CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION
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This is the study of Social Structure of Islam. Islam has been extensively studied but by theologians. Sociologists have not paid much attention to the study of Islam. And therefore, not much study on the social structure of Islam has been done. This is also true that the concept of social structure in sociology has not rigorously been defined. Definition of social structure varies from one school of thought to another school of thought and within a school from one thinker to another thinker. However, among various sociological perspectives it is the Structural Functionalism which appears to be most pertinent for the definition of social structure.

Social structure in Functionalism/ Structural Functionalism is broadly defined as consisting of different interrelated and interdependent social institutions. Functionalists generally compare society with any living organism. As a biological organism has certain needs and these needs/prerequisites are fulfilled by different interrelated organs, likely, the needs of any society are fulfilled by interrelated institutions. The major concern of Structural Functional perspective is an analysis of the things: the structures, and particularly the functions that a social system needs in order to survive. The tradition of this perspective in sociology is very old, and at time, it was one of the dominant sociological theories. Robert Nisbet argued that Structural Functionalism was “without any doubt the single
most significant body of theory in the social sciences in the present century." Kingsley Davis (1959) took the position that Structural Functionalism was, for all intents and purposes synonymous with sociology.²

Mark Abrahamson (1978) argued that Structural Functionalism is not monolithic. He identifies three varieties of it: The first is individualistic functionalism. In which the focus is on the needs of actors, and the various large scale structures (for example, social institutions, cultural values) that emerge as functional responses to their needs.³ Bronislaw Malinowski was a major proponent of this perspective.

The second is interpersonal functionalism; here the focus is on social relationships particularly the mechanism to accommodate strains that exist in relationships. The exemplar was another Anthropologist A.B. Radcliff Brown.

The third variety, societal functionalism, is the dominant approach among sociological Structural Functionalism. The primary concern of this type is the large scale social structures and institutions of society, their interrelationships, and their constraining effects on actors.⁴ Parsons is the proponent of this approach.

The roots of the structural functional perspective are found in the works of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer and E. Durkheim. Ibn-Khaldoon is also a great name in the history of the origin and development of sociology. It is a tendency to think of sociology as a modern and western
phenomenon. But scholar like Ibne-Khaldoon dealt sociology even much before than the founding fathers of sociology. He was an Arab philosopher, wrote his book in Arabic in which he discussed many things of sociology. G. Ritzer noted, while writing his biographical sketch that “Ibne-Khaldoon had produced a corpus work that had many ideas in common with contemporary sociology”.

Ibne-Khaldoon's work did not have dramatic impact on classical sociology, simply because his work was in Arabic and was not available in other languages for the scholars of sociology. As for the Structural Functional approach is concerned, the reflection of this perspective can be seen in his work. G. Ritzer also says that “He devoted considerable attention to various social institutions and their interrelationships”.

A. Comte too used this approach. He had a normative conception of a good society. This concept led him to say that every social phenomenon contributes to the society. He also sensed a kind of equilibrium within societies. However, his theory of organicism -the tendency to see analogies between societies and biological organism- was the most influential concept.

Herbert Spencer also adopted organicism. His organicism led him to look at social whole and the contribution of parts to the whole.

Both A. Comte and H. Spencer have thrown tremendous impact on the thinking of Durkheim. He gave the concept of ‘Social Fact’. His interest in Social Fact reflected an interest in the parts of the social
organism and their interrelationships as well as their impact on the society. In terms of Structural Functionalism Durkheim has much to say about structures, functions and their relationships to the needs of society.8

Parsons is considered one of the giant of this perspective. He highlighted the place of social action in the analysis of social system. He developed abstract concepts on ideal typical typologies for constructing his meta-theoretical scheme of social system. The scheme is designed for the purpose of analysing the structure and process of social system.

Social structure is conceived as a recurrent and regularized interaction among two or more persons, the primary units of social structure are not persons as such but selected aspect of interaction among persons such as roles, clusters of roles and statuses. For Parsons, Actors are goal seekers who possess alternative means to achieve their goals. In the course of goal seeking actors confronted with a variety of situational conditions, such as their own biological make up and external ecological constraints. These constraints influence their selection of goals and means. Actors also seem to be controlled by values, norms and sanctions, for they influence the goal as well as the means selected to achieve it. The structure of social action thus includes various elements like statuses, collectivity, norms, values, sanctions etc.9

All these elements are defined and connected by another concept called institutionalization. Institutionalization is both process and structure.
As interactions become institutionalized, a social system can be said to exist.\textsuperscript{10}

Parsons' Structural Functional Analysis becomes conspicuous when he says that four basic conditions have to be met if any social system is to operate at all. These are Adaptation to the environment, Goal Attainment, Integration and Pattern Maintenance. These conditions are fulfilled by four social subsystems (structures) of economy, polity, kinship and culture. In this way a social system is structured of interrelated and interdependent subsystems which function for meeting the basic conditions of social system.\textsuperscript{11}

In this theoretical context for better understanding of the problem it seems necessary to have a look into the socio, economic and political position of pre Islamic society of Arabia where Islam emerged.

