

The Role of HANAFI School in Evolution and Development of Islamic Civilization

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Abstract: *Hanafi* School of legislation was one of the first steps and biggest targeted efforts for establishing a real, blissful and rich Islamic civilization, as it was a great procedure that smoothed the path for Islamic scholars to create a reasonable approach according to Islamic guidance for developing and promoting Muslim societies. This school of thought has the most important and effective role in creation and evolution of the great and glorious Islamic civilization. It caused the principles of this glorious civilization to be the best reference, and good pattern for all nations in the range of human history.

Keywords: *Islamic civilization, Hanafi School, Islamic Principles, Rationality, Islamic institutions.*

Introduction

Hanafi School is one of the most popular and largest schools in Islamic *fiqh* with a large number of followers among Muslims and with many scholars and researchers supporting this school of thought. *Hanafi* School is also one of the prominent Islamic schools in founding Islamic principles and *sharia* rules. This school has developed special methods in the areas of developing thoughts and social manners among Muslims which is why it is not only considered as a *fiqh* school but also as an innovative school and is deemed as the best school among the Islamic scholars.

Research Question:

One common question occurring to the mined regarding the Hanafi school is that despite being among the largest schools of *Fiqh* around the world, what significant role has it played in the great Islamic civilization?

Research background:

There are numerous books written on Imam Abu Hanifa, his school of thought and his scientific, political and social life. Since many centuries, Islamic scholars and non-Muslim researchers have also conducted various analysis on his thoughts, life, and contributions but apparently their publications are more focused on religious and historical aspects of his life rather than analyzing the

real picture of his life especially the religious revolution in Imam's thoughts and teachings. Considering this drawback, the effort is to focus on the thematic role of Imam Abu Hanifa and his school of thought with regards to the Islamic civilization.

Research Methodology:

In this paper, library research technique has been used to find out the proper results of the Imam's publications using the references of prominent Islamic scholars and to analyze and compose the theme using scientific methods to conclude the stance and position of Hanafi School in this regard.

The Role of Hanafi School in evolution and development of Islamic civilization

To better identify the role of Imam Abu Hanifa and the followers of his school of thought with regards to the evolution and development of Islamic civilization, we need to first clarify the concept of civilization and culture to pave the way for further analysis.

There are many views regarding the concept of civilization and culture and many scholars have given their own perspective on these terms. Some consider both terms are similar while others believe that they are different. The analysis of different articles regarding the two terms indicates that both terms represent the same complimentary meaning. Mentioning the different scholars' definitions will drag us to the sidelines, therefore, it is better to only mention one of the definitions here.

After review of different definitions, it can be said that: civilization is derived from the verb that means to choose the city or to urbanize (Ameed, 1989, p.107). In idiomatic meaning we can say:

Islamic civilization means to apply the specific social pre-Institutions that are appointed by the Quran and Sunnah of the prophet (PBUH) and it's inbred in human societies to obtain materialistic technology aimed at welfare and prosperity (Faqih, 2010, p. 42).

Now, in the light of this definition, the role of Imam Abu Hanifa and his school of thought in evolution and development of Islamic civilization can be assessed as follows:

- a) Principles of establishing a civilization and the role of Hanafi school in this regard within Islamic civilization
- b) Practical participation of Hanafi School in determining the principles and assigning pre-Institutions in the Islamic civilization
- c) Rationalism and following the experience as the base for establishing civilization and culture.

A. Principles of the evolution of civilization and the role of Hanafi School:

Scholars believe that human civilizations are based on four principles. These principles are the fundamentals for evolution of civilization and lack of one or more of such principles would cause civilization to fall apart (Halabi, 2003, p. 206). These principles are as follows:

- ⌚ Economic principles
- ⌚ Social principles
- ⌚ Moral principles
- ⌚ Political and administrative principles

It should be mentioned that prioritizing the above-mentioned principles has been a matter of discussion among the scholars but the Quran has put moral principles first for evolution, development, and sustainability of civilization and has called it the nominal purpose for human civilization (Zaid, 1997, p.125). Thus the Prophet (PBUH) has mentioned the purpose of his prophet-hood to complete and promote moral principle:

“In fact, I was sent to complete the moral criteria” (Al Baihaqee, 1980, vol.5 p.190)

The moral and social principles in Islam are more prohibitive and the Quran focuses on such principles as they are revealed by Allah SWT and humans are obliged to obey because the creator is indeed aware of His creations and shows the right path for their success and prosperity.

