

Liberalism

& its effect on society

An Introduction

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Introduction

Liberalism is the world's most predominant ideology¹ with almost all western nations having embraced its fundamental political values and ideas. Liberalism represents a global force that seeks to transform societies in accordance with its values and practices, and under the banner of the 'Liberal Project' the United Nations regime on human rights is an attempt to enforce liberal values on non-liberal nations². Emeritus Professor John Charvet in his book *The Liberal Project and Human Rights* comments that,

"...liberal states must recognise that the liberal project for world order is unavoidably a long-term one, which they need to pursue with patience and persistence and not to be seduced by tempting short-cuts..."³

Liberalism however, has not always sought to export itself from the west via peaceful, and some may argue, covert means⁴. The various contemporary military expeditions, including Iraq and Afghanistan, have attempted to impose Liberalism using force, as well as trying to fulfil the goals of strategic dominance and the acquisition of much needed resources.

The effects of Liberalism are felt not only in the political arena but at the social level as well. Influential economic, political and social structures are used to propagate its values, but this has directly contributed to a number of social problems. These problems range from child abuse and neglect to violent crime and rape. A common trend in liberal societies, such as the UK and US, is that social breakdown has become a norm, and has shaped academic and popular cultural discourse. Professor Daniel Bell, lecturer in Political Science at the University of Singapore, states,

"Liberalism, it is claimed, contributes to, or at least does not sufficiently take account of, the negative social and psychological effects related to the atomistic tendencies of modern liberal societies. There is undoubtedly a worrying trend in contemporary societies towards a callous individualism that ignores community and social obligations, and liberal theory does not seem up to the task of dealing with this problem."⁵

As an ideology Liberalism is hard to describe. It can be best portrayed as a broad political philosophy that considers and emphasises individual freedoms, and the primacy – or priority –

of individual rights. Liberalism has various intellectual strands however these fundamental political values are shared by all types of Liberal thought.

On the superficial level these political values may seem attractive, however under intellectual scrutiny they are found to directly affect contemporary societies in the most negative way. It is the scope of this essay to highlight Liberalism's negative effects on society using historical, philosophical, legal, practical and social research arguments. This essay will finally draw attention to a potential solution by discussing the Islamic perspective and contrasting Liberal and Islamic Social Models.

The arguments are summarised as follows:

1. Liberalism is purely a European product. Liberalism's political values are the outcome of specific social and historical conditions, subjected to a specific type of analysis. Therefore it must be asked, is Liberalism an 'absolute' alternative to other ideologies, or is it historically and geographically bound? If Liberalism is found to be historically and context bound then it can not have any relevance in today's modern society.
2. Philosophically, liberalism's political values rest on the premise of individualism, or what some political philosophers call atomism.⁶ This essay will argue that individualism is ontologically false, in other words, it is an incorrect premise to base a political philosophy.⁷ The logical conclusions from this are that the results of individualism – and therefore Liberalism - will also be incorrect.
3. From a practical and social research perspective modern liberal societies, specifically the UK and US, exhibit signs of increasing social breakdown and social malaise.⁸ This essay will argue that if the most predominant political values propagated in western societies are Liberalism's political values, and these societies are showing signs of social decay, then it naturally follows that Liberalism is a key contributing factor to modern social problems. This argument rests on the premise that there is an established link between propagated values and a society's behaviour; this essay will bring to light social research strengthening this premise.
4. This essay will argue that Liberal values are not conducive to good legislation. This will be explained by showing how legal pornography – violent and nonviolent – can cause rape. There are many factors that play a causal role in the crime of rape, however this essay will

bring to light overwhelming evidence that strongly indicates pornography is a major factor. It logically follows from this argument that, if what is legal in Liberal societies facilitates crime, then Liberal values should not be a basis for legislation – as they are seen to provide impetus to social anomalies and criminal behaviour.

5. In the last part of the discussion this essay will exam how Islam's view on humanity does not rest on a false premise and that its core political values are cohesive, in contrast to Liberalism's non-cohesive values, and that they have produced a cohesive society in the past. This essay will argue that if Islam has a correct premise and it has produced a cohesive society, it - at least - must be investigated and used as a reference in the dynamics of political discourse. This essay will also contrast the Liberal and Islamic social models by highlighting and discussing some of their key features, in the hope to demystify aspects of Islamic law and demonstrate that in actual fact the Islamic penal code is founded on a workable model, which has produced positive results and has a greater capacity to achieve a cohesive society.

Historical Perspective

Liberalism's core political values of individual freedoms and the primacy of individual rights emerged and were developed as a result of a specific European problem. This problem was the clash between the Catholic Church and the people who carried ideas that were incompatible with the Church's doctrine and philosophy. The medieval Catholic Church never recognised other dogmas and beliefs. It frequently persecuted those who sought to promulgate non-Catholic ideas and practices in the public square. By the beginning of the 16th Century, for instance it was aggressively suppressing the Protestant movement using the rulers of Spanish Netherlands and France who were sympathetic to Catholic intolerance.

In 1517, the German priest and professor of theology, Martin Luther pinned to a church door in Wittenberg his famous theses attacking Catholicism. This event initiated a process, which is now called the 'Reformation', leading to a massive split in the Christian Church. This new version of Christianity – Protestantism – gained popularity in North Western Europe and many of its rulers adopted its doctrine as a means to achieve their completed independence from the Pope and Emperor.

In spite of this, the Catholic Church pursued its oppression to the extent that in the Netherlands the Protestants revolted and after a war that lasted a staggering eighty years, and it became an independent state which succeeded the peace of Westphalia in 1648.⁹ During this period many massacres took place as a result of clashes between Catholicism and Protestantism. Some of these included the massacre on St Bartholomew's Day in 1572 in France and the 30 years war in 1618 which was fought on German territory but involved the Catholic and Protestant states of Denmark, Sweden, Spain and France. There were many other incidents of massacres carried out mercilessly by both parties.¹⁰

The sheer scale of atrocities committed in the name of Christianity led to the formation of several parties with a mandate to bring about reconciliation. Some of the members in these groups included the likes of Erasmus of Rotterdam who facilitated the Edict of Nantes which set measures of tolerance for the French Protestants, but also in England in promoting the Toleration Act of 1689.¹¹

This climate produced the emotional and intellectual environment for personalities like Hugo Grotius, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Samuel Pufendorf to develop a new understanding

of natural law which eventually was to become the philosophical basis for Liberalism. These seventeenth century theorists developed an individualistic doctrine of rights. Professor John Charvet describes this individualist view as,

“...the rights held by individuals independently fitting into, and filling a function within, a God-ordered purposive whole based on the good.”¹²

These theorists viewed the rights of the human being as independent to that of society, and therefore devised on the premise of individualism. This was perfectly consistent in preventing any further religiously inspired atrocities because this individualist viewpoint took the rights of a human being removed away from God’s perceived will for society. In this way an individual belonging to the Catholic or non-Catholic tradition could be tolerated. However this need for an individualist view on rights was based upon the fact that Catholicism did not have a tolerant attitude towards others. So given this historical context is the individualist view of rights valid? It can be argued that as these theories were developed as a result of this clash and intolerance then in absence of this historical context these theories are no longer valid. The reasons for this are that the theories were limited in their intellectual scope, which was to ensure tolerance rather than seeking a true understanding of the human being and their standing in the world. The implications behind this argument are so profound that it undermines the whole premise that most of Western civilisation is based upon. Professor Ian Hunter from the University of Queensland summarises this argument by describing the premise or foundations of Liberalism as philosophically shallow, he states in his essay *The shallow legitimacy of secular liberal orders: the case of early modern Brandenburg-Prussia*,

“...that liberal government...arose in response to particular historical circumstances to which it remains tied. Modern liberalism continues to bear the marks of its historical emergence not because of the purity of its origins or the universality of its foundations, but because of the exigency to which it was an improvised solution...the philosophical shallowness of liberal orders is a direct outcome of their historical emergence...”¹³

This individualistic perspective was temporarily sufficient in providing a relatively quick solution to the problems faced in the 16th and 17th Century. However in the absence of these problems this individualist doctrine was not reviewed in order to ensure that it was philosophically and practically sound. It was just taken for granted because it solved the problems of violence and intolerance at the time. This was problematic because individualism, as a premise for an entire

political outlook, has been found to be philosophically incorrect and it has produced problems in society that have ensured its demise.

