



Prejudice in the tribal structure of the Arabs and its role in Islam

Mobin Ghadermarzi*, Rahman Mohamadi

Farhangian University, Hakim Ferdowsi Campus of Alborz Province, Iran

Abstract

In all human civilizations, there is the concept of prejudice, which is one of the requirements for the survival of a civilization. In this article, the aim is to examine the prejudice in the tribal structure of the Arabs. Prejudice is one of the characteristics of the pre-Islamic Arabs that existed structurally among the Arabs even after Islam. This prejudice, which was very evident among the pre-Islamic Arabs, played an important role not only among the post-Islamic Arabs but also in the events of the Islamic realm. Including in the incident of Saqifah Bani Saadeh and the Arab policies of the Umayyads. In this article, using the second and third hand sources, the role of prejudice in the events of the Islamic Caliphate has been investigated.

Keywords

Prejudice; Arab; Umayyad; Islam

1. Introduction

Prejudice is one of the most important concepts discussed in various branches of the humanities, including history and sociology. Many scholars, such as Ibn Khaldun, have offered different definitions of prejudice and studied its role in different histories and civilizations. In general, prejudice means unwarranted love and hate or blind and extreme bias towards something or a person (Raiya et al., 2008). For example, prejudice against tribes and ethnicities, which is also called ethnocentrism, and this type of prejudice was very common in the pre-Islamic period. Prejudice is divided into two categories: praised and condemned. Blindly prejudice is called reprehensible and disgusting, and prejudice based on rational thinking is praised (Verkuyten, 2013). Prejudice is evident in all aspects of Bedouin Arab life, and of course later this structural prejudice among the Bedouin Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula influenced many Islamic events (Ata et al., 2009). For example, in the event of the election of the Prophet's successor in the Saqifa of Bani Sa'deh and the subsequent clashes between government officials during the Rashidun caliphate and finally the enthronement of Mu'awiyah and the

* Corresponding author: Mobin Ghadermarzi, Farhangian University, Hakim Ferdowsi Campus of Alborz Province

Email-Address: mobinghadermarzi73@gmail.com

establishment of the Umayyad rule, and even in later Islamic dynasties such as the Abbasids, prejudice was not ineffective. The effect of prejudice is on tribal rivalries for power (Saroglou et al., 2009; Shaver et al., 2017). For example, in the early period of Islam, this tribal rivalry is evident. When Caliph Umar (RA) elected Mu'awiyah to rule the Levant, Abu Sufyan advised him that the emigrants became Muslims before us and we converted to this religion after him. They now get their wages and they are the boss and we follow, they have given you an important job, so do not go against them because you do not know what the end will be. These conversations show how father and son saw the Islam religion as a means of enjoying the world and gaining power (Imhoff & Recker, 2012). With the example given in the above text, it can be seen how much prejudice has penetrated into the structure of life of the Arabs of each tribe, which even before Islam, these tribes fought with each other.

2. The concept of prejudice

Prejudice from the nerve material means the foundations that connect the joints. Then any connection and connection is called prejudice, and it means the individual's defense of the privacy of his tribe and government. The Persian equivalent of prejudice is "ethnicism", which in sociological culture has been translated as ethnocentric. This concept has been studied in four verses of the Qur'an and important sources of narration and has been constantly sought after by scholars of ethics. Prejudice has both positive and negative aspects, praised and condemned. Blindly prejudice is condemned and otherwise praised. The characteristics of prejudice are (Raiya et al., 2008; Ata et al., 2009):

- 1- A natural force is like any other natural force.
- 2- Its origin is kinship and similar things.
- 3- It is not just a matter of blood-inheritance, but it must have manifested itself through mechanisms such as social cohesion.
- 4- It is interrelated with the geographical environment and the economic and belief system. Although none of these factors are an independent source for prejudice, they are effective in its severity and weakness.
- 5- Prejudice can be found in different communities. The prejudice of Bedouin tribes is stronger than other prejudices, but this does not mean that prejudice cannot exist in urban communities.
- 6- It is the driving force that provides the necessary energy for social change, especially political change.

In response to the question of how prejudice is formed or what causes the formation of prejudice, Ibn Khaldun refers to the following elements:

- A) Family ties
- B) Both covenant and oath
- C) Common religion
- D) Common ancestors
- E) Environment and harsh geographical conditions

In the end, it can be said that in general, according to Ibn Khaldun, the prejudice of the Bedouin people is specific and it cannot survive except in the Bedouin. Prejudice includes bravery, courage,

religiosity, morality, blood ties, the spirit of freedom, pure and healthy nature and generosity. For Ibn Khaldun, prejudice depends on the environment and the state, which is the basis of civilization, is created by prejudice, but because the urban environment is not suitable for prejudice, it eventually destroys it, and in fact, the more civilization flourishes, the weaker the prejudice (Johnson et al., 2013).

3. Pre-Islamic prejudice in the Arabian Peninsula

The people of the Arabian Peninsula are divided into two groups:

1- Deserter: Their hallmark is Bedouinism, personal freedom and hospitality. Weak people can take refuge in strong people, and the general profession is primitive herding.

