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Q. Analyze the Medina Accord as a "social contract" in detail.

A. Introduction

The Medina' Accord has several names which include the Charter of Medina or *Uthūq al-Madīna*. This was a social and political document that encompasses the notions of peace, democracy, tolerance, and justice and social equality. It was a contract that was formulated under the guidance of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and was assented to by all parties involved. It is called a social contract for several reasons which will be discussed in this answer.

The Medina Accords contain two social agreements with the main contract and i.e. the contract between the Muhajireen and Ansars and the contract between the Muslims and other tribes in Medina. The clauses and their analysis and general details will be highlighted in this answer.

The first part of the social contract: the Muakhawat Agreement between the Muhajireen and Ansars

The term 'social contract' is apt to describe the relationship these two groups of Muslims entered into. The Muakhawat enabled peaceful and brotherly relations between the natives of Medina and the Muslims who had migrated from Makkah to protect themselves from persecution. They became one combined nation who followed the teachings of the Quran and the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It was voluntary and not forced upon the people who happily obliged in order to

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form a strong Muslim community of Ummah.

Social equality under the charter

By entering into the social contract, the Muslims agreed to form a society based on Islamic culture and principles. They would, therefore, forgo the prospect of an in-group and out-group in the community of Muslims. Everyone would be treated equally and no one was superior than the other. A Quranic verse applicable

~~Peace under the contract~~

~~There would be the elements~~
to this setting is:

انما المؤمنون اخوة

Certainly all Muslims are brothers (Al Hujurat 49:10)

All Muslims under the banner of Islam

The social contract united all Muslims voluntarily under the banner of Islam. This enabled a united society. The verse below depicts the main teaching of Islam which all Muslims accepted without question

شهد الله ان لا اله الا الله

Allah bears witness that there is no God except Him (3:18)

Agreement between all Tribes and the Muslims

Tolerance and peace under the social contract

According to the social contract, all parties would have the right to practice their religion freely. No one would be allowed to hinder an individual from practicing his religion or damage his place of worship. Every religious group will be

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treated with respect. This contract enabled a multicultural society of people belonging to different religions. It enabled a contract to foster peace, tolerance and prosperity. These virtues are highlighted in the Quranic verses below.

لا إكراه في الدين -

There is no compulsion in Deen (2:256)

United front against enemies

The social contract highlighted that in case of attacks on Medina by enemies, all parties will unite. This could be done in two ways, either non-Muslims could physically join Muslims in battle against the enemy or they would pay Jizya and not be obligated to fight.

Comparison of social contracts using western ideology

Hobbes:

According to many sociologists, a social contract is an agreement between the ruled and ruler. For Hobbes, the social contract is under the authority of the sovereign and his authority is absolute as no power is above him. To apply this logic, the sovereign in this Medina Accord social contract is God. No authority is above him thus the term social contract in this case is apt.

Locke:

According to Locke the social contract is contingent on the ability of the government to protect the citizens. According to the Medina charter, the protection of citizens was his responsibility. He elected an army and was always successful in the protection of citizens. Thus social contract

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topic is applicable here.

Rousseau

According to Rousseau, a social contract is where the man is free and independent and his rights are protected. This is exactly what was promised in the Medina Accord. No matter what religion, class, tribe ~~you~~ the individual belongs to. He has his ~~independent~~ independence and set rights. Another verse below validates this:

مَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمَرْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ

whosoever wants he should believe and whosoever wants he should disbelieve (18:29)

Overall characteristics of the Medina Accord

The charter contains 47 clauses and was the first written constitution of the world in 622. It pre-dates the Magna Charter (1215). Some specific clauses include the establishment of social equality and protection against oppression (Clause 15). It also excluded help to its members in debt or in financial difficulties in regard to payment of ransom or blood money (Clause 12).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Medina Accord was a social contract because it enabled a peaceful and tolerant society. Everyone was safe from harm and forceful conversion. The concept of social contract is compared to some Western political scientists and philosophers including Rousseau, Hobson and Locke. The description of social contract is applicable to the Medina Accord and in some cases the Accord promised more than the typical social contract. This makes it ~~the~~ one of the finest contracts in history.

