POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF ISLAMIC RESURGENCE AND GLOBAL DEMOCRATIZATION: NEED FOR CIVILIZATIONAL CO-EXISTENCE

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Introduction

There is no doubt that the final decades of the twentieth century have witnessed two important developments - Islamic resurgence and democratization. It is also true that Islamic resurgence and democratization complement each other in some countries. The reason is quite obvious. The authoritarian political regimes of the Muslim world are mostly secular in their approach to politics and modernization. Hence, Islamic movements which form the backbone of Islamic resurgence emerge as the leading movements of opposition which assure not only popular participation of people in politics but also affirm their identification with Islam.

According to some Western scholars like John L. Esposito and John Voll and others, the demand of the people for greater participation in political process can be possible only through democratization.[1] They contend that democratic institutions like multiparty system, free election, and civil societies, free press etc. are inevitable to provide access to the people for greater political participation. For this reason they examine the Islamic political concepts and institutions to see the conceptual

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1   John L. Esposito and John Voll. Islam and Democracy.

resources available in Islam for promoting democracy. They also take up the case studies of some Muslim countries to look at the relationship between democratization and Islamic resurgence. Throughout their exploration of Islamic heritage and Muslim states they look into the relationship between democratization and Islamic resurgence. They also highlight how the West in general and the U.S in particular champion the cause of global democratization as its mission towards other countries across the world.

In contrast to these scholars there are some other Western scholars like Samuel P. Huntington who hold the opinion that Islamic resurgence is a threat to the Western civilization and this will lead to clash of civilizations. Whereas there are some others like Shireen Hunter who argues that the conflict between Islamic resurgence and the West is less due to cultural differences but more due to interest and power. These scholars also present their own views on the Western policies and attitude towards promoting democratization in the world.

In this paper, the views of John L. Esposito and John Voll on the relationship between Islamic resurgence and the West are explored and analyzed in context with democratization. However along with their views, the arguments and contentions of some other Western scholars are also presented in the paper. The main argument of the paper is that the Western agenda of global democratization is based on its own Western interest. It is also contended that the West is threatened and stunned with Islamic resurgence, no matter whether it is through 'revolution' or 'election'. This is elucidated through the examples of the Islamic revolution of Iran and the electoral success of FIS in Algeria. It is also argued in the paper that the Western scholars get confused with the political dimension of Islamic resurgence and defines it as political Islam' or 'militant Islam.' Towards the end of the paper, the nature and the position of Islamic resurgence in relation to the West is presented briefly to clarify some issues. The need for a dialogue among the Islamic and Western scholars and leaders on Civilizational co-existence is also emphasized.

Islamic Resurgence and Democratization

Contemporary Islamic Resurgence is interpreted by Western scholars in divergent terms and images. Mostly negative terms, like, Islamic threat, 'Green menace' 'Fundamentalist Islam', 'Militant Islam', 'Clash between Crescent and the Cross' are deliberately coined to define the relationship between Islamic resurgence with the West.

According to Samuel P. Huntington, "the religious resurgence throughout the world is a reaction against secularism, moral relativism, and self-indulgence..."[2] He elaborates the views of William Mc Neill who contends that the revival of non-Western religions is not a rejection of modernity but a rejection of the West and Westoxification. It is a bold declaration of cultural independence from the West and open manifestation of confidence in their own non-Western religions and cultures.[3] Huntington points out that both Asians and Muslims stress the superiority of their cultures to Western culture.[4] 'Islam is the solution' is epitomized in Islamic Resurgence.[5] He asserts that 'this Islamic Resurgence in its extent and profundity is the last phase in the adjustment of Islamic civilization to the West, an effort to find the 'solution not in Western ideologies but in Islam".[6] Quoting Bernard Lewis on the relation between Islam and the West, he points out that "Islam is the only civilization which has put the survival of the West in doubt, and it has done that at least twice".[7] In fact, it is argued that the renewed conflict between Islam and the West is basically rooted on the question of power and culture as to who is to rule? Who is to be ruled? Besides these, the

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2   Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. pg. 98

3   Ibid, pg. 101

4   Ibid, pg. 4

5   Ibid, pg. 109

6   Ibid, pp.109-110

7   Ibid, pg. 210

additional conflict is between "two different versions of what is right and what is wrong and, as a consequence, who is right and who is wrong."[8] Hence, Huntington asserts that the clash between Islamic and Western civilizations "will continue to define their relations in the future even as it has defined them for the past fourteen centuries".[9]

Whereas, according to others like Graham Fuller "a civilizational clash is not so much over Jesus Christ, Confucius or the Prophet Muhammad as it is over the unequal distribution of world power, wealth and influence".[10] Whereas, Françoise Burgat looks at the Islamic Resurgence as "the third phase of the process of decolonization".[11] He contends that the first phase of Islamic Resurgence was political, the second was economic and the third was cultural.

However, for Esposito, "Islamic Resurgence is not necessarily anti-Western but a movement for the establishment of an Islamic order".[12] He contends that the Islamic movements should be looked upon as "a challenge to the outdated assumptions of the established and to autocratic regimes,"[13] not as a threat to the West.

Along with these diverse Western images of Islamic Resurgence, an additional debate is added to by the Western scholars. The debate is on the compatibility or incompatibility of Islamic Resurgence with democratization. According to some scholars, there is a fundamental difference between Islam and Western secular democracy while others contend that certain Islamic concepts form the basis of democracy.

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8   Ibid, pg. 212

9   Ibid

10   Graham Fuller, "The Next Ideology", *Foreign Policy*, No. 98, Spring 1995: pg. 150

11   Quoted in Shireen T. Hunter, The Future of Islam and The West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence? Washington D.C: Center For Strategic and International Studies, 1998, pg. 73

12   John L. Esposito, The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality, New York, 1992, pg. 217

13   Ibid

According to Esposito and Voll, the 1990s saw the interaction of the forces of Islamic resurgence and democratization. They contend that "in the Muslim world, these issues are raised with special force because of the strength of the Islamic resurgence and the greater popular participation on the political processes".[14] They point out that organization like Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan al Muslimoon*) and *Jamaat-al-Islami* are joined by newly formed organizations and they all form "a significant part of Islamic resurgence".[15] These movements represent not only the social and political alternatives but also reflect "the dual aspirations of modern-educated professionals in Muslim societies".[16] The dual aspirations include the greater political participation and the explicit identification with Islam. "As a result the new organization bring together the two great trends of the late twentieth century: religious resurgence and democratization".[17]

However, some other Western scholars who are referred to as 'neo-orientalists' have different opinions on the compatibility of Islam with democracy. For instance, Martin Kramer contends that those scholars who are optimistic of the compatibility of Islam with democracy are "apologists".[18] Amos Perlmutter questions: "Is Islam, fundamental or otherwise, compatible with liberal, human rights-oriented Western style representative democracy? The answer is an emphatic No".[19]

