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## GREEN BOOK AND ISLAMIC SOCIALISM

**Ahmet Salih İkiş**

Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey  
Email: ahmet@mu.edu.tr

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### Abstract

During the two polar world system in cold war period, Muslim countries under Non-Alignment Movement had different ideological agendas. Socialist interpretations of Islam became very popular with Arab nationalism. One of the interpretations is Universal Third World Theorem of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya. The Green book of Gaddafi was showing a revolt and stance of his ideas against imperialism. As an Arab nation, there are strong emphasis on socialistic iterations in Green Book where Islamic socialistic discourse applied in some parts. In this paper, we first provide historical information about Libya and theoretical background of Islamic socialism explained by providing brief literature review. The final chapter of article devoted on to proper information about Green Book by analyzing its solutions to problems in developing world.

**Keywords:** Islamic Socialism, Libya, Green Book, Muammar al Gaddafi

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### 1. Introduction

African continent was one of the earliest settlements of human being as Cro-Magnon. The Sahara desert nested the first signs of ancestors of Berber culture. Libya was one of the colonies of Ancient Greece in 630 BC. Before that, it was adjunct unknown place for ancient Egyptians. There are some narrations in Holy Bible about people who were residing in ancient Libya called Phut. During the Roman Empire, the region had been occupied by Roman generals for centuries. After the Romans lost their hegemonic power in 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, there was Arab invasion in ancient Libya territories. In fact, the tribal Berber culture was similar to Egyptian spiritual beliefs of God. Thus, Islam as a new belief code easily attracted followers in tribal culture. However, Arab conquest was fierce and harmful so that they got strong resistance by Saharan people in those parts. Following Mamluks and Ottoman Pashas reign transformed country to Islamic culture and life style. More than 3 centuries until late 19th century, Ottomans ruled region as we may called Pax Ottomana (Ortaylı, 2016). The diminishing power of Ottoman Empire ended with shrinking borders and in 1911, Italian interests became clearer by their military attacks to region. Until the end of Second World War, there was Italian presence in region. After having independence from Italian forces, Emir Idris was designated as king of country. Libya was accepted as UN member state in 1955 as sovereign state. The monarchy had a parliamentary regime with elections. The breaking point in countries history was construction of pipeline for oil that created huge amount of foreign reserves in national economy. Nevertheless, parliamentary regime was shaking and had some instabilities distorted by military coups.

Even if Islam dominated culture evolves, there are very strong tribal social clusters in that Saharan country which is the unique example in the world. The nomad tribes has their own value judgment norms accordingly. Thus, nation state construction has become problematic due to lax

common values in the country. Individuals do not share social common values, which in turn harm solid foundations of nation. In addition, western typology considered citizens as Muslim Arabs sometimes ended with problematic interpretations.

## **2. Islamic Socialism**

The roots of Islamic belief codes lies to 7th century Arab peninsula. In the beginning, it was a manifest against corrupted Arab tribes with humanitarian conduct of well behave and honesty. Later, it became of polity for Muslim regimes in global context with practiced worships. Ethic codes, governance, trade rules, taxation, welfare distribution and other social issues have strict predetermined rules and regulations according to Islamic sharia laws. Even if Prophet Muhammed and Holy Quran drew specific orders in a good cause and wellbeing of Arab tribes in the region for just more than couple of ages, Muslim countries became a dominant hegemonic power for not only Arabs but also other following nations in global context with those rules. In heydays of Muslim world, their hegemonic powers created a safe haven for most of the ethnic and religious minorities such as Jews exiled from Spain due to their religious believes. Thus, in those times Islam had very liberal interpretations by ruling empires mainly Ottomans where Islam embodied under their rulings. The decline of Ottomans from world order had also distorted liberal connotations of Islam and vulgarized, oversimplified conservative approaches. Abolition of caliphate institution had some disintegration impacts on Muslim world.

