

Socio-economic Functions of Government Establishment From the Viewpoint of Teachings of ‘Ali Ibn Abitalib (660 A.D.)

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ABSTRACT

There is an extricate interconnection and concordance among different subsystems of a society, in a way that the politics subsystem is interconnected with economics subsystem, economics with culture, and culture with politics. However, the quality and style of the relationship among religion, politics, and economics have always been a question for scholars. This article demonstrates that a dynamic economy depends on the presence of a moderate, yet potent government. The governments are (directly or indirectly) effective in five socio-economic axes, including economic circulation, socio-economic support, socio-economic security and tranquility, justice and fighting against socio-economic corruptions, and socio-economic welfare and comfort.

KEYWORDS: Socio-economic Functions, Governments, Strategies, Islamic Doctrine.

INTRODUCTION

Coming to Imam ‘Ali ibn Abitalib (A)^[1] at Dhi al-Qar, Ibn Abbas (a companion of Muhammad Prophet of Islam (S)) sees him stitching his shoe. Imam asks Ibn Abbas: "What is the price of this shoe?" Ibn Abbas answers: "It has no value now." Then Imam states: "By Allah, it should have been dearer to me than ruling over you but for the fact that I may establish right and ward off wrong."^[2] Basically Imam ‘Ali (A) regards government a holy and worthy thing since by which he can establish justice and spirituality. Surely, economic and social justice and welfare of citizens are the most evident axis of justice in the society.

Therefore, it can be understood that without government and state there is no hope to establish economic, social, political and cultural justice and power is a good means for fulfilling this object. Peter Bauer referred to some of the responsibilities of government as follows: 1- laying down the law 2- establishment of order 3- public interest expenditure 4- distribution of income and wealth 5- reformation of land tenure systems 6- organization of agricultural units 7- fighting capital accumulation.^[3] As you see in his opinion performing economic-social responsibilities are the major mission of the state.

There are evidences that government can step toward public welfare of the society by making balance and developing economic justice and fulfilling this object it can take control of other sectors and areas of the country. Through establishment of public welfare and reducing poverty and class difference, for instance, a more appropriate atmosphere will be created for mental and spiritual development and reinforcement of religious beliefs and tangible changes will be seen in cultural area. As it is quoted from the Prophet Muhammad (S): "Poverty may lead to blasphemy and unbelief"^[4], which indicates that economic status has a great influence on society's cultural and spiritual health.

For this reason, in spite of all internal and external difficulties, Imam ‘Ali (A) paid special attention to the subject of economy and living of the people and work, production and construction were his most central strategies. For this reason, we see at the beginning of his letter to Malik Ashtar Nakha'i it was written:

"This is that which Imam ‘Ali (A), ‘Abd Allah and Amir al-Mu‘minin, charged Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in his instructions to him when he appointed him governor of Egypt: To collect its land revenue, to war against its enemies, to improve the condition of people and to engender prosperity in its regions."^[5]

Thinkable point is that three out of four matters pointed out by Imam ‘Ali (A) in the prelude to his noble letter which were considered the purpose of appointment of Malik the governor of Egypt relate directly to economic matters namely collection of revenue and its consumption for the interest of the country, to improve the condition of people and to engender public prosperity in the regions and one matter also leads to economy boost indirectly; i.e. to establish security and peace which is a requirement for investment and making balance and peace in the market.

Socio-economic Consideration of Sermon 40

One of the sermons of which one can infer important economic principles is the sermon 40 of Nahj al-Balagha. Although most of commentators and interpreters of Nahj al-Balagha have had political and governmental view of it, its economic points and strategies can not be ignored; the strategies by which

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government can directly or indirectly boost economy of market, to adjust class differences, and to engender prosperity in the regions.