A crucial point to note here is that the debate is not ended at the 'Yes' or 'No' on the compatibility of Islamic Resurgence with democracy but something more is curiously added to it. Some Western scholars are

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14 Esposito and Voll, op cit, pg. 3

15 Ibid, pg. 6

16 Ibid

17 Ibid

18 See Martin Kraamer, "Islam Versus Democracy", *Commentary*, January 1993. Quoted and discussed also by Shireen T. Hunter, Op.cit, pg. 72

19 Amos Perlmutter, Wishful Thinking about Islamic Fundamentalism, Washington Post, January 19, 1992 Quoted and discussed by Shireem T. Hunter, op.cit, pg. 72

greatly anxious to study as to how far Islamic Resurgence accepts democracy and democratization. According to Esposito and Voll, it is important to examine the conceptual resources within Islam for democratization.[20] It entails a critical exploration of the Islamic movements and its "developing relationship between the Islamic resurgence and democratization".[21] Such a critical examination requires at least two investigations: one is to see conceptual and ideological resources that are available for democratization in Islam and how for they are acceptable to Islamists, the other is to examine the ability of the Islamic movements "to meet the demand for both Islamic authenticity and popular democratic participation".[22] For Esposito Islamic resurgence is not essentially anti-Western and anti-democratic. He observes:

> For many Muslims, Islamic revivalism is a social rather than a political movement whose goal is a more Islamically minded and oriented society, but not necessarily the creation of an Islamic state. For others, the establishment of an Islamic order requires the creation of an Islamic state. In either case, Islam and most Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American or anti-democratic.[23]

According to Esposito and Voll, the Muslim world presents three major kind of experiences in both Islamic resurgence and democratization.[24] It ranges from Islamist power in Sudan and Iran, to new style Islamic movements who participate in existing democratic systems like Malaysia and Pakistan and to movements which are suppressed by their governments, in Algeria and Egypt. They argued that a critical examination of these movements for resurgence in all

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20. Esposito and Voll, Op. cit. pg. 17

21   Ibid, pp. 8-9

22   Ibid, pg. 7

23   Esposito, Islamic Threat...Op. cit, pg. 217

24   Esposito and John Voll op. cit, pp 8-10

these countries provided important insight "about the relationships between Islam and democracy and Islamization and democratization".[25]

One of the important reasons behind this togetherness of Islamic resurgence and democratization, according to Esposito and Voll is the world wide eruption of religious concern, particularly the affirmation of faith and identity in the Muslim world on one hand and the growing demand for greater popular participation in the political system, on the other side.[26] They point out that the authoritarian regimes in the Muslim world are identified as secularist in their approach to politics and modernization. For this reason, "the processes of democratization and Islamic resurgence have become complementary forces in many countries".[27] Obviously, some of the Islamic movements have proved to be the most effective opposition to authoritarian regimes "through reaffirmation of the Islamic identity".[28] In fact, Esposito and Voll argued that the demands for democratization in the Muslim world reinforce and given 'added strength' to the Islamic resurgence.[29] They also point out that as nationalism has penetrated the Muslim world and losses its secular dimensions and transformed itself with Islamic orientation, democratization is also experienced by the Muslim world in the same way.[30]

A closer look into the arguments of the above mentioned Western scholars on the compatibility or incompatibility of Islamic resurgence with democratization reveals that they are actually investigating the political dimensions of the contemporary Islamic resurgence. Obviously, political dimension of the Islamic resurgence is steeped in the Islamic

25   Ibid pg. 25

26   Ibid pp.15-16

27   Ibid pg. 17

28   Ibid pg. 16

29   Ibid

30   Ibid

political concepts and institutions not in the Western concepts and institutions. If some Islamic movements are participating in the elections, it is due to the fact that Islamic political system is Shura-based and Shura-oriented and therefore it is anti-authoritarianism, political, militaristic or otherwise.[31] It signifies that Islamic movements are against authoritarianism and authoritarian forces in the same way as they are against secularism and secular forces. It is therefore quite logical that in the contemporary Muslim world where some Muslim states are following democracy, the Islamic movements would have to participate in the elections to come to power. It is against the nature of Islamic political

31   For a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic political system and Islamic state, the aspirations of the establishment of which are reflected in the Islamic resurgence, see Sayyid Abdul Ala Mawdudi. Islamic Law and Constitution, Lahore; Islamic Publications Ltd., 1983. see also Muhammad Asad, The Principles of State and Government in Islam, Gibraltar; Dar Al.Andalus, 1981. Here, it seems pertinent to clarify that Shura is central to Islamic Political System and it was empirically established and practiced by the Prophet Mohammed (P.B.U.H) and later continued by the four Rightly Guided Khulafah. However, later the institution of Shura started to decline which eventually gave rise to Kingdoms, empires, dynasties or name-sake Caliphates which were not the manifestations of original Islamic political system. After the independence from the colonial powers, the Muslim world has been following the nation state system. As for the government, the Muslim rations are following democracy, monarchies, or military dictatorships and other such governmental systems. There is a wide gap between Islamic political system as ordained in the Islamic texts, which was followed by the Prophet (P.B.UH.) and early Caliphs and present Muslim nation-states and Muslim Kingdoms. However, the Islamic movements which are working world over for the revival of Islamic institutions including political institutions aim at the revival of Shura and all other Islamic political concepts and institutions in time and space context. Their aim at the political level is not the establishment or continuation of Western secular democracies, monarchies, Kingdoms, military regimes or any such political system which is antithetical to Islamic political philosophy and its institutions. As for the stance of the Islamic movements on Western type democracy is concerned, Islamic movement leaderships seem to be quite clear about the fact that there are some apparent similarities between Shura and democracy but there are also inherent ideological and foundational difference between the two. Perhaps, the Islamic movements after coming to power may follow multi-party system, election, free press, civil societies or may evolve some such mechanisms and institutions through which they operate the Islamic institution including Shura and other concept in a more better manner and thus give more access to people for participation in political people process. As for the views of the scholars and leaders of two major Islamic movements, Ikhwan al Muslimoon and Jammat-e-Islami on the issue concerning the relationship between the rising Islamic civilization and the West, see Arthur L. Lowrie (ed), Islam, Democracy, the State and the West, (A Round Table with Dr. Hasan Turabi), Florida: The World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE), 1993 and Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi (ed.) Islamic Resurgence: Challenges Directions and Future Perspectives, (A Bound Table with Khurshid Ahmad), Florida: World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE), 1994.

system to use force to come to power and impose its system on the unwilling population. It is the reason that weather it is Malaysia or Algeria, Pakistan or Sudan, Islamic movements are participating in election to come to power. It does not however mean that these movements are accepting Western secular theory of democracy. They are accepting multi-party system and elections, which are important parts of democracy because they are the mechanisms through which people get opportunities for political participation. Since Islam emphasizes Shura (consultation), it not only welcomes but also encourages political participation of people. But at the same time Islam emphasizes integrity of life and rejects the compartmentalization of life into so called secular and spiritual realms. Based on this integral approach to life, Islam gives sovereignty to Allah s.w.t. and vicegerency to man, both of which strike the root of democracy, (i.e.) secularism and the integral component of democracy, (i.e.) popular sovereignty.[32] It implies that Islamic resurgence has accepted only some mechanism of democracy not its secular philosophy. These are precisely the reasons behind the participation of Islamic movements in elections in those Muslim nation states where there is democracy. This reflects the political dimension and political strategy of Islamic movements not the promotion of democratization on Western lines to promote the Western interest. It is not the Islamic resurgence, rather the West that aspires to promote democratization in the Muslim world and elsewhere to protect and promote its own interest. This point shall be discussed in detail, later in the article.