“Shall He who has created all things not know?” (Al Quran Chapter, 67:verse14)

Islamic scholars have explained and interpreted the Islamic principles appointed by Allah and have shown the know-how to implement them. Imam Abu Hanifa was known for his good behavior

and many Islamic scholars have admitted his good manners and have praised him. Alama Shamsuddin Shafi'e quoting from Zumra bin Rabi'a writes:

People have not disagreed on his honesty and they all believe that he has never spoken ill of someone (Assalihi, 1974, p.230).

Similarly, Imam was once told:

There are people who talk behind you but you never say anything for them? He replied: This is all Allah's blessings and He gives whom He chooses (Assalihi, 1974, p.231).

Thus, Imam and his followers have put struggle to interpret and explain the moral principles of Islam, they wrote many books in the field of ethics to promote ethical norms in human societies. Books like:

KANZUL UMMAL FI SUNAN ALAQWAL-E- WAL AFAAL, JAWAME ALKLEM FE AL WAZ-E-WAL HEKAM, and MANHAJ AL UMMAL FE SUNAN ALAQWAL are examples of publications in this area which are valuable and can be considered as a great encyclopedia of prophet's instructions in the domain of ethics. The mentioned books are published by Alama Hasamuddin one of the prominent personalities of Hanafi school whose reputed by the name of (Muttaqi Hindi=Indian virtuous) (Azzarkali, 1997, vol.4 p.308). In these books, he has described the Islamic manners based on Nabawi hadith so that Muslims establish their civilizations as per the teachings and behavior of the Prophet SAW. Considering the social principles, Hanafi School is undoubtedly a compatible school with different human societies and better social networking among the followers, especially the amity of leading scholars of this school are considered as one of the major tools for spreading this school of thought among the nations.

Imam Abu Hanifa was always interacting with people and has served his entire life preaching and instructing the people. During the tenure of his life, he objected to the unfair practices and praised the good deeds in people through instructions and commendation (Abu Zaharah, 1997, p.69).

The leading personalities of Hanafi schools have always lived among their societies encouraging and preaching towards co-existence and convergence in all situations aimed at implementing principles and proper benchmarks in the societies. Thus, they did not merely rely on the interpretation and translation of Quranic verses or prophetic hadith and FIQH rules but they started authoring numerous books particularly in this respect. Books such as SEAR AL-KABEER AND SEAR ASSAGHEER by Imam Muhammad Shaibani, one of the best students of Imam Abu Hanifa, can be considered as unique and pure social principles books.

These two books explicating domestic and foreign social principles of humans on the basis of Hadith Nabawi SAW are of a big surprise for most of the prominent scholars and are accepted as a credible source for social relations among Islamic scholars. Imam AWZAIIE in favor of the SEAR ASSAGHEER writes:

If the book was not taken from the Quran and Nabawi Hadith, I would have said that Muhammad Shaibani has created this knowledge himself and has founded such principles (Haji Khalifah, 1991, vol.2 p.52).

The inputs by Hanafi scholars in the areas of the social system in the Islamic civilization has not only strengthened the social principles but also considered as the most credible sources for non-Muslims as well to follow.

