

# Anthropology As Discussed In The Holy Qur'an: A Theoretical Review

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**Abstract**—The holy Quran is a wonder book. It covers all branches of knowledge, science and theories. Though Anthropology is a recent topic of scientific study, the holy Quran had described a basic concept of it more than fourteen hundred years ago. This article is basically about the broad definition of Anthropology in the light of the present context. So it talks about physical anthropology, characteristics of social and cultural anthropology, the relationship of anthropology with sociology, biology and psychology. This article will prove a strong mutual relationship between Anthropology and linguistics, folklore and ancient archaeology. Another important aim of presenting this article is to show Anthropology in the perspective of colonialism and internationalism. The holy Quran contains all these aspects in their basic and principal forms. So Quranic religion i.e. Islam too is not devoid of all these branches of knowledge, science and theories. This analytical thesis will shed light on this significant point. It will make it evident that the anthropological concept that the holy Quran presents is full, complete and comprehensive and includes all the aspects of human life. Though the holy Quran relates Anthropology to its fullest, unfortunately any article or study regarding it is rare. So I believe, this analysis will lead the readers to a new vista of knowledge and play a significant role in establishing a value of knowledge in this field.

**Keywords**—The holy quran, Anthropology, Physical Anthropology, Scientific Study, Cultural Anthropology.

## INTRODUCTION

Anthropology assumes a deep and widespread phase of human knowledge. It discusses the scientific overview of human and human activities. That's why Anthropology is deeply related to Biology, Sociology, Psychology, Linguistics, Genealogy, Folklore, ancient Archaeology, religion, culture, colonialism and International isms.

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Anthropology deals with human physical structure, source, evolution and revolution. In the same way it discourses human psychological and cultural evolution. The actual aim of human knowledge is to reach a certain true destination. Man can know the Creator through real wisdom. Again man can be

aware of the whole Universe and the diversity of creation of the Universe. Human knowledge becomes successful when it reaches the aim of unveiling the truth. We can know the human physical structure, source, evolution and expansion as well as national and cultural evolution of mankind from the holy Quran and Hadith. Thus the close relationship of Anthropology with Islamic Theology is proved and established<sup>1</sup>.

## DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology should largely be understood as human science. It focuses on the source of human physical and cultural evolution, revolution and development. The Greek word *Anthropos* means human. *Logia* means study. So, Anthropology refers to the study that is related to human and mankind. The aim of Physical Anthropology is to study about the human source and evolution, the structure of human body and brain. It also aims at identifying the condition of human among the huge world of creations. Etymologically, anthropology is the science of man. The concept of race, on the one hand, and that o culture, on the other, have received special attention.<sup>2</sup>

Anthropology also gives light to human genealogy, source, evolution and cultural development. The major classification of Anthropology is divided into two parts: Physical Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology. Physical Anthropology discusses human organism, Biology, human fossil and measurement. On the other hand, Cultural Anthropology describes the source of human nation, Relative Human Science, Social Anthropology, Arts, Literature, Linguistics and Archeology.

The Holy Quran says regarding human evolution :

"O men! Fear your Lord Who created you from a single being and out of it created its mate; and out of the two spread many men and women." <sup>3</sup>

In Islam, we believe that Allah SWT created Hawa A. from the first human being and prophet of the world

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rahman Habib, ``Al Quran-e Nri Biggan'', *Islami ayin o Bichar*, (Dhaka : Bangladesh Islamic Law Research and legal aid center, 2013), P. 25

<sup>2</sup> *The New Encyclopedia of Britannica*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 15th Edition, 1981), Vol-1, P. 968

<sup>3</sup> Al-Quran 4:1

Adam A. And from both of them He created all the mankind. This mankind is the primary topic of Anthropology.

### PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

As Physical Anthropology discusses about the human evolution, development and his physical structure, so there is a strong bond between Physical Anthropology and Physiology, Anatomy, Zoology. In Human Paleontology, human skeleton, biological stone as well as different weapons and arms used by human beings are studied defining the exact time of saved human fossils. The topic that studies the measurement of human body is defined as Anthropometry. It not only discusses about the proportional differences of human organs but also analyzes them.

The holy Quran describes the structure of human body as well as other animals. Allah SWT says,

﴿وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِ ۗ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ أَرْبَعٍ ۗ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

"Allah has created every animal from water. Of them some move on their bellies, some move on two legs and some on four. Allah creates whatever He wills. Surely Allah has power over everything."<sup>4</sup>

Some special species are called the primate. They are the animals who have nails in their fingers and toes. And they can hold something using the nails. But the exact definition and identification of the primate are very difficult. Gross Clerk said in his famous work 'History of the Primates', It is peculiarly to give satisfying feature which distinguishes all the members of the group.<sup>5</sup>

The relics of the animals and trees that have been found by researching the deep layer of soil are called Fossil.