Now a question still arises here concerning those states which are authoritarian and are also strongly supported by the West though the West claims that it supports democratization not authoritarianism. What should be the political role of the Islamists in such a situation? Obliviously, firstly they would put all their efforts to settle the matter through peaceful talks and negotiation. But, if the concerned authority does not comply with the Islamists and it uses force against them and become more tyrannical,

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32 For a comparative study between shura and democracy, see Rashid Moten, Democracy as Development: Muslim Experience and Expectations, in Zeenath Kausar (ed) Political Development: An Islamic Perspective, Kuala Lumpur; pp.103-123

the Islamists would have to take consent of the people on the issue for a revolution. And if majority of the people believe that the conditions are intolerable and that there is a need for a revolution, they go for revolution. It does not however mean that revolution should be adopted as the political strategy by all the countries. As the political conditions differ from country to country, the political strategies differ accordingly. But to condemn mass supported revolution against a tyrannical ruler, as 'militant Islam' or 'terrorist Islam', is understandable. Many revolutions took place all over the West against autocratic regimes and absolute monarchies since the breakdown of Christiandom on to the emergence of modern nation states. All those revolutions cannot be labeled as 'militant' or 'terrorist' because some of them were virtually the fight against autocratic and absolute monarchs. Similarly, in some part of the Muslim world, if the conditions necessitate a revolution against an oppressor, it cannot be defined as 'militant Islam' or 'terrorist Islam' and 'political Islam' either. It is one of the political dimensions of Islam and Islamic resurgence 'not political Islam'. There is nothing like 'democratic Islam' or 'terrorist Islam' in the same way as there is no such thing as 'Good Islam' or 'Bad Islam'.[33] Islamic resurgence embodies various political dimensions in its wide spectrum from participation in election and peaceful negotiation to populist revolution, depending on the circumstances and general political conditions. These political dimensions should not be messed with secular democratization. If the West is interested in removing its ignorance and ambiguity on the nature of Islamic resurgence and its political dimensions, it can see eye to eye with Islam and can settle down the problem of civlizational co-existence with peace and mutual trust. But sometimes Western scholars seem to be more interested in categorization of Islam and less interested in reflecting over accommodative and cooperative strategies to build bridges among various civilizations around the world so as to give peace and prosperity to the whole humanity.

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33 See Jim Hoagland, Driving a Wedge between the Dominant Branches of Islam" International Herald Tribune, April 29, 1996. Discussed by Shireen T. Hunter, Op cit, pp. 15-16

Western Agenda of Global Democratization

An important point to be noted here is that according to Esposito and Voll, American leaders have a distinct model in their mind v en they like to support developing countries for democratization. They point out that after the disintegration of Soviet Union, the then secretary of state, James Baker presented five fundamental principles which include interalia 'multiparty, free elections and a Jeffersonian understanding of the rights of minorities".[34] The same conditions are emphasized for American support to African countries. Similarly, the then Assistant Secretary General for African Affairs, Herman J. Cohen pledged assistance to the African countries from United States to start a democratic process and to continue the democratic entire process.[35] It is pointed out that United States and the major Western European powers are helped by the international institutions including the United Nations to export democracy to non-democratic countries and to expedite the process of democratization in democratic countries.

Earlier, Bush administration considered the promotion and consolidation of democracy as its mission. During the election campaign of 1992, Bill Clinton declared that democratization should be the top priority and the only foreign policy of Clinton administration.[36] While in office, he devoted a two-thirds increase in funding for the National Endowment for Democracy.[37] According to his secretary of defense, one of the four major goals of Clinton foreign policy was the promotion of democracy. Another important point to be noted here is, that European states also emphasize the promotion of human rights and democracy in their foreign policies. Furthermore, the promotion of human rights and democracy as conceived by the West are "the criteria of the West-controlled international economic institutions for giving loans and

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34   Esposito and Voll, op. cit, pg. 18

35   Ibid pp 18-19

36   Ibid pp. 18-19. See also Huntington, op cit, pp.192-193

37   Huntington, op. cit, pg. 193

grants to developing countries".[38] The same foreign policies for the promotion of human rights and democratization are continued by the present Bush administration. Infact, promotion of democratization to the world by U.S. and European powers is reckoned as global revolution for democracy or global democratization.[39]

At this juncture, a critical question can be raised: Why the West is so much interested in what it calls global democratization? The clear and concrete answer to this question can be found with Huntington. According to him, "there are three important issues that divide the West and other societies: (1) To maintain its military superiority through policies of non proliferation and counter-proliferation of weapons (2) To promote Western political values and institutions by pressing other societies to adopt human right and democracy on Western lines: and (3) to protect the cultural, social and ethnic integrity of Western societies".[40]

From the above, it is quite clear that in all the three important issues, it is the interest of the U.S., which is kept above everything else. Whether it is the question of the proliferation of weapons or the issue of ethnic integrity and even on the promotion of human right and democratization it is the militaristic, political and cultural superiority of the West which is kept at the forefront.

