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A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN SAYYID QUTB'S
AND FAZLUR RAHMAN'S POLITICAL THOUGHT:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISLAM AND STATE

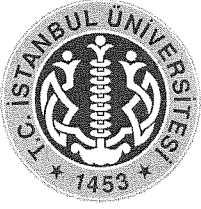
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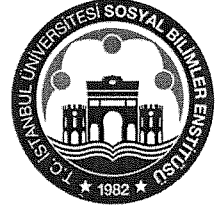
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TEZ SAVUNMA SINAVI, İÜ Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim Yönetmeliği'nin 36. Maddesi uyarınca yapılmış, sorulan sorulara alınan cevaplar sonunda adayın tezinin KABULÜNE OYBİRLİĞİ / OYÇOKLUĞUyla karar verilmiştir.

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ÖZ
SEYYİD KUTUB VE FAZLUR RAHMAN'IN SİYASAL
DÜŞÜNCELERİ ÜZERİNE KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR
İNCELEME: İSLAM-DEVLET İLİŞKİSİ
MUHAMMAD BADRI HABİBİ

Bu tezde Seyyid Kutub ve Fazlur Rahman'ın siyasal düşüncelerinin özellikle İslam ve devlet ilişkileri konusuna yaklaşımları açısından karşılaştırmalı bir incelemesi yapılmaktadır. Tez Kutub ve Rahman'ın Kuran tefsir usulleri (metodolojileri) ve siyasal düşünceleri arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi üzerine kuruludur. Buradan hareketle Kutub'un "eşsiz Kuran nesli" ve "cahiliye" kavramları ve Rahman'ın vahyin tabiatına ilişkin görüşleri ve "iki hareket teorisi" ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelenmiştir. İslam ve devlet ilişkisi konusunu açıklayabilecek olan üç paradigmadan söz edilebilir; bunlar "entegre paradigma", "simbiyotik paradigma" ve "seküler paradigma"dır. Entegre paradigma, İslam'ı politika da dahil olmak üzere insan hayatının tüm yönlerini düzenleyen bütünsel ve kapsayıcı bir din olarak ele alır. Simbiyotik paradigma İslam ve devletin karşılıklı bir ilişkisi olması gerektiğini belirtir. Seküler paradigma devletin İslam'dan bütünüyle ayrı olması gerektiğini belirtir. Tezde Kutub'un ve Rahman'ın devlet, demokrasi, şura, Allah'ın egemenliği, halk egemenliği ve şeriat gibi konulardaki siyasal görüşleri bu perspektiften incelenmiştir. Kutub'un siyasal düşüncesi entegre paradigmanın, Rahman'ın siyasal düşüncesi ise simbiyotik paradigmanın bir örneği olarak değerlendirilecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İslam siyasal düşüncesi, İslam hukuku, Seyyid Kutub, Fazlur Rahman, devlet.

ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN SAYYID QUTB'S AND FAZLUR RAHMAN'S POLITICAL THOUGHT: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISLAM AND STATE

MUHAMMAD BADRI HABIBI

This thesis focuses on a comparative study of Sayyid Qutb's and Fazlur Rahman's political ideas, particularly related to the relationship between Islam and state. The thesis is based on an analysis of the relationship between Qutb's and Rahman's methodology in commenting the Quran and their political ideas. Hence, a discussion concerning Qutb's Rahman and methodology such as Qutb's idea of the unique Quranic generation, three steps of Qutb's Quranic approaches, the concept of *jahiliyya* and Rahman's idea of the nature of revelation and his double movement theory are discussed extensively. In the context of the connection between Islam and state, there are three paradigms that can explain this relation; integrated paradigm, symbiotic and secular paradigm. The integrated paradigm considers Islam as a holistic and comprehensive religion covering all dimensions of human life including politics. The symbiotic paradigm assumes that Islam and state have should be in a reciprocal relationship. The secular paradigm rejects the first and the second paradigm and demands that state must be totally separated from Islam. The thesis explains Qutb's and Rahman's political views such as their idea of state, democracy, *shura*, God's Sovereignty, people's sovereignty and *sharia*, in order to know whether they tend to see the relation between Islam and state in this perspective, and states that Rahman's political thought is an example of the integrated paradigm, while Rahman's political thought is an example of the symbiotic paradigm.

Keywords: Islamic political thought, Islamic law, Sayyid Qutb, Fazlur Rahman, state.

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INTRODUCTION

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and Fazlur Rahman Malik (1919-1988, generally known as Fazlur Raman) are Islamic thinkers who put a very serious concern towards Quranic commentary¹ and socio-political issues especially related to the issue of relationship between Islam and state. Qutb and Rahman formulate their methodology of Quranic commentary (*usul at-tafsir*), which give a very influential impact towards their thoughts and understanding in all aspects of life; politically, economically, socially and so forth.

Certainly, exploring Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary and political thoughts is very important. This is because genesis and development of their political thought cannot be separated from their Quranic approach, in which Qutb tends to interpret the Quran based an effort for understanding the Quran by the Quran itself and rejecting all non-Islamic/*jahili* sources including all Western modernization. On the other hand, Rahman gravitates to comprehend the Quran by using his double movement theory based on the social-historical context and he also utilizes modern social sciences to espouse his effort in understanding of the Quran. Hence, Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary ultimately becomes a very significant element that influences their political thought, particularly concerning the issue of the relationship between Islam and state. On the other hand, their methodology of Quranic commentary and political thought also become quite notable to be discussed, due to the fact that their background of life could not be separated from the social and political tension between Qutb and the regime of Gamal Abdul Nasser, on the other hand, and Rahman versus the traditionalist group in Pakistan, which also gives a very interesting perspective related to the development of their methodology of Quranic commentary and political thoughts.

¹ *Tafsir* is a commentary, an exegesis of interpretation, generally of the Quran. In many cases a work titled *tafsir* will follow the text of the Quran from beginning to end. Someone who engages in *tafsir* is a *mufasssir*. On the Other hand, *Ta'wil* is an allegorical interpretation or exegesis; originally more or less synonymous with *tafsir*; often used for mystical interpretation of the Quran; sometimes used for reason-based exegesis, see Abdullah Saeed, **The Quran: an Introduction**, New York, Routledge, 2008, 241.

However, before Qutb and Rahman, the discourse and discussion concerning the relationship between Islam and state historically have been a warm and interesting issue discussed among Muslims as responses to the influence of Western ideology and a new proposal and design for restoring Muslim's historical inheritance particularly since the direct clashes with modernity in the nineteenth century: Western modernization in all aspect of life becoming an obviousness and challenge where the Muslim is required and demanded to deal with it. The context of particular political and religious crises such as the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924 also stimulated Islamic thinkers to develop their political ideas.

The relation between Islam and state has been analysed by William E. Sheppard in his article titled "Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology" (1987) as a threefold paradigm. According to Sheppard, in terms of the relationship between Islam and state in the modern era, there are at least three paradigms of thinking that explain this relationship, namely, integrated paradigm, symbiotic, and secular paradigm.²

The first, integrated paradigm says that religion is a complete and holistic thing covering every aspect of human's life including politics/state. As responses upon this issue, modern Islamic scholars such as Rashid Ridha (d. 1935), Hassan al-Banna (d. 1949) attempted to offer their idea to overcome the problem by trying to call Muslims to purify Islam from every religious heresies and deviations by coming back to the Quran and *Sunnah*, and rejecting all kind of Western modernization.³ This view is categorized as a typology of Islamic totalism viewing "Islam not merely as a religion in narrow sense of theological belief, private prayer and ritual worship, but also as a total way of life with guidance for political, economic and social

² According to Saifur Rahmat, there are three paradigms concerning the relationship between Islam and state, namely theocracy, secular and religion/culture/fiqh. On the other hand, Din Syamsudin states that those paradigms are integrality, symbiotic and secularity. See, Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, "Muhammad Iqbal's Philosophy of Religion and Politics: The Basic Concept of Religious Freedom," *Al-Nun*, vol. 14, no. 2, December 2014, 420.

³ For a detailed explanation of those thinkers' ideas, see Ali Rahnema, ed., **Pioneers of Islamic Revival**, 2nd ed. Selangor, Strategic Information Research Development, 2008. See also, Anthony Black, **The History of Islamic Political Thought from the Prophet to the Present**, 2nd ed. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2011, 281-347. See also, John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, ed., 2nd ed. **Islam in Transition Muslim Perspective**, New York, Oxford University Press, 2007.

behaviour.”⁴ This first paradigm practically leads to implications in which one of them is that this perspective will bring Muslims to have a tendency to understand Islam in literal and partial sense, where the contextual aspect of Islam potentially will be neglected.⁵

The second paradigm is “symbiotic” or “mutual” paradigm. Muslim thinkers such as Rifa’ah al-Thantawi (d. 1873), Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d.1893), Jamaluddin al-Afghani (d. 1897), Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905), Muhammad Husain Haikal (d. 1956) contended that in order to solve the problem, Muslims basically need to reinterpret the Quran and have to compromise with the Western modernization. Basically, this paradigm emphasizes that Islam and state have a mutual need and reciprocal relationship. Islam and state can work together, where Islam needs state because through state, Islam can develop and exist well. On the other hand, Islamic laws probably can be implemented through the power of state, and state needs the presence of religion to strengthen the moral and ethical order of society because only through religion the moral order of state’s citizens can be formed and reinforced well.⁶

According to this paradigm, Islam never gives a standard/formal pattern concerning the form of state, and the term *daulah* (state) is not mentioned in the Quran. It is true that some of Quranic expressions seem to refer to the sense of political authority, but according to those who support this paradigm, the expression do not refer to politics, state and power. In other words, it does not have any relation with political issue/concept. This is because, they believe that Quran is a moral book and it is neither the book of politic nor state. Therefore, they contend that the main principles of Islam (the Quran) are related to the principles of justice (*al-'adalah*), equality (*al-musawah*), fraternity (*al-ukhuwah*), and freedom (*al-hurriyah*). Hence, a

⁴ William E. Shepard, “Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology,” **International Journal Middle East of Studies**, vol. 19, no. 3, Aug., 1987, 308.

⁵ Hilmi Muhammadiyah, “The Relation between Religion and State in Indonesia,” **Asian Social Science**, vol. 11, no. 29, 2015, 101.

⁶ **Ibid.**, 102.

political power and state according to the people who espouse this paradigm should be based on those principles in any form of state.⁷

The understanding of the symbiotic paradigm compared to the perspective of Shepard related to the Muslim typology seemingly represents the group of Islamic modernism, where the teaching of Islam is not comprehended literally but more comprehensive, in which the values of the substances of Islamic teachings are being the main point, but is limited by the Quran and *Sunnah*. The principles of justice, equality and fraternity that are the main substances of Islam can be compromised with the principle of democracy that has similar principles with the tenet of Islam. On the other hand, a reinterpretation towards the Quran and *Sunnah* in an extreme form, “in which the all specific cases in the Quran and the *Sunnah* would be in effect converted into moral principle,”⁸ in fact, would lead to the neo-modernism.

Third is secular paradigm. According to Niyazi Berkes, secularism can be conceived in two different ways:

The use of the term ‘secularism’ in connection with the determination of relations between spiritual and temporal authorities gives the impression that the condition to which the term refers is found only where such distinctly institutionalized authorities coexisted. In this narrow concept, secularism appears to be merely a matter of separating the respective areas of jurisdiction of two institutions of authority.⁹

The secular paradigm in Islamic thought rejects the first and the second paradigms and demands that state totally must be separated from Islam, because Islamic texts do not have any clear statement for the organization of state; Islam

⁷ Muhammadiyah, “The Relation between Religion and State in Indonesia,” 102.

