

Enlightenment and Societal Trends: Critical Analysis in Western and Islamic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Societal trends are shaped by the influence of the movements which change the social system and intellectual thought of the people. There has been debate on the influence of Enlightenment movement, modern liberal thought and religion perspective. Critical questions like acceptance or rejection of modern societal trends were raised by both the religious scholars and the proponents of the Enlightenment and modernization. The purpose of the study was to critically analyze enlightenment in Western and Islamic perspective and how societal trends emerged to react rational thinking, scientific reason in the sphere of religion or moral values.

Islamic perspective of enlightenment gives a comprehensive framework of an enlightened approach that sets social trends of peaceful, harmony and tolerance. It does not support practices which foster social, cultural, economic and political prejudices which prove harmful for humanity in one way or the other. Perspective of western enlightenment revealed that it had influence on thinking, lifestyles, education, culture, media and social practices. Family relationships and support system are different as examined from both perspectives. Logical thinking and scientific approach are supported by Islamic and western enlightenment philosophy. Certain challenges exist to societal trends regarding intermingling of culture and traditions. Social institutions like educational organizations, media and family units can initiate talks on promoting tolerance, cultural harmony, equality, social justice and critical thinking in the society. Trends of social arrogance, damaging others' rights, injustices and inequalities are opposed in enlightenment approach of both the perspectives. There is need to initiate and promote awareness through interfaith dialogue and reflective discussion to understand social dynamics of an enlightened society inspired by enlightened belief system.

Key Words: *Relationships, Education, Culture, Social dynamics.*

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Introduction

It was in the 16th and 17th centuries when the term enlightenment emerged in Europe. It presented the case of liberal and bourgeois ⁽¹⁾ trends which emphasized on logical, empirical, scientific and humanistic way of thinking. These new developments of social change focused on material aspects rather than the moral or spiritual. Theological and mythological interpretation of the universe was rejected. ⁽²⁾

European philosophy described enlightenment in a sense that it turned down old teachings of the Church and believed in human society based on rational approach. ⁽³⁾

Enlightenment prevailed as social folkway in Europe in 18th century time when it was in darkness since the fall of Roman Empire in 4th century and Europe was in the 'Mediaeval Ages of Darkness'. On the contrary Arab Muslims were enjoying prosperity and have brought light to humanity in the East and the West. These Muslims spread the light of knowledge and guidance to far off corners of the world including Europe. ⁽⁴⁾

The concept of enlightenment breeds a new idea and that was of atheism ⁽⁵⁾ which denies church, God, state, ignorance, poverty and superstitions. This new environment of Europe gave emphasis on virtues based on science and natural philosophy. ⁽⁶⁾

Islam says that enlightenment has staunch basis of belief in God and science; and mind is of no use if not showed path by Islam so it is invalid to compel Islamic societies for following western enlightenment to exert pressure on the plea of conceptual terrorism as it is alien in Islamic civilization. No reformation and resurgence took control from priestly reign. The problem is that the concept of western enlightenment replaces religion with science for becoming civilized a wrong thought interpreted in Islamic world ⁽⁷⁾.

Islamic religion believes in reasoning and logical thinking and maintains a balance between religion and science. On the other hand, western enlightenment establishes supremacy of logical and scientific thinking on religious teachings and keeps religion away from physical

(1) It belongs to elite upper class during 1500 AD to 1800 AD

(2) The Encyclopedia of General Islamic Concepts, vol. 2000, p.169.

(3) Mahmoud Hamdi Zakzouk, Religion, *Philosophy and Enlightenment*. (Cairo: Dar El-Maarif, 1996), p.79.

(4) Anouar Al-Joundi, *Maalamat Al-Islam*. (Beirut, 1982). p.61

(5) Atheos that hold that there is no existence of God

(6) Ibid, p. 405.

