The Evolution of Islamic Politicization Process

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Abstract

It is possible to say that in the process of the formation of the first centralized Islamic State the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sanctified his political governance by means of Islam. The combination of the Prophecy and the functions of the head of a society later contributed to the formation of integrated religious and secular aspects of the Islamic theology. During the social and political career of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) many secular and theocratic aspects of governance are clearly witnessed at their best form.

Keywords: *Messenger, prophet, Central Asia, shariah, Bedouin, Persian Empire, Byzantine Empire, Arab Caliphate, ummah, Qur'an, faqihs (judges), muhaddiths (narrators), mufassirs (interpreters), mukri's (recitors), religious traditions, Mecca, Medina, Islamic culture, Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus.*

Introduction

Investigating Islamic culture and history has a very important theoretical and practical significance in today's world. In today's politically and economically diverse world coupled with the conditions of globalization, many world states are intending to acquire an appropriate position in the system of international relations. These intentions are so evident in light of open and hidden actions of the different political forces, especially, in the actions of the developed world and core nations, to achieve certain geopolitical goals. These goals are usually attained by holding newly independent states under the sphere of their influence and taking advantage of the powerful factor of religion in these states.

Islam, in the sense of Islamic context, is referred to as the last divine teaching sent to earth to lead the mankind to the right path. Namely, quoting from Qur'an, 'Say: We believe in Allah, and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and in (the Books) given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord: We make no distinction between one and another among them, and to Allah do we bow our will (in Islam)' (3:84)[1]. Allah chose Muhammad (PBUH) as His messenger and as His divine word, sent Qur'an to him. Initially, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) called his people, and then all Arabs, to stop worshipping different idols present those times and to believe in Allah, do good deeds during this lifetime and be granted paradise in the hereafter life.

'During the emergence of the first Islamic society, the behavior and the career of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) after the first revelation were surely in a pure religious manner. After the Hijra, the emigration from Mecca to Medina, the career of the Prophet took shape of a more political and social nature. Regardless, according to A. Khasanov, Uzbek Islamic Scholar, the first society that was formed in Medina was based on real Islamic theocratic state[2].

The first core law of the Islamic society, the Shariah, consisted of the Qur'an, the divine script sent down to the Prophet, and the orders of the Prophet, the Sunnah. According to the Qur'an, 'the only lawgiver is Allah while the Prophet is the explainer' (16:44)[3]. And,' Allah ordered people to obey the Prophet, because the one who obeys the Prophet is the one who obeys Allah' (4:80)[4].

Shariah, indeed, is considered to be the main set of moral and religious laws of the Muslims, and still the basis of the Islamic society. However, a certain number of

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[1]Holy Qur'an. (3:84).

[2]Государство и религия в странах с мусульманским населением. (Под ред. З.И.Мунавварова и Р.И.Крумма). - По материалам межд. научно-практической конференции (Самарканд, 3-5 октября 2003 г.). - Ташкент: Республ. научно-просветит. центр Имама ал-Бухари, Фонд им. Ф.Эберта, 2004 г. - 251 с. - С. 26. (The State and religion in countries with Muslim populations. (Ed. Z.I.Munavvarova and R.I.Krumma). - According to the materials Intl. Scientific-practical conference (Samarkand, 3-5 October 2003). - Tashkent Repub. scientific and enlighten. Center of Imam al-Bukhari Foundation them. Friedrich Ebert, 2004 G. - 251. - P. 26.)

[3]Holy Qur'an (16:44)

[4]Holy Qur'an (4: 80)

actual norms in forming states and the provision of sustainability for the society have always existed through all periods of the past including prior to Islam, and after (quoted from 'The Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia' by Abashin. S)[5]. It is essential to note that the formation of a just Islamic society and government has notably been caused by the acceptance of Islam by different kinds of people and nations, coming from different backgrounds, cultures, and views. Nevertheless, as it has been seen in the recent years, many present Islamic scholars still assert the necessity of the application of the Shariah as the basic law for the political and societal affairs.

According to a Russian professor of law,' The general meaning of this notion becomes obvious once as it is derived from the Arabic word 'Sha - ra - ah', which refers to legislation and showing something as an obligation[6]. From this very point of view, we can realize that the root of the Shariah is based on Qur'an, the Sunni theologies and hadiths, namely, the words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). At the same time, in terms of Islamic literatures, Shariah is regarded as a set of principles and instructions delivered to the mankind through the words of the Prophet (PBUH)[7]. Bound by this thinking, many scholars and the vast majority of Muslims assume that Shariah is the ideal system of laws for an Islamic community and the social life of Muslims[8].

