The Culture of Election and Democracy in the Taxonomy of Islamic Political Literature in Relation to the Democratic Revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa

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Abstract

This research is an attempt to study the process of election in the spectrum of formal democracy within the Islamic polity in relation to the current democratic revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa. The objective of this research is to comprehensively assess the process of election and democratic compatibility with Islamic norms within the taxonomy of Islamic political literature in relation with democratic revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa. The research utilized library-based methodology to arrive at comprehensive conclusions. The significance of this study lies on the fact that it contributes to a timely issue which attracts academic and political attention. The research makes calculated predictions and provides answers to current concerns of political interest.

Keywords: Process of election, Middle East, North Africa, Democracy, Islamic State, Revolution, U.S. interest in the Middle East

1. Introduction

Unlike the physical sciences or the natural sciences where greater control can be exercised in laboratory settings, the unpredictability of the human being and the difficulty of controlling factors impinging on human subjects explicate why research in political science in relation to religion and democracy in the Middle East or in the Muslim world tends to be inconclusive.

The laboratory of most political science researches is the political mechanisms of the universe and its variables capriciously swing with time and events. The theoretical framework of this research correlates concepts, ideas, perspectives and events such as Islamic political literature, electing a leader in Islam, democratic revolutions in the Middle East and in North Africa, medieval and contemporary approaches in Muslim political thought, classical address of election and the concept of bay'ah.

The research also investigates the election procedures and political legitimacy in the taxonomy of Islamic political literature in relation to the democratic revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa and the uncertainty of the U.S. foreign policy toward the region. This framework explores rather than control the study. Put differently, what guides the research is the process of exploration and endeavors of creating linkages between history, culture and religion.

The variables, characteristics and the attributes in this conceptual system or the qualities are views of Islam on election, Western democracy, Arab culture, and the political views of Muslim thinkers. The outcome variable of the research or the dependent variable is that Arab and Muslim nations can learn, practice and form democratic governments and obviously democracy has no specific culture or belong to a particular group of nations. At the same time, this research explores independent variables or the indicators. History shows that some Arab and Muslim nations had successfully performed recognized elections and this explains this aspect of the research theory.

In the frame of Islamic political literature laid by Muslim thinkers within the accessible history of Islamic political thought, the process or the idea of electing a leader to a political office, have not taken one solid

structure. This was/is due to the fact that Islamic political ideals throughout its history had no codified formal constitutional documentation, rather it has been going with trends of early customs.

Medieval and contemporary Muslim political thinkers have tackled the procedural aspects of succession in their vast theo-political works and based their views about election on the procedures adopted by the first four guided leaders after the Prophet.

It seems this trend became the precedent for all subsequent discussions on election in the literature of Islamic political thought. The *Suni* political thinkers, for instance, consider the political methods and models of the first four caliphs as binding on all subsequent Muslim political behavior. This should not mean however, that other procedures which are not necessarily in conflict with Islam may not be developed.

Today the Muslim world has been associated with poor governance, tyranny, and dictatorship and absolute monarchy for the past few centuries, although it is obvious that consciousness for pertinent governance through election is underway in the Muslim world.

2. Muslim Classical Address of Election

Islam in general has not specified a particular form of government for its adherents; rather it has left the matter to the rational humans to decide according to the requirements of time and place or according to the public interest. On balance, political system in Islam is based on the general wisdom of the Qu'ran and that of the Prophetic traditions.

In the taxonomy of the literature on Islamic political thought three terms take the centre in a hierarchy of concepts. These are: a) *Siyasah Diniyah or Shar'iyah,* indicating a political system or form of government based upon the divine or revealed laws b) *Siyasah 'aqliyah* referring to a system of government based upon human rationality and c) *Siyasah Madaniyah* which refers to a policy, systems or form of government supervised by the wise (*Hukama*).

These mainly medieval Muslim political thinkers have only spoken these three concepts with minor variations and emphasis. *Ibn Khaldun, al-Mawardi, Ibn Tayumiyah and Imam Al-Ghazali* are the pioneers, if not the founders, of these concepts.