Commentators unanimously believe that the ignorant position of Kharijites (Seceders) was the cause of delivering this sermon (as Seyyed Razi has pointed to it at the prelude to this sermon). After Arbitration (Hakamiyat) they enchanted the slogan: "verdict lies but with Allah" and called for the rejection of any ruling except Allah's with this purpose that humans, competent or incompetent, have no right of ruling. Upon hearing and being informed of this slogan, Imam 'Ali (A) made a speech and explaining the subject he enumerated the reasons for the people's need for ruler and government. Now with a special look at this statement of Imam 'Ali (A), the economic consequences of existence of government will be discussed here in this text from the viewpoint of Amir al-Mu'minin. It is quoted from Amir al-Mu'minin in sermon 40 that:

"A true statement to which a false meaning is attributed. It is true that verdict lies but with Allah, but these people say that (the function of) governance is only for Allah. The fact is that there is no escape for men from ruler good or bad. The faithful persons perform (good) acts in his rule while the unfaithful enjoys (worldly) benefits in it. During the rule, Allah would carry everything to end. Through the ruler revenue is collected, enemy is fought, roadways are protected and the right of the weak is taken from the strong till the virtuous enjoys peace and allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked."^[6]

Emphasizing the principle of belonging rule and ruling to Lofty Allah at the beginning of his speech Imam 'Ali (A) states that: "A true statement to which a false meaning is attributed. It is true that verdict lies but with Allah, but these people say that (the function of) governance is only for Allah". It means that slogan of Kharijites (Seceders) is acceptable if they consider ruling a position submitted to the Signs of by Him, since the principle of authority and kingdom as well as rule and ruling belong to Allah, but Lofty Allah transfers His Will by a selected man to the human being based on His Wisdom. For this reason, this statement is right by itself, but Kharijites (Seceders) has a false understanding of it because they say ruling belongs only to Allah but not anyone else. Imam 'Ali (A) considers the existence of ruler and establishment of government a necessary requirement and rejecting the thinking of earlier Kharijites and contemporary anarchist he adds: "The fact is that there is no escape for men from ruler good or bad". These words stipulate that if it is not possible for a righteous ruler to take control of affairs, it is necessary at least for an impious ruler to take the seat in order that the society preserve its civil life and security. These words indicate that Imam rejects anarchism.

Anarchism means a social and political system without government or generally a society without any class or governmental structure. According to this view, economic system works better in a free society without any force by an organized power and the voluntary classes can perform their responsibilities better than the present governments. Anarchists are generally disagree with any kind of government and they also believe that democracy is the autocracy.^[7]

The most important and fundamental principle of anarchism is rejection of government; i.e. the essence of anarchism is individual liberty. This focus leads to disapproval and disagreement with any kind of external authority (especially government) which is a barrier to free individual growth.^[8]

In fact, from the viewpoint of Imam 'Ali (A) if the people are once allowed to select from among two types of anarchist government (rejection of ruler and government) and totalitarian government (autocratic government), it would be better to accept autocratic one in order that the country is ordered at least relatively and is protected against the plunder by strangers; since the bad ruler is forced to resist against internal and external invasion and chaos at least to save his life and his region and to take steps toward prosperity in order to strengthen his position. The commentators of Nahj al-Balagha have considered the subject of relativity of a bad ruler.^[9]

It is obvious that by the phrase "good or bad" Imam 'Ali (A) does not mean to legalize ruling of a bad ruler, but as he has pointed out the people should have at the first place a trustworthy and righteous ruler, if it is not possible they should accept a bad ruler in order that the economic, political, military and social systems remain alive even slightly and that the people have access to minimum facilities and services in a civil society.

It has been quoted from the Prophet Muhammad (S) that: "Bad ruler is better than sedition and anarchy."^[10]

Then Amir al-Mu'minin explains why the people need ruler and mentions several cases which can directly or indirectly influence socio-economic trend and the living status of the people. Now five reasons for the necessity of existence of a central government will be discussed:

1. Circulation of Economic Activity

It is clear that work and effort are requirements for dynamic production, consumption and making balance in circulation of economic activity, and in this line the most important function of government is to set the grounds for fulfillment of the above-mentioned matters. Imam 'Ali (A) states that: "The faithful persons act (good deeds) in his rule while the unfaithful enjoys (worldly) benefits in it" (Sermon 40).