Philosophical Perspective

Individualism: The False Premise of Liberal Values

Liberalism is a “disputatious family of doctrines”¹⁴ which share the same core political values. These values are the priority of individual rights and an emphasis on individual freedoms; it can be argued that these values form Liberalism’s intellectual foundations. The *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics* reflects this position and describes Liberalism as,

“...the belief that it is the aim of politics to preserve individual rights and to maximise freedom of choice.”¹⁵

Professor of Philosophy Will Kymlicka confirms the bedrock of Liberal thought,

“...liberals base their theories on notions of individual rights and personal freedom.”¹⁶

The proposition upon which these values are based on - in other words, the premise for Liberalism’s core political values - is atomism or individualism. Political Philosopher Marilyn Friedman adds that,

“...individualism...underlies some important versions of liberal political theory.”¹⁷

Individualism is the consideration that individual human beings are social atoms abstracted from their social contexts, attachments and obligations.¹⁸ In light of this, is individualism a correct premise to base a political outlook or philosophy? Similar questioning is expressed by Political Philosopher Charles Taylor, he states,

“The very idea of starting an argument whose foundation was the rights of the individual would have been strange and puzzling...why do we begin to find it reasonable to start a political theory with an assertion of individual rights and to give thee primacy?...the answer to this question lies in the hold on us of what I have called atomism.”¹⁹

If it can be shown that individualism is ontologically false – which refers to whether this viewpoint has a basis in reality - this should raise fundamental questions about the validity of Liberalism as a suitable ideology for humanity. The argument here is that individualism is a false

premise and the reasons for this are many. This view is supported by Philosopher and Professor Michael Sandel who concludes that the problem with individualism is with its faulty foundations.²⁰ Individualism views, and seeks to understand, the self - in other words the human being - as an abstract entity divorced from its social reality. This is incorrect because:

- There are social and communal attachments which determine the individual.²¹ For example, during the cognitive development of a child, developmental psychology has moved away from emphasising the child as the “independent constructor”²² of his or her own development. According to research cognitive development is not so abstract but is more closely tied to social attachments including socially prescribed routines and tasks.²³

- Individuality is dependent on aims and values. The human being is a vessel of aims and values. Aims and values must be considered when determining the individual, and aims and values can only be truly understood within a social context. Shlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit argue this point,

“We cannot analyse their behaviour as if they were abstract entities, as if their values existed somewhere in the distance, ‘outside’, so to speak. This is a critique of the image of the person put forward by the individualists, who tend to distinguish between who one is and the values one has.”²⁴

- There are dynamic links between society’s values and behaviour. Social Constructionist Vivien Burr concludes that key features – or values – of a specific society will affect an individual’s personality, she uses competition as an example,

“For example in a capitalist society competition is fundamental; society is structured around individuals and organisation that compete with each other for jobs markets etc...so that where competition is a fundamental feature of social economic life, what you will get is competitive people.”²⁵

- Charles Taylor argues the incoherence of individualism. He contends that human beings have capacities and the affirmation of human capacities, defined as the presence of characteristics and traits of individuals that ensure the possession of rights, has normative consequences in that it cultivates these capacities in a society. Liberalism’s core political value of the primacy of rights, affirms the capacities that were nurtured in a society, therefore the obligation to belong to a society should be as fundamental as the assertion of

rights.²⁶ However by asserting the primacy of rights, one cannot always claim an equally fundamental obligation because at times the assertion of an individual right is achieved at the expense of the society. To assert the rights to the point of destroying a society, deprives the environment for nurturing the required human capacities as well as prevents future individuals in exercising the same capacity, therefore rights can not be ensured if individual rights are taken as a priority (primacy) at the expense of society.

It can be concluded that the premise of Liberalism – individualism – is a false one. Its attempt to understand the individual or the self is incorrect as it seeks to dissociate the human being from its social reality, in other words, it argues that the individual is shaped, influenced and developed without any reference to social links. It logically follows that if an entire political outlook is based upon a false premise, its results will also be incorrect. In addition to this the ontological emphasis of individual rights at the expense of society leads to a vicious downward spiral, which will be elaborated in the next argument.

Practical & Social Research Perspective

Non-Cohesive Political Values

Liberalism's political values of individual freedoms and the primacy of individual rights, based upon the false premise of individualism, are non-cohesive. What is meant by non-cohesive is that these values do not facilitate social cohesion and do not evoke ideas that construct positive behaviours.

Since modern liberal states emphasise and propagate these values within western societies, their effects must be examined. If social breakdown is on the increase and it seems to be a permanent feature of liberal society, then it can be argued that the propagated non-cohesive values have had a role to play. This may seem like a form of 'guilty by association', however if the nature of societies are examined and modern social research is investigated it will bring to light the fact that propagated values and ideas in any society actually effects the actions and behaviours of that society.

Social Research: The Link Between Ideas and Society's Behaviour

So how do societies change due to propagate ideas and values? Why do people in that society conform? Conformity represents a form of social influence in which sources of influence – such as the political and social structures in a society – steer society's members into a particular way of thinking or behaving.²⁷ Society's thoughts and behaviours, resulting from propagated ideas and values, reflect different kinds of social influence and different kinds of conformity.²⁸ Social influence can be active or deliberate, as in persuasive communication and obedience, or passive and non-deliberate, as in social facilitation and conformity. A common feature of all social influence is the concept of the social norm. Social norms are rules that a group or society develops for appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.²⁹ Social norms are generally adhered to and two major motives for conformity involve the need to be right, known as 'informational social influence' and the need to be accepted by others, known as 'normative social influence'³⁰.

Informational Social Influence

Informational social influence (ISI) is a type of conformity based upon the individuals need for certainty. When an individual is in a situation where they are uncertain on how to behave or they are exposed to an ambiguous setting, the individual will conform if other peoples interpretation on how to behave or react is perceived as more certain or less subjective. This perception can be influenced by group size and the type of people the individual is referring to such as an influential figure. This will then lead the individual to comply in public and well as in private because they will genuinely believe that other people’s interpretation is more certain³¹. The figure below summarises ISI:



Normative Social Influence

Normative Social Influence (NSI) is a type of conformity that leads to an individual’s compliance in order to be liked and accepted by others and society. This compliance seems to occur more strongly if society has the ability to reward or punish individuals that do not adhere to its social norms. This can take many forms including belittlement and praise. An individual will publicly comply but it does not necessarily mean that they will in private.³² The figure below summarises NSI:



Since there is an established link between propagated values via a society's influential structures and its behaviour, then social malaise and social breakdown apparent in contemporary societies is due to these predominant values.

Liberal societies such as the United Kingdom and the United States are experiencing unparalleled and unprecedented social decay. Since these nations are liberal nations, and they propagate liberal political values in their societies, then liberal values have caused the social disasters that they face today.