(7) MuhmoudHamdiZakzouk, Religion, *Philosophy and Enlightenment*.(Dar El-Maarif, Cairo: 1996). P. 79

progress of man. But logic alone could not satisfy man in exploring truth about this universe. There are certain opposite concepts of western enlightenment and Islamic concept of enlightenment about various aspects of human life. Islam does not put unwanted restrictions on human intellect and logic but it calls human being to look into the secrets of the universe⁽¹⁾.

Enlightenment in Islamic Perspective

Islam clarifies that guidance of Allah is essential to achieve enlightenment. When Allah saves man from ignorance and false beliefs, and brings him to the light of true belief and logic, then such man is known as enlightened person. There are not multiple ways to achieve enlightenment; the only way is to seek guidance of Allah. So Islam has only one precise definition to Enlightenment and Allah acts as the only source to the Light.⁽²⁾

Islam presents a logical sense of enlightenment and its fundamental necessity lies in science and logic. Enlightenment, both spiritual and mental, can be attained by having belief in Allah by use of observation and logic. A useful mind is the one which undergoes logical thought process.⁽³⁾

Enlightenment in Islam is series combination of belief in Allah, natural laws, religion, and logical reasoning. European enlightenment lacks belief in religion and is only based on logical thinking through pure sciences. But Islamic enlightenment is basically the combination of both, the religion and the reasoning. European enlightenment is completely different from that of Islam. Islamic perspective of enlightenment is far more compete and organized. Islamic enlightenment is not restricted within pure sciences.⁽⁴⁾

Islam has different perspective of modesty. Modesty in terms of Islamic teachings is the improvement in the living standards meantime keeping intact with the original values presented in Islam. Western modesty ignores the past and is a leap into the future, breaking any linkage with the past. This idea of ignoring the past does not make any sense as it leads in rejection of religious values prevailed in the past. European modesty is confined to the "Church".⁽⁵⁾ In fact Islam gives more

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- 1- Muhammad Qutb, *The issues of Enlightenment in the Islamic World*. (Cairo, 1999) p. 72
 - 2- Ahmed Aziz, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*. (New York: Oxford university press: 1967) p.78.
 - 3- Sheikh Muhammad Abdou, *The Synthesis of Eloquence*. (Cairo: 1982). Vol. 1, p. 146.
 - 4- Anouar Al Joundi, *Maalamat Al Islam*. (Beirut.1982) Vol. 2. p. 15.
 - 5- Groff.S.Peter, *Islamic Philosophy A-Z*.(Eden burg University Press, 2007). p.107

importance to reasoning and freedom of will more than any other religion.⁽¹⁾

Enlightenment, as seen by the Europeans, was not strange to the Islamic thought. The word, in Arabic, is derived from "Nur" (light), which is the opposite of darkness and ignorance, the latter being a form of darkness. But, in Islam, it is not confined to using the mind alone. Islam coupled religion with mind, and showed that the enlightenment of religion means absence of complexity and vagueness in belief and legislation, and enlightenment of mind means infallibility of conscience, realization of facts, and distinguishing between different matters. Islam has been so keen on using the mind, reflecting on Allah's dominion and signs, rejecting dependency, which means neglecting the mind. All of this led to the independence of will, opinion, and thought in Muhammad Abduh's words. Hence, Islam presented to man a sublime civilization that was one of the longest civilizations in man's history.

The correlation between mind and religion: Islam looked at mind and religion as correlating not contradicting with one another. The mind is the base, and the religion is the building, according to Hujjatul-Islam Al-Ghazali⁽²⁾; neither can replace the other. Hence there has never been conflict in the Islamic thought between religion and mind, or choice between them. Rather, the mind, according to Sheikh Muhammad Abduh⁽³⁾, is the staunchest ally to the Islamic religion.