⁸ Shepard, “Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology,” 312. According to Shepard, modernism basically obtains the flexibility in three main ways; the first is “by the tendency to restrict the specific and detailed content of the authoritative tradition as much as possible by limiting it to the Quran and the authentic *Sunnah* and then possibly limiting the latter by radical Hadith criticism.” “The second way is a more or less re-(interpretation) of the authoritative sources.” And the third way is an interpretation of the Quran and *Sunnah* in an extreme form, “in which the all specific cases in the Quran and the *Sunnah* would be in effect converted into moral principle.” See, Shepard, “Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology,” 312.

⁹ Niyazi Berkes, **The Development of Secularism in Turkey**, London: Hurst and Company, 5.

being part of private conscience, and State being part of the public realm. For Islamic thinkers that adhere to the secularistic paradigm in Islam, such as Ali Abdel Raziq (d. 1966), to liberate Muslims from the problem, State and religion should be separated to be a secular state as implemented in the Western countries. Khalid Muhammad Khalid and Muhammad Said al-Ashmawy also belong to this secularistic current of Islamic scholars. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, a prominent defender of the secularistic paradigm, the secular state is defined as "one that is neutral regarding religious doctrine, one that does not claim or pretend to enforce *Sharia*—the religious law of Islam—simply because compliance with *Sharia* cannot be coerced by fear of state institutions or faked to appease their officials."¹⁰ This paradigm certainly refuses any kind of perspectives foreseeing the building of an Islamic state with *sharia* as the fundamental pillar and constitution of the state.

Apart from a brief introduction above, this thesis basically is a qualitative research using a method of library research. On the other hand, the research depicts the important of Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary and political thought in order to compare their ideas of the concepts and their perspective concerning the relationship between Islam and state. Principally, the sources of this thesis research are obtained through library such as textbooks and scientific journals, which were used within a framework of descriptive analysis.

In this thesis, Qutb's and Rahman's Quranic commentary will not be discussed extensively. The thesis is intended to focus not in the text of their respective commentaries, but on their methodologies. The main concern and focus of this research is related to the explanation and debate of Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary, both political thoughts and how does both thinkers' methodology of Quran give impacts towards their political thoughts. The following chapters include analyses of Quranic commentaries of both thinkers related to a series of political themes such as *shura* (consultation) and *sharia* (Islamic law), in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of their arguments related those issues.

¹⁰ Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, **Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Sharia**, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2008, 1.

The aforementioned threefold paradigm model will be used in analysing Qutb's and Rahman's political thoughts. In this thesis, I also will depict Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary that consists of three elements as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, and Rahman's Quranic approach encompasses his idea of the nature of revelation which basically becomes the main pillar of his double movement theory applied in analysing and discovering to what extent Qutb's and Rahman's Quranic approach influence their political thoughts. Therefore, the main research question in this thesis will be pervaded of two questions:

1. In what paradigm and typology are Qutb's and Rahman's political thoughts
2. How deep do Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary give impact on their political thoughts.

As the scope of thesis is limited to an analysis of Qutb's and Rahman's work, the secularistic paradigm, to which none of these two thinkers adhere, will not be treated in detail.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter focuses on Qutb's political thought. Two main issues are tackled in this chapter; the first is Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary, which is based on the concept of the "Unique Quranic Generation" ¹¹(*Jilun Quraniyyun Farid*) referring to the first generation of the Prophet Muhammad's companions. The second is associated with Qutb's political ideas such as the issue of Qutb's notion of state, *shura* and democracy, people's sovereignty and God's sovereignty and the issue of *sharia*.

The second chapter explores Rahman's political thought. It includes an account of Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary, which concentrates on the elaboration of the nature of revelation and Rahman's double movement theory. This chapter also explains a variety of aspects of Rahman's political thoughts such as his idea of state, the compatibility between *shura* and democracy, the comparison between people's sovereignty and God's sovereignty and the discussion of *sharia*.

¹¹ Qutb contends that the unique Quranic generation refers to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad in the first period of Islam where they interacted directly with the Prophet and they were educated completely by him. See Sayyid Qutb, **Milestones**, ed. A.B. al-Mehri, Birmingham, Maktabah Booksellers and Publishers, 2006, 29.

The third chapter is an analysis of comparative studies regarding Qutb's and Rahman's political thought in order to identify in which category their political thought can be classified in the three paradigms of relation between Islam and state. A comparative analysis regarding their methodology of Quranic commentary and how deep it influences their idea of political thoughts is also discussed in the chapter.



CHAPTER ONE

SAYYID QUTB'S METHODOLOGY OF QURANIC COMMENTARY AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

The present chapter outlines two important issues that are interrelated. Firstly, it is concerning Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary. Secondly, it is the continuation and development of the first part of this chapter focusing on the elaboration of Qutb's political thoughts, which comprehensively will elucidate Qutb's position concerning the relation between Islam and state.

1.1. Sayyid Qutb's Life and Works

1.1.1. Sayyid Qutb's Life

Sayyid Qutb was born in 1906 to a middling family in the village of Musha in Asyut Province in Egypt. His father was al-Hajj Qutb bin Ibrahim, a member of the Nationalist Party. In 1921, Qutb moved to Cairo to continue his study at *Dar-ul-Ulum*.¹² He was under the guidance of Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad's (d. 1964)¹³, and he was mostly influenced by Westernizing tendencies. During this time, Qutb became interested in learning English literature. After graduating from *Dar-ul-Ulum* in 1933, he was appointed a teacher, and later he also served as an inspector of the Ministry of Education, until he resigned his official duties in 1953.

Between the years 1948-1950, Qutb was sent by the Ministry of Education to the United States to study about the Western educational methodology. During this time, Qutb observed Western society, and he concluded that although the Western people lived in the economic prosperity and the scientific advance, they actually lived in the decline and bankruptcy of spirituality and morality, because they lived

¹² *Dar-ul Ulum* is an institution that was founded 1872 at the behest of the Khedive Ismail. This institution was owned by the Old Regime Egypt, which was built to bridge the gap between the traditional and modern school. See, John Calvert, **Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism**, London, C. Hurst & Co Ltd, 2014, 58.

¹³ Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad was one of Old Regime Egypt's most important and famous literary prominent. He became Qutb's mentor until Qutb graduated from *Dar-ul Ulum* in 1933. See, Calvert, **Sayyid Qutb**, 64-72.

under non-Islamic or *jahili* system.¹⁴ Therefore, Qutb believed that only the Islamic system is superior to other ideologies, and these observations resulted in the publication of his first major work entitled *Social Justice in Islam (Al-'adalah al-Ijtima'iyah fi al-Islam)* in 1949.

Qutb decided to join the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwanul Muslimin*) in 1952.¹⁵ The Muslim Brotherhood was an Islamist organization built by Hassan al-Banna (d. 1949) in 1928 in the Canal Zone city of Ismail'iyyah to counter the Western hegemony and influence over Egypt that had been consolidated in the interwar period during the reign of King Farouk (d.1965). Al-Banna founded this organization to preach people and invite them to turn back to the principles of the Quran and *Sunnah*. In 1952, the Brotherhood was banned by the regime because according to regime, the Islamic Brotherhood became a serious threat to the regime. During that period, the Brotherhood worked together with Arab Nationalists such as Gamal Abdul Nasser (d. 1970) to topple King Farouk's regime, but in 1954 Qutb and other leaders of the Brotherhood were detained by Nasser for conspiring against him.¹⁶ Qutb was jailed around ten years and during these years, he wrote his monumental Quranic exegesis entitled *In the Shade of the Quran* (1952-1965). After ten years, in 1964, Qutb was released, but when his controversial book named *Milestones* talking about the concept of God's sovereignty, *jahiliyya* and rejecting all human-made laws was published in 1964, he was rearrested and sentenced to death in August 1965. The accusation was that through his book, Qutb wanted to incite the people of Egypt to overthrow the regime of Nasser. He was hanged in 1966.

¹⁴ Related According to Qutb, the people of the USA live in the peak of advancement but they also live in the depth of primitiveness. He says, "People who have reached the peak of growth and elevation in the world of science and productivity, while remaining abysmally primitive in the world of the senses, feelings and behaviour." See, Sayyid Qutb, **The America I Have Seen**, New York, 2000, 11.

¹⁵ See, Calvert, **Sayyid Qutb**, 81-87.

¹⁶ For a detailed explanation related to beginning of the conflict between Nasser's regime and Muslim Brotherhood, see Calvert, **Sayyid Qutb**, 179-195.

1.1.2. Sayyid Qutb's Works: An Overview

Sayyid Qutb's Quranic approach is based on his research on the first generation of the Prophet Muhammad companion called the "Unique Quranic Generation" as the best generation in the history of Islam, where this generation lived only under the light of the Quran in the whole of their activities and they isolated themselves from non-Quranic sources.¹⁷ Based on Qutb's observation upon this generation, Aref Ali Nayed contends that in general, Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary consists of three important elements; 1. The Quran is to be lived and not just intellectually appreciated. 2. Only the Quran should be the basis for understanding the Quran. 3. The understanding of the Quran must be done in the "existential seclusion" (*'uzluh shu'uriyah*), where all non-Islamic sources must be rejected during the commentary of the Quran,¹⁸ in which this existential seclusion leads to emergence of Qutb's idea of *jahiliyya*.

On the other hand, Qutb's *jahili* idea which distinguishes between Islamic teaching and non-Islamic teaching becomes Qutb's basis in constructing his social-political thoughts, in which its root idea can be traced through Muslim thinkers who also propose and explain this idea before Qutb such as Abul A'la Maududi, Abul Hasan Nadwa and so on as explored profoundly by William Shepard in his article "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya".¹⁹

In his works on political thinking, Qutb contends that there are two kinds of state; *dar-ul-Islam* (Islamic homeland) and *dar-ul-harb* (non-Islamic homeland), and through *jihad* which is the second important pillar after belief (*iman*), the Muslims are obliged to build an Islamic state based on the Islamic law and allowed to topple *jahili* state which is not based on the Islamic law as explained in his books *Milestones* and *In the Shade of the Quran*. Qutb mentions that the main criterion of *dar-ul-Islam* is not associated with the quantity of Muslim but how dominant Islamic

¹⁷ Sayyid Qutb, **Milestones**, 29-30.

¹⁸ Aref Ali Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," **Islamic Studies**, 31:3, 1992, 358.

¹⁹ William E. Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya," **International Journal Middle East of Studies**, vol. 35, no. 4, Nov., 2003, 521-545.

law is.²⁰ On the other hand, he regards that the idea of separation between Islam and state which is initiated by Western civilization, in fact, leading to negative consequences and this notion is contradictory with Islam.²¹

Apart from his idea of state, Qutb states that *shura* is one of the most important features of Islam and its position is as important as *as-salat*,²² therefore, for him, there is no reason for Muslims not to set and govern their matters based on or through *shura*.²³ Related to Qutb's rejection of the compatibility between *shura* and democracy, AB Rahman in his dissertation²⁴ mentions that this rejection based on the philosophical difference between both concepts and due to a fact that the implementation of democracy in the West is full of deviation and controlled by the capitalist group.

In terms of sovereignty, Qutb explicitly states in his books, namely *In the Shade of the Quran*, *Milestones*, and *Social Justice in Islam*, that there is no sovereignty except God's sovereignty and no legislation except from God's legislation. According Sayed Khatab and John Calvert, Qutb's idea of God's sovereignty and his rejection of the concept of people's sovereignty is influenced by Maududi.²⁵ According to Qutb, the idea of God's sovereignty cannot be separated from the Islamic law/*sharia*, due to the fact that *sharia* is a manifestation of God's sovereignty on earth, while human being as God's vicegerent on earth must implement it through the establishment of the Islamic state which is *sharia* becoming its constitution as emphasized by Qutb in his books; *Milestones* and *Social Justice in Islam*.

²⁰ Asyraf HJ AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal Al-Quran*," **PhD. Dissertation**, University of Edinburgh, 2000, 152.

²¹ Sayyid Qutb, **Islam: The Religion of the Future**, Kuwait, The Holy Quran Publishing House, 1984, 33.