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...cause on a global scale or to punish certain groups of people they adopt practices that include public beheadings, mutilation of corpses or adopt torture techniques. All the while, the record these practices so that the general public can see and develop fear. These extremist practices have been a challenge to Islam because it promotes a sense of violence which is contradictory to Islamic teachings. Moreover, people are repelled by the religion and develop prejudices against Muslims who actually practice Islam in the true sense. Thus, a bad image of Islam is fostered and challenges Islam.

Sectarianism

Sectarianism: heightened differences lead to extremism.

The two major sects of Islam have been at dagger drawn with each other for centuries. Moreover, this has only become worse as time has gone by. The two sects focus on their differences rather than their similarities. This fuels extremism between the two groups who may target the other. The extremism is fuelled more when right-wing teachings such as one sect is superior or worse, the other sects have distorted the meaning of Islam and should be punished are channelled. Furthermore, with the nation state system in today's world these extremist tendencies are worse as seen with the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Thus, instead of Islamic teachings which hold that all Muslims are one community, differences are created.

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا دِيَارِكُمْ مَوَدَّةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَمَّا نَبَا الدِّينَ
Certainly, all Muslims are brothers (49:10)

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This challenges Islam as the above teachings are not followed and the Muslims do not have a united front against the world. Instead they are occupied by internal strife

Extremism fueling illiteracy in the Muslim world

Unfortunately, the Muslim Ummah is lagging behind in education and ultimately, science and technology, modern practices, and many fields of education and development. The Muslim world was once the epitome of modern development and progress. It contributed much to the world such as Ibn Sina in Chemistry and Ibn Khaldun in political thought and philosophy. Extremism dragged Muslims to the prehistoric era where they can no longer compete with the progressing world. Muslims are more occupied with the nitty gritty and backward ideology and often misinterpret Islamic teachings. This has created challenges for Islam because they ^{it is} are unable to foster scientific and educational progress of the Muslim Ummah. This fault lies solely on the agenda of extremism and extremist ideologies that are scared of progressive thoughts. Instead of seeing Islam as a religion for all time to come, they see it as something that needs to be protected. In reality Islam does not need protection ~~&~~ but rather, it protects the Muslims.

Backwardness

Backwardness in female empowerment

Islam has put females as equal to men.

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However, extremism has led to female subjugation. ~~Instead~~ Instead of promoting their education, employment and political representation, they are pushed to the side. For example, females in Afghanistan have banned women from going to school, ~~and~~ attaining employment and have even banned their public presence without a male guardian. According to the prophet (PBUH),

Acquisition of knowledge is bidding on all Muslims
(both men and women)

(Ibn Majah)

Extremist view such as those above challenge the fundamental teachings of Islam.

Extremism from non-Muslim societies are a challenge to Islam:

The Fear of a Muslim Planet

Extremism comes from outside Islam as well. Even if the source of extremism is not from the native community, it can and has proved to be challenging and detrimental to Islam. According to Fear of a Muslim Planet by Iftikhar, ~~the~~ many Western societies and particularly white supremacist groups are not afraid of Islam but of their the growing non-white population in the West. They fear that due to immigration and their massive procreation over many years, their race or ethnic group will be outnumbered by Muslims. This fear is challenging to Islam because first

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extremists has used Islam as a target. Many Muslims are attacked based on the way they look and are in constant fear of attacks. Thus, this problem is not fuelled by ~~Islam~~ ^{muslims} ~~they~~ but still challenges Islam in the contemporary world.

Islamophobia: usually baseless but possibly the largest challenge to Islam

As a result of the gory and violent images of the practices of terrorist groups, non-Muslims have developed a fear of Islam i.e. Islamophobia. A religion that in the eyes of the public promotes violent and extremist acts, must be violent. Thus, a false image of Islam is imbedded into the minds of the non-Muslims. The challenge to Islam is that people do not see the religion for what it truly is but focus on the sensationalised, agenda-driven media output that fuels hatred and fear. Thus, the peaceful religion is seen as the violent religion due to Islamophobia.

Middle Eastern Peace Process Wars in the Muslim world challenge Islam

The Muslim world is marked by conflict after conflict. Palestine is being taken over illegally by Israel, Kashmir is under the unlawful occupation of India, Syria has become ground for western agendas and the list is endless. Wars are either currently in full-swing or unfolding slowly or on the way to commence. The Islamic

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World is constantly threatened. It is a challenge to Islam as progress is hindered because a feasible solution for conflicts needs to be devised and implemented. Islam can not be preached and practiced to its full capacity in a state of war where children are being killed, women are being raped and men are considered dispensable bodies to fuel conflicts. Thus, conflicts in the Muslim world challenge Islam.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ^{contemporary} challenges to Islam come from outside and inside. Islam is caught between a rock and a hard place with jabs from the Muslim community and the outside world. The extremist practices of terrorist groups, sectarianism, illiteracy and female subjugation challenge Islam and its core teachings and message. On the other hand, Islamophobia, ~~the~~ fear of demographic replacement in the west by Muslims and constant wars in the Muslim world are also huge challenges fuelled by extremism.

