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**Theoretical and empirical framework of connection between political Islam and consociational democracy**

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**Abstract.** The following paper deals with an issue that goes beyond the persistent dilemma of compatibility between Political Islam and democracy, taking the ratio one step further. Hence the author's intention, through methods of induction, deduction and comparison, is to present the theoretical standardization precisely on the relation of political Islam and consociational democracy, as an important model of eventual democratic regulation in some Muslim societies. It is extremely important to emphasize that consociational democracy for political Islam should not be perceived as an ideal and most desirable democratic model, instead, it should be regarded as a solid basis for compromise for mutual political integration of different groups and communities, which due to a set of circumstances share the same state community. The connection between consociational democracy and political Islam will theoretically be sketched in several respects. First, as an opportunity for certain aspects of it to be incorporated into the political system of Muslim states, as guarantees for a non-Muslim or a population with a different Islamic denomination, ie. in those systems which do not meet Lijphart's criteria as favorable conditions for consociational democracy. Second, as an empirical experience of the implementation of confessionism with a focus on the praxisological benchmark of Islamic political entities. Third, the general axiological determinant of political Islam for the categories that are an integral part of the mosaic of consociational or consensual democracy.

**Keywords:** political Islam; ideology; models of democracy; consociational democracy; confessionism

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**Introduction** ( ). Consociational democracy as a democratic model emerged in an era when Muslim societies and states experienced a kind of political, economic, cultural and social stagnation. But what is particularly characteristic of consociational democracy, that is, some of its elements, is the fact that they were already contained in the practice of some Islamic empires, especially after the Islamic military and territorial expansion, facing the non-Muslim world. Certainly some of these practices have an Islamic legal dimension conceived from the very establishment of Islam and its political organization, and some arose as a compromise and adaptation to the current conditions, political power, ie weakness of Islamic society, and attempts for inclusive character of the modern state, and often a key factor in shaping them were the Great Powers, the colonialist legacy and modern neocolonialism. It is extremely important to emphasize that consociational democracy for political Islam should not be seen as an

ideal form, but as a solid basis for a compromise for political integration of different groups and communities, which due to a set of circumstances share the same state community.

Several key questions determine the research framework in this paper. First, what is the significance of consociational democracy for the Islamic political perspective, in terms of the relationship between political Islam and democracy? Second, what is the general relationship of the Islamic political perspective with the model of consociational democracy? Third, are all the characteristic elements of consociational democracy applied in the theoretical-ideological orientation of the Islamic political narrative, as well as are the same elements represented by ideological-value (axiological) and empirical (praxeological) discourse equally?

**Methodology** and **methods** ( ). The intention of the author in this paper is through the methods

of induction, deduction and comparison, to present the theoretical and empirical standardization of the connection between political Islam and consociational democracy, as an important model of eventual democratic order in some Muslim societies. The significance of the relevant issues that will be covered in the paper lies in the actuality of the perception of consociational democracy in the Islamic political narrative. Hence, we will perceive consociational democracy for political Islam from several aspects. First, as an opportunity for certain aspects of it to be incorporated into the political system of Muslim countries, as guarantees for the non-Muslim or the population with different Islamic denomination, i.e. in those systems that do not meet Lijphard's criteria as favorable conditions for consociational democracy. Second, as an empirical experience of the implementation of consociationalism with a focus on the praxeological determinant of Islamic political entities. Third, the general axiological determinant of political Islam for the categories that are an integral part in the mosaic of consociational or consensual democracy.

In the discussion and discussion, the author takes into account the theoretical findings of the past period, especially of Horowitz and Lijphard, as a methodological framework. Thus, the application of the majority model of democracy, which is a defining feature of liberal democracy in today's understanding of this concept, becomes problematic from the aspect of the issue of majoritarianism. Although in itself the majority component and category in decision-making does not necessarily lead to a majority, ie neglect of the interests of the minority, still when it comes to linguistic, cultural and religiously divided societies the situation is problematic. Problems in particular relate to control of resources and power, which can transcend or cause political permanent or periodic instability. As Donald Horowitz points out in ethnically (we would add culturally and religiously) divided societies, majority rule often means ethnic majority (and / or religious according to our observations) rule, meaning very different from the rational meaning it has

in the form of fluid and a deliberate majority based on electoral determinations (Saveski, 2011: 144).

