



Rashed Al-Ghanoshi's Concept of Democracy

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This study analyses the concept of democracy according to Rashed Al-Ghanoshi that it aims exploring the contributions of this intellectual theses about democracy in the contemporary Islamic intellectual interaction with reality. Furthermore, it adopted text analysis method that Al-Ghanoshi's intellectual texts are subject to this study. The researcher concluded that Al-Ghanoshi based his writings on a technical dimension of the concept of democracy eliminating the philosophical dimension to assure the neutrality of his methods. Also, he confirms that Islam and its objectives do not prevent these methods and arrangements. On the contrary, Islam aims to get humanity to these good arrangements for ruling in order to fulfill the principle of *Shora* (consultation). Besides, Al-Ghanoshi based his intellectual project on a number of ideas about the principles and practices of democracy where are intellectually controversial in the contemporary Islamic thought such as multiparty system, elections, the concept of the majority, legislation and separation of powers. This is done to reach the conclusion that Islam does not contradict with these practices and principles as the Islamic thought rejecting this concept and its methods is the only hindrance for any democratic change in the Arab Islamic societies.

Keywords: democracy, political thought, the contemporary Islamic thought, Rashid Al-Ghanosh, multiparty system, elections, separation of powers, Islam.



Introduction

The Islamic contemporary thought has been going through developments and new intellectual paths along with their challenges, problems, and questions as well as essential responses for this thought. Furthermore, such responses include developments and paths at levels of curricula, systems, thoughts, and concepts including democracy. To sum up, democracy is one of the most common terms in politics which can be considered the perfect model for any political system.

In other words, democracy has been the interest of many Islamic contemporary theses which analyzed and criticized its aspects. Consequently, various thoughts, problems and questions were asked by Islamic contemporary intellectuals leading to the emergence of proponents, opponents and conservatives concerning this concept partially or fully.

Based on the previously mentioned, this study tackles Al-Ghanoshi's concept of democracy since he is one of the leading intellectuals of the Islamic movement nowadays and the leader of the Tunisian Nahda movement. Also, his thoughts are about different styles of speech in the Islamic temporary world with a variety of subjects about the Islamic ruling system, the dialectic relationship among democracy, Islam, women, citizenship, human rights, public freedoms in Islam, the methodology of political change and the Islamic civil society. Despite this variety, there is a thin line between these discretions and movements; this line is the dialectic study of the realistic and political contemporary thought in the Arabic, Islamic and global intellectualism.

To conclude, this study tackled democracy according to Al-Ghanoshi highlighting his intellectual discretions about democracy as well as his contributions in regenerating the contemporary Islamic thought. Also, it concluded the required results at the special level by demonstrating an analytical framework summarizing his world and logic. Finally, there is the level where he tackles the contemporary Islamic thought and its analysis.

Problem of the Study and its Questions

Many Islamic contemporary intellectuals tackled democracy that their pioneer is Rashed Al-Ghanoshi who dedicated most of his intellectual work for tackling this concept and its relationship with Islam. Consequently, the main problem of this study is answering the following question: How do Al-Ghanoshi's writings the concept of democracy and its relationship with Islam?

This study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

How did the tendencies of the contemporary Islamic thought towards democracy emerge?

To what extent does the political thought of -Rashed AlGhanoshi in regenerating the contemporary Islamic thought and its interaction with reality about democracy?



Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in demonstrating the concept of democracy and the contemporary Islamic thought highlighting the contemporary Islamic intellectual tendencies towards democracy. Also, it is about the intellectual developments and paths in the contemporary political Islamic thought clarifying the range of studies of these alien political concepts focusing on the concept of Rashed Al-Ghanoshi's idea of democracy and its relationship with Islam. Also, it highlights the contribution of the idea of developing the contemporary Islamic thought and its interaction with reality and democracy.

Goals of the Study

This study aims to:

Recognize the concept of democracy and the contemporary Islamic thought exploring its tendencies towards democracy.

Depict democracy in the contemporary Islamic thought in general and in the studies of Rashed Al-Ghanoshi in specific.

Show Al-Ghanoshi's contribution in regenerating or developing the contemporary Islamic thought and its interaction with reality and democracy.

