المركز العربي للأبحاث و دراسة السياسات
Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies

Background paper for

The second islamic Movements

and democratic governance conference

Questions of Citizenship, the Nation and the State

Second ACRPS Conference on Islamic Movements and Democratic Governance

Islamic Movements and Questions of Citizenship, the Nation and the State

The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies convened the first "Islamic Movements and Democratic Governance" conference in Doha in October 2012. In line with ACRPS' commitment to provide an in-depth academic understanding of the social and democratic transition currently taking place in the region, the 2012 conference brought together over 200 participants including researchers, politicians and discussants. In addition, members of the public with an interest in the dialogue between academics and politicians on the current critical issues in the region were also invited to attend.

A number of follow-up meetings were held by the organizing committee to evaluate the 2012 conference, assessing its achievements. In light of the region's ongoing developments, the committee stressed the need for a second conference on Islamic Movements and Democratic Governance. A number of critical issues that emerged in the 2012 conference will provide the areas of focus in the second conference, with an emphasis on the themes of the nation, the state and citizenship in times of transition. In the committee's view, these issues form the main theoretical questions currently driving many of the political discussions in the region.

ACRPS invites both academics and individuals who have a practical interest in the subjects framing the event to attend its second conference on "Islamic Movements and Questions of Citizenship, the Nation and the State: Historical Precedents, Current Perspectives and Future Prospects," to be held September 28 to 30, 2013.

All papers submitted for consideration will be subject to an academic refereeing process, and the committee kindly requests that all authors abide by ACRPS criteria for the submission of academic papers (link here). Accordingly, all candidates are expected to send an abstract covering the main points of the proposed paper no later than April 15, 2013. Final drafts of the research papers are to be submitted by June 30, 2013. Kindly note that the Center maintains a rigorous refereeing process and, as with the last conference, only papers adhering to ACRPS criteria will eventually be published.

Submissions for consideration as part of the conference are expected to fall into one of the themes listed below. The following points elaborate the main themes and some of the proposed issues to be addressed and presented in the papers.

Theme One: Models and Visions of Islamic Governance

1. Traditionalist and reformist visions of nationhood, the state and citizenship within Islamic movements, at both the ideological and organizational levels. This topic should address the presence or absence of well-defined political Islamic models of reference on these ideas and the extent to which these notions are inherently Islamic, or, alternatively, new introductions to Islam.

2. Examples of Islamic models of governance. This topic should elaborate on models of governance that Islamic Movements are seeking to emulate. Analysis should include the experience of: The Four Righteous Caliphs: history, inspiration and projections; the event of the Constitution of Medina (*Sahifat al-Madinah*); and Islamic political thought and the dilemma of methodology, or lack thereof. Authors are invited to elaborate on various models, whether the model of the Prophet (PBUH), the experience of the Four Righteous Caliphs, the Hadith, a combination of the above, or a novel approach.

Theme Two: The Nation (*Ummah*)

1) Approaches to the concept of the Islamic Nation (*Ummah*, meaning alternately "nation" or "community of believers") and its formation, historically and ideologically; the textual conception of the Islamic *Ummah*, and its development throughout history. Papers should include the emergence of the Muslim *Ummah* beginning with the earliest experiments and through the following age of empires, and how this was shaped by both *religion* and *religiosity*.
2) Islamic thinking on the *Ummah* and the predicament of unity versus national and confessional pluralism (seen through the lens of social and anthropological history), as well as internal disintegration. Such papers should include the notion of the "saved sect" (al-*firqah al-najiyah*) and its beliefs and repercussions, as well as the challenges which such a notion poses for Muslim integration (e.g., Shiite or Sunni conversions).
3) The compatibility of the Islamic concept of a transnational *Ummah* with a global system based on the integrity of states, and the implications for Muslim minorities living in Western countries.
4) The various conceptions of the *Ummah*, including the general Islamic concept, the classical and modern conceptions of the nation or the novel concept of an *Ummah* understood as a complex of identities.
5) The political implications of the notion of a religious *Ummah* in an age of sovereign nation-states, the impact of the concept of a Muslim *Ummah* on non-Muslim citizens of modern states, and the appropriateness of such an ideology for a ruling party.

Theme Three: The State

1) The modern state versus the empire/Caliphate, and the differences in their respective use of Islamic law (*shariah*). This topic also includes the dialectic of the state and the *Ummah*, in Islamic and historical consciousness: the history of the state versus the history of the *Ummah*. Which of the two has responsibility for the application of Islamic law?