The word "act" in the statement of Imam 'Ali (A) illustrates that performing all kinds of activities is possible in the light of the existence of a government and the purpose of establishment of a government is not merely to perform cultural and religious activities; since this word implies two different meanings: on the one

hand the activity itself, and on the other the purposeful and intentional activity. Because the word "perform" is not used for non-intentional activities, rather the word "act" is applied which has a wider meaning.^[11] Therefore, the range of his words covers all kinds of activities including political, social, cultural as well as economic activities.

It is worth mentioning that thanks to establishment of a government, performing socio-economic activities are not restricted to a special group of people or religion, but a wide range of people with different tribes, religions and races can participate in the circulation of economic activities which it seems far unusual in an anarchist government.

Based on socio-economic viewpoint of Amir al- Mu'minin, all people of society should participate in the production and prosperity of their regions as much as they can. And it has been pointed out in his letter to Malik Ashtar that all groups of people including merchants, agriculturists, farmers, and scientists may contribute to production and economic boost.^[12]

It is mentioned that Imam 'Ali (A) paid special attention to work, effort and production and in his opinion it is not dependant to having facilities and capital. Imam 'Ali (A), for instance, blames a person who has access to water and land but he does not use them for production and has left them useless and believes that he is away from blessing of Allah.

"One who has access to water and land and is still poor, he is away from the blessing of Allah."^[13] It can be said that here in these words Imam 'Ali (A) wants to explain but not to specify the matter and it is not limited to water and land, but it is meant that people should use minimum facilities to contribute in production and prosperity of the regions. A student, for instance, can produce knowledge with the minimum facilities. Japan is a country that has the maximum production and productivity with minimum facilities. Developing new methods for exploitation of resources this country could have a considerable economic growth.^[14] Therefore, it should be acknowledged that "the problem of poverty in some countries is not because of lack natural resources, but because of insufficient capability to exploit or wrong exploitation of resources."^[15]

2. Socio-economic Support

Imam 'Ali (A) defines revenue collection as a philosophy of existence of government^[16] since at the shadow of existence of a government revenue is collected and used for the prosperity of the regions and the welfare of people. It has not been neglected even by bad rulers and they should consume some part of this financial resource for the benefit of country. Revenue system may have many functions for economic growth; it sometimes helps the production of goods and providing job opportunities, sometimes helps construction sector. In some cases it is paid as subsidy to the people of society or is spent in defense and military sectors. In any case revenue should be spent for the nation or public interest.

In economic practice of Amir al- Mu'minin revenue has been considered from two different aspects:

- A) the way of revenue collection
- B) the way of revenue consumption

In the first aspect, i.e. the way of revenue collection and the revenue collectors' conduct with people, Imam 'Ali (A) offers instructions and recommendations to his revenue administrators all of which focus on respecting the people. Addressing his rulers Imam emphasizes that when collecting revenue they should treat people kindly and respectfully and if in some cases the people are not capable of paying their revenue they may exclude them respectfully of paying revenue and they should never get angry with them and treat them arrogantly. In a letter to his revenue agent, for instance, Imam 'Ali (A) states that: "Move on with the fear of Allah Who is One and has no partner. Do not frighten any Muslim. Do not pass over his lands so as to make him feel unhappy. Do not take from him more than Allah's share in his property. When you go to a tribe, you should get down at their watering place instead of entering their houses. Then proceed towards them with peace and dignity till you stand among them. Then salute them and do not be remiss in greeting them."^[17]

The second aspect, i.e. the way of using revenue focuses on this point that the best method of using this national capital and the most accurate method of distribution should be applied; of course, the best example throughout the history was seen at the time of the ruling of Amir al- Mu'minin 'Ali ibn Abitalib (A).