²² Sayyid Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, Markfield, Leicester, The Islamic Foundation, 2000, vol. 15:193

²³ Sayyid Qutb, **Social Justice in Islam**, trans. John B. Hardie, New York, Islamic Publications International, 2000, 5/2.

²⁴ AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal Al-Quran*," 178-179.

²⁵ Sayed Khatab, **The Power of Sovereignty: The Political and Ideological Philosophy of Sayyid Qutb**, New York, Routledge, 2006, and see also, Calvert, **Sayyid Qutb**, 214.

1.2. Sayyid Qutb's Methodology of Quranic Commentary

1.2.1. Qutb's Approach to the Quranic Exegesis

One of the most important books written by Qutb is the Quranic exegesis entitled *Fi-Zilal al-Quran (In the Shade of the Quran)*. He wrote this Quranic commentary in 1952-1965 when he was in jail after he was arrested by the Nasser's regime. He was charged with the accusation of subversive activity in the form of anti-government agitation. This book is widely used and circulated among Muslims around the world and became one of the most influential Quranic commentary book among the Muslim world. Briefly, Qutb's Quranic exegesis avoids the traditional methods of *tafsir*, which usually refer to the previous accepted commentaries and other established authorities. On the other hand, Qutb tries to eschew this method. He gives the readers his personal views to Quranic verses that he interpreted. When he needed to make reference to other Muslim writers, he did not constantly cross to the previous accepted commentaries like what was done by the traditional interpreters, but only pointed to some Muslim thinkers who lived in the twentieth century and seemingly had the same insight and understanding of Islam, particularly concerning the need to return to the pure teachings of Islam as practiced by the Prophet and his companions, and in this respect his attitude is reminiscent of thinkers such as Abd al-Qadir Awda (d. 1954), Abbas al-Aqqad (d. 1964) Abu l-A'la al-Maududi (d. 1979), Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Nadwa (d. 1999).²⁶

Basically, through *Zilal*, Qutb attempted to explain specifically about the original message of Islam in the Quran so that the Muslims really comprehend the core of Islam. On the other hand, he also tried to provide a fresh perspective related to the understanding of the Quran by presenting that the values of the Quran can become the primary source for solutions upon the various challenges and problems happening in the contemporary era, particularly associated with social and political aspects. Therefore, from this aspect, it can be understood that Qutb's style of Quranic commentary denotes the strong commitment to his view of Islam, in which Islam

²⁶ Ali Rahnama, ed., **Pioneers of Islamic Revival**, 2nd ed. Selangor, Strategic Information Research Development, 2008, 16.

should become the dominant political power of nations with a majority Muslim population.²⁷

According to Badmas Lanre Yusuf, there are two main reasons why Qutb wrote his Quranic exegesis. The first is that Qutb probably wanted to discuss issues concerning socio-political matters by using the Quranic principles as his parameter, so that readers would know automatically that the primary source used in the discussion was only the Quran. Qutb expected that the situations would lead the readers to a situation in which they could directly track the important points that were discussed among them in terms of political and social issues to the source (the Quran). The second is that Qutb might want to write his Quranic commentary because he wanted to join the class of the commentators of the Quran, who left a very precious legacy, particularly related to Quranic commentary works or books for his generation and next generations.²⁸

Apart from those reasons above, one of the most crucial points that should really be noticed in this chapter is concerning his methodology and approach in interpreting the Quran. Although Qutb wrote his monumental Quranic commentary *Fi Zilal al-Quran (In the Shade of the Quran)*, he never wrote a particular book especially related to his methodology of Quranic commentary, which completely explained his Quranic approach in interpreting the Quran. Therefore, the important question arises in this context is how Qutb's methodology can be traced?

Related to the question above, Aref Ali Nayed contends that Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary can be categorized as a radical approach. Nayed adds that Qutb's methodology cannot be discovered in his Quranic exegesis (*Zilal*). It can be found and traced in Qutb's manifesto entitled *Jilun Quraniyyun Farid (The Unique Quranic Generation)* which is part of the second chapter of Qutb's famous works namely *Ma'alim fi al-Thariq (Milestones)* (1964). The main point of this manifesto is the explanation of the life and characteristics of the

²⁷ Saeed Abdullah, **Interpreting the Quran Towards a contemporary approach**, New York, Routledge, 2006, 18.

²⁸ J.B. Heru Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: a Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," **Oreintasi Baru**, 17, no. 2, October 2008, 125.

generation of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, including how the Prophet educated and trained them to be the best generation in the history of Islam based on the Quran.²⁹

Basically, Qutb's main purpose why he seriously explores the life of this generation profoundly is to find the secret and factors that make this generation becoming the best generation. This is because Qutb wants to re-create the similar generation as well as the unique Quranic generation in order to re-restore and revive the glory of Islam in today's world. Hence, through his manifesto that will be described later, Qutb principally wants to feature that the Quran should be comprehended purely by rejecting all of non-Islamic sources and teachings as practiced by the unique Quranic generation.³⁰

1.2.2. Qutb's Conception of the "Unique Quranic Generation"

As it has been pertained previously that Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary can be traced and comprehended through his manifesto "The Unique Quranic Generation". Of course this generation needs to be explored and clarified comprehensively remembering that the genesis and development of Qutb's methodology is inseparable from this generation, as it has been claimed by Nayed. Linguistically, the term of the unique Quranic generation according to Qutb refers to the first generation of the Prophet Muhammad's companions in Mecca and Medina as he taught the message of God (Islam). On the other hand, Qutb believes that this generation is the best generation ever in terms of their dedication and support towards the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad, their religious practices, their understanding of the Quran and the prophetic traditions. Further, Qutb adds that the Quranic generation is the generation educated and trained by the prophet directly based on the guidance of God's revelations (the Quran) in all aspects of life. This

²⁹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 29.

³⁰ *Ibid.* See also an analysis related to Qutb's research regarding "the unique Quranic generation," in which he wants to find some secrets and characteristics of this generation "because he wants to mobilize a similar generation of youth to uphold Islam's ideas in today's world," Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 359.

generation lived in the light of the Quran, where they only took the Quran as the source and guidance of their life. Based on this way, finally, the generation became the best generation in the history of Islam and even in the history of human being. Qutb says:

At one time this message created a generation-the generation of the companions of the Prophet, may God be pleased with them, without comparison in the history of Islam, even in the entirely history of man. After this, no other generation of this calibre was ever gaining to be found. It is true that we do find some individuals of this calibre here and there in the history, but never again did a great number of such people exist in one region as was the case during the first period of Islam.³¹

Explicitly, Qutb clarifies that the main reason why this generation is the best generation along the history of Islam because they have a pure in heart, pure in conscience, pure in mind, pure in vision, pure in understanding as the fruit of the Prophet Muhammad's education and training which based on the values of the Quran. To establish this generation, the Prophet taught them how to live in the light of the Quranic principles. The prophet also dissociates them from all non-Islamic influences. Hence, they were not touched and effected by any other outside influences besides the divine revelation contained in the Quran.

The perspective and characteristics of this generation above seemingly denotes that Qutb basically wants to emphasize that to recreate such a generation in the modern era, the Muslims should absolutely be isolated from non-Islamic sources. Qutb then continues that the Quran was the only source from which the unique generation quenched their thirst and hunger in pursuing the path of God. This is because they believed that God has already provided the Quran to be the only source for humans to shape their behaviour based on its values. All kinds of their activities of life were inspired from the values of the Quran. Therefore, according to Qutb, this fact makes this generation being different from subsequent generations, which no longer make the Quran as the only source and guidance for their life.

³¹ Qutb, **Milestones**, 29.

The main reason why the generation did not take other sources besides the Quran for being their guidance of life is not because they did not know other sources which being the primary sources for other civilizations such as Persian and Roman, Greek, Chinese, and Indian cultures and civilizations, which were existent before Islam. The reason is because the Prophet taught and trained them to be convinced that there was just only one source of guidance for the humans, namely the Quran which certainly would bring them to the path of God. Therefore, the Prophet instructed them to arrange their life based on its values.

Further, Qutb states that there are three factors of the uniqueness of this generation; the first factor is because the generation was isolated and dissociated from any form of non-Islamic teachings and sources such as Roman cultures and civilizations, Persian civilizations, Greek philosophy, Jewish folklore, Christian theology and others as it has been pertained and elaborated previously. The second is because this generation did not read and understand the Quran for the primarily purpose only to obtain knowledge and information or to become cultured and better informed, nor for the sake of an aesthetic pleasure. They also did not read it neither just for the sake of the knowledge nor to increase their understanding regarding the science, or to solve problems they had. They read and learned it because they really wanted to understand deeply about what God had ordered and what God had forbidden, so that after attaining these injunctions they would immediately implement it in their daily activities like a soldier who gets an instruction from his commander. Then, without any question he will directly execute it with the full feeling of responsibility.³²

Therefore, to grasp the understanding God's injunctions accurately, they really devoted their time to certainly read and comprehend the Quran intensively and carefully in order to catch its messages and teachings comprehensively. So that they never read and learned many verses of the Quran in one time because they knew and realized that to comprehend its core meanings and values, they need a long process and time. In sum, this generation read and studied the Quran gradually and patiently

³² Qutb, *Milestones*, 30-32. See also, Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 356-357; and Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God," 125-126.

in order that they could really be able to grasp and comprehend its purpose and content comprehensively.³³

They believed that only based on this way, the doors of spirituality would be opened by God, which would lead them to have higher understanding in recognising God so that when they have arrived to this level, they would live under the blessing of God and would be far from any form of evils. On the contrary, if they read the Quran for the sake of knowledge, science, information, learning and discussion, and not merely for God, then the doors of spirituality would never be opened, and the Quran would become neither the part of their personality nor their light of the life. Therefore, in this point of view, the position of the Quran for them was not a book of story, a book of intellectual contents and a book of literature, but it was more than those books. It was a book of guidance and a book of a way of life on how people should live based on its line to reach the path of God.³⁴

The third factor according to Qutb is related to what he calls as an existential seclusion (*'uzlah syu'uriyah*). Further he explains that when a man became a Muslim in the time of Prophet, then he would leave his all non-Islamic teachings, customs that are part of *jahiliyya*.

1.2.3. *Jahiliyya*: A Key Concept in Qutb's Religious Thought

The terms *jahiliyya* originally refers to the primitive savagery of pre-Islamic ignorance.³⁵ Qutb also explicitly defines that the meaning of the terms *jahiliyya* is as "pagan of ignorance" as the terms mentioned and used in the Quran (QS: 5:50).³⁶ Based on Yvonne Y. Haddad's opinion, concept of *jahiliyya* does not genuinely

³³ Qutb, *Milestones*, 31-32

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁵ For a detailed explanation of this, see Qutb, *Milestones*, 3.

³⁶ See, Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Quran*, vol. 4, 121.

belong to Qutb. According to Haddad, Qutb concedes the fact that he borrowed this concept from Maududi.³⁷

According to Qutb, as a new Muslim, he moved and migrated from the old condition (*jahiliyya*) to a new situation under the Islamic system. This movement and conversion from a non-Muslim in past to be new Muslim under the Islamic teachings was a right decision that qualitatively changes their life better than before, and Qutb names this movement as a cross-roads (*muftaraq turq*). The most important aspect is that this generation was successfully consistent to live in this existential seclusion and isolated from any form of *jahiliyya*. In this context, he starts to introduce his important concept of *jahiliyya*.³⁸

Further, The Quran mentions the word of *jahiliyya* four times, namely in the Quran (QS: 33:33), (QS: 48:26), (QS: 5:50) and (QS: 3:154). The concept has been intensively discussed and developed by some prominent Muslim scholars before Qutb such as Abul Hasan Nadwi and Abul A'la al-Maududi. Currently, they have written this concept related the modern *jahiliyya*, which they have found it in the Western and communist society, although they did not implement their idea of *jahiliyya* in the radical way as well as Qutb. According to Maududi, the concept of *jahiliyya* is related to every conduct and activity that is contradictory with the Islamic culture, morality, the Islamic way of thinking and behaving. In other word, Maududi defines *jahiliyya* is the antonym of Islam and antipodal with the teachings of Islam.³⁹ On the other hand, Nadwi defines *jahiliyya* as all ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, which revive in the modern era and become the main basis of modern European civilizations and cultures, where Muslim societies are in many places being influenced and ultimately becoming its allies. Then this situation according to Nadwi finally leads Muslim societies turning to be *jahili* society.⁴⁰

³⁷ For detail, see John L. Esposito, ed., **Voice of Resurgent Islam** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 85. And see also, William E. Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya," 522-523.