The above fact can be better elucidated through the words of the then Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who once proclaimed:

" ... encouraging the global revolution for democracy that is transforming our world. By helping promote democracy, we do more than honour our deepest values. We are also making a strategic investment in our nation's security".[41]

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38 Ibid

39 Esposito and Voll, Op. cit, pg. 19

40 Huntington, op. cit, pp.185-186

41 Esposito and vol, op .cit, pg. 19

Thus, the hidden agenda of the U.S behind the global democratization is Westernization in general and Americanization in particular. It is rightly remarked, "What is good for democracy is good for America. The more democratic the World becomes the more likely it is to be both peaceful and friendly to America"[42]

A practical question arises here: How far the American project of global democratization achieved success? There are divergent opinions of Western scholars on this question. Some scholars contend that the project could not meet expected success because there are some inherent differences between Islam and secular democracy and that mostly Muslim countries are authoritarian and despotic regimes and that Muslim societies lack 'civic' qualities.[43] Whereas for some other scholars, Asian and Muslim countries have always resisted against West oriented human right proposal and secular democratization. Huntington observes that the pressure of the West on the non-Western countries for human right and democratization is greatly resisted by Asia and Islam. He points out that "this resistance was rooted in the broader movements of cultural assertiveness embodied in the Islamic Resurgence and the Asian affirmation".[44] This is illustrated through various examples. It is pointed out that "for five straight years in the 1990s, China was able to mobilize Asian support to defeat West sponsored resolutions expressing concern over its human rights violations."[45] Many Asian countries look at the promotion of human rights issue by the West as 'human rights imperialism'.[46] The differences between the West and other civilizations over human rights revealed more clearly in the UN World conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993. As against Western countries, the Asian Islamic bloc emphasized that human rights should be considered

42   J. Muravchik, Exporting Democracy, pg. 222

43   See Bernard Lewis, "Islam and Liberal Democracy; A Historical Overview, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.7, No.2, April, 1996, pp. 58-60

44   Huntington, op. cit, pg. 193

45   Ibid, pg. 195

46   Ibid

in the context of historical, religious and cultural backgrounds. Because of these differences between the two blocs, "the declaration approved by the conference was a minimal one".[47] Thus, the Asian-Islamic coalition in Vienna was Victorious. It was commented that American hegemony over the international human rights was eroded.[48]

The same sort of clash between Islam and the West appears on other issues including the Western type of democracy in the Muslim countries. As pointed out by Huntington, "Conflicts between the West and Islam thus focus less on territory than on broader intercivilizational issue such as weapon proliferation, human rights and democracy, control of oil, migration, Islamist terrorism, and Western intervention".[49]

However, according to Esposito such views on Islamic resurgence are based on 'mutual distrust and condemnation'.[50] There is a greater demand of political liberalization and democratization on one side through out the world and on the other side there is continued vitality of Islam and Islamic movements. Moreover, he asserts that 'risk exists', because there cannot be risk-free democracy. Those also fear about the future power of Islamic movements, they have a 'legitimate concern'.[51]

Islamic Heritage of Political Thought

Perhaps, for this 'legitimate concern', Esposito and Voll briefly examined the heritage on Islamic Political thought. According to them, there are some important concepts and images in Islam which can become the 'foundations for the Islamic perceptions of democracy'.[52] Some such

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47   Ibid, pg. 196

48   Ibid

49   Ibid, pg. 212

50   Esposito, Islamic Threat... op. cit, pg. 3

51.   Ibid pp. 216-217

52   Esposito and Voll, op. cit, pg. 23

concepts which become central to the Islamic political system are identified and elaborated by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi who established one of the major Islamic revivalist organizations, the *Jamaat-Islami*.[53] These concepts are *Tawhid* (Unity of God), *Risalat* (Prophethood) and *Khilafah* (Caliphate).[54]

He explains that the concept of *Tawhid* emphasizes the sovereignty of God and rejects popular sovereignty, which is the central concept of democracy. Sovereignty of God is antithesis of secular Western democracy. Therefore Esposito and Voll point out that the concepts of *Tawhid* and *Khilafah* do not fit into the Western based definition of democracy. However, they point out that democracy can be affirmed within Islamic framework through some specific concept like *Shura* (consultation) *Ijma* (consensus), and *Ijtihad* (interpretive exercise). They surveyed the views of Iqbal, Mawdudi, Muhammad Hamidullah, Fazlur Rahman, Ayatullah Baqr al-Sadar, Rashid al-Ghannouchi, Khurshid Ahmad, Taha Jabir al-Alwani and a few others on *Shura, Ijma, Ijtihad* and some other related concepts to investigate the conceptual resources which confirm with some ideas and institutions of democracy.[55] They find out that *Shura, Ijma* and *Ijtihad* are some key operational concepts which develop the relationship between Islam and democracy. Further, Esposito and Voll quote Khurshid Ahmad who once stated that there is a "transition from economic teachings of Islam" to the emergence of "Islamic economics".[56] Similarly, Esposito and Voll look forward for the transition from listing democratic doctrines of Islam to creating coherent

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53 For a brief sketch of the life and the real contribution of Mawdudi for the Islamic movement, see Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi: An Introduction To His Vission of Islam and Islamic Revival, in Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari (ed.) Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Maulana Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, pp.359-384

54 For a comprehensive understanding of Mawdudi's political philosophy and his arguments on the differences between democracy and Tawhid and popular vicegerency, see his Islamic Law and Constitution, op. cit

55 Esposito and Voll, pp. cit., pp. 21-32

56 Ibid, pg. 31

theories and structures of Islamic democracy. They contend that from a global perspective, the efforts of Muslims to develop an authentic and viable Islamic democracy have great significance.

From the above contentions and observations of Esposito and Voll it is quite clear that they are strong exponents of the project of global democratization. But at the same time it is interesting to note their recognition of the fact that the acceptance of democracy in the Muslim world have its own Islamic orientation not the Western secular orientation.

Case Studies of Some Muslim States

Keeping these views into consideration, Esposito and Voll examined the dynamics of democratization and Islamic resurgence as experienced in some Muslim countries. Hence, we would critically review their views only on Iran and Algeria for two reasons. Firstly, discussion on all the case studies cannot be covered in a single paper. Secondly, For a proper discussion of this paper, Iran and Algeria are good examples.

Iran

Iran's Islamic revolution represents a threat of "Islamic fundamentalism" or "the quintessential example of political Islam",[57] for many Western scholars as pointed out by Esposito and Voll. For them, although Islamic Republic of Iran is an important symbol of revolutionary Islam, it is a good example of modern political Islam in practice.[58]

A critical analysis of the whole history of modern Iran tracing back to the domination of Pahlavi dynasty (1925- 1979) and the Islamic revolution of Iran throws abundance of light on the relationship between Islam and the West and between Islamic resurgence and democratization.

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57   Ibid, pg. 52

58   Ibid

Reza Khan (1925-1941) who was a military officer, seized power and created the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran. He was secular and adopted Western based legal and educational reforms. Reza Khan was deposed by the British and his son Reza Shah was placed on the peacock throne. Reza Shah was supported by the Western government particularly the United State and Britain and Western multinational corporations.[59] Reza Shah took up ambitious Western oriented, socio-economic modernization Program, called the "White Revolution" (1963-77). He was increasingly dependent upon the Western and Israeli-trained military and police to pursue his programme.[60] This was strongly opposed by the (*Ulema*), Islamic scholars in Iran and an effective opposition was formed by 1970s. Ayatullah Khomeini emerged as an anti-government voice. Opposition to the Shah grew throughout the 1970s and Shah used SAVAK (State Security and Information Agency), his CIA to repress the oppositions. But all his SAVAK forces and Israeli trained secret police could not repress the oppositions. Islamically oriented intelligentsia and masses who were greatly influenced by Ali Shariati, and Khomeini and others were determined to fight against Western cultural imperialism, Weststruckness.[61] Khomeini was sent to Turkey in 1964, and then he moved to Iraq in 1965 and then to France in 1978.[62] From his exile, he could teach and influence people in Iran. Finally Khomeini led the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and "brought down the Shah and ended a 2,500 year tradition of monarchy in Iran, turned three decades of U.S Iranian amity into bitter enmity, and for 10 years was uncontestable leader."[63] The Islamic Republic has survived successfully even after the death of Khomeini. According to Esposito, in terms of some of the basic issues of democracy and the Islamic republic, there was a continuing affirmation of the importance of popular participation, consensus, and freedom."[64]