The holy Quran instructs to carry research work regarding fossils. And this research has been defined as a sign of the existence of Allah SWT. The holy Quran says,

﴿وَ أَنْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا﴾

"And see how We put the bones (of the ass) together and clothe them with flesh."<sup>6</sup>

This type of fossil is found in different geographical areas of the world. The holy Quran states in this regard,

﴿قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ كَانُوا أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ﴾

(O Prophet), say: "Traverse in the earth and see what the end of those who went before you was: most of them associated others with Allah in His Divinity."<sup>7</sup>

In the first part of the above mentioned verse, human relics and historical archeology have been discussed. And in the second part, the cultural situation of those who used to associate partners with Allah has been described.

Some of the mentionable human fossils are : Sinanthropus Pekinensis : 1903, Pithecanthropus Erectus : 1894, Homo Heidelbergensis : 1907, Eoanthropus Dawsoni : 1911. The anthropologists say that by discovering Homo Neanderthalensis they found the source of biological development. These fossils were found in many areas of the world including Palestine, Austria, Spain, France, Belgium and Germany.

The Neanderthals used to live on the earth nearly 100000 or 400000 years ago. This is the opinion of the majority of the anthropologists. The famous anthropologist Koenig opines that the Cro Magnons used to live on the earth almost 25000 years ago. Some anthropologists demand that the Cro Magnons are the ancestors of modern human.<sup>8</sup>

Men can be divided into three parts according to the measurement of their heads: Dolichocephalic (long headed), Brachycephalic (round headed) and Mesocephalic (medium sized head). The people of South Asia have been divided into seven categories: the Turkish Iranian, Indian Aryan, Aryan Dravid, Shock Dravid, Dravid, Mongol Dravid or the Bangalees, Mongoloids. The Turkish Iranians have round heads, slender noses and bright colored skin. The Indian Aryans have relatively long heads, slender and a little raised noses. The Aryan Dravids have brown or slightly dark skin. Their height is less than medium. The Shock Dravids have round heads and thin noses. Their height is between long and short. The Dravids have long heads and wide noses. Maximum of them have curly hairs. The Mongol Dravids are the same species as the Bangalees. Their heads are generally round but medium sized. They have slender and slightly wide noses. Their complexion is dark but sometimes light brown too. Their height is also between long and short. They live in Bengal (Bangladesh and West Bengal) and some part of Odisha.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Al-Quran 24:45

<sup>5</sup> Wilfrid LeGros Clark, *History of the Primates : An Introduction to the Study of Fossil Man* (London : British Museum (Natural History), ed. 8, 1962), pp. vi+119

<sup>6</sup> Al-Quran 2:259

<sup>7</sup> Al-Quran 30:42

<sup>8</sup> Ibne Golam Samad, Nritatta (Dhaka : Bangla Academy, 1967) p. 90

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p.93

The Mongoloids have round heads. Their face is somewhat plain and wide. Their complexion is yellowish brown. They are usually short. They hardly have beards and moustache. But however, the human beings have the best physical and facial structure among all the creatures. In Surah teen Allah SWT says,

﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَن تَقْوِيمٍ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ﴾

"Surely We created man in the best mould; then We reverted him to the lowest of the low." Al-Quran 95:4-5<sup>10</sup>

This beautiful creation of Allah SWT refers to Physical Anthropology. Again in the above verse, it has been said that Allah SWT reverts man to the lowest of the low due to his evil activities. It actually refers to Cultural Anthropology which includes human activities, thought and spirit.

Besides the holy Quran also supports the change and alteration of human physical structure. Allah SWT says in this regard,

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ قَدَرْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ الْمَوْتَ وَ مَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ عَلَى أَنْ نُبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَ نُنشِئْكُمْ فِي مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ وَ لَقَدْ عَلَّمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَى فَلَوْ لَا تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

"It is We Who ordained death upon you and We are not to be frustrated. Had We so wished, nothing could have hindered Us from replacing you by others like yourselves, or transforming you into beings you know nothing about. You are well aware of the first creation; then, do you learn no lesson from it?" Al Quran 56:60-62<sup>11</sup>

### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is closely related to Sociology. In the other words, Anthropology is basically included in Sociology. One of the main features of Sociology is it presents an individual and far outlook in explaining and understanding the social world. The famous sociologist Anthony Giddens defines Sociology is— Sociology is the systematic or planned and organized study of human groups & social in modern societies. It is concerned with the study of social institution<sup>12</sup>

The social institutions that are related to Sociology are : family, education system, economic system, and religious institutions. To utilize them effectively we must judge the dependability on the mutual relations of these institutions. Moreover, Economic Sociology, Political Sociology, Media Sociology and Sociology of

Health and Disease are also included in different aspects of Sociology.<sup>13</sup>

Economic Sociology studies the economically related institutions in the light of the background of Sociology. So discussing about employment, unemployment, retirement etc. is the main focus of Economic Sociology. Whereas Political Sociology discusses about the relation of the state with its people and tribes. It also broadly describes the political culture, movement and outcome analyzing the political institutions in the light of the background of Sociology.