Administrative and financial affairs which are mostly related to worldly affairs and are necessary for a living among human beings thus the Prophet SAW has instructed us to the use of logic and knowledge in this respect as it's narrated that He (PBUH) said:

"You well know your world works"

Reviewing the knowledge inheritance of Hanafi School, it can be extracted that Imam Abu Hanifa and his followers have detailed in these two specific areas; Imam himself had a creative thought

for business (Abu Zaharah, 1997, p.215) which is deemed as the biggest criteria for prosperity and welfare among human beings. He was always engaged with trade deals and business transactions and would always explain and run his business affairs based on the Islamic and Quranic instructions. He would always focus on two basic themes which are the fundamental pillars for the establishment and development of a prosperous human civilization:

The first theme is that he always had sympathy towards others considering the situation and conditions of the people. It is said that he has insisted a lot in this regard and would discuss with everyone repeating the word "ASTAHSEN" meaning (I consider it well) and convincing everyone using this idea (Al Makee, 1978, vol.1, p.179). It is obvious that the building provisions based on approbation are a prerequisite for a well-established and efficient civilization.

The second theme the Imam focused on is financial affairs and managing business deals and contracts. Each of these contracts is considered as different and effective approaches regulating the business dealings among Muslims whose trade went beyond the Islamic civilization (Abu Zaharah, 1997, pp.215-222).

Followers and the leading scholars of Hanafi School have also made considerable efforts for the development and improvement of the Islamic civilization following the footsteps of their Imam.

Imam Abu Yousof, one of the best students of the Imam and expert of Hanafi School, wrote the first book "Al Kharaj" in the history of Economics as per the demand of Haroon Rashid, the ruler of that period. He has explained public finance topics such as production, distribution, depreciation to applying general principles on public finance as per the guidance of the Holy Quran that has become a credible source for Islamic finance contributing to the developments of Islamic civilization (Al Babani, 1994, vol.2, p.134). They are still being used in western courts as one of the credible sources of law.

Followers of the Hanafi School have made significant contributions since the emergence of this school of thought up till now. Current scholars of this school are active in the areas of Islamic banking and modern business deals contributing to the betterment of the financial affairs of the Muslims around the world.

As a final word, it should be mentioned that Hanafi school of thought has put the base in finance and economics which are considered as the fundamental pillars of civilization (Al Babani, 1994, vol.2, p.134).

Regarding the political and administrative affairs, Imam Abu Hanifa and his followers have always participated actively in political affairs throughout history which is a clear example of politics and administration in the Islamic civilization. Imam Abu Hanifa had his particular political approach called consulting and advising approach and his firm political and administrative activeness justifying rulers of his time has been reflected in the political history of Islam. I do not think they should be mentioned here but as per the confession of scholars, Hanafi School is not only a fiqh school but also a political, governance and administration school.

Throughout history, governments and the rulers have benefited from the political and administrative ideas of this school of thought and have developed their own civilizations. The followers of Hanafi School also have published valuable books throughout histories such as ADABUL QADHE, TOHFATUL MOLOOK, and NESAB-UL-EHTSAB.

Finally, it can be said with surety that if we look at the Islamic civilization from the perspective of evolution and development of civilizations, the active and broad role of Imam Abu Hanifa and his school of thought is visible in evolution and development of Islamic civilization and in many cases, it can be said that the Hanafi school has founded the steps to such a prominent civilization.

B. Contribution of Hanafi's in making preorders in Islamic civilization:

If civilization is assumed as the human beings' achievement with intellectual attitude and accepted behaviors that are imposed by the humans with assigning of written and unwritten principles and preorders for realizing of their improved values, then Islamic civilization is also a glorious

civilization decorated with real and unbiased principles and preorders published by the human beings in the Holy Quran and Hadiths of Hazrat Mohammad (PBA). As well as things that are deemed necessary for the improvement and sublimation of humans are being stipulated in the Holy Quran and Hadiths.

Imam Abu Hanifa and his followers were the antecedent people among the Muslims leaders who have been the leading characters in making the principles and assigning preorders according to the Islamic courses in different scientific, social and ethical areas within Islamic civilization. The Imams from the Hanafi group had come with several affairs by having logical thoughts and ideas inductions as well as the adduction of arguments and reasoning in order to correct and making disciplines. At the same time, by having creative thoughts they have made new and effective issues. As for an instance, they are as following:

In the field of written principles: The leaders of Hanafi are the first creators and makers of the jurisprudence principles' science which is the basis to set the rules and principles of a written preorder. The Muslim historians believe that Imam Abu Yusuf is the first Islamic scholar who has written a specific book in this field but unfortunately his book is lost and is not handy now (Zaidan, 2004, p.25). The Hanafi scholars hold their special method in jurisprudence and by having the exclusive style they have facilitated the life of the people through deduction and applying Islamic laws. The researchers have called their method in this area as "Jurists School" where later on this method has become the opponent of other schools such as Al-Motakalimin and Al-Mokhtalat (Zaidan, 2004, p.27).

