Planning Reforms in the Arab World: A Theoretical Model

Khalid Alskait

Assocaite Professor

College of Architecture & Planning

King Saud University

Abstract

This paper discusses the importance of a theoretical planning framework in Arab cities. It suggests that Islamism and relevant planning theories may represent a good base to develop this framework. Consequentially, a Planning Reform Model (PRM), specific to current setting in the Arab World, is developed. The model encourages participatory planning process, which is lacking in many Arab cities. The paper concludes by discussing the constraints which may impede the usage of such a model along with suggestions on how to deal with them.

المستخلص

تناقش هذه الورقة أهمية وجود إطار نظري تخطيطي يقود ممارسة التخطيط الحضري في المدن العربية. وتقترح هذه الورقة أن الإسلامية ونظريات التخطيط الغربية ذات العلاقة يمكن أن تشكل قاعدة جيدة لتطوير هذا الإطار. وقد تم اقتراح نموذج إصلاحي تخطيطي يتناسب مع المعطيات القائمة في الساحة العربية من الناحية التخطيطية. ويشجع هذا النموذج المشاركة العامة في المراحل التخطيطية والتي يمكن اعتبارها مفقودة في كثير من المدن العربية. وتختم الورقة باستعراض المعوقات التي قد تعترض تطبيق هذا النموذج وكيفية التعامل معها.

Introduction

This research is an attempt to develop a theoretical planning model which ought to help in enriching the Arabic planning theoretical base. It is also intended to promote participatory planning practices in light of the fact that the majority of Arab cities follow a centralize municipal planning system (Alskait, ١٩٩٨). The paper starts by introducing relevant literature in the field.

Then it introduces Islamism and *Shura*. It proceeds to examine in some details relevant planning approaches as well as relevant administrative tools. These approaches include radical planning, advocacy planning, the tradition of social reform and the concept of decentralization. Thereafter, the paper sheds light on the current settings in the Arab worlds and it introduces the assumptions of the model and its main process. This leads to examining the applicability of the model in the Arab World given its major system variables. Constraints that could impede the applications of the model are introduced with suggestions on how to deal with them. Finally, the paper closes with a conclusion which summarizes the major findings of this work..

Methodology & Data and Limitation of the Resereach

This work is a theoretical construct based on Islamism and planning theory literature. This form of research depend heavily on the intellectual contributions of theorists in this field. It discusses planning theories and

critique it in order to come up with alternative constructs. Unlike other forms of research, such as survey research, the need of primary data in this paper is of limited value. The development of theoretical construct in planning is a reflection of how other thoeries were developed based on past urban experiments and historical evolution. It is impossible to place a community or a city in a lab in order to undertake controlled research. At best we can observe what happens throughout the years in our urban setting and try to explain it. If it takes few hours or days to conduct an experiment in a controlled environment (laboratory), it will take years or decades to examine the behavior of large social entities such as urban areas. The methodology of this research will be limited to the anlysis of established theoretical contructs and urban development experiments in the Arab world. Secondary, non-theoretical data, such as UN reports, will also be used to give indicators for the existing settings in the Arab World. UN reports are expected to be more impartial and non-propogandic in nature.

Literature Review

The literature on urban development in the Islamic context is rich. Most of the discussions in this field revolve around the influence of Islam on the spatial development of cities. Planners in many Arab countries have been fascinated by old Islamic cities. Abu-Lughod critique those planners who try to re-create Islamic cities because they focus on products not processes (Abu-

Lughod, ١٩٨٧). Hakim shows how the width of roads and minimum vertical heights in Islamic cities were to reflect the major mode of transport at the time (the camel) (Hakim, ١٩٨٦). Other thinkers such as Alsayyad has discussed the origination of Arab Muslim urbanism (Alsayyad, ١٩٩١). Hourani had shed light on the cases used by Orientalists and others to draw the image of the Islamic city (Hourani & Stern, ١٩٧٠). Toulan works on the development of the Makkah plan show a good example of planning in Islamic city. Indeed , the methodological tools which were used in this experiment may be of value to other cities whose economy is driven by forces beyond local controls (AmirAhmadi & El-Shaksh, ١٩٩٣). Al-Hathloul in his works on the Arab-Islamic city has shown how the Islamic regulatory system has clearly defined the very small area of the "not allowed" in urban development (Al-Hathloul, ١٩٩٤). Mahayni suggests that in some Arab countries, *vis.* Syria, the urban decentralization is a product of a special relationship between town and country which dates back to the early days of the Islamic empire (AmirAhmadi & El-Shaksh, ١٩٩٣). Travel routes between East and West had strengthen the role of these urban centers as commercial link. El-Shaksh and Amirahmadi have shown how urban planning in major Arab cities: Cairo, Alexandria, Baghdad,

Casablanca, and Algiers were hindered by conceptual, legal and organizational structures (AmirAhmadi & El-Shaksh, ١٩٩٣).

Akbar has suggested that the loss of responsibility is the major difference between old Arab- Islamic towns and contemporary cities (Akbar, ١٩٩٢). For example, commercial areas and streets in those old towns have been supervised and monitored by the merchants them selves and the *Muhtasib* (a guardian of public good appointed by ruler or judge), while contemporary Arabic city has assigned this job to an outside party, namely the Municipality (Ibid: ١٠٩).

