Chapter 6

Mawlana Mawdudi’s Views on Democracy, Secularism, Socialism and Capitalism

It is important to examine what was the opinion of Maulana Mawdudi regarding the modern ideologies and how he reacted to the impact of these ideologies. Maulana Mawdudi studied carefully the modern secular ideologies like democracy, secularism, socialism and capitalism. Having studied these ideologies at length, Mawdudi, writes that all these ideologies are purely materialistic, devoid of spirituality, divine guidance and moral values. Despite the best effort of the west, democracy, secularism, socialism and capitalism have failed to establish social justice. Mawdudi was of the view that not only that they have failed to deliver but have placed the humanity at peril.

After making these remarks Mawdudi writes the Islam presents a system of Social Justice, Equality, Love and Brotherhood. The fundamental principal of the ethical, social, economic and political system are given in the Quran and were practically implemented by the Prophet and the righteous caliphs. They are still very much relevant even after more than fourteen hundred years.

Mawdudi, writes that the concept of western nationalism is based on Darvin’s theory of survival of the fittest, which was transmitted into social philosophy of human society. He further says that Stalin concluded that in the struggle for survival of the fittest
those who are fit will survive and the rest will perish. According to Mawdudi this concept of the survival of the fittest conveyed by Darvin and others to the western nations is devoid of human behaviour, justice and fair play.¹ This deep rooted desire to carry their nations to the great heights had ignited among their people hatred and enmity not only against each other but also between the nations. This desire to achieve progress and development over other nations has resulted in the exploitation of the wealth and resources of other countries. As a result of this, powerful nations occupied weak nations, resulting in the colonial occupations and their rule.²

After examining the root cause of colonialism, exploitation of the weak and smuggling of their resources, Mawdudi points out that western nationalism is based on race, color, language and territorial boundaries. This has resulted in the national phobia to protect and uplift their country and their own interest.

Mawdudi, writes that the concept of western nationalism comprises of four aspects, i.e., national superiority, prejudice, their interest and pride. In order to achieve these four goals western nations have imposed their might upon the other weak nations, resulting ultimately in loss and cruelty. This imperialistic tendency results in the occupation of other nations, Mawdudi, writes that this phobia of nationalism is the biggest curse on humanity and greatest danger to human race and culture.³

---

² Maslah-i Qaumiyat, pp. 128.
Keeping in view the negative and the dangerous implications of this western nationalist ideology, Mawdudi not only opposes it vehemently but warns Muslim nations who are blindly following these western ideologies and cultures. Instead of following blindly western concept of nationalism Mawdudi preached the Islamic concept of equality, justice, love and brotherhood.

Mawdudi, also rejects the concept of capitalism and socialism. He writes that these western concepts are devoid of the human elements, kindness, equality, brotherhood and justice, which are the basic ingredients of an Islamic society. Maulana Mawdudi, writes that the western ideologies have divided the human race on the basis of cast, creed, religion, language, color and territorial boundaries. People who adhered to these concepts are referred to as nationals and the rest as aliens. He, therefore, writes that the elements of morality, humanism have no place in these western ideologies. He points out that these man made concepts are devoid of any spiritual elements.⁴

This position has resulted in a deep rooted caste system as in Hinduism, the divide between the black and white in USA and the apartheid in Africa. All this has resulted in bloodshed and misery for hundreds and thousands across the globe.⁵

As against this the Quran says,

“Mankind, we created you from one man and woman, and then divided you into nations and

---

⁵ Tafhim al-Quran, Vol. V, p. 96. See also Sirat-i Sarwar Alam, vol-I, pp. 730-731
tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is one who is the most pious among you”.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) has declared in his farewell hajj:

“No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab
Nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab. Nor does a white man any superiority over a black man, or black man any superiority on the white man. You are all children of Adam and Adam was created from Clay”.  

These and other verses of the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet are international charters for all humanity without the distinction of caste, creed and religion. Islam being a universal religion, its message is for all humanity and for all times to come. The best among you is one who is known for his piety and moral excellence and not for his / her race, colour or country.

