



İslam, Muslims, and Social Change*


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Çeviri

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Change as the destiny of humanity, is a vital reality in interaction with religion in social life. In this sense, social change refers to rooted and permanent changes in society's structure and the established social system. On the other hand, religion can be considered as a belief system and a lifestyle connected to it for people. Religion, which brings the principles of belief and practice in understanding, significating and living life for humans, aims to regulate and organize social life. Based on this purpose, religion aims at establishing, structuring or organizing the society and guiding people in belief, thought, mindset and practice. While interacting with the existing social order and culture, stability, emerging new situations and the reality of change, it redefines and reconstructs them or becomes a factor in their realization with its principles and beliefs. In this context, the relationship between religion and social change is an essential issue in understanding and significating religion and religious and social life. As a matter of fact, this study deals with the relationship between religion and social change in the case of Islam and Muslims. The study aims to understand, explain and make sense of the dimension of social change in the Islamic religion and Muslims. Within the framework of this purpose, it aims to contribute to social sciences in terms of studies on the subject.

Keywords: Sociology of Religion, Religion, Islam, Muslims, Social Change.

Abstract

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İslam, Müslümanlar ve Toplumsal Değişim

İnsanlığın yazgısı olarak değişim, toplumsal planda din ile etkileşim halinde önemli bir gerçeklik olarak karşımıza çıkar. Bu anlamda toplumsal değişim, toplumun yapısında, kurulu toplumsal sistemde köklü ve kalıcı değişiklikleri ifade eder. Din ise insanlar için bir inanç sistemi ve ona bağlı bir hayat tarzı olarak anlaşılabilir. İnsanın hayatı anlaması, anlamlandırması ve yaşaması konusunda inanç ve uygulama esasları getiren din, toplumsal hayatı tanzim etmeyi amaçlar. Bu amaç temelinde toplumu inanç, düşünce, zihniyet ve pratikte kurmaya, yapılandırmaya veya düzenlemeye, insanlara yol göstermeye çalışır; mevcut toplumsal düzen ve kültürle, istikrarla, ortaya çıkan yeni durumlar ve değişim geçişiyle etkileşime girerken onları kendi ilke ve inanç esaslarıyla yeniden tanımlama, inşa etme veya bizzat onların gerçekleşmesinde etken olma yoluna gider. Bu bağlamda din ile toplumsal değişim ilişkisi dini ve toplumsal hayatı anlama ve anlamlandırmada önemli bir konudur. Nitekim bu çalışmada İslam ve Müslümanlar örneğinde din-toplumsal değişim ilişkisi ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, İslam dini ve Müslümanların toplumsal değişim boyutunu anlamak ve anlamlandırmaktır. Bu amaç çerçevesinde konuyla ilgili çalışmalar noktasında sosyal bilimlere katkıda bulunmak hedeflenmektedir.

Özet

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din Sosyolojisi, Din, İslam, Müslümanlar, Toplumsal Değişim.

Introduction

As can be understood from its title, this study focuses on the dimensions of Islam as a universal religion of revelation and of people who belong to Islam as a universal religion and who are named as Muslims related to the reality of the social change. The subject of the study is of great importance both in terms of social change in general and religion in general and also social change-religion interaction in the example of Islam and Muslims in particular. Today, more than ever, there is a need for an examination of a phenomenon such as social change, which is the destiny of every society and therefore every human being as a social being, in the context of Islam, which is one of the largest and most influential religions in the world in terms of both demographic, familial, economic, educational, political, legal and moral dimensions.

Within the framework of social change, it can be said that although Islam presents different situations according to time and place, it has caused radical changes to occur wherever it reaches. It can be said that this reality is not only in history, but has emerged with different meanings, content, shapes and images today.

Indeed, sociologically speaking, remarkable mental, familial, social, political, legal, moral, cultural, educational, economic changes, social change, occur in the social environments in which Muslims live and present for various reasons. This can be seen as a very important and interesting situation. However, what is even more critical for Muslims are issues such as the state of their relations with social change where they live, what position they take in the face of the reality of change and innovation and whether they are the

subject of change. Obviously, this situation is one of the most important problems for the religion of Islam and Muslims. When talking about the position of Muslims in terms of time, Islam and change come first. The questions such as "Are Muslims closed to change, will they be subject to some kind of atavism? Do Muslims have their own change plans and strategies?" and issues around such questions are frequently raised in relation to Islam and Muslims. People, societies, especially Europeans and American society who do not have enough knowledge about Islam and Muslims, with the influence of some politicians, Hollywood movies, media and orientalists, have false information and perceptions that Islam and Muslims are closed to change, they are not the subject of change but the object, and Muslims are not active at the point of change.¹

Undoubtedly, the perception pointed out about Islam and Muslims on the basis of the fact of change and whether these are correct can be correctly understood by looking at the main sources of Islam and the interaction of Muslims with change in history and today. Therefore, this research has dimensions that will also serve such a purpose.

In the article, after discussing the mutual relations between the phenomenon of social change and the phenomenon of religion, revelation (wahy) and prophethood (nubuwwah) are tried to be understood in terms of social change. Again, the social change approach of Islam is examined within the framework of basic elements, concepts and factors. In connection with this subject, the dimensions of social change of Muhammad(pbuh), the last prophet leader of Muslims and the Holy Book of Muslims, the Quran will be emphasized. Hijrah also has an important place among the subjects of the study. Because the event of the Hijrah has a special place in Islam to understand the aspects of time and change. Finally, the interaction of Muslims with the reality of social change in history and today is tried to be understood in the article.

This research was carried out by referring to the Quran, the siyar (the life of the Prophet) and the Sunnah of the Prophet, historical works on the subject and sociology studies. Within the framework of the resources, the author's previous studies² on the subject were also used. It should be noted that in the study, the interaction of Islam and Muslims with social change is attempted to be understood based on the types of religion-social change relations by Okumuş, author of the book 'Social Change and Religion',³ in other words, the mutual relations between religion and social change are modelled on reality. In this modelling, the mutual relations of religion with social change basically occur in two types. The first is the situation in which religion takes an effective or active position in the relations between religion and social change; The second is the status of the relationship between social change and religion in

1 Ejder Okumuş, "Hz. Muhammed ve Toplumsal Değişim", *Yeni Bir Toplum İnşası*, ed. Adnan Demircan (İstanbul: Siyer Publications, 2015), 9-10 etc.

2 Ejder Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*, 7th edition (İstanbul: İnsan Yay., 2020); Ejder Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*, 5th edition (İstanbul: İnsan Yay., 2015); Okumuş, "Hz. Muhammed ve Toplumsal Değişim", 99-116; Ejder Okumuş, *Dinin Meşrulaştırma Gücü* (Ark Kitaplar: İstanbul, 2005).

3 Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*.

which religion is affected or social change is more effective against religion. The situation in which religion takes an active position in the mutual relations between religion and social change occurs in three different types of reality: (1) the relationship between religion and social change in which religion is a factor that prevents or slows down change; (2) the form of the religion-social change relationship where it is a supportive or reinforcing factor for change; and (3) the form of the religion-social change relationship in which religion takes its position as the main factor in change. *The situation of social change-religion relationship in which religion is affected or social change is more effective against religion* can likewise be considered in three types: (1) the form of the relationship between religion and social change in which social change is a negative or a hindrance to religion; (2) the form of religion-social change relationship where change supports or reinforces religion, that is, it has a positive effect on religion and (3) occur change in religion itself with change.

It is useful to mention the following in the introduction: This study aims to examine the social change dimension of the religion of Islam, to present a perspective and to make a model. Therefore, some basic issues are pointed out under each title below; it is beyond the limits of this study to go into details and to cover each topic broadly.

1. Social Change, Revelation (wahy) and Prophethood (nubuwwah)

1.1. Religion and Social Change in General

First of all, change, in general, refers to the alteration that occurs in the current situation. Change is a law, destiny and tradition of life. Because over time, everything gets its share of change and becomes altered. Therefore, there is a feeling that everything has changed over time in man. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus was saying that no man ever steps in the same river twice and that everything changes all the time is undoubtedly a good expression of the reality of change. Considering that change has meaning in human understanding and perception, it can be said that the reality of change has also changed.