The above discussion emphasizes that the majority of the works in this field are inclined toward the physical urban environment of old Islamic-Arabic towns. Those important scholary works have covered a very important aspect of urban planning in the Islamic context. But there are other dimensions in the field which need to be covered; particularly those related to the philsophical aspect of planning and participation in the planning process. This paper aims at filling this need by exploring Islamic components which can work as a philosophical base to guide planning in Arab cities and towns.

The need for this work has never been greater where experiments of developing, redevloping and renewing towns and cities in the Arab world are pending. Past experiment of town development in the Arab world are mix of success and failure. Although few muncipal authorities will admit failures, one can easily judge these experiments by using basic and simple indicators; for example, the difference between expected and observed population figure in these towns. For example, Sadat city in Eygpt was planned in the ١٩٧٠'s to be a new town with a population of ٥٠٠٬٠٠٠ people by the year ٢٠٠٢. By the turn of this century the population is less than ١٠٪ of the targeted figure (Alskait, ١٩٩٩). One cause of this discrepancy is the lack of including targeted future residents in the planning process. This form of needed participation can not occur without a legitimate Islamic planning philosophy which can guide the planning process. Another example, is the town of ١٥ *May* which is more successful, in terms of attracting more people to reside, but has not score well on the economic base. Planners of this city did not take into consideration the economic base upon which the city would thrive. Rather it assumed that the surrounding Halwan area will take of this issue (Abu-Annaser, ١٩٨٨). The Riyadh city center

redevelopment is also a good example of re-development projects in Arab towns. Architecturally, the center is very attractive but commercially it did not live up to the expectation. The center was not able to attract enough people to play the role of a major city center. For example, the center attracted about ٢٪ of the total daily-person-trip in the city of Riyadh in comparison to ١٧٪ in the case of Toronto, Canada (Alskait, ١٩٩٩). Large capital invertments were not enough to jump start the weakening city center of Riyadh.

The lack of an Islamic participatory planning philosophy in the Arab world may be responsible for the problems Arab cities and towns are facing today. Difficulties which has faced development projects in Arab cities may support this claim. Participation in planning is a key ingredient for success. Islamism has encouraged participation in all aspect of life through the concept of Shura. This concept may prove to be the solution for many of our planning problems. Current planning practices in Arab cities and towns are dominated by centralization (as we shall see later) *Shura* is the major missing element in these practices.

Theoretical Review

        This part of the paper will introduce Islamism and approaches relevant to the purpose of this research. It will introduce approaches such as Radical Planning, Advocacy Planning, the Tradition of social reform, and Decentralization as a planning tool.

Islamism & Shura

        Islamism is the philosophy of Islam in life, knowledge, and decision making.. Its major ideals or components which relate to planning include freedom, justice, equality, morality, respect for the natural environment and *Shura*. *Shura* is highly related to the purpose of this paper. It can be defined as the act of consultation on the part of decision maker with a representative group of his fellow people. Those people must be well informed, wise, and moral. This group of people are called the consultees and they represent the *Shura* council. This council may exist at a state, regional, town, or community level. In the context of this paper, the *Shura* council is meant to be at the city and/or community level unless otherwise specified.

        There are several elements which may be explored under the frame work of *Shura*. Qadri has identified many of these elements some of which seems appropriate for the purpose of this paper. These elements include the indispensability of Shura to Islamic polity, the domain of Shura, and the

methodology of Shura (Qadri, ١٩٨٦). Shura is indispensable element of Islamic

polity because its lack may lead to societal instability (Ibid: ٢٢). Because Shura

requires consultation on the part of the decision makers, it can lead to participatory planning process. Indeed, abiding by the concept of Shura will create friendships and peaceful relationships among society's members because they will feel part of the decision making process. Decentralization of decision making is expected to be a major by-product of the application of the concept of Shura. Decentralizing decision making via Shura may result in more responsible decisions; this may not be the case if such decisions were to be made by one single actor. Indeed, a decision that is approved or suggested by both decentralized actors (e.g. communities' leaders) and centralized actor (e.g. top central planner) will be more rightful, on average, than if it were adopted merely by the centralized actor. Rida went further by suggesting that it is healthier to adopt the collective opinion--as opposed to the opinion of a single actor--even if the former is wrong and the latter is right. This encourages collective participation and reduces singular control over the decision making process (Ibid: ٢٥). The domain of Shura is limited to the humanistic field.

Divine orders (e.g. acts of worships) are not in the humanistic field and thus are not in the domain of Shura. Therefore, Shura is to include all aspects of life except those identified by divine orders. Indeed, Shura's domain may be

extended to identify the characteristics of those who are to be consulted. The concept suggests that the moral conducts, knowledge, and wisdom of the consultees must be taken into consideration. The consultees may represent the different communities in a city or a region for which the plan is being drawn. Ideally the consultees, or those individuals who posses the mentioned properties, ought to be at leadership positions in their communities. Within the Shura concept those individuals are preferred to elected actors. However, if the ideal state within Shura can not be attained, then election is the best representative mean available today. Although Shura may seem an ideal concept to be undertaken, its application is possible should there exists a genuine desire by all participants. In fact even if a concept is too ideal to ever avail, it might be used to guide actions (Krieger, ١٩٨١).