The topic of Media Sociology discuss about the actual use of Media that man can go through. Besides, Sociology also deals with some other aspects like a. Literal Sociology; b. Historical Sociology; c. Rural Sociology; d. Sociology of Law; e. Sociology of Education; f. Sociology of Disaster and g. Sociology of Organization. This proves that Sociology not only discusses about political and economic topics; but also analyzes city, health, literature, history, village, law, education, disaster and organizations. So, it shows the wide and vast sphere of Sociology.<sup>14</sup>

Anthropology is established at the center of the study of male and female. Because this subject focuses on the emergence of human and human behavior, social structure and general culture. The anthropologists have been engaging themselves in the research of human nature for more than two centuries. In the recent form of Anthropology the scientific condition of human is being researched tactfully. This research work is conducted taking information from the world human family. The scientists are giving effort to the discovery of the ancient human and their cultural diversity. They are studying underground fossils in searching for the real picture of human. As the modern anthropologists conduct research works and study regarding modern humanity, society and culture, so the international world and its society, politics and colonialism have also become an important topic of modern Anthropology.

Physical anthropology sheds light upon the human physical structure, its source and evolution. But cultural anthropology discusses human culture. That's why Sociology is deeply related to cultural anthropology in the discussion of society and culture. Cultural anthropology discusses about marriage, family, religion, state, different occasions and organizations. And in order to clarify these subjects Ethnography, Linguistics and Archeology are very much important to study and understand their mutual relations. But this is true that Anthropology observes

<sup>10</sup> Al-Quran 95:4-5

<sup>11</sup> Al-Quran 56:60-61

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* (Cambridge and Maiden : Polity Press, 6th ed., 2009), p. 6

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid* , P.10

<sup>14</sup> Michael S. Basis, Richard J. Gelles, Ann Levine, *Sociology : An Introduction*, (New York : Random House, 1984), p. 355-361.

human and human society in small sphere. On the other hand, Sociology studies and analyzes human and human society in a larger scope. The main method of the research of Sociology is survey method. Whereas in Anthropology the participation of all observational methods is a must.<sup>15</sup>

In Sociology Institutions are an important topic. According to Recharad Jellies and Ann Levine, Social institution are relatively stable sets of norms and values, statuses & organizations that provide a structure for behavior in a particular area of social life.<sup>16</sup>

So, we can say that social institutions describe societal method, organizations and the usage structure of social life.

In society and culture, human wish and hope are generally effective. This ideological sample of human wish and hope is called Value. Sometimes Norms are more important than Value. Because Norms present the ethical stand of human behavioral way and guidance in a certain and fixed situation. From the very beginning of civilization religion has been playing the role of the foundation of human values. That's why in the case of socialization the role of religion is very important. But in the modern era, the place of religion in socialization has become narrow. Nevertheless, socialization is a very significant matter of society. The following definition of socialization is worth considering : Socialization is the process by which we learn to become members of society, both by internationalizing the norms & values of society, and also by learning to perform our social roles.<sup>17</sup>

Religion plays an important role in building up the foundation of ethical civilization and discipline of life. That's why I think, the role of religion should be considered as effective in the case of socialization, value and norms. Though ethics and belief are the elements of culture, religious essence is also significant in this regard. Just look at the definition of the famous anthropologist E.B. Tylor. culture as defined by him: Culture is the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities acquired by man and a member of society.<sup>18</sup>

When some new thoughts, events or deeds get included in a certain culture, we call it the Innovation of Culture. In the consideration of the sociologists the expansion of western culture throughout the world is called Diffusion. In this case, a national and historical

standard of ethics is a must. This is ever admitted by the real patriot and wise people.

The holy Quran too points at the change and ups and downs of culture. Allah SWT says,

﴿قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ ۖ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ﴾

"Many eras have passed before you. Go about, then, in the land and behold the end of those who gave the lie to (the directives and ordinances of Allah)." Al-Quran 3:137<sup>19</sup>

In the same way, we are informed of the cultural revolution by the following verse of the Quran. It proves that taking effective measures about the cultural evolution and revolution is one of the signs of Allah SWT.