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59   Ibid, pp.53-55

60   Ibid, pp.54-55

61   Ibid, pg. 59

62   Ibid, pg. 56

63   Ibid pg. 61

64   Ibid pg. 76

A critical point to note here is the Western support to Shah's regime when compared to its present perception and hostile relationship with Iran after the Islamic revolution. Esposito and Voll point out how the West supported Reza Shah:

> Mohammad Reza Shah's reign began in 1941, when the British deposed Reza Khan and placed his son on the Peacock Throne. However, it was not until after his U.S orchestrated and British backed return from exile in Italy in 1953 that the Shah began to effectively consolidate his power with significant assistance from Western government (in Particular the united State and Britain) and Western multinational corporation.[65]

Infact, they pointed out that Shah mainly relied on Western and Israeli-trained military and police for his "White Revolution" (1963-79).[66] From 1972 through 1977, Shah became so heavily dependent on the West that he purchased $6 billion arms from the U.S with another $12 billion on order on the basis of Iran's enormous oil revenues.[67] These were the policies of Shah among other things which made Khomeini to raise his voice in strong opposition to Shah in Qum.

> "The government has sold our independence, reduced us to the level of a colony, and made the Muslim nation of Iran seem more backward than savages in the eyes of the world!... If the religious leaders have influence they will not permit this nation to be the slaves of Britain one day, and America the next... they will not permit Israel to take over the Iranian economy: they will not permit Israeli goods to be sold in Iran in fact, to be sold duty free!" [68]

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65   Ibid, pg. 54

66   Ibid, pp.54-55

67   Ibid, pg. 59

68   Ibid, pg. 55

Shah not only continued his pro-Western policies and programmes but also dreamt of "making Iran one of the five conventional military powers of the world, and Washington fueled his ambitions by anointing his regime the policeman of the Persian Gulf"[69]

It is quite clear from the above that the West, particularly, the U.S was quite friendly and intimate with Iran because Shah was protecting and promoting the interest of the U.S. whereas the same U.S after the Islamic revolution, looks at Iran as one of the five Muslim terrorist states. U.S. officials refer to these states-Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Sudan as "outlaw" "backlash" and "rogue" states and place them outside the civilized international order and making them legitimate targets for multilateral or unilateral counter measures.[70] Huntington observes:

> Given the prevailing perceptions Muslims and Westerners have of each other, plus the rise of Islamist extremism, it is hardly surprising that following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, an international quasi war developed between Islam and the West. It is quasi war for three reasons. [71]

Few crucial questions arise here: How does the West define "terrorism"? Was Islamic revolution in Iran based on terrorism or Shah's regime was a terrorist one which continually repressed the opposition employing Western and Israel trained military and police? Furthermore, how does the U.S define "human right", "democracy" and "democratization"on one hand and "authoritarianism" on the other hand? Should not the Islamic leaders and masses in Iran enjoy the right of forming the Islamic government based on their own concept and value? Is it not democratic to let the leaders and the masses of Iran decide about their own legal, political, economic and social structures and institutions based on their own ideological norms? Or is it democratic

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69   Ibid, pg. 60

70   Huntington, op. cit. pg. 276

71   Ibid, pg. 216

to be inquisitive and watch curiously to know whether other countries are following democracy or not? Is it democratic to promote democratization all over the globe disregarding the fact whether other cultures and societies do not find its secular foundations in harmony with the foundations of their own belief system and values?

As pointed out earlier by Esposito and Voll themselves some of the core central concepts of Islam like *Tawhid* and *Khilafah* are antithetical to popular sovereignty which is one of the integral part of the philosophy of democracy. Whereas, some other concepts like *"Shura"*, *"ijma"* and *"ijtihad"* emphasize participation of people which is inevitable for democracy. Hence, all depend on an individual Muslim state whether it wants to be thoroughly an Islamic state or wants to mix some Islamic concepts and institutions with Western concepts and institutions or it wants to remain thoroughly a Western type nation-state, though with a Muslim majority. However, all those Muslim states which pursue Islamization to form Islamic state need not be following democratization in all it forms and institutions. Hence, it seems futile to watch jealously a Muslim state which aims at the institutionalization of Islam, to know how far its institutions are nearer to democratic institutions or they are democratic in essence. The states may have their own concepts and operational mechanisms to provide access to the people for participation in political process. These states may accept some concepts and institutions of democracy like multi-party system, elections and other things but not the whole definition and secular philosophy of democracy. Here, the question raised by Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia is very crucial to understand: "...democracy, and only democracy is legitimate and permissible now..." But is there only one form of democracy or only one high priest to interpret it?[72] He further asserts: "Hegemony by democratic power is no less oppressive than hegemony by totalitarian state."[73]

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72   Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, "A Muslim Perspective On The New World Order, "United Nations Forty-Sixth Session." pg. 7

73   Ibid

Mahathir also pointed out the hypocrisy of the West elucidating it with the example of Western support to Kuwait because of its interest in petroleum and its lame excuses for not Protecting Bosnians.[74] According to Mahathir, "if democracy means the right to carry guns, to flaunt homosexuality, to disregard the institution of marriage, to dispute or damage the well-being of the community in the name of individual right"[75] it is rejectionable. On some other occasion, Mahathir remarked: "Liberal democracy may be good for some, but not for everyone."[76] He further adds that "the democratic system is not divine. It is concocted by very human and fallible people. We cannot be accused of heresy if we disagree and reject some of the interpretations of new Prophets".[77] But the problem is as what pointed out by him, "we are being harassed into accepting democracy as interpreted by those who are mature and strong"[78] All these statements of Mahathir sum up the stance of most of the Asian and Muslim countries on democracy and democratization. It signifies that Western form of democracy and Western concept of human rights differ with many non-Western countries and cultures. No country has any right to impose its own form of government or its own theory of human rights on other cultures and countries. But, if the West is imposing its own political and cultural values through "global democratization" and "human right imperialism", on other countries, then it is new form of colonization. Another important point to understand here is that even if a Muslim state is not following all institutions of democracy, it is not necessarily anti-Western or anti-American. Furthermore,

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74   Mahathir Mohamad, "Islam and Justice" (ed) Aidit bin. Hj. Ghazali, pg. 2

75   Mahathir Mohamad, "A Muslim Perspective On The New World Order," op. cit, pg. 7

76   Mahathir Mohammad, "Cooperation for Growth", a speech delivered at the 1st Summit of the Group of Eight Islamic Developing Countries (D8) in Istanbul, Turkey, on June 15, 1997, p.139. This and some other speeches of Mahathir Mohammad delivered on various occasions at different places are complied and edited in a book by Hashim Kamaruddin, with the title Islam and The Muslim Ummah, Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publication, 2000.