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Chronological events

Article, What happens, Hisbal

Book

Q2. What is meant by the Day of Judgement? Explore its effects on individual and collective lives of human beings.

Introduction

Muslims believe that life on earth is a Test. The true purpose of man's time on earth is to prove his worthiness for eternal bliss in the hereafter. It comes the Day of Judgement. This Day is a fundamental belief in Islam which constitutes as being Muslim. The Day of Judgement holds the scale of Truth and the eventual reward of Heaven or punishment of Hell. There are many a series of stages that have been described in the Quran and Hadith depicting the Day of Judgement. This has some significant impacts on individuals physically, spiritually and morally and also affects the mankind in general. In this answer, the belief of the Day of Judgement will be sketched along with its effects on individual and collective lives of human beings.

Overview of the Day of Judgement

Religious significance

The Day of Judgement is an article of faith in Islam. It constitutes as a fundamental principle around which the teachings of Islam revolve. As Muslims, it is obligatory for Muslims to believe in the Day of Judgement. Given the fact that

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Islam is a perfect religion, the concept of the Day of Judgement has been sufficiently described and its importance is significant. To not believe in the Day of Judgement would be sinful as it holds a significant place in Islamic teachings. As a verse in the Quran says

"This day, I have perfected your Deen for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen Islam as your Deen"

(al-Maidah 5:3)

Thus, the teachings of the Day of Judgement are part of this perfect religion of Islam and ~~are compulsory in belief~~ ^{if} it is compulsory.

Chronological events for the Day of Judgement

Debasement and Fitnah on earth

It is said that the Day of Judgement will come about when mankind is at its lowest ebb. Moral behaviour and modesty will be at the lowest of lows and evil will prevail. The earth will be consumed by the opposite of Islamic teachings. Some of these factors will be the disrespect of elders, particularly parents, indecency, corruption and immorality.

First blow of The Trumpet: sent The world asunder

Hazrat Israfil, an angel has been charged with the blowing of the horn on the Day of Judgement. Before its commencement, the first blow will bring the death of all of mankind every living creature on earth will die and the earth will be destroyed. Mountains will crumble

(26:45)

Second blow of Trumpet: Resurrection for the Day of Judgement

The trumpet will be blown a second time by Israfil and all human beings will come back to life. They will then proceed towards a barren valley where they will be handed their judgement. This Day of Judgement has many names such as al-Saa'ah (the Hour), Yawm al-Qiyamah (the Day of Rising), Al-Yawm Al-Aakhir (the last day) and many many other names.

Accountability and Final Judgement

Each individual's deeds will be placed before him on a scale. The people individual with greater good deeds will be rewarded with Jannah (Heaven)

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and those with more bad deeds. Meanwhile, if the balance tips towards bad deeds then the individual will be thrown in the pits of Hell. Overall, human beings will be held accountable or *Hisbah* (accountability) will commence which will ultimately lead to ~~reward~~ eternal reward or eternal punishment. ~~The believers going individuals will go across a path~~

كل نفس لودية ^{بما كسبت}
Every soul will be (held) / in pledge for its deeds.

(74:38)

After the final decision, a path called *alsirat* will be crossed ~~across~~ through which the believers will reach heaven. However, the evil-doers will fall from the path into ~~hell~~ *Jahannum* (Hell).

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Flow chart of chronology of events

Man-kind at its lowest
ebb / fitnah prevalent



First blow of Trumpet
by Israfil



Death of all
living creatures



Second blow of
Trumpet by Israfil



Resurrection of
man-kind



Proceed to place
for final judgement



Weighting of deeds



Final Judgement



Excess good deed holders go
to heaven and excess
bad deed holders go
to hell

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Effects of Day of Judgement on individuals

Way of pleasing Allah

Individuals will know the consequences of their actions and will work hard to please Allah. Every act will be in His name and to make Him happy. This will ensure that the Muslims live fulfilling lives to achieve Jannah in the Hereafter.