Socialist movement had roots to western countries with critics to liberal economic order. Capitalistic economic system has created class based social determinants much worse that poor living conditions, long working hours and low level of payments became unbearable for most of the citizens in Europe. The greedy, selfish wild capitalism treats disadvantaged masses as byproducts of production system. The vulnerability of workers from economic system revealed alternative economic thoughts in west such as socialist view. Early socialist philosophers attempt to explain social inequalities with moral values approach that harnessing businessperson from greedy behaviors will cure economic inequalities among people. For example, Robert Owen as famous tycoon and philanthropist use market bonds rather than money for workers' wages by providing welfare benefits, public housing and nursery (Aybay, 2012). Those romantic socialists advise upper and wealth manufacturers to care poor workers by their own will rather than social class analyses between workers and landowners (Aybay, 2012). Dialectic materialism theory produced by Karl Marx is the backbone of communist manifesto to capitalist economic order in western world especially in England (Marx, 2015). Marx (2015) successfully spin labor theory of value of Ricardo to surplus value and exploitation of employer. Surprisingly, his anticipation of working class revolution burst not in western capitalist world rather in very different geography in Russia in 1917. Planning mechanism, public enterprises and state control alternate market mechanism, private enterprises and liberal governance for decades. The cold war period after the Second World War ended with the disintegration of USSR. Both USA and USSR in two polar world system had own influence fields in globe with specific regions. That orbit countries adopted their governance according to block leader. In that case, socialism had different variants in different geographies. Under this political climate, there are intellectual interpretations of socialism in Muslim countries imposed by USSR block.

Islamic socialism can be considered as a more spiritual form of socialism. Thus, the teachings of the Quran and Muhammad can be very suitable with principles of economic and social equality. Common ground of Muslim socialists have their own roots in anti-imperialism. Muslim socialist leaders believe in the derivation of legitimacy from the public. The welfare and fair distribution of wealth by public policies in socialism is very familiar with Islamic readings.

In fact, Islam is religion and socialism is economic system. Thus, the issue is based on an alternative anticapitalistic model. The idea advocates government intervention to market in order to guarantee minimum income for citizens or rather brothers of Islam. Unfair income distribution would cured in Islamic countries by zakat so that lower income families would have improved living standards by high-income households with transfer of wealth with their own will. Those Islamic commands of Quran would be suitable to the main elements of socialist economic modelling. Even long before the socialist movements in first periods of Islam, the economic

policies are very familiar with socialist economic models. After the foundation of first socialist country USSR, there were some modifications of Islamic socialist policies in some parts of Kazan in Tataristan.

Ubaidullah Sindhi was one of the activists against the British in India (Paracha, 2013). During his stay in Istanbul, he started to construct his ideas of Islamic Socialism. He advised Muslims that they may reach economic justice at which communism aims by following religious basis in Islam. (Paracha, 2013).

From Imam Maturī till today, there have been many scholars to put aside the reasoning against dogmatism in Islam. One of the prominent figure was Jamal al-Din Afghani with its contributions on Islamic Political Thought. The external margins of Islamic political thought are determined by the dialectic of Western domination and patterns of reaction to it (Unsar, 2011). Rejecting either pure traditionalism or uncritical imitation of the West, he began what has become a continuing trend among Muslim modernists emphasizing pragmatic values needed for life in modern world (Tariq, 2011). Jamal al-Din Afghani in late 19th century moral sentiments of Islam is quite similar socialism in case of social justice, prohibition of interest instrument of zakat (Sanghro, 2019). Islamic belief is much more suitable to socialism than capitalism. However, overwhelming propaganda against socialism due to atheistic materialism thoughts embodied in by religious people weaken those intellectual ideas.

In his paper, Paracha (2013) declares Ghulam Ahmed Parvez's interpretation that an Islamic Socialist society runs on the laws and economics derived from rational interpretations of the Qu'ran and modern scientific thought. That would inherently become responsible, law-abiding, egalitarian and enlightened and would not require the state to play the role of a moral guide (Paracha, 2013).

Pakistan has one of the samples of this concept in governance level that was also a move toward Moscow rather than Washington. So that, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who had worked as the Foreign Minister in General Ayoob's cabinet propounded new ideology i.e. Islamic Socialism as the remedy for Pakistan (Sanghro, 2019).

Classless society, freewill of people with social justice, central planning of economy with free involvement of individuals in market are some rough similarities of those concepts. There are numerous followers of Moscow block due to political climate in cold war mainly from Arab world and African continent. The Islamic socialism had ramifications in Arab socialism and Ba'ath socialism and particularly influenced Egypt, Syria and Iraq with secular regimes. Those regimes were different interpretations of secularism compared to western origins and transformed into dictatorial democracies following the collapse of USSR led communist bloc. Even if there is no communist country in world, there are small groups in Islamic world with fierce critics of capitalism. Very good example would be seen on Labor Day a group called themselves "anti-capitalist Muslims" marching with their slogans "Allah, bread, and freedom" (Akyol, 2012).