According to the civilization scientists believes who claim that Islamic civilization is the embodiment of Islamic law, the science of jurisprudence principles is the strong pillar and the first source of Islamic civilization. This comes at a time where the Hanafi Imams had been more antecedent in writing and publishing of this science than other school scholars and significantly contributed to this area. In addition to Imam Abu Yusuf there are much more Imams from the Hanafi's School like Alama Nizamuddin Al-Shashi, Imam Jasaas, Fakhrol Islam Bazdawi, Imam Sarahsi, Allawoddin Samarqandi, Alama Nasfi who have in turn written books in this area and had set rules and strict basics for publishing a great preorder in the Islamic community. Moreover, they have played significant roles and served well in creating a superior civilization compatible with human nature based on Islamic courses.

Meanwhile, the scholars of this school have been the pioneer in setting comparative principles of jurisprudence which are also called jurisprudence rules and are used for appropriate application of sharia laws composed a complete body of the Islamic civilization. At the same time, they have written many books and set several other rules. The book of Al Ishbaah was Al-Nazar belongs to Alaama Ibni Najim and the book of Taseesun Nazar belongs to Al-daboosi has been called the most valuable and significant papers in this area (Haji Khalifa, 1991, vol.1, p.81).

In the field of Legislation: There is no doubt that the school of Hanafi is not only a juridical school but the founder of a social trend in Islam as it has mentioned before this school is a source for Islamic civilization too. Indeed, this position has been a well bed for the improvement of this school in Islam and been an effective way for the thoughts and non-Islamic activities in the history too.

The followers of this school have been so active in promoting Islamic civilization and played significant role in creating discipline and social and administrative principles as most of these followers were rulers, governors, fighters, ministers and commanders. Therefore, in

respect to being a good and effective statesman and for a better accomplishment of the affairs the people were referring to law enforcement and in administrating and social order they were giving good and important advices to their time authorities.

One of the biggest achievements of the Muslims in legislation was the legal book of *Mujalatul Ahkamul Adliya* which was published in their recent time of governance. This book was considered as the most valuable legal book by the followers of this school in the time of Ottomans. Based on severe need of the Ottoman caliphate, according to the rules and methods of this school this legal book was published by the Hanafi's scholars in 1850 articles which are still a pure source for the Islamic and non-Islamic world (Azzarkaly, 1997, Vol.1, p.109).

Also, the Hanafi jurisprudence is the significant reference for the most trade and civil laws of the western countries especially for financial and social rules as well as the Hanafi jurisprudence has been the significant reference of the courts and judicial affairs in western countries.

C. Rationalism:

Rationalism and relay on experience is the first step and the most significant tool for civilization. Today's and previous biggest civilized communities are all the harvest of the logics and skilled and elites experiences who have utilized from their experiences and resources and have brought wonderful achievements to their biotype and fellowmen as well as they have disclosed an enormous part of the hidden secrets of this world by their technology and intellectual experiments.

In the very past the Holy Quran has also ordered us to use our logic and mind for having a fruitful and blissful life, and holding a proper civilized world. All the holy verses of the Holy Quran that are related to the creature of the firmament and earth indeed are a bid for learning and access to the source and roots of different sciences and experimental tools till the human beings through these experimental and intellectual tools reach to the beauty and amazing parts of this world. As well as, they find out about the rolling rules over this world to finally reach to the peak of the civilization (Alwan, 2002, p.17).