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

"Allah wants to make all this clear to you, and to guide you to the ways which the righteous have followed in the past. He will turn graciously towards you. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." Al-Quran 4:26<sup>20</sup>

The negativity of Globalization is being especially effective in the case of culture among the third world countries. Edward W Sayeed opines that the practice of western knowledge, literature and arts is forcing the sovereignty of western culture upon the developing world.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE HOLY QURAN

We think, this cultural aggression must be re-settled with the positivity of patriotism, conventional tradition, ethical value, and the awareness of religion. Because religion plays important roles in creating mutual love, cooperation, and building up human belief and molding one's behavior. That's why in the case of social and mutual cooperation the significance of religion must be considered. Because the sociologists say that religion not only frees mankind from anxiety and fear, but also helps in beautifying and enjoying life and world.<sup>21</sup>

Professor Nazmul Karim said in his book '*Somajbiggan Somikkhon*', "The Anthropologists consider everything created by human as culture. But they did not attach *value* to it. They say that civilization is not more than a complex growing culture."<sup>22</sup> Actually defining culture detaching *value* is never beneficial to civilization. For example, if all the people of the world start to live a moral life by tying

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, P. 360

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, P. 363

<sup>17</sup> Gordon Marshal, *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 1621

<sup>18</sup> Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture : Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2010), Vol. 1, p. 1

<sup>19</sup> Al-Quran 3:137

<sup>20</sup> Al-Quran 4:26

<sup>21</sup> Dr. Rahman Habib, ``Al Quran-e Nri Biggan'', P. 30

<sup>22</sup> Syed Ali Naqi, *Nribiggan*, (Dhaka : Bangla Academy, 1980), p. 27

the knot of marriage, bastards, AIDS, different social crimes and nudity will be removed from the society. In the city of Bombay, 70% female students lose their virginity before starting college. According to a survey, in 2006 the number of AIDS patients in USA increased by 56 thousand and 3 hundred.<sup>23</sup> In USA population is not growing through the ethical system of marriage. That's why it has been difficult for them to maintain civilization out of the lacking of population. So every year they have to import man-power from other countries. In fact, in order to sustain civilization for the future there is no alternative to the ethical life of marriage. If man wants to enjoy his instinct like the animals, civilization and culture will no longer exist. That's why Allah SWT said in the holy Quran,

﴿فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا ۗ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا﴾

"This was the inevitable result of the loss of the connection with Allah. As they became more and more neglectful of their Salat, their lusts took complete hold of them and they fell to the lowest depths of moral depravity and began to follow their whims instead of the divine commands. Except those who repent and believe and act righteously. Such shall enter Paradise and shall not be wronged at all."<sup>24</sup>

History witnesses that no matter how strong the foundation of civilization and whatever the number of population is, when immorality gets into a society, it must destroy itself. The following verse is saying the same thing as :

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوا هُمْ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾

"Have they not journeyed in the land that they might observe the end of those who came before them? They were even greater in strength than they and left behind more splendid traces in the land."<sup>25</sup>

In the above mentioned verse Allah SWT talked about Prophet Musa A., Harun A., Ismail A. and Ibrahim A. They were all the seekers of truth and against all evils. They used to admonish people against all evils. In the above verse, the evil and uncultured people have been censured and the people with good morality and ethics have been praised. These kinds of God-fearing people have been given the glad tidings of Jannah.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP OF ANTHROPOLOGY WITH SOCIOLOGY, BIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Anthropology goes forth with human physical stature and cultural evolution and revolution.

Anthropology researches on ancient society collecting information from there. But Sociology explains about modern city and rural life. That's why the subtleness of the width of Anthropology is deeper than that of Sociology. Anthropology is kind of bio-social science. Because Biology and Zoology both include Social Science at large. But in social science Biology, Fossil Science and Zoology are not that much important to teach and learn. A Social scientist has to face Anthropology to know the source of society, evolution and revolution. In Anthropology Archeology and Linguistics are a must whereas in Sociology these are of little value.

The major branches of Biology are Botany and Zoology. Biology runs research on the source of animals, their development and evolution. But Biology has to take help from Anthropology in order to know the lost formula of the source of animals and the process of human development. In this consideration, these two sciences are related to each other deeply. Allah SWT discussed about the biological source of human in the holy Quran. He said :

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۖ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ﴾

"Recite in the name of your Lord Who created, created man from a clot of congealed blood."<sup>26</sup>

Anthropology observes human behavior being in the center of society. On the other hand, psychology studies the mental development and evolution of mankind. A person's personal basic features and their forms depend on his/her social environment. So, the main duty of psychology is to look at how the effect of social environment affects human mind and soul. Anthropology and Psychology are related to each other in the sense that Anthropology deals with both Physiology and Biology. And in order to observe the structure of human mentality one has to take help from Physiology and Biology both. All of us know the story of Yousuf A. and Julekha. This story is described in the holy Quran. Julekha fell in love with Yousuf A. for both of his physical and psychological attraction. The holy Quran states in this regard,

﴿وَرَاودَتْهُ الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ وَغَلَّقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُغْلِبُ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

"And it so happened that the lady in whose house Joseph was living, sought to tempt him to herself, and one day bolting the doors she said: "Come on now!" Joseph answered: "May Allah grant me refuge! My Lord has provided an honourable abode for me (so how can I do something so evil)? Such wrong-doers never prosper."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *The Daily Noya Diganta*, 4 August, 2008, p. 8

<sup>24</sup> Al-Quran 19:59-60

<sup>25</sup> Al-Quran 40:21

<sup>26</sup> Al-Quran 96:1-2

<sup>27</sup> Al-Quran 12:23

In this verse Allah SWT discussed about the purity of Yousuf's thought and culture. His strong attitude of being detached from the evil instinct has also been praised here. This verse is a great proof of the strong personality of Yousuf's culture and ethics.