One section that requires revenue revenues is, for example, military and defense department which provides its equipments and support through revenue revenues, because if this section is not strengthened, the power and security of the regions is weakened and this opens the greedy eyes of the strangers which in turn has negative economic consequences. In his letter to Malik Ashtar Imam 'Ali (A) writes: "Our soldiers have proved strong before the enemy because of the privilege God has given them to fight for Him; but they have their material needs to fulfill and have therefore to depend upon the income provided for them from the state revenue."^[18]

On the other hand, the scientists and historians generally agree that Imam 'Ali (A) was very careful about fair distribution of revenue among different classes of society and there is no need to explain and to bring evidence on this issue, since the name of 'Ali ibn Abitalib (A) is mingled with justice and trust. He states that: "Even if it were my property, I would have distributed it equally among them, then why not when the property is that of Allah."^[19] It is worth mentioning that the way of revenue payment in Islamic society at 4th and 5th

centuries has been explained eloquently by some orientalist like Adam Metz which indicates the great Islamic civilization throughout the history.^[20]

3. Socio-economic Peace and Security

It is a famous saying to scientists of economy that "capital is coward and it does not lie in stressful regions." Therefore, economic boost and investment and existence of a healthy society requires establishment of peace and security and it is only possible at the shadow of establishment of government; as Imam 'Ali (A) defines providing peace and security and defending external invasions as the reasons for the people's need to government.^[21]

Basically the benefits and consequences of security are sensible in all sectors and areas of the country including socio-economic area which is a necessary and effective requirement.

Sea, ground and air ways and transportation systems act, for instance, as blood vessels by which goods and cargos are transported across the country and if this network becomes insecure, the economic systems are blocked and it leads to death and the end of economic life of the society, as the blocking of human blood vessels leads to death. For this reason Amir al-Mu'minin opens a special account for the issue of security and he does not tolerate any kind of insecurity within his ruling territory. When he is, for instance, informed that plunders and rioters attack a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim woman and steal their hearings, bracelets and ankles without any injury, he calls this a great tragedy and not only blames a believer who is greatly regretful and dies because of this great tragedy but also says that he deserves to die.^[22] In his view all of the classes, industries and religions of the country should live in complete security.

Certainly in such a society in which security is so valuable, investment growth and circulation of goods is more confident and stable and there will be an acceptable level of balance between production and consumption. It should not be ignored that all of these bounties is achievable at the shadow of establishment of government and the amount of blessings depends on the good or bad ruler, while without a ruler none of these economic ideals will be fulfilled.

4. Justice and Fighting against Socio-economic Corruptions

Undoubtedly, the most important and fundamental purpose of government establishment in Islam is to establish justice in the society. This is clearly expressed in the Holy Qur'an, chapter Hadid, verse 25: "And revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe right measure."

It is obvious that socio-economic justice is a central axis of justice in the society by which all rights of the weak people are restored from the owners of wealth and power and the country's facilities and capitals are distributed equally among people and this is achievable at the light of existence of a powerful government. Although under the ruling of a bad ruler the least of this object is achievable, it will be profitable for the country. In the words of Imam 'Ali (A) restoring the right of the weak people from the strong ones has been defined as the duty of government^[23] as it is observed in the practice of Imam 'Ali (A). When the people rush to Imam 'Ali (A) after the death of 'Uthman ibn 'Affan asking him to accept the ruling, he says: "by Allah if people had not come to me and supporters had not exhausted the argument, I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders."

The thinkable point is the way Imam 'Ali (A) defines divine covenant: "If there had been no pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce in the gluttony of the oppressor".^[24]

In 'Alawi point of view the Lofty Allah has taken covenant from religious scholars not to remain silent about oppressors' over eating and starvation of the oppressed and to rise for actualization of economic justice, improvement of living status and public welfare. In this line government is a good means to fulfill this ideal and for this reason Imam 'Ali (A) took the rope of Caliphate in his hand and directed it toward widespread justice.

