



Comparison of the Iranians and Western People Lifestyles

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, in order to illustrate the Iran-Islamic and Western lifestyle, viewpoints of Islam and the West about the "human" and "life" were expressed and then to specify the lifestyles differences, according to the Quran and the traditions of the Imams (AS), the principles of Iran-Islamic lifestyle have been planned. Through the study of these principles, the differences between Iran-Islamic and Western lifestyles can be realized. As, usually the opposite of these principles dominants a Western lifestyle.

Key words: Human , Iran-Islamic , Western lifestyle

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INTRODUCTION

In order to review "Iran-Islamic and Western lifestyles", first of all, the concept of "life" and "human being" accurately should be defined; then the living conditions and the life of people, should be discussed and taken necessary studies. So every scholar in the field of lifestyle, before entering into the discussion, should have sufficient knowledge of the concepts of "life" and "human being" and know what do those mean and what are the symbols of life and living, based on his/her own culture. In his/her culture what are the symbols, signs and examples of prosperous and miserable life. On the other hand, whose life it is or what is our definition of human? Is human created just to live in this world, or human remains and is created to live forever. For sure, the point of division and discord among Iran-Islamic and Western lifestyles, there are such definitions.

It clearly implies that a serious conflict exists between the culture of the West and Iran-Islamic culture. The Iran-Islamic culture definitions for life, good and bad life and human all are based on the life after death and the physical life is just a farm for the after death life motto. This definition completely is in the opposite of Western culture which is based on humanism and hedonism and its ultimate goal is physical life. These two worldviews are exactly the opposite of each other and undoubtedly this difference in perspective will have the full effect on the study of status of 'life' and its goodness and badness and planning to reform in the life. Perhaps based on Islamic perspectives in the study of the 'life' style some behaviors and purposes should be considered which according to the Western view are completely

needless or even are not basically included in the lifestyle.

The supreme leader, in this case, states: "Social behavior and lifestyle follow our interpretation of life; what is the purpose of life? Every specific purpose we draw for our lives, naturally, will bring out a lifestyle to suit it" (the Leader statements in students meet in North Khorasan, 23 October 2012).

"Human" and "life" from the perspectives of Islam and the West

Differences between Iran-Islamic and Western lifestyles come from the definitions of "human" and "life" in Islam and the West. Islam considers spirit of the human; while, for the West, the body and the physical needs possess importance. Islam says that an individual after death continues but west believes that life just is worldly and should make every effort to make all the pleasures. It made two completely different lifestyles. In other words, the different worldviews has created the difference in lifestyles. For further clarification of this issue, two types of physical or spiritual worldview will be explained.

Materialistic worldview based on the attitude of God and the universe resurrection rejection is shaped. In this worldview, all the universe is restricted to the nature and the material world and also, there is no creator who has consciousness and perception from outside of the world. All is just the physical world, and there is no metaphysics and the other world (Judgment and Resurrection). Every individual is just its physical body which by death disappears or changes to other components of the material.

Proponents of this worldview is based on the notion of benefit; the difference between avarice, greed and so on is like the difference between the tendencies to foods and colors and the causes of differences in the meaning of moral notions are different ideas which because of differences in bodies. According to this view, it is impossible an individual who is hungry, doesn't have any food and drink, be able to love life and also sacrifice it. The terms such as charity, sacrifice and so on are stupidity. What is for the benefit of others does not make sense unless make more profit for the person. The output of such thoughts is Western lifestyle. They think about what should be done to enjoy life more (in Islam, there are halal pleasures), so if there is pleasure in child in giving birth to a child, it is good but if it is hard so it is not good (Rahimpour A, Lecture at the AmirKabir university entitled "lifestyle is related to all, it is not just about currency and gold, 8 November 2012).

According to the majority view of such people, everyone must do his/her utmost to enjoy life and reach his/her goals in the world which they think is the only chance to be exist. According to this worldview the subject of life after death and the punishments and rewards afterlife are completely unacceptable and therefore the ethical guidelines through the prophets or terms of nature and human conscience- ever if they come active- in addition to the lack of a practical model there is no warranty and a strong executive support.

