

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT, POWER & STRUGGLES FOR GOVERNANCE

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ABSTRACT: *Islam as a religion and social order which seeks power, state and governance of a polity in line with the external principles laid down in the Holy Quran and Hadith and demand every believer to actively participate and struggle to establish supremacy of the righteous moral conduct. Consequent upon the above, the reformist calls on believers across the Muslim world to build a fair, just and acceptable society based on principles of Islamic ideologies of governance to restore human dignity and social cleansing. As a result, some Islamic Movements emerged in places like the Mahdi Movement in Sudan, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Jama'atmi Movement in Pakistan, Taliban in Afghanistan, Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Sokoto Jihad in Nigeria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Palestine that try to seek power, state as well as establish good governance. However, so many challenges came on their ways among which include internal and external problem. This paper therefore, attempted to assess and analysis the struggle of Islamic movement, power and state and above all the challenges of governance using Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan as a state model.*

KEYWORDS: Islamic Movement, Power, State formation and Governance

INTRODUCTION

The creation of Medinah state during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions was a turning point in the history of Islamic political experience. One of the major objectives of Prophet Muhammad was to establish a political base (authority) in accordance with “divine will” through which the world can be transformed in accordance to the principles of Islam to benefit humanity as a whole. This buttresses the nature and struggle for state power in overhauling the entire Muslim social life. As such, the state (Medinah) was tasks with dual responsibilities lie that of fulfilling the aspirations of its subjects in the world with necessary wherewithal in order to transcend to the great beyond safely to enjoy the bounties of Allah. According to Iqbal, (1984) the Islamic state is Allah’s state and the Muslims constitute the party. It is based on two fold concepts of happiness and caters for the entire immediate communities as well as prepare for the realization of the happiness in the hereafter.

As such, Islam being a complete way of life has once assumed a center stage or a dominate position in international politics. The struggle for being wage by Islamist is not only in Muslim but also in non Muslim countries.

It is against this back drop that Islam as a religion and a social order seek for state, power and good governance of a polity based upon the eternal principles as laid down in the Quran and

Hadith (deeds of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW)). It also demands every Muslim believer to actively participate in the affairs of the world, so as to display honest character in all temporal activities and establish supremacy of the righteous moral code in all spheres of life. Therefore, it is on the basis of this doctrine, that several Islamist groups emerged in various places across the world to see the full implementation of such. The emergence of Islamic reforms was as a result of expression of anger, disagreement and political dissatisfaction with the existing statusquo. The reforms have found itself at a time when Islam was disappearing or collapsing from life. It was observed that; concept were upset, values were changed and taken over by evils, people took control, oppression and darkness prevailed, cowards became like tigers, people were scattered and were caused to wonder all over the world. The state of justice disappeared and replaced by state of falsehood and nothing remains in the right place.

Thus, everything changed and went bad due to the secular western democracy thereby resulting into moral and system decay all over the society translating into total deviation from the teaching of Islam. For example, according to Abdullahi (1989) before the Sokoto Jihad of 1804, the Hausa society was nothing better than what was obtainable during the Arab Jahiliyah period while, corruption, immorality such as prostitutions, gambling and brutality of the rulers remains the order of the day.

The Evolution and Development of Islamic Movements

The origins of Islam as a Political Movement started during the life and times of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his successors in 622 AD. Furthermore, the struggle for political power can also be dated back to this time when the Prophet and his Companions migrated from Makka to Medinah to establish political base (state) in accordance with the divine will. It was in recognition of his prophet hood, that he was invited to rule the city of Medinah. Subsequently, with the establishment of the Umayyad Dynasty; the territory of Islam got expanded through Jihads. Although before that time, there were constant clashes and conflicts between the local Arab tribes of Aus and Khazraj in Medians. However, after the arrival of Prophet Muhammad and his followers to Medinah, a charter was immediately drafted between the Muslims, and the non Muslims. The believed was that it was this document that made Prophet Muhammad the ruler, and also recognized him as the Prophet of Allah. The laws were based on the revelations of the Quran and his actions (Sunnah) are considered by the Muslims to be Sharia or Islamic law, which Islamic Movements seek to establish today.