        The methodology of how to select the consultees   and *Shura* is not specifically determined within Islamism. For example, if the decision maker is the head of the state, *Shura* can be conducted through direct communicating with civic leaders, factional representatives, or lay people. Finally, Islamism has two facets : ideal and practiced; the former is achieved when all the ideals of Islamism are met. The latter is but the traditions and norms which are mixed with Islamic teaching . This is called practiced Islamism. It is the prevalent culture in most Arab nations.

Radical planning

Radical planning may be described as a humanistic approach, as opposed to a technocratic one. In this sense, it might be perceived as an activity that starts from the community, and may be not organized by the state, with the ultimate goal of social emancipation (Friedmann, ١٩٨٧). Hudson saw two main streams within the approach (Hudson, ١٩٧٩). The first stream places more emphasis on personal growth and community organization, while the second focuses more on the theory of the state (Ibid:٣٩٠). Both streams tend to relate social development to changing the status quo . If the first stream represents radicalism in the sense that it encourages operating in the interstices of the institution (e.g. the planning agency), the other stream which is identified with class structure may represent a form of neo-marxism.

Advocates of radical planning see in the approach certain attributes that do not exist in conventional planning traditions. The approach tends to encourage changing the status quo through politically oriented actions. It questions the existing planning system and challenges the dominant interests. It claims to achieve equity and justice and aspires to the notion of "what the future could be". Moreover, radical planners see traditional

approaches as manipulative means to maintain the status quo, accommodate dominant interests, and accept the existing planning system. They accuse main stream planning approaches of being intoxicated by notions of efficiency and rationality, thereby sacrificing coexistence and fairness

Radical planning thoughts have been linked to the decentralization of the decision making process. The decentralization of the planning process is required, because the "modern planning" or main stream planning approaches are inefficient in many respects (Grabow and Heskin, ١٩٧٣). The practices of such approaches have been perceived as separated from the communities. In addition, main stream paradigms are more apt toward centralization as planners tend to control all activities. Indeed, main stream planning is anti-change. The radical planning paradigm seems to have strengths which may not exist in other planning theories. Probably the major component of its strength lies in its approach toward problem solving. It deals with the roots of the problem as opposed to the symptoms. The lack of participation in the planning process in many Arab cities is seen by many as the root cause of most planning related problems.

The major critique of radical planning in particular and theories of social change in general is their claim of universal applicability. Particularly,

wherever capitalism operates the need for such theories are evident, radical planners claim.

Advocacy Planning.

Inclusion of all citizens in the planning process is a major theme of advocacy planning. Inclusion, under this approach, is not confined to hearing citizens perspectives, it goes further to include informing citizens about the underlying themes of planning proposals. Davidoff affirms that the planning process under such circumstances will encourage democracy in urban government (Faludi, ١٩٧٣). He also saw discouragement of full participation when only one agency ,such as the city planning commission, draws the plans. If other interest groups, outside the government advocate alternative plans then positive possible consequences may follow. For example, such alternative plans may convey to the public other possible options , they might cause the responsible planning agency to compete with those who laid out such plans to win political support, or they might force those who criticize the plan to produce superior ones.

The advocacy planning model perceive society as a heterogeneous entity which consists of different groups with unequal distribution of power

and resources (Alexander, ١٩٨٦). Therefore, the advocacy approach aspires to a society where power is diffused so that no one group can be dominant In addition, the advocacy model assumes a society that consists of diverse interest groups to allow for broad representations of interests; that elections are an important tool for mass participation; and that individuals can actively participate in organization of different kinds. Although such assumptions are appealing they may not be very practical. First, power is unequally distributed and few, instead of many, interest groups influence the decision making process. Second, election may not be the ideal tool of mass participation, because, by and large, politicians are not responsive to the average citizen and in particular to the have-nots who are in minority. Third, individual active participation in different organizations, especially the corporate giants, are limited to the main path of such organizations. That is, individuals may participate as long as they do not disturb the existing power structure. In addition, the advocacy model does not provide for criteria to identify which group to be advocated for or which of conflicting interests to be served.

Social Reform

According to Friedmann   this tradition focuses on the role of the government in the planning process and the means which may make its actions

more effective (Friedmann, ١٩٨٧). The tradition's main theme may be portrayed as a paradigm that proclaims the application of scientific knowledge to public affairs and limits politics to its proper concerns. The state, according to reformists, may intervene if necessary in three situations. Firstly, to promote economic growth; secondly, to maintain full employment levels; and thirdly, to assure fair distribution of income (Ibid:٧٦). The tradition also pays considerable attention to the issue of institutionalising planning; for example, should planning be used as an instrument of central guidance (as what Perloff would like to happen) or should it be divided among large number of independent actors (as Lindblom would envision).

Within this tradition, some see planning as a directive force to serve the interest of the people using a bottom – top approach. Many insist on giving important weight to the concerned communities. But even if planning is to follow approximately a top - bottom approach, the people of the community must be involved. Indeed, it is possible to say that intellectuals in this tradition, even if they were polarized in two groups--those who prefer reforms from top and those who are sceptical of any form of government intervention--agree in principle on the notion that institutional changes are need (Ibid:١٣٥). Thinkers of this tradition lay considerable weight on the role of the state in the planning

process. They typically address themselves to the rulers of societies (Ibid:١٣٦).