Research Methods

This study, which follows text analysis approach, studies the intellectual texts of Rashid Al-Ghanoshi. This approach requires analyzing the script by determining texts to be analyzed, verifying them and their writer until the end of their reading. (Ibn Abi Rabei, 1980). Furthermore, text analysis approach means the demonstration of the texts including their ideas and images depending on four levels of reading including indirect reading in which the reader reads the text to get the main idea of the text. Then, the second reading is the indirect reading in which readers read what is hidden in the text. Also, the third reading is the reading of the hidden indirect ideas by discovering the aim of writing such concepts Al-Ghanoshi did not write directly in the text. Instead, he expressed them indirectly through specific words, concepts, and perceptions. Finally, the fourth reading is the moral from the text. (Mongod, 2002)

Structure of the Study

This study is divided into two main sections, namely: the reality of the Islamic, political contemporary thought and democracy as well as the concept of democracy in the writings of Rashid Al-Ghanoshi.



The Reality of the Islamic, Political Contemporary Thought and Democracy

The Islamic Political and Contemporary Thought:

Thought is defined as the overall mental activity including thinking, passion and internal feelings reaching their utmost level in the form of analysis, synthesis and coordination which makes them the characteristics of humans. (Amara, 1998:87)

Also, there are many definitions for political thought such as being a set of principles and political values which are connected with a certain society formed in a complementary accurate logic. Thus, it includes political values, political philosophy as well as circulated realization of political practices. (Ibn Abi Rabea, 1980: 94)

Researchers worked hard to define the Islamic thought without having a great variation in the definitions that it is defined as all the product of the Muslims' thought since sending prophet Mohammed (PBUH) until nowadays including knowledge about God, as well as science and humans expressing the interpretations of the human mind of this knowledge in the framework of the Islamic principles, creed, legislation, and attitude. (Abdul-Hamid, 1985:18)

Other definitions define it as the result of the thought that faced all philosophies and western theories criticizing them ascribing the Islamic thought as their replacement. (Helmi, 1988:46).

Furthermore, the addition of the word 'contemporary' after the Islamic thought is to adjust the time zone since 'era' means eternal span or 'era' referring it to someone such as 'the era of Mohammad Ali' or a ruling dynasty as in 'the Abbasid era'. Also, it may refer to social phenomenon such as 'the modern era'. Once era is referred to in general, it will be the modern age, but when it refers to kind of life in that age, it is the common lifestyle in that era. (Al-Baidani, 2007)

When tackling the concept of the Islamic thought, there is an important note that it is important to distinguish between the Islamic thought and Islam. This is because the former is the product of the Islamic intellectual achievements in order to achieve the best interest of the Muslim community and serve the public Islamic principles. However, Islam is a revelation and fixed legislations.

Besides, this difference created core differences between them. On the one hand, thought is evolvable and changeable according to the change in points of view and jurisprudence. Consequently, standing by the results of this thought is up to its alignment with the Islamic rules. (Fatoh, 2005)

Furthermore, looking at the Islamic thought as Islam itself, it means the establishment of many Islamic systems for the monotheistic worship of God. This is because the relationship between Islamic thought and Islam is interdependent not a symmetrical relationship. In other words, the Islamic thought mirrors the public image of the Islamic principles, however, this



match cannot be accurate which creates problems in considering them as one. (Al-Alwani, 1994)

Democracy

Democracy is the most pervasive concept that the word almost lost its sense since it means the rule of people. This way, its procedural use will have more than three hundred different definitions which contributed to causing confusion. Those different regimes claimed that they are established based on democracy which indicates that democracy is the system in which most of the political system want to be members.