However, at that time, there were many non Arabs whom were either converted to Islam or ruled under Islamic government and traditions. As a result, their pre-Islamic negative values, customs and traditions and other sophisticated kinds of culture, life, and beliefs affected the Muslims. This was as a result of social integration, inter-marriages and the practice of concubine and which became more prominent and dominant features in the social life of the Muslims. Even though, the contemporary Movements are a continuation of the aspiration of Muslims for an ideal order, but the current Islamic Movements is much wider than was the case in the past. Thus the whole socio-political lives of the Muslims were greatly affected by the foreign influence. Others include the Arab culture based on pre-Islamic (jahiliyah period), Greek and Persians civilization, Indian culture and above all use of Arabic as official language. These and many more were some of the factors influenced or enhanced the evolution and development of Islamic

movements across the world. Today, most of these Movements are being led by the elites of the religion. Among which include: Tablighi Jam 'at faith Movement in India, Jam'at Islamic Movement in Pakistan, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Islamic Revolution in Iran, Mahdi Movements in Sudan, Sokoto Jihad of Usman Danfodio etc.

The Islamist Movement in Turkey, Al-Ittelhad –al Muhammadi) Rabmen (1994) emerged and was led by Tarikat (religious order) Sheikhs and professional men of religion, which was an offshoot of secular Republic of 1923 who lost their status and economic power when secular reforms abolished and religious institutions trying to stage revolts against the secular state in 1920-1930. However, with the transition to a multi-party system in 1946, the Islamist group formed converts and overt alliance which gave birth to the National Order Party in 1970 up to the present day. Similarly, Egypt which has a long standing tradition religious scholarship but the contemporary and the scholaristic approaches to religion are being criticized by the Islamist group that seek to return the country to what they believed are the original practices of Islam. They emphasize for the strict adherence to the conservative mood dresses as well as the need for a comprehensive Islamic law to address the contemporary social and economic problems. Consequently, the group (Islam Brotherhood) had challenged the legitimacy of the government as concluded by Mosley (2006) in a context which the government no longer provides the required services as well as job security that were central to its social contract with the people; Islamic brotherhood offers concrete social services.

Furthermore, the Jama'at-elislami Movement in Pakistan was founded by Sayyid Abdul A'la Maudidi in 1941. Though the Movement initially was nonpolitical, but from 1978, the Jama-at active membership grew from 215 to more than 3,500 cutting across all people of different educational background mainly from universities, colleges and other institutions. Maudidi had achieved the visible and auditory support of many thousands including Army officers Ahmad (1985). The history of Islamic Movement in Afghanistan was generally characterized with power struggle particularly so when the former Soviet Union forces occupied the country in 1979. Consequently, several Islamic resistance groups came up under the umbrella of Mujahedeen means (holy warriors) and fought against the occupation and finally succeeded in driving them out of Afghanistan in 1989. Soon after the Soviet forces withdrawal, the Afghanistan backed government by the Soviet equally lost to the Mujahedeen as a result of lack of control by different factions. The Taliban under the leadership of Mohammed Mullah Omar which they represented a potentially huge force emerged in 1994 and wage war against some of the war lords. As a result, they took control of the two-third majority of the country and introduced Sharia under their control based on Islamic principles. The coming of Mullah was welcome by many Afghans, weary of conflict and anarchy, were relieved to see corrupt and often brutal war lords replaced by the devout Taliban.

Another Islamic Movement is the Hezbollah group is alleged to be a radical Islamic Movement by the West include Israel stationed in Lebanon and enjoys political, economic and social backing from Syria and Iran. Soon after the Balfour declaration in 1948, which was intended to establish a homeland for the Jews state without prejudice to the National right of the indigenous Arabs gave birth to this resistance group now called Hezbollah in 1998. This was at the time when the Arabs were expelled from the homeland and resettled of a sizeable number of them in

the in neighboring Lebanon. They have been fighting the western backed Lebanese government and Israel. As part of strategies to earn them more popularity, they introduced general welfare schemes in some certain areas where the Lebanon government failed in their responsibilities and also govern the areas under them accordance with the provision of Islam.