This very statement is of interest to planners who are to practice in Arab societies. Addressing the state--as opposed to challenging it--may be the optimum choice. This can be achieved via the use of a planning tools such as decentralization.

Decentralization

Decentralization has been seen as the optimum solution for all planning problems. It is associated with democracy and public participation. It is a widely known concept but does not have a very exact definition. However, it relates to power delegation and many intellectuals understand it within this framework. More importantly, it has several forms which is discussed down below.

The general framework within which most forms of decentralization occur lies between territorial (political) decentralization and administrative (functional) decentralization. Territorial decentralization pertains to transferring public responsibilities to organizations or governments within well-defined political boundaries. Examples of territorial decentralization are the provinces in Canada and the states in the USA. Administrative decentralization, on the other hand, occurs when politically independent units entrust some of their

powers to subordinate levels within their organization (Porter and Olsen, ١٩٧٥). An example of administrative decentralization is the transfer of functions from a nation's capital to the concerned regional offices. Though there is a chance for an overlap between the above two types, major differences exist.

Decentralization can be further broken down in a little crisper frame work of four categories: deconcentration, delegation to semi-autonomous or parastatal agencies, devolution to local governments and transfer of functions from public to non-government institutions (Cheema & Rondinelli, ١٩٨٣). According to these authors, deconcentration pertains to redistribution of responsibility within the central government. In other words, deconcentration is shifting the workload from the central government offices to regional offices without giving the latter the authority to carry out exclusive decisions.

The delegation to semi-autonomous agencies form of decentralization occurs when the central government delegates management and decision authority of certain functions to organizations which are not under the direct control of the central government. This form of decentralization allows the recipient organization, which is assumed to be technically and managerially

capable, to articulate and implement decisions in certain areas without the direct supervision of higher units of government (Cheema & Rondinelli, ١٩٨٣). Indeed, delegation to parastatal agencies represents a clear move toward true decentralization when compared to deconcentration.

Devolution, as a form of decentralization, refers to the devolution of functions and authorities to different units or level of government (Ibid: ٢٢). That means enabling local authorities to take care of certain responsibilities within their jurisdictions. Cheema and Rondinelli did clarify devolution by characterizing it with five aspects: First, the local units of governments are autonomous with little or no control from the central government. Second, the local governments have identified boundaries within which they may exercise their power. Third, the local governments have the power (as in corporate status form) to secure resources and independently perform governmental functions. Fourth, local governments ought to be seen by local citizens as a means to satisfy their needs and should work on their citizens' behalf. Fifth, the relationship between local governments and the central government--under devolution--is reciprocal and mutually beneficial (Cheema & Rondinelli, ١٩٨٣). Devolution represent a significant move towards full decentralization.

Devolution, by and large, can be seen as an equivalent to territorial decentralization which has been discussed earlier.

Transfer of functions from public institutions to non-governmental agencies is the fourth category of decentralization suggested. This form of decentralization pertains to transferring functions or task management from the government to non-governmental (e.g. voluntary or private) agencies. This form of decentralization is sometimes associated with privatisation as governments shift the responsibility of producing major goods and services from public organizations to private ones (Ibid: ٢٤).

Existing Conditions in the Arab World

This section of the paper draws from the UN report <u>The Human Development Report For The Year ٢٠٠٢</u> which draws a very sad picture of the Arab world. In the year ٢٠٠٠ the population of the Arab World reached ٢٨٠ millions people distributed over ٢٢ countries. This population figure is similar to that of the USA but differs greatly when it comes to productivity and per capita income. The following paragraphs will shed light on relevant

system variables which might explain the current status of the Arab World and its disparity from the developed world.

Several system variables are identified as relevant; the positive change in any of which might lead to the betterment of the currrent condition in the Arab World. This will certainly affect planning practices positively. The system variables are Development Status, Human Development, Freedom, and Political Setting. These variables are by no mean exhuastive; however, they may be sufficeint for the purpose of this paper.

Development Status :most countries in the Arab world--like those in the Third World--fall into the second stage of the economic development process. As outlined by W. Rostow there are four economic development stages that measure development status in the world nations (Rostow ١٩٦١& ١٩٧١). These stages are the traditional stage where societies are predominantly agrarian, consume more and produce less; the pre-condition to take off stage where certain infrastructure is in place; the take off stage where all infrastructure is in place, income is rising and growth is positive; and finally the drive to maturity stage where positive growth is accompanied by a diversified industrial base. While the developed world is at the final stage (drive to maturity) the

developing Arabic world is still struggling at the second stage (pre-condition to take off).

Human Development : many agree that education is among the most important factors for human development. In the Arab world a little over ٥٠٪ are literate (UNDP, ٢٠٠٠). The UN indicator for human development shows that the Arab World scores less than the international average in this regard.

Freedom. Using the UN indicator for freedom, the prospect of the Arab World is grim. On average people in the Arab Word enjoys about ١٧٪ of the international figure for freedom (Ibid: ٢٥). This compares to almost ١٠٠٪ in North America, ٨٠٪ in Europe, and ٦٥٪ in latin America.

Municipal Governance. Most cities in the Arab World follow a municipal governance system which is centralized. In a survey conducted by the author of Arab cities, the author has found that ٩١ % of these cities use centralized planning systems. Only ٩٪ adopted local governance system (Alskait, ١٩٩٨). This, by virtue, contributes to the lack of participatory planning process in the Arab Wrold.