However, there is also the Qura'nic nomenclature, which includes the concept of political consultation (*shura*) and political obedience (*ta'ah*).

Majority of these thinkers have agreed that election, or the process of choosing the right leader, becomes necessity (*Darurah*), as people have varied intellectual capacity. So it is true that Muslim classics have spoken of election and democratic process. Mawardi, for instance, have argued that leadership can be established based on selection by agreement or nomination by the predecessor. (Al-Mawardi, 1983).

The first procedure limits the power of electing a leader to a small group called *Ahl al-Hal wa al-'aqd,* (those who loose and bind) whereby the second procedure bestows the prerogative of electing a leader to the wisdom of the out going leader. Al-Farabi also sees election as a mechanism to choose the right leader. In his *Kitab as-Siyasah al-Madaniyyah* Farabi declares that a leader is he who needs no assistance from others, sciences and arts are his property. (Al-Farabi, 1346h). The elected chief is perfect in all respect; he is imaginative and not subservient. (Al-Farabi, 1985). Farabi's intention was to necessitate election process.

Al-Baqilani, on the other hand contends that the head of state or the skeleton of the government is established in office through testamentary designation (al-*'ahd*) or alternatively through election by *Those Who Loose and Bind*, a view which is more similar to that of al-Mawardi, but unlike Mawardi, Baqilani deposited the condition that the validity of this method must be subjected to public approval. (Al-Baqilani).

Baqilani's views in this position is comprehendible for the fact that during his time several leaders ware appointed based on secret methods. *Baqilani* also omits the quality of moral probity for the electors a view that made him the closest classical Muslim thinker to contemporary methods of election.

Captivatingly Ibn Jama'a adds new method into the commonly accepted methods by classical Muslim thinkers. *Taghalub* or imposing a leader on others is accepted by Ibn Jama'a as a method of electing and forming a government. According to him leaders are installed through elective method *(Ikhtiyariyah)* and by force (*Taghalubiyah*).

One thing is so far clear that election in Islam is necessitated by *Ijma'* (consensus) of the people which means that the method and the process of election will depend on the time-space factual circumstances of a given nation.

A related classical concept to the procedure of election in the Islamic political literature is the oath of allegiance (*Bai'ah*), which has been interpreted by Muslim scholars in various forms. Inference of *bai'ah* would however, be interpreted as an acceptance of leadership of the elected person, which in turn necessitates obedience during the leadership tenure.

3. Election and Democracy in Islam

I shall begin this section by asking that are election procedures and voting mechanisms in line with the general sprit of Islam? Answering this question one is obliged to look into some historical issues related to the political roots of Islam. The pledge of allegiance or the bay'ah is one of these issues. In that mechanism Muslims willing accept the authority of the Caliph and so testifying that the Caliph is their political leader and representative. The term bay'ah itself has an interesting semantic root which means in the literal Arabic language to sel.

So the bay'ah is a form of allowing your political representative to act on your behalf. This sense of bay'ah is in line with today's process of election and democratic voting systems. It must be underlined that the bay'ah to the Prophet was politically and religiously different to that of the other political leaders and representatives. Bay'ah to Prophet Muhammad was a pledge of allegiance to acceptance the divine authority and Prophethood of Muhammad.

The Bay'ah for the political leaders, which was in fact, offered to each of the subsequent Caliphs or the *Khulufa ar-Rashidun* upon their nomination, was a signature and a vote of allegiance and acceptance of their appointments. Therefore, the bay'ah in this form is a political and social issue more then it is a religious. Ibn Khaldoun in his muqadimah argued that:

> "It should be known that the bay'ah is a contract to render obedience. It is as though the person who renders the oath of allegiance made a contract with his amir, to the effect that he surrenders supervision of his own affairs and those of the Muslims to him and that he will not contest his authority in any of (those affairs) and that he will obey him by (executing) all the duties with which he might be charged, whether agreeable or disagreeable." (Ibn Khaldun).