Discussing the concept of democracy, Mawdudi writes that the western democracy, political and legal sovereignty rests in the hand of the people and they are free to legislate and frame laws as per the will of the majority people. Religion has no role in the constitution of the state. When compared to this in Islam

---

6 49:13. See also 4:1.
7 Kitaab al-Haj, p. 70.
8 4:1, 75:39, 16:97.
11 Islami Riyasat, pp.540-542 See also, Islami Nizam-i Zindagi, p.308.
legislation has to be as per the Shariah law, i.e., the Quran and the Hadith. Men can only legislate when there is no guidance available in the Shariah. The leader, i.e., the caliph holds power on behalf of God, being His vicegerent. Therefore, the fundamental difference between western democracy and the Islamic democracy lies between the nature of the role head of the state has to play. The chief of the western democracies works and legislate on behalf of his people who elect him but the leader of the Islamic state, i.e., the caliph works on behalf of God and acts as per the Shariah.  

Discussing the formation of national democratic and secular state in India, Mawdudi writes that it will be a state which will be governed by the non-Muslim majority. It is therefore, not necessary that it will be a non-Hindu state. To establish his point, Mawdudi writes, that in the provinces where the congress is in power and where non-Muslims are in majority, saraswathi puja is performed, the slogans of Jai Shri Ram and Vande Mataram are chanted. Muslims are discriminated in appointments. Therefore, in such circumstances how can a Muslim accept such secularism and democracy.

He further writes, that wherever there exists the concept of majority and minority, the minorities are discriminated on the basis of religion, race and language and are given some rights, which are mostly on paper. The majority always tries to suppress the minority. It desires that the minority shall merge with the majority.

---

12 Islami Riyasat, pp. 480-481.
14 Siyasi Kashmakash, vol.II, pp.127-128 and 129-147, See also Tahrik-i Azadi-i Hind, p.286. This was when the government of India Act 1935 was passed in five provinces of North India.
Discussing the concept of capitalism, Mawdudi writes, that it is the outcome of renaissance, industrial and French revolutions. This provided liberty to each and every individual to achieve anything as per his/her desire, capacity and ability. The division of religion and polity into two different spheres created a new concept in which neither the state, nor the church, nor the society had any role to restrict or place any breaks in the progress of an individual. Every individual is free to achieve any amount of progress. It even believed that progress of the society also lies in unlimited freedom to all individuals. The first principle of capitalism is free enterprise. Mawdudi also points out the discrepancies of the capitalist system. He writes that it provides unlimited powers to individual ownership and hardly imposes any legal or moral restrictions. Therefore, all means of production rests with the capitalists. The capital system provides all opportunities to generate wealth by all means, which involved exploitation, un-ethical and immoral practices. In this system insurance company, provident funds, stock markets operate freely. All this is against the rules of Shariah.15

The capitalist system mainly depends on the generation of interest which is most dominant aspect of this system. Whereas taking or giving interest is fundamentally against the principles of Islam. As a result of this capitalist system wealth is accumulated in the hands of few individuals and there is hardly any scope for circulation of the wealth. In Islam, however, to avoid the rich become richer and the poor became poorer, Islam wants to establish an economically just and balance society.16

16 Islam awr Jadid Maish-i Nazriyat, pp.36-37, See also Mashiat-i Islam, pp.52, 134.
The capitalist will have complete control over the market which is basically against the interest of the society. The multi nationals, holds sway over the market which makes life difficult for the small entrepreneur. Capitalism divide the society into have and have nots. Its leads to a unfair trade, struggle and competition. On the other hand Islamic envisages a system in which the richer classes of the society are required to share their wealth with the poor, the needy and the destitute by means of paying \textit{Zakat, Sadaqat, Kaffar\hat{a}t, Fitrah} and other forms of charity. Islam envisages a system which takes care of all the section of the society.\footnote{Islam aur Jadid Mashi Nazriyat, pp. 83, 85,127.}