Change marks an obligatory reality also when it comes to society. Every society changes and continues to change due to its nature. Therefore, a society that does not change or in which change does not occur cannot be imagined. As Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) pointed out,⁴ change, that is, social change, which is a necessity of the nature of society and social life, is an inevitable and universal phenomenon. Undoubtedly, in order to call a change occurring in the society sociologically as social change in the technical sense, the change can be determined based on a reference point, that is, it must be indexed to a period of time; It must be uninterrupted and collective, that is, it must emerge effectively and permanently based on groups or institutions that express permanent

4 İbn Haldun, *Mukaddime*, Critical ed. Derviş el-Cüveydî, 2nd edition (Beirut: el-Mektebetu'l-Asriyye, 1996).

associations such as family, community, education, and economy. Accordingly, social change refers to the radical changes in the social relations network that constitute the structure of the society and the social institutions that determine them.⁵ While social structure marks the relative stability state that includes all institutions and values system in the society and social action and relationship patterns, change points to the alteration and transformation that occurs. This means that, in fact, social change means that the core elements of society and the principles of behaviour remain constant by looking at change, the culture and cultural values of the society are passed down from generation to generation, the society has a tradition, and thus change will take place within the tradition and based on tradition.⁶

Social change becomes a reality with some factors. Climate, time, geography, place, demography, religion, economy, ideology, power relations, opposition, competition, cooperation, conflict, peace, union and family, politics, education, migration, urbanization, culture, law, invention, discovery, industry and technology, charismatic personalities and social movements, tradition and hope are the main factors of social change that come to mind. Within the boundaries of this article, it should be stated that these factors, which will be contented with just mentioning their names, are not effective in social change independently from each other. Each factor can be related to the other in various ways. Sometimes, another factor can be behind a social change factor. For example, there may be economic factors behind the conflict factor, and belief, understanding, or mentality may also be behind economic factors. Besides, many of these factors can be factors in social change by interacting with each other.⁷

After an overview of social change, we can now move on to religion and the relations between religion and social change. At this point, it can be stated that religion, like social change, is the social destiny of people. Considering that religion, which offers people a world of belief and a lifestyle, is a powerful system that regulates social life, it can be said that it is more effective in people's fate than social change. In this context, it can be argued that human history is also an adventure of religious history or religious events. Indeed, religion emerges as a universal dimension of human societies. Religious beliefs are the most fundamental or influential factors of human destiny.⁸

Religion affects people in all aspects of social life. İ'tiqād (belief), righteous deeds, experimental, intellectual, scientific and moral principles in religions

5 Tom B. Bottomore, *Toplumbilim*, trans. Ünsal Oskay, 2nd edition (İstanbul: Beta Yay., 1984), 313.

6 Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*, 21-22.

7 See for detailed information about Social change factors Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*, 26-35.

8 See Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, 2nd edition (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), 41-49, 51 etc.; E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 29-83; David Hume, *Din Üstüne*, trans. Mete Tunçay (Ankara: KBY. 1979), 5-6; Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (ABD: A Mentor Book, 1964), 182; Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Çağdaş Sosyoloji Kuramları*, trans. M. M. Raşit Öymen (Ankara: KBY., 1994), 2: 185 etc.; Joachim Wach, *Din Sosyolojisine Giriş*, trans. Battal İnandı (Ankara: Ankara Üniversite İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1987), 17-30.

strongly influence the social actions of people and thus play an important role in determining the objective structure of the social system and order.⁹ As far as it is understood, religion is a very powerful phenomenon in the social dimension. Religion has essential dimensions inherently in social reality such as legitimizing,¹⁰ mentality acquisition,¹¹ reconciliation, integration,¹² conflict, fragmentation,¹³ organization, structuring and regulation,¹⁴ socialization and social control,¹⁵ gaining identity,¹⁶ preserving and transmitting culture value, setting and providing a hierarchy of values and being an intermediary. It functions very importantly in society, depending on these dimensions.¹⁷

Religion, which has many dimensions in social life and has many functions connected with these dimensions, enters into various and complex relationships and interactions with social change. First of all, changes in society's religious dimension bring about radical changes in society's norms, beliefs, and lifestyles.¹⁸ Undoubtedly, social change also leads to significant changes in religion and the lives of believers. When we look at the relations of religion with the social change from the perspective of typification and analytical, it is seen that these relations have an interactional and dialectical feature, reciprocity. It can be argued that the mutual relations between religion

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- 9 Joachim Wach, *Din Sosyolojisi*, trans. Ünver Günay (İstanbul: İFAV Yayınları, 1995), 61; Bertrand Russel, *Din İle Bilim*, trans. Akşit Göktürk, 6th edition (İstanbul: Say Yayınları, 1994), 12; Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 27-143 etc.
- 10 See J. L. Adams-T. Mikelson, "Legitimation", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 3: 499-509; Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*; Ejder Okumuş, *Dinin Meşrulaştırma Gücü*; H. Paul Chalfant-Robert E. Beckley-C. Eddie Palmer, *Religion In Contemporary Society*, 2nd edition (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1987); Ernest Gellner, *The Devil in Modern Philosophy* (London - Boston: Routledge - Kegan Paul, 1974), 91, 94, 97, 102, vd.; Peter L. Berger Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1967), 111 etc.
- 11 See . Max Weber, *Protestan Ahlakı ve Kapitalizmin Ruhu*, trans. Zeynep Aruoba (İstanbul: Hil Yayınları, 1985); Sabri F. Ülgener, *İktisadî Çözülmenin Ahlak ve Zihniyet Dünyası*, 2nd edition (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1981); Sabri F. Ülgener, *Zihniyet ve Din, İslâm, Tasavvuf ve Çözülme Devri İktisat Ahlakı* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 1981); Sabri F. Ülgener, *Zihniyet, Aydınlar ve İzmler* (Ankara: Mayaş Yayınları, 1983); Şerif Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji*, 5th edition (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1992); Hans Freyer, *Din Sosyolojisi* (Ankara: AÜİF Yayınları, 1964), 71.
- 12 Irving M. Zeitlin, *Ideology and The Development of Sociological Theory* (EnglewoodCliffs, New Jersey: PrenticeHall, Inc., n.d.), 234; İbn Haldun, *Mukaddime*, 146-148 etc.
- 13 See Wach, *Din Sosyolojisi*, 316-319.
- 14 Peter L. Berger, "Dini Kurumlar", *Toplumbilimi Yazıları*, trans. Adil Çiftçi (İzmir: Anadolu Publications, 1999), 87.
- 15 M. McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, 2nd edition (California: WadsWordth Publishing Company, 1987), 195- 196; Berger, "Dini Kurumlar", 85-86; Bryan Turner, "Confession and Social Structure", *Annual Review of the Social Sciences of Religion*, 1, (1977): 29-58.
- 16 See Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York, Evanston, London: Harper-Row, Publishers, 1969), 23-41 etc.; Joan Stambaugh, "Introduction", *Identity and Difference* (New York, Evanston, London: Harper-Row, Publishers, 1969), 7-18; Peter J. Burke "Identity Processes and Social Stres", *American Sociological Review*, 56/6 (1991): 836-850.
- 17 See for detailed information about the Social Dimensions and Functions of Religion Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*.
- 18 Günter Kehrer, "Din Sosyolojisi", *Din Sosyolojisi*, comp. Yasin Aktay-M. Emin Köktaş, 2nd edition, (Ankara: Vadi Publications, 1998), 100-101.

and social change in the framework of interactional characteristics basically acquire two types of reality, as stated in the introduction. The first of these is the type of religion-social change relationship in which religion acts as a factor; the second is the type of social change-religion relationship that religion is affected by.

What is meant by the relationship between religion and social change in which religion is effective is the situations where religion is slowing, reinforcing and the main factor according to social change. In all these three types, religion is an influential phenomenon in the realization, direction and speed of social change. Slowing down of the religion in the Middle Ages of the West in thought, science, technology, forms of social relations, economics, politics etc. and taking a negative, limiting, preventing or slowing role to the new approaches and the reality of change, can be given as an example. The Reform movement of the Protestant interpretation of Christianity can be given an example in the relationship between religion and social change, in which religion is reinforcing. From a Weberian perspective, Protestantism's role in the emergence of modern Western capitalism can be given as an example of the form of relationship in which religion is the main factor of social change.

The social change-religion relationship in which religion is affected by the social change-religion relationship is the situations in which social change is preventing or slowing down, supportive and main factor according to religion. The situation in which change is the main factor can be considered as the situation in which religion changes itself together with social change. It is possible to give examples of the situations in which modernity makes secularization strong against religion, whether it is preventing or slowing change. As an example of situations where change is supportive of religion, modernization and technological development may lead to a tendency towards religion, or some problems brought by modernization and secularization increase the tendency towards religion. The changes that Christianity made in the face of the new situations brought by modernity can be given as an example of the change of religion itself in the face of the reality of change.

It should be noted that all these situations of religion-social change relations can be observed in the example of the Islamic religion in history and today. This is what has been attempted to be addressed throughout this article.

1.2. An Overview of Wahy and Nubuwwah in Social Change

Wahy and nubuwwah show itself both as the factor of social change and by giving the believers the horizon and direction of change, by defining change, drawing the framework of change, setting the principles of change and having a voice in the reality of change which is the destiny of social life.

