

Anarchy and Democratic Political Culture in the Realist World: A Critical Analyses

Dr. Aslam Khan¹

¹Associate Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, Yobe State University, Nigeria
alhamamu@hotmail.com

Keywords: Anarchy, Democratic, Political Culture, Realist World.

Abstract: Political system is generally manifested through the actions, policy programmes and operational aspects of the government, political parties, pressure groups and the public. The establishment, existence and achievements of a State depend upon a political culture, which is civic, liberal and representative. Democracy has been the most dominant aspect of discourse both within the academe and among the political actors in various parts of the world. Its relevance lies at the roots of its utility for the well being of the people. It passed through different phases of construction and reconstruction from Greek political thought to modernism and post modernism. It became a kind of blessed political doctrine form civic and political culture, defined laws, rule of law and representative governments particularly after John Locke and Jeremy Bentham. After World War-II democracy became a kind of global feature of a political culture to be adopted by the most of the members of the United Nations. But after Cold War, it took a wrong turn and became a tool for the western powers to secure their national interests or to control the resources of the poor and developing nations. The anarchic nature of USA and the allies put this blessed political doctrine in a very uncomfortable position. Sovereignty of a state is a mockery in the present world order. The destruction of communities and livelihoods has been the part and parcel of these occupationist powers e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Palestine and Egypt. The present world is heading toward less of Lockian, more of Hobbesian and beyond Machiavellian. The paper will analyse this theme critically.

1. Introduction

Realist theory of international politics emphasizes power play among the States and the politics of interests. They respond to system of anarchic world by the belief that, they should not rely anyone but themselves for the security and survival. Realists observe the behavioural pattern of a state is survival, holding that the increased security of one state will automatically lead to a decrease in security of others. Thus, states are forced to constantly take into account that others might have more power than them or are planning to gain more power and are so forced to do the same that leads to competition. Classical thinker, Machiavelli accorded that desire to gain more and more power is rooted in the flawed nature of human being, which extends into the political world, and leads states to ever going struggle to increase their influence. the collapse of league of nations and outbreak of second world war proved the Thucydidean principle that 'might is right' means the powerful do what they want, the weak do what they can. Traditional realist thinker, Hans Morgenthau, claimed international politics is struggle for power and interests. He further suggests that universal moral principles can not be applied on the actions of the state in their abstract universal formulations but they must be modified in accordance with the concrete circumstances of time and place.[1] By this interpretation, everything is

justified to achieve political power. Thus political realism is contrary to the legalistic and moralistic approach to international politics. To achieving the spectrum of power, the mighty nations compelled weaker nation to surrender their power and resources and creating a situation of anarchy and resulted towards structural realism. In structural realism one can find a central feature 'anarchy'. As Kenneth Waltz describes anarchy as a condition of possibility or a permissive cause of war. John Herz, an American political scientist argues that a state's interests and actions are determined by the anarchic structure of international system itself. [2]

At the same time liberalists believe that though the international system is anarchic but international institutionalization and interstate cooperation can avoid the condition of war. They were of the beliefs that, the principles of liberal democracy, free market economy, liberal institutionalization can reduce the likelihood of war but these assumptions have also proved as a failed thesis for weaker nations.

2. National Interests and Beyond

A nation's vital interests are those for which it is prepared to undertake a serious economic, political and military action irrespective of the cost involved. [3] Preservation of such interests is accorded so high a priority that even military action is regarded as a legitimate act. Perhaps that is why aggression has often been justified by its perpetrators as absolutely necessary for the security of the nation. However, it needs to be mentioned here that a superpower's perception of threat is not merely confined to an attack on home territories, but may include threats that are much more distant in space. However, threats to the source of important raw material, supply lines, and allies could constitute a threat that warrants a firm response from a superpower. The nature and degree of response depends on the thinking of the incumbent administration. The agreed response is then translated into what is commonly referred to as strategic objectives which, in fact, is more specific goals calculated to serve those vital interests.[4] Strategic policy presupposes certain interests and objectives. But the present international system dominated by America and allies surrounds on extreme realist pathway.