The opposite of materialistic worldview is divine worldview that it is based on three pillars:

- 1) Belief in God
- 2) Belief in resurrection and eternal life for each individual in the world hereafter.
- 3) Belief in the Prophets of God's mission for human guidance toward ultimate perfection and happiness of this world and the hereafter.

These are the answers to fundamental questions arises for everyone that what is the origin of the universe? What is the end of life? How can we find out the best living way?

Since the Iranian society is a society based on religious, faith-centered, God-centered and world view based on God and the commitment to religion and tradition are largely common. Iran-Islamic way of life provides the principles, these principles are listed below. By studying the principles would determine the boundary between Iran-Islamic and the Western lifestyles. Because most of the principles governing the western lifestyle are unlike these principles.

Mainly ruling Islamic-Iranian lifestyle

First principle: Worldly life is a way

Surely, worldly life is a mean to achieve life after death. In divine worldview, the real life is the

hereafter life and the worldly life is as a means or field that must plant in as much as possible to reap in the other world and reach the main goal.

Imam Ali (AS) says in this regard

(Surely the world is temporary abode and the Hereafter is the permanent abode, then you should take supply from road to your abode) (Nahjolbalaghe, page 239)

He also says

(Lari, SA, Page 474)

(Indeed the world is the farthest sight for blind-like human who cannot see beyond it but a seer with visionary eyes knows that the actual abode is beyond the world. The sighted individual abandons the world and the self-blinded one attracts to it. The wise takes supply from it and unwise individual provides supply for it.)

Hazrat also says

(Kulayni Alkafy, vol 8, Page 174)

(Servants of God! in the short life in the world, you should try to save for the hereafter which is eternal because the worldly life is for action and hereafter is for penalty and inhabitancy.)

According to Iran-Islamic lifestyle, the world has worth, because it is a tool that can be used to attain the bliss of real life. Otherwise, due to its hardness and its shortness and so on, it has no real value. It is just a toy for those who are unaware of God.

The second principle: Remembrance of God leads to a happy and prosperous life. According to this principle, joy and happiness in life are not due to eating, drinking and consumption more but they are the results of God remembrance. As God in the Holy Qur'an says:

(Ta-ha, 124 to 127)

"But whosoever turns away from My Reminder verily, for him is a life of hardship, and we shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.... And thus do we recompense he who transgressed and did not believe in the signs of his Lord. And the punishment of the Hereafter is more severe and more enduring."

Hazrat Ali (AS) says in this regard: (Majlesi, Bharalanvar, vol 75, p 39) (Remember Allah sincerely to have the best life and the way to beyond).

The third principle: Worldly material life is worthless. According to the Quran and the traditions of the Imams (AS), Worldly material life is worthless and if ever the world has some worth, it is due to be a means to attain bliss and the real life ,otherwise; its deterioration and along with difficulty make it have no real value. For those who are unaware of God, it is just a temporary toy. God says in the Holy Quran:

(Spiders / 64)

And this life of the world is only amusement and play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life

indeed (i.e. the eternal life that will never end), if they but knew (Al-Ala/16, 17).

Nay, you prefer the life of this world; although the Hereafter is better and more lasting
(Al-Naziat/37, 39)

And Hell will be made manifest to him who sees. Then, as for him who rebels, and who chooses the life of this world, - (Al-Annam/32).

And worldly life is nothing but a sport and a pastime. And surely the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who are righteous. Will you not then understand?

The fourth principle: Being affected pains and pleasures in "Life" by non-material factors:

According to the Iran-Islamic lifestyle pain and pleasure are not only affected by the enjoyment or lack of physical resources. But basically, definition of happy and sweet life is different in the view and completely different effective factors have defined for it. Some of them are mentioned in the following hadiths.

- Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says

(Majlesi aval, Rozatol Al-motqin, vol 12, Page 112)

(Tolerant towards people is half of faith. And tenderness and compassion to them is a half of a life).