Muslims rely on the Shariah laws in every field of their lives considering it as the perfect reference for their lifestyles. According to the traditions of Muslims, Shariah is seen as the system of laws, sent by Allah, to keep the balance of the actions and matters concerning the social-political, family and personal relationships[9]. The concept

of Shariah, is believed to be the straight path shown by Allah, and anyone who follows it and obeys its orders, will surely reach virtue.

In studying the emergence of Islam and its politicization genesis in political sense, it is of a real necessity to take into account all the possible political, social, economic, and cultural aspects.

Islam appeared in the region of Hijaz of the Arab Peninsula at the end of 6th and the beginning of the 7th century.

Despite the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to worship only Allah as The Supreme God, only an insignificant proportion of the local population accepted Islam as their religion. During ten years of his presence in Medina, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had repeatedly struggled against different oppositions to defend the new religion and the Umma, the Muslim society. Eventually, a number of wars and oppositions that took place during that period led many historians to the idea that Islam was "spread out" by force.

The main task of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was to announce the code of Allah, and the following ayahs were revealed concerning it: '' Say: '' Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger. But if ye turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and ye for that placed on you. If ye obey him, ye shall be on right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to preach the clear (Message)[10]'' Qur'an (24:84). And 'Thy duty is to convey the Message'. (3:20)[11], '' Therefore do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish. Thou are not one to manage (men's) affairs'[12].(88:21-22). Hence, in none of the conquests achieved by Muslims there was an aim of spreading Islam by force. In all conquests meant above, Muslims fought only for their own defense and safety. In Qur'an as well, certain ayahs were revealed to permit the Muslims to battle, meaning the necessity for the war against enemies; but not for the sake of spreading the religion.

The turn of this society, initially being a group, into a state with its capital in Medina and then to a centralized government of an empire, occurred in a very short time. However, interestingly, due to such intensive changes occurring, the societies new to Islam, with diverse mentality and background, could not manage to adapt to the newly appeared circumstances properly.

Although the formation of the Islamic state was led under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), its political, social, economic and military governance and further expansion of regions developed during the periods of the first four Caliphs. As a result of numerous conquests by Arabs throughout many years, the Islamic regions began to expand.

[5]**See**.: Абашин С. Исламский фундаментализм в Центральной Азии. - Независимая газета. - 05.12.2001. **(**Abashin S. Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia. **-** Nezavisimaya gazeta. 05.12.2001.)

[6]Holy Qur'an 42:11/13, 20/21

[7]Сюкияйнен Л. Шариат и мусульманско-правовая культура. // Центральная Азия и Кавказ. - Стокгольм, 1999 г. - № 4 (5). - С. 12. (Syukiyaynen L. Sharia and Islamic legal culture. // Central Asia and Caucasus. - Stockholm, 1999 г. - № 4 (5). - С. 12.)

[8]Кремер Г. Вступительный доклад // Государство и религия в странах с мусульманским населением. (Под ред. З.И.Мунавварова и Р.И.Крумма). - По материалам межд. научно-практической конференции (Самарканд, 3-5 октября 2003 г.). - Ташкент: Республ. научно-просветит. центр Имама ал-Бухари, Фонд им. Ф.Эберта, 2004 г. - 251 с. - С. 7-8. (Kremer G. Introductory report // the State and religion in countries with Muslim populations. (Ed. Z.I.Munavvarova and R.I.Krumma). - According to the materials Intl. Scientific-practical conference (Samarkand, 3-5 October 2003). - Tashkent Repub. scientific and enlighten. Center of Imam al-Bukhari Foundation them. Friedrich Ebert, 2004 G. - 251. - P. 7-8.)

[9]See.: Ёвкочев Ш.А. Исламский фактор в политической системе современного Египта. - Т.: ТИУ, 2008. - С. 16. (Yovkochev Sh The Islamic factor in the political system of modern Egypt. - T: TIU, 2008. - 16p.)

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[10]Holy Qur'an (24:54)

[11]Holy Qur'an (3:20)

[12]Holy Qur'an (88:21-22)

In the periods of the first four Caliphs, the gradual development of governance system finished the formation process of the Islamic state which originated from the city-state of Medina. The new Caliphate started to own some of the elements of the existing governance systems of the neighboring countries in its administrational apparatus as well as regional traditions and customs.

Among the reforms brought in, the formation of the health care system, the permanent military units, military camps and the application of the so-called lunar 'hijri' calendar can be seen as some of such examples. The Caliphs administering these processes and acting as representatives of a religious society became in a real and pure sense, heads of states, as in the modern world terms.