2- Urban dwellers and villagers: The main occupation of the townspeople is trade, but some also make money through looting. The houses of the urban villagers were fortified castles to protect the primitive evil. The Arab community at that time consisted of small groups called tribe. There was strong solidarity among the members of the tribe. In the tribal system, the Arabs were always right with their own tribe, even if they were aggressors and this is a clear example of prejudice in the structure of life of the Arabs of the peninsula in the pre-Islamic period. Of course, this prejudice has continued after Islam (Roggemans et al., 2015). According to the Holy Quran, prejudice was one of the characteristics of the Arabs of the pre-Islamic era. They were prejudiced against the Arabic language, so God says that if the Qur'an was revealed in another language, they would not accept it and said we do not understand it. The ignorant Arabs were prejudiced against their idolatry, so they were not willing to abandon it. In their customs, they blindly imitated their fathers and said that since we found our fathers in this way, we will walk in this way ourselves (Ata et al., 2009). In addition to the ugly and disgusting traditions, there were other good traditions among the Arabs that were caused by prejudice. Traditions such as hospitality, faithfulness to the covenant, courage, support for the oppressed and allies in it, retribution, the prohibition of some months to prevent war and bloodshed, diligence in some sciences such as genealogy, medicine and arithmetic. In general, prejudice among the Arabs has a rooted structure that existed before Islam and after Islam, and this prejudice has influenced many events in the Islamic realm. This prejudice must be attributed to the system of life of the Arab people. According to Ibn Khaldun, prejudice is more prevalent among the Bedouin people, and since the Arab people lived as a tribe, this prejudice could be due to it. But later, with the development of the Arabian Peninsula and the growth of urbanization, this bias faded (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008; Johnson et al., 2013).

4. Prejudice in the Arabian Peninsula "Early Islam and After"

When the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a prophet, one of the reasons that the Arabs opposed the Prophet was that they could not abandon the religion of their fathers, and this stemmed from their prejudice. There are also other important reasons, such as the loss of monopoly profits and wealth due to trade, which was in the possession of certain tribes such as the Quraysh, but this opposition was also due to prejudice. Prejudice was very influential in these oppositions (Imhoff & Recker, 2012).

5. The story of Saqifa Bani Saadeh

In the case of Saqifa Bani Sa'deh, a group of Muhajireen and Ansar competed for power. The Ansar chanted in Saqifa that they helped the Islam, the city of Medina is the city of Ansar, and in front of the emigrants, they shouted that the Prophet is from Quraysh. In Saqifa Bani Sa'deh, the Khazrajis wanted to Substitute Sa'd ibn 'Abadah. Meanwhile, a group of immigrants joined them. The Ossetians were

opposed to Sa'd ibn 'Abadah. But with the joining of the Muhajireen, which included Omar, Abu Bakr and Abu Ubaydah, they turned the page. The Muhajireen said that the Prophet is from Quraysh, so it is better that a successor from Quraysh. Meanwhile, Abu Bakr, who was one of the first believers in Islam and the companions of the Prophet and was from the Quraysh tribe, was elected to the caliphate. This appointment is due to tribal prejudice and not to the attention to the people's choices or to the principle of Imamate and succession. Various sources have stated the reasons for the rejection of the Caliphate of Imam Ali (as) by the Arabs due to prejudice (Kalkan et al., 2009):

Ali's removal from political power was due to the jealousy and resentment of the Quraysh towards Ali. Ali (AS) had killed many of their relatives in the battles of the Prophet (PBUH) with divine and religious motives, and for this reason, the Quraysh nobility had severe grudges against him. It also displeased the tradition of Arab old age with Ali (as). However, the Prophet had tried many times to eradicate this ignorant tradition by appointing young people to important tasks such as appointing Osama to command the army (Roggemans et al., 2015).

6. The beginning of Abu Bakr's caliphate and Islamic conquests

With the beginning of the Caliphate of Abu Bakr (RA) and the annexation of the Levant, Egypt and Iran during the Caliphate of Umar (RA), the issue of Arab prejudice, which had diminished in the early days of Islam, was revived. The Islamic conquests brought different cultures and races into the Islamic lands, and this caused the issue of the patronage and politics of Arabism to appear in the Islamic Caliphate from the very beginning. Although the issue of patronage and the politics of Arabic was more prominent in the Umayyad period, it was first raised during the Islamic conquests. Mawali who converted to Islam were still second-class citizens. Also, non-Muslims were required to pay Jizyah. This Jizyah was separate from the taxes paid to rulers and governors for government affairs. Mawalis who had knowledge and industry were also used as slaves. But their situation was more or less good than that Mawalis of the Umayyads period (Johnson et al., 2013).