However, closely related to this Hezbollah group, is the Hamas resistance Movement in Palestine that can be best described as child of circumstance. It was due to the deplorable condition caused by the frequent attacks and harassment by Israel as well as the inability of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to actualize the dreams of the Palestinians for many years gave birth to this group. The group was formed by late Sheikh Yasin under the leadership of Khalid Meshaal based in Damascus. According to Abdul (1990) the group as part of their strategies, introduced social and economic welfare scheme to help address some of the social problems and made political land mark in the history of Islamic resistance movement. As a result, no any meaningful development towards the realization of peace in the Palestine could be achieved without input from Hamas. The move by both Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and some part of the West to achieved separate Palestine state side by side with Israel can never be realized if Hamas is not involved in the process.

In Sudan, they revolted against the foreign rule and were led by proclaimed Holy man Muhammad Ahmad. He belonged to the Samniyah Sufi order and advocated religious reforms and preached a return to the original Islam as presented by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He further, declared himself as the promised Mahdi whose advent was expected according to common belief, and who was to redress the grievances of the people, and usher in a rule of justice and righteousness. Therefore, by the end of 1884, he had conquered the whole of Sudan and referred himself as Mahdi. The other Movement which is closely located within the West African region is the Sokoto Jihad and was led by Sheikh Usman Danfodio. He declared a holy war (Jihad) on the then corrupt exploitive and in human Hausa rulers as concluded by (Last, (1974). The Jihad against the Hausa rulers became eminent and at a time when (Hausas) custom and traditions were deviating completely from the true teaching of Islam. It is against this development that he declared most part of the present day Nigeria and ruled accordance with Islamic injections. Some of the objectives of the Jihad are among others to;

- i) built a Muslim state by instituting and relating on Islamic society and political governance
- ii) built Muslim individuals and their families to have faith
- iii) Institutionalizing the shariah.

Islamic Political System

Since the colonization of Arab and non Arab countries around 1884 apparently after the Ottoman Empire was uprooted by the Britain, France, Portugal, they partitioned the world among them. Since then, the Islamic civilization was dominated by the western civilization. As a result, the Muslim countries, communities and the civilization were placed under different geographical boundaries with different names. Example, Secularization process and nationalistic feelings were imposed and people were forced to forget about their moral and religious principles in countries like Turkey, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia. Instead, emphasis was so much placed on the political culture that is purely featured on the freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, association, political parties, political opposition, election and entrenchment.

Furthermore, the system of political structures was also impelled with a view to establish the bases of parliamentarism, presidential, constitutionalism and other form of democratization process as opined by Moten (1996) that the rule of law and separation of powers, which has now become the syndrome infiltrated purposely to take over the position of the caliphate and the Muslims self image and cultural identity already found in those places. The most dramatic impact to that are the colonial conquest and the imposition of its immoral values which had succeeded in destroying the known Islamic values, as well forced them to inculcate the principles of nationalism, secular through political practices and processes. Moreover, in an effort to reconcile the Islamic political principles together and reconstruct the Arab society along the line of a modern democratic political foundation, the leaders of the Arab states met in Cairo after the Second World War. At the end, resolution was reached and a league of the Arab nations was formed in March 1945. The league was designed to among other things to have common position of oneness to the Arab states in relation to any external aggression from any country outside membership. It should be noted that, until this nation-state syndrome is revisited and addressed, there won't be political stability among the Muslim countries. In fact, it is the sources of most of the conflicts that arise between countries in the Muslim world today.

Establishment of Islamic State

Leadership is one of the utmost functional prerequisite of an Islamic state. According to Al-Maudidi, the caliphate is established in order to continue with the Islamic activities after Prophet Muhammad (SAW) death in his capacity as defender of Islam and in worldly governance; he says it is the nature of reasonable men to submit to a leader who will prevent them from injuring one another and who will settle quarrels and disputes. For without rulers men would live in anarchy and heedlessness like benighted sages. Therefore, the Islamic epistemic analysis is a clarion call for the leadership to see the state as a trust and responsibilities entrusted in you. It is against this backdrop that the need for the establishment of an Islamic state has been the goal and objective of almost all the movements discussed above, only two groups in spite of the impediments successfully succeeded in achieving such. These are the Islamic revolution in Iran headed by Imam Ayatollah Khomeini and the Taliban resistance group in Afghanistan that topples the former Soviet backed government while others are still struggling. The most recent which was under civil society but has Islamic religious undertone was the changed of governments of Tunisia and Egypt in January 2010 and 2011 respectively and later saw the emergence of Muslim Brother party forming government in Egypt. However, with the full backings of US and its European allies, the military staged what can be clearly described as coup in Egypt on August 2013. The emphasis of this paper is to use Afghanistan and Iran as a case study.