Islam as an Enlightened Religion

Islam demolished superstitious school of thought. It supports the practicality in life. Faith in Islam is not solely dependent upon blind trust. Islam teaches to undertake goodness having trust in Allah. Religion is subject to be followed by action, rather than mere talks.⁴ The Qur'an says:

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحَسُنَ مَا أَجْرُهُمْ﴾⁽⁵⁾

Those who believe and act righteously, joy is for them, and a blissful home to return to.

One of the hadiths also purports that

Allah does not accept belief if it is not expressed in deeds, and does not accept deeds if they do not confirm to belief.⁽⁶⁾

(1) FarangRajae, *Islam and Modernism*.(University Of Texas Press, 1997). p.157

(2) Abu Hāmed Mohammad ibn Mohammad al-Ghazzālī (1058–1111 C.E.), PersianMuslimtheologian, jurist, philosopher, and mystic.

(3) An Egyptian Islamic jurist (1849-1905) religious scholar and liberal reformer, regarded as one of the key founding figures of Islamic Modernism.

(4) SeyyedQutb, *Basic Principles Of The Islamic World View translated by Rami David*. (Islamic Publication International, New Jersey, 2006) p.41

(5) Al-Qur'an, 13:29

(6)

Islam teaches to live a balanced practical life and face the ground realities and challenges of life and seek spiritual satisfaction by doing good deeds. Islam keeps both natural science and spiritual purity together without dividing them into separate spheres¹. The Qur'an teaches man to pray as follows:

﴿وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾⁽²⁾

Our Lord! Give us something fine in this world as well as something fine in the Hereafter.

God strongly censures those who refuse to benefit from His blessings. The

Qur'an says:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي

الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾⁽³⁾

Say: "Who has forbidden God's finery which He has produced for His servants and the wholesome things from (His) provision?"

﴿كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا﴾⁽⁴⁾

And Islam's injunction is: "Eat and drink, but do not be extravagant".

The Prophet said:

"Keep fast and break it (at the proper time) and stand in prayer and devotion (in the night) and have sleep - for your body has its rights over you, and your eyes rights over you, and your wife has a claim upon you, and the person who pays a visit to you has a claim upon you".⁵

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ

يَعْدِلُونَ﴾⁽⁶⁾

Praise be to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light. Yet those who reject Faith hold (others) as equal, with their Guardian-Lord.

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ﴾⁽⁷⁾

"Surely We revealed the Taurat in which was guidance and light".

﴿وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ﴾⁽⁸⁾

(1) Op.cit 97

(2) Al-Qur'an, 2:201

(3) Al-Qur'an, 7:32

(4) Al-Qur'an, 7:31

(5) SahihBukhari, Book:31, Hadith: 198

(6) Al-Qur'an, 6:01.

(7) Al-Qur'an, 5:44.

(8) Al-Qur'an, 5:46.

“And We gave him (Isa) the Injeel in which was guidance and light”.

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَن نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾⁽¹⁾

“And thus did We reveal to you an inspired book (Qur’an) by Our command. You did not know what the Book was, nor (what) the faith (was), but We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants; and most surely you show the way to the right path”.

Noor, therefore, is a word used by the Qur’an to either denote guidance, true knowledge or Emaan (as an antonym to the darkness of Kufr).

Islam emphasizes at the use of both spiritual and material aspects together for the benefit of humanity. It is not advised to separate both of them and rejects the focus on only material welfare⁽²⁾.

It is seen in today’s life that the world is not in the balanced state as it fails to emphasize on both the aspects simultaneously. Some people completely reject spiritualism and others completely emphasize on spiritualism. Both are at a loss⁽³⁾.

Either it is Christianity, modern western civilization or Marxist socialism; all of them were inclined to one aspect and rejected the need of the other, which resulted in mistakes.