77   Mahathir Mohamad, Islam And The Muslim Ummah, Hashim Kamaruddin (ed.), op. cit, pg. 140

78   Ibid, pg. 137

anti-Westernization or anti-Americanization does not mean anti-Western or anti-American. Anti-Westernization or anti-Americanization imply rejection of all those ideas, concepts, theories and values which originate from the West and are un-Islamic in their philosophical orientation and political implementation. Obviously, this rejection also entails the rejection of Western ideas, concepts and institutions, which contradicts to the Islamic teachings. Muslim states do not look at the West as its enemy nor at its theories and institutions as enemical but they look at the Western projects of Westernization of other countries as enemical. Islamic movements in particular and Muslim states in general dislike Western interventions in the Muslim world, its anti-Islamic foreign policies, its biased attitudes towards Islam, its prejudiced and distorted images about Islam, its promotion of Western theories and institutions in the Muslim world, its globalization of its own forms of human rights and democracy.[79] In short, Islamic resurgence is not anti-Western, anti-American and not anti-democratic but definitely anti-Westernization, anti-Americanization and is anti-Western form of global democratization. Obviously, Islamic resurgence is against Western imperialism whether it is militaristic, or political, or economic or cultural or all of these.

79　For a concrete understanding of Islamic movements, their philosophical foundation, their objectives and models which are instrumental in bringing the contemporary Islamic resurgence, see Muhammad Mumtaz Ali (ed.) Islamic movements: Models, Problems and Prospects.

80　There is no such thing as 'Islamic Imperialism.' Islam by its very nature is against imperialism. Islam invites humanity to submit not to a 'man', or a group of people, or a people or community in general, not also to any nation, big or small. Islam is revealed by Allah swt to liberate man from all kinds of domination and imperialism and to invite man to submit to Allah swt alone. As far as the 'universality of Islam is concerned, it is not imperialistic or hegemonic as conceived in the West. It only underlines that Islam and Islamic Ummah are universal in the sense that whoever wants to enter into Islam and its Ummah, he/she can enter in its fold without any sort of discrimination. Islam and Ummah are open to all and invite all. But neither Islam can be imposed on anyone nor Islamic Ummah can compel any one to enter into community. Compulsion and imposition which are essential elements of imperialism of the West are totally forbidden in Islam. Even there is no such concept like "conquest" in Islam rather Islam believes in 'fatah', opening of the territories for Islam not for the domination of man or nation or self-aggrandizements of nation, but to make the words of Allah swt supreme in the world. This is not imperialism but the universality of Islam and Islamic Ummah. For a proper understanding of the concepts of Islamic Ummah and Shariah: see Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, Concept of Islamic Ummah: Some Methodological Issues.

The same can be said about the West vis-à-vis Islam. The West has all the rights to reject Islamic imperialism, if there is any,[80] but has no rights whatsoever to impose its own 'human rights regime' and global democratization scheme on the Muslim world to promote its own interest.

As far as multi-party system, free-election and the freedom for the formation of civil societies which form the essential parts of democracy, many Muslim states are already following them. But the problem of the West is that it is selective on authoritarianism and too pragmatic towards the promotion of "human rights" and "democracy" in the Muslim world. It supported Reza Shah's authoritarianism but denounced Islamic resurgence, which opposed authoritarianism. It promotes democratization in the Muslim world as long as it serves its own Western interest. However, if it predicts that democratization in any given state would not serve its purpose, then it lifts its hands from that state and leaves it for military *coup de etat* or authoritarian regime. Algeria is the best case study in this connection.

Algeria

Algeria is one of those few countries which experienced "French hegemonic design and waged one of the longest and bloodiest modern wars of independence in the Islamic world".[81] But the post-independence Algeria witnessed the subordination of religion as well as popular will to a one-party authoritarian rule based upon a triple alliance FLN (Front De Liberation Nationale), the government and the military. All Algerian rulers ever since independence embarked on Western, secular path of development and employed Islam selectively, identifying it with Algerians socialist national ideology to legitimate their rule. In the late 1980s, the Benjedid government promised greater political liberalization and democracy.[82] In 1989, the constitution was revised, FLN's monopoly

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ended and Algeria was transformed from one-party state into a multiparty system. On June 12,1990, Algeria had its first multiparty municipal and regional elections since its independence. Almost sixty opposition parties responded to the opening of the multiparty system. Among the Islamist parties, some important parties included were HAMAS (Movement de la Societe Masalmane), Ennahda (Renaissance) and AL-Jabhatu al-Islamiyyatu Lilinqadh (The Islamic Salvation Front), whose French acronym FIS stands for le front Islamique du Salut. The FIS is an umbrella organization, established under the leadership of Sheikh Ali Abbasi Madani. Ali Belhadj in one of its known radical leaders.[83]

Long thirty years of one-party rule and the absence of opposition parties helped the Islamists to emerge in the late 1980s "as the self-proclaimed voices of the oppressed masses"[84] and the FIS to rise as the only formidable challenge to authoritarianism. Finally "the unthinkable had happened"[85] and the "West stood stunned" at the clear and overwhelming victory of FIS in municipal, regional and also in the Parliamentary elections. This magnanimous victory of FIS at elections was totally disliked by the government authorities, the French government and the West at large. They never expected such a clean and glorious victory of FIS and it shocked and shivered them collectively. However, the Algerian military intervention relieved all of them. The Algerian military intervened in the name of state security and stability, declared a state of emergency, annulled the results of the elections, cancelled the second round of Parliamentary elections and postponed all elections indefinitely. The President Benjedid was forced to resign and a high Security Council was appointed by the military to govern the country. The FIS was banned and its leaders, members and sympathizers were arrested and tortured. This was "the end of Algeria's" democratic experiment for the immediate Future."[86]

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83   Ibid, pp.155-163

84   Ibid, pg. 155

85   Ibid, pg. 150

86   Ibid, pp. 166-167

Few questions may be raised at this juncture: What is the justification of military intervention in Algeria? On what grounds, the results of the elections were annulled? What was the Western position on this issue?

For military intervention and the cancellation of election results, it is argued, that all those actions were necessary to save the state from fundamentalist religious authoritarianism.[87] It was alleged that Islamists were out to "hijack democracy."[88] However, Some others contend, "that secular elites believed in elections as long as the opposition remained weak and thus their victory assured."[89] Perhaps, this contention is true because FLN and the West never expected that FIS would sweep all municipal, regional and parliamentary elections.

