

A Comparative Analysis of the Role and Function of Shura (Consultation) in the Political Theories of Darwaza and Fadlallah, Focusing on Quranic Verses 3:159 and 42:38

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Introduction

Shura (consultation) is an ancient religious and Quranic concept that has evolved in contemporary times, gaining new meaning in response to the emerging needs of modern Muslim societies. The Quranic exegesis of this concept, especially by key scholars, has played a significant role in shaping its current interpretation. Notably, there is a difference in the interpretation of Shura between Shia and Sunni scholars, which reflects divergent political implications. This paper focuses on the contrasting views of two prominent contemporary scholars, Darvazah (a Sunni thinker) and Fadlullah (a Shia thinker), in order to explore their governmental theories and the role of Shura within those frameworks. The study aims to answer the following questions: "What is the theoretical structure of Islamic governance according to these two thinkers, and what role does Shura play within that structure? What are the key differences in the function of Shura in their political thought?"

Methodology

The study uses a descriptive-analytical method. Initially, the views of Darvazah and Fadlullah on the Quranic verses related to Shura were closely examined, and relevant excerpts were extracted. The analysis was further supported by searching the comprehensive Quranic exegesis software and reviewing other works by both scholars. The data was categorized and analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of their views on the theory of governance and the role of Shura.

Findings

A comparative analysis of the views of Darvazah and Fadlullah reveals significant differences in their understanding of the position and function of Shura in Islamic governance. The key differences are as follows:

1. According to Darvazah, the structure of Islamic governance consists of three main components in order of priority: "the ruler, the Shura council, and the community." In contrast, Fadlullah prioritizes the components as "the ruler, the community, and the Shura."
2. Darvazah advocates for a "presidential system" of governance, where the ruler and members of the Shura council are elected directly by the people. Fadlullah, however, supports the "Guardianship of the Jurisprudent" (Wilayat al-Faqih), which requires both divine legitimacy and popular acceptance.

3. For Darvazah, the ruler is not only obliged to consult with experts on all matters but must also implement the best possible solutions derived from the consultation. Thus, for Darvazah, Shura is of intrinsic value (its own purpose), not merely a procedural means. In contrast, Fadlullah views Shura as a procedural tool, where the ruler is only obliged to consult experts when lacking the necessary expertise. However, the ruler is not bound by the outcome of the consultation.
4. Darvazah believes that the establishment of Shura is essential for achieving consensus, especially in matters related to governance and lawmaking. In contrast, Fadlullah considers Shura to be an advisory body, made up of trusted experts, without a decisive role in the governance structure.

Both scholars agree on the importance of Shura in the social life of Muslims and emphasize that its scope should be limited to matters where there is no clear ruling in the Quran and Sunnah. They also agree that the specific framework and details of Shura should be adapted to the needs of each era.

Conclusion

The differences in the views of Darvazah and Fadlullah regarding the role of Shura in Islamic governance can be traced back to their respective theological and historical backgrounds. The Sunni perspective, influenced by early Islamic history and the practices of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), tends to view the legitimacy of governance as being shaped by public consensus and consultation. This perspective is reflected in Darvazah's emphasis on the role of Shura in legitimizing governance. On the other hand, Shia thought, with its emphasis on divine appointment, views the legitimacy of a ruler as stemming from divine designation, which explains Fadlullah's perspective on Shura as a non-decisive advisory body. This theological divergence is central to understanding the differences in their political theories.

Keywords: : Political Theory, Shura (Consultation), Consultation Verses, Darwaza, Fadlallah, Islamic Governance.

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