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THE CONCEPT OF JUSTICE AND GOVERNANCE IN THE QUR'AN

Abstract: In the current stage of development of New Uzbekistan, the effectiveness of public administration, the moral responsibility of leaders, and the maintenance of social stability in society have become among the most pressing issues. In this regard, the concepts of justice and governance reflected in the Qur'an represent not only a historical and spiritual source but also a vital framework for understanding contemporary state policy and leadership principles. This source clearly emphasizes the importance of leaders' ethical conduct, the prioritization of public interests, the enforcement of the rule of law, and the implementation of justice within society. When examined from a textual studies perspective, the formation of the concepts of justice and governance in Qur'anic verses, their stylistic and structural features, and their coherence with the cultural context become evident. Thus, a textual studies approach enables not only a contentbased analysis but also a deeper understanding of the cultural and political context.

Keywords: Qur'an, Justice, Public Administration, Ethical and Social Foundations, Textual approach (Philological analysis), Integrity, Tafsiri Tabari, Tafsiri Samarqandi.

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Introduction

Today, the issues of strengthening the ethical and social foundations of public administration in the Republic of Uzbekistan are of paramount importance. In this context, as outlined in Presidential Resolution No. PR-171,[1] "On measures to expand the scope of social services for persons in need of external care," protecting the interests of the people, ensuring justice, and strengthening social stability have been established as top priorities for leaders and state agencies. Both the principles found in the Qur'an and the measures defined in the Presidential Resolution confirm the contemporary relevance of just governance in modern society.

From this perspective, the subject is significant not only from a scientific and historical standpoint but also from practical and spiritual dimensions. The principles of justice, integrity, and the protection of public interest, emphasized in Qur'anic and Turkic-Islamic sources, serve as a guiding framework for addressing the most critical political and social issues of our time. Consequently, studying the Quranic concept of justice and public administration, analyzing them through a philological and textual approach, and integrating them into modern state management processes remains an urgent scientific and practical task.

Methods

This article analyzes the interpretation of the concept of justice and state administration in the Qur'an based on classical exegetical (tafsir) sources. As the primary sources of the research, Imam al-Tabari's "Tafsir al-Tabari" and Al Samarqandi's "Tafsir al-Samarqandi" were selected; verses pertaining to justice, authority, responsibility, and governance within these works were studied through thematic and textual approaches. The research utilized descriptive-analytical, comparative, and contextual analysis methods. The exegetical interpretations of the Qur'anic verses were categorized in relation to historical-political contexts,

[1] **Republic of Uzbekistan. (2023).** *Presidential Resolution No. PR-171: On measures to expand the scope of social services for persons in need of external care*. Tashkent.

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linguistic meanings, and jurisprudential (fiqh) interpretations. The gathered data were synthesized through comparative analysis to identify the conceptual correlation between justice and state administration in the Qur'an.

Result

Linguistic and Conceptual Synthesis: Analysis of "Tafsir al-Tabari" and "Tafsir al-Samarqandi" reveals that the Qur'anic concept of 'Adl (justice) is not merely a legal requirement but the fundamental pillar of political legitimacy. The study identified that governance is framed as a "trust" (Amanah), emphasizing that authority is a responsibility granted by the Creator and the people. Thematic Categorization: Based on the textual analysis, three main pillars of state administration were identified in the classical commentaries:

Shura (Consultation): As a mechanism for collective decision-making.

Haqq (Truth/Right): As the standard for administrative transparency.

Mas'uliyyah (Accountability): The ethical obligation of leaders towards their subjects.

Historical-Modern Correlation: Comparative analysis shows that the principles of social protection and justice mentioned in the classical sources directly correlate with the objectives of modern reforms in Uzbekistan, particularly the initiatives outlined in Presidential Resolution PR-171. Scientific Contribution: The study concludes that applying a textual and philological approach to classical tafsir works provides a robust ethical framework for modern public administration, bridging the gap between traditional Islamic values and contemporary governance needs.

Discussion

The concept of justice is one of the most central and extensively studied concepts in Islamic-enlightenment thought and medieval Turkic political literature.

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The interpretation of justice as a divine source is uniquely illuminated in the Qur'an, and this source plays an incomparable role in the formation of principles related to Eastern administrative culture, leadership ethics, and social life. Within the Quranic text, the concept of justice is expressed through several key Arabic terms, the most significant of which are 'adl, qist, qast, and m¯ızan. While these terms possess distinct linguistic meanings, they function as complementary concepts within the Qur'anic context.

1. Qur'anic Terminology of Justice

1.1. 'Adl — Rectitude and Moral Equilibrium: Linguistically, 'adl denotes balance, firmness, and placing things in their rightful position. Classical Arabic lexicons define it as judging according to truth and restoring righteousness in opposition to deviation. In Qur'anic usage, 'adl signifies honest, impartial, and faith-driven conduct toward oneself and others.

> Imam al-Tabari defines 'adl as "delivering rights to their rightful owners and maintaining impartiality in judgment", emphasizing steadfast adherence to the straight path ordained by Allah and the rejection of bias in governance and legal rulings.

1.2. Qist — Social and Economic Justice: The term qist conveys meanings such as equitable measurement, fair distribution, and granting rights without diminution. In the Qur'an, it frequently appears in contexts of economic justice and social balance. Classical exegetes interpret qist as the practical application of fairness in communal life and as a safeguard against oppression (zulm).

