Political Philosophy

Politics of Identity and Political Order in Developing Countries

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Abstract - **Politics of identity and political order in developing countries has been a focus of discussion by political scientists, especially international relations scholars. This paper emphasized the stigma of politics of identity and order in developing countries. The issues of politics of identity and order seriously affect the human rights of people in developing countries. The importance of the discussion of this topic cannot be ignored as it defines how societies of different backgrounds in terms of creed, culture, economic, and religious orientation interacts. Globally, some countries, particularly developing countries, have been explicitly identified based on their culture of spiritual practice and beliefs while at the same time maintaining freedom of religious association in their constitutions. However, other countries are circular in terms of religious freedom, thoughts. The minority religions interact with the majority, while for some developing countries, the minority religions suffer tremendous persecution and abuse. Issues of religious freedom and the political order, Feminism, migration, and xenophobia are also addressed in this paper. The paper further examined the political and social problems of some developing countries affected explicitly by the downside of identity politics and concluded that cultural differences amongst developing countries are more responsible for the intolerance and human rights abuses of citizens and non-citizens these countries.**

Keywords: Politics of identity, political order, feminism, xenophobia, religious freedom, migration, culture.

1. Introduction

Apart from the rhetoric of leaders and people seeking presidential offices in the West, mostly Christian countries against certain religions based on strengthening immigration policies or security, some developing countries have also used religion to define their culture and core values that also defines the way people should interact. For example, some developing countries with predominantly Muslim populations either identify their countries as the Islamic Republic or amend and adopt Sharia laws in their constitutions to guide the conducts and behaviors of their citizens even though they have

Christian and other religious minorities. For example, Indonesia's former Mayor of the city of Jakarta is a Christian that was charged for Blasphemy of the Muslim religion and subsequently lost his re-election because the Muslim majority in the city of Jakarta believes that they should be governed by a fellow Muslim as Non-Muslims are infidels and unacceptable according to the doctrine of their religion (Islam). The defeated former President of the Gambia is another example of a leader who amended the constitution of the Gambia known from a circular state to the Islamic Republic although guaranteeing freedom of other minority religions and modes of worship.

Historically, the second half of the twentieth century brought the advent of significant political movements, second trend feminism, Black Civil Rights in the US, Lesbian, Gay, Trans-gender and Bisexuals (LGTBs) liberation, and the American Indian movements, for instance, based on a plethora of assertions about the injustices done to these social groups. Besides, these social movements are motivated by and adopted a philosophical body of literature that considers the nature, origin, and futures of the identities being protected (Heyes, 2002). Interestingly, politics of identity as a means of establishing is connected to the notion that some social or communal groups are beleaguered; that is, for example, that one's identity as a woman or as a Native American makes one peculiarly susceptible to cultural imperialism, violence, abuse, side-lining, or powerlessness. Identity politics begins from examines of repression to recommend, variously, the regaining, explanation, or revolution of previously stigmatized accounts of a group membership. The latitude of political movements that may be defined as identity politics is broad, and the examples used in the philosophical literature are primarily of struggles within western capitalist democracies, but ethnic rights movements globally, nationalist schemes, or anxieties for regional self-determination use related arguments. Probably, no upfront measure makes a political struggle into an example of identity politics. Instead, the term indicates an unsafe collection of political schemes, each assumed by representatives of a joint with an idiosyncratically different social locality that has previously been abandoned, obliterated, or suppressed.

2. Politics of Identity and Political Order in Developing Countries

2.1 Religious freedom and the political order

The concept of religious freedom and political order has received far more attention than expected, but much has not been achieved primarily in some predominantly Muslim states in developing countries. There are many civil conflicts in some developing countries that have religious undertones, i.e., the social life, culture, and political order conflict with the religious beliefs of certain sections of society. On the other hand, some of these societies or groups use force or terror to maintain or demand their religious freedom while defying the political order of these countries. For example, the "Bokoharam" terrorist group is causing mayhem in the north of Nigeria, demanding the abolition of the Western form of education in the north of Nigeria predominantly Muslim. Western Education, according to their Islamic ideologies, is forbidden. Note that these issues are philosophical. There is always a difference between social and political justice, and the very nature of justice lies in defining what rules may be lawfully enforced on the members of society.