The greatest medal for a ruler and the light of his eyes in the viewpoint of Imam 'Ali (A) is the ability to promote justice across the regions and to establish it in the society, especially to establish economic justice and to fight against economic corrupters and rent seekers. Amir al-Mu'minin Imam 'Ali (A) says to Malik Ashtar that: "The fact is that the real happiness of the administrators and their most pleasant comfort lies in establishing justice in the country."^[25]

As it was mentioned earlier, using the lever of power and government, Imam 'Ali (A) made a wide and consistent effort toward fulfilling economic justice and fighting against economic corruptions was his top priority. In his letter to Malik Ashtar he mentions the role and position of traders and merchants and adds that: "But bear in mind that a good many of them are intensely greedy and are inured to bad dealings. They hoard grain and try to sell it at a high price; and this is most harmful to the public. It is a blot on the name of the ruler not to fight this evil."^[26] He then instructs clearly to the governor of Egypt to severely fight against economic offenses and to identify and punish offenders: "Prevent them from hoarding; for the Prophet of God - peace be upon him - had prohibited it. And see to it that trade is carried on with the utmost ease, that the scales are evenly held and that prices are so fixed that neither the seller nor the buyer is put to a loss. And if in spite of your

warning, should anyone go against your commands and commit the crime of hoarding, then deal him appropriately with severe punishment."^[27]

His conduct toward the issue of Muslim's public treasury and the way of its distribution among people is another example of economic justice of Imam 'Ali (A). In his viewpoint, Allah has fixed the livelihood of the destitute in the wealth of the rich. Consequently, whenever a destitute remains hungry it is because some rich person has denied (him his share).^[28]

For this reason Imam 'Ali (A) restored all Muslim's public treasury distributed unlawfully by the caliphs, even he did not neglect those Muslim's public treasury which has been paid unlawfully as the dowries of the women and made an ultimatum from the beginning his caliphate that: "By Allah, even if I had found that by such money women have been married or slave-maids have been purchased I would have returned it (to its owners)."^[29]

It is quoted by Ibn Abi al-Hadid Mu'tazili that after this statement Imam 'Ali (A) ordered to take the charities (arms and camels) back from 'Uthman but not the rest of his property and commanded to give back all properties and lands bestowed by 'Uthman to his friends and companions and influential people to Muslim's public treasury.^[30]

Distributing Muslim's public treasury Imam 'Ali (A) never went away a step from justice, he never discriminated between black and white, Arab and non-Arab, free and slave; although he faced many oppositions on behalf of elites. A few days after his caliphate Imam of the pious announced his clear positions and said: "Oh people! Hadrat Adam (A) had no children as slave-maids or slave, and all the people are born free, but now for some reasons some people are you slaves There is some Muslim's public treasury with me that I should divide equally among you, whether black or white, free or slave."^[31]

One point attracting our attention is the way Imam 'Ali (A) fight against socio-economic corruptions namely announcing the name of corruptors. Addressing Malik Ashtar he emphasizes that: "Keep watching over them without their knowledge, loyal and upright men. Perchance they may develop true honesty and true concern for the public welfare. But whenever any of them is accused of dishonesty and the guilt is confirmed by the report of your secret service, then regard this as a sufficient to convict him. Let the punishment be corporal and let that be dealt in the public at an appointed place of degradation."^[32] It is obvious that enforcement of some laws such as flagellation, announcing his disloyalty and putting the rope of disgrace and shame on his neck has no meaning but to introduce the corrupter to the people. Therefore, the phrase "to take the right of the weak from the strong" is a sign of enforcement of justice especially in the area of economy which is a major function of government. Of course, Imam 'Ali (A) emphasizes that the reports about corruption should be valid and there should be some confident state officials who are agree about the disloyalty of a person, otherwise, no one can be punished just because of an accusation and suspicion.