They mostly laid stress on outward presentation and did not furnish the inner self of a man, which is necessary for the ultimate purification. They used the sources available on the wellbeing of the outer body leaving aside spiritual purity.⁽⁴⁾

According to Islam, Man has the goal to restore the order of Allah on earth. World is created for man, and man is the representative of Allah. It should be the ultimate objective of the man to bring reforms to his inner self and finally make an impact on society for the purification of the individuals.⁽⁵⁾

Thus Islam stands in the middle path and the goal of producing a moral man in the service of just society and orders of God, thus, maintain a balance between material and spiritual spheres of life.

(1) Al-Qur’an, 42:52.

(2) Ahmed Aziz, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*. (Oxford university press: 1967) p.78.

(3) Khalifa Abdul Hakim, *The Fundamental Beliefs And Principles Of Islam And Their Application To Private Life*. (oxford university press, 1989) p.67

(4) Lord, Snell, *The New World*. (London: Watts & Co. 1947). p. 12

(5) Op.cit.91

Compatibility of Islam and the Development of Science

It is debatable whether science is promoted or restricted by Islamic societies. Islamic scholars hold the position that being the Caliph of Allah on earth, man is assigned the task to ponder upon all sciences. So science should have flourished in an Islamic state.⁽¹⁾ Most of the scholars agree to the fact that Qur'an has asked people to think about natural phenomenon and seek for the signs of the creations of Allah. Many of them agree that acquisition of scientific knowledge is the duty of human beings.⁽²⁾

Social Influence and Modernization

No other term is mentioned with greater frequency in the vocabulary of development liberation relating to the third world as modernization. Its definition and exact meanings, however, are still shrouded in ambiguity and numerous misconceptions continue to create puzzlement for scholars and policy-makers, others who consider it a vital aspect of national building and technological advancement⁽³⁾. Among certain other circles it is understood as a movement for sociological change in society and weeding out institution which have lost social value. It is construed as some kind of internal revolution that challenges traditional customs and values that compels the people to emancipate themselves from traditional beliefs and mores. No matter from whatever angle we might judge modernity one thing can be said with certainty that it entails considerable fermentation and change in social relations, economic philosophy and political structures⁽⁴⁾. There are also some other additional questions that need to be answered before and individual could crystallize his thinking about modernization. Who would herald modernization? Is it to be accomplished by a charismatic leader or through the collective will of the community as represented in broad-based democratic institutions? Are modernity and traditionalism⁽⁵⁾ totally inconsistent? Is modernity culture bound or is it something universal? What is the role of religious and political ideologies in modernization? Does it mean a complete break with the past⁽⁶⁾?

These and a host of other questions have perplexed those who have focused their attention on the trends and events which in the name of modernization and shaping the destiny of the teeming millions in the

(1) Muhammad Khalid Masood, *Islam modernity and society*, (Global times, 1995) p.127

(2) SayyidQutb, *Milestones*. (Islamic Book Services, 1981) p.112

(3) Wayne Hudson, *Enlightenment and Modernity*. (Art Publications, 1996) p.113

(4) Ibid. 115

(5) The view point in favour of traditional concepts

(6) Jonathan .I Israel, *Enlightenment Contested:Philosophy,Modernity And The Emancipation Of Man*.(New York: oxford university press, 2009) P.839

developing nations. There are inherent ambiguities in the concept, but in recent years scholars have tended to agree on three fundamental issues. Firstly, modernity it is synonymous with westernization, then its application in other parts of the world is problematic, because it is unique to an industrial society that emerged in the wake of Renaissance⁽¹⁾ in Europe. Secondly, recent research has provided evidence that the assumptions that modernity is the only factor that could dispel backwardness of a static social system is unfounded, and thirdly, a close look on human civilization, modernity then it has to be examined and judged in the light of its proper historical perspective.⁽²⁾ Moreover, it is difficult to say that any society is completely static. There is always an element of change even in the most traditional society and there is hardly any modernized society which is completely free of traditionalism. For instance after its meteoric rise, Islam is generally described by historians to have become stagnant. But a careful examination of its historical evolution would show that it is very superficial observation, because during every period of its history there were reforms that always changed intuitions and practices to meet new challenges, similarly in the most advanced and dynamic industrial societies like England and America many traditional characteristics still constitute critical dimensions of people's behavior⁽³⁾.

