

Research Article

Contemporary Discourse on Citizenship: An Islamic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

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The pre-modern practices of political institutions of Muslims are no longer compatible with nation-state framework. The new classifications, *Dār al-Shahādah* (Abode of Testimony), *Dār al-Ahd* (Abode of Truce) and *Dār al-Amān* (Abode of Peace) have been the contemporary additional terms (*Mustalhāt al-M'āsirah al-Ḥarbiya*) to the classical legalistic framework which classifies the countries into *Dār al-Islam* (Abode of Islam) and *Dār al-Harb* (Abode of War). This paper will analyse the contribution of modern Muslim scholars in the emergence of the concept on the one hand while reformist scholars on the other hand. The basic idea of citizenship (*Muwātana*) seems to treat all the citizens alike and make the concept wider, inclusive and cohesive in light of *Darūrah* (Necessity/Compulsion). In the given context, the paper will highlight how has the concept of citizenship evolved during the course of time from Caliphate (632-661 C.E) to the Ottoman Empire (1299-1924 C.E) and afterwards.

1. INTRODUCTION

Citizenship is a legal, constitutional and political relationship between an individual and the state, founded on the principle of sovereign community, corresponding to rights and obligations. It is the basic right through which the state guarantees certain rights and in turn imposes some obligations (UNHCR, 2005). It is a relationship which qualifies an individual to be called a citizen of a particular state; e.g., an individual living in India, and having this relationship with the state, will be called an Indian. (*Shahriyat*, 2015, 83). Citizenship has become one of the main necessities of our times and even slightest negligence as a citizen can land one in trouble or make a person stateless, making him devoid of all basic rights and obligations (*Nationality*, 2005, 1).

Over the last decade, the conception and rights of citizenship have had a great impact throughout the world (Heater, 2004, 6-79). The concept of citizenship is an integral and inseparable part of the modern nation-state, which can be understood by the fact that a stateless person can't be a citizen of any country and cannot enjoy the rights and privileges otherwise offered through citizenship. Citizenship represents a basic claim of the citizens vis-a-vis the state to the civil, social, political and economic resources best represented by the term *Muwātana* (Davis, 1997, 19-20). *Muwātana* "Democratic Citizenship" is different from *Jinsiyah* "Passport Citizenship" as passport expires and without passport, one can still be citizen of any state, while there can be no passport without Citizenship (20).

The basic nature of Islam is unity and oneness of all Muslims irrespective of their places of origin race or nationality. The Quranic concept of *Ummah* unites together all the identities wherein colour, religion, race and similar other affiliations didn't fragmentise this conception (The Holy Qur'ān, 49:13). Islam generally advocates a system wherein there is no curb on the movement of individuals from one place to another (The Holy Qur'ān, 29:20). The concept of citizenship gained importance because the borders were sealed and the movement of people was restricted from one country to another. The Current changes in the international and political scenario has forced the nations to lay restrictions and make laws for safety and security of its nationals. These circumstances have led to the adoption of Citizenship in this new world order. Citizenship, in its modern sense, is a modernist phenomenon, but its roots may be traced back to our traditions and culture. The terminology and context are the differences between the modernist and classical Islamic frameworks of citizenship. The modern concept of citizenship is integrally related to the nation-