Wahy aims to change the life of society from beliefs and thoughts to behaviours in order to repair, improve, restore or correct the existing social structure and system. The prophets address social actors within the framework of the orders and prohibitions, halal and harams given in wahy. It tries to change, re-establish or build the belief and mentality of the society, its cultural structure, understanding, language, institutions, moral structure, structure,

organization and system, network of relations, time, family, education, politics, economy and legal order as desired by wahy.

The prophets who undertook the duty of prophethood and wahy in the individual and society aims to establish the right, justice, order, peace, honesty, trust and goodness, the belief of tawhid and behaviours related to it instead of the beliefs and behaviours of shirk and bad deeds such as superstition, unbelief, cruelty, chaos, corruption, defeatism and falsehood. Prophets strive to achieve this goal. As can be understood within the scope of this purpose, prophets aim for social change. Based on wahy, prophets provide an environment suitable for the use of free will required for a new order in society. The prophets provide the necessary grounds with the line of tawhid they put forward for individuals and society as a whole to think freely about what is and will happen, to accept or reject shirk and tawhid, and to express their will freely. This is already a tremendous social change project.

It is possible to see clearly the issues stated in the context of wahy and prophecy in religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in their holy books and prophets. The aim in the Torah, the Bible and the Quran and in all prophets, especially Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (pbuh), is to make radical and lasting changes. Peace will be built in the society with the desired order, structure and system through the changes to be realized in social life.

This purpose continues in wahy even after the life of the prophets. The system of religious beliefs and practices revealed through wahy is tried to be preserved in the society by those who believe in wahy. Therefore, the aim is to realize a social change that will enable people to live in a new social order in religions based on wahy and, of course, in all religions. In the example of the religion of Islam, after the death of Muhammad (pbuh), Muslims try to establish the belief of tawhid and the Islamic life system in the society, based on the wahy of the Quran and the Sunnah of Muhammad (pbuh) and therefore to make a change in the society, to protect that situation if the society is in the direction they try to make and follow change strategies suitable for it.

2. Islam's Language of Social Change

2.1. Basic Points of Approach to Social Change

There are some basic points in the approach to the phenomenon of social change in Islam. At this point, it should be emphasized that Islam, as a religion, has a unique language and a set of concepts along with its basic sources, especially the Quran. It is important to try to understand the Islamic religion's approach to the phenomenon of social change on this basis.

Within the framework of understanding and explaining the subject of social change, for example, how human beings are handled in Islam as an individual and a society comes to us as a very important issue. It is useful to make the following determination in the approach of the holy book of Muslims, the Quran, to social change: The Quran asks people to live within the framework of a change that will nourish and strengthen them instead of allowing for a change that will lose nature, creation, and essence. If this happens, it guarantees that the way for Muslims will be cleared, and they win in

the world and in the hereafter. As a matter of fact, the issue of social change in the Quran is tried to be understood in general in this article.

At this point, it should be emphasized that the Quran deals with the human, individual, society, social events, the phenomenon of social change, the development, growth, regression and collapse of societies and their reasons with its specific terminology and expression, as it can be easily understood when read. Consequently, in order to understand the Quran's view of society and social events, the terminology and its way of expressing this terminology should be analyzed well.

Another important point is that the Quran mentions the individual, the life and death of the individual on the one hand, and a common past, a common consciousness, understanding and attitude, a common term and destiny for societies on the other hand. There are a collective life and death of societies in this world and a deed book on the Qiyamah day.¹⁹ As far as it is understood, the Quran confirms that there is a social phenomenon that is formed by the coming together of individuals different from the individual but has different integrity and existence. The Qur'an accepts a phenomenon called society, treats people in terms of social dimension and holds them responsible. However, when the verses of the Quran are considered as a whole, it is understood that society is not ascribed a meaning independent of the individual but as a union composed of individuals. Of course, there is a reality called society, there is such a thing as social spirit and consciousness, but within this reality, the reality of the individual does not disappear.²⁰

One of the main points of approach to social change in Islam is the principle and belief of tawhid. Everything in Islam and in Muslims' beliefs and deeds is based on tawhid. Accordingly, the book of revelation, the Quran, and the Sunnah, lifestyle, way of living of Islam of Muhammad (pbuh) are two basic sources from which the basic criteria of Muslims' approach to change as well as everything else. How to approach people in individual and social change projects and efforts is determined based on these basic resources. For example, to value people, to treat people softly, to approach with the right personality, to be confident in society, to speak and act in a gentle, nice, civilized style, to be an exemplary person, to be nice family members, spouses, children, parents, relatives, neighbours, in short, to be nice everyone, being straightforward and honest are indispensable criteria of Islam's language and approach to social change. These criteria are based on the Quran and the Islamic language and lifestyle of the last Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), who is accepted as the living Quran.

One of the most important points in Islam's approach to social change is that Muslims must act with righteous deeds in all their efforts, take Allah's sake as the basis and strive for i'la-i kalimatullah. For this purpose, Muslims implement the principle of al-amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-n-nahy 'ani-l-munkar which is

19 See al-A'raf 7/34; Yūnus 10/49; Ibrahim 14/10; al-Hijr 15/5; al-Isrā' 17/71 al-Mu'minūn 23/43; al-Nahl 16/61, al-Jāthiya 45/28 etc.

20 See for more information; Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din; Okumuş, Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*, 66-68 etc.

to encourage good and to forbid evil, and believe in Allah, in society, inter-communal and in international relations. They preach Islam and invite people to the belief of tawhid and the lifestyle of Islam. They engage in jihad in all aspects of life from the inner world to the outer world, based on the principles and practices determined by the Qur'an and Sunnah of Islam and demonstrated by the good examples of Muslims in history and now.

According to what is understood from the basic sources and historical background of Islam, one of the main points of approach in social change is to keep the dimensions of renewal, revival, tajdid and ijihad alive with the change of time and the emergence of new situations. According to this, Muslims should try to produce their own time and therefore make their own change plans and try to live and keep Islam alive and dynamically according to the conditions of the day. In short, Muslims should keep the institution of tajdîd and revival alive.

In addition to these, issues such as institutionalization, liberty, freedom, peace, civilization, making the consciousness of brotherhood and unity prevailing in society, taking peace as a basis in society and international relations, but attacking Islam and Muslims, resorting to war when necessary in case of preventing the existence of Islam are some of the fundamental points in Islam's approach to social change.

Considering all these and similar issues, it can be said that in the approach of the religion of Islam to social change, it is essential that Muslims make efforts to gain people and establish a solid social system in accordance with the measures determined by verses and as Muhammad (pbuh) showed. In this essential aspect, Muslims should make a social change plan in order to create the society in question, and they should fight for the improvement of society and not go in a bad direction.

2.2. Holistic Approach to Social Change Concepts

In order to understand social change in the religion of Islam, it is necessary to focus on the concepts of social change in an integrity manner and a holistic approach. In this context, it is important to grasp the concepts of society and their logic. In this respect, the Quran depicts a social world around those concepts by putting a series of social concepts from the concept of family to the concept of the ummah, as the basic unit of society, and demands the establishment of a unique society. In this context, apart from the family and the ummah, concepts²¹ such as sha'b, qawm, qabila, tribe, ahl-i book, shirzimā, shia,

21 See for the concept of Ahl about the Qur'anic uses of these concepts Surah al-Baqara 2/105, 109, 230, 232, 235; Āl 'Imrān 3/64, 65, 69, 121 etc.; al-Isrā' 17/32; al-Tawba 9/101, 120; al-Nūr 24/2, 3, 32; Yūsuf 12/25, 109; Tā Hā 20/132 etc.; al-Nisā' 4/20, 22, 25, 127, 58; al-Fath 48/11, 12, 26 etc.; Hūd 11/40, 45, 46, 83; Hijr 15/65; al-Mu'minūn 23/27; al-Zumar 39/15; al-Taḥrīm 66/6 etc.; al-Furqān 25/68; al-Mumtaḥina 60/12 etc. See. Ebû Hilâl el-Askerî, *Kitâbu'l- Furûk* (Trablus 1994), 309. Concepts for qawm Hūd 11/27, 28, 29, 30, 36, 38, 50, 61, 63 etc.; al-A'râf 7/47, 109, 147; al-Dukhān 44/37; Qaf 50/14; Yūsuf 12/9; al-Şāffāt 37/30; al-Tawba 9/11, 96. See for explanations and comments on the concept; Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili* (İstanbul Eser Neşriyat, 1982), 6: 4468-4469; er-Rağb el-İsfehâni, *Müfredâtü Elfazî'l-Kur'an* (Dimişik: Daru'l-Kalem, 1992), 693. For Ummah concept see Hūd 11/8; Yūsuf

raht, shube, qabîl, taifah, hizb, fawc, hashr, descendants, fâsil, kebkebe, qit'a, âl , human, ma'sher, khulefâ, ashîr, nisâ, qarya, qârn, companions, mankind, legion, community, medina, sulta, fie, group, usbe, believer, unbeliever, polytheist, hypocrite, fâsiq, mustazaf, mustaqbir, mālâ , mufrad are mentioned as social groups and categories in Quran and hadiths.