Ibn Kahaldun again contends that once a leader is elected the obligation is to obey: "The obligation to recognize and obey the Caliph is a legal obligation and not rational necessity". (Ibn Khaldun) Al-Ghazali pointed out the spiritual and religious significance of the bay'ah. He opined that once a person offers total allegiance to the leader the individual enters into a covenant with God. (Black, 2001).

Modern elections therefore are not different from these activities, such as bay'ah which are practiced in early Islamic political traditions. Hence, election is a method to elect individuals who have the aptitude of representation and authorization and it is not a new practice among Muslims. Ibn Hisham in his famous Seerah Ibn Hisham narrated that the Prophet to have said to the *Aws and Khazraj* that: "Select for me from amongst you twelve chiefs, who will be responsible for their people, including themselves" (Ibn Hisham).

This specifically signifies that the Prophet democratically solicited them to elect their representatives. Indeed, based on this, the means of election mentioned is also applicable to other branches of government; such as the *Majlis* ash-*shura*, a consultative body or branch of government which the parliament in the modern day political lexis.

The difference though, lies in the fact that in Islam the purpose of the election must be sanctioned by the shari'ah, the legal, the religious and ethical aspects must be taken into account. Here is where the issues lie. A Muslim Brotherhood candidate in Egypt future election after the revolution may campaign on a ticket against the treaty or repealing the peace treaty with Israel on the ground that this treaty has no religious sanctioning.

On balance, what currently available in the *Fiqh* literature is that the *Shari'ah* rule regarding election is that when the election relates to a prohibited action, then the election becomes *illegal;* similarly a person who campaign on *haram* (forbidden in religion) issue or an issue without religious significance will also be considered campaigning in illicit election. This is because Islamic view of democracy does not separate the values of the candidate, the manifesto party and the values enshrined in the constitution of that party.

In this sense, what makes voting in a particular situation legitimate or unlawful is the issue being voted for, the values of the candidate, and the worldview of the party. Another related issue is the facts that, majority of Muslims assume that democracy is a political instrument in a secular system whose foundations lie in the separation of religion from life. This assumption is however baseless. To the contrary, democracy is a mechanism with general known principles and parties concern should design the form of democracy they deem applicable as long as the general parameters of democracy such as liberty, human rights, freedom of expression,

civic mindedness, and law and order is respected. Therefore, one can have full-fledged democracy in Egypt or in any other Muslim or Arab country based on the customs, demography, faith and history.

In fact, even in secular system of democracy such as U.S. and U.K. Muslims have to accept the reality and vote for progress within the spectrum of Islamic permissibility.

The truth is though; contemporary societies correlate election with the Western concept of democracy is also associated with freedom and good governance. Vast Muslim nations attempt to accommodate the Western fashion of democracy, but theocratic political ideals repudiate to assimilate as the nature of Islam in relation to politics is proving intricate for Muslims to demarcate the two.

Those who adore theocracy contend that "theocracy is a form of government in which God is regarded as the ultimate ruling power. (Muhamad Abu Bakr). However, opponents to that contention hold that, theocracy is not a form of government. Democracy instead is a form of government in which the power of choosing government is legitimately bestowed upon the subjects.

Although for various reasons perpetual democracy remains fragile in the Muslim World or in some cases a mirage in a form of hallucination, nonetheless, it appears from the near history or in the last three decades, that some positive developments have taken place.

Since 1980s election became part of the political features in the Muslim world. From 1989 -1999 over 80 elections took place in the Muslim world, affecting the political worldview of Muslim citizens. *Aoushira van enteshami,* in an essay entitled *Islam, Muslim, Politics and Democracy* estimates the affect of election on Muslim citizens.

> "Significant elections now regularly take place in more that half of Muslim
> countries affecting the political life of more than 150 million people from
> Morocco to Aman.... election regulates the political life of more than a dozen
> Muslim.... countries, and their 280 millions citizens" (John Anderson, 2004).

These Muslim nations however, are not identical in their political set up, mode of elections and level of validity in the voting process.