That is why Arend Lijphardt dealt with the question of the stability and sustainability of segmented societies and how the decision-making model and what decisions should be made analogously to such situations. One research is quite indicative. It also supports the thesis of John Stuart Mill, who emphasizes that free institutions are impossible in countries composed of different entities, and the only public opinion necessary for the functioning of a representative government can not exist in societies with very weak friendly relations between members who speak and read different languages. (Mill, 1977: 547). Of course, this applies to identical, if not to a greater extent to the population with different religions or religious denominations. In his research, Robert Dahl concludes that democracies in divided societies are really rare. Thus, out of the 114 political systems surveyed, there were polyarchies or almost polyarchies in 58% of the countries with low degree of subcultural pluralism, 36% in those with moderate subcultural diversity and only in 15% of the countries with pronounced or extreme pluralistic subcultural mosaic. (Vasovic, 2003: 16). The example of Northern Ireland is highly illustrative, where after 50 years of unipolar, one-sided democracy, a period of 30 years of violence and murder followed, which ended only after an agreement and consensus was reached for democracy to function differently. In this domain, the substantive side, although elitistly based, is evident in the fact that it directly incorporates the vital ethnocultural and religious interests of the parties concerned. Given this fact, Lijphard concludes that what such societies need is a democratic regime that emphasizes consensus rather than opposition, which includes, not excludes, and seeks to maximize the size of the ruling majority, rather than dominating the simple majority, ie consensual democracy is needed. (Lijphard, 2003: 33).

From a methodological point of view, it is extremely important to note a certain terminological dilemma regarding the naming of

this model. Arend Lijphart, for example, uses the terms adjustment policy, consociational democracy, and more recently the notion of power-sharing. Gerhard Lehmbruch writes about proportional democracy, Klaus Armingeon writes about negotiating democracy, and the Swiss use the term concordant or consensual democracy to describe how their system works. (Saveski, 2011: 147). All of these terms emphasize elements that are characteristic of this model of democracy. In the existence of segmented and cross-segmented divisions, decision-making is adapted to the interests of different social and entity groups. Saveski concludes that in order to reconcile all the details, which can never be considered unimportant to be abused as an occasion to inflame passions, negotiations are imposed as inevitable, hence the justification of the term negotiating democracy. (Saveski, 2011: 147). On the other hand, the consensus refers to fundamental issues of common life, coexistence and cohesion of social and political life, which would mean that the term "consensual solutions" is also quite valid. But because our focus is predominantly oriented towards different social (religious, ie cultural) we will use the term consociational democracy.

Moreover, due to the current knowledge that is an integral part of the methods in this paper. Namely, Lijphart points out that even divided societies on potentially hostile pillars can achieve political stability, as long as group or party leaders are willing to compromise at the national level. Their agreements relate to nothing but the allocation of resources, with each group retaining the autonomy to use the resources it has acquired. This solution allows each community to continue to control itself on those issues that do not directly affect other pillars. Such an outcome would point to a pluralistic society governed by certain cultures, rather than a dominant culture and opposing sub-cultures. (Hag, Harop, 2009: 120). Lijphart also suggests that this model may also be appropriate for less divided societies but heterogeneous states, and as such is a solid alternative to the British-style Westminster model,

that is, archetypal liberal democracy through modern discourse. (Lijphart, 2003: 33).

**Research results and discussion** ( ). The central research result that will be discussed in this paper is the high level of compatibility, through the theoretical prism and historical experience of political Islam, ie the Islamic experience with consociational democracy and its determinant features. The author will see the characteristics of this model of democracy individually, in light of the Islamic ideological-theoretical positioning, as well as political experience, such as: autonomy of the segments, the possibility of a grand coalition with Islamic entities and the right of veto. The results of the relevant research suggest a high degree of connection between these characteristics and Islamic practice that as a theoretical framework would be used in modeling democracy in societies with significant Islamic representation and the relationship with minority ethnic and inter and intra-religious groups.

Consociational democracy as a system is inextricably linked to the attitude of Islam, and analogously to political Islam to other communities. Prominent Islamic activist from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, in his "Islamic Declaration" best systematizes the relations that political Islam recognizes with other communities. First, with regard to minorities, non-Muslim minorities in the Islamic State enjoy religious freedom and full protection on the condition of loyalty. Second, the overall relationship is based on several principles based on the Qur'anic verses, namely: a) Freedom of religion (Quran, 2: 256); b) Strength and determination for active defense (Quran, 8: 61-62); c) Prohibition of attack, aggression and crimes (Quran, 2: 190-192); d) Mutual cooperation and acquaintance of the peoples (Quran, 49:13); e) Observance of contractual obligations (Quran, 9: 4); f) Mutual reciprocity (Quran, 9: 8). (Izetbegovic, 1990: 21). Because consociational or consensual democracy is a contractual relationship of democracy, in the sharing of power or delegation of power in certain segments, many of these principles have

an appropriate application at the axiological level in its modeling.