Epistemologically speaking, researchers agree that the word 'democracy' goes back to the Greek era since it consists of two words, namely: demos and Kratos. The former means people and the latter means to rule. Consequently, democracy might be borrowed in other languages including Arabic. (Al-Makhadmi, 2007)

Thus, the definitions of democracy are abundant that the classic definition is the rule of people by themselves which means that power is in the hands of common people without being affected by classes. (Mahna, 2001) In other words, the previous definition focuses on considering people the source of democracy, however, power is practiced from one class in this society facing the people in order to achieve goals for the best interest of people. (Hoho, 2012)

Still, these classic definitions were criticized by issuing all laws and decisions of the country with the approval of the people. Still, this is theoretically acceptable, but it is unapplicable because issuing decisions need qualified people which might not be available in every individual in this society. (Mahna, 2006)

Also, these definitions are inaccurate which indicates the development of new regimes and democratic practices that Jean-Jacques Rousseau said that if there is a society of gods, they will rule themselves democratically. In other words, democratic rule is not for humans, it is for gods since it a perfect regime. Consequently, Rousseau's law is replaced by the agreement of the majority. (Al-Makhadmi, 2007) Similarly, Robert Dahl called it the rule of the majority, so practicing democracy is banishing individuals and letting the rule to elite in order to rule people. (Hoho, 2012)

According to that vision, contemporary democracy is a method not a creed because applying its rules is up to those who should do so. In other words, it is a lifestyle which should be lived among the individuals of the society based on the principles, institutions empowering a political group to manage political differences peacefully. (Abdulla, et al. 2002) Also, nowadays' democracy is the process of taking abiding collective decisions focusing on the essence of democracy guaranteeing the right of its individuals to participate directly or indirectly in taking decisions. (Hoho, 2012)



Concerning the most important principles of democracy and its practices, they can be presented in the following:

Democracy is a political ruling system

It is considered a political creed aiming to empower people to enable them to practice authority or sovereignty in the state by authorizing people's political participation in taking decisions according to the legal and constitutional system. (Monef, 2007)

Resorting to a Democratic Constitution

The constitution is the highest law for the state as all the legislations abide with it. (Yajik, et al. 2006) In other words, it determines the nature of the relationship between the ruling and the ruled defining the rights and citizens and groups since the main aim for any constitution is helping to provide a complete system including all its legal rules preventing any sign of tyranny. (Mahna, 2006) Furthermore, contemporary democracy is the practice of power according to a democratic constitution based on general principles including providing institutions and legal guarantees starting from establishing political parties, syndicates, and media bodies as well as the rotation of power and separation of powers. (Al-Kawari, et al. 2005)

Majority Rule

It is determining the general affairs according to the will of the majority of the participants in the periodic elections which does not necessarily mean being unfair to minorities. On the contrary, it means taking care of their rights giving them the right to object to anything in the parliament by one of their representatives or parties. Consequently, the existence of political parties is necessary to get to the authority. (Ghazawi, 2000)

The Concept of Respecting Freedoms and Equalities

One of the most important principles of practicing democracy is equality among the people without discrimination for any reason. (Nofal and Al-Thahira, 2008)

Political Participation

It means participating in political events contributing to the participation of the majority in the rule as one of the steps of democracy. (Tander, 1993) Consequently, it is possible to distinguish between democratic regimes-based citizenship and tyrannical regimes. (Lamen, 2007)

Multi-Party System



It is the heart of democracy which sorts out the ruling majority from the opposition that the choice of the people is the only reference in determining the majority and opposition. (Al-Makhadmi, 2007)

Separation between Powers

It is done thorough distributing the duties of the state among separated committees practicing their duties independently incorporation with other authorities. (Nofal and Al-Thahira, 2008)

The Tendencies of the Contemporary Islamic Thought Towards Democracy

Once reading the word ‘democracy’, it can be found that it is rooted in the practiced of the western political and historical heritage. However, this does not mean that other societies did not have such values. In fact, democracy has been through many stages of development keeping the Islamic thought as its key development, but the western ideology did not want to recognize this. (Mustafa, 1985)

Based on the previously mentioned, it is imperative to deal with the western view of the Islamic societies concerning the value of democracy as the following:

The western view of the Islamic societies concerning the value of democracy depends on the missionaries’ view based on considering the western civilization as the civilization of freedom and the philosophy of assuring the values of superiority. Also, it pictures the western civilization as distant from the eastern world described as ‘tyrannical orientalism’ that knows nothing but the tyrannical model of power. (Ibn Abi Rabea, 1980) Then, other studies came to blame Islam for tyrannical regimes in the eastern societies as well as the lack of experience of the Islamists to practice political actions such as voting and parliament councils as a way of expressing the will of people. In other words, the development of the western societies is the result of moving towards the value of democracy due to a cultural revolution and a political organization. Furthermore, they transferred internal opposition into physical actions and political reactions. In fact, this is rooted in the Greek and Christian humanity as well as the law of nature while they consider the Islamic thought as being without any revolutionary or democratic change. (Hourani, 1980)