When the verses are examined in integrity regarding the meaning content of these concepts, it is seen that the family is the first and most important social union and institution according to the Quran. The prohibition of adultery, ordering marriage, and many regulations regarding marriage²² show the importance given by the Qur'an to the family. Various social groups and society have emerged from the order of the family, which is the first and most important social union, in different ways. Actually, this process is universal; details can change; The fact that the family is broad, nuclear and polygamous etc. does not change the basic nature of the society. The family is followed by morality, its normalized form, law, economy, education, and finally, politics.²³ The concept of family as a social category is followed by the above-mentioned concepts and other concepts.

2.2.1. Tawhid, Islam and Faith

The basic starting point in social change in Islam is the belief in tawhid. Muslims strive to accommodate the belief of tawhid and its requirements against shirk, oppression, injustice and bad deeds in social life. In their efforts to realize social change, they act in accordance with the requirements of the belief of tawhid. At this point, the two most important dimensions manifest themselves with the concepts of Islam and Faith, and the concepts of Muslim and Mu'min depending on those two. Based on the Qur'an, Sunnah and hadiths, it can be said that Islam refers to a way of life based on safe, reliable and peaceful life of people who adopt it as a religion and become Muslims in their relations with itself and its environment in accordance with the principles that are determined by submission to Allah, determined by wahy and which are most clearly shown by the leadership and Sunnah of Muhammad (pbuh). Muslim is a person who accepts the religion of Islam and surrenders to Allah and takes peace in his social life on the basis of the principles of tawhid. Faith means believing in the existence and oneness of Allah in a firm and satisfied manner and acting with faith in social life, self-confidence and confidence in oneself and its environment. A believer is a person who firmly believes in the existence and oneness of Allah and approaches himself and his environment with self-confidence and as a reliable personality with faith in social life. Muslims become subjects on the basis of tawhid, Islam and Faith with their content of meanings in social change and play a correct, dynamic and effective role on the social scene.

12/45; al- Naḥl, 16/120; al-Zukhruf 43/22, 23; al-An'âm 6/38; al-Baqara 2/128,143; Āl 'Imrân 3/104 ; al-Qaşaş 28/23.

22 al-İsrâ' 17/32; al- Nûr 24/2, 3, 32; al- Furqân 25/68; al-Mumtaḥina 60/12 etc.

23 See Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*.

2.2.2. Sunnatullah and Other Concepts

Considering the dictionary meanings²⁴ of the word Sunnah, which is the plural of sunan, and the verses in which it is used, it can be seen that the words sunnatullah and sunanullah in the Quran have meanings such as the way of behaviour followed by Allah, the law of Allah, the decree and practice of Allah regarding the change of societies.²⁵ When the verses are considered together with their contexts, it can be said that the concepts such as kalimât - kalimâtullah, kalima-kalimaturabbiq, kalimatu'l-ahzab, kalimatu'l-fasl, kalamullah,²⁶ kavî,²⁷ masal-masalu'l-awwaleen- masulat,²⁸ ayyam-ayyâmullah²⁹ are in a close relationship with the sunnatullah.

When the subject is handled and understood within the scope of the verses of the Qur'an and the meaning of Sunnah, it is understood that the concept of Sunnah has a historical and sociological context, and therefore, the positive or negative changes of societies are implicit in the concept of sunnatullah.³⁰ One of the most important reasons why Allah's social rules and laws are mentioned in the Quran is to make people learn these rules and laws and learn from the destruction of past societies. In addition, it is understood from the verses that the rules and laws of Allah are universal and they encompass all time and places and apply to all human societies without making the distinction between unbelievers and believers.³¹ In this case, it is unthinkable to have a change and transformation in the Sunnah of Allah.³²

The concept of death is also important in the Quran to understand the language of change of Islam. In some verses³³ of the Quran, the term 'death'(a fixed period)³⁴ for societies or civilizations is mentioned with the compound

24 İbn Manzur, *Lisanü'l-Arab* (Beirut: Daru Sâdir, 1990), 12: 220-229; el-İsfehânî, *Müfredâtü Elfazi'l-Kur'an*, 429; M. Reşid Rıza, *Tefsiru'l-Kur'ani'l-Hakîm (el-Menâr)*, 2nd edition (Beirut: Daru'l-Ma'rife, 1973), 4: 140.

25 Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 6: 3930, 4000; 5: 3045; Fazlur Rahman, *Quran with Main Subjects*, trans. Alpaslan Açıkgenç (Ankara: Fecr Yay., 1987), 124-125; İbrahim b. Ali el-Vezir, *Dirâseli's-Süneni'l-İlahiyye've'l-Müslimü'l-Muasır*, 4th edition (Kahire: Daru's-Şuruk, 1989), 7-12; Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*; Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*.

26 al-An'am 6/34, 115; Yûnus 10/64, 82; al-Kahf 18/27 (kalimât-kalimâtullah); al-A'râf 7/137; Yûnus 10/19, 33, 96; Hüd 11/110; Tâ Hâ 20/129; Fuşşilat 41/45; al-Shûrâ 42/14 (kalima-kalimaturabbiq); al-Zumar 39/19, 71 (kalimatu'l-ahzab); al-Shûrâ 42/21 (kalimatu'l-fasl); al-Fath 48/15 (kalamullah).

27 Hüd 11/40; al-İsrâ' 17/16; al-Naml 27/85; al-Mu'minûn 23/ 27; al-Qaşaş 28/63

28 al-Zukhruf 43/8, 56; al-Ra'd 13/6. See for comment, İbn Kesir, *Tefsiru'l-Kur'ani'l-Azim* (İstanbul: Daru'l-Kahraman, 1984), 7: 206; Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 4: 2961; 6: 4266.

29 Âl 'İmrân 3/140-141; Yûnus 10/102; al-Jâthiya 45/14.

30 al-Nisâ' 4/6; Yûnus 10/19, 64; Âl 'İmrân 3/137; al-Anfâl 8/38.

31 al-Nisâ' 4/26; Âl 'İmrân 3/137; al-An'am 6/11; al-Hijr 15/13; al-Nahl 16/36; al-Naml 27/69; al-Rûm 30/42 etc. See regarding the subject, Cevdet Said, *Bireysel ve Toplumsal Değişmenin Yasaları*, trans. İlhan Kutluer (İstanbul: İnsan Yay., 1986), 186.

32 See al-Fath 48/23; Fâtîr 35/43; Âl 'İmrân 3/137; al-An'am 6/34, 115; al-Anfâl 8/38; Yûnus 10/64; al-Hijr 15/13; al-İsrâ' 17/77; al-Ahzâb 33/62; Ghafir 40/85; al-Fath 48/23

33 al-A'râf 7/34. See also; Yûnus 10/49; al-Hijr 15/4-5; al-Mu'minun 23/43 etc. See for the interpretation of the verses Rıza, *Tefsiru'l-Kur'ani'l-Hakîm*, 8: 402-403; Fahru'd-Din er-Râzî, *Mefâtihu'l-Gayb*, İstanbul: Daru't-Tabatî'l-Âmire, 1307, 4: 298; Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 4: 2155-2156.