That said, one must also be reminiscent that there is no one form of election process agreed or formulated by contemporary Muslim nations. Immense number of political Islamists reject Western method of election to maintain the uncalled for rift between Islamic and Western terms. *Ghessan Salame* contends that the use of these terms, such as election, is clearly linked to the cultural and political norms of the West. (Ghassan Selame, 1996).

This line of argument further observes that Western style of democracy and Islamic polity are not on the same lane, this incompatibility is inherent in Islam as religion. For instance, democracy considers homosexuality as a form of freedom and choice of personal preference. In Islam, one may not have that lewd freedom of choice.

These rejectionists nonetheless are of the view that all Western systems are designed to destroy the tenets of Islam, they further opine that the mode of democracy propagated by the West is not adequately bestowing autonomous license over Muslim nations to devise their own localized democratic system, rather aims to stamp the Islamic polity out of the process.

This view emanates from the fact that Western policy makers are at odds on the marriage between democracy and theocracy or the implementation of what some has termed as "*Islamic Democracy*".

It has been rightly predicted that if free elections are initiated in several Muslim nations more so in the Muslim Middle East, Islamic parties would have gain political grounds, as we have seen in the recent election in Egypt, but the West has no desire to envisage Islamic parties advancing through the ballot box, a phenomenon that the Islamists are aware of particularly after December 1991 crushing victory of the FIS in Algeria and the subsequent devastations.

Nonetheless, various Islamic parties are used to the norms of democracy and successfully participated elections, competing against national parties. The proponents therefore, contend that Islam is inherently democratic system as it encourages transparency, debate, differences of opinion, and consensus in the political process. As such, democracy, if localized or islamized, could be infused into the development of Islamic political system. From this consciousness the invention of *Islamic Democracy* emerged as a new term.

It was the former President of Iran, Muhamad Khatami, who first coined the term *Islamic democracy,* although it is a known fact that his predecessor, Ayatulah Khumaini, had rejected any link between Islam and democracy. Opponents further argued that Islam as a comprehensive and inherently pluralistic system does not require any added values including democracy.

But the fact remains that the West has not shown proven interest in Islamic democracy. An example of this assertion is the case of Iran. The democratic process of this Islamic nation is far superior to numerous Muslim democracies endorsed and recognized by the U.S and E.U governments, but so far they have considered Iran's election as unacceptable; an attitude that may have direct link with the Islamic component to the Iranian side.

A related aspect of the issue is the liberality of Islam as apolitical system. The West opines that Islamic democracy is not liberal enough, a charge which is rather debatable. Islamic polity is naturally liberal, democratic and expressive, provided that liberalism upholds minority rights, multi-party system and free election. The idea that absolute sovereignty belongs to God not to the people is also part of the rift. God is absolute and sovereign over all human systems but He, the almighty, is not, a head of state or cast His vote in the process. So this would not contradict with the liberal nature of Islam.

Tamimi made an attempt to prove the Muslim opponents of democracy wrong. Arguing on that line he claims that the only reason is the lack of understanding either of democracy or Islam. Like *Rachid Ghannonchi, Tamimi* considers the antithetical attitude of the rejectionists an obstacle that undermines the endeavor of mainstream Muslim community. (Azzam Tamimi).

Besides, it has been argued that the rejectionists have misread or been wrongly influenced by *Sayid Qutb,* who in a way, successfully connected the process of law making to the Islamic faith, the *'Aqidah.*

Being one of the leading ideologues of contemporary Islam, Sayed Qutb, gulfed the social order into Islamic and *Jahilic* (ignorance). Democracy to him falls within the parameters of the *Jahilic* order, as it belongs to the man made political system category.

Qutb believes that democracy violates the sovereignty of God; His right to legislate and bestows His powers on man. And for the same reason democracy is rejected as people become the sole legislators. (Sayed Qutb, 1989).

Others even went further to equate democracy with blasphemy or *Nizam al-Kufr,* which was brought to the Muslim world to distort the ideological foundations of Islamic political system. These positions on democracy play a role in understanding election.

4. Election Procedures and Political Legitimacy

One must underline that the general precept of Islam is that man manages, administrates, and rules the earth, a position that subsequently encompass the powers to derive laws and administrate election based on the spirit of the original sources.

