ISLAMIC POLITICAL ORDER AS A MODEL OF POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT: *The continues encroachment by the US and its allies to challenge the Islamic form of government as alternative to the modern secular system coming at a time when both the West and Muslim scholars remain divided in their assessment of the Islamic system of democracy. Perhaps, unlike Christianity, Islam does not separate religion from state, and many Muslims argue it is a political Islam not political "Islam that requires explanation". As such, many Islamist or Islamic political order (democratic parties) existed in almost every democracy with a Muslim majority. As a result, many Islamic groups are also working in different parts of world to adopt non violent resistance of Western political, social, cultural and technological ways of governance particularly so in Egypt, Algeria, Iran, and Turkey advocated and practiced "Westernization". The pattern of western politics is completely different from the Islamic form of politics, where the mission and purpose are far ahead. While Islamic pattern of politics and other economic vices largely depicted in the Holy Qur'an and Sunna (tradition) of the prophet Muhammad (SAW), on the other hand, the western politics and other socioeconomic devices are purely derived from man-made laws which were designed only to perpetuate the interest of the West.*

KEYWORDS: Islam, Politics, Governance, Secularism, Islamic Political Order

INTRODUCTION

Islam as a religion plays an important political role in any Muslim communities unlike Christianity in the secular state models of the west. Conclusions have been drawn suggesting that Islam and democracy are incompatible. Since the coming of Islam about 1436 years ago (counting from the day of the first afflatus); the religion and the Muslims have been passing through bloody boarders (Huntington, 1997) right away from within Makka. The challenges had continued and prolonged with a lot of persecution to the Muslim. As a result, the Muslims had to migrate, first to Abyssinia by small group of them and later by large group including the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself to Medina to establish political base (authority) in the year 622AD. Just as politics and Islam is inseparable, similarly, power and Islam are inseparable as well. Islam the religion of Allah cannot play the role of royal opposition for there can be no higher authority. An Islamic order should unite religion and politics.

Over the last few decades, Islam has become a central point of reference for a wide range of political activities, arguments and opposition movements. The term "political Islam" has been adopted by many scholars in order to identify this seemingly unprecedented irruption of

Islamic religion into the secular domain of politics and thus to distinguish these practices from the subsumed in western scholarship under the unmarked category "Islam." In the brief comments that follow, I suggest why we might need to rethink this basic framework.

In the Muslim world, Abdul-Aziz (1998), concluded that "where religion permeates the national culture, Islamic tradition neither remains, nor can afford to remain, indifferent when addressing issues of national politics and social justice. Nonetheless, the limitations placed by religious values on the determination of national policies in a modern Muslim nation-state have never been fully explained or accepted by Muslim communities. It was against this background that the Muslims were made to accept, adopt and take the pledge of territorial boundaries more than any other forms of religious obligations. No doubt, the consequent of which could only weaken the strength of the Muslims, means there could be no single Islamic government that would have a universal authority because the Islamic world was disintegrated through this process in order to make it weak at all cost and few followers, which to make it less powerful on the globe. Indeed the mechanism had succeeded in making the Muslims subservient to the west. In spite of that Fadl, (1990) puts that Islam was able to expand to the peak of its height, becoming the only super power around the globe during the Abbasid period. However, with the collapse of Ottoman Empire, most of the provinces under various caliphates fell within the European system of administration that was through conquest by Britain, Italy or Portugal

Consequently, by 19th century, almost all the countries of the Muslim world were directly or indirectly put under the influence and control of the West. They were highly affected with consciousness of ethnic feeling and paying much respect to the geographical boundaries, secularization, compromises their political reforms (Democratic ideas), economic reforms in the name of globalization, the idea of nationalistic sentiment that goes contrary to tradition, custom and values of Islam prevailed. During the period of the cold war, Islam was relatively not considered as a political identity. However, with the advent of political terror, Islam became a political identity particularly so during and in post 9/11 America (mamdami 2004). Americans were made to believe that it (Islam) is an institution of terror and political violence, as expressed by Bush (2001) "they (Muslims) hate what they see right here in this chamber a democratically elected government. Their leaders were self appointed, they hate our freedom" Therefore, based on this comment Mahmoud (1990) concluded that;

The west felt that the existence of Islamic states and the activities of Islamic organizations are nothing but a threat to their international and economic interest. Hence it is a threat to imperialism, secularism, and neo-colonialism and above all to modernity.