During that period Arabia, corresponding to the two fold nature of the land, was divided into two groups: nomadic Bedouins and the settled folk. The line of demarcation between the wandering and the sedentary elements in the population is not always sharply drawn. There were stages of semi nomadism and quasi urbanity. Action and reaction between the towns' folk and the desert folk are motivated by the urgent direction of self interest and self preservation.\textsuperscript{12} The Arab society was organised on clan line. Every tent represents a family, and encampment of tents forms a clan. A number of kindred clans grouped together make a tribe.\textsuperscript{13}
The larger size of population of a tribe was considered as a source of social prestige and power so they used to marrying many wives and used to keep lady slaves in order to procreate more children to strengthen their position among the Arabian tribes. Generally the tribes less in number were considered weak who used to make alliances with other tribes to consolidate their position in the society.\textsuperscript{14}

The people had little social consciousness. They had little regard for moral. Might is right was the order of the day. People were moved by emotions and not by reasons. They were leading a life full of vices, superstition and barbarism. They were addicted to drinking and gambling. Women were regarded as chattels. They had no right and no social standing. A man could marry as many women as he liked and could divorced them any time at his sweet will. On the death of the father the son inherited his step mothers and could marry them. There was no ban on fornication and adultery. The society was morally degenerated. Most of the female infants were killed or buried alive.\textsuperscript{15}

The economic life of Arabs was of two types. The nomads insist on extracting from his more favourably situated neighbour such resources as he himself lacks, and that too either by violence- raids- or by peaceful methods-exchange. Sheep and camel raising and to a lesser degree horse breeding, hunting and raiding, from his staple occupation and are to his mind the only occupation worthy for a man.\textsuperscript{16}
Urban economy was based on business. Mecca was a business centre where capital enjoyed active circulation. The business has a flair for hoarding and gathering of wealth. Usury was the common trade practice, and the rich made money on the cost of the poor. Mecca had many financers whose first article of trade was money, and they advanced money on credit at profitable terms. The society of Mecca was steeped in to materialism and the people in their race to make money had little consciousness of the higher moral and social values.17

Arabs were without any formal political organization at the eve of Islam except Yemen. There was no governance that can assure peace and harmony for them. As earlier mentioned that the whole country was divided in to tribal groups and each tribe was a world by itself. It has its own code of honour, its own concept of law and order. All activities were conceived within the framework of the tribe.18

It appears from the description of pre Islamic Arab society that no system at macro level existed. There were only tribal groups who had their own system but inter-tribal relationships were not controlled by any authority.

It is safe to assume here that Islam originated in Arab when the society was struggling for stability and order.19 It is a fact, that when a society does not function with its prerequisites, it gets terminated either by absorption into another society through annexation, conquest or through conversion in to a new system.
It is in this way, when Prophet Muhammad\textsuperscript{PBH}, the last Prophet of Islam, started propagating Islam the whole society embraced it. As Islam represented a system that provided stability and functionality. In functionalistic terminology it could be said that pre Islamic Arabia was the case of extreme deinstitutionalization. During the period of Prophet Muhammad\textsuperscript{PBH} Islam not merely integrated itself but became a dominant social, economic and political force. It is in this context the large number of people of Arabia who did not merely opposed Prophet Muhammad\textsuperscript{PBH} but also mentally and physically tortured, converted in to Islam.

1.1 Research Design

"Research design is the plan structure and strategy of investigation conceived to as to obtain answer to research questions."\textsuperscript{20} The designing aspect of research study, especially in the field of social sciences is very complex. The selection of a method or methods of the logic and the planning of the design do not guarantee sound results. The research design at the most is a blue print and therefore, at best it is only tentative. Every design has its strength and weaknesses, and at the same time there is no such thing as a single correct design. A good research design satisfies the objectivity, reliability, validity of the findings. A research design provides the logical basis for drawing conclusions.
Present study is descriptive and explanatory in nature. The descriptive research design enables researcher to describe or present a picture of phenomenon under investigation. This design is mostly qualitative in nature.

In this study textual approach has been followed, that is the institutions are tried to be dealt only with the help of Islamic texts. These Islamic texts are Qur'an and Hadith.

The Qur’an is the religious book of Islam and it is revealed by Allah upon his Prophet Muhammad⁴ to provide guidelines for humanity to succeed here and hereafter. This book is preserved in its original form even today.

The Qur’an was explained and its commentaries have been written by many theologians. In this work Maulana Moudoodi’s commentary, originally written in Urdu, named ‘TAFHIM-UL-QUR’AN’ consisting of six volumes has been consulted. The reason for using this commentary is that, the explanations are found more relevant to modern world and is more sociologically oriented.

Maulana Syed Abul Al’a Maudoodi, a well known theologian of the 20th century was born in Hyderabad, India and migrated to Pakistan at the time of partition. He wrote more than hundred books on Islam, and was the recipient of Shah Faisal international award as recognition of his work.

The saying and the deeds of Prophet Muhammad⁴ recorded by his companions are called Hadith. The collection of Hadith was started after
the Prophet's passage. So its validity and reliability is not as much as Qur'an. The collectors put up a lot of effort a precaution in their work to maintain the authenticity and reliability. Many collections of Hadith are available. But in this work Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim have been consulted mainly, because these two are considered the most reliable books of Hadith. Besides, the researcher has quoted some Hadith from other collections on purposive basis in order to support these two above mentioned books.

It is also tried to be concentrate only on basic principles of the substructures, because my attempt is to analyse the functional ability of these. The researcher has deliberately ignored the indulgence in juristic discussion except the inevitable.
1.2 References


2- Ibid, p.233

3- Ibid, p.233

4- Ibid, p.233

5- Ibid, p.8

6- Ibid, p.8

7- Ibid, p.233

8- Ibid, p.234

9- Ibid, p.239

10- Ibid, p.241

11- Ibid, p.245


13- Ibid, p.26


17- Masoodul Hassan, Op.cit. p. 43
Note: “Islam literally means commitment and obedience - as a religion; it stands for belief in one God and in all the Prophets of God, the last of whom was Muhammad, and for complete submission to the divine will as revealed through his Prophets. A Muslim believes in the Prophet hood of Abraham, Moses and Jesus, holding that all of them conveyed the same message from God. The final revelation came through Prophet Muhammad and is known as Islam - the religion of all Prophets not ‘Mohammedanism’. This revelation is preserved in the Qur’an in the form in which it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.”