Practical Perspective: The Negative Effects of Liberal Values

The assertion that the political values of the Liberalism have played a causative role in the social decay being witnessed today needs to be examined further. In February 2009 the Children's Society³³ launched *A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age*³⁴ report and it presented evidence that supports my thesis. The report states,

"Britain and the U.S. have more broken families than other countries, and our families are less cohesive in the way they live and eat together. British children are rougher with each other, and live more riskily in terms of alcohol, drugs and teenage pregnancy. And they are less inclined to stay in education. This comes against a background of much greater income inequality: many more children live in relative poverty in Britain and the U.S."³⁵

The report also supports this book's conclusions that social breakdown and decay is due to the premise of liberalism – individualism.

“But we believe there is one common theme that links all these problems: excessive individualism. This was identified as the leading social evil in the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's consultation on ‘social evils’.”³⁶

Individualism has affected our societies in an immense way, below are some statistical accounts of social breakdown in the two most liberal nations, the UK and US. There is a plethora of statistics that strongly indicated social decay in these countries however this essay has specifically chosen child abuse, the treatment of women and crime to bring to light the conclusion that the UK and US are experiencing social fragmentation and social malaise.

Child Abuse

The atomistic trends in modern liberal societies have effected the treatment towards the most vulnerable.

- The seventeen months of torture and agony inflicted on ‘Baby P’ is probably one of the worst stories of child abuse in the UK. The baby was found dead after months of torture with broken ribs and a broken back.³⁷ In the UK, according to NSPCC research,
 - 7% of children experienced serious physical abuse at the hands of their parents or carers during childhood.
 - 1% of children experienced sexual abuse by a parent or carer and another 3% by another relative during childhood.
 - 11% of children experienced sexual abuse by people known but unrelated to them. 5% of children experienced sexual abuse by an adult stranger or someone they had just met’.
 - 6% of children experienced serious absence of care at home during childhood.
 - 6% of children experienced frequent and severe emotional maltreatment during childhood.³⁸

- In the US an estimated 3.6 million children were accepted by state and local child protection services as alleged victims of child maltreatment for investigation or assessment.³⁹
 - An estimated 905,000 children were substantiated as victims of child abuse.

- 64.1% of substantiated cases were victims of neglect, while approximately 16.0% suffered from physical abuse, and 8.8% were sexually abused.
- An estimated 1,530 children died as a result of child maltreatment, an average four children everyday.
- Children 0-3 years of age accounted for 78% of child fatalities, while children under one year of age accounted for 44.2% of child fatalities.

Treatment of Women

Liberalism's political values have affected the way UK society treats women. According to Women's Resource Centre and Women's Aid⁴⁰,

Domestic Violence

- 1 in 4 women will be a victim of domestic violence.
- Two women are murdered every week by a current or a former partner.
- In any one year, there are 13 million separate incidents of physical violence or threats of violence against women from partners or former partners.
- 1 in 5 young men and 1 in 10 young women think that abuse or violence against women is acceptable.

Empowerment and Self-esteem

- 66 % of women in the UK would consider plastic surgery because of concerns about their looks.
- 63 % of young women aspire to be glamour models or lap dancers.
- 54 % of women became aware of the 'need' to be attractive between 6 - 17 years of age.

Unequal Pay & Employment

- In 2006, female graduates earned, on average, 15% less than their male counterparts at the age of 24; with this gender pay gap widening with age increasing to 40.5% for women graduates aged 41-45.

Prostitution

- There are estimated to be around 80,000 people involved in prostitution in the UK. However, many people believe that this figure is an underestimation.

- A 2002 study found that 74% of women involved in prostitution cited poverty, the need to pay household expenses and support their children, as a primary motivator for entering sex work.

Mental Health

- The NHS reported in 2009 that more than one in five of the adult female population experiences depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts.

Poverty

- Many older people, especially women over 75, experience severe poverty due to institutional failure, as levels of state pensions are determined according to years of employment.
- One in five single women pensioners live in poverty. In 2004, almost 1.3 million older women lived below the poverty line and suffered significant financial disadvantage - compared with men of the same age.

Safety

- Research published in 2006 identified that women aged 16 or over are 5 times as likely as men to feel very unsafe walking alone in their area after dark.

Child Abuse

- An NSPCC prevalence study in 2000 found that around 21% of girls surveyed experienced some form of child sexual abuse. The majority of children who experienced sexual abuse had more than one sexually abusive experience.
- The UK is not alone in its maltreatment of women, in the US a woman is raped every 6 minutes and battered every 15 seconds.⁴¹

Crime: UK

The effect of Liberalism's non-cohesive values can also be seen in the following U.K. crime figures,

- 2,164,000 violent incidents during 2007/08 against adults in England and Wales⁴²
- Approximately 47,000 rapes occur every year in the U.K.⁴³

- Increase in murder rates. Metropolitan Police reported the most incidents, with 167 murders in 2007/8, up from 158.⁴⁴

Mr Justice Coleridge, a Family Division judge for England and Wales, comments on social and family breakdown, describing it as a,

“...never ending carnival of human misery - a ceaseless river of human distress.”⁴⁵

Crime: US

The US is also suffering from social breakdown and social decay⁴⁶, the US suffers from,

- 16,204 murders a year⁴⁷
- 9,369 murders with firearms in one year⁴⁸
- 2,019,234 prisoners and this has increased since 2002⁴⁹
- 95,136 rapes per year⁵⁰
- 420,637 robberies per year⁵¹
- 11,877,218 total crimes per year⁵²

The late Urie Bronfenbrenner, the Jacob Gould Schurman Professor Emeritus of Human Development and author of *The State of Americans: This Generation and the Next*⁵³, highlights the social problems faced by the US,

“The signs of this breakdown are all around us in the ever growing rates of alienation, apathy, rebellion, delinquency and violence among American youth...”⁵⁴

It can be seen that the UK and US are suffering from social breakdown and social decay. The social collapse of the two most liberal nations is due to their ideological convictions – liberalism. There is a direct correlation between Liberalism’s non-cohesive political values, their premise of individualism and the social problems highlighted in this essay.

Legal Perspective

In a liberal society, the coercive power of the state is only used with reluctance. Concerning individuals' personal lives the state will be particularly conscious of the freedom of the individual, unless a convincing reason can be found to do otherwise. The problem with this is that the 'convincing' reason will be analysed via the lens of individualism, which in many cases means asserting individual rights to the point of tearing down a society.

Legal theorists generally agree that, in liberal societies, law fulfils basic values.⁵⁵ The basic values of a liberal society's legal system are: order, justice and personal freedom. Professor of Civil Law Peter Stein explains how these values require delicate balance when legislators make new laws,

"These are the three basic values of the legal system. We criticise the law when something happens which suggests the law is deficient in any of them. But rarely do we call for them all together. In western society all are needed and the balance among them is a delicate one."⁵⁶

Since personal or individual freedom is a fundamental value taken into consideration when creating new laws, it can be argued that law, in a liberal society, tends to be individualistic. This may sound like a generalisation, however there are many cases that exhibit the emphasis on individual freedoms and rights to the extent that society – which includes many individuals – is harmed.

It can be argued that liberal values do not contribute to good legislation. The reason for this is the atomistic nature of liberal values on which liberal societies base their law. This will be brought to light via research that substantiates the fact that there is a direct correlation between the consumption of pornography and rape. By doing so this essay will highlight that the legal basis for pornography is not good legislation and this is due to the fact that the liberal legal framework is based on the false premise of individualism.

Pornography a Causal Factor in Rape

Pornography and related material is a good example to show the individualistic propensities in the liberal legal system. Pornography is legal in liberal societies, for example, the UK in 2000 legalised hardcore pornography. However, more recently in the UK it was announced on August

30th 2006 that possession of depictions of rape would become a criminal offence; however aggression and violence were not included. Additionally the Criminal Justice and immigration Act 2008 introduced a new offence, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland of the possession of extreme pornographic images; again aggression and violence were not included.⁵⁷ The notes to the 2008 Act only mention:

- an act which threatens a person's life,
- an act which results, or is likely to result, in serious injury to a person's anus, breasts or genitals,
- an act which involves or appears to involve sexual interference with a human corpse,
- a person performing or appearing to perform an act of intercourse or oral sex with an animal (whether dead or alive)⁵⁸

All other acts of aggression and violence depicted in pornographic material are still legal.