Socio-economic Welfare

After speaking about enforcement of justice and restoring the right of the oppressed at the shadow of establishing a government, next Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (A) referred to its major effect, i.e. establishment of public welfare in the society.^[33] It should be mentioned that as socio-economic justice is a major axis of justice in the state, socio-economic welfare is also one of the most important characteristics of ideal society and there is causal relationship between justice and welfare. In other words, promotion of living status of the people and their power of purchase results from enforcement of justice and substitution of rules for relations. The state has the duty to use all capabilities in order to step toward reducing poverty and class difference in the society and this point has been mentioned in the ever-lasting charter of Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (A) to Malik Ashtar, the governor of Egypt. In fact, one of the most obvious characteristics of socio-economic practice of Imam 'Ali (A) is his special attention to the issue of livelihood of the people and public welfare which considering the poor, the captive and incapable people it takes more importance. Letter 53 of Nahj al-Balagha reads:

"Fear God when dealing with the problem of the poor who have non to patronize, who are forlorn, indigent and helpless and are greatly torn in mind -victims of the vicissitudes of time. Among them there are some who do not question their lot in life notwithstanding their misery, do not go about begging. For God's sake, safeguard their rights; for on you rests the responsibility of protection. Assign for their uplift a portion of the state exchequer (Bait al-Mal), wherever they may be, whether close at hand or far away from you. The rights of the two should be equal in your eye."^[34] Focusing generally on the issue of investigation and consideration of economic status of the people, especially low-income ones, this paragraph also discuss an important and delicate point:

In order to promote living status and public welfare of the state, Imam 'Ali (A) offers two fundamental strategies to the governors: 1- relief strategy 2- stabilizing strategy.

Relief strategy acts like a sedative drug and it is not a fundamental and ideal strategy. In this strategy, public revenues and revenue are used to fulfill the requirements of different classes of the society, especially low-income class. Of course, it does not mean that this strategy does not include other middle or high- income classes, because Imam 'Ali (A) allocated and distributed a specific part of Muslim's public treasury among the

common people of the society, whether poor or wealthy, white or black, slave or non-slave. It should be considered that low-income class needs more aid, for this reason special attention was paid to them. It is pointed out that justice is not always equality and although the allocation of a special proportion to vulnerable and low-income class of the society is against equality but is fair; because justice means to put everything in its right position but not to equality in action. In relief strategy people, especially the class in need seeks the aid of state to fulfill part of their requirements, even transiently. In fact, this is a consuming approach but not production and prosperity one which leads to self dependence.

This strategy appeared in this phrase by Imam 'Ali (A): "And allocate a special portion of Muslim's public treasury to the poor (forlorn, indigent and helpless)"^[35] which aims to meet the needs of the classes based on relief strategy. It is in any case a useful strategy and can remove some part of difficulties.

But the stabilizing strategy takes production and construction approach and is a great help for job production in the country the product of which is promotion of welfare and purchase power of the people. Based on this strategy the state provides the people with initial funds and facilities and relying on their own human forces the people in return engage in production and earning money. The most obvious characteristics of this strategy are self-reliance, independence and preventing from consumption which can reduce poverty to a great extent in the society.

The phrase "Assign part of "Ghallat Sawafi" in every city to them" in the statements of Imam 'Ali (A) indicates stabilizing strategy getting more knowledge about which requires the explanation of the word "Ghallat Sawafi".

There are similar quotes about the word "Ghallat Sawafi". According to Ibn Abi al-Hadid Mu'tazili, "Ghallat Sawafi" were "the lands possessed without any conflict or war."^[36] Also according to Ibn Meitham Bahrani, "al-Sawafi" is the plural of "al-Safiya" which mean "land plundered in war".^[37] Sahib Al-Nahaya defines "al- Sawafi" as "non- habitual lands or the lands without any owner or inheritor".^[38]

Considering the above-mentioned evidences it should be said that "Ghallat Sawafi" are the estates or properties under the authority of the ruler which he uses them for the interest of the state as it is mentioned by Farid Khurasani in "An explanation to Nahj al-Balagha".^[39]

In his letter to Malik Ashtar Imam 'Ali (A) recommends him to give part of these estates and lands to the poor thereby they enjoy two blessings: water and land that remove poverty; since Imam 'Ali (A) believes that: "whoever has access to water and land and is still poor, he is away from the blessing of Allah".^[40]

Anyway, using this strategy leads to economic stabilization in the society, because state has only supervising role and in fact the people are the real executives. Of course, according to the practice of Imam 'Ali (A) these properties should be given first to the weak and poor class of the society. This strategy may be called a fair and regulated privatization developed by Imam 'Ali (A) 1400 years ago.

