

# Sociological Principles of the Quran

## **1 Man is by nature a social being who seeks out other people.**

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ - 49:13

*O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (49:13)*

Everyone has individual differences, weaknesses, and strengths. If everyone were the same, we may not have been in need of each other. Relationships are symbiotic- individuals need each other not only because there is a diversity in ideas and knowledge and skills, but also that it is impossible to identify oneself without the context of other people.

Here in 49:13, Allah explains that He: “made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another.” Why? It is because we find our identity through our differences with other people. In other words, Allah knows the innate nature of man and speaks directly to this truth. No conflict or compromise would have ever arisen if it were not for everyone’s fundamental and individual differences. For any human experience to occur, the necessary condition is to interact with other humans. By nature, our human experience is driven by other humans.

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ۚ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُلْطَىٰ ۚ وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ - 43:32

*Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of this world and have raised some of them above others in degrees [of rank] that they may make use of one another for service. But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate. (43:32)*

Allah even creates socioeconomic differences between people as well as cultural or ethnic differences. However, Allah explicitly mentions that He: “raised some of them above others in degrees [of rank] that they may make use of one another for service.” In other words, this furthers the idea that humans have a mutual relationship with each other. All people are in need of assistance and help from others in order to progress. Allah reminds us of our final goal here: “But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate,” showing the believers that individual differences are a means by which we arrive at Allah’s mercy.

## **2 Every society is like a living thing that will also be held accountable on the Day of Judgement**

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْجِرُونَ سَاعَةً ۚ وَلَا يَسْتَقِيمُونَ - 7:34

*And for every nation is a [specified] term. So when their time has come, they will not remain behind an hour, nor will they precede [it]. (7:34)*

This verse shows a clear principle that every nation is almost like its own individual. Allah causes the death and birth of individuals as well as nations as well. This is why Allah explains the death of a nation as an inevitable fact of reality, just as how man cannot delay the moment of his death.

As for the birth of nations, Imam Ali explains in Nahjul Balagha [Sermon 201](#):

O people, certainly, what gathers people together (in categories) is (their) agreement (to good or bad) and (their) disagreement, for only one individual killed the camel of Thamud but Allah held all of them in punishment because all of

them consented to it. Thus, Allah, the Glorified, has said:

*Then they hamstrung her, and turned (themselves) regretful. (Qur'an, 26:157).*

Nations are born out of a common will, and a common drive to a singular goal. Ayatollah Baqir Sadr in his [tafsir](#), explains on a number of occasions in the Quran that the common will of a people is what creates a nation. For example:

لَا يَفْتَالُونَكَ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَى مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ - 59:14  
*They will not fight you all except within fortified cities or from behind walls. Their violence among themselves is severe. You think they are together; but their hearts are diverse. That is because they are a people who do not reason. (59:14)*

In this verse, Allah explains that because these people do not have a common will, they are considered separate. What this then means is that if someone in society goes against the common will, he would not be considered as part of that society anymore. This is corroborated by Ashabul Kahf, as they went against the idol worship of their nation:

وَإِذِ اعْتزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَقًا - 18:16  
*[The youths said to one another], "And when you have withdrawn from them and that which they worship other than Allah, retreat to the cave. Your Lord will spread out for you of His mercy and will prepare for you from your affair facility." (18:16)*

This principle is also upheld by the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ - 5:105  
أَوْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ - 7:173  
*O you who have believed, upon you is [responsibility for] yourselves. Those who have gone astray will not harm you when you have been guided. To Allah is your return all together; then He will inform you of what you used to do. (5:105)*  
*Or [lest] you say, "It was only that our fathers associated [others in worship] with Allah before, and we were but descendants after them. Then would You destroy us for what the falsifiers have done?" (7:173)*

By demonstrating that man has free reign over his own belief and also that society has its own will, Allah is suggesting that people have the power to defy their society and be considered apart from it. Prophet Ibrahim defied his society by destroying the idols and was admitted as among the Ulul Azam Prophets. Allah demonstrates that man is only considered a part of his society if he believes in his society's ideas. [See also.](#)

### **3 Human nature is fundamentally unchanging**

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ - 42:13  
*He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]. (42:13)*

Tawhid and adalat are universal concepts that apply to all humans regardless of period of time, class, race, sex, origin, level of knowledge, or culture. If these two concepts were not universal, then Allah would not have appointed every prophet to say the same message to every people. Allah understands human nature better than

anyone. He is like an engineer who has created some machinery, and only He knows the intimate details of that machine.

In other words, if Ayatollah Baqir Sadr's tafsir holds true (the idea that natural and innate phenomenon are [unavoidable in society](#)), then Adalat and Tawhid are insuppressible ideas in society as well. It is impossible to remove the Light of Allah from this earth so long as Allah has left the Imam in our presence:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ - 2:30

*And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know."*

So as long as this “successive authority” remains on this earth, Allah will maintain his mercy over the people. Allah corroborates this idea in the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ - 5:54

*O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, powerful against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of a critic. That is the favor of Allah ; He bestows it upon whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing. (5:54)*

This shows that Allah will always have someone who brings people to the religion of Islam as long as there is the authority that Allah keeps on this earth. This authority, most importantly, is a universal authority. All people in the society will be able to attract themselves to this authority, and derive the knowledge of the religion of Islam from him.

[Source.](#)

[Zurarah](#)