Political Setting. The Arab World can be classified into three groups with regard to political systems: monarchies, civilian republics, and military republics. Most of the Arab countries within these groups have severe restriction on freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

Having drawn the general picture in the Arab world, it is timely to discuss the prevalent planning systems in this region of the World. Most Arab cities follow a form of centralized planning system. About ٩١٪ of Arab cities and towns follow a central municipal planning system and local administration systems (Alskait, ١٩٩٨). Local administration systems are but a form of deconcentration. Only ٩٪ of Arab town and cities use a local governance regimes and there are no independent cities in the Arab world (Ibid: ١٣١). With regard to sources of finance, ٩١٪ of Arab town and cities depend heavily on the central government. Central planning is usually accompanied by many side effects such as in-efficiency, waste and non-responsiveness. Many Arab towns suffer from such problems.

The problematic setting discussed above requires solutions that deal with the essence of the problem not the symptoms Dealing with the root cause of planning problems must be based on a common ground that people believe

in. Islamism represents the spiritual basis, which can be used as such. If centralism is dominant in planning systems in Arab cities then, by virtue, Shura is not practiced and if Shura is missing then Islamism is lacking.

Planning problems are complicated, wicked, and time consuming. They require long period of times to be effectively solved. People may not be willing to put up with long term solutions and suffer without logical justification or definite rewards. Islamism along with its ideals may be used in this situation to play such a role. Therefore, it is imperative to use components of Islamism in any planning reform initiative in Arab cities to justify the need for change and the hardship that may accompany it. Planning reform initiatives should not ignore the experience of other societies especially in the West where most modern knowledge has developed.

Discussions early in the paper showed that radical planning and the tradition of social reform are substantial approaches, which deal with the essence of the problem. They are not anti-change approaches, rather they promote it. Many of the planning problems in Arab cities such as inefficiency, lack of responsiveness, ineffectiveness are nothing but symptoms of a root problem, namely centralism in planning. Indeed, in most international cities, where central planning is the dominant planning approach, these symptoms are prevalent. Therefore, substantive planning approaches such as radical planning

and the tradition of social reform are instrumental in developing a model to improve planning practices in Arab cities. Moreover, the first step to deal with centralism in planning is to encourage its anti-thesis, decentralization. The different forms and types of decentralization provide a good mix to choose from. Every city has its own circumstances which may adopt to different forms of decentralization differently.

An effective planning model should utilize values people aspire to (Islamism), use theories that deal with the root of the problems (e.g. radical planning), and administrative procedures, which promote participation and democracy (decentralization).

Transforming non-participatory centralized planning systems into participatory decentralized ones is in urgent need in many Arab cities. A Planning Reform Mode (PRM) might respond effectively to this need. Before identifying this proposed model (PRM) and its medium, certain characteristics, if possessed by the prospect planners, will make the chances of success better. Planners who are willing to carry this model to actual life must possess two qualities: knowledge, and the spirit of the profession. The planner ought to be knowledgeable of his profession as well as the medium (the environment) in which he is to practice. In addition, the planner ought to have the spirit of the profession. That is, he should consider that service is always above gain,

excellence is above mediocrity, and loyalty is above individual advantage. One may sense similarities between desired characteristics of a planner and the required characteristics of those of who are to be consulted in the Shura process. Ideally, planners ought to be identical with the consultees in terms of moral and ethical properties.

The Planning Reform Model

Planning Reform Model (PRM) is a conceptual construct to be applied in Arab societies to achieve a peaceful transformation from centralized planning systems to participatory decentralized ones. PRM uses two sources of knowledge; it will use Islamism as the consulting planning philosophy and it will draw compatible points from other paradigms (e.g. radical planning).

The model draws from both the substantive and procedural components of planning theory. The substantive theory components of the approach lie in the inclusion of some radical planning components. The model also aspire to utilize planning theory as a process for paradigm change; a notion that have been suggested by planning thinkers ٢٥ years ago (Galloway & Mahayni, ١٩٧٧). In addition, the model tries to deal with the root of the problems as opposed to the symptoms. The procedural components of the approach can be seen in its means - decentralization - to achieve the desired changes. In this

model the planner is encouraged to conceptualise a future state that entails some realizable ideals. These ideals should stem from the masses and should be based on Islamism but they must respond to pragmatic realities.

There are two assumptions for PRM application. First it assumes an Arab society. And second, the model assumes a preceding mass educational campaign so that its utilization can be maximized and not abused by any group which may take advantage of Islamism as a religiously derived philosophy.

The planner's mission within PRM can be summarized in the following steps :

١. The planner starts by examining the existing system to see if it can approach the ideals of Islamism and other realizable ideals which reflect the aspirations of the people.

٢. If the existing system is appropriate to reach these ideals the planner stops. It is assumed that such ideals could be approached if the existing system is participatory and decentralized.

٣. On the other hand, if the existing system does not promise the achievement of these ideals, then the planner uses Islamism as a legitimiser for appropriate changes.

٤. The planner, thereafter, explains to the client (e.g. the community) that changes toward decentralized participatory planning system is not only supported by Islamism (e.g. through the concept of Shura) but also by the success of the application of decentralized systems in the developed world. The planner should also communicate with bureaucratic officials to explain the same subject.