As for Western stand on this issue, it is greatly disappointing. Esposito and Vol write:

> Much of the 1980s was dominated by fear of Iran's export of revolution. The question asked was invariably; will country X be another Iran? Is so-and-so another Ayatollah Khoemeini? In the early 1990s, as surveillance and vigilance against "radical Islamic fundamentalism" continued, many in the Muslim world and the West were stunned by the prospect of an elected Islamic government. Algeria embodies the failures, hopes, and fears of the West's encounter with political Islam.[90]

Many points can be noted from the above words stated by Esposito and Voll. It is very strange as well as interesting to note that the West was neither happy about revolution in Iran nor happy about the success of Islamists in election in Algeria. It labeled Iran revolution as 'radical

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87   Ibid, pg. 171

88   Ibid

89   Ibid

90   Ibid, pg. 150

Islamic Fundamentalism' and success of Islamists in election as 'political Islam'. The question is, how can the West fear both-revolution and election? In reality, it seems the West fears none, revolution or election but fears the success of Islam through any means-revolution or election. This is evident from the following words of Esposito and Voll:

> The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) swept municipal and later national parliamentary elections. The unthinkable now seemed to be on the horizon: an Islamic movement would come to power not through bullets but through ballots, not by violent revolution but working within the system.[91]

It clearly shows that the West is not scared by the 'bullet' or the 'ballot' but the Islamic movement that comes to power. In other words, the West is not so serious about democratization for its own sake but for the sake of Western interest. It further implies that the West follows no principle for the promotion of democratization. Esposito writes:

> However, in principle if we condemn government repression of the opposition, cancellation of elections, and massive violation of human rights, then the same concern must apply to many current regimes, such as those in Tunisia and Algeria, where the results of the Arab worlds first free parliamentary elections have been denied and the winners imprisoned.[92]

The whole problem of the relationship of the West with Islamic resurgence and its policy towards the promotion of democratization can be fully comprehended by the frank and unapologetic statements of Huntington. He points out that "during the Cold War, the West and the United States in particular confronted the "friendly tyrant" problem: the dilemmas of cooperating with military juntas and dictators who were

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91   Ibid

92   Esposito, pg. 217

anti-communist and hence useful partness in the Cold War".[93] Huntington writes that sometimes cooperation with such regimes produced embarrassment and uneasiness because such regimes were involved in violation of human rights. But the West had no other alternative than to work with a less brutal friendly tyrant than a more brutal unfriendly one. The policy of the West towards other states during the post-cold war became more difficult and complex. In the post-cold war world "the choice can be the more difficult one between a friendly tyrant and an unfriendly democ racy."[94] The Western assumption that democratically elected governments would be cooperative and pro-Western did not hold true in non-Western societies. The West realized that electoral competition could bring anti-Western nationalists and fundamentalists to power. Huntington writes "the West was relieved when the Algerian military intervened in 1992 and cancelled the election which the Fundamentalist FIS clearly was going to win."[95]

Further, Huntington points out that Iran after the revolution manifests more democratic regime than other regimes in the Muslim world.[96] He also holds the opinion that competitive elections in Saudi Arabia and Egypt may also bring government 'far less sympathetic to Western interest than their undemocratic predecessors.[97] Hence, "as Western leaders realize that democratic process in non-Western societies often produce governments unfriendly to the West, they attempt to influence those elections and also lose their enthusiasm for promoting democracy in those societies."[98]

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93   Huntington, op. Cit., pp.197-198

94   Ibid, pg. 198

95   Ibid

96   Ibid

97   Ibid

98   Ibid

More or less the same views have been expressed by Shireen T. Hunter. Hunter observes that in those countries where the government is receptive to Western interests the West asserted that the democratic norms should be upheld. Whereas the West showed no interest for democratization in those countries of the Muslim world which are not pro-Western. In fact, "Western states not only have not flinched when their favored governments have denied the fruits of free elections to their opponents but also helped them eliminate their opponents for example, in Algeria since 1992."[99]

According to Huntington, this stance of the U.S. is based on double standard and hypocrisy. "Democracy is promoted but not if it brings Islamic fundamentalists to power; nonproliferation is preached for Iran and Iraq but not for Israel."[100]

Hunter argues that the U.S. uses the issue of human rights in the same way as the issue of democratization:

> The West has also used the human rights issue, which constitutes such an important component of Western values and diplomacy, to pressure those countries that, in one form or another, either threaten Western interests, pose some kind of actual or potential security or economic challenge to those interest, or simply refuse to follow the West's lead on important issues.[101]

Hunter, like Huntington provides many examples to illustrate the above facts. For instance, the Western support to Iraq during Iran-Iraq war even over looking the fact that Iraq used poison gas against the Iraqi Kurds in Halabja. Furthermore, the West found no problem in Sudan

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99   Shireen T. Hunter, op. cit., pg. 25

100 Huntington op. cit., pg. 184

101 Shireen T. Hunter, op. cit., pg. 25

with the government of Jaafar Numeiry since he did not challenge the West. Whereas, Sudan is presently categorized by the West as one of the terrorists states 'because of its Islamization policy but mainly because of the Sudanese government's opposition to Western policies in the Middle East." [102]

It is quite explicit from the above that the real concern of the West is nothing but the Western interest, not 'democratization or the issue of human rights. Democratization and human rights are the mechanistic means for the higher ends-the Western interest and the Western imperialism. In order to achieve these ends, the West defines its own interest as the interest of humanity. This is aptly and precisely said by Huntington: "The West is attempting and will continue to attempt to sustain its preeminent position and deferred its interests by defining those interests as the interests of the 'world community'.[103] Thus, the West gives global legitimacy to all it actions that are performed either to protect or to promote its own interest through euphemistic or collective nouns and big terms or terminologies like modernization, global democratization or globalization. As rightly stated by Mahathir Mohamad, globalization is invented by the North Atlantic countries to strengthen their domination of the world so that "they not be successfully challenged either by the big East Asian countries or even the weak Muslim countries."[104] Further Mahathir points out that these countries "talk endlessly about human rights, about justice and the rule of law" but children who threw stones (in Palestine) are being shot dead with live bullets. Referring to many exploitative and hypocritical tendencies of the West, Mahathir asserts " globalization in its current manifestation is benefiting the West",[105] and that "the present Western style system and concept of democracy is no

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102   Ibid

103   Huntington, op. cit., pg. 184

104   Mahathir Mohamad, Islam and the Muslim Ummah, Hashim Makaruddin (ed.), op. cit.,   pg. 17

105   Ibid, pg. 21

better than the feudalistic theocratic states which had preceded them."[106] He also points that although thousands of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovinia were raped, starved, tortured and massacred by Christian Serbs, Muslim have not shouted at them as 'Christian terrorism'[107] or 'Christian terrorists'. Whereas, today, Islam and the Muslims have been made almost synonymous with terrorism. It is as if Islam itself advocates irresponsible terroristic acts.[108]