### THE MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP OF ANTHROPOLOGY, LINGUISTICS, ETHNOLOGY, FOLKLORE AND ANCIENT ARCHEOLOGY

In Linguistics, Phonology, letter, word, Morphology, Syntax and Semantics are broadly discussed. The famous linguist Sir William Jones (1746-1794) declares in 1786 that there is a similarity between Latin, Greek, German, Celtic and Sanskrit languages. His speech actually discovers the foundation of Comparative Linguistics. As Anthropology is human related science, so it also observes the physical, grammatical, linguistic and rhetoric analysis of human languages. In fact, Linguistics is an important element of cultural Anthropology. Cultural anthropology, then, set out to analyze the totality of human culture in time and space.<sup>28</sup>

Ethnology discusses the ancient social system and comparative culture. Anthropologist Kroeber said in this regard : Ethnology is the science of peoples and their culture and life histories of a group.<sup>29</sup>

The discussion of Ethnology also includes historical human life system and their culture. Allah SWT created human being and animals in pairs. This is, in fact, a biological concept. Because by creating them in pairs Allah SWT spreads the human chain. In this regard a verse of Surah Ash-Shura is specially mentionable :

﴿فَاطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا ۗ يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ﴾

"The Originator of the heavens and the earth, He has appointed for you pairs of your own kind, and pairs also of cattle. Thus does He multiply you."<sup>30</sup>

The whole sensitivity and awareness of mankind is an important topic in cultural Anthropology. So this is also a significant element of humanity and human science. Thus, according the culture anthropologists, humanity is the products of its own total past history and activity and each individual is both the product and the support of a collective consciousness that defines a particular movement in the history of the human spirit.<sup>31</sup>

The racist Anthropologists showed Race in two categories : high race and low race. Race is actually a sub-division of mankind. They consider the white

Aryan caste as high race and the black Negro, Mongoloid, Australoid as low race. Moreover, the people of North Europe have been identified as high race and the people of Asia, Latin America and Africa have been identified as low race. But this division of high and low race is definitely objectionable. Because all of them are the creation of the same God. While describing the difference between races, Gobineau just ignored the impact of religion. This undoubtedly allures to his shortsightedness. The pure sense of Islamic culture takes the sense of race to a certain and fixed height. Because – One can better appreciate current trends by reconsidering the emergence of specialized scholarships on primitive religions.<sup>32</sup>

Even in the modern people ancient ideologies, stories, fables, folklore, custom, and biological diversity remain active under the covering of human nature. This is called Folklore. Folklore observes the sustainability of genes in modern society, succession of the unwritten past and human beliefs. In the same way, Anthropology considers the ancient society. That's why there is a close bond between Folklore and Anthropology.

Archeology studies the biography of ancient people. By Archeological digging different elements of the living of the ancient people are identified. The historical biography of the people belonging to the era before the Christ and their races and nations have been mentioned in different places of the holy Quran. In such a place, Allah SWT states :

﴿كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَأَصْحَابُ الرَّسِّ وَثَمُودٌ ۚ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَانُ لُوطٍ وَأَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبُعٍ ۚ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدِ﴾

"In the past, Noah's people, and the people of Rass and Thamud gave the lie (to Messengers), and so did 'Ad, and Pharaoh and Lot's brethren, and the people of Aykah, and the people of Tubba', They all gave the lie to the Messengers. Thereafter My threat of chastisement against them was fulfilled."<sup>33</sup>

In the above verses the biography of the ancient people and their superstitious beliefs and uncourteous behavior have been described.

### ANTHROPOLOGY, COLONIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

As we said before, Anthropology studies human physical and cultural evolution and development. We have observed many times in the history of world imperialism, Britain, France, America, Japan and some other countries established their colony in different other countries in order to gain economical

<sup>28</sup> The New Encyclopedia of Britannica, P. 971, <https://global.britannica.com/science/cultural-anthropology>, accessed on 19th December 2016

<sup>29</sup> Naqi, *Nribigan*, P. 5

<sup>30</sup> Al-Quran 42:11

<sup>31</sup> *The New Encyclopedia of Britannica*, H, P. 981

<sup>32</sup> Mircea Eliade (Editor in Chief), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York : Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), Vol-1, P. 309