³⁸ Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 357.

³⁹ See, Abul A'la al-Maududi, **The Meaning of the Quran**, ed. A. A. Kamal, Trans, Muhammad Akbar, Lahore, Islamic Publications, 1975, and comment on Quran: 5:50. And see also, Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya," 522-523.

⁴⁰ Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of *Jahiliyya*," 523-524.

On the other hand, Qutb contends the terms *jahiliyya* basically refers to the Quran (QS: 5:50). Therefore, he adds that the definition of *jahiliyya* based on the Quran (QS: 5:50) refers to the people who are led by people and they totally reject God's law.⁴¹ In this sense, he tends to defines *jahiliyya* is a kind of rule and law of humans made by them and aimed to make some people becoming servants of others and to make some people being more powerful than others so that they can enslave and oppress others. In other word, *jahiliyya* can be comprehended as the human's effort to rebel and fight against the concept of servitude to God, namely to reject His divine authority and replace it with the human's authority, and to make humans to be lords over others.⁴²

Qutb claims that the concept of *jahiliyya* also related to a human's venture to annihilate God's sovereignty, which is the most important characteristics of His divinity and replace it with the idea of people's sovereignty. According to Qutb, there is no any kind of sovereignty for humans except God's sovereignty, so that sovereignty only belongs to Him. In this context Qutb accentuates that any human's attempts to usurp His sovereignty and alters it with people's sovereignty is categorized as a part of *jahiliyya* as practiced in the Western countries. Therefore, based on this argument, Qutb argues that basically *jahiliyya* is not only a condition that happened in the days of the prophet, but also a condition that is potentially repeated in any time and period. This is because *jahiliyya* basically is a social and spiritual condition that will continue repeatedly and exist in any time and in any place.⁴³

For Qutb, Islam and *jahiliyya* are two different things and cannot blend each other and there is no half situation.⁴⁴ This opinion leads him to an important conclusion that the Muslim community must be separated from the *jahili* society. He states that a society can be identified as a Muslim society if they believe in God and implement His rules completely to be their guidance in their life. On the other hand,

⁴¹ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 4: 121. According to Qutb, the terms *jahiliyya* was mentioned four times in the Quran. See, Qutb, **Milestones**, 11.

⁴² Qutb, **Milestones**, 27.

⁴³ **Ibid.**, 146. See also, Esposito, ed., **Voice**, 85.

⁴⁴ Qutb, **Milestones**, 146.

even there is a Muslim community who believes in God but rejects His divinity by taking and implementing human's laws as their laws, then this community cannot be classified as a Muslim society. This is because Islam and *jahiliyya* cannot mingle simultaneously in the same time and space. Based on this perspective, he disagrees with Maududi's concept of *jahiliyya* saying that Islam and *jahiliyya* probably can exist concurrently within the Muslim society.⁴⁵

Apart from his disagreement toward Maududi's notion of *jahiliyya*, Qutb's understanding of *jahiliyya* ultimately refers to everything that is not Islamic or contradictory with Islam. Qutb also highlights the Muslims' way of life nowadays, which according to him, is based on the *jahili* system and far from the Quranic values as implemented by the unique Quranic generation. He views that the situation is almost similar to the *jahili* era happening in the pre-prophetic era. In addition, he states that today, everything around the Muslims is *jahiliyya*, Qutb says,

We are surrounded by *jahiliyya* society today, which is the nature as it was during the first period of Islam, perhaps a little deeper. Our whole environment, people's beliefs, and ideas, habits and arts, rules and laws is *jahiliyya*, even to the extent what we consider to be Islamic cultures, Islamic sources, Islamic philosophy and Islamic thought are also constructs of *jahiliyya*.⁴⁶

In this sense, Qutb apparently attempts to use the terms *jahiliyya* to depict everything that is not Islamic. All things that are contradictory the Islam and not implemented by the Prophet and his companions in the early period of Islam n would be considered as part of *jahiliyya*. For him, there are only two cultures that exist and competes each other, namely, Islamic culture which is based on the Islamic concept and "concerned with all theoretical and practical affairs, and it contains principles, methods and characteristics which guarantee the development and perpetuation of all cultural activities,"⁴⁷ and *jahili* culture "which manifests itself in various modes of living which are nevertheless all based on one thing, and that is giving human

⁴⁵ Shepard, "Sayyid Qutb's Doctrine of Jahiliyya," 523.

⁴⁶ Qutb, **Milestones**, 34.

⁴⁷ **Ibid.**, 123.

thought the status of a Allah Almighty so that its truth or falsity is not to be judged according to Allah's guidance."⁴⁸

Qutb realizes that the main problem for the Muslims presently is a malignant cancer called *jahiliyya*, which gnaws and weakens them in all aspects of life. This cancer actually impedes them to achieve the glory of Islam as reached by the unique Quranic generation in the beginning period of Islam. To recover from the cancer, Qutb then offers best cure for healing it, namely by re-creating a Muslim generation as well as a unique Quranic generation in this era. According to him, there are three steps needed by the Muslim to re-create this generation. The first step is to re-build the existential seclusion as exemplified by the unique Quranic generation. In this sense, Qutb presumes that the best way to re-produce the existential seclusion nowadays is through the boycott and eliminating all non-Islamic teachings in all aspects of Muslims life.⁴⁹

The second step is to abandon all non-Islamic sources besides the Quran. In this sense, Qutb regards that the non-Islamic sources such as philosophy, mysticism, folklore are contradictory with the values of the Quran and must be discarded. The Muslims consciously should return to the Quran and avoid those non-Islamic sources, because only through this way the Muslim will have a pure in heart, pure in conscience, pure in mind, pure in vision, pure in understanding as reached by the unique Quranic generation.⁵⁰

The third step is to read and comprehend the Quran with the intent to put its values into the practice in the daily activities. It means that the Quran does not only be read and understood for the sake of intellectually appreciated or to be educated, civilized and better informed, but it is more than these purposes. It must be read with the main objective to put into practice its values and contents, so that the entire activities of Muslims in their life will finally be coloured and influenced by the values of the Quran as practiced by the unique Quranic generation. According to

⁴⁸ Qutb, *Milestones*, 123.

⁴⁹ Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 358.

⁵⁰ Qutb, *Milestones*, 30-31. See also Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 358.

him, this step will lead the values of the Quran to be a live and real in the dynamics of social life of the Muslim society.⁵¹

However, apart from what Qutb have deciphered regarding those steps above, his analysis and explanation related to the uniqueness of the unique Quranic generation, ultimately, becomes his main fundamental methodology for apprehend in and interpreting the Quran. Qutb's methodology is based on three important points; the first is that the Quran is to be lived, and not just intellectually appreciated. The second is that only the Quran itself should be the basis for understanding the Quran. Third is that the understanding of the Quran should be conducted in an existential seclusion from non-Islamic teaching (*jahiliyya*).⁵²

These are three important points of Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary. Nayed categorizes Qutb's approach as a radical one. This is because Qutb's methodology involves three radical acts: The first is severing the Muslims from the world of *jahiliyya*. The second is disconnecting the Muslims from any other sources except the Quran. The third is implementing all injunctions of Islamic teachings comprehensively as a proof of an absolute obedience and commitment towards the divine imperative.⁵³

1.3. Sayyid Qutb's Political Thought

1.3.1. Qutb's Idea of State

According to Qutb, state, cannot be separated from religion (Islam). Islam literally means submission obedience, true belief and derivation of all principles of life, which include what are allowed and what are forbidden by God, and what are lawful and what are unlawful. Qutb specifically characterizes Islam as a total way of life, and it "is essentially unity worship and work, political and economic theory, legal demands and spiritual exhortations, faith and conduct, this world and the world

⁵¹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 31-32. See also Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 358.

⁵² Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 359.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 362.

to come, all these are related parts of one comprehensive whole.”⁵⁴ He adds that there is no true system and way of life for humanity, except Islam. On the other hand, all other systems in terms of way of life besides Islam are *jahiliyya* as stated in the Quran (QS: 5:50).⁵⁵ Therefore, in this sense, state and all of its aspects basically are integrated with Islam or part of Islam. Explicitly, Qutb defines state as an Islamic state established by the Muslim society based on *sharia* that source from the Quran in the Islamic land (*dar-ul-Islam*).⁵⁶

His definition of state above basically denotes that Islam is a comprehensive religion covering all aspects of human of life including the aspect of politics/state which functions to uphold the values of justice through the implementation of God’s laws (*sharia*) on earth. Therefore, based on this sense, Qutb completely rejects the idea of separation of state and religion as implemented by Western countries. He argues that Western civilization is the first civilization to introduce the split between state and religion or belief and practice. He identifies that what was practiced by the Western civilization concerning the segregation of state from religion is contradictory with Islam, and even he certainly believes that this separation has constructed a permanent condition of *jahiliyya* in the West that has scattered throughout the world, and leading to some negative consequences.⁵⁷

Apart from his rejection towards the separation between state and religion, what he aims concerning state is basically related to an Islamic state. In this sense, Qutb apparently attempts to segregate between an Islamic state and non-Islamic state to confirm that the Muslims only can live and exist within the Islamic state based on

⁵⁴ Sayyid Qutb, **Social Justice in Islam**, 5/2.

⁵⁵ For a comprehensive explanation, see Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 4:112-113.

⁵⁶ Qutb, **Milestones**, 131. According to Asyraf HJ AB Rahman, Qutb’s idea of state is actually the Islamic state based on *sharia*, in which the obligation to build the state is part of the religious duties for every Muslim. On the other hand, the obligation to construct an Islamic state is very urgent and important for Muslim because according to Qutb, the most effective instrument to implement Islamic law is through the Islamic state. See, AB Rahman, “The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb’s *Fi Zilal Al-Quran*,” 157-160.

⁵⁷ Sayyid Qutb, **Islam: The Religion of the Future**, 33. See also, Qutb, **Social Justice in Islam**, 14:21. According to Luke Laboda, the main reason why Qutb totally rejects the idea of separation between religion and state as introduced and implemented in the West is due to the fact that its implementation in the West just has “created permanent condition of *jahiliyya* in the West that has spread throughout the world, thereby creating numerous negative consequences.” See Luke Laboda, “The Thought of Sayyid Qutb,” **Ashbrook Statesmanship Thesis Recipient of 2004 Charles E. Parton Award**, 9.

the values of the Quran and isolated from any kind of *jahiliyya*. On the other hand, non-Islamic state where the values of Islam are ignored and the *jahili* system are upheld, is forbidden for Muslims, even they are encouraged to hostile it. For Qutb, to establish an Islamic state is the duty of every Muslim and part of *jihad*⁵⁸, where only through the Islamic state the laws of God can really be maintained and implemented completely. To the contrary, every Muslim who rejects to the duty of establishing the Islamic state based on the laws of God, then according to Qutb, the Quran identifies those people as unbelievers, wrongdoers and iniquitous.⁵⁹

Additionally, Qutb states that the Islamic state cannot be established and developed by any other society except the Muslim society. Of course, this society must be a group of people who do have belief, strong commitment to Islam, good understanding of the Quran and the Islamic laws, and even they refuse non-Islamic sources besides the Quran to be their guidance of life. Therefore, Qutb emphasizes that the society can really grow and exist to be a strong society after they reject all kind of *jahiliyya*; while he also believes that the existence of the Muslim society will gradually lead to the establishment of the Islamic state.