٥. The planner, then, must probe the clients (e.g. communities) to make sure that they not only want change but also have the will to pursue it.

٦. The planner --along with all concerned parties-- articulates a plan of transformation to be addressed to the top most central actor--be it a mayor, a regional governor, or even a state ruler.

After listing the major steps in PRM, it is worthwhile to discuss each one in more detail. Step (١) deals with examining the status quo. In this step, the planner examines the existing planning system in light of Islamism. For example, does the system address the concept of Shura in the planning process? That is, does it allow people to be consulted by the planner as well as by the politician in drawing future plans? All the remaining components of Islamism can be examined to see if the existing planning system considers

them. Step (٢) suggests that the planner should quit if he finds the planning system is in compliance with achieving the concerned ideals. Since the chances are not high that there exists such a planning system in the Arab world, the planner should go to Step (٣).

In Step (٣), the planner uses Islamism as a legitimiser for changing the status quo.   The planner starts to inform his local community about the differences between their existing realities and their ideal philosophy, Islamism. The planner will prove to the community that their ideal philosophy is not fully employed or not correctly understood, this is the case when practised Islamism is the prevailing philosophy. The planner should be able to convince the people that their ideal philosophy, if correctly employed, can improve their urban life as well as assure the perpetuation of their cultural values. He may clarify to them that reaching the highness in moral ideal is at the heart of Islamism, their ideal philosophy.

The planner, in step (٤), makes clear that the transformation to a participatory decentralized planning system could be supported by Islamism (through Shura) and experiences based on human knowledge (e.g. decentralization). Indeed, the concept of Shura which is a major principal of

Islamic polity opposes singular control over the decision making process. Such an opposition to centralism can be a powerful argument at the disposal of the planner to be used when communicating with both the communities and the bureaucrats. In addition, the planner can further support his argument by presenting experiences from the developed world where public participation has been an outcome of decentralization. Decentralization, if effectively used, can be an instrumental means for people to access information and power. The planner can also show that the planning authorities' claim of possessing special knowledge and expertise is a basic weakness of centralization even in developed countries like the U.S (Cooke, ١٩٨٥).

In step (٥), the planner takes a more active role as he probes his clients to see that they not only want change but also have the will to pursue it. Assuming that the will exists on the part of the clients (e.g. communities) and that bureaucratic officials are well informed, then the probability of achievement increases while rejection from central actors decreases. Transformation becomes susceptible if it has sympathy from both sides (the people or the communities and the bureaucrats in the planning institution). In fact the planner in this context works in an innovative manner as he facilitates a social action in order to achieve social change.

As a reformist (step (٦)), the planner addresses the central actor, be the politician or the ruler, with the plan. The collective support of the community as well as the understanding of the officials in the planning institution accompanied by the idealistic backing of Islamism may make the refusal of the plan on the part of the politician rather difficult. This can only work effectively if, as suggested earlier, a mass educational program precedes the application of the model. If such a program is conducted uncensored then it should prepare the way for the maximum utilization of PRM.

All plans which are to be proposed, as a by-product of PRM's application, should involve a decentralizing component within them. This is the case because decentralization is a prerequisite for participatory planning. However, each type of the different forms of decentralization may be peculiar to different situations in which PRM is to be employed. For instance, when applying PRM in countries which are governed by totalitarian regimes, then PRM may include deconcentration. On the other hand, when PRM is to be employed in a democratically based system, then the model may include devolution. Because devolution allows for a much more decentralized decision making process, its acceptance in democratically oriented governments, as opposed to totalitarian ones, has a better chance of occurring. It is hoped that the application of some simple form of decentralization within PRM in

authoritarian countries will be the first step toward complete participatory planning in these countries.

Application of the Model

It is the author's assumption that the application of the model will have a direct or indirect impact on the introduced system variables. An impact that may result in the enhancement of the standard of living in the Arab world. The model was narrowly tailored to be applicable to the Arabic world; therefore, it is presumed to produce positive outcomes. The following paragraphs will discuss the model application, given the aforementioned system variables.

PRM applications may not have an immediate effect upon the economic development status of a country, because the purpose of its introduction was to improve the planning process as opposed to the economic development process. However, it is the author's belief that PRM, if applied correctly, could work as a spark to improve the economic status. This is the case because the acceptance of the model on the part of the host country could lead, in the long run, to the preparation of society to democratic change which in return may accelerate economic growth.

With regard to human development, PRM application will lead to more participation and therefore more human development. When people participate

to shape their future they mingle with others and they learn how others (other group in other nations) have worked to achieve positive change. This educational process by itself is the most important element, which will contribute to the betterment of human development.

With regard to freedom, PRM will undoubtedly give participants an access to responsible freedom. Freedom to development is like air to plants, if plants can grow without air then society can develop without freedom. The intellectual and material development of any society cannot do without freedom, stability, and financial support. If this development is a plant then its air, soil, and water are freedom, stability, and financial support respectively. The fact the PRM is a participatory model represents the first and most important step toward freedom and emancipation.

With respect to municipal governance systems, PRM deals with the core and root of this issue. It will provide a legitimate base upon which participation may take place. The adoption of the model requires the participation of all relevant parties. Without participation the model is invalid. Therefore, an acceptance of the PRM is a de-facto acceptance of public participation.