Consequently, if election process is about political participation, then there are those Muslim thinkers including *Ash-sha'rawi* who opinioned that Islamic government need not to consult or refer to its subjects in matters pertaining to government's daily administration. Expression of opinion in political life is the hart of election process. In *shura*, for instance, citizens are given the right to choose their political representatives. Similarly opposition and freedom of thought are accepted within these parameters.

On the implementation of election procedures, voting (casting ballots secretly) is one aspect in the process of election. As a mechanism and expression of one's views through the ballot box, it represents a direct testimony. That would also further mean that the electoral process embodies religions responsibilities; that is to say, one must be religiously conscious of whom he or she had voted for, as it is one's sole responsibility to check the credibility, the history, and capability of the party and the candidate.

Slogans, promises, manifestos and monitory offers should not mislead a virtuous Muslim from the core issues which affect the future of his/her nation. Identified characteristics of the party and the candidate should be based on the credibility of the candidate, as voting would amount not only a political support but also a religious duty.

Nonetheless, in a world where candidates camouflage themselves with Islamic values, norms, beliefs and legal systems, the challenge is, how one benchmarks the integrity of a candidate or a political party? This dilemmatic question remains integral part of the process of election in the mind of Muslim voters.

It however suffice to note that, the aim of voting within the Islamic political system is to instate a right candidate in a position of political power, so that he or she may exercise powers to rectify the erroneous political, social and religious systems and develop proper mechanism for governance.

Besides, the Islamic criteria for who a Muslim should vote for are: 1) the party or the candidate should have the aptitude and the talent to preside over. 2) Able to provide lucidity and precision in government affairs 3) Competent on the war against corruption, fraud and vice 4) Facilitate religious teachings with open mindedness 5) Sincerity and integrity should be viewed as priority for candidacy. 5) Wealthy candidate with spiritual and moral high should be given priority and chance to rule. 6) Intellectually and politically bankrupt candidates must be

rejected. 7) Knowledge of social maneuvering should be seen as prerequisite for candidacy and party choice. 8) Love for Muslim unity, dignity and justice should be made part of the qualification for candidacy. 9) Greedy and dough devotees should be discarded 10) Political potentiality should be regarded the first raison d'être for electing an aspirant.

5. Culture and Democracy and Islamic State in Relation to the Current Revolution in the Middle East and North Africa and the Uncertainty of the U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Region

Before I embark on the main tenets of this section I shall shed a light on practical development of the current political set up of the Muslim world. We must remember that after the final abolition of the Ottoman Empire in 1924 and the advent of the colonial forces to the Muslim world new trends of political thinking emerged and the discussions revolved over three major arguments, namely; a) the return to the *Khilafah* system b) adoption of western style nation-state system c) formation of Islamic state. Seemly, the first and the third were not achievable and nation-state system became the alternative for the Muslim world based on the political reality of the time.

Today we however know that though it was not achieved as a political system the idea of Islamic state survived in the minds of the concerned Muslims. In fact, prior to these developments the term *al-Hukumah al-Islamiyah* (Islamic state) could not be found in the Arabic language, let alone in the political literature of Islam. Surprisingly numerous Islamists erroneously perceive today that the phrase *al-Hukumah al-Islamiyah* (Islamic state) is in the Qur'an! The phrase was only coined later by Muhammad Rashid Rida, a Syrian political theorist, in his work entitled *al-Khilafah*.

From thereon the proposal notionally progressed to take shape in the mind of Muslim scholars. Prior to Muhammad Rashid Rida, Muhammad Iqbal argued that, "the state is only Islamic when it fulfils the fundamental principle which makes it Islamic. (Muhammad Iqbal, 1964). While Muhammad Asad defined Islamic state "the implementation of all political matters within Islamic worldview". (Mohammad Assad, 1980) Hassan Turabi's definition is faintly specific; a mixture of contemporary and early perspectives. To him Islamic state "may take any form as long as it remains as an entity subjected to the *Shari'ah*. (Hassan al-Turabi, 1983).