Afghanistan is a country that has no history of power. When Burhanudeen Rabbani former president failed to bring the various factions into one group, the Taliban who were mostly students of Islamic knowledge Movement under the leadership of Mullah Omar loosely organized on a regional basis during the occupation and civil war from 1990-1996. As a result, they took the advantages of the civil war due to ethnic and tribal supremacy and succeeded in eliminating social vices such as corruption and restoration of peace and order. This became possible under the auspices of Taliban of Kandahar and who were mostly trained in Pakistan took

controlled of the two-third of the country. They forced the Taliban forces and their leadership such as Ahmad Sha Massoud and Burhanudeen Rabbani into exile which after they established their order through the institution of a very strict interpretation of Sharia. Example, women were barred from leaving their homes without male relation accompanied them.

In the word of Masden (2002), he stated that although the Taliban managed to re-unite most of the Afghans, but they had failed to end the circle of civil war violence in the country. In context for the Islamic struggle to establish state in Afghanistan, the rise of the Taliban though not their extremism as portrayed by the western analysis, still more than 90% of the population of the country are devoutly Muslims. However, while the Taliban presented themselves as a reform movement yet, they have been criticized by some Islamic scholars as being poorly educated, inexperienced in Islamic law, Islamic administration and history which have long history of scholarly writing debate. To this end, their implementation of Islamic law seems to be a combination of Wahhabi orthodoxy and tribal customs.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan shares common identities and similarities of establishment of Islamic state but with little contrasting circumstances. The Islamic Republic of Iran Revolution was necessitated by government attitudes toward control of media in the country in 1978. During that time, the Iranian government controlled press and publishes an article insulting supreme Islamic leader in Iran Ayatollah Khomeini in abusive and obscene terms. This contributed to the December, 1978 greatest Islamic Revolutionary that ever happened in human history not merely in Iranian history but also modern history in general. According to Muhajeri (1982), it was that revolution that forced Shafi Ahmad into exile and by the time he returned to Iran at the beginning of February, 1979, the supreme Islamic leader Ayatollah Khomeini without material resources, single political party, wagging guerrilla war and above all without any foreign support and intervention established himself as the undisputed leader of a major Revolutionary Movement in Iran.

The Islamic Revolution in Iran has made her to have a different utopia, the one which consciously subordinates the materialistic ethos to the fundamental religious values. The overriding objective of the social system is to create an Islamic society, claimed to be more capable of promoting human fulfillment than materialistic social and political orders and based on a parliamentary organization and follows the principles of the separation of powers. Furthermore, the system equally operated within Islamic legal frame-work in addition of being a popular system, it is also a “divine government”. Consequently, the Islamic Republic is the sovereignty of God over the people and the people over themselves. Whereas, in a normal conventional Republic, the people governed people and there is firmly established political structures.

Challenges of governance

Many scholars have attempted to provide a definition of governance, to Saints (1992) in Bello-Imam (1997), “should be understood as mechanisms whereby an institution/organization incorporates the participation of relevant interest groups in defining the scope and content of its work-including the capacity to mediate among these interest when they enter into conflict and the means whereby it demonstrates accountability to those who support it through its mission

mandate and the application of its resources in pursuit of its goals". The key words in his definition are participation and accountability. Similarly, Emerson (1991) refers to governance as "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs..... It encompasses the state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes and implementation capacity and the relationship between government officials and the public". This means governance is the political and institutional capacity of the state to establish and maintain an enabling framework and relationship with its actors involved in development. These may all aspects of the complex and myriad relations that exist between a government and a people.