About modernization of the Muslim World there are two distinct schools of thoughts. There are scholars who are convinced that the transformation that was initiated during the nineteenth century in various Muslim countries was indigenous product.⁽⁴⁾ It was a reformation that was fed on internal realization among the leaders of the reform movements, that

(1) Cultural traits during 14th to 16th century

(2) William R. Polk and Ricard L. Chambers, *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p.16.

(3) Jonathan .I Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity And The Emancipation Of Man*. (New York: oxford university press, 2009). p. 56

(4) Ahmad Balafre, Secretary-General of the Istiqlal Party in Morocco has described built-in modernity of Islam in the following way: Some people might wonder whether religious leaders or certain group in Muslim universities even the Muslim religious itself-might not form an obstacle to modernization in the political and institutional field as well as in economic and social affairs. I should like to point out that Islam has no clergy and the Muslim religion. Over secular problems but they do so by laying down general principles which are susceptible of evolution. These principles are in no way incompatible with the development of the world or with modern trends. On the contrary, they are conceived in the spirit of progress, of equity, social justice, tolerance and peace among men. More than that, the *ijtihad*—interpretation of the principles—allows the commentators in any case to adopt the principals of the Qur'an to the requirements of evolution and progress.

Benjamin Rivalling, *Culture and conflict in the Maghrib in the contemporary Middle East: Tradition and Innovation*. (New York, 1986).

the old structures and the numerous traditional intuitions were being overburdened by stresses resulting from a new set of interpersonal relations, more dynamic social groups, and by new political inspirations among the educated classes⁽¹⁾. The advocates of this view believe that governments seldom initiate change in society. The agents of change are forces that are never state – sponsored. Government intervenes only when it realizes that changes that have taken place need institutional adjustment to make policy-making machinery more efficient and productive. The government can legitimize its intervention in the name of religion, and ideology or any other idea that has popular appeal at the particular time. It is further added that during the process of modernization the society is torn between competing ideologies⁽²⁾. The conservative groups show that their distaste for the change by hearkening the masses to return to the past when peace and bliss reigned supreme in the life of people. The modernists on the other hand are obsessed with the idea of radical transformation and label every traditional view retrogressive, shop soiled and useless. If we examine them carefully, both schools of thought seem unrealistic. Modernity and traditionalism can always co-exist⁽³⁾.

The second approach which is more popular, and is widely discussed by scholars and historians is that modernization in Islam is the direct outcome of the infiltration of western ideas in the Static Muslim societies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Daniel Learner has concluded that the term modernization currently being used for Islamic renaissance is of a very recent origin. During the nineteenth century, the process of change overtaking the world of Islam After the World War II when these lands became independent, under the impact growing nationalistic fervor the term modernization was found more relevant and appropriate, There is however, one clear difference between Europeanization and modernization that needs to be kept in view. Europeanization during the last century was confined only to the leisured class, the upper crust of the society, who could afford to send their children abroad or had the means to import technological gadgets. Modernization on the other hand is a much more universal phenomenon. Its ramifications are spread over vast segments of society⁽⁴⁾.

Modernization of a Muslim society is however, vastly different from similar transformation in other society. In other societies, while making changes in social, economic and political institutions, religion is seldom brought into discussion and even in evolving principles of public

(1) SeyyedHossein Nasr, *Heart of Islam*. (Harper Sans Francisco, 2002). p.185

(2) SeyyedHossein Nasr, *Heart of Islam*. (Harper Sans Francisco, 2002).p.182

(3) Ibid.151-152

(4) SeyyedHossein Nasr, *Heart of Islam*. (Harper Sans Francisco, 2002). p.114

morality very little attention is paid to religious percepts. This is however, not the case in Islamic society where religion still comprehends every aspect of human existence. It's all pervading spirit dominates both the individual and collective life of the believers. Nothing will be deemed legal, and capable of winning popular support unless it is consonance with the laws of Shariah. Therefore no matter, at what issue of national life a public debate is being held, it automatically assumes a religious character. It is for this reason that in every period of history of Islamic civilization, Ulema and specialists in the religion doctrine always played a decisive role in the formation of public policy in a Muslim state.