<sup>33</sup> Al-Quran 50:12-14

profits from them. Edward W. Said<sup>34</sup> is an expert in Orientalism. He said in his famous book *Orientalism*, the imperialist orientalist depicted the people of Asia, Africa and South America in a very trifle way. But we know that people are equal and have the right of equal honor regarding cultural and humane dignity. Even the people of undeveloped economy can reach the developed economical state and high ambition with the combination of wisdom and technology. Today's internationalism is an internationalism with the effect of egocentric US rules. Anthropology is an effective study which helps to improvise a country's humanitarian, cultural and educational development. So, the aim of studying Anthropology is to prevent the attitude of exploitation in the guise of Globalization showing the socio-economic, politico-religious, ritual and linguistic differences.<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, the ethical subtleties of anthropological, ethnological, and cultural knowledge can play a role in saving the world from the injustices and negative grips of imperialism. However, I believe this requires the leadership of honest and visionary ethical, cultural, and intellectual personalities from third-world countries.

#### THE REASON FOR SEEKING IDEOLOGICAL INSIGHTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

The family is the foundational institution of a society. Through families, the propagation of humanity has continued on Earth. In primitive societies, we see the practices of monogamy, polygamy, and polyandry. The practice of a wife having multiple husbands is not morally acceptable as it creates problems in determining the father of a child. If the family environment maintains discipline and beauty, then morality, beauty, and harmony will naturally be ensured in the state environment and social organizations. In the West, the breakdown of the family structure has led to severe social problems such as murder, adultery, chaos, AIDS, and an increase in the number of illegitimate children. Western sociologists have started to recognize the importance of family-centricity and the provisions of marriage and morality given by Islam, which has provided a strong foundation for social organization. If the practice of long-term intellectuality and moral-cultural farsightedness in the process of human physical and cultural evolution can be ensured, wise people will acknowledge that the global society will achieve a stable cohesion.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY AND RELIGION

French sociologist Émile Durkheim's definition of religion is noteworthy: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral

community. all those who adhere to them." That is, "Religion is a unified system of sacred objects and practices that evoke a specific moral community."<sup>36</sup>

The father of British anthropology, E.B. Tylor (1832-1917), related the origin of religion to dream experiences and the consciousness of death. He believed that through the experience of dreams, humans arrived at the notion of the soul or spirit. He commented that from animism, the evolutionary sequence led to nature worship and monotheism. Wise individuals have expressed that humans can reach the heavenly idea of the soul not only through dreams but also through deep intuition. By worshiping the objects and creatures of nature, humans developed the idea that there is a single creator of all things, leading them towards monotheism.

Sociologist Karl Marx said<sup>37</sup> that religion alienates people from their human essence. He viewed religion as the opium of the poor, a concept I disagree with, believing instead that a liberal and religious nature deeply connects individuals to their true human essence. Marx, as the father of class struggle, regarded religion as an illusion or ideology that serves the interests of the ruling class and maintains existing inequalities. However, Islam emphasizes paying a worker before their sweat dries and strongly prohibits the unjust usurpation of even the smallest value. Thus, the notion that the ruling class will be exploitative and create inequality contradicts Islamic principles.

Religious revivalism exhibits significant emotional loyalty towards religion, opposite to secularism. The absence of the concept of God in Buddhist and Confucian religions is seen as a weakness. Secularism is the movement from the transcendental world to the worldly one. By maintaining the contemplation of a single creator within the human mind, the world's affairs can be conducted honestly and justly, negating the need for secularism. After the 1920s, the term fundamentalism was initially used concerning Protestant Christianity. Now, the term is applied to Islam, often with the intent to portray Islam negatively. The Five Pillars of Islam include the declaration of faith, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and almsgiving, with the shahada being the key to Islam's essence.

The core of Islam lies in worshiping one Allah and following the path of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) with the intent of pleasing Allah. Beyond the five daily prayers, additional voluntary prayers like *Ishraq*, *Duha*, *Awabeen*, and *Tahajjud* are also significant. The Quran emphasizes the continuous recitation of

<sup>34</sup> Dr. Rahman Habib, "Al Quran-e Biggan", *Islami ayin o Bichar*, (Dhaka : Bangladesh Islamic Law Research and legal aid center, 2016), P. 14

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, P. 15

<sup>36</sup> Emile Durkheim's, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Translated by Karen E. Fields (New York: The Free Press - Simon & Schuster, 1995), p. 129.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, P.130

tasbih. Allah says in the Quran, ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

"I did not create jinn and mankind except to worship Me."<sup>38</sup> Hence, Islam promotes constant worship. Wealthy individuals are obligated to perform Hajj, and those who possess wealth beyond a certain threshold must give Zakat. Serving humanity is a fundamental principle of Islam. Islam prohibits the unjust killing of any creature, and service to humans and animals is considered worship. Hence, Islam is known as a humanistic religion. Following the Five Pillars means upholding the fundamental thoughts of Islam. Therefore, labeling Muslims as fundamentalists, I believe, is theoretically incorrect and against both human and religious cultures.

