



One's Homeland

The homeland vs. the Ummah

- Does love of your country contradict the religion's teachings?
- Does caring about Muslims conflict with belonging to your country?
- Is one's homeland merely a "handful of soil"?
- Is concern for your country and longing for it jahiliyya (ignorance of Divine Law)?
- Were countries made by colonialism?

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

All praise be to Allah. Peace and blessings be upon our master, the Messenger of Allah, and his family, companions and those loyal to him.

The natural disposition (*fitra*) made by Allah

Allah, Most Exalted, created the human being with His marvellous power. He instilled in him a natural disposition. He instilled in this disposition the foundations of lofty values and character to honor and distinguish him from other creation. Allah readied the human being with this natural character to be His vicegerent on earth. All the components of this natural disposition – if unimpaired by what corrupts it—are the structure of the pure religion. Allah, the Sublime, says: [This is the natural disposition God instilled in mankind- there is no altering God's creation] [Surah Rum:30]. Here, humanity is before religiosity.

Human bonds and relationships are part of the Divinely instilled natural disposition:

Among what the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, confirmed about this natural disposition are human bonds and relationships. By this, we mean the human being's connection to places, times and people during his lifespan in this world.

Islam has drawn up lofty parameters for humankind with respect to establishing these relationships, so as to preserve and strengthen them and to achieve the objectives of the Divine wisdom in creating them, since they are willed by Allah and not of human design.



Sacred law was revealed to put these bonds and relationships in order, and grant them rights. Reward or punishment ensues from them.



Is one's homeland merely a "handful of soil" as they claim?

The concept of one's homeland:

A homeland is a human being's place and abode. By this, we mean the place a person is satisfied with for his dwelling and livelihood on a settled basis.

A person's homeland may be his birthplace. It may be a place that he moved to and stayed there for a period of time until it became his residence and by which he is known.

It is also one's family, relatives, tribe, neighbours, friends and loved ones...

Rather, it is one's people, culture, history, victories, issues, and the geniuses who gave the country its history in various fields...

It is all the feelings and memories that a human being passes through as a result of interactions with the aforementioned...

Therefore, the meaning of 'homeland' is complex and intertwined. It is incorrect to reduce it to a spot or place and say, "It is just a handful of soil that has no value."

Ignoring of all of these components that make up the concept of the homeland and reducing it to a handful of soil represents recalcitrance to the natural disposition, distorted understanding and contempt for an immense matter. Thus it was said,

"If you want to know someone, observe his longing for his homeland."¹

Erroneous understandings and rebutted objections

For a long time hard-line religious currents and groups focused --and still do-- on alienating the concept of homeland and citizenship.

They considered it to run counter to the goals of Islam and to one Islamic ummah, according to their misconceptions about this pure religion and its lofty foundations.

This caused religious youth to live in a state of confusion regarding their relationship with the land in which they were born, grew up and belong to...

They sensed that their religious identity imposes on them attachment and belonging to the large Islamic geographical area, and prevents them from wearing their national identity.

That was on the basis of misconceptions that resulted in inadmissible objections being disseminated and advocated.

1- Dinawari narrated it in the book, "al-Mujalasa wa Jawahir al-Ilm" (#332) through Asma'i from 'Arabi.

The dissenter's objections and the response to them

Those with radical thought have several objections to the issue of love of one's homeland, including :

- ◆ Love of one's homeland was not mentioned in the Sacred Law. No text was reported about it.
- ◆ The concept of a homeland conflicts with the love of Allah and His Messenger.
- ◆ The concept of love of one's homeland is an ignorant (jahili) idea.
- ◆ Countries are a colonial creation to fight Islam.

Love of one's homeland in the Book and Sunna and according to the scholars of the ummah

The Quran refers to love of one's homeland:

In the context of many texts came the concept of attachment to and love of one's homeland, and that leaving one's homeland is one of the most difficult things on the soul. The Quran mentioned that in terms of acknowledgment and validation of it, not in terms of censure and prevention.

Allah, the Exalted, said: {If We had ordered, 'Lay down your lives' or 'Leave your homes'...} [Surah Nisa:66]. He made leaving one's home equivalent to laying down one's life.¹

And the Exalted said, {Drive them out from where they drove you out, for persecution is more serious than killing} [Surah Baqara:191]. He made leaving one's familiar homeland the most serious affliction.²

1- Refer to 'at-Tafsir al-Kabir' by Imam ar-Razi.

2- Refer to 'Mirqat al-Mafatih' by Mulla Ali al-Qari.