Accounts by public figures and religious leaders recently have drawn attention to the mode and scope of the Ethiopian secular state order. A typical example is the case of Ethiopia, where according to Jon Abbink, the 2011–2014 hullabaloos between the Ethiopian Government and Muslim societies on the role of Islam in Ethiopia have stressed the unwarrantable nature of religious dealings in Ethiopia Abbink's paper describes the latest Muslim protest movement and the reaction to it by the government in the light of the secular state ideal. Although the challenges to it also involve the large Christian society in Ethiopia, the hitches became prominent chiefly in the case of the Muslims, who challenged apparent 'government interference' in their community life and self-organization. Abbink gives an overview of vital recent events and of factors causing conflict between state and religion. He also discusses and presents the situation of more general debates on Ethiopia's secular nature and the accustomed through the worn-out system of identity politics. The State suppression of Muslim civic protest in Ethiopia exposed insecurities of the state, rather than an occurrence of the process of othering a religious society; according to him, there is a case of political crisis, as well as a search for new system of governance of diversity and mutual religiosity in Ethiopia(Abbink, 2014).

Numerous dialogs dominate the public circles in Africa, and it appears that today dialogs dominated by religion can be articulated more quickly than those dominated by politics. However, religious freedoms seem to be legal and practically hold primacy over media and political freedoms, which are strongly controlled in countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, and Eritrea(Abbink, 2014).

2.2 Feminism

As the concerns and the bars on human rights and other liberties of women and children continue to rise, the issues of feminism have become an identity for certain sex who thinks or assumed they have been and continued to be marginalized. Indeed, there is no gain in saying that women are not facing the challenges of being marginalized in developing countries for various reasons ranging from the perception that they are of weak sex, economic, educational, political, religious, and socio-cultural freedoms. Countries in some developing countries had to relax and amend certain portions of their laws that discriminate against women due to extreme international pressure because of meeting international human rights standards. On the other hand, some developing countries are way behind in a snail space either because such adjustments or law reforms collide with their religions, traditions, or cultural beliefs. For example, in certain developing countries, women were only considered housewives and were not allowed to work and earn income, not encouraged to be educated. Even if they did, the ratio of men was high compared to women, it was forbidden for them to also participate in political activities talk less of being elected or appointed to political offices, and as tradition demands, they were not allowed to participate in decision making, they were only "yes people" in society. Nevertheless, the status quo is different and changing now in developing countries because of the campaigns of right organizations in these countries, liberals, and international non-state actors like the United Nations Agencies striving for the liberties and other basic human rights for women and children and against arbitrarily abuses or hate crimes. In a recent paper, Alison Woodward (2005) argues that discussions on issues of diversity and intersectionality have 'arrived' in European equality policies because of the influence of consultants and thinkers from the US. This is significant since these issues have been debated by European (especially – but not only – British) feminist scholars since the end of the 1970s but, apparently, without noticeable effect on policymakers(Yuval-Davi, 2006).

According to Yuval-Davi, 2006, Nancy Fraser (1997) asserts that gender and race are what she calls bivalent collectivities that cut across the redistribution and recognition spectrum while class relates to the redistributive model and 'despised sexualities' to the social and cultural recognition one. Nevertheless, such generalities are factually specific, fundamentally binding in every situation, and are under constant processes of contestation and modification. Besides, when people are barred from specific jobs, like teaching or

becoming a bishop, as lately materialized in the Anglican Church, because of their sex, this worries not only their social and cultural respect or freedom but also their economic situation. The most important issue is to examine how specific arrangements, identities, and political ideals are created, correlate, and affect each other in specific locations and circumstances. Equally important would be an investigation of the specific ways in which the different divisions are interlinked. Significantly, one cannot undertake the same effect or pattern each time, and, hence, the investigation of the specific social, political, and economic processes in each historical instance is imperative(Yuval-Davi, 2006).

As (Moghadam, 1999) puts it referencing Boserup, 1970, world markets have stretched, and female proletarianization has taken place. More significantly, in developing countries and specifically in southeast and east Asia, some portions of the Caribbean and Latin America, Tunisia and Morocco, more and more women have been drained into the labor-intensive and low-wage garment and textile industries, also into electronics and pharmaceuticals, which yield both for the home or local market and for export or international market. It is important to note that the outpouring in women's waged employment in developing countries started in the 1970s, subsequently an earlier period of capitalist progress and economic growth that was pigeonholed by the shift of labor and craftwork, including the commercialization of agriculture coupled with rural-urban migration. Some schools of thoughts like (Mies, 1986); have called the marginalization of women "housewifeization" and others have defined it as the "U pattern" of female labor-force contribution in early transformation(Moghadam, 1999). Slowly, this concept of "housewifeization" or "U Pattern" is changing because of the global phenomenon of gender equality and fair wage laws now into legislation and even enforced in most developing countries.