7. From Mu'awiyah's battle with Imam Hassan (AS) to the formation of the Umayyad Caliphate

From the very beginning of the rise of Islam, rivalry and conflict between the Umayyad and Hashemite tribes was evident. It is mentioned in many sources that Abu Sufyan, Mu'awiyah and other people from the Umayyad clan were dissatisfied with the fact that a member of the Hashemite clan overpowered the people and took power, and at the last moment they convert to Islam. It is narrated that when Mu'awiyah gave the good news to his father Abu Sufyan that he had been appointed governor of the Levant, Abu Sufyan replied: "The Muhajireen became Muslims before us and we converted to this religion after them (Shaver et al., 2017). They now receive wages. They are the boss and we are the followers. They have given you an important job. Look so that you do not go against them because you do not know what will happen in the end." Of course, there is no information about the correctness or incorrectness of this narration, which is mentioned in Dr. Jafar Shahidi's book on the analytical history of Islam, but we are sure that there was a dispute between the Hashemi and Umayyad tribes over power and the issue of the caliphate. This dispute over the caliphate and the leadership of the people stemmed from the prejudice of the Umayyad tribe. They considered it a disgrace that someone other than their tribe would be in power and lead the people. Finally, after the martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS), the people of Syria in Jerusalem pledged allegiance to Mu'awiyah as caliph and called him Amir al-Mu'minin. Mu'awiyah then rushed to Iraq (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). In Kufa, Imam Hassan (AS) went to Madain with an army of twelve thousand people, including Abdullah ibn Abbas. When he reached Sabat, he doubted the loyalty of his companions, especially after

Mu'awiyah tried to bribe the commander of the army and succeeded in appeasing Obaidullah ibn Abbas. At this time, Imam Hassan (AS) renounced the war and in the talks that took place between him and Mu'awiyah, Imam Hassan (AS) handed over the government to Mu'awiyah. The Imam chose peace with Mu'awiyah on the condition that the Imamate of the Muslims after Mu'awiyah be him. Mu'awiyah entered Kufa seeking peace, and Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein pledged allegiance to him. As a result of the gathering of the people around him, that year was called "Aam al-Jama'a"; Because the people, with the exception of the Kharijites, pledged allegiance to a caliph. Mu'awiyah's rule was the first experience of a ruler who came to power amid religious-political divisions, and possibly tribal and regional ones, by force and by using political tricks. Thus, the Umayyad government came into being and Mu'awiyah became the caliph of the Islamic Ummah. This dynasty lasted 91 years (132 AH-41 AH). During this period, 14 people became caliphs. The first of them was Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and the last of them was Marwan ibn Muhammad (Kalkan et al., 2009).

8. The issue of Mawali and the policy of Umayyad Arabic

With the coming to power of the Umayyads, a new era opened up in the Islamic world. The Umayyads pursued a policy of Arabism in their affairs and imposed many strictures on the Mawalis. The Umayyads applied the policy of Arabism not only in national affairs but also in religious affairs and the administration of non-Arab regions. The Umayyads mostly insisted on the Arab Imamate, for example, the pilgrims considered the merit of the Imamate of prayer only from that Arab. Judging was an important job that non-Arabs did not have access to, and the people accepted the fact so much that even if sometimes a non-Arab was appointed to an important job by order of a ruler, they would not accept him. For example, when the pilgrims appointed Saeed ibn Jubayr to judge in Kufa, the people of Kufa did not accept him and said that no one but the Arabs deserved to judge. Therefore, the pilgrims appointed Ibn Abi Musa al-Ash'ari as a judge and asked him to consult with Sa'id ibn Jubayr in the matter of judgment. The Umayyads also took over wherever they ruled. They controlled Khorasan, Rey, Sistan, Sindh, Qaliqala, Tbilisi and other areas (Saroglou et al., 2009). The areas in the hands of the Umayyads can be divided into five provinces whose governors were Arabs, especially Umayyad Arabs. Most of the Mawalis, in terms of origin and language, were Iranians who came to Kufa as captives and converted to Islam there and held a very low position, but after accepting Islam, they were no longer slaves, although they were subjected to many hardships and remained under their Arab owners and needed their support. Mawalis served as infantry in the wars and had no right to ride horses and had no share of the spoils of war, or if they had, it was so small that it was not significant compared to other spoils. The prohibition of Arabs marrying Mawali was another example of humiliation of Mawali, as even if an Arab married an Ajami, they would separate the couple from each other. The Umayyads forced the Mawalis to pay jizyah and taxes, which also led to the humiliation of the Mawalis and imposed a lot of economic pressure on them (Raiya et al., 2008; Velasco González et al., 2008).

9. Conclusion

Prejudice is a root concept among the Arabs, which was more prominent in the pre-Islam period. However, despite the efforts of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), this prejudice among the Arabs was not completely eradicated and continued during the rule of Islamic governments such as the Umayyads. Prejudice over many Islamic events has played an important role. For example, in the incident of Saqifa Bani Sa'deh, the decision to replace the Prophet in this incident was due to prejudice. As each tribe tries to introduce a successor. Also, this prejudice reaches its peak again in the Umayyad period and the

issue of Mawali arises, which leads to their revolt and even the fall of the Umayyad government by a Mawli named Abu Muslim Khorasani. As a result, it can be said that prejudice has played a very important role in the events of the beginning of Islam and after it.

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