1.3. Qast — Deviation and Oppression: Although derived from the same root (q-s-t), qast represents the opposite of qist. It signifies injustice, deviation, and transgression. In the Qur'an, qāsiṭūn refers to those who abandon truth and commit oppression. This linguistic contrast illustrates the Qur'anic dialectic between justice and tyranny.

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1.4. Mīzān — Universal Balance and Divine Norm: Mīzān, meaning scale or balance, symbolizes both material justice (weights and measures) and the cosmic order established by Allah. Tafsir literature presents mīzān as a universal moral and legal standard governing individual conduct, social relations, and governance.

2. Justice in Surah al-Nahl (16:90): “Indeed, Allah commands justice (‘adl), excellence (ihsān), and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.” (Qur’an 16:90)

2.1. Tafsir al-Tabari

Al-Tabari interprets ‘adl as unwavering impartiality and fulfillment of rights, while ihsān is defined as acting beyond obligatory duties, attaining ethical and spiritual excellence. He explains “giving to kinsfolk” as maintaining kinship ties and fulfilling both moral and financial obligations.

Al-fahshā’ denotes heinous sins rejected by both divine law and sound intellect; al-munkar encompasses all acts condemned by reason, innate human nature (fitrah), and revelation; al-baghy refers to transgression and the usurpation of others’ rights.[2]

2.2. Tafsir al-Samarqandi

Al-Samarqandi defines ‘adl as fulfilling the rights of Allah and abstaining from oppression among people, while ihsān represents benevolence and forgiveness. He narrates that this verse encompasses the entirety of moral virtue, stating that it “commands three things and forbids three things, encompassing the Sunnah and the wisdom of both early and later generations.”

[2] Al-Tabari, M. J. (2001). Jami’ al-bayan ’an ta’wil ay al-Qur’an. Cairo: Dar al-Hajr.

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He records the narration of ‘Uthman ibn Maz‘un (r.a.), who stated that his faith became firmly established upon hearing this verse revealed through Jibril (peace be upon him), highlighting the verse’s transformative ethical power.[3]

3. Justice and Moral Integrity: Surah al-Ma’idah (5:8)

“O you who believe! Stand firmly for Allah as witnesses in justice, and do not let hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to taqwā.” (Qur’an 5:8)

This verse establishes justice as an act performed solely for Allah, free from emotional bias, personal interest, or social pressure. The Qur’an explicitly warns against allowing hatred or enmity to corrupt justice, thereby setting an unparalleled ethical standard: impartiality even toward one’s enemies.

Justice is directly linked to taqwā, affirming that justice is not merely legal compliance but a manifestation of spiritual maturity.

4. Justice in Hadith Literature:

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforced the Qur’anic vision of justice through numerous hadiths:

• “Do not oppress, and do not be oppressed.” (Sahih Muslim)[4]

• “Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock.”

• “The nations before you were destroyed because they spared the noble when they stole and punished the weak.” (Bukhari and Muslim)[5]

[3] Al-Samarqandi, A. L. (1993). Bahr al-’Ulum. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-’Ilmiyya.

[4] Al-Naysaburi, M. H. (2007). Sahih Muslim. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers
[5] Al-Bukhari, M. I. (1997). Sahih al-Bukhari. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers.

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These narrations demonstrate that justice is both an internal moral stance and an external social obligation. The collapse of societies is directly linked to selective justice and abuse of power.

5. Justice and Leadership in Islamic Thought

5.1. Leadership as a Trust (Amanah)

The Qur'an commands: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due." (Qur'an 4:58)

Exegetes include leadership and governance within the scope of amanah. Authority is not privilege but responsibility, and failure to uphold justice constitutes a grave moral violation.

5.2. Justice as the Criterion of Legitimate Leadership

Al-Tabari views justice as the essence of leadership, while al-Samarqandi associates it with spiritual integrity. The just ruler is promised divine reward, whereas the oppressive ruler faces accountability on the Day of Judgment.

Accountability: Every administrator stands responsible before both Allah and society. This perspective is reflected in modern management principles today. President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev consistently emphasizes in his speeches that the true essence of leadership is to ease the burden of the people and create dignified conditions for them. According to the President, a true leader is not one who tests the people's patience, but the one responsible for finding solutions to their needs and problems.[6]

This approach manifests in harmony with the Qur'anic concept of leadership. In the Qur'anic view, the governing individual is the primary guardian of social

[6] Mirziyoyev, Sh. M. (2017). Xalq davlat idoralariga emas, davlat idoralari xalqimizga xizmat qilishi kerak [The state bodies must serve the people, not the people the state bodies]. Tashkent: O'zbekiston.

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rights and the restorer of justice. Thus, in both Islamic thought and modern public administration, leadership is interpreted as a unified noble duty of service, justice, and responsibility.

Conclusions

The essence of the concept of justice in the Qur'an lies in its definition as a moral-legal principle that is rooted in Divine command, free from personal emotions, and intrinsically linked to faith (Iman) and piety (Taqwa), applicable equally to all segments of society. While most individuals associate the concept of justice primarily with rulers, leaders, and authorities, if this principle were embodied by every member of society, oppression and inequality would not have taken root, and human relations would be shaped by trust and responsibility. Indeed, the Qur'an interprets justice not merely as a tool for rendering judgment, but as a universal ethical norm that regulates all human interactions.

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