The response to the western vision of dealing with the Islamic society based on the value of democracy. In fact, it is a recurrent attitude from other civilizations before the western civilization that they considered reaching to democracy the optimal development of any society. Consequently, judging that a society is non-democratic neglects political analysis facts. (Ibn Abi Rabea, 1980)

Then, other views which were referring to the Islamic heritage and thought indicated that it didn’t deal with democracy mixing up the democracy as a value or a practice. (Dahel, 1966), Probably this led to the dilemma about the relationships between Islam and democracy leading some people to reject democracy in its western model in an attempt to show the differences between the Islamic and western model. Consequently, others cannot deny that



democracy is a relative concept since that is rejected in the Islamic faith is rejected in democracy. To sum up, this made the relationship between Islam and democracy a dilemma.

Based on the previously mentioned, the relationship between democracy and the contemporary Islamic thought by knowing how thinkers dealt with this concept that they varied from a total rejection to a customization of the concept with Islam totally or partially. This was apparent in two main directions:

The Rejection of Democracy

It can be explored as follows:

Democracy is a political system whose ideas do not conform with Islam in its philosophy by considering freedom emerged in the illuminati era. In fact, this disagrees with Islam that it is a secular system rejecting the reflection of religion on life. Also, the existence of a divine intervention in the lives of humans at the individual or social level is rejected.

Secondly, considering humans the source of legislation and power making the law of nature the only force ruling humans is rejected because this makes them away from any moral, social, or political restrictions. In other words, humans are free to do anything since they are responsible for themselves. (Ibrahim, 1999)

The democratic system is Jahili system because it makes laws without resorting to the Islamic Sharia', so it is forbidden to participate in such councils because participants obey disbelievers. (Hamad, 2010) Furthermore, Saed Qutub (1983) made his stand against any attempt to moderate between Islam and democracy objecting to describe Islam as democratic.

Also, Saed Qutub (1993:407) was the most criticizing person for democratic legislation since it takes away God's orders saying people in all human regimes consider each other God-likes without God. Here, the system is tyrannical and democratic as the same time.

Rejecting democracy considering it anti- Islamic Sharia' affiliating directly to the secularism. In other words, it gives the right to sovereignty to persons other than God (Abu Roman, 2010) that many thinkers saw that democracy aims at secularizing life. This is why it was rejected in the first place simply because democracy separates religion from life which is the basic idea of the sovereignty of people.

Mahmoud Al-Khaldi (1984) considered the democratic system as an infidel system leading to considering whoever does not accept Islam's judgment as infidel. Similarly, Mohammed Bin Shaker Al-Sharif (1990:11) said that democracy in its essence is not right since it is an infidel system irrelevant to Islam.

Rejecting the way democracy deal with life that it replaces God's judgments changing things according to the majority of its council. This violates the essence of the teachings of Islam which does not depend on the agreement of the majority, but consultation is bound by the law of God. (Yakin, 1974)



Accepting the Positive Aspects of Democracy

Accepting democracy based on bringing in the good aspects and leaving the bad ones (Khatemy, 1999) considering the good aspects a kind of sciences or organizations despite their western origin since science has no bias to any identity. (Al-Amen, 1992)

Accepting democracy considering it a procedural method to choose the leader that this tendency depended on getting along with each other to prove the rights of Muslims and remerge them including democracy. (Hwedi, 1993)

Considering the general agreement as one of the sources of deducing religious judgments to be a proof to accepting democracy by linking general agreement with the will of the nation. In other words, democracy is the method of guaranteeing and protecting genuine Islamic values such as justice, equality, and freedom of choice. (Fatouh, 2005)

Democracy in the Thought of Rashid Al-Ghanoshi

Democracy and Secularism

Many writings questioned the epistemological origin of the word ‘secularism’ saying that it is from science while other said it is from being global. In other words, it makes people think of their daily life not their life after death. Ironically, it is originated in the ‘laicus’, which is the French secularism, distinguished the priests from commoners. In other words, the laicus is not a priest at all, he is a commoner. (Rabeo, 2006) Also, secularism means separating religion from the state which means the independence of the state’s constitution and all its legislations and system from any religious considerations. (Badawi, 1982)