*Autonomy and separation of segments.*

The question of the autonomy and separation of the segments, ie the non-Muslim elements, ie the denominations of different Islamic denomination that we will treat here are inextricably linked to the historical component, the current socio-regional structure and the fixed provisions of Islamic law that we have seen ideologically. Islam. If we consider some of the democratic elements of political Islam, the issue of the attitude towards non-Muslims (kafir) in the Islamic domain is also significant. Thus, according to Shari'a regulations, they enjoy universal justice, protection from external aggression and internal injustice, protection of property, honor, protection of religious buildings, social justice and protection, freedom of movement and work, etc. (Alibasic, 2015: 34-39).

It is very important to note that the autonomy of the segments can be territorial and functional. Both are notable in Muslim history, and the latter has a fixed nature, ie Islamic legal regulation. From an axiological discourse, as noted by Ahmed Alibasic, Islamic law provides for special norms for non-Muslims in situations where equating them with Muslims would offend their religious customs. Hence, non-Muslims are exempt from paying zakat (religious Muslim tax), nor are they required to participate in military obligations (jihad), and in return are obliged to pay jizya (protection tax by the Islamic State). Non-Muslims cannot be subject to laws that do not identify them, especially in family and inheritance law. Islam means guaranteeing them legal, functional autonomy. (Alibasic, 2015: 43). In the field of family law, inheritance law, non-Muslims in the classical Islamic period (such as the Abbasid Caliphate or the Ottoman Empire) regulated their own relations and drafted a number of regulations that were not limited to this subject. (El-Ajid, 2006: 51). On the other hand, as is already known in the field of criminal law, only those punishments that are compatible with their religion were applied, but not issues that are not legally sanctioned in Christianity, such as alcohol, pork, etc. (El-Ajid, 2006: 50).

To illustrate, the functional autonomy of the segments functioned in the Ottoman Empire through the millet system, which was a social form of social division on a religious basis, ie it expressed a form of social-religious autonomy. Each millet exercised its rights through its own institutions such as religious courts, religious schools, etc. The millet referred to non-Muslims according to ethnographic key and to Muslims regardless of nationality. Thus the following millets were legalized: Muslim millet - without division into Turkish, Kurdish and Arabic, rum millet - Eastern Orthodox led by Constantinople, Frankish millet - for all Roman Catholics, Armenian-Gregorian millet, Armenian Roman-Catholic millet, and Bulgarian Orthodox millet (Sahin, 2012: 183).

From modern discourse, reminiscently, we should note that the Constitution of Egypt proposed and conditional by the President supported by the Muslim Brotherhood Mohamed Morsi, contained similar provisions for Christians and Jews, ie the application of the religious law of personal, family status. as well as the election of their spiritual leaders (Egypt's 2012 Constitution: art. 3).

Territorial autonomy is more recent and here we need to point out a few features. Political Islam gives priority to functional rather than territorial autonomy. However, the case of Iraq confirms that political Islam has the capacity in complex circumstances to agree to such solutions as in Iraq-Kurdistan under the 2005 Constitution, supported including by the Islamic Dawa (Prayer) Party. Thus, the Constitution defines the Kurdish region as a federal unit of the Iraqi state, with Arabic and Kurdish as official languages and an independent administration known as the Kurdish regional government (Iraq's 2005 Constitution: art. 116-118).

Finally, regarding the separation of segments as a favorable condition for the development of consociational democracy, it should be noted that by their physiognomy the Muslim community in multi-confessional societies as well as non-Muslim communities live in certain regions or neighborhoods with a predomi-

nantly own population, such as , south of Lebanon, north of Iraq and southwest of Turkey with the Kurds, north of Syria with the Alevis, east of Iraq with the Shiites, etc. Describing the traditional Muslim societies, Tarik Kulenovic states that in the cities in the Islamic bazaars, different religious and social entities were found, and in the neighborhoods (city quarters) live originally members of one religion (Kulenovic, 2008: 48).

*Opportunity for a grand coalition with Islamic entities.* The potential grand coalition in which Islamic political entities would participate is also an issue that can be considered from axiological and praxeological discourse, noting that here praxeological discourse is significantly richer and conditioned by the political processes and factors in a particular Muslim country. The grand coalition was the result of post-conflict peace-building in some Muslim countries, seeking through a common consensus of all major actors, including of course Islamic parties, to build a new constitution that would incorporate democratic principles as well as traditional Islamic values.