Whereas Hassan al-Banna argued that Islamic state "constitutes the symbol of Islamic unity, and ties together the affairs of the world to that of the religion. Banna's definition is far-reaching and sole". (Hassan al-Banna). Maududi on the other hand, is creed oriented like Sayyid Qutb he emphasizes the idea of sovereignty *(al-Hakimiyyah)* and its relation to Islamic faith. (Abul A'la Mawdudi, 1977). Other approaches provide philosophical characterization. The state is Islamic when the systems of rules that determine the inter-group activities, general social and economic and political organs necessary for the realization of Islamic ideas are found. (Louay Safi, 1991). Abdul Rahman al-Kawakibi's contentions are directly related to the development in the Middle East and North Africa. He argued that "Islamic state is a state which guarantees freedom for its subjects". (Eliezer Tauber, 1995).

What we can deduce from the aforementioned approaches of the Muslim scholars is that Islamic state is a state in which institutions, individuals, levels of society, and government agencies enforce and apply fair injunctions of law applicable to the daily life of the people. It is a state ruled according the general norm of decent human being, justice and freedom. God, the almighty, has nothing to do with Muslim political affairs; he is not the head of the Islamic state and even the Qur'an has no direct explicit elucidations dictations on the matter.

From the beginning of the last decade, Islamic parties triumphed in most democratically conducted elections in the Muslim world in the year 2002; in Morocco's cleanest election Islamists won 42 seats tripling their representation to become the third biggest party in the 325-seat parliament, in Pakistan a coalition of religious groups won 59 seats out of 342 parliamentary seats; in Bahrain the Middle East base for the US Navy's 5th Fleet, and one of the current spotlight in the ongoing revolution, the Islamic party won 19 out of 40 seats almost half of the legislative house; in Turkey the party of this nature won 363 of the 550 seats forming the government.

Nonetheless I can comfortably argue that the revolution in the Middle East and North Africa is not Islamically motivated it is rather lead by people who despise authoritarianism, corruption and political mismanagement. They want their countries back, they want to live in freedom and share the wealth of the nation. We also need to comprehend that if free elections are administered in some countries currently ruled by dictators or absolute monarchies or those countries just freed such as Tunisia and Egypt the Islamic parties may come to power, but this should not be the fret or the concern of the West, for the reason that, democracy will work in these countries at these times.

In Western sense of the term, democracy is a process of electing government or transferring powers from the people to a ruling organization, in a form of social contract, the people could take back this power anytime they deem betrayed or cheated by their government . Therefore, no culture or religion should be alien to the process of democracy. In fact, All Western theorists and political thinkers including j. j. Rousseau, John Lock, Thomas Hobbes, and other modern Western political theorists are in agreement on the aforementioned assertion.

Democracy therefore, is in line with human nature. Humans, regardless of their geographical location are entitle to the rule of law, liberty, freedom of expression, freedom of belief, equal opportunities, equal distribution of wealth and equal opportunities to education. Democratic principles in this sense are processes suitable to every society in this world; denied or given. There is no culture or religion that owns democracy.

In relation to the current democratic revolution in the Middle East, the societies are comparatively young, mostly Western educated, knowledgeable enough to claim their rights, knowledgeable enough to understand the crimes and the political blunders committed by their governments. Necessarily therefore, the idea that certain communities such as Middle Eastern people, or certain religions such as Islam could not be acclimatized with democratic process is an old fashioned argument.

Having said that, one of the questions that people have in mind as we witness the political revolution in the Middle East and North Africa is that are Islam and Muslims democratic enough in their political attitude to embrace the process of democratization correctly? Some even question the Muslim culture and its relation to democratic process; others are anxious about the ability and the knowledge of these societies on democracy.

In effect, in the history of political thought we see that Christianity was once seen incompatible to democracy however, there is no question on that today as democracy entrenched itself in Christian heartlands. As early as in 1958 Jordan run fair and free elections participated by parties of diverse ideological backgrounds. The Communists, the Islamists and the liberal democrats all participated. Algeria's most fair and free elections of 1989 brought FIS (Front islamique du salut, Islamic Salvation Front) to power. Formally created in the '80s, the FIS developed rapidly into a party of the masses with hegemonic ambitions, which, at the time, gathers hundreds of thousands of young people in search of action and recognition. (Salima Mellah, 2004).