Defending one's homeland is jihad in God's cause:

The Exalted said, {They said, 'How could we not fight in God's cause when we and our children have been driven out of our homeland?'} [Surah Baqara:264].

He made being driven out of one's homeland a reason for fighting in His cause.

The Noble Quran affirmed what they said and did not censure them or disavow it.

The Sacred Law made leaving one's homeland a punishment and discipline for criminals:

The Most Glorious said about those who make war and brigands: {Those who wage war against God and His Messenger and strive to spread corruption in the land should be punished by death, crucifixion, the amputation of an alternate hand and foot, or banishment from the land} [Surah Ma`ida:33]. Imam Shafi'i said, "Leaving his homeland and tribe is sufficient forsaking and humiliation."

Allah's punishment of the Israelites was that He made them wander the earth aimlessly without a homeland, for forty years. {God said, "The land is forbidden to them for forty years: they will wander the earth aimlessly. Do not grieve over those who disobey.} [Surah Ma`ida:26].

Therefore, for rational people, leaving one's homeland is a very difficult matter. It is equal to the pain of laying down one's life. It is one of the most severe punishments on the soul. This indicates that love of one's homeland and attachment to it is a profound matter in the soul.

Love of one's homeland in the Prophetic Sunna:

Bukhari narrated in his Sahih that when the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, would return from a journey and see the walls of Madina, he would speed up his riding camel, and if he was on another animal, he would make it gallop because of his love for Madina. Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar said, "In this is indication of the merit of Madina, and the legitimacy of loving one's homeland and longing for it."⁴

In the narrative of the beginning of the revelation of the Quran upon the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and his going to Waraqa ibn Nawfal, and Waraqa's saying to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, "I wish I could be with you when your people would drive you out,"⁵ he said, peace and blessings be upon him, "Will they drive me out?" Suhayli says, "The severity of leaving one's homeland can be taken from this. For he, peace and blessings be upon him, heard Waraqa saying that they would hurt him and deny him, but he did not display discomfort at this. When Waraqa mentioned to him driving him out, he stirred due to love of his homeland.

Love of one's homeland according to scholars:

There are many statements and reports from the scholars with respect to love of one's homeland and attachment to it. The words of al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Suhayli have already preceded. Rather, the jurists went on to explain the wisdom of the pilgrimage (hajj) and the greatness of its reward to it refining the soul by leaving one's homeland and departing from what is familiar. Imam al-Qarafi said, "The benefits of the pilgrimage is the disciplining of the soul by leaving one's homeland."⁶

4- Sahih al-Bukhari (#1802), the Book of Pilgrimage. And refer to 'Fath al-Bari' by Ibn Hajar (3621/).

5- Agreed upon (muttafaquun alayhi). Bukhari reported it (#3), the Beginning of Revelation, as did Muslim (#160), the Book of Faith, as well as others, from the narration of A'isha, Allah be pleased with her. And refer to 'Fath al-Bari' by Ibn Hajar (12359/).

6- 'al-Dhakira' by al-Qarafi.

The habit of the righteous has always been to love their homelands. It has even been narrated from the Master of the ascetics and devotees, Ibrahim ibn Adham, that he said, "In all that I left, I did not undergo anything more severe than leaving my homeland."⁷ Love of their homeland would pour forth among those of earlier times, and they had much to say about it, such that they devoted works to it. Al-Jahiz authored the book, 'Love of one's homeland.' As-Sam'ani authored, 'Sentiment for one's homeland.' Abu Hatim as-Sijistani has the book, 'Yearning for one's homeland.' Abu Hatim at-Tawhidi has the book, 'Longing for one's homeland.' And many others –those of earlier and later times who wrote about this.

**There is no conflict between love of Allah and His Messenger
and love of one's homeland**

Love of one's homeland is a natural disposition. Just as love of one's family, forefathers and children does not contradict love of Allah and His Messenger, but rather is classified and built upon love of Allah and His Messenger, likewise is love of one's homeland.

They inferred this from His saying: {Say, 'If your fathers, sons, brothers, wives, tribes, the wealth you have acquired, the trade which you fear will decline, and the dwellings you love are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and the struggle in His cause, then wait until God brings about His command'}

[Surah Tawba:24]. The dissenters made this verse –according to their ideas— A proof of censure of attachment to one's homeland. They said that a homeland is "the dwellings you love."

7- Hilyat al-Awliya,' by Abu Nuaym (380/7), the Biography of Ibrahim ibn Adham.