The grand coalition is logically a solution in systems where there is a constitutional and politically established multipartyism of different denominations and religions. Political Islam in this domain does not remain immune to such determined processes. Two methodological notes should be noted here. First, the aspect of the potential for grand coalitions with Islamic political entities should be treated through the prism of coalition potential with Christian or Jewish, as well as with secular-liberal, socialist or party articulators and representatives of different Islamic denominations. Second, we will perceive the potential of Islamic parties through a praxeological prism, while we will derive the axiological moment with the Qur'anic provision and practice of the Prophet Muhammad, as a source of value orientation of political Islam.

The axiological dimension of the possibility of a coalition of Islamic subjects with non-Islamic uninformed readers may lead him to a dubiousness. Namely, the fifth verse of Surat al-Ma'ida (Sophra) says: “O believers, do

not take Christians and Jews as protectors. They are protectors of each other. And those who will take you as protectors from you - they really are! Surely Allah does not guide the people unjustly!” (Quran, 5: 51). However, Ibn Kesir's tafsir (Qur'anic interpretation) indicates that this verse was published as a warning to Muslims not to all Jews and Christians (as evidenced by the other Qur'anic provisions for respect, tolerance and harmony), but to those who are enemies of Islam and Muslims and who have conspiratorial tendencies towards the Prophet (Ibn Kesir, 2014). Analogous to such an argument, Louis Safi notes that the practice and fundamental principles of the Medina State governed by the Prophet contain, inter alia, the following principles: First, the Islamic political system embracing the principle of religious tolerance based on religious freedom for all social actors. The Charter emphasizes the fundamental importance of co-operation between Muslims and non-Muslims in establishing justice and defending against military aggression. Second, the charter stipulates that in the new system, social and political relations must satisfy universal values such as the equality of all people and equal treatment. Sovereignty does not belong to individuals - rulers or a special group, but to the law (meaning Islamic, i.e Jewish) based on justice, fairness and dignity of individuals (Safi, 2001: 66). These institutes and practices for the protagonists of a coalition government, especially from the Wasatiyyah (moderate) branch of political Islam (whether Sunni or Shiite), are argued as an adequate apology for such political steps.

The grand coalition in contemporary discourse is manifested in the Muslim world with political Islam, as its partner or bearer, through a triple perspective. First, as a systemic solution imposed after military intervention, ie inter-religious conflicts, second, as a constitutive custom imposed after the creation of a certain state and third, after the coming to power of an Islamic entity for democratic transition as a result of the overthrow of a regime. The first and third cases are not according to Liphard's model for a coalition of all entities, but it serves

us to demonstrate the coalition capacity of Islamic parties, especially in countries where some elements of consociational democracy are looming.

The first case is typical of Iraq after the US military intervention in 2003 and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime. The two largest Islamic political entities of Shiite origin, the Islamic Dawa Party and the Islamic Supreme Council, have joined a coalition primarily called the United Iraqi Alliance. It was formed by Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and included Abdulaziz al-Hakim, Ahmed Chalabi (a secularist and nationalist option), as well as other Shiite, Turkmen parties, as well as independent Sunni and tribal leaders (Kern, 2006: 634). The 2010 Coalition is renamed the Rule of Law Coalition with an almost identical structure. What should be noted is that this coalition participated in the adoption of the Constitution of the country that provides autonomy to the Kurdish region. From 2018, on the eve of the parliamentary elections, the most striking example is the Islamist party of Moqtada al-Sadr, whose grand coalition "Reform Alliance" managed to unite the communist, Sunni and secularist parties<sup>1</sup> (BBC, 2018).

The second point concerns the Lebanese system. Hezbollah as part of the grand March 8 coalition, which has Shiite, Sunni and nationalist entities. Despite divisions with Amal, it was not a problem for Hezbollah to accept the March 8 Alliance coalition and integrate Michel Aoun's Christian Maronite party (Norton, 2007: 485-486). Hezbollah also does not dispute the system of division of seats under the Taif agreement, nor the constitutive custom of proportional distribution of the head of the legislature, the state and the executive. Finally, for the latest form of coalition, the best illustrators are Tunisia and the Islamic Al-Nahda party. After the overthrow of Ben Ali's regime, Rashid Ghannouchi and his followers formed a coalition with the Social Democrats Nidaa

Tunisia, and nothing prevented the liberal secularists Afek Tunisia from participating in the governing coalition.

