The Ethics of Self-realization

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Self-realization is the expression that describes man's utmost satisfaction. Beyond is an infringement on others and things; below is direct or indirect self-degradation. One might be excessive, or might fall short; but as long as he/she tries to elevate his/her awareness and develop the compatible atmosphere and behavior, he/she is said to be trying to overcome alienation. Freedom is the negation of alienation, and the prime requisite for creativity and progress. Unless freedom is attained progress will remain an objective development that is independent of man's will, and self-realization remains remote.

Self-realization is associated with nature and rights. One is human as long as he/she isn't behaviorally in contradiction with his/her bio-physiological structure or creation. Biology is expressive of pre-ordained or pre-organized set of abilities and needs that are built in one's body. It provides for expected behavior, although the details differ from one person to another. One cannot get out of his/her skin, and those who try to flee from this natural arrangement could never be in harmony with themselves. Those behaviors that aren't compatible with the biological and physical natural law put man against him/herself. Homosexuality and addiction are examples.

Rights are the second component of self-realization. The definition of rights is intrigue and problematic. They have to do with one's perceptions, values and awareness. As rationalization becomes the norm of understanding things, definitions become more complex, and thus perceptions and values develop toward sophistication. A thorough assimilation of the dimensions of right becomes possible. There are the strictly personal and private rights, and the personal rights that are associated with the public good. There are the public rights, the rights of others and things, personal and impersonal.

One is free as long as he/she establishes a harmonious balance in the realm of rights. Accepting injustice on the personal or the public levels willingly or unwillingly is a violation of self-respect and a repugnance of self-realization. Committing injustice is excessiveness that whirls one away from respecting the rights of others. Accepting injustice isn't different from committing injustice. Both take one away from rationality, although one makes a victim and the other a predator. Rabbits and wolves are no humans, and the argument of freedom is un-applicable.

Rights aren't frozen in the realm of the state of things but expand to the realm of changing things. History and the surroundings are in a state of flux, and progress is the true expression of historical development. Attaining more knowledge, developing new methods, making scientific discoveries, providing new technology, achieving higher levels of understanding and mutual cooperation with others, preserving healthy environment are all the unfolding of man's will toward progress. Those who stay standstill are more or less irrational who knowingly or unknowingly subdue themselves as the vehicles of history; and those who realize themselves are the
makers of history. The vehicles are either deniers of their rights or unaware of them, while makers unfold themselves.

For rights to materialize, freedom is a necessity for which man should struggle. We might be born free, but factors that undermine this freedom are countless. The struggle takes so many forms such as the elevation of awareness, economic development, enhancing social cohesion, fighting an enemy, etc. the realization of freedom is itself a right that requires efforts that might include sacrifices. Exerting effort is in itself one's right because it is a physiologically built in determent, and the expression of one's abilities. Those who live up to their humanity invest the needed efforts and inevitably become free; but those who lag behind remain un-free and might seek freedom in the unreachable outside world.

Freedom isn't liberalism. Freedom is the path of moderation while liberalism might be a deviation. Freedom is the state where natural factors and behavioral values are in harmony. It is the unity of the objective and the subjective. It is the state where one coordinated his/her activities in a symphonic portrait. Liberalism might mean excessiveness that undermines one's freedom. Getting drunk is an act of liberalism that takes one away from being her/himself.

What does this mean ethically? As long as one's physical existence is part of the natural physical existence, and she/he is naturally rational, the relation between nature and behavior is dialectical. Man uncovers natural law, and behavior develops accordingly. As man's perception of progress develops, her/his willingness to make the necessary discoveries intensifies. These are inter-related and inter-dependent ethical acts. The subjective interacts positively with the objective. The objective is the unchanging revealed or unrevealed natural law, the subjective is the ever becoming.

Example: if the need for wood doesn't interact positively with environmental natural health, our life will suffer a certain degree of damage.

The observation of justice in all activities whether private or public is a must for the achievement of self-realization. The definition of justice is not attainable, but ethically it is two sided: On one side, one must make sure that she/he isn't doing harm to her/himself or others or things; on the other, be sure that he/she is contributing to human advancement. This requires a great deal of wit, intelligence and a high level of awareness. Getting to that point is almost impossible, but ethically outstanding people always give it a try.

Equality isn't a synonym of justice. Equality might be justice at certain conditions, and sometimes it could be injustice. It is justice to give different payments to different professions, but it is injustice to regard them on different codes of respect. Here I should assert that men and women are not equals but integral partners. Integrity means more family cohesion, while equality might lead to family dissolution.

Doing harm to one-self is the key to harming others. If one does harm to him/herself, he/she, most probably, has the readiness to harm others; and if he/she concedes his/her own rights, he/she is ready to concede the rights of others. Ethically, one should observe her/his rights on different levels: first, ethics means obligation to have human emotions, feelings, intellect and physical capabilities express themselves to the
best of their goodness; second, courage, wisdom, persistence and resolution must provide for virtuousness with the outside. Virtue means the fulfillment of duties and the preservation of rights. Being at peace with others is absolutely ethical, but tolerating un-deterred harm is absolutely un-ethical. Peace contributes to the fulfillment of one-self; but tolerating injustice is destructive. Third, mutual cooperation and team work top the ethics of social, economic, cultural, political and ethical progress.

How does this reflect on democracy? If democracy is based on participation, one has a chance to find her/himself; but if based on individualism and liberalism its days might not be long. Participation is a prime feature of freedom and leads to renovation, while individualism and liberalism lead to exploitation.

Where are the Arab regimes from this? The Arabs are far away. Until now, the Arab regimes still seek freedom from without not from within, and still don't understand that conduct should be a reflection of slogans and ambitions. On the one hand, they surrender their freedom to others; on the other, they remain regressive. Both hands mean a tight dictatorial grip on the people. On the public level, some people are trying to remove or evade the debris. Arab regimes provide the suitable environment for resistance in all of its different forms.