34 For the meaning of the word Death, See el-İsfehânî, *Müfredâtü Elfazi'l-Kur'an*, 65.

term³⁵ 'ajal al-musemma'(Until a certain time, death, as determined by Allah,). It is important to understand this issue in order to understand the place of the human will with the practice of Sunnatullah. According to the view adopted by Ibn Abbas (D. 687) and many of the commentators, the social dimension of death indicated in the verses means the time of punishment and destruction not in the sense of life like that of individuals in the natural contexts of the verses.³⁶ The law of "Every ummah has a time of death" does not prevent an ummah whose individuals do righteous deeds to be permanent until the end of the world.³⁷ This provision does not mean the immediate destruction of a society whose turn has come at the end of a time limited in years, months and days. However, this indicates that there is a moral limit to the possibilities given to each society to show its power as a respected society. This limit is determined by the ratio of good deeds and bad deeds. Allah tolerates a community until their good deeds fall to a lower level than their bad deeds. But when that limit is exceeded, no time will be given to that sinful and wicked people.³⁸ Thus, it is understood that the term death in the verses means temporary time. In this case, Allah gives a certain time limit to every nation and community that denies the prophets. If the society does not change for the better within this deadline, Allah destroys that society. Therefore, understanding the verse ³⁹"We have never destroyed any society without a book known to it" ⁴⁰ will be an important factor in the same direction in reaching what the text of the Quran means.⁴¹

As can be understood, according to Islam, there is Allah behind every event, and all events and phenomena achieve reality within the will of Allah, but it is the people and societies who are responsible for social events, social change and collapse⁴². At this point, the will and freedom of people are not restricted. For, Allah clearly states in the Quran that He gives man strong will and freedom.⁴³ In order to understand the issues related to social change in Islam, it is necessary to look at other important concepts along with sunnatullah and death and understand them. In this context, concepts such as time,⁴⁴ costs, tebdil, tabaddul and istibdāl,⁴⁵ tahwil(change)⁴⁶; jédid (new),

35 al-Nahl 16/ 61; Tā Hā 20/129; al-ʿAnkabūt 29/53; Fāṭir 35/ 45; al-Shūrā 42/14 etc.

36 Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 4: 2155-2156.

37 Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili*, 4: 2155-2156; Ebu'l-A'la el-Mevdûdî, *Tefhimu'l-Kur'an*, trans. M. Han Kayani et al. (İstanbul: İnsan Yay., 1986) 2: 509.

38 el-Mevdûdî, *Tefhimu'l-Kur'an*, 2: 29.

39 F.Râzî, *Mefâtihu'l-Gayb*, 4: 298.

40 al-Hijr 15/4. See also Hud 11/110; al-Isrâ' 17/58; al-Kahf 18/58,59; al-Hajj 22/47; Fussilat 41/45 etc.

41 Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*.

42 See Âl 'Imrân 3/165; Yûnus 10/13; Hud 11/101,117etc.

43 See al-Baqara 2/81; al-Anfâl 8/53; al-Ra'd, 13/11, 39; al-Nahl 16/112; al-Isrâ' 17/15, 18-20; al-Kahf 18/29; al-ʿAnkabût 29/40; al-Rûm 30/41; Fāṭir 35/43; Fuṣṣilat 41/46; al-Shūrā 42/48; al-Jāthiya 45/15; al-Najm 53/38-39 etc. See regarding the subject, Muhammed Aziz el-Habbabi, *eş-Şahsâniyyetü'l-İslamiyye*, 2nd edition (Kahire: Daru'l-Mearif, n.d.), 128-140.

44 al-ʿAşr 103/1-3.

45 al-Nisâ' 4/2, 20, 56; al-Ahzâb 33/23, 52; al-Taḥrîm 66/5; al-Baqara 2/59, 61, 108, 181, 211; İbrâhîm 14/28; al-A'râf 7/95, 162; al-Furqân 25/70; al-Naml 27/11; al-Qalam 68/32; Yunus 10/15, 64; al-Fath 48/15, 23; Ghafir 40/26; al-Nahl 16/101; al-Kahf 18/50, 81; al-Nûr 24/55;

tajdîd(renewal) and tajaddud(innovation)⁴⁷; revolution⁴⁸; bi'sat; direction; stability; reconstruction; eyyâmullah, mudâvele and circle; irtidâd (apostasy) and destruction can be mentioned. If these concepts are handled in integrity, the social change approach of Islam can be understood correctly.⁴⁹

2.2.3. Human Will in Social Change in the Quran

According to the Qur'an, God has set a number of rules, laws or provisions that govern the rise, fall and decline of societies with the principles of change.⁵⁰ However, this does not mean that social and historical rules or laws are independent of human consciousness and will. Of course, people cannot create and abolish laws.⁵¹ But they can create or abolish the conditions necessary for them to be implemented. As a matter of fact, the important point that the Quran emphasizes at this point is the religious, moral and social factors that result in the collapse of the corrupt society and cause the degradation of the sources of human actions for human purposes.⁵²

If it is accepted that the strict laws of causality are dominant in history, the necessity arises to accept that all events that occur are spontaneous and inevitable, that they occurred outside of the human will. In this case, events are developing in an absolute deterministic sense. This means that nobody will have any responsibility. However, the Quran has its own understanding of history. The Qur'an accepts neither historical determinism nor organismist and evolutionist conceptions of history. Because the Qur'an, while talking about the existence of an absolute order in the universe, on the other hand, states that this order is not an absolute mechanism. The universe operates according to certain laws, but it is never independent of Allah; Allah is capable of all things; He has the power to break the existing order whenever he wishes.⁵³ The real reason behind every event is Allah in the causality accepted by the Qur'an. However, this does not mean that human will and freedom are out of the question in the functioning of history and the life of societies. First of all, the certainty and inevitability of the divine sunnahs do not have to condemn man to a certain life by force and pressure. On the contrary, these sunnahs confront man with the definite and inevitable consequences of the lifestyle he chooses of his own will.⁵⁴ In other words, in the understanding of the Qur'an about

Qâf 50/29; al-Tawba 9/39; Muhammad 47/38; al-Wâqî'a 56/61; al-Ma'ârij 70/40-41; al-Insân 76/28; al-Wâqî'a 56/61.

46 al-Isrâ' 17/56, 77; Fâṭir 35/43.

47 Ebû Davud, *Sünen*, Melâhim 1.

48 al-Shu'arâ' 26/227; al-Baqara 2/143; Âl 'Imrân 3/127, 144, 174; al-Mâ'ida 5/21; al-A'râf 7/119, 125; al-'Ankabût 29/21 etc.

49 See for detailed information about these concepts, Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*.

50 Rahman, *Ana Konularıyla Kur'an*, 138.

51 Rahman, *Ana Konularıyla Kur'an*, 124-125.

52 Mazhuriddin Siddiki, *Kur'an'da Tarih Kavramı*, trans. Süleyman Kalkan (İstanbul: Pınar Yay., 1982), 195, 221.

53 al-Mâ'ida 5/17; al-An'âm 6/133; al-Furqân 25/45-46; al-Mulk 67/16-18.

54 Muhammed Kutup, *Çağdaş Fikir Akımları*, c.2, trans. M. Beşir Eryarsoy, 3rd edition (İstanbul: İşaret Yay., 1993), 241-242; Roger Garaudy, *20. Yüzyıl Biyografisi*, trans. Ahmet Zeki Ünal (Ankara Fecr Yay., 1989), 264; Muhammed el-Behiy, *İnanç ve Amelde Kur'anî Kavramlar*, trans. Ali Turgut, 2nd edition, (İstanbul: Yöneliş Yay., 1988), 155-167.

sunnatullah as a deterministic law, it can be said that there is the principle that the bad is good, the wrong is the right, the harmful is not permanent⁵⁵.

Although the Quran not only draws attention to the deterministic relations between events in history but also supports this determination with the principle of Sunnah's immutability, it does not include a predetermined course of events for the flow of events. The point that the Quran supports; when the conditions necessary for a certain social change are established, that is, when people act with their own will and ensure the realization of these conditions, the result of this formation is that the change will occur when Allah wills. However, it can be understood from the verses that social changes are not predetermined because the agent of the reasons determining the change is a society consisting of individuals with free will. As a matter of fact, many of the historical and social rules stated in the Quran are presented as conditional propositions. There are correlations in these conditional propositions that link two social or historical events. Therefore, it can be said that when the first event, the condition is fulfilled; the second event, that is the result will also occur. At this point, the concept of taghyīr can be remembered. In verses about taghyīr⁵⁶, will and responsibility are given to man in changes.

3. Factors of Social Change in Islam

In Islam, in addition to social change factors, there are also important factors that affect these factors of change. In the religion of Islam, Muslims are asked to be effective in realizing change in the society with these factors. In this context, first of all it is necessary to mention the Quran and Muhammad (pbuh). Like all their behaviours, Muslims act on the basis of the Quran and the Sunnah of Muhammad (pbuh) in social change. Muslims' belief in the Quran and the Prophet is the most fundamental factor in developing a change project in the society. The most fundamental point for Muslims is to spread the principles and truths determined in the Quran in line with those principles and truths and to try to establish Islam in the society as shown by Muhammad (pbuh).

Another factor of change in Islam is the value given to human beings. The value of man in Islam is enormous. Again, in the Islamic sense, faith and, depending on it, good deeds and good moral character are among the most important factors in social change. It is of vital importance for Muslims to have faith, righteous deeds, and good moral character and to be among people with this equipment in realizing change. In Islam, in addition to these, principles and behaviours such as patience, persistence, stability, direction, effort, tabligh, amr bi'l-ma'ruf and nehy ani'l-münker, right, law, openness to change, prayer, tawba, and hijrah are also very effective factors in social change.