Conceptualization of Politics

The dominant perception of politics by the West on the non secularist Islamic countries is narrow. It conceives of politics along a path that literally erects a wall of separation between the temporal and spiritual worlds thereby compartmentalizing the two. The general trend in such conception is that politics is an activity that takes place in a particular environment that is geared towards the acquisition of power for the advancement of "good life" in the early world, one may add. For example, according to David Easton (1953), he defines politics as the authoritative allocation of values in the society. While, Harold Lass put it as the being concerned with the issue of "who get what, when and how". In essence, it is about power distribution and allocation of societal values in the temporal. The major objective of this

paper therefore is to highlight the advantages of Islamic political order as a model of politics and governance for sustainable development in respect of its religious colorations.

In the Islamic view point, it is a religion that makes no separation between the spirituals and the temporal world? Therefore, the two are fused together. It is a complete way of life with elaborates code of conduct as contained in the Muslim's Holy Quran and the saying or Deeds of the Prophet of Islam (Sunna) as well as that of the rightly guided caliphs. These are the guides of the life of its adherents from cradle to grave. It touches on all the aspects of life in such a manner that left no space between politics and Islam. The Muslim positions on participation and democratization range widely. Secularists argue for a democracy that observes the separation of religion and state. The Muslim conservatives hold that Islam has its own forms of governance that is incompatible with democracy. While, the moderate Muslims hold the secularist position while accommodationists believe that traditional concepts consultation (shura), consensus (Ijma), and reinterpretation (ijtihad) can develop islamically acceptable forms of popular Participation and democratization as expressed by Ka'b he contend that;

 Islam, the government and people are like tent, the pole, the ropes and the pegs. The tent is Islam, the pole is the government, the rope and pegs are the people. None would be without other

Islam and Politics
Historically, the clearest manifestation of the interface between Islam and politic was categorically brought out in Prophet Mohammed's (SAW) effort at building a political community in Medina after the migration (Hijra). The political community embodied the essence of Islam and established a structure of power relation and that make man subservient to the Devine will of Allah. Thus, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) assumed the dual role of a leadership and head of state and head of religious community with an established constitution regulating the conduct of the ruler and the ruled. Later, day efforts, to built similar political community after the demise of the Prophet and across the globe met with success. In what came to be present day Nigeria, the Islamic political community of the former Sokoto Caliphate, was constructed or established with this experience as a guide. It lasted for roughly one hundred years until internal decay set in as the holders of public powers made a reversal from one set objectives and were subsequently conquered by the wave of secular inspired imperial onslaught. This saw the conquest of such community and the imposition of values which are secular in nature. From there henceforth, there has been series of attempts by the Muslim communities at reconstruction or recreating this past experience with little or no success. This is partly explained by the unfavorable secular environment that Islam found itself and the sheer deceit on the part of the Muslim elites to instrumentalise Islam for some ulterior temporal motives.

In this respect, like the secularists before them, this category of elites have invariably erected or facilitated the creation or consolidation of a political wall that compartmentalized the temporal from the spirituals spheres and invariably separated Islam from politics even though they make the presence of establishing it. This effort has been met by the constant struggle by the bulk of the Muslims community for the return to the path of salvation. This is globally manifested in the Middle East, Pakistan, and Somalia among others. However, it should be noted that beyond outward utterances attempt at secularism even in the West has proven a failure particularly when one realizes how politics is seriously intertwined with religion. Example, in England, the Queen is the political head of the church of England and she also

has representatives in the British parliaments who are there not by virtue of being elected rather, largely by the fact that of being nobles in the British social order. Furthermore, in USA the contest for power has constantly being dominated by the protestant faction of the community who professed secularism but practiced a mixture of religion and political machination. It is obvious that the claim of secularism is actually a spurious claim in the West.