The rights of an individual seemed to have been outweighed by the effects of pornographic material on the wider society. Pornography, both violent and non-violent, is a major causal factor for the occurrence of rape in modern society. Although there are multi-causal theories established for the crime of rape, empirical and social research evidence is overwhelming in affirming that pornography is a major facilitating and causal factor.

"I don't need studies and statistics to tell me that there is a relationship between pornography and real violence against women. My body remembers."⁵⁹

The above woman's testimony taken in 1983 is just one voice of the thousands upon thousands of women who have been physically and emotionally abused as a result of the consumption of legal pornographic material. This woman's anguish about her experience is not just an emotional unsubstantiated claim, there is ample of evidence to show how pornography that is legal in the UK and US has caused rape. For instance Diana E. Russel in her publication *Pornography & Rape: A causal model* states,

"My theory about how pornography – violent and non-violent – can cause rape...I have drawn on the findings of recent research to support my theory....Just as smoking is not the only cause of lung cancer, neither is pornography the only cause of rape. I believe there are many factors that play a causal role in this crime. I have not attempted here to evaluate the relative

importance of these different causal factors, but merely to show the overwhelming evidence that pornography is a major one of them⁶⁰

In this study it cited journals and studies which concluded that,

- 56% of rapists implicated pornography in the commission of their offences,
- 66% of rapists claimed they were incited by pornography,
- 25 – 30 % of college students would rape if they could get away with it.

The liberal world view would not ban or criminalise pornography because society is not considered and emphasized under the liberal value of individual freedom. As can be seen above, liberal values are not conducive to good legislation because the values that underpin law in liberal societies are individualistic and ignore social obligations, links and attachments. Pornography both violent and non-violent has been shown to cause rape, and due to the individualistic propensities in the development of liberal law, society is ignored and women have to face the dehumanization process of this legal activity, and it's facilitation of this terrible crime.

The Islamic Solution

Since non-cohesive liberal values have directly contributed to social breakdown, then an obvious solution is to propagate cohesive values with the relevant social models and mechanisms to achieve a cohesive society. It can be strongly argued that Islamic cohesive political values are an answer to the problems faced by liberal societies.

Islam's view on society doesn't rest on a false premise; rather it has a unique view on the society and the individual. This philosophy is best described by the following hadith⁶¹,

“God's messenger gave an example of people sailing on a boat having an upper deck and a lower deck. The people from the lower deck require water and request water from the people of the upper deck. The people from the upper deck refuse water, so the people from the lower deck decide to make a hole in the floor of the ship and get water from the sea. God's messenger said, ‘If the people from the upper deck don't stop the people at the bottom from making a hole, the ship will sink and all the people travelling will drown.’”⁶²

This hadith gives a clear view that individuals are part of society and the society is part of the individual. It highlights the need for a symbiotic relationship between society and the individual. Certain actions, values and behaviour of individuals in a society can affect it in negative way, especially if these actions and values are non-cohesive. Hence, Islam propagates cohesive values in its society to prevent the ‘boat from sinking’, in other words preventing social breakdown and facilitating social cohesion.

These cohesive values include justice, compassion, empathy, distribution of resources, tolerance and accountability. The source texts of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Hadith (also known as the Sunnah), which are the bedrock of Islamic Law known as the Shariah, seeks to propagate these cohesive values. The Qur'an and the Hadith strongly emphasise these values, for example:

“The best of all jihad is a word of truth to a tyrant ruler”⁶³

“Let there be among you people that command the good, enjoining what is right and forbidding the wrong. They indeed are the successful.”⁶⁴

“...judge with justice between them. Verily, God loves those who act justly.”⁶⁵

“What will explain to you what the steep path is? It is to free a slave, to feed at a time of hunger, an orphaned relative or a poor person in distress, and to be one of those who believe and urge one another to steadfastness and compassion”⁶⁶

“...bear witness impartially: do not let the hatred of others lead you away from justice, but adhere to justice, for that is closer to the awareness of God. Be mindful of God...”⁶⁷

“Woe to every slanderer, defamer. Who amasses wealth and considers it a provision against mishap; He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal”⁶⁸

These cohesive values were once propagated in the Muslim world. Many commentators argue that these essential political values have disappeared due to Muslim nations not adopting Islamic political theory comprehensively. However, much evidence can be sited via historical references, when the Islamic cohesive political values were once disseminated in the Muslim world. For example, Amnon Cohen, an American Jewish historian, studied the 16th century documents stored in the archives of the Shariah religious court of Jerusalem (commonly known as sijill), whereby he found 1000 Jewish cases filed from the year 1530 to 1601 CE. Cohen published his research in 1994 during which he made some astonishing discoveries, as he himself states,

“Cases concerning Jews cover a very wide spectrum of topics. If we bear in mind that the Jews of Jerusalem had their own separate courts, the number of cases brought to Muslim court (which actually meant putting themselves at the mercy of a judge outside the pale of their communal and religious identity) is quite impressive⁶⁹...The Jews went to the Muslim court for a variety of reasons, but the overwhelming fact was their ongoing and almost permanent presence there. This indicates that they went there not only in search of justice, but did so hoping, or rather knowing, that more often than not they would attain redress when wronged...”⁷⁰

Cohen further elaborates upon the Jewish condition in the 16th century Ottoman Jerusalem,

“Their possessions were protected, although they might have had to pay for extra protection at night for their houses and commercial properties. Their title deeds and other official documents indicating their rights were honoured when presented to the court, being treated like those of

their Muslim neighbours⁷¹...The picture emerging from the sijill documents is baffling. On the one hand we encounter recurring Sultan's decrees sent to Jerusalem – in response to pleas of the Jews – to the effect that ‘nothing should be done to stop them from applying their own law’ regarding a variety of matters. There are also many explicit references to the overriding importance of applying Shari’a law to them only if they so choose. On the other hand, if we look closely at some of the inheritance lists, we see that the local court allocated to female members of Jewish families half the share given to male members, exactly as in Islamic law. This meant, ipso facto, a significant improvement in the status of Jewish women with respect to legacies over that accorded them by Jewish tradition, although it actually meant the application of Islamic law in an internal Jewish context⁷² ...he [the Muslim Judge] defended Jewish causes jeopardized by high-handed behaviour of local governors; he enabled Jewish business people and craftsmen to lease properties from Muslim endowments on an equal footing with Muslim bidders; more generally, he respected their rituals and places of worship and guarded them against encroachment even when the perpetrators were other Muslim dignitaries.”⁷³

And finally Amnon Cohen describes the effectiveness of Islamic cohesive values,

”No one interfered with their internal organisation or their external cultural and economic activities...In a world where civil and political equality, or positive social change affecting the group or even the individual were not the norms, the Sultan’s Jewish subjects had no reason to mourn their status or begrudge their conditions of life. The Jews of Ottoman Jerusalem enjoyed religious and administrative autonomy within an Islamic state, and as a constructive, dynamic element of the local economy and society they could – and actually did – contribute to its functioning.”⁷⁴