In dealing with the political system and stability, PRM may be adapted to each of these systems so that it can produce the desired outcomes as the circumstances allow. The model should help in realizing political stability, because it will eventually lead (through its participatory components) to a more just society. Justice is a major prerequisite for stability. Since there are three major groups within the Arab World : monarchies, civil republic and military governments. PRM that entails deconcentration may be introduced to the third group. While PRM that entails devolution may be introduced to the second group. The first group needs a version of PRM that entails a decentralization form somewhere between devolution and deconcentration. It is believed that once the model has been successfully applied to one country other countries will follow suit.

Constraints

There are constraints which might impede the successful application of the model. They include:

- Authority's perception of the planning process.
- Disparity between what is in the plan and what is implemented in developing countries.
- The financial dependency of municipal governments on central ones in the developing world.

- The lack of good administrative structure in the municipal system in most of the developing world Including the Arab world.

- The possible misuse of the model as the number of proletariat in the Arabic world increases.

The major, if not the greatest, obstacle against PRM is the perception of the Arab authorities in most of the Arab world of the idea of change. Many of these authorities have dealt suspiciously with movements that are Islamicly motivated. Though the change in the planning context is different from that of politically oriented movements, there is no guarantee that the authorities, in many Arab societies, will peacefully deal with it, let alone accept it. Planners must be able to communicate with such authorities in a way that assure them that their position as agents of change is to improve the planning system and not to threat the political system.

Another obstacle which may arise here is the typical disparity between planning and implementation in most developing countries. Many of the plans and projects which were designed for developing countries have failed, due to imperfect implementation, in achieving any significant results. Ben-Amor and Clairmont found that many of the development projects in developing countries were ineffective (Rondinelli, ١٩٧٦).

The disparity between plans and actions, which are common in the developing world, are also common in the Arab world. Indeed, this disparity can be attributed to the intellectual or ethical inabilities of the officials responsible for development projects in these countries (Abdulhadi, ١٩٩٠). A third obstacle to PRM in the Arabic world is the financial dependency of municipal governments on central authority. In many of these countries regions and localities are very dependent on central governments for financial support. This dependency may cause some difficulties in applying decentralism, which is the backbone of PRM. If a municipal government cannot generate its own revenues, can it ask for decentralism? The fourth obstacle which ought to be considered is the lack of competent administrative structure in the localities to carry out PRM. Since most trained and professional staff is at the center, it may not be very easy to manage decentralism, through PRM, in the peripheries.

The fifth obstacle is the possible abuse of the model by opportunists as the proletariat class enlarges in most of the developing Arabic world. The formation of this class is a direct consequence of income divergence. The proletariat is the most vulnerable group in a society for political turmoil. When a government undertakes a drastic action; for example, when it increases the prices of basic necessities, the proletariat will react sharply. Unfortunately, most of these sharp reactions are destructive in nature (e.g. destroying public facilities such as post offices). Examples for these violent actions are numerous, erupting in Algeria (١٩٨٨), Egypt (١٩٧٧), Tunis (١٩٧٨), Tunis and Morocco (١٩٨٤), and the Sudan (١٩٨٥) (Ibid:٣٦). The nature of these actions-- unplanned--shows how critical these groups can be if taking advantage of by opportunists. A model like PRM which has religious components will be more vulnerable for abuse as the proletariat class widen. One way to guard against such abuse is by educating the masses about the model and its ultimate aspirations.

Accompanied with massive educational programs and supervised by well-trained planners, who are familiar with Islamism, ideal and practised, and planning theory, the PRM will succeed in improving the planning system in the Arabic world. All of this should happened in a frame work of patience. Planners must be patient with the masses if the model is to prevail. In addition,

planners must make sure that the model appeals to the masses and implementers alike. Even if a program appeals to the most central power holders, its success will largely depend on its appeal to the people. The failure of the collectivisation of agriculture in Yugoslavia (١٩٤٥ - ١٩٥٣) provides a historical example of the critical role of the people in materializing plans (Solomon, ١٩٧٣). The model has also to appeal to the implementers (e.g. civil servants) in order to fully succeed (Gillis, ١٩٨٧).

It is hoped that PRM will manage to draw the attention of the masses to their own problems (e.g. standard of living). Islamism, which respects other faiths and encourages respectful coexistence with other cultures may manage to change the Arab world by leading it to a modern and progressive direction. It is preferable to apply PRM in one urban society within a nation to prove to other societies within the same nation that it is a beneficial program. Indeed, PRM may have a better chance of being applied in one of the civilian republics or monarchies as the systems in both categories are more likely to accept change than that of the military governed countries.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the theoretical frameworks of planning which could be of value to Arab cities and towns. It discussed Islamism with emphasis on Shura as one of its major components. It also delved in relevant planning theories with the intention to extract appropriate elements which may improve planning practices in the Arab World. In addition, it gave an overall image of the existing settings in the Arab world. Moreover, the paper discussed radical planning, advocacy planning, the tradition of social reform, and decentralization in order to find out how can they—along with Islamism—be used to develop a planning model. This analysis has shown that a theoretical planning framework, which is based on Islamism and relevant Western planning theories is instrumental for planning practices in Arab countries. The discussion of this framework resulted in the development of a Planning Reform Model (PRM) specifically articulated for Arab cities. This model is intended to encourage participatory planning process in Arab cities.