According to the non-Islamic scholars and researchers, Islamic civilization is an experience and logic based civilization (Faqih, 2010, p.46). Therefore, up to the time that our ancestors were exploring about this world by utilizing their logic and minds and were presenting a materialistic interpretation of the verses of the holy Quran and other Islamic texts; they were the antecedent of the thoughts and the masters of the sciences, and had been the carrier of the civilization lights in the world. They have made such fundamentals in the civic civilization that all the modern civilized world in the east and west are using from their sources as well as their bright star had been lighted their civilization today.

Imam Abu Hanifa himself by following those guidelines of holy Quran had signified this part and asked his followers to use their logic, experimental and thought tools for realizing the realities and hidden secrets in the world. He was prioritizing logical reasons in stipulating the

issues and figuring out the laws and orders and he was relaying in logical reasons in proofing the realities so then he became famous and titled as the person of thought based (Abu zahara, 1997, p.170).

In proofing the Sharia's issues and reasoning from the text of the holy Quran Hanafi's school had been used the analytic and Synthetic approaches which are the most important scientific approaches in utilizing the logic in researches and exploring scientific experimental. At the same time, this school has been severely avoided the usage of disobedient approaches and methods like phenomenology and even in respect to the certification of the Hadith from the Prophet Mohammad (PBH) they have carefully acted. So, according to the religious scholars and researchers, Imam Abu Hanifa was the first thought-based scientist personality in the world of Islam who had founded the rationalism and complaint of quotation to the reasoning and logic.

As it has mentioned before, the Hanafi School has been specific in the application of meditation and contemplation in their reasoning and had also been behind the tools and causes, and was handling the cases tangibly. According to Hajawi, it was because of the contemplation and meditation in this school that they create jurisprudence by the name of virtual jurisprudence where the issues and cases were imagined in thoughts and they were searching a solution way (Abu zahara, 1997, p.202).

In my point of view, as much as it has to be said in regard to the logic and rational in the school of Hanafi it is too less but it is enough to know that this school had been the founder of rationalism and relayed on experience while they have counted the first step for development as well as the Islamic civilization is based on it and the holy Quran has encouraged us to do so too. This school has stepped on several tight steps and had been active in its promotion among Islamic scholars till there has to be an ease in the way of civilization.

There is no doubt that Islamic civilization had been due to all efforts and struggles done by Imam Abu Hanifa and his followers as to be acknowledged same as Imam Abdullah Ibn Dawood has confessed it: *If the person who wants to be delivered from ignorance, foolishness and dullness; he has to refer to the books of Abu Hanifa (Assalihi, 1974, p.195).*

Imam Abdullah Ibn e Dawood was calling the Muslims to honor all the efforts done by Imam Abu Hanifa and to pray for Allah SWT to bless his soul. He says: *It's required from all the Muslim nations to pray Allah almighty for remuneration of Imam Abu Hanifa (Assalihi, 1974, p.194).*

Discussion:

Hanafi School as it is mentioned, is not only a fiqhi (legislation) school but also, as per the scholars' confession, this school is a great pathfinder for creating an actually advanced civilization. This school really could present an invaluable worksheet for creating and developing of an advanced and tranquil civilization for humans all over the world.

The methods and approaches appointed by this school of legislation are not only practical methods and easy to play in different human societies, but also a good pattern for all human to follow up. As most of the Islamic and non-Islamic scholars confess, this school is an Avant-garde and pathfinder among all other Islamic schools of legislation and thought. It also endeavored to put the pillar of a great civilization, based on Islamic principles and intellectual axioms.

Conclusion:

In the end, we may conclude that Hanafi School of legislation endeavored a lot in the guidance of the Islamic nation and tried to prosper the life of people according to the Islamic instructions. This school played an outstanding role in the creation and evolution of a progressed Islamic civilization. It could establish all the dimensions of the Islamic civilization according to the Islamic doctrines. In this regard, they not only relied on the Islamic texts, but also focused on intellectuality and rationality to

lead the Islamic civilization to be sociable to the human nature and compatible to every time and every place.

Most of the Islamic scholars confess on the propriety of the Hanafi School, as they always praised the efforts of the followers of this school and mostly obeyed their guidance. Moreover, non-Islamic scholars have also appreciated the contributions of this school in human progress.

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