However, it is proof against them, not for them, and it is proof for love and attachment to one's homeland! We agree with them that a homeland is "the dwellings you love," but we disagree with them in their understanding. Allah, the Most Exalted, mentioned homelands ("the dwellings you love") in the same context as "your fathers, sons..." in terms of love of them being from the natural disposition instilled by Allah. He set, as a result of that, rights in the Sacred Law. Whoever maintains those rights has obeyed Allah and His Messenger. Whoever neglects them has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. Censure here is only for giving preference to that over Allah. Giving precedence over Allah and His Messenger to any of one's fathers, children or homeland is subject to censure, not mere attachment to them. So understand!

3- Love of one's homeland is a natural human disposition, not a custom ignorant of Divine Law .

One of the ugliest things put forward in denying the meaning of love of one's homeland is to say that it i.e. love of the homeland, is a jahili idea (an idea ignorant of Divine law). It is as though one who harbors love for his homeland has brought some jahili act or character. It has been established and we have already known that love of one's homeland is inherent and that it is the natural disposition of every human being: Prophets, scholars, the righteous, as well as others. So saying that love of the homeland is from jahiliyya (ignorance of the Divine Law) is like accusing the aforementioned people of being involved in that opprobrium. And this is not repudiated by saying that blame falls on those who surrendered to this meaning and not on those who struggled and returned to obedience, because we say that none of those with firm footing in knowledge and faith --especially the Prophets--become involved with any jahili ideas.

Colonialism created borders, not homelands

Hardliners regard countries today a result of the colonial division of the lands of the Islamic state.

This is limited thinking, since these lands were not created by colonialism; the division and demarcation of borders did not change or renew an individual's relationship with his homeland, although it had an impact on a Muslim's movement between Muslim and Arab countries.

As for nations and states from a political standpoint, they have had a long history with Muslims. Major states would emerge, and then split up into smaller ones. Then they would unite, then split up, and so on. There was no colonist then, nor an outside party that had a hand in the division of those countries.

What we emphasize here is that there is no conflict between these countries being within one or more political borders. A person's attribution to his homeland and the existence of attachment to his homeland and loyalty and service to it and its people does not conflict with the fact that he belongs to the ummah and Islam.

The Concept of homeland and citizenship:

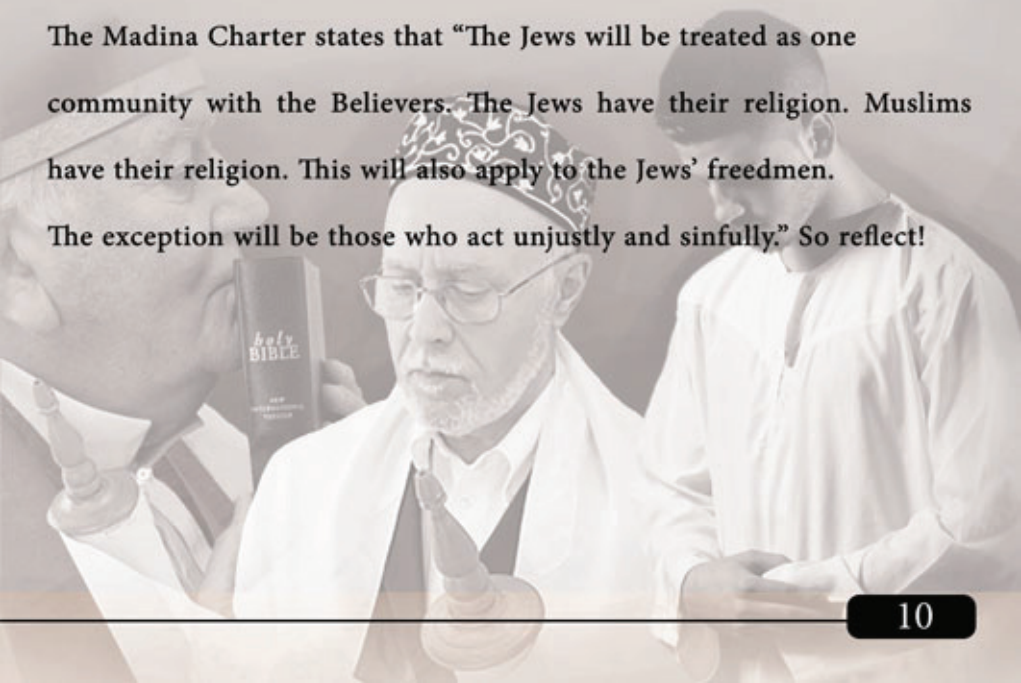
Citizenship means the rights and duties of being a member of the nation, in which everyone is equal without discrimination on the basis of religion, language, race or gender.