- Hazrat Ali (AS) says

(Noori, mostadrek al-vasayel, Vol. 5, page 178)

(No gift and no flourishing life were lost but because of the sins that were committed, because God does not oppress his servants.)

- He states in the other word

(Ansari, Ghorralhekam, page 87, H 1426)

(A life with fear could not be enjoyable. The foolishness is like the death and nobody does associate with a dead person.)

- Imam Sadiq (as) says

(Baharalanvar, Vol. 5, page 140)

(An individual's live with his/her kindness and goodness not just with the passing time. And death is because of sins more than coming the time).

The fifth principle: Avoid attachment to the world.

Consuming material blessings as much as needed is not only okay but also necessary for survive and live in material world. But any attachment and extreme attention to worldly life is blamed.

- Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says

(Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 100, Page 29)

(God tucks his wealth at heart of whoever that always at night and day, his/her largest ambition is hereafter. And God gives order to his/her works and he/she will not die until receives the complete allotment. God puts poverty between the eyes (make always hungry for material blessings) whoever that always at night and day, his/her largest ambition is

worldly life. And God distracted his life and he/she won't get more than his/her share from world.

Hazrat Ali (AS) says

(Nahjolbalagheh, Page 269)

(I avoid you from the world because it is very glamorous)

Imam Sadiq (AS) says

(Vasaeleh shie, Vol.1, Page 344)

(Anyone who is fascinated by life will be disgraced)

In the divine worldview every living is not life. It should have some requirements, such as believe in God and his unity and some obstacles, such as humiliation and the sin should be missing. In these conditions, it can be called life.

The sixth principle: Being materialistic ruins life.

Based on the divine worldview, man in life just is a traveler whose destination is hereafter. This world is on the way and obviously, travel light makes comfort for a passenger.

Muhammad Prophet (SAW) says

(Majlesi, man layahzareh alfagh, Vol. 3, Page 156)

(You should work for your world as if you never die and work for hereafter as if you will die tomorrow.)

The seventh principle: Every lifestyle doesn't have any value:

Due to divine worldview, every lifestyle doesn't have value. There are some requirements to call life a true-life, such as theology and monotheism and some barriers to taking such humiliation and sin.

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

(Kulayni, Alkafy, Vol. 8, Page 222)

I prefer to die in obedience to God to live with sins. I prefer to live in poverty. While, I obey the God to live rich while I disobey him. Endure hardships for God is much more pleasant than health and bless as being along with sin.

Hazrat Ali (AS) says:

(Mofid Al-arshad, Vol. 1, P 296)

(Life is not more than be religious and death is not more than loss of certainty. You should drink sweet and pure water (pure Islam) to make you awake. Be aware of the deadly poisons (false religions).

The eighth principle: The red line of life is welfare fixation

Islam does not prevent welfare, it invites people to live better and healthier. Islam opposes extreme cancer-like welfare and indulgence. Islam recommends to avoid luxury and being conspicuous in exploiting worldly material blessings.

Muhammad Prophet (PBUH): Ibn Masud! An individual who lives in luxury what obtains when eternally burns in hells fire. "It seems, they are aware of external view of life but unaware of hereafter."They build houses, establishes castles and ornament

mosques; but their all efforts are only for worldly life which they have gone on to and attached to it.

Their god is their stomach. God has stated": do you believe that you will be alive forever so you build castles and palaces? And in revenge times, you act like a rogue? So you devote yourself to God and obey me. " And the Lord has commanded "Have you seen he who has taken as his god his own desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?" Such a person is nothing but a hypocrite who have made his desire as his religion and have made his stomach as his God. He doesn't avoid whatever he wants, lawful or unlawful.