Qutb contends that in Islam there is only one land on the earth named the Islamic land (*dar-ul-Islam*) where the Islamic state can exist and develop and the laws of *sharia* can be practised fully while the rest of the world is named as the home of hostility (*dar-ul-harb*). Based on this perspective, Qutb divides the world into two parts; firstly, the land of Islam (*dar-ul-Islam*) and secondly, the land of hostility (*dar-ul-harb*). Here, I will start to explain with the second one namely *dar-ul-harb*. According to Qutb, *dar-ul-harb* refers to any place where the Islamic law (*sharia*) is not imposed and implemented, and where un-Islamic law is dominant on the other hand, even though its population is Muslims. Qutb states that based on the Quran

⁵⁸ According to Qutb, *jihad* in Islam “is simply a name for striving to make this system (Islamic system/*sharia*) of life dominant in the World.” See Qutb, **Milestones**, 86. On the other hand, Qutb contends that the main reasons to implement *jihad* are related to establish God’s authority and law on earth through the establishing an Islamic state and abolishing all *jahili* and satanic systems of life, and to “end the lordship of one man over others since all men are creatures of Allah and no one has the authority to make them his servants or to make arbitrary laws for them. See Qutb, **Milestones**, 81. Qutb also states that to maintain and defend the existence of the Islamic state is also the main reason for proclaiming and practising *jihad*. See, Qutb, **Milestones**, 82.

⁵⁹ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 4:4.

(QS: 8:73) a Muslim must prepare to fight against the people of *dar-ul-harb* because they are disbelievers. Their existence according to Qutb potentially will jeopardize and oppress the Muslims. Qutb adds, if the disbelievers want to make a treaty and reconciliation with Muslims, so the Muslim must accept, respect, help and protect them (QS: 8:72). Therefore, based on these arguments, Qutb contends that Muslims have only two possible options related to the relationships with *dar-ul-harb*; the first is reconciliation and peace under the peace agreement contract between them. And the second option is war when the first option cannot be agreed by both sides.⁶⁰

The second land is *dar-ul-Islam*, which according to Qutb points to any place where Islamic law is enforced and implemented and where Islam is dominant, although the majority of its citizens are not Muslims. In this respect, basically, the most important criterion of *dar-ul-Islam* is not related to number and quantity of Muslims' population in a state whether they are majority or minority, however its criterion rests on whether the Islamic law is upheld and dominant in the state, so that if the Islamic law is not imposed, enforced and less dominant, so the state cannot be included as *dar-ul-Islam*. In other words, the main criterion to be part of *dar-ul-Islam* is related to how strong the Islamic law implementation and enforcement in a state is.⁶¹

In addition, there are some characteristics of *dar-ul-Islam*: The first is that all elements related to the political system must be based on the principle of Islamic laws and not man-made political systems such as democracy, communism and so forth. This is because the Islamic laws are originated from God, which vouch the people to live in harmony in the world and hereafter. On the other hand, according to Qutb, man-made laws are full of people's desire and interest, which will lead the people into a destruction and disorder.

The second characteristic of *dar-ul-Islam* is related to the universality of Islam. Qutb states that Islam comes to institute only one relationship, namely a

⁶⁰ Qutb, *Milestones*, 131

⁶¹ *Ibid.* See also Qutb, *In the Shade of the Quran*, vol. 4:68-69. Qutb's criteria of the Islamic state is also elaborated by AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*, 152.

relation in sight of Allah and eliminate others Therefore, according to him, there is no nationality in *dar-ul-Islam* except the nationality of Islam based on the belief that there is no God except Allah (QS: 4:1). The most important point from this perspective is that the relationship in Islam is not built upon the relation of family, tribe, ethnicity, nationality and so forth. Therefore, everyone who believes in Allah and accepts the laws of God will automatically become the citizen of *dar-ul-Islam*.⁶²

In this respect, Qutb seemingly wants to create a supranational government under the Islamic laws with a central government, where all citizens have equal rights and obligation. It might be because he was inspired from the Islamic caliphate under the four caliphs of *ar-Rashidhun* caliph (Abu Bakar, Omar, Usman and Ali) who were part of the unique Quranic generation. On the other hand, Qutb really believes that his idea of state potentially will be in accordance with the needs of the Muslim community today, namely related to the need of the Islamic state for them instead of national state as practised in the Western countries, which according to him is contradictory with Islam.

Of course, the Islamic state needs a leader. According to Qutb, the Islamic state should be led by an *imam*⁶³ or *khalifa* (leader) who is elected by the committee of *shura* through a mechanism of consultation and deliberation among them to lead the government. He adds that the leader is the one who is able to govern the Muslim community to the path of God, especially to implement the laws of God on earth. Hence, the leader must have a strong commitment to enforcing and executing the laws of *sharia* in the state. Qutb states that the main criteria to be imam are related to the quality of religious commitment and readiness to be a just imam. To have the criteria, certainly, the leader must have a deep understanding of the Islam, its laws

⁶² Qutb, **Milestones**, 140.

⁶³ Qutb states that the terms *imam* refers to all aspects of leadership including prophet hood, political authority, and the leading of congregational prayers. Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 1:132. See also See, AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*," 170. In this context, AB Rahman states that basically Qutb's understanding of *imam* has three meanings, namely *imama al-risala*, *imama al-khilafah* and *imama al-salat*. Qutb adds that *imama al-risala* and *imama al-khilafah* is integrated as shown by the Prophet of Muhammad and the Prophet David. On the other hand, they were the prophets of God but, at the same time, they were the leaders of the government. After the Prophet Muhammad, it becomes the duty of *imam* or *khalifa* among Muslims to enforce and uphold the laws of *sharia*.

and teachings, and also strong belief (*aqida*) and justice. This is because without having these aspects, it seems to be not realistic that he will have and reach the quality of religious commitment and readiness to be a good and just leader. In this context, what Qutb wants to deliver is that the political leadership must be given by the Muslims to one who has those criteria, not because of family ties or blood relation.⁶⁴

As mentioned prior, the imam as the leader of government must be chosen and appointed through the *shura* system which is one of the most important aspects of the Islamic state, and it will be explained later. This is because the members of *shura* basically represent the whole Muslim community to uphold God's command. After the leader was elected, all Muslims must give their *bay'a*⁶⁵ to him as a proof of their loyalty and all duties of supervising the leader's implementation and application of the Islamic laws is not only the task of *shura*'s members but also Muslims task. On the other hand, Qutb states that since the leader of the Islamic state was elected by majority of *shura*'s members, he rejects the emergence of other Islamic state led by other leader; even he assumes that this leader is a transgressor (*bugha*). This is because according to Qutb, the leader's function and role is to maintain the unity and solidarity among Muslims. Therefore, this function will be difficult to be realized if in the land of Islam there are two different leaders.⁶⁶

On the other hand, Qutb also states that all governmental matters should be decided by the imam after holding the discussion with the members of *shura*. Imam as the leader of government basically has a very important role to enforce the Islamic laws into the practice. The important point related to authority of leader is that although he has power to be obeyed by the people, it does not mean that his power is

⁶⁴ AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*," 170.

⁶⁵ The word *ba'a* is originally an Arabic word which means exchanging money for goods by mutual consent of giving the cost (of the goods) and receiving (in return) the priced goods. In terms of political context, the terms *ba'a* refers to the meaning of pledge of allegiance. For a detailed elaboration, see AB Rahman, "The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*," 181-186.

⁶⁶ Historically, QS: 3:159 explains and informs concerning the battle of Uhud happened in 625 between the Muslims and the disbelievers from Makah, and also explanation the deliberation (*shura*) held by the Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad before this battle. See, Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:218-222. On the other hand, QS: 42:38 deciphers the importance and position of *shura* in Islam. And for a complete elaboration, see Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 15. 193-196

an absolute power. Actually, leader's power is limited and he probably will lose it, when he deviates and abuse from the principles of *sharia*. On this condition, Qutb argues that this leader must be toppled from his position. This is because according to Qutb, to ensure that the leader should not act and lead the Muslims based on other than the *sharia* and the will of people.

1.3.2. *Shura* and Democracy

One of the important political aspects highlighted by Qutb is concerning *shura* and democracy issues. When talking about *shura*, Qutb refers to the Quran (QS: 3:159) and (QS: 42:38). According to him, these verses explicitly command the Muslim to run their all affairs through *shura*. Qutb continues that *shura* is basically one of the features of Islamic way of life for Muslims. He also underlines that *shura* is a part of the laws of Islam (*sharia*) which cannot be separated from the quality of the faith of every Muslim. In this sense, Muslims are demanded to realise and comprehend how significant its position in Islam is. Therefore, for Qutb, there is no reason for Muslims to do not set and govern their matters based on or through *shura*.⁶⁷

As mentioned by Qutb prior that *shura* is one of the notable features of the Islamic way of life, in which the Prophet himself constantly practiced it along his era with his companions in deciding all matters, particularly related to the political affairs and policies. In fact, as a Prophet who receives the direct command and revelation from God, the Prophet Muhammad basically need not *shura* to decide all problems. Yet, to show the importance of *shura*, the Prophet was still required to perform it through a mutual consultation and discussion with his companion on the conduct of his government as mentioned in the Quran (QS: 3:159).

On the other hand, Qutb also stresses that the position of *shura* in Islam equally important as the prayer (*al-salat*). Therefore, the obligation to implement it for Muslims becomes a very fundamental duty in all conditions as the obligation to

⁶⁷ Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 5:13.

perform prayer five times a day in any situation. To espouse his argument, Qutb points the Quran (QS: 42:38), which mentions *shura* and *al-salat* together, in which *al-salat* is usually mentioned together with *al-zakat* in many verses of the Quran, where it also shows that the position of *al-zakat* is comparable to the position of prayer in Islam. Based on the verse, Qutb concludes that *shura* really has the same position with *as-salat*.⁶⁸ According to him, although the verse was revealed in Makah where the Muslims were not living under the Islamic state, while they were still instructed to perform *shura*. It implies that the implementation of *shura* becomes an obligation for Muslims to be carried out in all conditions, particularly related to the political and governmental affairs even though they are not living in Islamic state.

Further, Qutb explains that although the Quran mentions the concept of *shura* during the Meccan period where Muslims were a minority class living under the oppression of the majority, namely the Makah's people who are the pagan, it denotes that *shura* should not be abandoned and should still be practiced, even if the Muslims do not have any Islamic state. They are sued to implement *shura* as it was demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions during the Mecca period. Qutb argues that the concept of *shura* began to be institutionalized for the Islamic government during the Medina period after the Prophet decided to migrate from Mecca to Medina (*hijra*) in 622 AD, where the Prophet untimely built an Islamic state in Medina. According to Qutb, the battle of Uhud that happened in third year after the migration of the Prophet was the first event where the Prophet and his companion performed a mutual consultation/*shura* related to the government affairs as informed in the Quran (QS: 3:159).

The consultation was about where they would fight the unbelievers, whether they would fight the unbelievers inside or outside the city of Medina. A group wanted to fight them outside the city and another group wanted otherwise, namely to stay inside Medina with a consideration that they would easily repel every attack of the enemy because they knew better the situation and condition of Medina than the unbelievers. Personally, the prophet wanted to fight them inside the city because he

⁶⁸ For a complete Qutb's elaboration concerning the position of *shura* and *as-salat*, see Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 15:193.

had seen in his dream that one of his families would be killed, and a number of his companions would fall in the battle. As a prophet whose dreams always come true, the prophet believed that his dream indicates that remaining inside the city and fighting them inside is better than battling them outside the city. But the result of the consultation showed that the majority of Muslims wanted to fight them outside the city. And finally, the prophet followed their decision to battle them outside the city without any hesitation.⁶⁹

In sum, Muslims were defeated by the unbelievers and what the prophet had seen in his dream absolutely came true, his uncle, Hamza (d. 625) was killed and a number of his companions died in this battle. But the important point taken from this battle according to Qutb is not about the victory or the loss. Here, the significant thing is that to implement the principle of *shura* is an obligation for Muslims, even if in the end result of decision which has been obtained through *shura* leads them to the failure or lack of the success as shown by the Prophet in the case of Muslims in the battle of Uhud.