Islam has rendered great service to human civilization; it has saved state and its institution from being judged according to hedonistic utilitarianism⁽¹⁾, theories of social contract, and dialectal materialism⁽²⁾. It rules out the possibility of two spiritual and secular hierarchies existing side by side because such situation is always susceptible to friction and disorder in society. Christianity which created such hierarchies had to pay a heavy price in the form of war and squabbles⁽³⁾.

It is concluded that if the western model of modernization has been successfully implanted in such tradition-bound non-western societies as Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore, they do not see any reason why it could not yield the same results in Muslim lands. But they forget the fact that these societies derive their spiritual strength mostly from ethics and not from a revealed religion. According to William Griffith, in a society where peoples' outlook is determined by a revealed religion, the reforms are always confronted with an imponderable dilemma. For them modernization is attractive as an alienating, sought after and rejected, admired and hated. Most of the third world admire some of its results such as affluence, upward social mobility, and technological progress and therefore assured national independence. It rejects other like agnosticism⁽⁴⁾, corruption, materialism, amorality, ruthless competition and technocracy. , the more rapid, corrupt and inegalitarian, especially in major cities modernization is the more violent is its rejection.⁽⁵⁾

In other words modernity or modernism is basically a struggle between continuity and change or acceptance or rejection of alien influences and concepts by society whose culture is still rooted in

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- (1) The view point that any action which is beneficial for majority of humanity should be allowed and is right to do.
 - (2) Is a philosophy of science and nature, based on the writings of Karl Marx
 - (3) KamarSusmit, *Christian vs Islamic Civilization*. (Global Times, 1995). p.27
 - (4) School of thought that does not believe in ultimate knowledge about God
 - (5) William E. Griffith, *The Revival of Islamic Fundamentalism, The Case of Iran* (HamdardIslamicus Vol.III, No. 1, Spring, 1980). p.47.

traditionalism. Before turning to the various approaches that have been put forward by various scholars and jurists regarding modernization and its implications for Islam, it would be gainful to know that Islam is not the only religion doctrine that is experiencing the anguish of maintaining a difficult balance between norms inherited from the past, the needs of the present and hopes for the future. It is a universal phenomenon, every nation whether developed or underdeveloped, and every ideology no matter whether it is religious or secular, is encountering this acute and perplexing dilemma⁽¹⁾.

There is no doubt, a contemporary Muslim society is being subjected to a lot of incoherent, change and conflict, but one fact needs to be kept in mind during this discussion that in spite of the magnetic pull of western rationalism and technological advancement and their impact on the daily life of the people the inherent belief system of Islam embedded so deeply in the popular mind remain unchanged. The recent upsurge of Islamic revival, even among the educated youth who have been continuously under the influence of western intellectual trends and ideas is a clear indication of the innate strength of the religion doctrines. G.E Grunebaum says:

No matter what the devotees of modernism would say against the ulema, the fact that could not be denied was that over a long period of time they had assumed complete domination in such areas of national life as education and judiciary. As custodians of the laws of Shariah, they wielded considerable juristic authority, and occasionally as mediators between the state and other pressure groups in society they also assume a very decisive political role⁽²⁾.