In 2005 when U.S. adopted a policy supporting democratic middle East these counties run semi-fair elections and Islamist parties have gained varying degrees of political power in Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, and the occupied Palestinian territories, and have widespread influence in Morocco, as I mentioned earlier. In fact the West was distressed by the outcome.

The West is again shocked by the scale of the current revolution; which has set in motion in Tunisia followed by Egypt and the rest of the Middle East and North Africa. Its intelligence have not predicted or even anticipated, some call it the total failure of Western intelligence system. The world however, knew that Muslims in general and Arab world in particular, are ravenous for political freedom, liberty, fair judicial systems, and freedom of speech. The good news as I mentioned is that, research has revealed that these comparatively young populations see no religious incompatibility with democratic process.

In a research entitled Islam and democracy undertaken by Dalia Mogahed, Executive Director of the Gallup Centre for Muslim Studies observes that Muslim world residents see no conflict between religious principles and democratic values.

> A recent in-depth Gallup survey in 10 predominantly Muslim countries, representing more than 80% of the global Muslim population, shows that when asked what they want in their political future; their answer was… political freedom, liberty, fair judicial systems, and freedom of speech… they do not believe they must choose between Islam and democracy…the two can co-exist inside one functional government. (Dalia Mogahed, 2006).

Having cited the aforementioned we also knew for the past decades that the Arab world faced diverse grave internal challenges prior to the revolution; it endured for decades and still suffers from unemployment, poverty, and absence of democratic principles, human rights, and lack of equal opportunities to wealth.

The West, through the Israeli orthodox political attitude, inflicted grave moral political damage on the Middle Eastern societies and Muslims at large. Whether they have realized it or not; they actually helped the revolution against the dictators and absolute monarchs in the region. America and Israel failed to end the wars in Palestine, and now Israel has to deal with the outcome of the revolution. For the past few decades America went out of its political values to provide overwhelming political, economic and military support for despotism and repression in the region. Some American administrations, such as that of President Bush junior equated Muslims, particularly Arab Muslims, to Osama bin Laden after September 11, and it is now the time to learn lessons from the political errors.

Unlike Tunisia Egypt's revolution will have lasting political ramifications on the future of Israel and U.S. foreign policy. More so the democratic transition in the years ahead will have political implications for U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and for other countries in the region ruled by monarchs and dictators. In fact the impact is already felt. The March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty could be an issue to be concerned about.

The Obama Administration and Israel are also concerned about the Muslim Brotherhood coming to power, or how to contain them or initiate relations with them. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928 to protect Egypt from secularism, and through the course of this period they have developed politically and they are now a wedge to reckon with in the political spheres of Egypt. In 2005, Brotherhood-affiliated candidates won 88 seats in parliament. In that year Mubarak open up the system and made the elections less restricted.

But in 2010 just one candidate of Muslim Brotherhood was elected, and the group withdrew from the elections after the first round of voting accusing Mubarak of fraud, and it was. Otherwise, how is it possible a fall from 88 seats to one seat in the parliament within five years? In fact, the way Mubarak handled the 2010 elections and arrogance displayed were part of the causes of the revolt in January 25.

Muslim Brotherhood renounced its former strategy of using hostility as a political approach. Nonetheless for the United States, the issue of whether or not to recognize the Muslim Brotherhood as a legitimate political player continues to puzzle Washington. The U.S. has a dichotomous attitude on this; one is that Muslim Brotherhood may still maintain a link with the regional Islamist groups still devoted to militancy tactics such as the Palestinian Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah and this attitude has created general reluctance among U.S. decision-makers to push for Islamist inclusion in politics as they may pursue policies counter to U.S. interests in the region or will transform Egypt into theocracy state. Others in Washington are of the opinion that if Islamists were brought into a functional democratic system, then they would appeal to a wider audience and be part of the mainstream system.

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