### **3. Muammar Gaddafi Era in Libya**

Libya was one of the former members of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during cold war period in polarized world. The Movement advocates a middle course for states in the developing world between the Western and Eastern Blocs during the Cold War. The countries wishes circle changed after reaching rich oil reserves. It was African country for a long time under Ottoman reign and Italian occupation. Then ruling monarchy was very torn up by corruption and prodigality. Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar Gaddafi commonly known as Colonel Gaddafi was born on June 7, 1942, in Sirte, Libya. Grown in the Libyan Desert in a tribal family called the al-Qadhafah he had much influenced Bedouin tent life of Berber families. The family was so poor that in his childhood he was a goat herder. He attended religious school at seven in Sirte. In 1951, Libya gained independence from Italian colony forces by King Idris. Young Gaddafi attended University in Benghazi military school after having history degree from Libya University. As a young man, Gaddafi was much influenced by the Arab nationalist movement of Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser and joined army. He was sent to England for further education where British instructors complained about his negative attitude and defiance of their authority. In 1960's Nasir's Arab socialism era had many devotees in region as they called themselves oppressed nations. Free

Officers Movement in Egypt inspired many military students in Arab and African region to revolt monarchies backed by western world. In fact, Cemal Abdülnasır advocates Arab Unity rather than Islamic Unity with secular percussions (Dursun, 1993). Muammar Gaddafi was very inspired from that movement and had a chance to contact with some members. The common part of those military officials were from rural parts of the country with very poor families. The secular, impartial westernized military academy education provided those young Arabs fair rights in social movement to upper classes. Qaddafi had very good impressions about the anti-Semitic, anticapitalistic and antiimperialist notions of Arab socialism formation from Nasır movement and made a military coup in September 1 in 1969 (Caner, 2018). In his 27 year old, he was the head of young officers' movement who made coup against King who was in vacation in Turkey.

Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah was founded in 1977. After the clearance with old regime and making progress in every aspects in daily life in Libya, he transformed his own ideological formation in the 1970's where there were concrete borders in world system. His own ideology neither considered USSR and US hegemonic powers in those times. However, there were strong influences from socialist model in governance. Even if he had many assassination attempts, which is quite common in this geography, he was one of the long lasting leaders in Arab world. While he received many critics for his undemocratic governance for a long period besides Lockerbie, assault in 1988 western countries had tolerated policies towards Gaddafi. During the two polar world order, he was impartiality in foreign policies to USSR and US that he thought they both have same imperial polices for oppressed third world.

Even if Gaddafi has very fundamental Islamic belief from childhood, we observe quite secular governance in Libya during his reign. The life style, the role of women in public and social life reveal the clues of mode of conduct in Gaddafi era. The natural resources, mainly oil, had impacts on Gaddafi success against many coup attempts to Gaddafi that he successfully managed to increase country's GDP sharply. The 1974 OPEC crisis increased the flow of its exports in tremendous amounts. Large oil reserves created large public sector and created fertile grounds for welfare state for the benefit of former poor Bedouin families. As most of the dictators, he created clientele circle of high ranked officials, managers of state enterprises and family members in country. The whole country was a state controlled economy with socialist structure. Post USSR era shaped in reign from the collapse of Soviet regime that he had inspirations from socialist ideas. Thus, his era changed after the collapse of USSR that much more de facto one man ruling regime. After 1992, the regime had much more liberal economic policies and had increasing amount of FDI. After 2002, there were close relations with Berlusconi's Italy that Gaddafi even bought Italian soccer club. Tony Blair's visit enhanced cooperation with western capital chambers. Saif al Islam, one of Gaddafi's sons is renowned for being in favor of "liberalizing" the economy (Weston, 2011). Therefore, the "anti-imperialist" spirit of Gaddafi vanished with increasing cooperation with US and west contrary to policies in early 1970s.

#### **4. Green Book of Muammar Gaddafi**

The discourse surrounding Gaddafi in the 1980s exemplifies the use of the rhetorical arsenal necessary to create an enemy using a good versus evil binary (Kushlan, 2007). Therefore, Gaddafi created his own propaganda mechanism in order to defeat that. One of the main tools was his book for Libya development project. Green book was one of the fundamental parts his ideological background. This helps us to understand regime rhetoric from socioeconomic and political reality (John, 1983).

One of the interpretations of Islamic socialism was Gaddafi's Libya in 1970's. He drew theoretical formation of his views by Green Book. First chapter of Green Book published in 1976 with a title Democracy: Solution to Problem, Public Authority. There, Gaddafi advocated that public authority is the main way of governance and criticized parliamentary democracies. Thus, Libya has very good example of public governance after revolution of him. In his own words, multiparty system is very poor way of governance since it is unable to solve real problems of people. The parliamentary regime was based on corruption, fraud behaviors and led to dictatorship. Ruling governments in parliamentary regime diverge, alienate and insentient from

society. In such systems, there is always power struggle for the votes of people among politicians (Muhammad, 2010).