Furthermore, there is a trend in the academic research departments tending to secularize democracy which is talked about in most of the previous studies of democratic politics or the political values of democracy being mostly liberal. Taking this vision in consideration, democracy is not only a tool to rule the country, but also a grand ideological organization which does not differ from the exiting ideologies nowadays including communism and Fascism. (Abul-Salam, 2008)

The last reading is more common among western academics since it suits the missionary legacy which keeps cultures apart to distinguish the western culture from other cultures due to its solid spiritual and intellectual roots linked with the Jewish Christian legacy as well as because of the combination between the two. Despite the dominance secular tendencies in the western culture, comparing the western culture with other cultures or civilizations leads to a change in the western narcissistic discourse being proud of its superiority. (Weber, 1998)

Despite this historical discourse and the post-colonial literature exposing what is between the lines of the missionary texts especially in Edward Saeed’s writings; this discourse recovered after 11/9 event. Also, the political Islamic system started to link between democracy and secularism which became a condition for democracy. (Abdul-Latif, 1987)



In this context, Al-Ghanoshi (2015a) determined the nature of the relationship between democracy and secularism that it indicated that the democratic system in the western countries was linked with secularism agreeing on the separation between religion and the state. Despite the attempts of the secularists in the Arab region to link democracy with secularism, its principles are not necessarily related to a specific philosophy or anti religion creed. Furthermore, it is evident from the implementation of the democratic strong systems was not based on any secular or religious system. Also, it was based on a different religious philosophy to the extent that some systems separated between religion and the state completely

Also, there were tyrant regimes holding secular philosophical content that the advancement of the USSR was secular and democracy, however, countries like Turkey adopted secularism without democracy. Consequently, it is possible to have democracy without secularism.

Al-Ghanoshi shared this opinion with many Islamic thinkers who considered democracy neither a sect nor a creed. On the contrary, they considered it a set of procedures allowing to rule the state with the help of the secular forces that there are Islamic forces without democracy and yet they are secular. This indicates the weakness of democratization cultures or ideologies for environmental variation reasons. (Abdul Salam, 2008) Consequently, Al-Ghanoshi disagrees with secular thinkers who saw that secularism and democracy are related as the fruit is related to the tree. (Abd Al-Qadim, 2005)

Also, Al-Ghanoshi (2015a) considered democracy as a culturally- religiously based political system abiding with a set of rules and methods, namely: having a system based on citizenship, sovereignty practiced by people to rotate powers peacefully through elections and having the right to form a party. Also, it includes distributing powers guaranteeing accountability and the right of people to replace the rulers in order to keep people's dignity.

Democracy and Islam

To begin with, Al-Ghanoshi (2015a) democracy is set of settlements and good arrangements which aim to run the best interest of the country away from tyranny and based on equality along with considering public opinion as the source of legitimacy regardless the common religions.

Concerning the nature of the relationship between democracy and Islam, Islam agrees with democracy's aims, but the best way to achieve them is consultation. Also, nothing prevented the implementation of this system in the time of prophets and Caliphs. This is away from secularists who call for taking the west as a whole or leaving it as well as the Islamic groups which considers whoever deals with democracy as an infidel.

He also criticized the anti-democratic Islamic groups which have formal reasons for being a hindrance in the way of the Arab transformation to democracy such as defining democracy and Islam comparing between them.

He assures that these excuses are lame that putting the Islamic judgment against the rule of people is an offense to Islam since it assures difference among humans. Secondly, our prophet (PBUH) ordered us to consult each other. In other words, those who deny democracy stressing that the rule cannot be Islamic unless it is consulatory. In fact, democracy is nothing but a way to achieve that. Similarly, Mohammed Al-Ghazali (1997) considered democracy is not a religion, but it is a way to organize the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. Consequently, some rules should be taken from it.

Also, Fahmi Hwedi (1992:4) said that Islam is unjustly considered twice: when it is compared with democracy and when it is considered against democracy. In other words, neither comparing democracy with Islam not claiming the clash between them is a sin.