A Note on Minorities

In a world dominated by the Liberal outlook, minorities have undoubtedly faced many problems. The reason Liberalism fails minorities is because it is in continuous need of temporary adjustment to address their issues. Political Philosopher Charles Taylor provides an interesting analysis of Liberalism which leads him to conclude that it can not accommodate for people of different cultural backgrounds. Under the liberal outlook minorities are not equal in dignity due to the fact that recognition of someone’s culture and heritage is necessary to dignify that person. This is because the individual is crucially dependent on recognition by others to determine who that person is. Since Liberalism does not account for this recognition due to its focus on shaping

peoples values to be inline with the liberal outlook, then it does not dignify the person who belongs to a minority group with an alternative heritage alien to the liberal tradition.⁷⁵

As can be seen with Amnon Cohen's research, under the cohesive political values of Islam these problems seem to have been virtually non-existent. In light of this, Islam needs to be read with an open mind in order to appreciate that its political values are a foundation for an entirely unique and cohesive way of life, as Author Lex Hixon states,

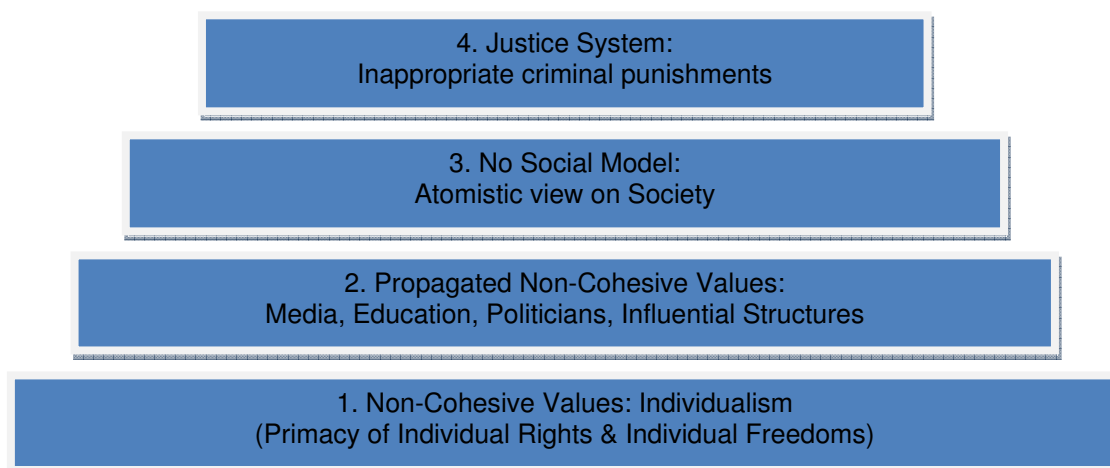
"Neither as Christians or Jews, nor simply as intellectually responsible individuals, have members of Western Civilisation been sensitively educated or even accurately informed about Islam... even some persons of goodwill who have gained acquaintance with Islam continue to interpret the reverence for the prophet Muhammad and the global acceptance of his message as an inexplicable survival of the zeal of an ancient desert tribe. This view ignores fourteen centuries of Islamic civilisation, burgeoning with artists, scholars, statesmen, philanthropists, scientists, chivalrous warriors, philosophers... as well as countless men and women of devotion and wisdom from almost every nation of the planet. The coherent world civilisation called Islam, founded in the vision of the Qur'an, cannot be regarded as the product of individual and national ambition, supported by historical accident."⁷⁶

Many liberals may argue that these values are shared by all; however Islam propagates these values and doesn't create a competition between cohesive values and non-cohesive values like we see in Liberal societies. Hence, Islam makes its cohesive values part of its political and social make up, which is in contrast to Liberalism's individualistic and atomistic outlook. Islam offers a practical alternative to Liberalism as its political values rest on a strong premise and its core political values are cohesive.

Social Models: Islam and Liberalism

Propagating cohesive values alone is too simplistic to achieve positive results in a society. Although cohesive values are a fundamental feature of a cohesive society, they are inadequate if they do not sit within a workable social model. Liberalism's failure is not only due to its lack of cohesive values, it is also due to an absence of an effective social model. This absence is directly caused by the philosophical underpinnings of Liberalism which has already been discussed.

Liberalism's social framework is illustrated below:



1. As illustrated above a Liberal society lacks cohesive values. The main values that are politicised and propagated are non-cohesive individualistic values. This doesn't mean that there are no entities that attempt to promote cohesive type of values; however these are in competition with individualistic values. Furthermore these cohesive values will be implemented and viewed via the individualist lens. For example distribution of resources, which a key economic problem, in a liberal society, relies mostly on charity organisations. The nature of charities is that it seeks to receive funds by engaging with the public's conscious. However the issue is that people are given individual choice whether to participate in charity or not. In an Islamic society, charity is seen as an obligation and a fundamental part of Islamic economy. The obligation of charity takes seriously the number one problem in economics, the distribution of resources, and it shows the cohesive nature of that society. Dealing with such an important economic problem in such an individualist way, shows how in liberal societies even when cohesive values are propagated they are translated via the lens of individualism.

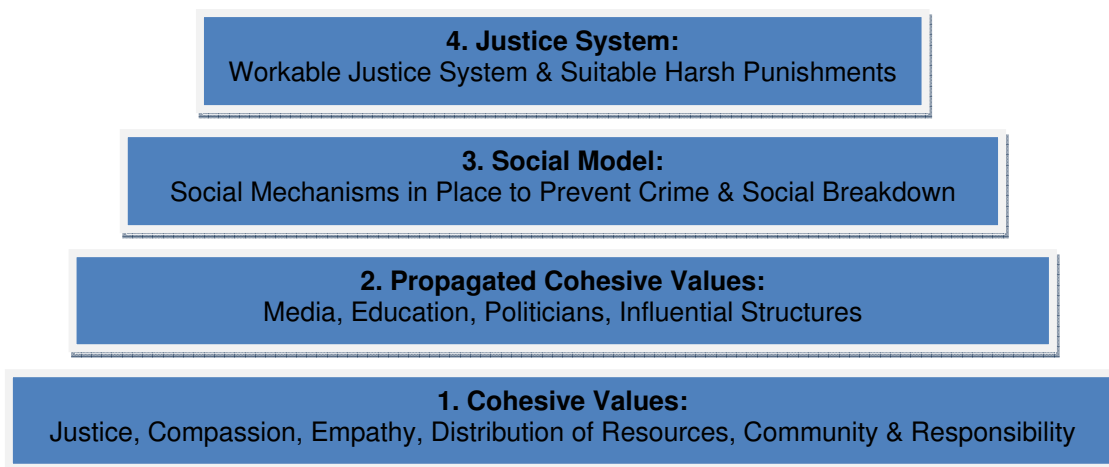
2. Its non-cohesive values are propagated via the influential structures in society including the media and politics. In essence these values are politicised, for example, Leader of the Conservative Party in Britain, David Cameron said, during a speech to the Foreign Policy Centre,

“It is a shared home with values which make it tolerant and hospitable in the first place. We need to build that home together. We need to re-assert faith in our shared British values which help guarantee stability, tolerance and civility. If we lack belief in ourselves, then we transmit a fatal lack of resolution to defend liberal values against those who would destroy