Logically, the arrival of the Umayyad dynasty was the final point of processes that took place in the periods of the four Caliphs. During its ages, the transformation from a society to a state and the absolute preference and priority of secular attitude towards the matters of governance had clearly been reflected. Moreover, the Damascus Caliphate managed to acquire a compact system of governance and the Caliphate became an inheritable status.

It is well-known that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as well as being the preacher of the new religion acted as a head of community - in a secular sense, the leader of a state[13]. He became directly the founder of the centralized state in the Arab world ending the distinctiveness of the Arab world. Through Islam, the Prophet (PBUH) sanctified his authority in real practice. He unified and successfully carried out the positions of a commander, tribe leader, king, and judge in his own personality.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Muslims went to the idea that the connection between Allah and the Ummah, had disappeared and this in its turn was the beginning of many issues. In the struggle for authority, new different versions of the explanation of Qur'an and Sunna, the traditions of the Prophet of Muhammad (PBUH) started to appear. The Sunnis, following the traditions of the first three Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman) purposed to choose the new Caliph. The Shiites - the supporters of Ali Bin Abu Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), willed Ali to be admitted as the successor of the Prophet, and claimed that He should be recognized by God as His Messenger. They argued that the governance should belong only to the descendents of Ali, rejecting the selection of successor Caliphs by the Umma. Deriving from the 'divine' character of an Imam, the Shiites recognized the Imam as 'the Messenger of Allah', as the legal imam in secular and religious issues and inheritor of the knowledge of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The third so-called 'harijiis' group believed that 'submission to

Allah is better than submission to a human being', thus preached the idea of 'absolute submission to Allah'[14]. Another newly emerged group, naming themselves the Khawarij, on the other hand, played an important role in conceptualizing the idea of the Caliphate. In the next years of the Caliphate, the state educational system, based on the traditions of Islam, was reflected in the above-mentioned government and the three systems with the principles of this government.

One of the initial problems faced by the Islamic state was the selection of the Caliph, a successor to the Prophet (PBUH) and the process of voting for him. The word Caliph was familiar to Arabs and had been in use for a long time before Islam, referring to a mayor of a town or city[15].

Thus, after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) the head of the group-state began to be called Al-Khalifa[16]. Chosen as the first Caliph, people started to call Abu Bakr as 'Khalifatu Rasulillahi', translated as 'The Caliph of the Prophet'. Also, it is well known that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not like to be called a king or an emperor but in the light of the actions taken by him, it becomes clear that he indeed deserved such a title. The minbar of the Prophet (PBUH), a podium from which the Friday sermon is preached, served as the throne of the Islamic governance[17].

Following Abu Bakr, the second Caliph Umar bin Al-Khattab, as the right successor of the former Caliph and also known for his wisdom and knowledge of Islam, became ' Khalifatu Khalifati Rasulillahi', the Caliph of the Caliph of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

During the Caliphate of Umar and due to the reflections of the secular aspects of the duties of the Caliph, some of the citizens with solid religious background perceived the title Caliph as only one-sided secular sense. They assumed that the disappearance of sacred form of the authority could probably lead to the social diminution of the state. Just then Umar, the second Caliph, preferred to be called by the semi-religious phrase 'Amir al - Muminun' translated as 'the Amir of Muslims'[18].

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[13] Watt M. Muhammad at Medina. - Oxford, 1962. - P. 289.

[14] Ёвкочев Ш.А. Исламский фактор в политической системе современного Египта. - Т.: ТИУ 2008. (Yovkochev Sh. The Islamic factor in the political system of modern Egypt. - T: TIU, 2008. - 16 pp.) Прозоров С. М. Ал-Хаваридж // Ислам: Энциклопедический словарь. М.: Наука, 1991. - С. 260; (See: Prozorov. Al-Khawarij // Islam: Collegiate Dictionary. - M.: Science, 1991. – P.260; World Christian Encyclopedia. 2nd edition. A comparative survey of churches and religions in the modern world. - Barrett D., Kurian G., Johnson T. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. - 2 vols. -719 p.)

[15] Резван Е.А. Коран и его мир. - СПб.: Петербургское востоковедение, 2001. - Б. 163. (Rezvan EA Koran and his world. - St. Petersburg.: Oriental, 2001. – P. 163.)

[16] The translation of this word in Uzbek stands for "Successor."

[17] Резван Е.А. Коран и его мир. - СПб.: Петербургское востоковедение, 2001. - Б.164. (Rezvan E.A. Holy Qur'an and his world. - St. Petersburg.: Oriental, 2001. – P. 163.)