3. Realism and Present World Politics

The collapse of Soviet Union in 1991 was marked a new era of international politics and made USA a sole superpower. America also took full advantage of it by waging some of the unilateral wars i.e. Iraq and Afghanistan. The present world politics dominated by United States of America (USA) has crossed all the limits of unilateralism and most of the Third World is either surrendered or fighting for the survival against USA's adventurism. The bodies like United Nations have also failed to stop this anarchy. The 2003 US led war in Iraq, with few allies without the approval of United Nations marked the peak of American unilateralism. The US invasion of Iraq also delivered a clear message of alliance for complimentary interests as Britain joined the war with US and France refused to join. Realists give emphasis to the variability of alliances. Alliances are not always the bonds of love but the bonds of expediency. Alliances are mainly based on national interests and may change as national interest change. Because of the changing nature of international anarchy, the possibility of turning against a friend is always present. One can easily understand by this statement of Lord Palmerston delivered in British parliament in 1948, "We have no eternal allies and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are perpetual and eternal and those interests it is our duty to follow." [5] There are many examples in this context as Nixon cooperated with Mao Zedong in 1972, Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with Hitler, US-Soviet alliance in World War II, aftermath became adversaries, US backed Afghan Taliban against Soviet Union in 1980s, and then attacked them in 2001. But, one can see a clear difference in bipolarity and unipolarity with prevailing theory of realism.

4. Invasion of Iraq

Iraq invasion of USA was one of the unique cases of unilateralism and anarchy as it was without the approval of Security Council and US Congress. There is no legal justification for a pre-emptive attack on Iraq. It was justified in the name of elimination of weapons of mass destruction and regime change. This invasion is no way justified. USA founded their case on the alleged link of Saddam Hussain. As for as the WMD is concerned, the UN inspector did not find any weapon of such type. The claim of US was proved to be an utter falsehood because the real motive was political and only purpose was to oust Saddam Hussain as he refused to follow U.S. dictates. The invasion of Iraq is only the first step in the United States' astonishingly ambitious project to recast the world. It has identified Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as members of an "axis of evil." On September 19, 2002 Bush proclaimed the United States' commitment to fighting "pre-emptive" wars against "rogue states" that have weapons of mass destruction or harbour "terrorists." [6] But on the other hand it was the cycle of interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. The way Saddam Hussain was executed, US gave a clear message to her adversaries that, if any state will refuse to follow its objectives will follow the same fate. The human rights of Iraqis were bleeding to death and destruction when US pounded tonnes of bombs of high intensity and destroyed the community and livelihood for no reason and more than 6,50,000 Iraqis have been killed till now and whole country is hostile to violence and suicide bombing almost everyday. In a broader term this war was a complete failure for America and International community.

5. Pakistan and American War on Terror

Pakistan is the ally of United States since World War II but, Pakistan's ties with the United States were increasingly strengthened due to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, as funds and supplies slipped over the Afghan border for the war effort. Aid had been set at \$3000 million over five years, bolstering Pakistan's security and reducing the military imbalance with India. This was a time when Pakistan emerged as a front-line state, fighting as America's proxy in the war to contain communism in Afghanistan. This era was a boost and defining moment for religious fundamentalism as both U.S.A. and Pakistan created and funded War Lords and other Jihadi outfits against Soviet Union. The support of Pakistan to the Jihadi elements continued in Afghanistan and Taliban were come to the power after defeating Northern Alliance in 1996.

But, the 9/11 attack on U.S. change the course of Pakistan's politics and put Pakistan in a state of Dilemma when President George Bush II gave difficult choice to Gen. Musharraf, you are with us or with the terrorists. Pakistan selected to fight American War and made it clear that 'their is no permanent friend, there is no permanent enemy but interest is permanent'. Pakistan took U turn from its Afghanistan policy and forced to leave its longstanding search for the strategic depth in Afghanistan. For that, Pakistan is paying heavy domestic price and terming as a failing state as Pakistan was compelled to fight against his own creations. On the other hand, despite considerable military success in Afghanistan, it proved to be a political failure for United States. Afghanistan still governed by warlords with a shattered economy making the mockery of so called war on terror.

The US war in Afghanistan proved very costly for Pakistan as its own security is at stake. On the one front, Pakistan is fighting against Taliban and on the other hand, there is always a cry for US attacks inside Pakistan's territory. The drone warfare has shattered Pakistan's tribal structure bordering Afghanistan. The overusing drone attacks are resulting in civilian casualties. Ben Emmerson, United Nations special rapporteur on human rights and counter terrorism recently commented in a statement issued by the office of the High Commissioner for Human rights in Geneva

that, 'As a matter of international law, the US drone campaign in Pakistan is being conducted without the consent of the elected representatives of the people, or the legitimate Government of the state, it involves the use of force on the territory of another state without its consent and is therefore a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. There is a heavy criticism of drone attacks inside Pakistan as scores of civilians have been killed. Former U.S. General Stanley McChrystal, who devised the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan, warned against overusing drones, which have provoked angry demonstrations in Pakistan. Civilian casualties from drone strikes have angered local populations and created tension between the United States and Pakistan and Afghanistan. Washington has sought to portray civilian casualties as minimal, but groups collecting data on these attacks say they have killed thousands of civilians.