2) Authority of the Islamic *Ummah*. In need of analysis is the question of where the authority of the *Ummah* would be invested: within a select oligarchy qualified to elect or depose a caliph on behalf of the Muslim community (Ahl al-Hall wal-Aqd), in a select group of jurisprudents, or in an elected representative legislature and an elected legislative council? Authors are further invited to examine where the limits of such an elected body's jurisdiction would lie: would it be unrestrained, or limited to the margin of legislative permissibility and use of *ijtihad*—the making of a decision in Islamic law by personal effort (*jihad*), independently of any school (*madhhab*) of jurisprudence (*fiqh*).

3) The question of *al-hakimiyya* (the idea that sovereignty and governance are for God alone) in Islamic discourse and practice; *al-hakimiyya* as merely the inverse of the concept of sovereignty within the modern nation-state, versus al-*hakimiyya* as a genuinely Islamic theory; and the positions of Islamic movements regarding this intellectual theory and its practice. The papers should address the contexts which gave rise to the idea of *al-hakimiyya*: the Indo-Pakistani context (Maulana Mawdudi) as well as the Arab context (Sayed Qutub, the Muslim Brotherhood and Egyptian jihadist groups). Authors are invited to examine the growth *al-hakimiyya* from the vantage points of texts and exegesis of the Quran and other foundational texts of Islamic jurisprudence, and to analyse how the doctrine of *al-hakimiyya* is related to the idea of the *Vilayet-e-Faqih* (or Guardianship of the Jurist). Finally, authors are invited to study the difference between the "sovereignty and governance of God" and the "will of the people," and the significance of this distinction in the debate of Islamic doctrine with tyranny, seen from a religious perspective.

4) The definition of an Islamic state and its model of governance: applicable models for such a state that are already in existence, experimenting with its implementation, or adopting a path leading toward another model. Papers should examine the extent to which an Islamic state would be a state embracing all of its citizens.

5) The definition of a "civil state" and the challenges posed by secularization, in both the strict and wider senses of the word. In this context, researchers are invited to discuss the significance of religious minorities who refuse the attribute of a minority, and whose patriotism is genuine, deeply rooted and unassailable, existing before, during and after the period of Islamic conquests.

6) The civil state considered as a departure from the religious state, as opposed to the reformation of such a state in a new guise, or an understanding of the state as open, secular and flexible.

7) Questions of international affairs and various forms of Islamism, including Islamism at the country-specific, regional and global levels; Arab Islamism; Arab-Palestinian and Islamic liberation.

Theme Four: Citizenship

1) The state and citizenship in Islamic discourse: the supra-national, "ideological homeland" versus the political state.
2) Citizenship and *dhimmitude* (subordination of protected citizens such the Christians, Jews and Sabians in an Islamic state) as conceived by the Ottoman *Tanzimat*.
3) Citizenship and issues related to religious minorities: Authors are invited to examine the positions of Islamic movements on the confessional communities which were never classified within the Ottoman Millet system, such as the Druze, Bahais, Ismailis, Yazidis and others.
4) The ramifications of the removal of religious and national affiliations from legal definitions of citizenship, and the way this impacts the concept of the *Ummah*. Accordingly, papers could analyse the question of what would become of the Islamic *Ummah*, aside from a common religion, if such affiliations were to be removed.
5) The Arab contexts which have framed the conceptualization of citizenship, including the consideration of the writings of key scholars, from Tahtawi to Mohammed Abdo to Tarek al-Bishri, Qardawi, Fathi Othman, Huweidi and Ghannushi. Additionally, the possibility of classifying the development of citizenship in different historical periods or phases.
6) The ways in which the notion of citizenship has influenced the thinking of traditionalist, modernized or modernized-traditionalist Islamic Movements.
7) Questions related to *dhimmis* (non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state): the status of non-Muslim minorities and the reformulation of the relationship between doctrine, Islamic law and politics (for instance on issues such as a non-Muslim assuming the presidency of a state, full equality of rights between Muslims and non-Muslims, women in power, and so forth).
8) The role and definition of citizenship in the writings of Islamic thinkers versus the practices of Islamic political parties.
9) The attitudes of Islamic political parties towards absolute citizenship, regardless of any privilege.
10) The constitution, laws and notion of citizenship within a "civil state," and their inherent controversies.