The Islamic System of Governance
The structure of Islamic political authority (leadership) is made up of Shura council or consultation with the council presiding over their affairs to elect or appoint leaders as the chairman as done during the early times of the Caliphates Abubakar, Usman, Umar and Ali to succeed Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Since then, this has been the practiced by prominent men of a kinship group, or tribe, to gather after a leader's death and elect a leader from amongst themselves. However, there was no specified procedure or methodology spelt out for the Shura council or Consultative Assembly. The only visible literatures stated was that candidates are usually from the same age group or lineage with the deceased (leader) and must also not necessarily be the deceased sons. Capable men who would lead well were preferred over an ineffectual direct heir, as there was no basis in the majority (democracy) as currently practice or obtained in our current system of democracy today. Unlike Christianity, Islam does not separate religion from state, and many Muslims argue it is apolitical Islam not political Islam that requires explanation but just order.

Similarly, the Islamic constitutions are derived from the Qur'an, Hadith (deeds of the Prophet) while the Islamic law, Sharia or Ijma (consensus of the opinion) are the responsibilities of the rulers to seek Shura council or consultation from their subjects. In every Muslim community, there exist Islamic political orders (authority) but due to the varying differences in political and religious ideologies, philosophies and contexts of western democracy, the West lump together a large variety of Islamic groups and then called them Islamic Fundamentalist or Militants. The apparent triumph of capitalism over forces opposed to it has rekindled the search for a renewed focus in its attempt at imposing western secularist notion the state across the world. Although, this has met with stiff resistance from most Muslim dominated countries as posited out by Huntingtonian thesis of class of civilization that; the next world war, if there was one, would be class of civilization between the contending forces of Western and Asian civilizations. This is because the likely shape that the class would take is along what he considers as;

the fault lines that separate the capitalist western secular world (which is predominantly Christians) and on the other hand, the Asian world, specifically the predominantly and Muslim world. In essence, it would be a class between Christian's values and the Islamic ethics. This renewed zealot impose secularism in the search of global domination has recently been elaborately brought out in the fight against terrorism, perceived to have posed a major threat to world peace.

In line with this, it is here proposed that the tension between secularism and Islam stems from the attempt, on the surface, by western influences at separating religion from politics even though in reality, the west and their values are religious. Islam on its part as a religion incorporates politics and brings religious values to the forefront of governance. Thus, while secularism relegates religion to personnel sphere**,** Islam permeates and promotes to govern all

the aspects of a better life. In essence this is a short hand expression of the discourse built around what is perceived to be the tension between religion and state. Should contemporary states be governed by doctrine of rendering unto to Caesar the things which are Caesar and unto God? What are the bases and the motives behind the rise of current notion of secularism? What is the Islamic conception of the state and should Islam interact with politics? If yes, what should be the nature of such interaction and if no, could such be demarcation be achieved?

Islam and Secularism
Although, in every society or civilization has its basic foundations and the characteristics parameters within which it developed. However, the quality of a civilization, its calibre, will invariably vary in both relative and absolute terms. Relatively, Islamic civilization may fluctuate experiencing its ebbs and flows and other rival configuration may be at conspicuous advantage over time. In obsolete terms, may be deemed to be a measure of intrinsic superiority in a civilization which is evolved within their parameter. In contrast to the secular paradigm of knowledge, with shifting sand, the matrix in the Quran is fundamentally stable and coherent. The notion of secularism refers to the attempt at the exclusion of religion from public affairs. Thus, it is believed that religious bodies should have no part in political or civic affairs or in running public institution. Moten (1996) contends that secularism is composed of three cardinal principles of this worldly orientation, "Western science" and liberalism i.e. temporal, factual/scientific and freedom of science/creed respectively. In the final analysis, this conception of liberty or liberal creed placed emphasis on the "erection of a wall of separation between the church and the state". There is a state is said to be secular;

 in which the government exerts no pressure in favor of one religion rather than another a state in which no social or educational pressure is exerted in favor one rather another religion or no religion; a state wholly detached from religion or (irreligious) teaching or practice