It is indicated that Al-Ghanoshi's concept of democracy and its relationship with Islam went for the technical aspect and the performance of the system as well as the philosophical dimension achieving the goals of consultation. Many scholars shared this view with him such as Jabron et al. (2013), Fahmi Hwedi (1993) and Ahmad Al-Raisoni (2012) In short, democracy in all ages is nothing but a way of implementing consultation among people who have common causes.

Also, Al-Ghanoshi (2015a) agrees with Abdul Hamid Al-Ansari (1981:1) said that humans knew various ruling systems leading to the best system which is democracy defined by the rule of people by themselves.

Based on the previously mentioned, democracy is a group of procedures, techniques and tools which manages the process of choosing leaders, parliament members and presidents framing the processes of decision making and decision deliberation in the state. In this form, it is the Islamic concept of Shora. (Jabron et al. 2013)

The Principle of the Rule of the Majority and Legislation

In studying the principle of the rule of the majority is one of the principles of democracy, it is clear that there is one legislator who has the right to change or pass a law. However, when there is a disagreement, the last word is for the rule of the majority who decide the rules to comply for. Still, if this majority disagreed with what is ruled in the laws, this group can change the law since they pass them. However, Islamically speaking, this cannot be done because all the law are from the Holy Quran which cannot be changed or even objected to. Even if this group wanted to change a law, it should be within the Islamic rules. Once the rule of the majority is against the Holy Quran, their rule is cancelled. (Mustafa, 1985)

Also, the concept of the rule of the majority expresses the truth that the Islamic thought was honest and straight that disagreement among the writings of the religious men is redundant. Still, their agreements are an expression of the rule of the majority. (Dia, Rayes, 1979) Also, Al- Dreni (2013) indicated the concept of "the relative percentage of making errors" highlighting that there is an agreement on something.



Still, the rule of the majority was criticized by many Islamic thinkers based on two main points, namely: exaggerating the sovereignty of the nation is based on the majority which means that sovereignty is for the majority not the whole nation. Secondly, the majority are not always right that the minority might be right either still their opinion is neglected. Furthermore, Al-Nahawi (2001) saw that the opinion of the majority is always right has nothing to support it in the Islamic scripts since it is human in the making not fixed in the heart of the Islamic belief.

Based on the previously mentioned, Al-Ghanoshi (2015a) ideas about the rule of the majority and legislation is that nations are different in their culture and religion, so democracy mechanisms are within the values of a certain society. Furthermore, this makes the legislative authority subject to the people in issues such as abiding with law and human rights as well as the identity of the people, their religion and language. Consequently, the legislative council cannot pass a law that violates the constitution or the identity of the Palestinians. In other words, it is the advantage of the Islamic country that makes human fix values control the mechanisms of democracy.

What attracted the attention of Al-Ghanoshi is that the Islamic democracy reflects the democracy that agrees with Islam. Furthermore, it is different from the one prophet Mohammed (PBUH) established in the formation and procedures. However, it meets its aims. Here, traditional Islamists consider democracy as the opposite of everything Islamic. (Abdul Fatah, 2015)

Elections

The Islamic political thought is facing the dilemma of the difference between Shora and elections that some see that there are three differences. The first is that elections are by reaching to the state while Shora is a way to know the right and wrong and not a way of ruling. The second difference is that elections are a way of choosing among a number of people or matters that the role of the voter is to choose one of the nominees or agreeing on something while Shora is a discussion about a subject through which it is accepted or rejected or amended. The third difference is that elections are short in terms of states while Shora is comprehensive to all aspects of life. (Saleh, 1988)

This controversy was reflected about the relationship between elections and Shora that it can be clarified as follows:

Shora allows elections since it is one of its best ways of implementation based the Quranic verse: “who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation” (Al-Shora: 38) in which there a speech to all people to consult each other without any kind of restrictions. (Rida, 1990) Furthermore, it is one of the earthly issues related to peoples’ policy and the choice of the way is based on time and place. Here, cotemporary elections can be one of the methods of consulting people and knowing their opinions. (Al-Melejy. 2012)



Al-Shora does not agree with contemporary elections since Islam does not ask anyone unless he is qualified to answer. Also, it means benefiting from opinions to get to the right decision unlike elections which has the issuing an opinion and a judgment even if it was democratic. (Shaker, 2000)

In this sense, Al-Ghanoshi (2015b) saw that contemporary societies cannot recognize the opinion of a nation that the achievement of Al-Shora cannot be done but by elections which is the only way to show the real colors of the candidates leading the choice to people.