Following all teachings of Islam

Since Islam is the religion chosen by Allah for mankind, Muslims will follow it carefully.

ان الدين عند الله الاسلام

Indeed the (True) religion with Allah is Islam

(3:19)

This will manifest itself in following every article of faith and conforming to the pillars of Islam. Muslims will follow Had Salah, give charity, fast in the holy month of Ramadan and perform Hajj. All these acts will be done in the hope of receiving eternal bliss in the Hereafter and avoiding Hell at all costs.

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Strengthened Tauhid

The Muslims will believe in the concept of Tauhid more strongly. The 3 concepts of Tauhid, ~~the~~ Tauhid al-Shaat (Unity of Being), Tauhid al-Sifat (Unity of Attributes) and Tauhid al-Afoal (Unity of Actions), will be believed in. The Muslim will know that Allah can do anything He pleases and thus will spend their lives in doing what pleases Him. They will only worship Allah and give up false gods.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ

God bears witness that there is no god but He

(Al Imran 3:18)

Stay away from evil

As stated in the Quran:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ لَكُمْ شَيْئًا

Indeed the vaps that overwhelmingly commands a person to do sui

(12:53)

The Muslim will ~~be~~ realize that their actions will lead to them either being in Hell or Heaven. Thus, they will hold a strong front against evil and work hard to do good for fear

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of the Day of Judgement.

Effects of the Day of Judgement on the collective lives of human beings

Prevalence of social order

Nusulmi ~~Hyda~~ as a core quest to Samah will promote community welfare and avoid spreading fitnah. Thus, society will be stable and social order will prevail. Everyone will work towards societal betterment and progress instead of chasing greedy ambitions which will amount to negative impacts on the Day of Judgement.

"Cooperate with all in what is good and pious but do not cooperate in what is sinful and wicked"

(al-Maidah 5:2)

Removal of disparities as accumulation of wealth means nothing in the hereafter.

Economic disparities will be removed through charity. Believers will realize that wealth means ^{nothing} ~~left~~ for ^{the} ~~this~~ ^{next} world and charity would add to their scale of good deeds. Thus, the community would prosper from equitable distribution of wealth.

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Allah has blighted usury and made almsgiving fruitful.

(2:276)

General welfare and strong brotherhood

After learning about the Day of Judgement, Muslims will want their loved ones to also be granted eternal peace. The Heave, They will try to promote Islamic teachings and teach by example as religion cannot be forced. Moreover, a general love for the Muslim Ummah will prevail. Muslims will realise that they don't will be blessed by doing helping others do better. Therefore, the Muslim brotherhood will work together for their common goal of Jannah.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

Indeed all Muslims are brothers

(49:10)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Day of Judgement is a key and essential teaching in Islam. The concept as well as the chronological event have been described in the Quran and Sunnah. The final result will be the sorting of mankind into Heaven, goes and Hell.

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goes. This was a deep insight on individuals which instills a fear and love of God. For even believers work for the rest of their lives to achieve eternal bliss. Moreover, the ~~community~~ community of humans is unified through social order, welfare and brotherhood.

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Q3. Islam provides better rights to men and women than all other religions. Explore with arguments.

Introduction

The deed of Islam has been created by Allah to encompass every sphere of human existence. This entails that the believers are under the protection of the All-mighty Allah and are granted every right possible to ensure they are safe and can progress. However, by ~~com~~ comparison, the same cannot be said for other religions. Unfortunately, religions other than Islam have been lacking basic rights especially the rights of women. This could be attributed to the fact that other religions are imperfect, ~~st~~ distorted or incomplete compared to Islam. In this answer an assessment of the rights provided to men and women in Islam will be contrasted with other religions with sound arguments.

Comparison of rights in Islam ~~compared~~ to other religions

Concept of equality and brotherhood in Islam

Islam is an extremely progressive ~~and~~ religion that saw the problems of racism or prejudice and ~~and~~ gave a blunt verdict of equality. In Islam, men and women of any race, caste & creed are equal in the eyes of Allah. Hence, they have

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equal rights. To hold prejudice against a particular group is un-Islamic. Thus, Islam provides equal rights to all Muslims under its banner. This is proved in The Quran

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ
Indeed all Muslims are brothers (49:10)

Absence of equality in Hinduism through the caste system

Hinduism has had a strong caste system for a millennium which is the opposite of equality. At the top of the caste ladder are the Brahmins while the Dalits are at the bottom of the chain. The Dalits are considered untouchable and have no rights as they are kept away from society and social inclusion is absent. This proves that the Dalits, full-functioning human beings, are not given any rights based on the prejudiced Hindu construct.