This conception of liberty on the one hand is politically constructed on the ability to freely elect those to occupy public offices while the press is conceived as serving as the conscience of the state, among others. On the other economically, liberty is manifested in the precept of the non interference of the state in the economy thereby heralding the efficiency of the market forces, ie price mechanism. In this respect, liberal democracy and its economic complement of free enterprise evolved within the principle of secularism.
Broadly speaking, two factors informed the emergence of secularism, the first is found in the contribution Christianity and the internal combustion of European society and it's after math, ranging from the reformation and Counter Reformation Movements, to renaissance, the French revolution etc. Secondly, the attitudes of the Christians towards Islam built around hatred, fear and superiority complex. Thus, Christian's values laced western imperial expansion and facilitated the imposition of colonialism across the Muslim world with devastating consequences. Moten (ibid) contended that the civilization mission to win the world for Christ came to be wage by the secular of adherence of secularism. This drive created a unity of purpose among the three civilizing forces of Christianity, commence and colonialism and subsequently made the condition for the creation of inferiority complex among the Muslim communities possible.

Islamic Political Order

The claim that contemporary Muslim activities are using Islam for political purposes seems, at least in some instances, to be warranted. Political parties such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria which had religious coloration or Islamic credentials appear as Tarmiyah, (2007) rightly observed that the state is a necessity, to accept the authority of Allah and His prophet (PBUH) for Allah's orders good and prohibits evils and permits the use of clean ones. Tarmiyah further details that the acceptance of all these is obligatory and mandatory on all mankind and these functions cannot be realized without power and authority which Islamic political order seek to achieved. This means, Islamic political order is comprehensive enough in its aims and objectives. It orders every Muslim to live his life within the bound of shariah, socially, politically and religiously. Example, the religious obligation such as Hajj, jihad, justice, Friday congregation prayers as well as extending hands of friendship on the oppressed ones as well as enforcement of penal provision of the Qur'an cannot be fulfilled without power and authority as contained in the Qur'an and Hadith.

To establish this authority, Allah has revealed the book and created iron as (Allah) says, we have sent you prophet with the clear signs and revealed to them the book and the balance so that with their help, the people may establish justice and we have sent down created iron which embodies great power and profit for mankind. Furthermore, Islamic political order was what the prophet Muhammad (SAW) had established and left it as a legacy. Example, he orders Muslim community to live together, pray together in respect of their political and economic back grounds. Furthermore, he also calls on the Muslim Ummah to unite and assign a leader among them. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was reported to have said appoint a administrator among you to govern your affairs on behalf and return the trust to whom they are due and to adjudicate with justice when they sit in judgments on them. Furthermore, he also explained that "when three of you are on a journey, you should appoint one of you as your "leader". Therefore, considering the small size of people, yet he ordered to appoint a leader among you clearly indicates the importance of leadership (authority) and governance in Islam. However, it is permissible to disobey, impeach or remove leaders particularly so when such leaders are not meeting public responsibilities entrusted upon them under Islam obligations. Al-Mawardi said but if the rulers meet their Islamic responsibilities to the public, the people must obey their laws, but if they become unjust or severely ineffective then such a leader must be impeached through the Shura council (consultative assembly). Example, of countries that are purely using Islamic political order and are doing well include Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, U.A.E, etc.

CONCLUSION

The momentous event in the memory of early Muslims was the life of the Prophet. His prophetic was an overwhelming event in Muslim world which left no doubt in their minds of the Muslims that Allah has sustained his messenger ship every step of the way. It is in light of this, that his life was the subject matter of Islamic historical recollection and historical development as well as Islamic political order. There is urgent need for both the West and Muslim scholars to re-examine the historical role of Islam in political order to dispose of the alarmist views currently being presented. Moreover, there is a de facto separation between Church and state in Islam which should be recognized. This little brief, though in any way exhaustive, has brought to the fore the reality that renewed attempt to secularized the

Muslims world is more of an attempt to have a new sphere of influence and controlled on Islamic polity.

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