It is something that requires that all their disputes and differences dissolve at the point of participation and cooperation in the building and development of the nation and maintaining coexistence within it.

The term emerged recently, but its actual meaning and practice on earth existed since the time of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and is stipulated by the Prophetic guidance.

The Madina Charter states that “The Jews will be treated as one community with the Believers. The Jews have their religion. Muslims have their religion. This will also apply to the Jews’ freedmen.

The exception will be those who act unjustly and sinfully.” So reflect!



**The results of a morbid understanding of the meaning of
homeland and citizenship**

Hatred of one's homeland:

Under the pretext that it is the cause of separation between Muslims, that it is in opposition to love of Allah and His Messenger, and contrary to the Sacred Law.

Non-compliance with national obligations:

Under the pretext that it is not the desired homeland. So he does not care about building it and making it thrive.

Not preserving unity of the homeland:

For he gives it no weight. Instead of helping in having a united and strong homeland, he seeks to demolish and destroy it to build what he fancies from a homeland!

Loyalty to other countries or ideological groups:

He sees them as best suited to lead the Muslims.

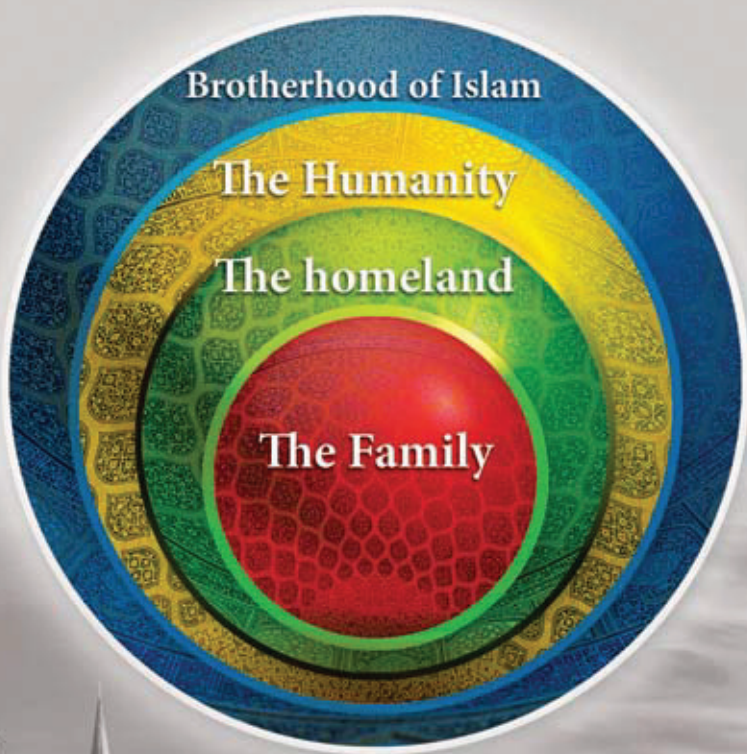
Conclusion

1. Love of one's homeland is a natural disposition that the human being is divinely instilled with.
 2. Love of one's homeland was referred to by the Noble Quran, clarified by the Sunna, and filled the lives of the scholars, the righteous, writers and others.
 3. The homeland consists of composite and complex relations and feelings, and it is incorrect to ever reduce it in their words to "just a handful of soil."
 4. Love of one's homeland is from love of Allah and His Messenger, and there is no conflict between the two except in the hardliner's mind. It is like love of one's family and tribe. It is not at all jahili (ignorance of Divine Law). It is not an alternative to brotherhood of Islam. Rather, they are overlapping spheres that are not in opposition.
 5. Citizenship has rights affirmed by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, as in the Charter of al-Madina al-Munawwara.
 6. To say that love of the homeland conflicts with love of Allah and is contrary to Islam is greatly dangerous to the human personality because of the fragmentation it produces and the grappling between the natural disposition (fitra) and obedience to these ideas falsely attributed to Islam. It is dangerous to countries because it produces a person who does not defend his land and is ready to sell and betray his homeland as he does not belongs to it, is not keen about it, and does not want it to progress and prosper.
- There is neither power nor strength except by Allah, the Most High, the Tremendous.

Finally:

Love of the homeland and its preservation and development is the first step in building the ummah. If only they understood!

Overlapping... not opposing



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