[18] Али Иброхим Хасан. ан-Нузум ал-исломийа. - ал-Кохира, 1996. - Б. 242.; (Ali Ibrokhim Xasan. en Nuzum al-islomiya. - Al-Qohir, 1996. - 242 B.;)

Nevertheless, subsequent to the murdering of the third Caliph, Uthman bin Affan, these two terms lost their significance and trust among the citizens, especially, among the religious sects of the society as they deemed this loss of the meaning as the consequences of the wrongdoings of the authorities. Therefore, struggling in order to preserve their political force, the supporters of Ali Bin Talib, declared him as Imam. And now political groups struggling for authority were taking advantage of the responsibility for the performance of the salah by the Imam as the factor to give this position a religious tinge. This in turn resulted in the increase of the secular aspects of the functions of the state leader.

Arnold T. in his book 'The Caliphate', attempted to shed new light on the distinction between the Arab Caliphate and the Roman Empire. As he states, the Roman Emperor in fact did not take part in the religious matters but these issues were dealt with by the Pope. In the Arab Caliphate, however, both political and religious duties were carried out by the Caliph. The elected Caliph was supposed to be able to manage political matters as well as religious questions. Also, the Caliph was considered as the leader during the prayers, the general commander during the war, and as the society head in many other cases of the Islamic events[19].

The combination of both religious and secular principles in the character of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) played a very essential role in the careers of Caliphs.

The Caliphate was not considered as a special religious institution, as it is misconceived as such, but it included more secular elements in its principles. At any rate, the main argument raised between the Ansaars and the Muhajirs was the question of election of a military leader, the Amir[20]. At that very moment other administrative positions were distributed among the Muhajirs. The major secular objective of the Caliphate first of all, was marked as state governance, the Emirate. Along with these, many rational techniques of governance of the conquered societies were brought into the Arab systems of governance in a very rapid manner. As a result, the main focus of the Caliphate was objected on the formation of the government apparatus and administration.

These four above-mentioned Caliphate ages led to the formation of a sole united country subduing all the existing distinct Bedouin societies in the Arab Peninsula, who lived without any principles and laws, and thus enabled the Caliphate to affect the two great monarchies, the Persian Empire and the Byzantine Empire. Consequently, because of the alliance of those distinct

societies the 400- years-old Persian Empire came to its end and the Byzantine Empire was consequently defeated. Many ancient communities such as Iraq, Syria and Egypt were later on brought into the Arab Caliphate. On the basis of the previously mentioned points we can conclude that during their leadership the Caliphs illustrated purely secular actions in making administrative decisions and controlling their implementation. And this led to the rapid formation of state governance which became a gradually well-functioning system.

As the state apparatus was formed, the Ummah, the global Muslim society, became different as well. In this case, it is really vital to state first of all, the occurrence of new political forces. Besides, the inclination to study the Qur'an, the main Islamic reference, and the actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) grew noticeably. This in its turn caused the emergence of authorities such as faqihs (judges), muhaddiths (narrators), mufassirs (interpreters) and mukri's (recitors). Starting from this time the social solutions of the religious issues were given not by the Caliph, who was always busy with secular matters, but by the scholars possessing a deep and accurate knowledge of the religious traditions and scripts[21].

This separation of state from the religion has led to occurrence of oppositions between the two networks of the government: the religious and the secular sectors have emerged from this very point of the Islamic age. The flag of religious sector was in the hands of the Ulama, scholars, while the Caliphs dealt with the secular aspect of the society. But both sides expressed their will in the image of the religious mottos and principles. This battle has been defining the Islamic society and teaching from the inceptive period of Caliphates until nowadays.

The relationship between the religion and the politics, church and state in modern terms, is one of the major issues of Islam. During his life the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), since he was considered as the last Messenger of Allah and the one whom Allah revealed His divine word, was the Messenger of all orders of Allah. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was not only the leader but also a real administrator of the Ummah. The social and political norms and principles of a religious society are precisely defined in the Qur'an and Sunni theologies. And in this sense the Islamic scholars asserted that the religious and secular governance were strongly inter-connected. In their views, the religious and political argument[22] exists only for the Western societies who had gone through various historical and cultural stages.

[19] Arnold T. The caliphate. - P. 133.

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As a summary to the analysis above, it is possible to say that in the process of the formation of the first centralized Islamic state the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sanctified his political governance by means of Islam. The combination of the Prophecy and the functions of the head of a society later contributed to the formation of integrated religious and secular aspects of the Islamic theology. During the social and political career of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) many secular and theocratic aspects of governance are clearly witnessed at their best form.

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