Multi-Party System

The Islamic political thought has been witnessing a discussion about multi-party system and its applicability to Islam. On the one hand, there are the ones who agree with his party and the mechanism of elections considering it the guarantee for power transfer and having fair systems. Also, it is a way of managing political differences and keeping rights and freedoms which succeeded in the west. On the other hand, others see that parties are one of the reasons of separation giving power to political powers in exchange for ruling by Islamic rules. This leads to instability and allowing alien system to rule an Islamic state. (Izat, 2016) These parties' logic can be discussed as follows:

The Opponents of Multi- Party System

this stand is based on mentioning the word “party” in the Holy Quran determining their stand from it by its indication leading to differences based on the verse: “But the various factions differed among themselves. So, woe to those who disbelieve from the scene of a tremendous Day” (*Al-Ahzab: 22*). Another position is a situation prophet Mohammed (PBUH) experienced in Al-Khandaq battle:” And when the believers saw the confederates, they said, “This is what Allah and His Messenger have promised us, and Allah and His messenger have told the truth.” And it only increased them in faith and submission” (*Al-Ahzab:22*). This generalized the separation meaning that the contemporary opinions enforce their refusing stand of multi-party system by considering it the product of the Imperial west to sabotage the Islamic belief and the cultural aspects of the Islamic world.

Also, it represents the Arab division which did not achieve anything positive, but it leads to the emergence of small Islamic deformed entities religiously and culturally. Consequently, it means the opposition of the rule of God because it means the control of a specific party on the authority leading to tranny. (Amen and Ghalion, 1996)

The Proponents of Multi- Party System

The proponents of multi-party system try to find legitimate reasons rejecting the pessimistic point of view from multi-party system based on the absence of any religious reasons to ban it. Based on the modern concept of political party, which differs completely from the tribal and clan party as mentioned in the Holy Quran, is divided into two parties namely: God’s party and the devil’s party. Furthermore, there were instances in the Holy Quran where the word



'party' was for praising and dispraising instance. Also, there is a need to match the goal of the party with the best interest of people, so what parties ask for is justice allowing minorities to defend on themselves. (Hindi, 2013)

Al-Ghanoshi deals with the multi-party system based on the experience of the Muslims when they met at Al-Medina in a society based on citizenship in a place where all social classes exist. Then, the constitution of the Al-Medina organized citizenship making their differences a kind of political unity. Also, these parties expressed on themselves and achieved progress in the era of the Rashida Calif to pave the way to the establishment of the Islamic state by establishing brotherhood between the immigrants and supporters. Then, due to the weakness of the Muslims to transfer Al-Shora from the level of giving advice to taking collective decisions peacefully, there was an unfair and tyrant ruler after Al-Rashidi era leading to a dispute on ruling Muslims.

He also considered parties which were formed in the Islamic era as parties for inviting people to Islam even if they were based on tribal considerations. (Al-Ghanoshi, 2015a)

Besides, he indicated that the Islamic history knew religious and cultural multiplicity coexisting in that society with other religions. Politically speaking, the Shora system did not develop to the system of getting rid of tyrant rulers. Then, the western political thought developed to transfer power by multiplicity of parties and voting, so Al-Ghanoshi was with the proponents of multiple party system.

Also, he criticized the opponents of multi-party system saying that their evidence from the Holy Quran and Hadiths in which "party" was mentioned came to prepare for banning multiplicity of parties depending on Ibn Taimia's answer when he was asked about God's party. He answered that it is the party that calls for good and right while the devil's party is the ones which calls for defying God. (Ibn Taimia, 1972)

He also accepted the existence of Islamic and non-Islamic parties in the Islamic society. Consequently, he opposed the writings of many proponents of Islamic multiple party system because they represent the alternative Islam leading to the fall of the Islamic system. (Fadl Allah, 1994). He assured that Islam has basic rules such as the respect of others believes, ordering the good and preventing the bad actions and Al-Shora.