According to Mawdudi, socialism and communalism came into existence as a reaction to feudalism and capitalism. It was propounded by Karl Marx and Lenin. Though socialism and communism are different in their means and mechanism but the spirit and purpose is the same. Socialism out rightly discards the ‘right of ownership’, which they regarded as a root cause of all evils. If the articles of the daily use remain under the ownership of certain individuals it is acceptable but if the land, the industry and other institutions are privatised it leads to the generation of wealth, its accumulation in the hands of few persons and the wealth will not be circulated, adversely effecting the other classes of the society. Socialism discards individual ownership and talks of nationalisation of all firms and companies and its income to be distributed among its workers.\footnote{Islam aur Jadid Maashi Nazriyat, pp. 22-45 and 46-48. See also Mashiat-i Islam, p.56.} The state must take over the entire economy under its control and then distribute the wealth equally among its citizens.\footnote{Islam aur Jadid Maashi Nazriyat, pp. 53-54 and 62-67. See also Islami Nizam-i Zindagi p.371.
Mawdudi writes that it is not simple and easy to transit from capitalism to socialism, from individual ownership to nationalisation. The result of this transition was a great upheaval which resulted in the death of hundreds and thousands of people, displacement of millions, punishments and exile of thousands of people. Apart from this the other negative aspect is the elimination of religion, morality, humanism and honesty.\textsuperscript{20}

Mawdudi, writes that the people living in socialistic countries were deprived of their fundamental rights like freedom of speech and liberty. Whoever ventured to question was imprisoned or sent into exile. In view of censorship imposed by the state, the facts, reality and the misery of human being was suppressed.\textsuperscript{21}

Mawdudi, further writes, that such system have sapped the abilities and potential qualities of an individual. The growth of an individual is thus snapped. The most important thing required for the growth of an individual is freedom of which he/she is totally deprived in socialist system. In fact it is destructive for the entire humanity writes Mawdudi.\textsuperscript{22}

Mawdudi, writes that socialist do not believe in divine guidance or spiritual values. They also do not believed in the concept of lawful and unlawful because for them the law promulgated by the state is final. Therefore, in such a system, corruption, dishonesty and cheating would be rampant. \textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{20} Islam aur Jadid Maashi Nazraiyat, pp. 55-56. See also Mashiyat-i Islam, p.384.
\textsuperscript{21} Islam aur Jadid Maashi Nazraiyat, pp. 56-57. See also Mashiyat-i Islam, pp.384-385.
\textsuperscript{22} Maeshiat-i Islam, p. 54. See also Islami Nizam-i Zindagi, p.371.
\textsuperscript{23} Islam aur Jadid Maashi Nazraiyat, p. 57.
country writes Mawdudi the government is in the hands of the dictatorship of the communist party. The party only holds the ownership of the land, industry and institutions and the common man remains helpless and powerless.²⁴

According to Mawdudi socialism regulates the entire economic matters and the rest of the matters revolve around it. Economy is the most central issue. All matters whether moral values, history, science etc would revolve only around the economic aspects. Because of this one sided policy the balance in life is lost.²⁵ Mawdudi, therefore, writes that socialism is not a natural solution to the economic issues. In fact it is a very unnatural solution. The fascists presented yet another solution, i.e., national socialism which allowed individuals to hold the economic resources in the larger interest of the people of the society with state control over it. Mawdudi writes that even this is not very different from the ideology presented by the socialism.²⁶

After having discussed at length the negative impact of capitalism and socialism Mawdudi explains us, as to how Islam resolve this problem. The fundamental principle of Islam is to allow the natural principles of life in each and every aspects of human life. The other important aspect on which Islam lays great emphasis is to inculcate in human mind the concept of morality and ethics. The third basic principle, writes Mawdudi is the use of the force and might of the state only when it is absolutely necessary and

²⁴ Maieshat-i Islam, p. 57. See also Islam ka Mashi Masla awr us ka Islami Hal pp.21-25.
²⁵ Maieshat-i Islam, p. 56.
²⁶ Maieshat-i Islam, p. 56.
inevitable. By the application of these three fundamental principles, writes Mawdudi, Islam tries to remove all unnatural means and mechanism in the economic sphere of life. He writes that Islam allows every individual to freely participate in the economic affair as per his/her capabilities but only by using the natural means. Unnatural ways and means and mechanism of earning are not allowed in Islam. The Islamic state imposes restriction in order to stop injustice to others.