Summarily, before the war of Uhud, the Prophet and his companions held the mutual discussion among them related to the location where the Muslims must wage war against un-believers, whether inside the city or otherwise outside Medina. When the result of discussion indicates that the majority of companions tended to fight the unbelievers outside the city, then the prophet immediately agreed and obeyed this decision since it was outcome of the majority views through the mechanism of *shura* which is an important part of the teachings of Islam, even though the Prophet was the one who wanted to stay inside the city and to fight against the unbelievers from inside it. This is because the Prophet knew that *shura* and any decision resulted from it in Islamic view is regarded as a perfect decision based on the perspective of Islamic *sharia*, and because *sharia* is a mercy from God for Muslim on the other hand.

In this context, Qutb seemingly wants to emphasize the importance of *shura* for the Muslims by giving a historical explanation concerning how the Prophet

⁶⁹ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:220-221.

implemented it in any condition and consequence, although the prophet as the messenger of God personally did not need to do *shura* in making every decision due to his position as the Prophet who always guided by God through revelation. It means that the result of *shura* is not the parameter related to whether *shura* should be implemented or not, but the obligation to perform *shura* is an absolute necessity and part of religious obligation that must be implemented by Muslims, although its fruit is a failure. In this respect, actually, the Prophet wanted to educate the Muslim regarding how to obey God's injunctions including *shura*, in order they should not have any feeling of scepticism and hesitation over such a decision made and decided by them since it is in accordance with God's commands.⁷⁰

Apart from the discussion upon the urgency and the history of *shura* above, basically, Qutb does not specify a detailed explanation concerning its procedure and the selection of its committee members. He just emphasizes that *shura* must be implemented only by the Muslim community and not *jahili* society, who have strong belief, who are knowledgeable and well educated, who really understand how to respect and accept other people's idea with the hope that such opinions will improve the welfare of the Muslim community. According to him, when the Muslim community is established, it would be easy to find these qualified people to fill the posts. Therefore, Qutb believes that only based on these criteria, *shura* can be practised effectively. On the other hand, Qutb adds that the procedure and "the way to conduct consultation is left for every generation and environment to decide. It is not cast in a rigid form that must always be followed," but its procedure is open to changes and developments depending on the circumstances of the community.⁷¹

Additionally, Qutb also tries to compare between *shura* and democracy by delivering a question; is *shura* compatible with democracy? He starts to answer this question by arguing that although, both of *shura* and democracy equally use the

⁷⁰ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:160.

⁷¹ **Ibid.**, vol. 15:194. In this context, Qutb also explains the reason why the procedure of the implementation of *shura* is open to changes and developments because according to Qutb, basically, "no Islamic system is outlined in text that must be literally followed or set in a particular model that cannot be modified. They are first and foremost of product of a process that begins with the truth of faith taking root in man's hearth as to mould his thought and behaviour." See, Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol.15:194.

principle of the majority voice becoming a decisive factor in the decision making process, it does not mean that *shura* is compatible with democracy. According to Qutb, *shura* was established and institutionalized for the sake of Muslim's interest, where the people who are involved in it has no personal and factional interprets in every decision made, therefore, every member of *shura* could not dispute and change decisions that are made and agreed by the majority of committee members. On the other hand, Qutb claims that these rules did not happen in the implementation of democracy practised the Western democratic countries.

According to Qutb, the main problem with democracy is that as man-made system, in which Qutb claims that all-man system would make another people to be servant of others and take one another to be lords besides God. Qutb adds that the phenomenon happens in Western countries where democracy emerged and was implemented there. This is because under the human system, the authority to legislate is controlled and dominated by certain groups who have power and capital. They make and produce legislation for the sake of their interest and not for the sake of people's interest and needs it becomes one of his reasons why he contends that *shura* is not compatible with democracy.⁷²

However, Qutb argues that the most fundamental reason why he disagrees and refutes democracy, because this idea makes people's sovereignty as its most important principle, while according to Qutb the sovereignty itself is one of the greatest attribute of God. It means that this concept attempts to usurp His greatest attribute, namely sovereignty and gives it to the people. And based on the principle, the people start to make some men becoming lords over others. For Qutb, it is part of *jahili* systems which is always based on the rebellion against God's sovereignty. This

⁷² Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:87. According to AB Rahman Related to Qutb's rejection of compatibility between *shura* and democracy (Western countries) is because Qutb sees that democracy Western countries was dominated by some capitalists and other influential members who control the government and all members of government. This condition led to the condition that the members of parliament did not represent the people's aspiration, but on the contrary they represented the interest and the voice of the capitalists. Hence, all decisions which are made by the parliament are certainly not for the sake of people's needs and interests but for the capitalists. Therefore, a question arises here is how can the people obtain better protection from every decision made under this system if their rights are stolen and ignored for the interest of certain groups and vice versa. See, AB Rahman, "Social Justice in Islam as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*," 178.

perspective indicates that Qutb's hostility towards democracy lies on the different understanding of philosophical foundation of popular sovereignty. According to Qutb, the notion of the people's sovereignty is substantially contradictory with the philosophy of Islam, which is based on the concept of the sovereignty of God as described previously. On the other hand, according to Qutb, Islam as complete religion that is united by the principle of belief has had complete political systems, therefore, Muslims need not democracy which is man-made laws and principally it is contradictory with Islam.

In this respect, Qutb's response towards *shura* and democracy above denotes Qutb's commitment related to universalism of Islam as a holistic and comprehensive religion covering all aspects of humans' life including the aspect of politic. Therefore, Qutb contends that Muslims need not democracy since they have had an identity, which is Islam. He claims that Islam is better than any political system, including democracy. This is because Islam is way and code of living that covers everything, and its laws are the laws of divinity made by God which give an accurate guarantee, namely the harmonious life to the people who live under the guidance of it. These laws are free from all defects and mistakes, while democracy is the man-made product, which is easily interfered by human desires and interests, and producing nothing except slavery and injustice.

Based on these reasons above, Qutb explicitly states that democracy is part of the system of *jahiliyya* which according to him is a major disease for Muslims in the modern era. He might probably think that Muslims would never attain a political order as good as what has been achieved by of Quranic unique generation, since they are still dependent to uses this *jahili* system with abandoning and ignoring the Quran which is the only source of guidance of life for human beings to guide them in achieving God's way.

1.3.3. People's Sovereignty versus God's Sovereignty

After elaborating Qutb's idea of *shura* and democracy, other important Qutb's political thought is concerning the concept of *hakimiyya*. The word of *hakimiyya* originally is derived from the Arabic root h-k-m from which its substantive form is *hukm* (rule) and its nomen agentis is *hakim* (ruler).⁷³ Therefore, from the point of Arabic grammar view, the terms *hakimiyya* can be identified as a verbal noun which implies 'sovereignty'. Based on this perspective, Qutb regards that *hakimiyya* is none other than God's sovereignty. On the other hand, Qutb contends that the word *hukm* mentioned in the Quran, basically is used to proclaim and inform concerning the authority and the power of God which only belongs to Him as confirmed in the Quran(35:5), (25:2), (18:110) and (18:57). In the other word, according to Qutb, these verses clearly emphasize that the ultimate sovereignty just belongs to God.

Principally, he argues that the idea of sovereignty in Islam cannot be separated from the first confession of the faith (*shahada*) that is '*La ilaha illa Allah*' which means "there is no deity except God". He adds that the confession (*shahada*) in fact is not only an ordinary and meaningless declaration which should be pronounced by everyone who wants to be a Muslim, but it was a fundamental declaration which substantively consists of a significant proclamation to fight against and eliminate all forms of human sovereignty such as those of governors, princes, priests, the leaders of tribes, the wealthy and the rulers from the earth because in essence, sovereignty belongs only to God and all legislation is from God.⁷⁴

The fundamental point related to Qutb's idea of God's sovereignty lies on his key argument saying that principally God is sovereign and the manifestation of His sovereignty is Islamic laws/*sharia*. Therefore, Qutb believes that there is no *hakimiyya* other than God's *hakimiyya*, which means that there is no law other than God's law, because He is the creator and the owner of the laws. Based on this argument, only God is basically the source of sovereignty. In terms of political

⁷³ Khatab, **The Power of Sovereignty**, 16. See also Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb*, 214.

⁷⁴ Qutb, **Milestones**, 38.

context, Qutb's idea of God's sovereignty basically leads to the understanding that God is politically sovereign. It implies that all of governmental affairs must be based and implemented under or in accordance with the principles of *sharia*. Qutb also adds that in terms of the practical context, the implementation of the concept of God's sovereignty underlines that the source of the sovereignty must be taken from God's laws, namely the Islamic laws and other sources outside the Islamic laws cannot be the source of the sovereignty.

In general, Qutb's idea of God's sovereignty is basically similar with Maududi's concept saying that God is politically sovereign. In this context, Qutb's and Maududi's idea of God sovereignty equally point to one similarity that governmental activity is arranged and limited by the *sharia* laws. It means that the government must be acted and implemented only based on the framework of *sharia* laws and no other law. Therefore, any kind of government that is not built upon *sharia* laws will automatically not be identified as the Islamic government but *jahili* government, and this government will be regarded as the transgressor. To strengthen this argument Qutb cites two Quranic verses; "These are the bounds set by God; do not, then transgress them. Those who transgress the bounds set by God are wrongdoers indeed"⁷⁵ (QS: 2:229) and "O you who believe, obey Allah and obey His Apostle and those from among yourselves who hold authority. Then if there is any dispute between you concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and His Apostle if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the better course and most just"⁷⁶ (QS: 4:59).

Relying on this point of view, Qutb explicitly rejects the concept of people's sovereignty as implemented in some of Western states, which rests on the principle that the source of sovereignty is people and the absolute sovereignty also belongs to people. As mentioned previously, the pivot of Qutb's idea of God sovereignty refers to a conclusion, namely God is sovereign and His sovereign is *sharia* law, so that the concept of people's sovereignty based on his understanding is apposite with the

⁷⁵ For a detailed explanation of this verse, see Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:288.

⁷⁶ **Ibid.**, vol. 3: 158.

Islamic teaching saying that God is sovereign and the sovereignty source from His laws.

The other reason why he rejects the idea of people's sovereignty is because he assumes that this concept is human's product or man-made laws. Consequently, in terms of political context, surely, all governmental affairs will be made and implemented in the framework of man-made laws, which ignore *sharia*. He believes that only based on the *sharia*, the people will be free from every political exploitation, oppression and servitude. He identifies the concept of people's sovereignty is a human's effort to rebel and usurp the sovereignty from God. And According to him, every rebellion towards God's identity and attribute is part of *jahiliyya*. Only God deserves to have an absolute sovereignty and neither human nor others. Qutb adds that the basic idea of people's sovereignty is how to make people to be the owner of the sovereignty in which its consequence is that they will have a right and authority to create the values and to make the rules of collective behaviour among them, which basically is God's right. In this point, Qutb confirms that the concept of people's sovereignty is contradictory with Islam, and even he presumes it as a part of *shirk* as also claimed by Maududi.⁷⁷

To strengthen his argument related to his rejection towards the concept of people's sovereignty, Qutb then presents a question concerning what the Western people have produced through this concept. Have they generated a just society, moralized, civilized community through this concept? In response to these questions, Qutb argues that the people who have insisted in the concept of the people's sovereignty, in fact did not produced anything except the slavery and oppression of others as happened in the Western states, and even they failed to create a moralized and civilized society. According to him, what occurred in the West as mentioned above will never take place in the Islamic society because, "only in the Islamic way of life do all men become free from the servitude of some men to others and devote

⁷⁷ *Shirk* is associating partners with Allah, worship of false gods/idols. In this context, the main reason why he regards that people's sovereignty is part of *shirk*, because the essence of the idea of people's sovereignty is to give the authority to legislate to people and to accept other sovereignty of other besides God. See, Qutb, **Milestones**, 56. According to Esposito, basically, the terms *shirk* is an Arabic word which refers to the meaning of ascribing the attributes, power or authority of God to other besides Him and worshipping others besides Him. See, Esposito, ed., **Voices**, 34.

themselves to the worship of Allah alone, deriving guidance from Him alone, and bowing before Him alone.”⁷⁸ It also because Islam and its laws is created by God for humans to forbid and destroy all kinds of slavery, servitude and iniquity among the people, but on the contrary instructing them to devote themselves to the worship of God and to love the people. This feature according to him is the main reason why the Islamic way of life is unique and better than the others.