Pakistan is always in limelight just because of terrorism, suicide attacks, drone attacks than the Afghanistan. The corrupt and dual nature of Pakistani leadership is resulting in bad governance and surrender of sovereign rights. That is why; the whole world is watching the developments within Pakistan more than the Afghanistan. On the one hand, Pakistani government receiving huge American aid as a compensation for its losses in the War on Terror, but on the other is failed to prevent its citizens from being the targets of double sword weapons (America and Taliban). As a result, Pakistan have moved towards a civil war that portrays Hobbesian state of nature 'brutish selfish and nasty'.

6. Crisis of Democracy

Western liberal democracy has been most important aspect of discourse among the political actor and it became a kind of blessed political doctrine from civic and political culture, defined laws, rule of law and representative governments particularly after John Locke and Jeremy Bentham. After World War-II democracy became a kind of global feature of a political culture to be adopted by the most of the members of United Nations. But after the demise of Soviet Union, It took a wrong turn and became a tool for the western powers to secure their national interests or to destabilise the third world countries. But the promotion of democracy by west especially USA was just a model of hypocrisy. The realist paradigm always made a mark in terms of securing the interests. By this way, nothing matter either democracy, dictatorship, monarchy all are justified. Sometime there is an intervention for the cry of democracy and human rights but at some points replacement of dictatorial regime from democracy. Sometime democratic regimes termed as terrorist regimes when Hamas secured a victory in Palestinian election. In order to undermine Yasser Arafat, President George W. Bush put pressure on the Palestinians to have nationwide elections, which they did on 25 January 2006, as the result of which Hamas won 76 of the 132 parliamentary seats, to the ruling Fatah's 45 seats, in a 74.6 per cent turnout. But, this result was never expected by the West. As a result, elections were declared null and void and the economic sanctions were imposed on Palestinians.

7. Egyptian Turmoil

The recent overthrow of Mohammed Morsi's democratic government in Egypt clearly a slap on the face of the world, who, talk and care about democracy. The people of Egypt marked a revolution against the dictatorial regime of Hosni Mubarak. As a result Morsi emerged as a leader of people's consent. But the aspirations of the peoples again shattered when military backed by US and allies ousted Mursi and took control of Egypt. The promoters of democracy favours democratic transition when it favour the result they desire. Otherwise whole purpose has to be defeated or condemned. The event of Egypt recalls the memory of Algeria in 90s when Islamic Salvation Front won the election by a huge majority. They won 188 of 231 seats and Chadli Bendjedid sworn as President. After a week time, military forced president to resign and arrested all the leaders of ruling party. [7] But, the after

effects of this unjust coup resulted in a deadly fight and the death of thousands of people. The Egyptian coup is also the remake of Algeria in 1990s. Now, whole world is watching the killing of supporters of Mohammad Morsi almost every day since the coup. They don't see here the violation of human rights, unjust coup but on the other hand whole West is trying to justify the plan they succeeded.

The U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry uttered strong advocacy of Morsi's ouster. He spoke to Pakistan's Geo News on 2nd August as *the military was "restoring democracy" when it ousted Morsi, which he said was at the request of "millions and millions of people."* [8]

When the Egyptian revolutionaries were calling for the removal of President Mubarak, the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair said: "Mubarak is very courageous and a force for good." When Mubarak was toppled, in a change of tone he predicted: "His fall is a pivotal moment for democracy in Egypt". After the coup, writing in the Observer, he praised the army and said "the Egyptian army had no alternative but to oust President Morsi from power, given the strength of opposition on the streets." [9]

This clearly indicates, the world in the name of democracy, human rights, sovereignty is moving in a very dangerous direction. The politics of interests and occupation is pushing the third world in an environment of anarchy and violence where 'every man is at war'. So, the present world has no guiding principles and is less of Lockian, more of Hobbessian and beyond Machiavellian

References

- [1] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Fifth Edition, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 4-15, 1978.
- [2] Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, p.12, 2000.