Discussion and Conclusion

Enlightenment theory or use of logic regarding moral values and faith cannot be accommodated from Islamic viewpoint. However, there is no doubt that both Islam and Enlightenment share some common characteristics and both encourage the use of logic. Both urge to strive for finding the Truth. The contradiction of Islamic thought and that of Enlightenment lies in the process or techniques to find the truth about certain beliefs. Islam does not ignore anything that is beyond human knowledge for a particular time. Islam maintains a balance between

(1) Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the west* (New York: Oxford University press, 1994) p.179)

(2) Joseph Schacht, *problems of modern Islamic Legislation*.(New York: Modern Middle East, 1963). p.196

rational thinking and metaphysical approach⁽¹⁾. Enlightenment tries to provide courage to people to think individually and get rid of collective thoughts which are imposed in their cultures. It tries to free the individuals from objectable ideals prevailing in society.

Islamic enlightenment gives a comprehensive framework of an enlightened approach that provides guidance for living in a peaceful, harmonious and tolerant way. It rejects all social, cultural, economic and political practices which may prove harmful for humanity in one way or the other. On the other hand tenets of western enlightenment were originally given by the proponents of the Enlightenment movement. Most of these principles of the western enlightenment movement were in harmony with the concept of Islamic enlightenment but its belief that religion should not intervene in worldly affairs is not supported by the teachings of Islamic enlightenment. Some points which highlight differences between the two approaches are given here:

Islamic family system is very strong. All family members (being a brother, sisters, mother, father, son, daughters and other relatives) all have their respective rights. Family coordination and mutual system of help, suggestion, gives social strength and good relationship between child, parents and elders. Old people feel secure and happy where West has broken family system. Old people have no family support and family love and respect. They are sent to old houses.

Islamic system gives directions that allow the adults to marry to a partner and in this regard, thier wish and will are repected and given due importance. Islam makes parents bound to ensure willingness of their daughters before their engagement / marriage. Islam does not preach any type or fome of force and coercion. There is a proper system of marriage, divorce, khula in Islam. A widow or divorced woman is also given full rights to spend independent life within the limits of Islamic teachings. West has no such family system, in West women have no respect and no planned system with family members exists as regarding marriage , divorce and other matrimonial matters.

Best and sound law of inheritance is provided for each of the gender (male and female). A proper system and guidance to share property of parents / husband / other family members exists whereas western system follows laws which prove ethnically and racially biased in such matters. Islam gives all people a guide-book to live their lives according to its teachings and preachings and one lives one's life with in the limits of

(1) Mehmet SaitReber, Religion after Enlightenment: the case for Islam, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (2012) V. 23:3, p. 305-314

Islamic boundaries which leads towards the ultimate good while in west no such code of life is determined for the purpose.

In Islam, religion, man, and state are concomitant. In west, religion falls in the private box of man.

In Islamic culture, all the light is taken and derived from the Divine Power, Allah Almighty. In Western culture, man is individually free and depends on his rational thinking that is the only way to light. This human rationality sometime leads towards the wrong path.

There is principle of equal distribution of wealth in Islam while western system of wealth does not support any such system.

The basis of Islamic culture is morality and simplicity. The true Islamic society always tries to set the highest levels of morality. In Islam no free mixing of male and female is allowed. Clothes with covered body are the symbol of modesty. Men and women are allocated for the works suited to their nature, man is to earn bread and butter and woman is to perform household duties and responsibilities, and it is the foundation of huge Islamic society. Contrary to this in western culture and society immorality is at its highest peak. It is a culture where man and woman live like husband and wife but never they get married their dress is shorter and tighter. Branded dresses are thought to be more fashionable and elite class and high gentry.

There were some of the core differences between Islamic enlightenment and western enlightenment but the basic difference is the mind set.

The mind set of Islamic enlightenment and Islamic culture is the belief that Allah is our Creator and Sustainer. Man is here on earth to worship Him alone. And as a result of one's submission and obedience, one will be blessed with the peace, and contentment.

Whereas the idea we get from western enlightenment and culture is that worldly pleasure, comfort and enjoyment is the basic purpose of one's life. life revolves round money making from morning to night , kids are brought up in day care centers and old family members are sent to old homes.