In either way, he strongly criticized class system whatever it is working class or any tribe as: "In summary, all attempts at unifying the material base of a society in order to solve the problem of government, or at putting an end to the struggle in favor of a party, class, sect or tribe have failed" (al-Qaddafi, 1978, p. 17).

Constitutional democracy had some implications, so constitutional system must depend upon countries religious and cultural values. Competent power of society must be based on public congress rather than parliament. Public congress must be consistent of local commissions in regions. These committees are the grassroots public congress. Popular conferences and People's Committees are the best ways for sustainable democracies. In fact, it provides unprecedented practical system of direct democracy.

In following year, second chapter of Green Book devoted on economics was issued. Property rights were explained in socialist methodology. According to him, employment in service sector as paid worker is new form of slavery in modern world and there is strong need for justice and fair distribution of income for necessities. Thus, labor in return for wages is virtually the same as enslaving a human being. In a socialist society, no person may own a private means of transportation for the purpose of renting to others, because this represents controlling the needs of others (Roberts, 2017).

A couple of years later, last chapter of Green Book was issued. That was about the cultural patterns of country in universal model. Family, clan and tribes are the essential components of tribes of that nation. The formation of a nation must particularly be found on the roots of those institutions. We can trace easily the effects of his tribal past in some parts where national unity family and tribe ties. "Care should then be given to the tribe as a social 'umbrella' and a natural social school, which develops its members at the post-family stage" (al-Qaddafi, 1978, p. 75). Women and men have equal rights and western ideology degrades women. As in his book, "modern industrial societies, which have made women adapt to the same physical work as men at the expense of their femininity and their natural role in terms of beauty, maternity and serenity are materialistic and uncivilized" (al-Qaddafi, 1978, p. 85).

Some reflections of his secularist governance can be traced about his writings about social life, fine arts, sports and education. He had great efforts to promote education level in whole parts of country. Whether male of or female education is subject to all citizens from all races; "society should provide all types of education, giving people the chance to choose freely any subjects they wish to learn. This requires a sufficient number of schools for all types of education. Insufficient numbers of schools restrict human freedom of choice..." (al-Qaddafi, 1978, p. 99) Compared to other countries in African continent, Gaddafi era displayed improvement in education level.

According to him, the African continent economic backwardness was due to the western world. In fact, the historical colonial policies of European countries reveal that argument. Exploiting those parts of world, they left nothing but only sorrow and poverty. Even if he had socialist ideals for Libya, Gaddafi had hesitations about the foreign policies of Communist block for undeveloped world. In this case, both capitalist and communist world had the same attitude towards those countries. That was the initiation third way theory of his nonaligned position in the world.

## **5. Conclusion**

Islamic political thought has many reflections from past today. The discourse mainly based on anti-western anti-capitalist narrations in public. Muslim scholars referred the potential benefits of political Islam from different perceptions. That can be either left wing or right wing interpretations in different geographies in past and today. Some scholars highlight universality of Islam as world system while other have different interpretations. On the other hand, some wise man from Muslim countries attempt to use nationalistic patterns in different Islam such Malaysian Islam, Turkish Islam etc.

Libya was one of the prominent members of NAM in African continent. During the cold war period, Islamic socialism was taken as remedy for western imperialism in some countries. Gaddafi had introduced third world theorem by preparing Green Book in the 1970's. He criticized western democracy, promoted tribal tribes. He shared own ideas on role of women, education, press and economy in different chapters of this book. Gaddafi luck is owing to rich natural resources of country where Libya is one of the main oil producers of world. That enabled him to create his propaganda machine with solid financial support for years. Meantime distributed the surplus of oil revenues to lower class that had tremendous impacts on GDP per capita level.

Like every authoritarian leader, Gaddafi wished to consolidate his power by disseminating his idealist ideas with books. The rhetoric of book reflects oversimplification of western concepts with third world narration. In addition, Green Book shows idealized life style of Bedouin boy who was strongly influenced by Arab nationalism with socialist grounds. Like other counterparts as Saddam Hussein and Hosni Mubarak, his ideology has very strong secular foundations. As indicated in several parts of book he attempt to use religion with socialism as catalyzer. In 1970's cold war period with strong USSR influence, it may somehow attract followers from oppressed Muslim around the world but negligence of democracy in his regime cannot sustainable in today's world. Compared to today's chaos in the country, the welfare gains of Gaddafi era with some clues from Green Book acknowledge his long-term governance.

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