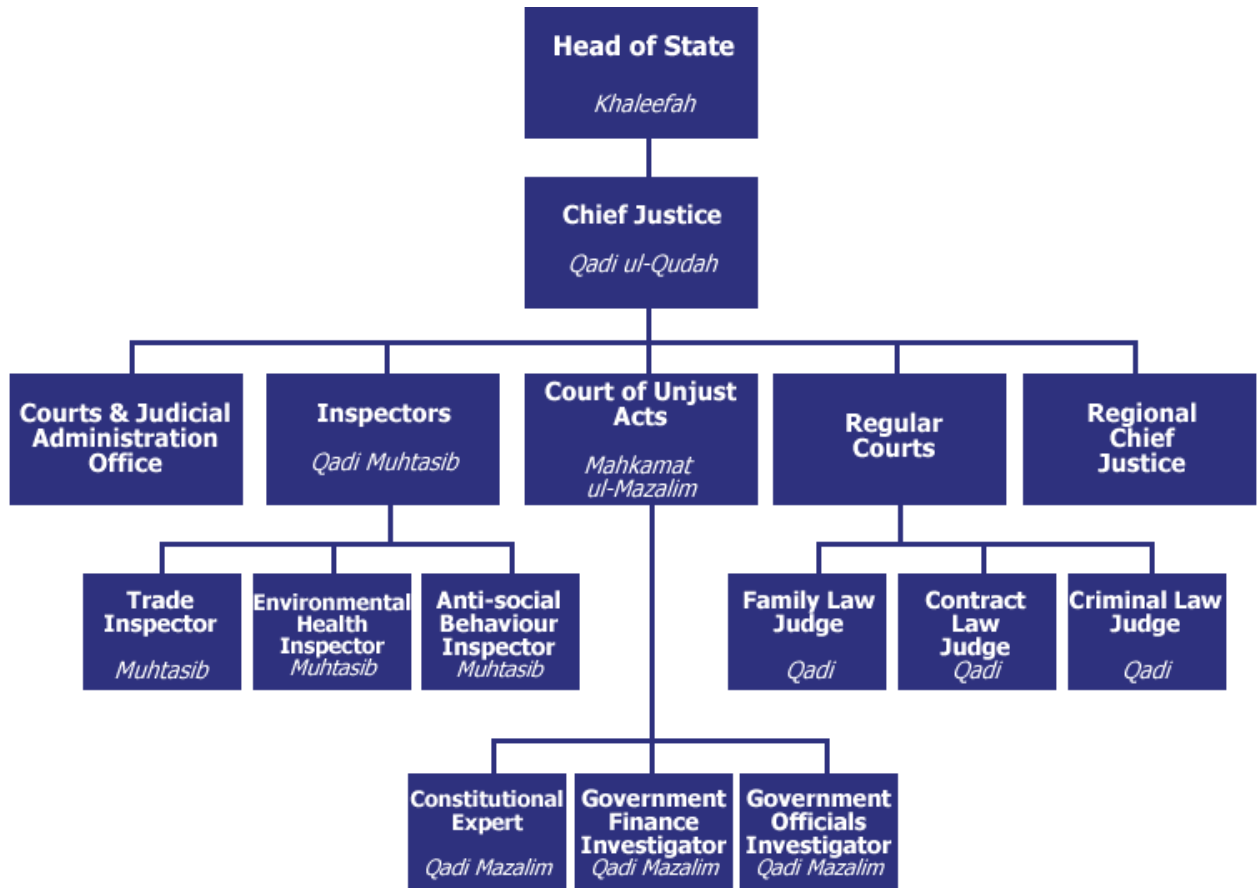
them. Sometimes liberalism can decay into relativism, and respect for others can become an unwillingness to proclaim confidence in what we know to be right.”⁷⁷

3. This sits within an atomistic view on society, in other words, society is recognised just as a collection of individuals and not as an entity in itself. Simply put, the dynamics of societal relationships are not entirely recognised other than through the lens of individualism.
4. In addition to this, in Liberal societies there is a weak criminal justice system that is failing and has inappropriate punishments. Taking the UK as an example, its criminal justice system is facing immense problems:
 - The system is bringing justice in only 3% of offences committed.
 - Punishment is not changing the behaviour of repeat offenders.
 - The courts are still not equipped with powers to attack the problems which generate crime, with the result that they continue to send too many defendants to custody.
 - Courts continue to experience delays - 24% of prisoners are not delivered to court on time; 52% of civilian witnesses come to court and do not give evidence; 64% of prosecution witnesses come to court and do not give evidence. Files of evidence provided by police to prosecutors are on time and up to quality in only 43% of cases; and the preparation by prosecutors is effective in only 60% of cases.
 - Forty-four per cent of fines are unpaid; up to 40% of community punishments are unserved.⁷⁸

In contrast to this the Islamic Social Model, illustrated below, is conceptually and practically enhanced:



1. As illustrated above the Islamic Social Model has stronger foundations due to its cohesive values.
2. These values are propagated via the influential structures in the Islamic society which includes the media, education and politics. These cohesive values are elevated from communal consensus to the political realm. In this way they become more influential and ensure that they embed themselves in Islamic society. For example in the Islamic society the values with manifest themselves via:
 - a. Law: Islamic law provides mechanisms to ensure cohesive behaviour.
 - b. Communications and Media: the Friday sermon, Radio, Posters, Bill Boards, Media Outlets etc.
 - c. Politics: Islamic leadership, at all levels, will promote cohesiveness. All of which will be based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
 - d. Collective Social Conscious: Individual choice is replace by ideas of social obligation.
3. Additionally the Islamic model provides mechanisms to prevent social breakdown. For example the excessive agitation of human instincts - such as the survival instinct - would be monitored and managed – which would be a contributing factor in preventing unnecessary crime such as theft and fraud. Liberal societies, where competition for goods is an essential feature for a functioning economy, have facilitated excessive marketing campaigns, including an increase in social and peer pressure, which has contributed to crime. Studies have shown that if the perception of what is required to survive is taken outside of a competitive and excessive marketing context, it reduces the desire to obtain the unobtainable. Psychologist Clive Hollin agrees that if crimes are the end result of criminals seizing the opportunity to make a personal, usually financial gain, then the opportunity or situation should be looked at as well as the criminal.⁷⁹
4. The Islamic model will ensure that it has a workable justice system⁸⁰ that is transparent and truly independent.⁸¹ The entire justice system also known as the judiciary is illustrated below:



www.caliphate.eu

The *Judge of the Court for Unjust Acts* known as Qadi al-Madhaalim is a useful example to show that Islam has an effective justice system. This judge is a category of judges within the criminal justice system of Islam consisting of judges who settle disputes arising among the people. This judge has jurisdiction within a court called Mahkamat al-Madhaalim translated as *The Court of Unjust Acts*. In essence, this judge of *The Court of Unjust Acts* is appointed to remove all unjust acts within the Islamic society, whether they are committed by the ruler, governors, or any other official. In cases of disputes between the people and the officials of the Islamic society, the judge of this court has the right to dismiss the official once his negligence of the law or injustice committed upon the people is established.⁸²

As examples, this court may investigate all matters executed by the Islamic system involving discrimination upon citizens, improper application of the law, improper interpretation of the law and negligence by the ruler, including forcing a tax unduly upon the citizens of the Islamic society. This is a unique process unheard of and not practiced in Liberal societies. Richard W. Bulliet a professor of history at Columbia University, who specializes in the

history of Islamic society and institutions, highlights this point in his book *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization*,

“...minutely studying case after case, they have shown that justice was generally meted out impartially, irrespective of religion, official status, gender...Not being subject to the sharia, Jews and Christians were free to go to their own religious authorities for adjudication of disputes; but in many cases they went instead to the Qadi [Islamic Judge].”⁸³

Finally the Islamic model prescribes suitably harsh punishments (hudud). These punishments are often described as ‘barbaric’ however this perception is based upon the liberal outlook to crime and society. If the punishments are viewed in the context of the Islamic Social Model, without superimposing Liberal values on the discussion, these perceptions will change. This is because these punishments are a deterrent and a last resort, additionally an individual will have to ‘escape’ the cohesive values and the mechanisms put in place to prevent the individual from committing a crime. One of the most powerful arguments for the deterrent effect of harsh punishments and the death penalty comes from the commonsense notion that people are conscious of pain or death more than a relatively short and comfortable life in prison. Ernest van den Haag, the late professor at Fordham University and a noted proponent of capital punishment stated,

“What is feared most deters most.”⁸⁴

Professor van den Haag also argues that harsh punishments should be, on grounds of justice alone.⁸⁵ He states,

“To me, the life of any innocent victim who might be spared has great value; the life of a convicted murderer does not.”⁸⁶

The Islamic model is unlike the situation in the US where capital punishment is still enforced in certain states yet commentators argue that US capital punishment has not reduced crime. This is because capital punishment in the US does not sit within a cohesive social model where it is viewed as a last resort, after the criminal ‘escaping’ the cohesive values and the mechanisms put in place to prevent the crime in the first place.

