

## FINAL PAPER

CSID Sixth Annual Conference  
Democracy and Development: Challenges for the Islamic World”  
Washington, DC - April 22 - 23, 2005

Democracy and Islam: A Reading within the Prophetic  
Instruction Toward Democratic Ideals

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### **Dear brothers and sisters**

It's really an honor to talk to you here, I who came from Syria; where we live within the core of the storm and in the center of disputation (argumentation) concerning Democratic reformation.

In fact, I will focus today on presenting a neutral vision of the democratic question in the Islamic World, in spite of the difficulty of neutrality according to a one who comes from the Middle East. In the area which witnesses a semi-apparent confrontation with the American administration, because of the unbalanced Democratic requests (demands) which call for Democracy in a country, and in the mean time, support Autocracy (Dictatorship) in another country, and call Arabs to disarm (to stop armament), while ignoring totally about the Israeli nuclear weapon.

In terms of the principals of Islam, the democratic values portray the features of Islamic revival, and since the first instance when the honorable prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) wrote (put) the constitution of the state in Al Madeena which indicated that: Muhammad and his companions, with the Jews of bany Awf are one nation *أمة واحدة من دون الناس*

And the prophet Muhammad had determined in his constitution, the equality among citizens, and had called for establishing supervision of the nation on the governor, and to achieve equality between the governor and the governed, regardless of their creed, race and language, and the alliance of the honorable prophet includes a pagan tribes such as; Khuzaa *خزاعة* for example, which was worshipping idols and it had the full citizenship rights without any discrimination, and in this God says:

*لا ينهاكم الله عن الذين لم يقاتلوكم في الدين ولم يخرجوكم من دياركم أن تبروهم وتقسطوا إليهم*

"Allah doesn't forbid you to be kind and just to those who didn't fight you in your religion, nor drive you out of your dwellings; for Allah loves those who are just." **Holy Quran 60:8**

and all of this are a democratic values which all the world do respect. But actually the case of suspect and doubt between the East and the West drove some of Islamic writers to adopt a strange attitude in their battle against Democracy, when they announced that Democracy contradicts with Islam on the base that Democracy is the decision of nation, whereas Islam is the decision of God. (حاكمية) (الله) And many books which published during the fiftieth and sixtieth of the last century, had adopted this direction, and judged of the disbelief of the nation if it chooses the democratic way on the base that the will of God is something and the will of parliament is something else .

Thus, some of them said that justice, equality and many noble human values are nothing except deviations from the guidance of revelation which seems to indicate inequality between man and woman, between the free and the slave, between the believer and unbeliever , and that to follow the will of the majorities is an evident denial of the logic of Holy Quran when God said : ولكن أكثر الناس لا يعلمون "but most people don't know." **Holy Quran 7: 187** and another verse وإن تطع أكثر من في الأرض يضلوك عن سبيل الله "If you obey most of the people of the earth they will lead you astray from the path of Allah." **Holy Quran 6: 116**

And some had declared that Democracy is the paganism وثنية of the twentieth century, and that the parliaments are the modern idols. And on the other hand, those who deny aspiration have announced in their judging on Islam, that Islam antagonizes (is against) the human values, and that Islam is not interested in justice on earth, and they get proofs of the autocracy which took place inside the Islamic history, to prove that it was the result of adopting the choice of revelation and rejecting the democratic choice, and they declared that the government of God contradicts with the freedom and government of man.

And here we shouldn't forget that the emblem شعار which says; no ruling but of God, according to the interpretation of al khawarj , الخوارج is an emblem which was fought by the Islamic awareness during the guidance period , and al Imam Ali had entered a deadly (fierce) war in confronting Al Khawarj defending on human rights of freedom and popular will, confirming the rightness of this emblem, and this what Imam Ali has confirmed saying: كلمة حق أريد بها باطل a word of rightness has been exploited for falsity .

I'm not ignoring the significance(meaning) of my existence here as an active parliamentary in Islamic trend, and I feel that I have to discuss this question from the legislative side of Islam, especially after many Muslims have placed Democracy in confrontation with the Islamic values. And the usual question is

now: are you with Democracy or with Islam?.and should we establish an Islamic regime or democratic one?

What this page refers to, is that Democracy within its global intents isn't a regional achievement, and its not subjected to monopoly- neither philosophically nor practically- for any kind of political regimes forms in the world. And we have to realize that Democracy and human rights are a global human achievement which human has paid its price from his blood and struggle, and contributed in its building, hence every nation has the right to enjoy what has been achieved on the base that its an available global heritage for all nations all over the world. Human struggle for Democracy began since the days of Abel هابيل against the oppression of Ken قابيل , and the struggle of the prophets was in the sake of Allah ,also a struggle for establishing justice and development which are definitely the highest values of Democracy.

And so was the struggle of the nobilities through the history from Akhenaton to Hamuraby to Plato to Aristotle to Justinian to Omar bin al Khattab and Omar bin Abdul Aziz to the French revolution to the announcement of the American constitution to the announcing of the human rights, and we do respect all of that in accordance with prophet speech : الحكمة ضالة المؤمن أينما وجدها التقطها : the wisdom is the goal of the believer wherever he finds it he has to exploit it.