In the light of the above propositions, we can agree that the Islamic Movement or Revoltionalist across the Muslim world could mistakenly be interpreted as an instrument of destruction more especially by the west rather it is an instrument of political, social and religious reforms to restore injustice, peace and unity and imbalance among community. This could be seen from some of the objectives of the Movements as well as the Jihads under taken in some countries. Above all, the nature of Islamic state pervades the issue that resolves around the orbit of governance, leadership, sovereignty and territory. The basis of politics in the Islamic state is beyond who get what, when and how that to say why does a person acquire a political power. Since political power should be purposeful and should be geared towards serving God without fear of any fear being other than Him, state and religion are mutually inclusive. The successfully establishment of Islamic state in these two states, Iran and Afghanistan were faced with challenges of governance. Although some of these problems may be similar or differs in nature from one country to another notwithstanding, it can be classified into three major categories, internal, external and natural factors;

Internal challenges: The situation in Iran after the Revolution was portrayed as one of the chaos especially by the west. Smith (1984) concluded that the situation was seen as a rule by the conservatives, so brutal and above all characterized by lack of experience people. The perception and fear led to the mass exodus of trained and qualified personnel out of Iran with fear of being arrested, prosecuted and jailed. This created a large vacuum that was very difficult to be replaced. As such the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini was faced with these problems of filling qualified as well as professional personnel to manage and administered most of the organizations. Furthermore, other internal problems includes power struggle between the liberalist, ethnicity, marginalization between the major and the minority ethnic groups and the fundamentalist, opposition as well the leftist. According to Petrossion (1981), these had affected the performance of the Ayatollah Khomeini led regime. In addition, there were also the problems of magnitude of rural-urban migration. For example, the population of Tehran has risen from 4.5 million in 1979 and by the end of 1983; the population had risen to 6.7 million almost double. These developments were cut across all the major cities in the country. As a result, it overstretches for the only available social amenities. Furthermore, there was also a problem of conflict between the new revolutionary institute and the old state organization especially on the issue of modernity and change against the traditional conservative.

External challenges: Another problem undermining the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini was the issue of external factors. After the successful revolutionary the new regime was faced with hostage taken as well as economic and political sanctions by the west. Most western countries

cut diplomatic ties with Iran and above all economic sanction was imposed. As a result, the regime was faced with problems of importation of goods and services. Furthermore, some of the former leadership in exile connives with the west to sanction the new administration. In addition, the Iran-Iraq war was also contributed positively in frustrating the new administration. The current nuclear dispute between Iran and the west under the administration of Ahmad Ahamadinajad is an offshoot of Ayatollah administration which Iran was known for the steadfast posture against Israel.

In the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban was also faced with strong opposition from the Northern Alliance which held the northern part of Afghanistan into ransom. These are the anti-Taliban factions led by the former President Burhauddin Rabbani. The group took the country with shattered economy devastated by both internal and external conflicts. Externally, they were faced with recognition. Countries like Saudi-Arabia, Pakistan and United Arab-Emirate (UAE) recognized the Taliban's regime as a legitimate government while many countries automatically cut ties with Afghanistan. To add more injuries on the government, after the September, 2001 World Trade Centre attacked, the government of Afghanistan was criticized for allowing terrorist to run training camps in their territory from 1994-2001 and above all refused to hand over Osama Bin-Laden alleged to have master minded the attack. As a result, Saudi-Arabia and United Arab-Emirate also cut diplomatic ties with Afghanistan. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution on the government of Afghanistan UNSCR1267 of 1999 and 1333 of 2000 demanding the that Taliban government ceased their support for terrorism as well as handing over Osama Bin-Laden for trial which the Taliban refuse. At the end, the Taliban regime was toppled down by the west and instituted Hamid Karzai as the new president of Afghanistan.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively therefore, one can accept that the Islamic Movements have been making serious attempt over the years to win political power either through armed struggle or ballot box, but are faced with challenges either at the state of the struggle or even after succeeding like the case of Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan. There is no doubt that the Islamic state as practice in the Medina buttresses the nature of its politics, economy, social and cultural practices. However, these attributes have been consumed by the western imperialism, secularism under the guise of colonialism to the contemporary era of globalization. As such, the lost of cultural identity and became voiceless were a deliberate attempt to made them (Muslims) be subservient to the western dictates. Since the collapsed of the former Ottoman and Sokoto caliphate in Nigeria, Muslim globally are still strongly trying to regain those lost identities consumed by the so called globalization. I believed the recent agitation of Islamic state by some Islamist in some countries like Somalia, Mali, and now recently Nigeria might not be unconnected to this. However, could there be an Islamic state similar to that practice in the Medina state even in the present state of Saudi-Arabia?

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