Qutb claims that Islam basically is a comprehensive and it is neither a theoretical nor doctrinal religion based on some assumptions. It substantially is a way of life that works with the reality and fact arranged by God through the Quran and revealed to the prophet Muhammad. Actually, the Quran frequently has mentioned and proclaimed that God as the creator is sovereign over the universe in its verses. It means that no one has the right to have the power and authority to legislate the system of life except God. All laws are created by Him on the basis of the principle of justice. Therefore, any servitude among the people will not happen under the laws of God, but on the contrary when the right to make laws for the people is in the hand of men, then they potentially will make the laws based on their interest and desire and not based on the values of justice. And finally, it will lead the people to enslave the others.

Qutb continues by saying that Islam is not only a religion of *da'wa* (calling people) functioning merely to call people to be Muslims, but it is wider than this function. Substantially, Islam is a total devotion and submission to God alone whose values cover all aspects of human life politically, economically, culturally and so forth. According to Qutb, the *jahili* people have understood Islam in a very limited meaning, namely only to the extent of ritual worships such as praying, fasting, pilgrimage and excluding the ritual elements such as politics, economic would not be regarded as the part of Islam. In other words, in this sense, Qutb wants to emphasize that Islam and its laws (*sharia*) basically are the manifestation of God's sovereignty

⁷⁸ Qutb, **Milestones**, 27.

in the practical sense as he claimed before which, basically, encompasses and arranges all aspects of people's life spiritually and worldly.⁷⁹

In spite of that, one important point which should be described in this chapter associated with Qutb's idea of God's sovereignty is how this notion could be implemented in a political system. In this case, Qutb argues that human as God's vicegerents on earth must serve to carry out the divine law since it is a trust from God. To implement this trust, people need to elect a leader through an Islamic mechanism namely *shura* which is part of *sharia*. Afterward, the leader should be obeyed by them since he follows the all the commands of God and His prophet. God says, "Believers, obey God and obey the messenger and those from among you who have been entrusted with authority. If you are dispute over anything, refer it to God and the messenger; if you are truly believe in God and the last day. This is the best for you and most suitable for final determination" (4: 59).⁸⁰

For this verse, Qutb states that this verse gives a very important message, namely sovereignty just belongs to Allah alone. Therefore, He has made laws for the human to be obeyed for the sake of people's interest. To obey God is obligatory for the people, and the way to obey Him is by implementing His laws on the earth as written in the Quran, which was conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad. In this sense, they are required to not only obey God but also the prophet and his prophetic traditions. And this obedience is not enough for the believers, they are also demanded to obey the leader who is entrusted with the authority among them on condition that he must lead them based on the Quran and the prophetic traditions. Afterward, they should always obey him, since he never invites or orders people to do what is forbidden by God and His prophet. And when he commands them to what is banned by God and His messenger and then they should not obey him as stated by the prophet Muhammad which was narrated by Bukhori and Muslim. "A Muslim s

⁷⁹ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 2:43. Related to this case, AB Rahman also gives a comprehensive explanation. See, AB Rahman, "Social Justice in Islam as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilal al-Quran*," 161.

⁸⁰ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 3:158.

required to listen and obey, when he likes or dislike unless he is ordered to commit what is forbidden. Should he be so ordered, then he must neither listen nor obey.”⁸¹

What is explained by Qutb above, related to the leader who is elected by the people to implement the laws God basically indicates that people has a very important role concerning the authority. On the other hand, Qutb also seemingly agrees to support the representative government model, which is commissioned and functioned to carry out God’s mandate. To practice the mandate, the member of representative are required to select a just leader among them, who will be an executive or leader to govern them in implementing God’s mandate and laws on earth based on the values of Islamic laws. Therefore, Qutb’s notion in this context seems that he approves the concept of democracy, but not the meaning of the idea of democracy as produced and implemented by Western countries, which makes people’s sovereignty as its main principle. On the contrary, the idea of political system that Qutb wants is that it should be based on *sharia* where the sovereignty only belongs to God alone, not to the people.

1.3.4. *Sharia* according to Sayyid Qutb

When discussing about Qutb’s idea of *sharia*, certainly, it cannot be separated from his conception of God’s sovereignty as it was pertained earlier. Qutb identifies *sharia*, which literally means the path or the road leading to the water, as a complete way of life created and provided by God for human being. It consists of the divine laws which cannot be compared to the man-made laws. Basically, Qutb was in line with the traditional thought saying that *sharia* is the best way of life based on the Quran and *Sunnah* as its main source, where the Muslims must take and implement it as their way of life. Based on this reason, therefore, the Muslims must accept *sharia* without any doubt and question, and also reject all other rules in any form.⁸²

⁸¹ Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 3:166.

⁸² Qutb, **Milestones**, 27.

Qutb states that *sharia* principally is the manifestation of God's laws that must be obeyed and implemented by men as God's vicegerent on earth. The manifestation of God's law is the Islamic law that is created by God for men to organize their life. Therefore, based on this viewpoint, Qutb argues that *sharia* is the best law provided by God for human being, and since it comes from God, so it cannot be compared with other laws, particularly man-made law.⁸³

In this point, every Muslim must accept *sharia* to be foundation of his life. The most important reason behind why the Muslims should obey and accept *sharia* is that following and obeying *sharia* means to recognize the attributes of God as the creator and the owner of sovereignty over the universe which is the important part of the implementation of *shahada* (*La ilaa illa Allah/There is no deity except God*). Hence, in this respect, accepting and following *sharia* is the basic principle of faith for Muslim while rejecting it means a departure from Islam. Therefore, obeying and adhering *sharia* for Muslims is very significant as an attribute and identity that distinguishes between the believers and disbelievers or Muslims and non-Muslims.

According to Qutb, in Islam, the meaning of *sharia* is not restricted only to the legal and formal injunctions, especially only limited to ritual aspects of religion, but it covers every aspect of human life which deals with belief, the nature of life, governance, human relationship, economy, morals, manners, the values of ideal society, all aspects of knowledge and principles of science and so forth. It indicates that in this respect, *sharia* is integrated and inseparable with the all facets of human life, including religious and worldly matters. Therefore, in this sense, Qutb's idea saying that Islam covers all human aspects spiritually and worldly is contradictory from the concept of secularism which separates the religious matters and worldly matters.

Furthermore, Qutb explains the reason why the obedience to *sharia* is a necessity for human beings. He states that basically man is part of universe that is created by God. The laws that govern the universe are not different from the laws regulating the human nature. On the other hand, *sharia* is the part of the universal

⁸³ Qutb, *Milestones*, 49.

laws that govern the entire universe. In fact, all these things are created and controlled by God. Therefore, the laws of *sharia* that God has provided for the people to organize their lives should be obeyed by them, in order that they can live on earth in harmony with the universe. This total harmony between human being and universe will give positive impacts for men where they can live peacefully in accordance with the laws of universe. Therefore, *sharia* basically is a blessing given by God for the mankind to harmonize their life with the universe, which finally will lead them to achieve their perfection in the hereafter.⁸⁴

This harmony would never come true, if the mankind ignores and rejects *sharia* while on the other side they accept and follow the man-made laws and system which is full of human desires. Its consequence is that they will begin to face various conflicts and disharmony with the universe since the man-made laws. This is because according to Qutb, man-made laws are constructed by men through their rationality and experience, which are very limited capacity in particular to understand the entire laws of universe. In this context, Qutb also asserts that the man-made laws potentially bring the people to a destruction, disharmony and conflict, because it full of desire and interest which gravitate to guide the people to the conflict and devastation. God says; “Had the truth followed their opinions, the heavens and the earth and whosoever is in them would surely have been in utter corruption (QS: 23:71).”⁸⁵

For Qutb, this verse gives a very obvious picture that a truth cannot be submissive to the personal desires and interests. On the other hand, the truth is something unique, unchangeable and consistent. It strongly will only exists and live through the laws of God which is a complete way of life for men. It grants them a guarantee, namely the peaceful and harmonious life in the world in accordance with the laws of universe, if they accept and obey it. In this sense, Qutb apparently, wants to show a fundamental difference between *sharia* as the laws of God and man-made laws. *Sharia* is a divine law that consistently will always direct the people to the truth. It ensures them to have a successful, harmonious peaceful life in the world and

⁸⁴ Qutb, **Milestones**, 100-104.

⁸⁵ See Qutb’s further explanation of this verse, Qutb, **In the Shade of the Quran**, vol. 12:175.

hereafter. To the contrary, the man-made laws, which rely on the strength of rationality, will induce them to the conflict and ruin. This is because; these laws are basically prone to the intervention of desires and human preferences. Therefore, he concludes that the truth only can be reached through *sharia*, and not by man-made laws.

To embody the harmonious and peaceful life on the earth based on the laws of God, Qutb contends that *sharia* must be implemented within the socio-political order through establishing a Muslim community, founding a state, organizing a society based on the values of *sharia* which is sourced from the Quran. Qutb states that the establishment of the Muslim society and the Islamic state based on the basis of true faith is part of religious duty for Muslims, which differentiates Islam from the other religions. This obligation is inseparable with the religion (Islam) and even integrated with it, and it also assumed as the worship and total submission to God as the manifestation of the meaning of Islam itself. Consequently, rejecting and ignoring it will be considered as the disobedience towards God's command.⁸⁶

According to his perspective, the most effective way to implement *sharia* is by involving the state. It implies that *sharia* must become the constitution of state, so that *sharia* can be implemented comprehensively through. Hence, there is no reason for Muslim to do not construct an Islamic state, so that they have to build it together. After, the state has been existent, so the duty to perform and implement the laws of *sharia* is in the hand of leader. On the hand, Qutb firmly states that the state will be quite difficult to be built and actualized if they do not construct an Islamic society as the first priority before establishing this state. Qutb views that the existence of the Muslim society will automatically lead them to an establishment of the Islamic state in the land Islam (*dar-ul-Islam*) where *sharia* is being its basis.⁸⁷

Undoubtedly, *dar-ul-Islam* according to Qutb is necessary for Muslims. This is because its existence is to represent and support the Muslims in executing and implementing the laws of *sharia*. Qutb believes that the main reason behind why the

⁸⁶ Qutb, **Milestone**, 102

⁸⁷ For a complete explanation, see the part of Qutb's idea of state.

Muslims have declined compared to the Western people in the modern era is because they have ignored the laws of *sharia* and tended to implement the man-made laws and system such as liberalism, communism, and socialism, to be their guidance in life. Meanwhile, their ignorance and rejection against the laws of *sharia* is certainly part of *jahili* acts as practiced by the people of Mecca when they rejected the truth of *sharia* brought by the Prophet Muhammad. Hence, to free them from such this condition, they are required to establish a *dar-ul-Islam* where *sharia* becomes the main basis of the state as exemplified by the first generation of Islam in the prophetic era. He also believes that under *dar-ul-Islam*, *sharia* can be truly implemented comprehensively, and what was achieved by the unique Quranic generation can be reached back by the Muslims in this era.

CHAPTER TWO

FAZLUR RAHMAN'S METHODOLOGY OF QURANIC COMMENTARY AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

The present chapter will comprehensively discuss the whole aspects of Rahman's thoughts in two important issues. The first one is related to his methodology of Quranic commentary, which completely focuses on the nature of revelation and the double movement theory. Secondly, it is regarding his political thought, through his notions of state, *shura* and democracy, God's sovereignty and people sovereignty and his perspective concerning the issue of *sharia*.