*The right of veto.* If the previous features of consociational democracy have a significant axiological and praxeological basis in political Islam, the issue of the veto is the least elaborated in both Islamic political thought and the practice of Islamic subjects. The reasons for such a situation are multiple. First, from a historical perspective, the veto issue emerges much later as a constellation of a process of peace agreements and solutions to conflict areas. Such a way of dismissal was not known during the time of the Prophet and for later generations of Islamic thinkers. Second, Islamic political thought abounds in a series of categories of protection of non-Muslims in the Islamic State, and the legislature is limited to making decisions contrary to sharia, so analogously it is limited to making laws that would have negative implications for religious or cultural identity of the other citizens. Third, for Islam, as we have already noted, linguistic and ethnic differences are irrelevant because their primary political and social motive for legitimacy is religious. In this regard, Islamic subjects do not have a particular problem with multilingualism, through an axiological prism. The branches of the Muslim Brotherhood best illustrate this. However, such problems can arise when political Islam from the Wasatiyyah (moderate) branch also gains a strong nationalist weight, so the elaborations from an Islamic perspective are irrelevant, and the nationalist dimensions are authoritative.

One allusion that can be qualified from the time of the Prophet Muhammad from an axiological point of view on the issue of veto is a case on the occasion of which 44 verses from Surat al-Ma'ida were published. Namely, in the Jewish fortress Khyber, a married Jew and a married Jewish woman were found in adultery. According to the regulations of the Torah, they were to be stoned, but since they were from a respectable family, the delegation

<sup>1</sup> BBC News (2018), Shia Cleric Moqtada Sadr's bloc wins Iraqi Elections, Available at:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44178771>.

asked the Prophet to exempt the application of this law. Muhammad vetoed the arbitrary assessment and ruled that the provisions of the Torah should be applied in accordance with the stoning (Quran, 5: 51). In this case, the Prophet, through the veto, played the role of protector of the religious identity of the Jews, judging by their law.

The right of veto has practically explicit categorization and application in countries with a Muslim population only in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implicitly, the veto has little application in Lebanon. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic's Islamic Party, as a signatory to the Dayton Accords, agreed to a veto principle based on a statement of a law that is “detrimental to the vital interests” of one of the communities (Bosniak, Croat or Serb). ), so if the entity parliament with a 2/3 majority adopts such a statement, the law does not enter into force (Ustav Bosne i Hercegovine). In Lebanon, on the other hand, the situation is slightly different and less used. The speaker of the assembly, the speaker, who is part of the troika, has a veto (and belongs to the Shiite Islamic political current - Hezbollah or Amal) on systemic laws in the country under the Ta'if agreement, and also the distribution of seats, which is now par. can be changed without a two-thirds majority in the Government of National Unity, which implicitly suggests a veto by one of the communities, given the difficult achievement of such a qualified majority. (Lebanon's Constitution, art. 24).

Conclusion ( ). Each of the models of democracy with some of its value postulates finds points of contact on an axiological and / or praxeological level with political Islam and its bearers and representatives in the party spectrum. In this regard, the essential features of consociational democracy such as autonomy of segments, coalition capacity, emphasis on religious peculiarities, and even the right of veto are relevant criteria for political Islam that justify the thesis of its durability and functionality in consociational democracy.

In the direction of the criteria and goals of our paper that we set in the introductory part, as well as the methodology and methods, we

can draw several relevant conclusions. *First*, the importance of consociational democracy for political Islam can be seen from a dual perspective. On the one hand, as a solid element for stabilization of the divided societies with a significant Islamic population, which at the moment are in a state of post-conflict peace building. On the other hand, the orientation towards a democratic order from both an axiological and a praxeological perspective is affirmed in value. In addition, such results speak inductively for the very compatibility of political Islam and democracy.

*Second*, as we have already pointed out, the general relationship between political Islam and consociational democracy implies two important dimensions. If the Shari'a postulates, which are the main ideological element of political Islam, are respected, the relations between the various non-Islamic groups must be based on the protection and freedom of religion. On the other hand, the overall relations in an Islamic society towards all groups are based on certain values such as freedom of religion, strength and determination for active defense, prohibition of attack, aggression and crimes, mutual cooperation and acquaintance of peoples with each other, respect for contractual obligations and mutual reciprocity.

*Finally*, all value elements and favorable factors for consociational democracy have their representation at the axiological and praxeological level in the ideological and empirical aspect of political Islam. Such representation is reflected in historical experience, sharia norms, and the socio-demographic configuration of societies with significant Islamic populations. The autonomy and segregation of the segments has almost equal stagnation throughout all three noted aspects. The veto has little Shari'a support, except for one hadith from the Prophet Muhammad, but his experience in the Muslim world is significant as a political practice to which Islamic subjects also resort. The possibility of a grand coalition with Islamic subjects is also strongly supported by Sharia law in the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad and the principles of the Medina state he ruled, and the modern practice in religiously



divided societies such as Iraq and Lebanon is evident.

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