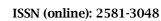### 3. Politics of Identity in a Globalized World

The growing economic globalization concerns are predominantly one of the modern age forms of political identification in developing countries. Economic policies have been developed and implemented primarily on developing countries by Western international institutions like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the philosophy of popular ideal of lifting developing countries from poverty(Ramay, 2020). These macroeconomic policies never worked in most developing countries; instead, it has only weakened these economies and brought untold economic challenges and difficulties on the lives of citizens. On the other hand, political order has been threatening by the impact of most of these policy prescriptions. For example, the economic policy of privatization or structural adjustment, a

form of economic liberalization, is considered a floppy economic policy by some public section that substantially benefits foreign companies to the detriment of developing countries with weak institutions and economic frameworks.

According to (Moghadam, 1999) the trade, capital flows, and technological developments that depict economic globalization necessitate new economic policies and production systems with significant effects for national economies, such as labor market regulations, skill requirements, education policy, and employment. Moreover, the new supple production systems are guided by the contemporary neoliberal economic orthodoxy, which also involves structural adjustment policies for developing countries as the only solution to an economic crunch and the only pathway to improved economic growth. Besides, structural adjustment policies, which aim to balance budgets and upsurge competitiveness through trade and price liberalization, include decrease of the public-sector wage bill and progression of the private sector, privatization of social services, the backing of foreign investment, and supporting the production of goods and services for overseas export through supple labor procedures. International financial institutions, particularly the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), are the foremost initiators of this free-market policy swing. Structural adjustment policies were initially implemented in some Latin American and African countries because of the debt crisis of the early 1980s. They were extended to other countries in the mid-1980s and were implemented in many Middle East countries, including Egypt and Jordan, in the 1990s (Moghadam, 1999).

Financial and technical supports, also given or granted by Western Financial Institutions such as the Internal Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to developing countries, are most times assumed to have been tied with political strings and unachievable conditions by these developing countries. One of the major utilities in identifying cultural causes of poverty, especially in the developing world, is macro and microeconomic policies. Indeed, governments in the developing world have very bad or poor macroeconomic policies, and to an extent, they tend to spend more considerably than surpassing national income through foreign borrowing. This development will lead to a current account deficit resulting in an unstable exchange rate, the bankruptcy of businesses leading to unemployment, and the list continues. The solution to this, amongst others, will be the designing and thorough implementation of sound macroeconomic and, to a greater extent, microeconomic policies, i.e., governments should adopt swift monetary adjustment such as trade protection, "expenditure-reducing," and "expenditure switching" policies.

The world has undergone many economic transitions. The development trajectories of most developed countries were through the enactment and declaration of so many treaties, rules, and regulations binding countries in doing international business. The pursuit of the new economic order ideally is the efforts of both the countries and international non-state actors like World Bank, IMF, WTO, Trans-national Corporations, etc. This is to ensure the proper implementation of the rules facilitating international trade. Such as those laws that ensure the effectiveness of the principles of free-market in international trade. Although there has been suspicion in terms of some of these treaties or trade agreements, especially when one country to the agreement stands to benefit more, i.e. instead of a win-win situation, the agreement is drafted so that the trade activities only exploit one country's resources especially developing countries. Therefore the new international economic order cannot hold if the rights of people, states and their resources, international trade, or free market are not protected or govern by the international legal framework, i.e., international economic laws and other laws that promote fair trade. The New International Economic Order is one of the major interests of the United Nations, and as mentioned above, it will only be pursued with an obvious objective and global interest. Allowing states for example, developing countries to decide the optimum use of their resources without external interference would have been a stepping stone in achieving political order in these countries, and this goal and the following accounts for the formal ending of the pursuit of a New International Economic Order:

Non-compliance to the principle of "free market," i.e., the idea of free-market does not hold as is alluded in international trade, which means that trade has not been entirely free.