Mawdudi, writes that Islam recognises the right of individual to explore the economic resource as per his/her ability, capacity and their liking. But it is does not allow to him/her to select such methods, means and mechanism which would destroy the morals and character of the society. Islam implements the rule of lawful and unlawful in the process of earning. It abolishes things like intoxicant, fornication, adultery and prohibits the give and take of interest (Riba). In fact Islam abolishes all such mechanism of earning which harm the interest of others. Apart from these Islam also taboos all such methods which benefits individuals but adversely effects others in the society. Therefore, in Islam bribe, theft, gambling and hoarding are prohibited. It bans all such businesses which would lead to conflict and litigation. Mawdudi, writes that if we examine the present day means adopted by those who have become millionaires over night are only those who have adopted all such mechanism which have been declared unlawful by Islam.

---

27 Maieshat-i Islam, p.57.
28 Maieshat-i Islam, p. 57.
30 Mashiat-i Islam, p. 58. See also 2:188, 283, 5:38, 5:90, 83:3, 4:10, 3:130,161.
After having declared unlawful means of earning, Islam accepts ownership of an individual who is willing to earn by lawful means. Even then it does not allow full freedom and it imposes certain restrictions. Mawdudi, writes that there are three ways through which an individual can make use of his legally earned income. Either he can spend it or invest it or accumulate it but Islam imposes certain restriction on all the three.

Islam imposes restriction on such ways of spending wealth which leads to the destruction of the society, namely, gambling, wine, women and cup, dance and immoral practices. An individual is allowed to spend moderately upon himself, his family and relatives. Extravaganza is not allowed in Islam. After spending moderately Islam has shown the path to use the left over income for the welfare of the relatives, the poor, the needy and the destitute.\(^{31}\)

Those who want to opt for the second option, i.e., to invest and double their wealth are not allowed to invest their money on interest which is unlawful in Islam.\(^{32}\) Islam also denounces the accumulation and detention of wealth as well. This is in fact done in order to circulate the wealth. Those Muslims who hoard the wealth have to pay the Zakat at the rate of 2.5 percent to the poor, the needy and the destitute, travellers, those under debt, preachers.\(^{33}\) The other mechanism adopted by Islam for the distribution of wealth is the payment of Sadaqat, Kafarat, Fitrat and through inheritance. By means of these mechanisms, wealth would necessary float from one family to the other and place restriction on hoarding of wealth.\(^{34}\)

\(^{31}\) Mashiat-i Islam, pp.58-59.
\(^{32}\) Mashiat-i Islam, pp.59-60.
\(^{33}\) 9:60.
\(^{34}\) Mashiat-i Islam, p. 63.
Maulana Mawdudi, concluded by saying that the capitalism and socialism are contrary to each other, where as the foundation of Islam rests on belief in God, Prophethood, implementation of the commandments of God. The economic system of Islam works on divine guidance. The goal of Muslims is to adhere to the teachings of Shariah in order to achieve the pleasure of God in the hereafter.\textsuperscript{35}

On the basis of Islamic belief mentioned above, Islam gives a full fledge, moral, legal and a system which govern all aspects of human life. Where as there is no such provision in the western concept which has been discussed above. The collective Islamic system gives basic importance to the freedom of an individual but imposes certain limitation in order to safeguard the impact of ill effects on the society.\textsuperscript{36} Islam lays great emphasis on developing an ethically and morally sound society in which there is an equal opportunity for all individuals. It creates co-ordination between the different sections of the society. It works for equal and just distribution of wealth.

Mawdudi writes that the entire world is a witness to the ill effects of these western ideologies, especially socialism. Examples of Russia and China are before us. Under the personality cult, Stalin was raise to the level of God. Leo Shaw Chi has to face the wrath of the people.\textsuperscript{37}

Mawdudi concludes by stating that the divine message of Islam provides guidance in each and every aspect of our lives.

\textsuperscript{35}Maulana Mawdudi, \textit{Istifsarat}, Vol. I, p. 407. See also Islam awr Jadid Mashi Nazriyat, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Istifsarat}, Vol. I, p. 400.