Determinism is criticized by some sociologists as leading to exploitation, oppression, and underdevelopment, attributing such determinism to a lack of action. While some religions might foster determinism, Islam is a religion of action. Islam emphasizes both faith and good deeds. Max Weber wrote that while some religions hinder rationality in worldly life by overemphasizing salvation, this does not apply to Islam. The Quran teaches Muslims to seek well-being in both this world and the Hereafter<sup>39</sup>.

Karl Marx wrote, "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature,"<sup>40</sup> which does not hold true for Islam. Islam does not support causing unnecessary harm to any creature, let alone humans.

The concept of continuous improvement through the expansion of knowledge, logic, and intellect is the essence of progress. Islam places great importance on humanitarian welfare by combining intuition and rationality. Modernization theory emphasizes the creation of modern society. After the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, the modernization process rapidly expanded in Europe. Some argue that the Western world entered the postmodern era in the latter half of the twentieth century, particularly in the 1970s. According to postmodern theory, grand narratives like Marxism or structuralism are not just flawed but meaningless. Islam emphasizes both individual and collective well-being, suggesting that individual efforts will ensure collective welfare and humanity. Renowned sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) stated that God's greatness transcends limited human understanding. According to Weber, it is humanity's duty to work hard to manifest God's greatness and help establish His reign on Earth.

Christian Catholic preachers maintain celibacy, which may lead to indulgence in sins, contradicting

<sup>38</sup> Al-Quran, 51:56

<sup>39</sup> Karl Marx, "Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher*, February, 1844, p. 1

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2

human nature. Lapouz noted that Islam is more lenient than Catholicism in this regard.<sup>41</sup>

Durkheim stated that religion is a "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things that is to say, things set apart and forbidden".<sup>42</sup>

According to anthropologist Tylor, the essence of religion is the belief in the soul. Philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates believed in the immortality of the soul. Sufi mystics, inspired by the love for Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), have created an atmosphere of spiritual purity through their practices.

A significant aspect of human culture is the tendency to care for others, feed the hungry, care for the sick, and free the captive. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

فكوا العاني، وأطعموا الجائع، وعودوا المريض.

"Free the captive, feed the hungry, and visit the sick."<sup>43</sup>

As humans are the best of creation, they should not wish for death in times of hardship. Instead, they should strive to transform themselves into the best versions through their virtuous perspectives and cultural consciousness. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) advised:

لا يتمنى أحدكم الموت إما محسنا فله يزداد وإما مسينا فله يستعذب

"None of you should wish for death. Either he is a doer of good, so he may increase in good, or he is a wrongdoer, so he may repent."<sup>44</sup>

The builder of global culture, Prophet Muhammad (SAW), gave high regard to people of any religion. Even a deceased Jew received his respect as a human being. In this context, a hadith narrated by Tabi'i Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Layla (RA) is notable:

كان سهل بن حنيف وقيس بن سعد قاعدين بالقادسية فمروا عليهما جنازة فقاما، فقيل لهما إنهما من أهل الأرض أي من أهل الذمة، فقالا إن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مرت به جنازة فقام فقيل له إنها جنازة يهودي فقال: أأست نفسا

<sup>41</sup> Nakii, *Anthropology*, page-74

<sup>42</sup> Durkheim's, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. p. 129.

<sup>43</sup> Abu Abdullah Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir, 1407 AH), Kitab Al-Jihad wa As-Siyar, Bab Fakaak Al-Asir, vol. 3, p. 1109, Hadith No: 2881

<sup>44</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab At-Tamanniya, Babu Ma Yukrahu Min At-Tamanni, vol. 6, p. 2644, Hadith No: 6808



"Once, Sahal bin Hunaif and Qais bin Sa'd (RA) were sitting in Qadisiyyah. A funeral procession passed by them, and they stood up. They were told that it was the funeral of a non-Muslim local. They said, 'The Prophet (SAW) once stood for a passing funeral.' He was told that it was the funeral of a Jew. He replied, 'Is he not a soul?'"<sup>45</sup>

Islam emphasizes the importance of seeing a prospective spouse before marriage to ensure a happy marital life. Abu Huraira (RA) narrated

جاء رجل إلى النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال إني تزوجت امرأة من الأنصار فقال له النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم: هل نظرت إليها فإن في عيون الأنصار شيئاً.