Conclusion

According to the teachings of Imam 'Ali (A) the government and power can be called holy and valuable if by them justice and spirituality are established. Government may have maximum or minimum functions. It has maximum function when the righteous rulers take the power and it has minimum function when bad rulers take the power. But it should be considered that from the viewpoint of Imam 'Ali (A), a bad government is better than anarchistic one. In fact, Imam 'Ali (A) believes that if once the people are allowed to select between anarchistic government and totalitarian government, it is better to accept totalitarian one in order to put the country in order even relatively. Imam 'Ali (A) offers reasons which address the minimum functions of totalitarian - autocratic government including: 1- economic boost and circulation of economic activities 2- socio-economic support 3- socio-economic peace and security 4- justice and fighting against socio-economic corruptions 5- socio-economic welfare.

Even though, from the viewpoint of Imam 'Ali (A), under the authority of a bad ruler a minimum or part of the above-mentioned functions may be achieved, this situation is better than anarchistic system of government.

As a righteous and fair ruler, Imam 'Ali (A) provides his governors and administrators with two fundamental strategies to improve living status and to promote public welfare in the state: 1- relief strategy 2- stabilizing strategy. In relief strategy, public revenues and revenues are used to meet fundamental needs of different classes of the society especially the low-income class. But stabilizing strategy takes a production and construction approach and initial funds and facilities are given by the state to the people, like the new model of privatization, in order that the people are engaged in production and work by the cooperation of the state.

The economic models and theories of Imam 'Ali (A) are also very effective in the area of enforcement and action. In fact, by applying strategies and policies Imam 'Ali (A) could change considerably the situation and promote welfare and living status of the people at his time of ruling. At the spite of all difficulties and shortages, Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (A) could keep water, food and housing situation (three important economic scales) in a good level and to fulfill this ideal in a human society. Therefore, there is no doubt that there is a complicated relationship between government and socio-economic status. And some of the economists believe

that the economic history of developed countries indicates clearly the influence of involvement of the state in economic development. Some of the scientists even consider state and government the only system that directs economic events in the county. Through this investigation and field study it can be concluded that the socio-economic theories and principles of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (250 recorded 1400 years ago), were successful, functional and useful model that by his good management and wisdom it bore fruit in a short time and the people could taste its sweet flavor and we now need this model more than any other time.