From the above discussion it is quite clear that the various images that are envisioned and presented by the West about Islamic resurgence are based on its bias and prejudice against Islam and its 'fear' of the revitalization of Islamic civilization which can pose a 'challenge' to the Western civilization. It is the reason that the West feels threatened at the Islamic revolution in Iran and gets stunned at the electoral success of FIS in Algeria. For the same reason, Huntington observes: "With the challenger civilizations, Islam and China, the West is likely to have consistently strained and often rightly antagonistic relations."[109]

Nature of Islamic Resurgence and The Need For Civlizational Co-existence

According to Khurshid Ahmad, Islamic resurgence should not be examined as a mere reaction to colonial rule but as a positive aspiration of the Islamic Ummah to regain its position, which it lost earlier due to Western domination.[110] As such the contemporary Islamic upsurge deserves to be seen as a positive and creative response to the challenge of

106   Ibid, pg. 101

107   Ibid, pg. 137

108   Ibid, pp.196-197

109   Huntington, op. cit, pg. 184

110   Khurshid Ahmad, The Nature of Islamic Resurgence," in John L. Esposito (ed.) Voices Of Resurgent Islam, pg. 220

modernity."[111] The Muslim world is already disillusioned by the variant Western models of capitalism and socialism. Hence, the Islamic resurgence represents an alternative for a comprehensive socio-political order to reconstruct the society as against the Western model imposed by the West to the Muslim world, Khurshid Ahmad observes:

> Similarly, reducing the resurgence to just an angry reaction of people against Western imperialism is equally misleading. There is no doubt about that. However, more than a political fury is being expressed or articulated. A much deeper cause is dissatisfaction with the ideals and values, the institutions and the system of government exported from the West and imposed upon them.[112]

He further points out that Islamic resurgence is basically internal, indigenous, positive and ideological movement within Muslim society but "it is bound to come into contact, even clash with forces in the international arena".[113] He asserts that the West should understand Muslim criticism of Western civilization. He contends that "the real competition would be at the level of two cultures and civilizations, one based upon Islamic values and the other on the values of materialism and nationalism."[114] He argues that if the Western culture had based on Christianity, the contact or conflict would have been different.[115] But now "the choice is between the Divine Principle and a secular materialist culture."[116] It seems to us that the West has started understanding this factor. Huntington writes:

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111 Ibid

112 Ibid, pg. 226

113 Ibid, pg. 227

114 Ibid, pg. 228

115 Ibid

116 Ibid

Muslims attack the West not for adhering to an imperfect, erroneous religion, which is nonetheless or 'religion of the book', but for not adhering to any religion at all... In the cold war the West labeled its opponent 'godless communism's, in the post-cold war conflict of civilizations Muslims see their opponent as "the godless West".[117]

Another important point elaborated by Khurshid Ahmad is that the West should put an end to the Western domination at international level to destabilize Muslim culture and society. However, if the West does not stop this imperialistic tendency, differences are bound to multiply. "And if things are not resolved peacefully through dialogue and understanding, through respect for each others rights and genuine concerns, they are destined to be resolved otherwise".[118]

It is very encouraging to see that the West has at last realized this point to a great extent. Huntington acknowledges the fact that the belief of the West in the universality of Western culture and its goal of exporting Western culture globally is wrong. He asserts that such a belief of West "suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral, and it is dangerous".[119] He further adds, "Imperialism is the necessary logical consequence of universalism".[120]

According to Khurshid Ahmad, despite the cultural and ideological differences between Islamic and Western civilizations, the "Western culture can co-exist with other cultures and civilizations without expecting to dominate over them".[121] Both Islam and the West can look at each

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117 Huntington, op. cit. pp. 213-214

118 Khurshid Ahmad, The Nature of Islamic Resurgence "op. cit pg. 228

119 Huntington, op. cit, pg. 310

120 Ibid

121 Khurshid Ahmad, "The Nature of Islamic Resurgence" op. cit, pg. 228

other as potential friends and can learn to live with their differences while discovering common ground for mutual understanding and mutual respect.[122]

Conclusion

It is most gratifying to note that although Huntington through out his book presented and elaborated his thesis-point-the clash of civilizations in the contemporary world, but towards the end he also emphasized the need of understanding and cooperation among civilizations. He asserts: 'the future of both peace and civilization depend upon understanding and cooperation among the political, spiritual, and intellectual leaders of the worlds majors civilizations."[123] He further concludes that although in the emerging era, clashes of civilization are the greatest threat to world peace, but an international order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard.[124] According to Esposito, the "challenge is to better understand the history and realities of the Muslim world... The West has an ideal vantage point for appreciating the aspiration of many in the Muslim world as they seek to define new paths for their future".[125]

The need for a better understanding of various cultures and traditions across the world, so as to build bridges for peaceful co-existence is increasingly emphasized by Muslim scholars and leaders. Kamal Hassan contends that "the first step in the building of bridges is the acknowledgement of interdependency in the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous world.[126] He further adds that a sincere attempt at

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122 Ibid, pp.228-229

123 Huntington, op., cit, pg. 321

124 Ibid

125 Esposito, The Islamic Threat...op. cit, pg. 217

126 Ismail Hj. Ibrahim and Abu Bakar Abdul Majeed (ed.), The Islamic World and Europe; Some Issues. pg. 91.

understand ing the other side objectively and profoundly is inevitable "to remove the prejudices and preconceptions in our minds."[127] Hence, there is an urgent need for civlizational dialogue among various civilizations particularly between Islamic and Western civilizations for a peaceful civlizational co-existence.

Several international conferences and symposiums and round table talks have been organized in the Muslim world and in the West to enhance the understanding of both the sides and to clarify the political dimension of Islamic resurgence and to avoid civlizational clash and to create respect and concern for all societies across the world.[128] In his round table talk, Khurshid Ahmad asserts that Islamic movements want the freedom of their own lands from secular, corrupt and autocratic regimes.[129] Hence they are not a threat to the West. He asserts "… we must encourage a healthy dialogue and exchange of ideas between Islam and the West."[130] As for the strategic interest of the Western countries in oil and other things in the Muslim world, he asserts: 'we would very much like to have a dialogue so that we can resolve conflicts through negotiation."[131] If such positive talks and efforts continue consistently among intellectuals as well as political leaders on both the sides instead of negatives efforts of imposing ideologies and cultures on each other, there is a great possibility of building a smooth and friendly relationship between the two majors civilizations of the world-Islamic and the Western.

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127 Ibid.

128 See Ahmad Sarji and Syed Othman Alhabshi (ed.), The Islamic World and Global Cooperation.

129 Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi (ed.), Islamic Resurgence…. Op. cit, pg. 61

130 Ibid, pg. 60

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