"A man came to the Prophet (SAW) and said, that he intend to marry an Ansari woman." The Prophet (SAW) asked him, "Have you seen her? For there is something in the eyes of (some) Ansars." (indicating that he should see her to ensure compatibility).<sup>46</sup>

Islamic marital culture also highlights the importance of taking the bride's consent before marriage. The Prophet (SAW) said,

لا تنكح الأيم حتى تستأمر ولا تنكح البكر حتى تستأذن. قالوا يا رسول الله وكيف إذن؟ قال أن تسكت

"A previously married woman should not be married without her consent, and a virgin should not be married without her permission." The companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah, how can we know her permission?" He said, "Her silence (indicates her consent)."<sup>47</sup>

"Regarding the issue of inheritance of property, it is not permissible to usurp even the smallest piece of land unjustly. In this regard, Rasulullah (PBUH) said, "

من أخذ شيئاً من الأرض بغير حقه خسف به يوم القيامة إلى سبع أرضين.

"Whoever wrongfully usurps even the smallest part of someone else's land, on the Day of Judgment, he will be sunk down seven earth layers."<sup>48</sup>

Regarding the importance of valuing a woman's mind and opinion, the following Hadith is stated:

المرأة كالضلع إن اقمته كسرتها وإن استمعت بها استمعت بها وفيها عوج-

"Women are like the rib bone. If you try to straighten it completely, it will break. So, if you want benefits from them, you can take benefit from them while they are in that crooked stated."<sup>49</sup>

Here, the Prophet Muhammad's profound knowledge of human psychology becomes evident. Human skin color can be black, brown, or fair. This color diversity depends on genetic or hereditary factors. This is hinted at clearly in the following Hadith of Muhammad (Saw.) narrated by Sayyiduna Abu Huraira (RA), He said,

أن أعرابياً أتى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال إن امرأتي ولدت غلاماً أسود وإني أنكرته فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هل لك من إبل قال نعم قال فما ألوانها قال حمر قال هل فيها من أورك قال إن فيها لورقا قال فأنى ترى ذلك جاءها قال يا رسول الله عرق نزعها قال ولعل هذا عرق نزعها.

"A man came to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, my wife has given birth to a black child, and I deny that it is mine." The Prophet (SAW) asked him, "Do you have any camels?" He replied, "Yes." The Prophet (SAW) asked, "What are their colors?" He replied, "Red." The Prophet (SAW) then asked, "Is there a gray one among them?" He replied, "Yes, there is." The Prophet (SAW) asked, "How did that color come about?" The man replied, "O Messenger of Allah, perhaps it inherited the trait from its ancestors." The Prophet (SAW) said, "Then perhaps this child has also inherited the trait from his ancestors."<sup>50</sup>

In this way, the flow of human ancestry in anthropology is evidenced from Hadith Sharif.

## CONCLUSION

Since prehistoric times, human beings have continued their lives and will keep doing so until the end of the world. The nature and potential of the

<sup>45</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab Al-Jana'iz, Babu Man Qama Li Janazat Yahudi, vol. 1, p. 441, Hadith No: 1250

<sup>46</sup> Muslim, *Al-Musnad As-Sahih* (Beirut: Dar Al-Jail, undated), Kitab An-Nikah, Babu Nudhub An-Nazr Ila Wajh Al-Mar'a Wa Kaffayha Liman Yuridu Tazwijaha, vol. 4, p. 142, Hadith No: 3551

<sup>47</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab An-Nikah, Babu La Yankihu Al-Abu Wa Ghayruhu Al-Bikra Wa Ath-Thayyib Illa Bi Rida'iha, vol. 5, p. 1974, Hadith No: 4843; Muslim, *Al-Musnad As-Sahih*, Kitab An-Nikah, Babu Istidhan Ath-Thayyib Fi An-Nikah Bi Nutf, vol. 3, Hadith No: 3538.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab At-Khalq, Babu Ma Ja'a Fi Sab'i Aradin, vol. 3, p. 1168, Hadith No: 3024.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab An-Nikah, Babu Mudara Ma'an Nisa' Wa Qawl An-Nabi, vol. 5, p. 1987, Hadith No: 4889.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Bukhari, *Al-Jami' As-Sahih*, Kitab At-Talaq, Babu Iza Urida Binafyi Al-Walad, vol. 5, p. 2032, Hadith No: 4999.

human body and mind are continuously expressed through the anthropological and cultural development of humans. The main characteristic of human life is that through the knowledge given by Allah, humans control the flow of the universe. Allah has sent humans to this world as His representatives so that they can extend their lives in love for the Creator and in the welfare of all created beings. In this regard, the verse from the Quran is noteworthy:

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ﴾

And when your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to place a representative on the earth," they said, "Will You place therein one who will cause corruption in it and shed blood, while we glorify You with praise and sanctify You?"<sup>51</sup>

Humans live in harmony on earth and in the hereafter to ensure peace in both realms. Allah sent humans to the world as representatives to test how well they can utilize their knowledge and understanding of society, culture, psychology, anthropology, and archeology in performing their duties as Allah's representatives. I believe that the anthropological research of the Quran will elevate human culture and civilization to a moral epistemology.

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<sup>51</sup> Al-Quran 2:30