55 al-Isrā' 17/81; al-Ra'd 13/17.

56 al-Ra'd 13/11; al-Jinn 72/16; al-Anfāl 8/38, 53; al-Isrā' 17/16 etc.; al-Nisā' 4/119.

4. The Quran and Prophet in Social Change

4.1. The Quran in Social Change

The Holy Book of Muslims, the Quran, which is the primary source of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, is perhaps the most motivating and influencing book in the quantitative and qualitative levels of individuals and societies in human history. This fact is also valid at the point of social change. The Qur'an is the first-degree effective scripture in the direction of the belief of tawhid which Muslims are the subject, spreading the issues to the world depending on it and realizing the social change that Islam wants.

There is no doubt that the Quran does not have a uniform effect on change. According to the attitude of the people, it either becomes the main factor of social change, it becomes a factor that supports social change, it becomes a factor that does not support the change, or it becomes a factor that adjusts itself according to social change. It is possible to consider these four types separately.

4.1.1. The Quran as the Main Factor of Social Change

The Quran clearly declares, in its integrity of its wording and meaning, that it annulled the shirk order before it, many laws that were valid in Judaism and Christianity, halal and haram, replaced the order of tawhid and a new legal regulation based on it.

Undoubtedly, the Quran is a book that was sent down to the last Islamic Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Under the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the leadership of his change, he tried to convey Islam in Mecca with the mission of prophethood, to spread it in the society, to establish a new social order with the Quran's message of change, taking its legitimacy from the Quran. The Prophet (pbuh) and a relatively small number of people who believed in him (companions) wanted to make a change in the society in line with the belief of tawhid based on believing in the Quran. However, this was not possible initially in Mecca. For this reason, Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions preferred to emigrate to Madīnah, to settle there as a homeland and to implement their change projects there. Here, the Quran played a role as the main factor in the practice of change and the establishment of a new social order by the Prophet (pbuh) and those who believed in him.

The Quran is the main factor in the change efforts of not only the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions but all Muslims up to now.

4.1.2. The Quran as a Factor Supporting Social Change

As the main factor, the Quran sometimes reinforces and supports the social change that occurs with the intervention of different factors. For example, it supports the change efforts of Muslim women in order to increase their social status more in Madīnah's Islamic society. Similarly, the Quran supports replacing the slavery system with a humane, fair and equitable social order.

4.1.3. The Quran as a Factor That Does Not Support Social Change

The Quran, the primary source and element of belief of Muslims, may be a factor that does not support existing social change with its messages, orders and prohibitions. One of the most obvious examples of this is that it looks negatively, does not support, and clearly opposes the change in the direction of social collapse, which the verses are described and put forward with the concept such as destruction. Similarly, it does not support going back, the change in the direction of apostasy, and gives the necessary messages to prevent such a negative change. Again, it does not support and it tries to prevent⁵⁷ the change in the direction of the alienation of society, meshing, losing its own identity and becoming apes, pigs (becoming malicious).

4.1.4. The Quran as a Source Book Considering Social Change

The Quran is a book that takes change into consideration, regardless of what happens. It always takes into account change in its being the main factor of change itself, in supporting it and not supporting it on the contrary. As a book of wahy, the Quran is not a book that changes and is affected by change in terms of text according to the beliefs of Muslims; but it can be said that the Quran takes the change into consideration in two points: In the first, Allah, who is the source of wahy, sent down the Quran by taking into account the state of society and social change, and in the second, that Muslims understood, interpreted and implemented the verses of the Quran within their own social conditions by taking into account the social change under the leadership of experts of science or being influenced by it. This aspect is essentially a feature of the universality of the Quran. After the Prophet (pbuh), of course, the Quran will not be revealed again in words and texts; but in terms of meaning, it is a book that takes into account the change with interpretation and tafsir.

4.2. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as the Main Actor and Subject in Social Change

Muhammad (pbuh) is the main actor in the occurrence of great social, legal, political, religious, economic and cultural changes in the history of humanity with his exemplary humanitarian-prophetic model personality, model of change, man of action, and impressive guidance and leadership in his society, where he served as a prophet and became the subject. In addition, Muhammad (pbuh), as a person-Prophet whom Muslims took as his example after his death and acted according to his Sunnah, words, behaviours and decrees, has the characteristic of determining the changes that have become a reality in the past and present of Islamic societies.

Muhammad (pbuh) took very clear steps with his own humanitarian-prophetic leadership and established a new social system in the social universe he was in and made radical changes in the existing social order or structure and

57 See for detailed information, Okumuş, *Kur'an'da Toplumsal Çöküş*, 79-87 etc.

system.⁵⁸ With his original experience, the Prophet objected to the established attitude and behaviour patterns, and He(pbuh) made revolutionary changes in the social life of those who believed in him with the creativity of his new message. With the power of attraction, he exerts on people, Muhammad (pbuh) put into effect a constructive mentality in the level of people, especially his followers.

4.2.1. Muhammad (pbuh) as the Main Factor and Subject in Social Change

In this dimension, Muhammad's(pbuh) direction in social change can be examined under the third reality within the type of religion-social change relationship in which religion is a factor, namely the type of religion as the main factor of social change. The religion of Islam is the main factor of the change in the social structure that Muhammad (pbuh), as a great influencing prophet and an influential guide, has put forth during his 23 years of prophethood and the social structure he has established with his Companions in Madīnah. The period when Yathrib was transformed into the center of civilization, Madīnah, and the Islamic community was built in Madīnah, was not only a period of tabligh, but also a first founding period in which the main body and fabric of the Muslim ummah were formed.

It should be noted that the change brought about by the new religion following the Hijrah, which took place under the leadership of Muhammad (pbuh), in a way means the transition from a period that Islam and Muslims call the age of jahiliyya. On the other hand, the change brought about by Islam means the transition from the tribal order based on oral culture to the ummah structure and urban civilization based on the literary culture. Because the religion of Islam, which emerged and spread in a city atmosphere, also supported or accelerated urbanization in the places where it is located and lived.⁵⁹

The religion of Islam continued to be the main factor of social change in the period of Rashid Caliphates that emerged after Muhammad's(pbuh) death. Although there were some important internal struggles and conflicts in this period, the borders of Islamic society expanded very rapidly. Islamic societies have encountered other societies, the cultures of new social circles, whether Muslim or not. In this process, Islam showed itself as an important factor of social change for different societies.⁶⁰

4.2.2. Muhammad (pbuh) as a Subject Supporting Social Change

Muhammad (pbuh), the last Prophet of Islam and Muslims, was not the main factor in social change as a subject factor in change, but a factor that supported change along with other factors.

58 See Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: BeaconPress, 1964), 46.

59 Hasan İbrahim Hasan, *İslâm Tarihi*, trans. İ. Yiğit-S. Gümüş, (İstanbul: Kayıhan Yay., 1985), 1:228-263.

60 Okumuş, "Hz. Muhammed ve Toplumsal Değişim".

4.2.3. Muhammad (pbuh) as a Subject Who Does Not Support Social Change

Of course, Muhammad (pbuh) may not support change. The Prophet (pbuh), who is the agent and subject of change, was able to use the will to not support the change in society in various ways and with different factors.

4.2.4. Muhammad (pbuh) as a Subject Considering Social Change

We also encounter a Prophet (pbuh) who takes social change into consideration and renews his own situation accordingly. In some cases, Muhammad (pbuh) adjusted himself, guiding, leading in that plan, mainly by looking at the changes that occurred in all situations.

4.2.5. Muhammad (pbuh) as the Subject Prevented by Social Change

Muhammad (pbuh) is the subject of social change, but sometimes change can prevent or slow him down. As a matter of fact, the change in the direction of strict introversion within the framework of shirk in Mecca tried to prevent Muhammad (pbuh) and those who believed in Him. Therefore, He(pbuh) and his friends also turned to the Migration.

4.2.6. Change and Continuity in Muhammad: Changing and Unchanging

It can be said that the understanding and practice of social change that dominates the Sunnah and lifestyle of Muhammad (pbuh) is an understanding and practice of change that includes a certain continuity in itself. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of Islam's success with the Prophet (pbuh) is its compatibility with some elements of the traditions before it.