The constraints, which could impede the successful application of the model are many. The paper suggests that massive educational campaign to inform the public, highly trained planners to carry out the application of the model, and patience are the most effective means to overcome all of these constraints. Although the model was developed specifically to meet the current planning needs in the Arab world, it is by no means the only solution for

prevalent planning problems. Other studies in this field are urgently needed to bring up planning practices in the Arab world to international standards.

References

أبو النصر كمال ، "المدن المصرية الجديدة بين التخطيط والتنفيذ" <u>ندوة المدن الجديدة</u> ،المجلد الأول،

المعهد العربي لانماء المدن، ١٩٩٣.

أكبر جميل، <u>عمارة الأرض في الإسلام</u> جدة، دار القبلة للثقافة الإسلامية ١٩٩٢.

السكيت خالد ،"دور العقلانية المركزية في التخطيط العمراني العربي" <u>مجلة جامعة أم القرى</u> ١٩٩٨.

السكيت خالد ،"مفهوم التخطيط في العالم العربي في ضوء فلسفة التخطيط الغربية". <u>مجلة جامعة</u>

<u>الملك عبد العزيز</u>.١٩٩٩.

الهذلول صالح ، <u>المدينة العربية الإسلامية أثر التشريع في تكوين البيئة العمرانية</u> ، الرياض ١٩٩٤

برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي ، الصندوق العربي للإنماء الإقتصادي والإجتمعي <u>تقرير التنمية الإنسانية</u>

<u>العربية للعام ٢٠٠٢</u> . ٢٠٠٢ One UN Plaza, New York, N.Y. ١٠٠١٧, USA,

_____ <u>World Development Report ١٩٨٤</u> Part II "Population Change

and Development." Chapters ٤ & ٥, pp. ٥١-١٠٥.

Abdulhadi, N. <u>The IMF and The Proletariats in Arabic Cities.</u> Al Faisal
Magazine, Nov.١٩٩٠, p ٣٦-٣٩

Abu-Lughod J., "The Islamic City …" <u>International Journal of Middle
Eastern Studies</u> , ١٩ pp ١٥٥-١٧٦, ١٩٨٧.

Abu-Lughod, J., "Urbanization and Social Change in Arab World", in Ekistics, Vol. ٥٠, No. ٣٠٠, May/June ١٩٨٣, pp. ٢٢٣-٢٣١.

Alexander E., Approaches To Planning Theory, N.Y.: The Gordon And Science Publishers, ١٩٨٦.

Alskait, K. "The Riyadh City Center: Lessons to be Learned"، King Saud Journal،١٩٩٩.

Alsayyad, N., Cities and Caliphs:on the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, ١٩٩١.

Amirahmadi H. & El-Shaks S., Urban Development in the Muslim World, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersy, ١٩٩٣.

Cheema,S.& Rondinelli D., Decentralization and Development, Beverly Hills : Sage Publication ١٩٨٣.

Cooke, Philip, Theories of Planning and Spatial Development, Hutchinson, London, ١٩٨٣.

Faludi, A., ed., A Reader in Planning Theory, Oxford: Pergamon Press, ١٩٧٣.

Friedmann, J., The Good Society, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, ١٩٧٩.

Friedmann, J.,<u>Planning In The Public Domain: From Knowledge To Action</u>, Princeton: Princeton University Press, ١٩٨٧.

Hakim, B., <u>Arabic-Islamic Cities: Building and Planning Principles</u>, London, KPI, ١٩٨٦.

Hourani A. & Stern S., eds., <u>The Islamic City</u>, Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, ١٩٧٠.

Hudson, B., " Comparison of Current Planning Theories: Counterparts and Contradictions," <u>APA Journal</u>, October ١٩٧٩،٣٨٧-٤٠٦.

Galloway, T. & Mahayni, R., "Planning Theories in Retrospect: The Process of Paradigm Change". <u>Journal of The American Institute of Planners</u>, [٤٣ (١)] pp. ٦٢-٧١.

Gillis, Pekins, Roemer, Snodgrass, <u>Economics Of Development</u>, New York: W. Norton & Company, ١٩٨٧.

Grabow, S. and Heskin, A., " Foundations For A Radical Concept Of Planning," <u>JAIP</u>, ٤٦, ١٩٨٠, ١٠٦ - ١١٤.

Krieger, M., <u>Advice and Planning</u>, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, ١٩٨١

Qadri, A., <u>Ashura (Shura)</u>, Jeddah: Dar Almujtama'a, ١٩٨٦.

Porter, D. & Olson, E. "Some Critical Issues in Government Centralization and Decentralization", <u>Public Administration Review</u>, v:٣٦ no. ١, Jan/Feb ١٩٧٦, Pg ٧٢-٨٤.

Rondinelli, D., "International Requirement for Project Preparation: Aids or Obstacles to Development Planning," <u>AIP Journal</u> ١٩٧٦, pg. ٣١٤-٣٢٦.

Solomon, S., <u>Asseyasah Aleqtisadiah (Economic Policy)</u>, Kuwait: W. M., ١٩٧٣.

W. W. Rostow <u>Stages Of Economic Growth</u>, (١٩٦١ & ١٩٧١)