No just system in applying international rules and regulations or economic laws in international trade or lack of international legal order, which promotes a proper system of international rules and establishments.

4. Being a Foreigner – Xenophobia

Of recent, the world has witnessed frequent violence and acts of xenophobia in developing countries against migrants, although historically, the United States of America has the highest rate of migrants and record of discrimination against them. The issue of xenophobia is characterized by both political identity and the challenge of the political order in developed and developing countries as well(Granule Services , 2021). A typical recent example of violence against migrant workers and business people was witnessed by the world in India and South Africa, where migrants were mercilessly murdered in broad daylight in the presence of South African security outfits such as the police based on migrant taking

their jobs. There had been serious concerns in the developing countries about issues of xenophobia. Mainly, Africans believe that the African Union, a body that is expected to address these issues, is not seen to be doing their work. The African Union is expected to be drawing up guidelines on the legal framework addressing migration across Africa and sanctions against unlawful treatments or acts of violation or abuse of the human rights of migrants or population movement in certain African countries but are not doing much or instead keeping sealed lips.

Population movement usually can be attributed to migration, this movement can be measured nowadays with various scientific tools, and information on population movement differs from country to country. For certain developing countries, such information can be obtained from their statistics bureau or immigration departments. People move for various reasons; for example, in my country Sierra Leone, we had many Sierra Leoneans professionals such as Medical Doctors, Lawyers, University Professors, etc., migrated abroad for lack of better-paid wages and greener pastures before the start of the Civil conflict in 1991. My view on population movement as an attribute of global development depends on the prevailing situation. For example, migration from one's own country to another legally as an educated or resourceful person to contribute to a society that the labour market is in dare need of, such situations could be an attribute of global development. On the other hand, the argument could be that these days, a lot of people move as illegal immigrants to another part of the globe without education or requisite productive skills to contribute to those countries only to become a social burden on them and to some extent increase the level of crime rate.

There is empirical evidence of mass movement of people locally or internationally because of wars or civil conflicts, which has posed a very big challenge for political order. For example, the mass migration of people from North Africa, the Middle East, Central Africa, and other developing countries creates social and economic pressures in countries like Germany, France, United Kingdom, and Italy. As Jonathan Crush and Sujata Ramachandran stated, migration from developing to developed countries has been complemented by growing hatred of immigrants and refugees. While xenophobic romanticism is strongly rooted in developed countries, it is gradually prevailing in developing countries. Their paper examines the rise of xenophobic romanticism and action in India and South Africa. According to them, in each case, the capability of the state to formulate or design and implement counteractive policies is compromised by its own responsibility or denialism concerning xenophobia. Without a well-coordinated or harmonized global, regional and national recognition of the extent of the problem and the formulation of

rational and coordinated response, xenophobia will continue to weaken the rights of migrants and the efforts to exploit the development potential of migration(Ramachandran, 2010).

Figure 1: A vehicle is allegedly belonging to a foreigner after a night of violence (Maluleke, 2015).
Photo credit: NonhlelozenkosiNsingo/Demotix

Several years since the latest outburst of xenophobic attacks on foreign African nationals they ensued in South Africa(Maluleke, 2015). Like the one that ensued in May 2008, this latest attack gave rise to several deaths and left thousands of emigrants as they fled from the violent attacks(Maluleke, 2015). The in humaneness attracted a great deal of media attention, which assumed that only two major xenophobic attacks have arisen in South Africa so far. Nonetheless, there have been frequent attacks on African foreign residents since the 1990s, with many of the attacks focused on the city areas of Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban(Maluleke, 2015). Sadly, common to all these attacks is the narrative "they steal our jobs and our women"(Maluleke, 2015). This description, however, is nothing new and has been used several times in nationalist discourses touching on immigrants in South-North migration. A misleading impression arises here that these challenges were due to apparent differences between foreign nationals and the locals. However, little consideration has been given to South-South (SS) migration, where such storylines are also predominant(Maluleke, 2015).

5. Conclusion

Globalization has defined the way people and countries worldwide interact politically, economically, and socially, but the philosophical aspect of human interaction has not been adequately addressed by the firm realities of cultural diversity in globalization. Therefore, the issues of women's right, religious freedom, economic freedom, social freedom and even the rights of migrants can only be guaranteed under international laws protecting the human rights of people regardless of their religion/sect, region, culture, gender, and social orientation.

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