God has said: "They are so pleased with ignoble life, but this life compare to hereafter life is insignificant» Ibn Masud! Their wives are their alter, their honor is dirhams and dinars, they use all their power to get their belly full. These people are worst among bads. They are origin of intrigue and its residence. Ibn Masud! Allah states: "don't you know that if I give them satisfaction for the years when they reached the promised punishment, what they have, will not be useful "(Ibn Tabarsi, Makarmalakhlaq, Page 344)

The ninth principle: Non-attachment and not-being seduced by the glamorous and materialistic attractions of life

Islam reproaches being deceived and attracted to ornaments and materials of life. God in the Holy Quran says:

(Kahf / 46)

(Wealth and children are an ornament of the life of this world. But enduring good works are better in the sight of thy Lord in respect of immediate reward, and better in respect of future hope) (Al-Imran / 185)

(Every soul shall taste of death. And you shall be paid in full your rewards only on the Day of Resurrection. So whosoever is removed away from the Fire and is made to enter Heaven has indeed attained his goal. And the life of this world is nothing but an illusory enjoyment) (Fater / 5)

(O ye men, assuredly the promise of Allah is true, so let not the present life deceive you, nor let the Deceiver deceive you with respect to Allah.) (Al-Jathiyah / 35).

(This is so, because you made a jest of the Signs of Allah, and the life of the world deceived you.' Therefore, that day they will not be taken out from thence, nor will they be taken back into favor)

The tenth principle: Avoid whoever looks sinfully toward life

Islam is not only offering beautiful and accurate depiction of the earthly life for believers but also

warns about the companionship and closeness with people who have too materialistic worldview. Because their false and evil thoughts and ideas in their hearts make them like ill people with contagious diseases. So, there is recommendation to being close to goodness and be aware of badness in these words.

- The Holy Qur'an says in this case

"(Najm / 29 and 30)

(So turn aside from him who turns away from our remembrance, and seeks nothing but the life of this world. That is the utmost limit of their knowledge. Verily, thy Lord knows him best who strays from His way, and He knows him best who follows guidance.)

Whatever have expressed briefly in the paper to explain Iran-Islamic and western lifestyles was an overview, so, other aspects can be found by considering carefully and thinking accurately.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the article, viewpoints of Islam and the west about the "human" and "life" were studied. And it was stated that the point of separation and segregation in the Iran-Islamic lifestyle and the western lifestyle are due to the definitions and viewpoints. Islam imports the soul of man but the west emphasizes body and satisfaction of physical needs. Islam says that man continues after death but the west believes that only the world exists and people should make every effort to reach all the pleasures. Further, for more explanation of the discussion, the differences between the two types of spiritual and materialistic worldviews have been studied.

Iran is a religious, faith-based and God-centered community with divine worldview and strong commitment to religion and traditions. So, there are some planned principles for Iran-Islamic lifestyle that have been defined using verses of Holy Quran and Imams hadiths. And we mentioned that studying the principles could help realizing the boundary between Iran - Islamic and western lifestyles. The majority of the Iran - Islamic principles are contrary to the principles governing the western lifestyle.

The discussed principles are:

The first principle; Worldly life is just a way. The second principle; remembrance of god leads a happy and prosperous life. The third principle; worldly materialistic life is worthless. The fourth principle;

Being by pain and pleasure in the "life" are affected by non-material factors. The fifth principle; Avoid attachment to the world; the sixth principle; being materialistic ruins the life. The seventh principle; being alive doesn't mean living. The eighth principle; too much dependence to welfare is life's red line. The ninth principle; not being attached and seduced by the glamorous and attractive

materials. The tenth principle; avoid people whose view toward life is sinful.

It can be concluded from the presented topics and principles that:

-Our anthropological definition of human determines our lifestyle (Humans continue after death or not?)

-And on the other hand, lifestyle is our interpretation of the life (does the life has end or not?)

- Principles governing Iran - Islamic life determines border between lifestyle Iran - Islamic and western lifestyles. Because the majority of these principles are in contrary to the principles governing the western lifestyle.

Suggestions

Nowadays, unfortunately, the Iranians have crisis in some values and identities which made them dispersed in the attitudes, trends, customs, laws, social traditions, beliefs and even their religious beliefs. Thus, Iran-Islamic lifestyle became conflicted and has very inconsistency. It has made our community a semi modern society.

Neither can it be called traditional or Islamic, nor modern. But it must be concerned about the confused identity; and also in order to correct it, special attention should be given to the mentioned principles. And the other suggestion is that for every principle a study should be developed separately.

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