Islamic punishments are suitably harsh, but Muslims completely reject the accusation that these rules are barbaric. They serve as a deterrent to ward off the occurrence of crime in society. The Qur’an views oppressive trials and hardship as worse than killing⁸⁷, hence for

some crimes, capital punishment is a suitable punishment. To contextualise this even further, Islamic law requires higher burdens of proof for conviction, for example there are eleven preconditions for the punishment for theft to be applied.⁸⁸ Professor of Law at Harvard University Noah Feldman states,

“Today, when we invoke the harsh punishments prescribed by Shariah for a handful of offences, we rarely acknowledge the high standards of proof necessary for their implementation.”⁸⁹

Islamic law actually gives the defendant greater basic rights, but also recognises that society has rights too. For example with regards to burden of proof, Islam requires much higher levels of proof compared to the liberal tradition of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’. In this regards the Prophet Muhammad said,

“...if a person has a way [e.g., alibi, excuses] let them go for it is better for a judge to make a mistake in dismissing charges than in applying the punishment on an innocent.”⁹⁰

In other words there must be no doubt at all rather than the liberal concept of beyond reasonable doubt, which is based upon common sense rather than absolute certainty. The Islamic concept considers absolute certainty as the criteria for passing criminal judgements.

Islamic law exists to protect both the individual and society, defining when one outweighs the other which is a point that seems to have been lost or ignored in liberal societies today. The Islamic Social Model is a comprehensive model that is layered with cohesive values and justice. The Liberal Social Model is a crude model that doesn't fully recognise society and is layered with non-cohesive values and a failing criminal justice system.

Some of the Fruits of the Islamic Social Model

Since Islamic political values are not being implemented in any Muslim country today, historical references must be investigated to highlight some of the results of its Social Model. The reason for this is due to the fact that Islam's political values and its models were implemented in history. It must be noted here that the Islamic Social Model can not be established successfully without a fully functioning Islamic Government, also known as the Khilafah (Caliphate). This is because Islamic Governance is a comprehensive system where all of its models and mechanisms are interdependent and interlink with one another. For example the Islamic Economic Model is

interdependent with the Islamic Social Model as the requirements for a cohesive society is that all essential needs are met which include food, shelter and clothing. These needs cannot be satisfied without the Islamic Economic Model which fundamentally rests on the premise that individual needs are limited and defined. This is in contrast to the Liberal Economic Model which rests on the false premise that there are too many needs and not enough resources. This is a geopolitical myth which has facilitated the competitive nature of Liberal Economics and its lack of distributing wealth and resources. Below are some of the Islamic cohesive values with historical references exhibiting the positive manifestations of these cohesive values.

Kindness & Liberty

The Qur'an expresses kindness and liberty of belief,

"There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path."⁹¹

"What will explain to you what the steep path is? It is to free a slave, to feed at a time of hunger, an orphaned relative or a poor person in distress, and to be one of those who believe and urge one another to steadfastness and compassion."⁹²

Heinrich Graetz, a 19th century Jewish historian expressed how Islamic rule in Spain favoured the Jews in the context of kindness and liberty of belief,

"It was in these favourable circumstances that the Spanish Jews came under the rule of Mahometans, as whose allies they esteemed themselves the equals of their co-religionists in Babylonia and Persia. They were kindly treated, obtained religious liberty, of which they had so long been deprived, were permitted to exercise jurisdiction over their co-religionists, and were only obliged, like the conquered Christians, to pay poll tax..."⁹³

Tolerance and Popular Rule

Reinhart Dozy, an authority on early Islamic Spain, states with regards to Islamic tolerance,

"...the unbounded tolerance of the Arabs must also be taken into account. In religious matters they put pressure on no man...Christians preferred their rule to that of the Franks."⁹⁴

Ulick R. Burke, a prominent historian specializing in the history of Spain, reached a similar conclusion,

“Christians did not suffer in any way, on account of their religion, at the hands of Moors...not only perfect toleration but nominal equality was the rule of the Arabs in Spain.”⁹⁵

These historical realities were as a result of the cohesive values of Islam. The Qur’an states,

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”⁹⁶

Justice

The Qur’an resonates with teachings of justice,

“O You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, God is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, God is aware of what you do.”⁹⁷

“... God loves the just.”⁹⁸

“O You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of God, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to faith. Heed God [alone]. God is aware of what you do.”⁹⁹

In Islamic history, where the cohesive values of Islam such as justice were propagated, the conclusions made by some historians are unparalleled, an Italian Rabbi, Obadiah Yareh Da Bertinoro, travelled to Jerusalem in 1486 CE and he wrote a letter to his father telling him about the country and its people under the Islamic Social Model,

“The Jews are not persecuted by the Arabs in these parts. I have travelled through the country in its length and breadth, and none of them has put an obstacle in my way. They are very kind to strangers, particularly to anyone who does not know the language; and if they see many

Jews together they are not annoyed by it. In my opinion, an intelligent man versed in political science might easily raise himself to be chief of the Jews as well as of the Arabs...”¹⁰⁰

The Jewish historian Amnon Cohen states that the Jewish minorities sought justice from the Islamic courts rather than their own,

“The Jews went to the Muslim court for a variety of reasons, but the overwhelming fact was their ongoing and almost permanent presence there. This indicates that they went there not only in search of justice, but did so hoping, or rather knowing, that more often than not they would attain redress when wronged...”¹⁰¹

Distribution of Resources

The distribution of wealth and resources constitutes the macro-economy of the Islamic economic model; the Qur’an repeatedly mentions distribution of resources and charity.

“Do good to the indigent till their economic imbalance is no more.”¹⁰²

“Feed the indigent, without wishing any return from them, not even a word of thanks.”¹⁰³

The famous letter from a Rabbi found in Phillip Mansel’s book ‘Constantinople’, reflects the Qur’anic reality of distributing resources,

“Here in the land of the Turks we have nothing to complain of. We possess great fortunes; much gold and silver are in our hands. We are not oppressed with heavy taxes and our commerce is free and unhindered. Rich are the fruits of the earth. Everything is cheap and every one of us lives in peace and freedom...”¹⁰⁴

Justice, kindness, tolerance and the distribution of resources are just some of the cohesive values that are propagated in the Islamic Social Model. It can be concluded that under this model people lived under a cohesive society full of justice and kindness, the type of society that is needed today.

Conclusion

Liberalism has failed humanity because its premise of individualism arose from a specific historical context that no longer exists today. Therefore Liberalism's premise is invalid. Additionally, individualism is philosophically incorrect as it views the human being as an abstract entity divorced from necessary social attachments. It has also produced atomistic tendencies in modern societies resulting in social breakdown and social decay.

Liberalism's core political values of individual freedoms and the primacy of individual rights are non-cohesive values that have facilitated the social problems faced by liberal societies. These non-cohesive values propagated in western nations have affected their collective behaviour, a reality that has been substantiated by social research on conformity and influence. In contrast to this, Islam has a unique view on society and its propagated cohesive values have produced positive results via its workable social model.