Also, it is imperative to get rid of linking democracy mechanisms in the minds of Muslims to their imperial and secular origins. Instead, they should take collective decisions that Islam is the happiest system once it sticks to the basics of the modern democratic system.

Separation of Powers

It is considered one of the cornerstones of establishing a democratic political system related to the thought of Montesquieu. It also means the separation between the three main powers in the democratic political system and the distribution of the state's legal bodies, namely:



legislative, executive, and legal keeping in mind the independence of each power with having a complementary role. (Saed, 1999)

It faced a great controversy in the contemporary Islamic political thought among three main streams as follows:

The ones who supported the existence of such principle in the Islamic political system bearing in mind many pieces of evidence:

Legislation in the Islamic system is for God while understanding the scripts and their implementation is up to the people responsible for such duties. Consequently, the main mission of the state is to implement God's orders, so there is a separation between the executive power and other powers. (Al-Mododi, 1964)

The idea of separation of powers is an Islamic idea before it is a western one that it is evident that prophet Mohammed (PBUH) implemented Shora distinguished between the ruler as the executive power and the consulted people. (Askar, 1991)

The evidence of the law of permission implemented in the Islamic law when there is no Quranic verse preventing its adoption. Also, it does not object the rules of the Islamic Sharia since religious scripts did not assign a specific framework for the tasks of the state leaving it to the best interest of the state. (Al-Deek, 2000)

The separation of powers achieves the best interest of the Muslims through the protection of their freedoms preventing injustice by rulers and keeping the jurisdiction of each power to its limits. (Al-Anbari, 2004)

The separation between powers should be with the agreement of the people of good religious men since many of its issues needs jurisprudence.

The ones who rejected this principle considering it non-Islamic said that:

The three powers were at the hand of prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and his followers followed the same path. Also, Muslim religious men who wrote about this did not mention this indicating their disagreement on this principle. (Asad, 1978)

The Islamic system is based on one unified nation and one body which is order and prevention as well as division of powers. This division is a hindrance to implementing God's orders, so the multiplicity of powers means having multiplicity of allegiance.

This leads to following many parties making people confused. Also, religious scripts did not define a specific shape of the Islamic state, so it is forbidden to create a new ruling system separating the Islamic state. (Al-Tamawi, 1976)

In this dilemma about the principle of separation of powers, Al-Ghanoshi (2015b) adopted better constitutional principles concerning the nature of the powers of the state which is



unstrict separation system. Furthermore, it achieves cooperation among the committees to raise the word of God making the main reference for ruling the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Mohammad (PBUH) establishing the culture of the society and all the institutions of the state in the Shora institution.

Besides, this made the mission of the legislative power independent in the state cooperating with the executive power with keeping options open based on the best interest of Muslims. (Al-Samirae, 2000).

Conclusion

Al-Ghanoshi is the most distinguished scholar in the Islamic contemporary literature for the variety of subjects talking about the dialectic nature of the political Islamic contemporary politics especially the western one.

In this study, the exploration of democracy in Al-Ghanoshi's writings related to Islam in constructing his concept based on the philosophical dimension through the determination of the nature between democracy and secularism. This is to confirm the neutrality of democracy and its mechanism away from any ideology and its success in the religious territory.

Also, he employs the dialectic discussion of democracy and secularism to phrase a definition of democracy coping with the good settlements and arrangements in the rule of the state away from aggression. Also, it should be based on citizenship with transferring power to public opinion as a source of the legitimacy of the authority.

This is done regardless the kind of creeds involved since the Islamic intellectual contemporary arena is witnessing a huge discussion about the relationship between Islam and democracy. Consequently, Al-Ghanoshi considers Islam and all its creeds and values applicable to democracy that there is nothing to prevent its implementation by following Shora.

He also proposes his efforts in constructing his own vision of democracy and its relation to Islam that there are many ideas about democratic practices which are dialectic in the contemporary Islamic thought such a multiple party system, the rule of the majority and separation of powers concluding that Islam does not contradict with these practices. Also, he highlights that the Islamic thought that refuses this concept is the only hindrance for any democratic transformation in the Islamic Arab societies.



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