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- [2]. *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermon 33. Nahj al-Balagha is one of the most valid and valuable traditional and historical books among Muslims which is also called the Brother of Qur'an.
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- [9]. See: Meitham Ibn Ali Ibn Meitham Bahrani, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Matba'a Khadamat Press, 1984), vol. 2, p. 103, Sermon 39; Muhammad Salih Qazwini Rughani, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Islamiyya Press, 1961), vol. 1, p.164; Nasir Makarim Shirazi, *Payam Imam Amir al-Mu'minin*, (Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, 1997), vol. 2, p. 436, Sermon 40. (The proof for my words is the fact that Banu Umayya rulers were all tyrants, except a few numbers namely 'Uthman and Umar ibn Abd al-'aziz. But even at their time of ruling revenues were collected, lands were plundered, Islamic boundaries were defended, roads were safe and the right of the weak was taken from the strong and their oppressions did not prevent from these affairs); Meitham Ibn Ali Ibn Meitham Bahrani, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Matba'a Khadamat Press, 1984), vol. 2, p. 104, Sermon 39.
- [10]. Meitham Ibn Ali Ibn Meitham Bahrani, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Matba'a Khadamat Press, 1984), vol. 2, p. 103, Sermon 39.
- [11]. See: Husayn ibn Muhammad Raghayb Esfahani, *Mufradat*, (Qum: Tali'a al-Nur, 2005), p. 587.
- [12]. Imam 'Ali (A), for instance, refers to the important role of traders and merchants and reminds Malik Ashtar of the pathology of this class. A part of this letter reads: "Adopt useful schemes placed before those engaged in trade and industry and help them with wise counsels. Some of them live in towns, and some move from place to place with their wares and tools and earn their living by manual labor. Trade and industry are sources of profit to the State. While the general public is not inclined to bear the strain, those engaged in these professions take the trouble to collect commodities from far and near, from land and from across the sea, and from mountains and forests and naturally derive benefits."
- [13]. Muhammad Ibn Hasan Hurr 'Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, (Qum: Mu'assisa 'Al al-Bayt, 1989), vol. 12, p. 24.
- [14]. See: Murtaza Qarih Baghiyan, *Iqtisad rushd wa tawsi'a*, (Tehran: Nei Press, 1994), p. 193.
- [15]. See: Sayyed Muhsin Ha'iri, *Andishih hay Iqtisadi dar Nahj al-Balagha*, tr. 'Abd al-'Ali 'Al Buya Langrudi, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 1999), p. 193.
- [16]. "Through the ruler revenue is collected", Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Sermon 40.

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- [17]. Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Letter 25.
- [18]. *Ibid.*, Letter 53.
- [19]. *Ibid.*, Sermon 126.
- [20]. See: Adam Metz, *Tamaddun Islami*, tr. Ali Reza Zakawati, (Tehran: Amir kabir Press, 1998), p. 115.
- [21]. "Through the ruler enemy is fought, roadways are protected", *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermon 40.
- [22]. Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Sermon 27.
- [23]. "The right of the weak is taken from the strong", Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Sermon 40.
- [24]. Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Sermon 3.
- [25]. *Ibid.*, Letter 53.
- [26]. *Ibid.*.
- [27]. *Ibid.*.
- [28]. See: Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Saying 328.
- [29]. *Ibid.*, Sermon 15.
- [30]. See: 'Iz al-Din Ibn Abi al-Hadid Mu'tazili, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Cairo: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 2006), vol. 1, p. 27.
- [31]. Ali Akbar Alikhani, *tawsi'a Siyasi az didgah Imam 'Ali*, (Qum: Daftar Tablighat Islami, 1998), p. 83.
- [32]. Seyyed Jamal al-Din Dinparwar, *Persian Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Bunyad Nahj al-Balagha, 2005), Letter 53.
- [33]. "... till the virtuous enjoys peace and allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked", *Nahj al-Balagha*, Sermon 40.
- [34]. "Then (fear) God, (fear) God regarding the lowest class, the wretched, needy, suffering and disabled who have no means at their disposal, for in this class there is he who begs and he who is needy (but does not beg). Be heedful for God's sake of those rights of theirs which He has entrusted to you. Set aside for them a share of your treasury (bayt al mal) and in every town to share of the produce of the lands of Islam taken as booty, for the farthest away of them belongs the equivalent of what belongs to the nearest. You are bound to observe the right of each of them", *Nahj al-Balagha*, Letter 53.
- [35]. *Ibid.*.
- [36]. Meitham Ibn Ali Ibn Meitham Bahrani, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, (Tehran: Matba'a Khadamat Press, 1983), vol. 17, p. 86.
- [37]. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 158.
- [38]. Ali Ansariyan, *Al-Muqtaf Min Bihar al-Anwar*, (Tehran: Wizarat Farhang wa Arshad Islami, 1987), vol. 3, p. 262.
- [39]. Ali Ibn Zayd Beihaqi, *Ma'arij of Nahj al-Balagha*, (Qum: Maktaba 'Ayat Allah al-Mar'ashi al-Najafi, 1988), vol. 1, p. 390.
- [40]. Muhammad Ibn Hasan Hurr 'Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, (Qum: Mu'assisa 'Al al-Bayt, 1988), vol. 12, p. 24.