However, this is just intellectual gymnastics. We need to realise the implications of this discussion. Therefore it is strongly advised that the reader to understand the importance of this analysis which must not be ignored or just taken to be ideological rhetoric. This essay has attempted to question Liberalism as a political outlook, something which in political and popular culture discourse just doesn't occur. This dangerous silence is due to the insistence that Liberalism should not be questioned as it is the best that we have. However, the best that we have has failed and it has affected human lives in the most destructive way. Additionally this crude mentality is a fallacy that has been uncovered in this essay.

Significantly it must be noted that policy and legislative changes will not solve the social crisis experienced in liberal societies. We have already tried that method and failed. Now it is time to question the underlying values of liberal nations and find workable solutions based upon cohesive values that will bring us out of this social decay. It can be argued these cohesive values must be the Islamic values and the workable solution is the Islamic Social Model. This personal conclusion has been validated in this book and it is a conclusion shared by many. The Prolific Author and Professor of Arabic and Islam Kenneth Cragg, who studied the Qur'an, which is the basis for the Islamic way of life, stated that in order for humanity to deal with the challenges it faces today,

"...multitudes of mankind...will need to be guided and persuaded Qur'anically."¹⁰⁵

In other words, mankind must be guided and persuaded Islamically.

Appendix 1

Responding to contentions

Although Liberalism emerged from a specific European problem; it has shown that its political values are universal, because Liberalism seems to be working.

Liberalism is not working. Liberalism has a principle of neutrality which means that liberal nations do not, or in theory, should not promote any conception of the 'good life'. In other words liberal nations must allow a 'market place' of conflicting and competing conceptions of the 'good life'. According to this principle, the best conception of the 'good life' will emerge due to the assumption that individuals will make the best choices on how to live their lives. The main issue with this is that it does not take into account the effect of influential structures in society and ignores the influence of those who have power and resources in order to propagate their version of the 'good life'. The implications of this are that a negative conception of how to live our lives can become the norm due to these influential structures. This has happened in many liberal societies, something which has been highlighted further in this essay.

The individualist view may be criticised conceptually, but it has protected the individual and his rights.

Liberalism doesn't have a monopoly on protecting individual rights. In fact, Liberalism has failed to protect the individual because when matters of national security are raised, national assembly can vote down the rights of individuals. This can be seen in the erosion of civil liberties in the US and UK under the banner of national security. Islam however protects the rights of the individual because national assembly cannot vote down these rights as they are believed to be divine law, and divine law cannot be voted down.

Did not the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) engage in civil war? Is this not an example of a conflict between 'Church and State'?

This is not an example of a clash between those in power and those who are not. The reasons for this are because the conflict between the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) years after his death was due to not compromising on some theological and political principles. There is not one instance in the 1400 year history of Islam that people living under the Islamic state did

people attempt to remove Islam from the political arena. Simply put, Islam does not share European history.

Liberalism did develop due to specific historical circumstances, but this doesn't mean liberalism cannot be applied today.

It is true that although a particular idea arose from a historical circumstance it can still be applicable today. Take Islam for an example, Islam has its intellectual roots pegged in the 7th century but its values, laws and concepts are applicable today. Reasons for this include that they have come from the divine, they deal with timeless human needs and problems, and they have been tested and have worked for 1400 years. However Liberalism fundamental premise of individualism was developed only to deal with the problem of Catholic intolerance. However individualism has been shown to be a false view and it has facilitated contemporary social problems, something which has been highlighted in this essay.

Individualism is the only way to protect the rights of the individual and society.

This contention presumes an individualist view on society to be true. Upon studying society it can be seen that it is made up of the following:

1. Individuals and
2. Permanent relationships between these individuals.

These relationships are shaped and governed by:

1. Common thoughts,
2. Common emotions and
3. A common system.

According to the individualist view only the first point is considered. So in reality the rights of the individual or society are not protected properly because they are not understood in their true context.

Liberal societies may focus on individualism, however in reality there are many mechanisms in US and UK society that promote more cohesive values.

This is accurate. However these cohesive values are in competition with non-cohesive values. It can be argued that in Liberal societies such as the UK there are institutions and certain media outlets that promote cohesive values, however the main influential structures in a Liberal society promote non-cohesive values. In addition to this the cohesive values that are being propagated are in perceived via the lens of individualism. Take the following as an example:

An advert on the Tube (metro) on the London network advises the passengers to give up their seats for the elderly. This seems like a very cohesive and positive thing to advertise. However this will be viewed via the lens of individual freedom, in other words it is based on personal choice. Now if the advert reminded to all that it is a social obligation to give up your seat to those who need it most, then the results would be different. Finally it can be argued that why must an advert be there in the first place, something which should be seen as a natural output of a cohesive society?

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- ⁴⁶ <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=9621>
- ⁴⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>
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- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*
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- ⁶¹ The recorded sayings, actions and consent of the Prophet Muhammad (p).
- ⁶² Mishkaat vol. 2 p. 436
- ⁶³ Sunan of Abu-Dawood, Hadith 2040
- ⁶⁴ Qur'an Chapter 3 verse 104
- ⁶⁵ Qur'an Chapter 5 verse 42
- ⁶⁶ Qur'an Chapter 90 verses 11-20
- ⁶⁷ Qur'an Chapter 5 verse 8
- ⁶⁸ Qur'an Chapter 10 verse 1-3
- ⁶⁹ Amnon Cohen, *A World Within: Jewish Life as Reflected in Muslim Court Documents from the Sijill of Jerusalem (XVIth Century)*. Part One, 1994, Pennsylvania, p. 8.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid. p 17
- ⁷¹ Ibid. p 18
- ⁷² Ibid. p 20 - 21
- ⁷³ Ibid. p 22
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- ⁷⁵ Charles Taylot. 1994. *The Politics of Recognition*, in Amy Gutman (ed). *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton University Press.
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- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ "Fitnah is worse than killing." (Qur'an chapter 2, verses 217)
- ⁸⁸ 'Abd ar-Rahman I. Doi revised and expanded by 'Abdassamad Clarke. *Sharia'ah: Islamic Law*. Ta-Ha. 2008. p 2388-390.
- ⁸⁹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/16/magazine/16Shariah-t.html> - This essay is adapted from his book "The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State"
- ⁹⁰ Reported by at-Tirmidhi, in Sunan at-Tirmidh
- ⁹¹ Qur'an Chapter 2 verse 256.

⁹² Qur'an Chapter 90 Verses 11-20

⁹³ H. Graetz. History of the Jews. London, 1892, Vol 3, p. 112.

⁹⁴ Reinhart Dozy. A History of Muslims in Spain. 1861 (reprinted 1913, 2002), Delhi, p 235.

⁹⁵ Ulick R. Burke. A History of Spain, London. 1900, Vol I, P. 129.

⁹⁶ Qur'an Chapter 49 Verse 13

⁹⁷ Qur'an Chapter 4 Verse 135

⁹⁸ Qur'an Chapter 5 Verse 42

⁹⁹ Qur'an Chapter 5 Verse 8

¹⁰⁰ Rabbi Obadiah Yareh Da Bertinoro, quoted in The Jewish Caravan edited by Leo W. Schwarz, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1946, p. 249.

¹⁰¹ A World Within: Jewish Life as Reflected in Muslim Court Documents from the Sijill of Jerusalem (XVIth Century). Part One, 1994, Pennsylvania, p. 17.

¹⁰² Qur'an Chapter 2 Verse 83

¹⁰³ Qur'an Chapter 76 Verses 6 - 9

¹⁰⁴ Philip Mansel. 1995. Constantinople: City of the World's desire, 1453-1924. Penguin Books, p. 15

¹⁰⁵ K Cragg. 1994. The Event of the Qur'an. 2nd Edition. Oxford: One world, p. 23