As the historian Hamidullah pointed out, the Prophet allowed the continuation of some traditional attitudes and the old customs or behaviour patterns that were previously spractised in the Muslim community, except for the issues that he deemed necessary to change or abrogate according to the basic principles of Islam. This permission applies not only to non-religious matters, such as business but also to purely religious things such as criminal laws and even Hajj. In short, all traditions and customs are welcomed with tolerance as long as they do not conflict with the Qur'an, hadiths and Sirah, which are a constant touchstone for Muslims.⁶¹ The Prophet (pbuh) made radical changes in the society, but this does not mean that he completely changed the institutions, lifestyle and mentality etc. of his society. Issues that are not regarded as contrary to Islam in law, family, commercial life and politics etc. have not been changed and they have been assumed to continue with new meanings within Islam's own universe.⁶²

4.2.7. Principles in Muhammad (pbuh)'s Model of Social Change

When looking at Muhammad (pbuh)'s model of social change as a whole, it is understood that there are some principles. Principles such as being an

61 Muhammed Hamidullah, *İslâm Peygamberi*, trans. Salih Tuğ, 5th edition (İstanbul: İrfan Yay., 1990), 898.

62 Okumuş, "Hz. Muhammed ve Toplumsal Değişim".

example, to follow the middle way, to be a mediocre ummah, to stay away from extremeness and remissness,⁶³ abiding by good moral principles; gradualism, stability and persistence, voluntary change, not persecuting, but fairness, planned change, considering social conditions, facilitation, patience, trust yourself, trust, trustworthiness and pro-peace and unity can be mentioned.⁶⁴

5. Hijrah as The Historical Event That is a Main Factor in Social Change

The Hijrah, which points to the migration of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions from Mecca to Madīnah, has a meaning far beyond being a simple event in the history of Islam and in the attempts of Muslims to establish a new world. Hijrah refers to the new world and time that Muslims have created and established with their Islamic identity. Hijrah is the name of the great change in history. Hijrah is a great incident that expresses the powerful emergence of Muslims on the stage of history as subjects, subjects of time and history. Hijrah is the event that, Muslims under the guidance of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Companions with their subjection to this guidance started the great wave of change and built a new fundamental effective period in history. In short, the Hijrah took its place in history as the main factor in the concept of social change, project and practice of Islam.

Hijrah is one of the decisive events for the Quran and the Prophet (pbuh) to appear on the scene of existence as the main factors of change. With the hijrah, Muslims have made it clear that they are the subjects of history and time and also of social change. The importance of the Hijrah in Islamic social change is really great. With the hijrah of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions to Madīnah, the social life of Madīnah went through a great change.⁶⁵

6. Muslims and Social Change

Muslims, like societies from other religions, have had a social change adventure in the historical process with the effect of the factors of social change mentioned above, but on the basis of their own structural characteristics. The same can be said about today. In this adventure, Muslims have carried out and experienced social change sometimes voluntarily and in a planned manner, sometimes in an unintentional and unplanned manner, with the intervention of various factors and events, in different times and places, from the moment when Muhammad (pbuh) first started to preach Islam as a prophet. Especially when they put forward a social life within the framework of the basic principles of the religion of Islam, according to the social circumscisions revealed by the Quran, and when they build a society with the main factor of Islam, devotion to revelation and prophetic way; It can be said that social change takes place in

63 Surah Al-Baqarah 2/41, 91, 97, 101; Surah Ali 'Imran 3/50; Surah An-Nisa 4/47; Surah Al-An'am 6/92.

64 See Okumuş, "Hz. Muhammed ve Toplumsal Değişim".

65 Baykan Sezer, *Toplum Farklılaşmaları ve Din Olayı* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yay., 1981), 57, 158.

the direction of the development of Muslims in socio-cultural, economic and political levels and international relations. In other words, when they made a change without changing their essence, degradation, alienation and going backwards without inclining to a negative change, the change occurred for Muslims in the way of development, empowerment and distribution of justice. However, in the opposite cases, that is, when there is a change in an unplanned, unintentional, surrender to the current, under the attack of other forces and societies or in a stationary structure, social change has been a negative change for Muslims. It is possible to see examples of both or more different forms of change in history and today.⁶⁶

6.1 Muslims as Subjects of Social Change

Faith in the Quran and the Prophet (pbuh) together with all the divine revelations and prophets is of great importance in the dimensions of social change of Muslims. With this faith, Muslims have tried to be a subject in social change, to make changes if necessary for their beliefs and practices, to be agents in change, if necessary to slow down, prevent or direct and manage change in different ways.

Muslims, the main factor of social change, have taken on a role as the subject of change in the social system and structure in the geography and societies they have been in many cases since the times of Muhammad (pbuh) and His Companions. While Muslims under the leadership and prophethood of the Prophet (pbuh) sometimes transform society from a city-state and tribal structure to an open and civilized social structure, from Yathrib to Madīnah, from local to universal; later, for example, after the Turks accepted Islam, they have ensured that radical changes take place in the structure of Turkish society. In the final analysis, Islam has played a fundamental role in the structural change of the religious, social, political, cultural, economic, literary and moral aspects of Arab society.⁶⁷ It is observed that Muslims continued to be the main factor of social change both within the established Muslim society and in the new Muslim sovereignty during the reign of the Rashidun Caliphates, who emerged after the death of Muhammad (pbuh) as a charismatic leader.⁶⁸

A new political process started with the Umayyad Caliphate⁶⁹ order established after the Caliphate period, that is, after the first four Rashidun Caliphates, and this process continued in the Abbasid period as well. During these periods, as Muslims became relatively more established in institutionalization and entered the process of fixation and routinization, Islam was an important factor in the growth of society and the establishment of the institutional structure with the movements of conquest.

Of course, many examples can be given to the fact that Muslims are the main factors in change with their subject identities, but this may be considered

66 See Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*.

67 See Hasan, *İslâm Tarihi*, 1: 228-263.

68 Okumuş, *Toplumsal Değişme ve Din*, 128-129.

69 See regarding the conceptualization, Ejder Okumuş, *Türkiye'nin Laikleşme Serüveninde Tanzimat*, 4th edition (İstanbul: İnsan Yay., 2018), 103-104 etc.

sufficient to understand the subject. In the last analysis, it can be said that Muslims have been able to play a role as the main factor of change in various events at different places and times, in the political, social and cultural changes of various societies and also at certain levels in places where they are not present.

It should also be noted that Muslims have been in a position to reinforce and support social change, as well as trying to slow down, prevent or direct social change in history and today. Likewise, as emphasized, they have taken a position as the main factor in change. Undoubtedly, there are cases where the change affects Muslims in various ways, prevents, negates, slows down or on the contrary, reinforces, supports, and confirms with positive contributions to Islam and Muslims. There have also been cases where change was the main factor for Muslims and the religion of Islam.

6.2 Muslims as Objects of Social Change

Based on Weber's theory of the routinization of charisma, the transformationism of Muhammad (pbuh) as a charismatic leader and the Companions, who believed in Him(pbuh), became routine a few generations after them, and a relatively tight institutionalization and traditionalization took the place of dynamism and change. This situation also led to stagnation. In the process of stagnation, there have been situations in which Muslims become passive and objects, not agents and subjects in social change. Sunnism ,in the historical practice of Islam, at least from a certain period, perhaps from the first three centuries of Islam, , on the one hand, against change and on the other hand, against the religious movements that manifested themselves in this framework, based on representing the tradition of devotion to the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). Attitudes of resistance to innovation and change have emerged from time to time and this resistance has revealed the tendency of certain social groups and actors in Islamic societies to reject everything new by stigmatizing it in the form of bid'ah from early periods. This situation seems to have led to the understanding of closing the gate of ijtihaat over time. It should be noted that these issues have always been discussed and negotiated by Islamic intellectuals and scholars (ulamas).⁷⁰

6.3. Tajdîd, Revival and Social Change

When Islam and Muslims are concerned, one of the first things that come to mind about social change is the horizon of innovation, revival and islah. The institution and tradition of tajdid among Muslims is the most important proof of this. It has a very strong and important basis that the scholars of Muslims accept Islam intelligibly and consciously as a livable religion and interpret people in a way that allows them to live in their own lives according to the conditions. Of course, this is done in the centre of the belief of tawhid, in the

70 See Ünver Günay, "Toplumsal Değişme ve İslamiyet", *Çukurova Ü.İ.F.D.*, 1/1 (2001): 9-46; Ünver Günay, "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Değişme ve Din", *Türk Yurdu*, 116-117 (1997): 80-89.

axis of the basic principles of Islam. Such a *tajdid*, renewal, revival, resurrection, correction and efforts to return to essence has been one of the most important aspects of Muslims.

The tradition of *tajdid*, *ijtihad* and revival of Islam has been very effective for Muslims to develop and implement their own projects of change, to produce their own time, to form the spirit of the time, to become the owner and subject of time, and therefore, they have been very effective in reading time and change correctly and producing the right strategies voluntarily. When Muslims stepped out of this tradition and became unable to engage in *tajdid*, *ijtihad* and revival, they became stagnant and became objects, not subjects, of change.