Rights of humans during war in Islam

Islam has considered not rights of men and women not just in peace but also in time of war. The prophet (SAW) instructed the Muslims to not kill non-combatants, injured combatants, women, old people, children and anyone else that did not

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pose a direct threat to the Muslim combatants

"And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits"

(2:190)

Moreover, even dead bodies are protected and given rights in the fold of Islam. The Prophet prohibited the Muslims from mutilating corpses (Bukhari).

~~The Prophet~~

Death of human rights in other religions during war

Generally speaking, there is a lack of rights in times of war. This explains why wars fought by non-Muslims in the past have been barbaric and gruesome. It also explains why the common victims were civilians particularly women and children. Due to this absence of humanitarian law in all other religions, the need to formulate International Humanitarian law through the Geneva Conventions emerged as humans had no rights from other religions like those provided by Islam.

Right to education in Islam

It is compulsory for all Muslims, men and women to achieve an education in Islam. Education is a right that was provided since the time of the first man, Hazrat Adam (A.S). It says in the

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Oman

slowly please

And He taught Adam all the names

(2:31)

This shows the right to education and knowledge of the Muslim in Islam. Moreover, the Prophet said:

"Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim" (Ibn Majah)

This entails that education is not just the right of men but also women in Islam.

Prospects of education in other religions

Other religions do not seem to value education as highly as Islam. The emphasis is mostly on religious scriptures and blindly following the teachings of the religion which include the dogmas, customs and morals. The Catholicism, for instance, values the opinion of the Pope the most. However, in Islam there is no one religious scholar or representative that is followed blindly. Muslims have the right to educate themselves in modern and secular subjects and also carry out their own deductive reasoning.

This is because Islam is not threatened by modernity and is a complete religion based on logic. Whereas, education truly threatens other religions' fundamental practices and teachings.

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Rights of non-Muslims in Islam protected

The rights of non-Muslims are protected under the fold of Islam. Islam prohibits Muslims from using force and allowing people to practice whatever faith pleases them. In the Quran it says:

فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفِرْ

Whoever wants he should believe and whoever wants he should disbelieve

(18:29)

This entails that all human beings are free to choose their own paths and have been granted the right of religious freedom.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي دِينٍ

There is no compulsion in Deen

(2:256)

Use of force and brutality in other religions

Throughout history, the West and particularly Christianity has ~~had~~ practiced the techniques of forceful conversions ~~then~~ to bring more people into its folds of religion. This is what ensued when the British Christians colonised North America. They used brutality and force to convert the naive Americans because they felt that held white saviour complex and

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wanted to Christianize and save these groups. Similarly, Ahmad Saeed in his book, *Trek to Pakistan* points out that Christian missionaries were forcibly converting the Indians in the subcontinent which led to ~~the~~ ill-will.

Rights of women in Islam

women ~~are~~ have been given particular rights in Islam that are not granted to such magnitude by any other religion. For example, women have the right to marriage based solely on her consent and not by force.

No widow should be married without consulting her; and no virgin be married without her assent, and her assent is her silence.

(Salih Bukhari)

Moreover, women also hold the right to divorce (Khula) if she does not want to remain in her marriage. In fact, women are granted right to property which was unheard of in ~~the~~ ancient times.

women's rights in other religions: missing

In ~~the~~ Catholicism, women are in a life-binding contract when they get married. As they say the words "Till death do us part" while reciting their marital vows, they agree that

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no matter what, they will remain married. Thus, they are not granted divorce rights. Moreover, women in previous times were treated as property and everything belonging to them would go to her husband. Hence, having property rights for women was a far-fetched concept.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the rights granted to men and women in Islam are manifold compared to other religions. Islam, not only grants rights to the believers but also the non-believers. As stated in the answer, non-believers are protected from compulsion and are allowed to live peacefully. Moreover, women are granted rights like never before in the field of Islam and this is incomparable to other religions. Islam truly holds mankind to the highest rank among all creatures on earth as Allah calls man a 'khalifa' or a representative placed by Him.