And here I prefer to produce Democracy as being an explanation of the word justice in its applied sides, and thereby it lies within the essence of Islamic struggle and within its purposes and intents. Quran was a call to achieve justice and mercy among people, and It provides (supply) the proper circumstances for all nations which lived under the shadow of Islamic justice for invention and superiority.

The Islamic enlightenment accompanied the movement of thought in Islam, and the movement of translating human sciences and knowledge in the Seryaly and Greek shape had been produced by the most prominent Umayyad and Abbassy leaders(Khulafaa), they were weighing the translated book by gold, although it might be full of sharp contradictions (confrontations) with the bases of Islamic creeds.

The same thing happened in the monasteries and the temples which were full of Latin, Aramaic and Christian East cultures, and no distortion was added to it despite it included the doctrines of Trinity, and all of this are contradicted to the Islamic law, and in spite of that Muslims didn't damage it, and remaining till now is the best proof on this opening age which Islamic society was living in during the days of guidance, and Muslims accepted the existence of prominent Islamic philosophers which differed in their creeds than the official attitude of

the state; as al Kanadi, Pharabi, and Bin Siena, yet the latter was given an important title which is the second teacher *المعلم الثاني* and then it became obvious that the title of first teacher refers to Aristotle, despite the huge difference in thinking between Islamic and Greek directions.

Universal sciences remained for several centuries as Sabianism and Christian ones, and we can mention here many important names such as: Hunain bin Isaac, Hunain Bin Masaweh, John Bin Bakhteshouh, Gabriel Bin Bakhteshouh, John Bin masaweh and Israel Bin zakria al Taiphory, and all of this relate to the knowledge of these figures about Greek, Latin and Serialy languages which contained the sciences of ancient medicine.

The condition of Democracy and Opening which we witness here was always facing a seeming expansion which sometimes intensifies and sometimes it decreases, but do we realize that this opening renewal trend is that which had witnessed the victory during the period of Islamic civilization, whereas the direction which aims to abolish the other and to apply the apparent *ظاهر* of the text, regardless the interests, is a failed trend through the history of Islamic glory? Talking about keeping (protecting) interests or what we can call (the interests of the nations) *مصالح الأمة* is so old in the Islam law, and its fundamental in the same formula in feqh of Malikia and Hanabelah ( which are the Islamic groups), and its called in Hanafy feqh: Istehsan (approval) *استحسان* and it consists according to Abo Hanneefah nine of (one) tenth (90%) of the knowledge.

I believe that the revival of Islamic legislative sources -using the courage which the honorable companions and their followers had used; such as Ijmaa *إجماع* ( unanimity), Istehsan *استحسان* (approval), masaleh mursaleh, Orph *عرف* (custom)and tharaee *الذريعة* (pretexts)- are enough to give the legislative foundation the capacity to legislate for what give benefits to humanity in terms of modern Democracy which originates its principals on the base of the will of people represented by the Istehsan ( approval) which the honorable companions had described saying : what Muslims agree on to be right, so its right according to God as well.

ما رآه المسلمون حسناً فهو عند الله حسن

Huzaifah Bin numman narrated that the honorable prophet Muhammad used to tell the man whom He put as a leader:" go with the bless of God and negotiate people wisely, and if they want you to judge them don't do that according to the law of God, but do it according to your own judgment, because you don't know if u can apply the order of God properly on them or not."

وإن أرادوك أن تنزلهم على حكم الله فلا تفعل إنك لا تدري أتصيب فيهم حكم الله أم لا ولكن أنزلهم على حكم نفسك

He wanted by this to pull the theocratic dress from the political behavior (method) and to let everyone knows that no one is sufficient to speak in the name

of God, but they should speak in the name of themselves, and to let people choose what they consider to be closer to Justice. I hope that Islamic politicians may hear this wise prophetic attitude, and to realize that no one has the right to rule in the name of God in the holy Heaven right, and here I will conclude by the glorious (great) prophetic speech which he drew by it for us the method of political work by saying : " if I give you an order which relate to your religion, so adopt it, and if I give you an order which relate to your life affairs so you are more aware of your own life than me". إذا أمرتكم بالأمر من أمر دنياكم فاتبعوه فأنا أعلم بأمر دينكم وإذا أمرتكم بالشئ من أمر دنياكم فأنتم أعلم بأمر دنياكم

We believe that Democracy is the spirit which the nobilities called for during the history, and we have to mention here that this Democracy which we call for can't come by force and oppression, and it can't arrive to the Middle East over the tanks , but it needs a long way of enlightenment and education to let people accept the rules of Democracy, whereas imposing Democracy by force and obligation will lead to negative results, and this is what reason and reality can't accept , and even religion refuses it as Quran said: "there is no compulsion in religion" **Holy Quran 2:265** لا إكراه في الدين and another verse: " and if it had been the will of your Lord, all mankind would have believed; all of them together ! ولو شاء ربك لآمن من في الأرض كلهم جميعاً Do you (O Muhammad )want to compel mankind to become believers?." **Holy Quran 10:99** أفأنت تكره الناس حتى يكونوا مؤمنين

At last, I would like to thank the studies center of Islam and Democracy, and I would like to present special thanks to the dear manager Dr. Radwan al Masmoudi for this generous initiative, and I hope we could meet in Syria soon.

Thank you indeed.