6.4 Islamic Sects and Social Change

It is possible to consider Islamic sects in two dimensions in terms of social change. One of these is the state of change of Muslims with the birth of sects, and the second is the direction of change of Muslims with their institutionalization after birth. Since the emergence of sects expresses a very wide and long cumulative process, it can be stated that, with the emergence of sects, Muslims have made themselves a voice in social change and have taken the stage of existence as subjects. However, after the institutionalization of the sects and the clarification of their members, religious environments that would cause Muslims to become relatively passive in the face of change began to emerge. Undoubtedly, there are renewals within the sects, their efforts to become subjects in social change with new interpretations or to have a voice in the changes that occur. However, it is not overlooked that sects are sometimes solidified by the masses, causing excessive routinization.

6.5 Tradition and Social Change

The Islamic tradition as the accumulation of Islamic lines from the Prophet (pbuh) until today, in other words, the entire of Islamic thought and practices that have become a tradition over time, played a role sometimes preventing and sometimes motivating Muslims from showing their will for change, especially from the Umayyad period, perhaps more clearly since the emergence of sects. When the tradition became too rigid, the change became preventing, and when it did not solidify and it continued as a flexible structure, it was able to reinforce the change and even became the main factor of change.

6.6. Modernity and Social Change

Western-centred modernity, by its nature, has led to enormous problems of thought and life for societies outside the Western world, especially Muslims. Muslims, who are surrounded by all aspects of modernity, trying to find solutions to these problems, sometimes to become the subject of change by making change projects, to turn the change towards modernization in their favor, to develop their own strategies of change against the trauma caused by it, the new situation, the new network of social relations, the new familial, educational, economic, industrial, religious, political, legal and moral situations,

and sometimes they were subject to the change adventure determined by modernity or manifested as modernization; they have been subjected to change and condemned in the direction determined by Western modernity.

In the globalization process, in the face of the overwhelming siege of high and fast technology, especially the internet, virtual world and social media, Muslims maintain their similar position in terms of change, with the dimensions of the aforementioned problems both causing a crisis and enabling them to turn the crisis into an opportunity.

Against the flood of modernity and modernism coming from outside, Muslims, wherever they are, are either subject to the change that this flood wants or try to put their own change projects into action against such a change. However, in the last analysis, it should be emphasized that Muslims harbor individuals and groups who try to solve the burning and destructive problems brought by modernity on an intellectual and scientific level with a change, *tajdid* and *ijthadic* approach.

At this point, it is useful to remember the existence of negative attitudes of Muslims regarding the dimensions of change. Today, looking at the tradition and the current situation, it is a fact that there are approaches that claim that Muslims are objects in the face of change, and that Muslims are not generally in favour of change but are opposed to change and are stagnant. But, it should be looked after whether this is a biased and ideological approach or a scientific and impartial approach. In fact, when looking at the main historical line and a large part of today with tradition and making an objective examination and an impartial observation about Islam and Muslim societies in the context of history, tradition and the present; it can be seen that Islam, Muslim leaders, Islamic scholars, Muslim intellectuals, and Muslim individuals, groups and societies acting with them generally do not prevent social change, but instead reinforce it, support it, and even in many cases are the main factors of change. In Umayyads, Abbasids, Seljuk and other Islamic states and societies, Muslims; as a religion and with the motivation of the religion of Islam to which they belong, can be seen as a factor that reinforces change in all areas of life, economy, education, politics, religious life, law, science and thought etc.⁷¹

Although there are opinions⁷² that Islam is a religion that is not in favour of social change, development and progress, prevents or does not support development while Christianity is a religion of living and in favour of change; and also there are opinions that Islam is the religion of poor or underdeveloped societies while Christianity is the religion of developed and advanced societies; with an impartial, scientific, objective historical and sociological perspective, it is understood that such an opinion is wrong, ideological, biased and subjective, and not true. It is seen that Islam is a religion that supports, motivates or reinforces change, takes an active position at the point of change, and is even the main factor in change in different social contexts.

71 See Okumuş, *Türkiye'nin Laikleşme Serüveninde Tanzimat*, 38-40, 152-171 etc.

72 See Raymond Deniel, "Dinler ve Sosyal Değişmeler", trans. İzzet Er, *Din Sosyolojisi*, ed. İzzet Er, (Ankara: Akçağ Yay., 1998), 303

It clearly demonstrates that Islam; with the Qur'an, Sunnah, the historical experience of Islam, the life lines of today's Muslim societies, the beliefs it has and the mentality and practices it has brought has assumed reinforcing roles in the development of society, in its strengthening, in achieving material and spiritual peace, and in its economic development.⁷³

It can be said that when the social and historical reality is examined scientifically, it is seen that Muslim societies constitute highly productive societies in terms of taking effective roles in the social, cultural and political changes. Indeed, it is observed that the religion of Islam and Muslims, with their various ecoles, movements and sects, play very serious roles in the realization of social change and in dealing with some social crises, dissolution, conflict and disputes that come with change. Those who prefer to explain religion with stability and constancy have made it a habit to see a solidified form of ideology that preserves the Islamic dogma and therefore protects the existing regulations in this dogma, approaches all changes negatively, and builds a wall against all progress, especially in the case of Muslims. Renan's approach in the 19th century, which claimed that Islam was equated with reaction, and that it was a religion that was closed to renewal and change, found many supporters in the 20th century. On the other hand, those who talk about the awakening of Islam and Muslims have a very strange appearance and seem to have been deceived by their ethnocentric attitudes and extreme secularism, and in fact forget that with Islam, Muslims do not fall asleep or regress. According to those who adopt such an approach, Islam, which has regressed yesterday or was regressive, has now started to awaken with the mobilization of Muslims. In fact, the emphasis on the Islamic awakening seems to mark the panic in the face of the darkness that a totalitarian and reactionary religious ideology would cause. However, it should also be noted that the views that Islam, to which Muslims belong, is a suitable way of thinking and life for development and change have recently been put forward even in the works of orientalists. There are also some Muslim intellectuals and thinkers who claim that Islam is a religion of positive change and progress.⁷⁴

Conclusion

The social change of the religion of Islam and Muslims is often powerful, dynamic and influential, with people gaining reality in various ways according to their attitudes, culture and social conditions. It is possible to see this both in history and today. The Quran and Muhammad (pbuh) is primarily the main factor of change for people to believe, to find the true path and to establish a new social world. Secondly, Muslims' will of subject in social change by fulfilling

73 See İzzet Er, *Sosyal Gelişme ve İslâm*, 3rd edition (İstanbul: Rağbet Yay., 1999).

74 Nülifer Narlı, "Urbanisation, Structural Changes and the Rise of Political Islam in Turkey", access: 24 Aralık 2020, <http://www.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/IAS/HP-e2/eventreports/Narli.html>; Nilüfer Narlı, "The Rise of Islamist Movement in Turkey", *Meria, Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 3/3 (1999).

the requirements of the belief of tawhid has enabled them to be the main factor in change.

The Quran, Sunnah and hadiths of Muhammad (pbuh) are effective factors in social change as the basis of belief on the one hand, and on the other hand, they are effective factors in social change with their messages that encourage or order change in a good way. If it is necessary to make a general evaluation regarding social change, it can be said that the Quran puts the human being at the center of social change in accordance with the Sunnatullah and states that, in the last analysis, change is an event that occurs by human will. According to what is understood from the verses on social change, human beings are at the center of change with their strong will and determines the direction of change.

Even though Muslims, who believe in the Quran and Muhammad (pbuh), have taken various positions in the matter of change since the first period of the Islamic society and the change occupies different positions towards themselves, they have become the subject of change as a dominant character. With their subject identities, they have sometimes been the main factor of social change, sometimes the supporter of change, and sometimes those who have changed themselves with change. Undoubtedly, in some periods of history and in some geographies, Muslims were not subjects but objects, not agents but passives in social change.

The main source of Muslims, the Quran, is the main factor in Muslims' being agents of change as a reference point, it also demands Muslims to be agents in change with its messages, recommendations, orders and prohibitions. Muhammad (pbuh), the first recipient of the Quran, wanted Muslims to be subjects of change as the person whom Muslims regard as the last Prophet and whom they are subject to their guidance. Muhammad himself became the subject of change and showed this to humanity through his Sunnah. Have the Muslims always been the subject of change as the Quran and the Prophet (pbuh) wanted? This has not always been possible. But if one looks closely at the position of Muslims in change and their situation in the face of change, it can be seen that there are many events in which they are subject and active in change.

In the final analysis, in order to correctly understand, make sense of and explain whether Muslims have a voice in change in history and today, it is necessary to conduct studies and researches with a scientific approach, without prejudice, without falling into reductionism, by taking time, place and culture into account.

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