2.1. Fazlur Rahman's Life and Works

2.1.2. Fazlur Rahman's Life

Fazlur Rahman was born in Colonial India, in the Hazara district (today part of Pakistan) on September 21, 1919. Rahman's father, Mawlana Shihab al-Din was a famous Muslim scholar who had studied and graduated from the reputable Indian Seminary *Dar-al-Ulum* Deoband. Rahman started to study at his father's private institution focusing on the traditional Islamic knowledge that emphasize on law (*fiqh*), dialectical theology (*'ilm al-kalam*), prophetic tradition (*hadith*), Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*), logic (*mantiq*) and philosophy (*falsafa*). Rahman continued his master focusing on Arabic literature at Punjab University at Lahore and graduated in 1942. From there, in 1946, he went to Oxford University to continue his doctoral program and writing his dissertation on *Ibn Sina's Psychology* under supervision of Professor Simon Van den Bergh, and Rahman finished his doctorate in 1949.⁸⁸

Between 1950 and 1958, Rahman was a lecturer of Persian language and Islamic philosophical studies at Durham University. Afterward, he went to Canada to become an associate professor in Islamic Studies at McGill University, where he

⁸⁸ Fazlur Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam: a Study of Islamic Fundamentalism**, Edited by Ibrahim Moosa, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, 1-2.

stayed until 1961. Rahman turned back to Pakistan and became the director Central Institute of Islamic Research built by the Pakistan government over seven years from 1961-1968 at the behest of President Muhammad Ayyub Khan (d.1974) to help government in reforming and formulating the Islamic laws in order to be implemented into the daily dealings of the nation.

On the other hand, political parties and religious groups that confront Ayyub Khan's government realized that the most effective way to frustrate "the government's reformist orientation was to target the main ideological architect of reform, Fazlur Rahman, as the object of criticism and demonization."⁸⁹ Therefore, Ayyub Khan's opponents started to charge the agenda of reformation initiated by government and led by Rahman that some of the agendas were contradictory with the principle of Islam such as the issue of the nature of revelation, in which Rahman contended that "Quran is entirely the word of God and, in an ordinary sense, also entirely the word of Muhammad",⁹⁰ which was contradictory with the traditional understanding, in which the Quran is totally the word of God. Finally, this condition led the massive demonstration and protest from traditional scholars who accused him as an actor of heresy. Apart from that, his idea of the nature of revelation was influenced by the thoughts of Sheikh Waliyullah and Ahmad Sirhindi, which will be explained later.

Due to this instability in Pakistan, Rahman resigned from his position in 1968 and moved to America, and started to teach at Chicago University from 1969 until his death in 1988. Rahman's thoughts were based on a socio-historical analysis, where Islam and its teachings sourced from the Quran and prophetic tradition must be interpreted comprehensively through the socio-historical approach and supported by modern social in order to grasp neither a literal nor atomistic understanding of Islam. Along his life, Rahman wrote many books such as *Islamic Methodology in History* (1965), *Islam* (1979), *Major Themes of the Quran* (1980), *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (1982). His last book, *Revival and Reform in Islam*, was published after his death, in 2000.

⁸⁹ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 3.

⁹⁰ **Ibid.**, 15.

2.1.2. Fazlur Rahman's Works: An Overview

Rahman contends that the Prophet Muhammad was actively involved in the process of delivering revelation, where the revelation could not be separated from the history of the life and mission the Prophet. Therefore, the revelation is inseparable with the social and historical context as elaborated profoundly by him in his book *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*.

To avoid a partial and atomistic understanding of the Quran and to grasp a comprehensive meaning of it, Rahman proposes his double movement theory where the Quran should interpret through two movements; the first movement to discover the comprehensive meaning of Quran by using historical approach and the second movement to implement it in the current situation as explained profoundly in his books; *Islam and Modernity*, and *Revival and Reform in Islam*.

Apart from that, Rahman's commentary of the Quran can be traced in his book titled *Major Themes of the Quran* including his interpretation of state, *shura*, democracy, and economics. In terms of his idea of state, Rahman contends that the state in Islam should be a democratic state, where the Muslim society must be established before the establishment of state as mentioned in his articles "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu" (1967) and "Some Key Ethical Concepts of the Quran" (1983). He adds that all political decision must be made through the basis of *shura* which according to him is compatible with the concept of democracy, in which all decisions and laws made through parliamentary or representative system (1967).

Related to the idea of God's sovereignty, Rahman rejects the idea that politically God is sovereign, in which according to him, this idea leads to the perplexity and much confusion. In the political context, the sovereignty is in the hand of the people, in which if they use this sovereignty to legislate the law based on the principle of justice as the core the Quran, they basically respect and implement the idea of God's sovereignty (1967).

In terms of *sharia*, Rahman states that *sharia* should be comprehended comprehensively through the way of *ijtihad*. He argues that the gate of *ijtihad* has been always opened for every Muslim. To produce a comprehensive understanding of *sharia*, Rahman suggests Muslims to turn back to the organic relation between *Sunnah*, *ijtihad* and *ijma*, in which *ijma* is a result of an analysis towards *Sunnah* by using the analogical approach (*qiyas*). By doing *ijtihad* consistently through the organic relation, Rahman believes that Muslims will produce a comprehensive and dynamic interpretation of *sharia* as completely depicted in his work *Islamic Methodology in History*.

2.2. Fazlur Rahman's Methodology of Quranic Commentary

2.2.1. The Nature of Revelation

When discussing concerning Rahman's notion of the nature of revelation, it certainly cannot be separated from his idea that is contradictory with the orthodox⁹¹ notion regarding the nature of revelation. The orthodoxy contends that the Quran is absolutely the word of God revealed to the Prophet. They claim that the Quran is the uncreated and eternal words of God coming from His eternal attribute of knowledge revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the agency of the Archangel Gabriel on every occasion in which the Quran is totally different from the Prophet Muhammad, and the Prophet's role in the process of delivering revelation is not considered.⁹²

The most important reason why the orthodoxy rejects the Prophet's role in the process of delivering revelation is because if the Prophet has the role in that process, the purity of the Quran as God's word potentially will not be preserved in terms of its otherness, objectivity and verbal character. Therefore, the absence of the Prophet's involvement in the process of delivering revelation will automatically give

⁹¹ According to Rahman, orthodoxy refers to all medieval thought in the Muslim world. For further information, see Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, 2nd ed. Chicago, The University of Chicago, 2002, 31.

⁹² Rahman, *Revival and Reform in Islam*, 11. See also J.B. Heru Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: A Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," *Oreintasi Baru*, 17, no. 2, October 2008, 125. See also Akbar, "The Origins of Fazlur Rahman's Theory of Revelation," *3rd International Conference on Arabic Studies and Islamic Civilization*, 14-15 March 2016, 91. Doi: 9789670792088.

an absolute guarantee that the revelation is the words of God and those of the prophet related to its otherness, objectivity and the verbal character. Consequently, the sanctity of the revelation, which consists of the eternal and uncreated word of God stemming from His attribute of knowledge, will be kept all the time. Therefore, to maintain the otherness, objectivity and verbal character of the revelation, the orthodoxy argues that the Prophet's role in the process of delivering revelation is not taken into account, and he is regarded as a passive recipient.⁹³

For Rahman, it was true that the revelation is the word of God revealed to the Prophet, in which it is also called *wahy*⁹⁴ meaning of 'inspiration.' He also adds that along the history of human, God never speaks to the human except through the *wahy* as confirmed in the Quran (QS: 42: 51-52). Apart from this part, Rahman certainly rejects the orthodox understanding of the nature of revelation related to the ignoring of the Prophet's role in the process of delivering revelation. According to him, what was claimed by the orthodoxy saying that the Prophet was not involved and had no any role in the process of delivering revelation is not right and even it was contradictory with the historical fact of how the revelation was revealed during more than 22 years (610-632).⁹⁵

According to him, historically, some verses of the Quran sent down by God to the Prophet through Gabriel basically cannot be separated from the influence of Prophet's personal conducts and travails. For examples, the verse "The Prophet frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man (i.e. Abdullah bin Umm-Maktum, who came to Prophet while he was preaching to one of some of the Quraysh chiefs). And how you know that he might become pure (from sins)" (QS: 80:1-3) were revealed by God as an admonition towards the Prophet's behaviour when he constricted his face to one of his companions, a blind man, coming to him while he was involved in a serious discussion with some prominent figures of the people of Mecca.

⁹³ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 11.

⁹⁴ Rahman contends that *wahy* is basically close to the meaning of inspiration, "provided this latter is not supposed to exclude the verbal model necessarily (by 'Word', of course we do not mean sound). See, Rahman, **Islam**, 31.

⁹⁵ **Ibid.** See also, Fazlur Rahman, **Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition**, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 2-7.

And also the verse of the changing the prayer direction (*qibla*)⁹⁶ from Jerusalem to Mecca as mentioned in the Quran,

Verily! We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad's) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qibla (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjidil Haram (at Makah). And whosoever's you are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, the people who were given the Scripture (i.e. Jews and Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of Ka'bah at Makah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do (QS: 2: 144).

was revealed as the answer of the Prophet wish, namely to pray facing Ka'bah in Mecca after he was ordered by God to perform prayer five times a day facing the Jerusalem. The Quran also informs us about the time of the prophet's interaction with his wives, which had caused his personal sadness. Then God revealed "O Prophet (Muhammad) say to your wives: If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (divorce)" (QS: 33: 28) to the Prophet in order to be informed to his wives whether they want to be divorced by the Prophet, then they can marry with other men who are able to give them the worldly pleasures, or whether they want to be patient living with the Prophet in the simple life, but they would obtain the reward in the hereafter.⁹⁷

The facts above show that the nature of revelation cannot be segregated from the Prophet's religious personality. On the other hand, these examples also indicate that without understanding of Prophet's history and his historical context, many parts of the revelation will remain blurred. It proves that the Prophet has a significant role and actively involved in the process of delivering revelation, therefore, in this sense the Prophet is not the passive recipient in the process of delivering the revelations of

⁹⁶ Before (QS: 2:144) was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad that commanding him to alter the prayer direction from Jerusalem to Makah (Ka'bah), the Prophet prayed to the Jerusalem direction for sixteen or seventeen months. See Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, **Tafsir al-Jalalayn**, trans. Feras Hamza, Amman, Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2007, 25.

⁹⁷ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 13.

the Quran. Further, he adds that based on the prior verses, the Prophet is certainly inseparable from the revelation itself, the Prophet was not the outsider in that process but he was a part of internal agent in the revelation. According to him, although, the Prophet was actively involved in the process of delivering revelation, it would not contaminate and eliminate the otherness, the objectivity and the verbal character of the Quran as claimed by the orthodoxy. This is because according to Rahman, “The Quran itself certainly maintained the ‘otherness’, the objectivity, and the verbal character of the revelation.”⁹⁸

However, Rahman does not stop only to this elaboration concerning the nature of revelation. Due to the facts that the revelation is inseparable from the religious personality of the Prophet and has an intimate connection with the work and the religious personality of the Prophet, therefore, it indicates that basically the revelation is not something external and distinct from the Prophet. Based on this argument, Rahman then concludes that the Quran is entirely the word of God and, in ordinary sense, also entirely the word of Muhammad.⁹⁹ To strengthen his opinion, Rahman quotes the statement from Sirhindi (d. 1642), “The Word of God is, in truth, one single (mental act)”¹⁰⁰ and Shah Wali Allah (d. 1762), “verbal revelation occurs in the moulds of words, idioms and style which are already existent in the mind of prophet.”¹⁰¹ And Shah Wali Allah also said,

God subdued the mind of the Prophet in such a way, that He send down the book of God in the pure heart (*hajar baht*) on the Prophet in nebulous and undifferentiated manner (*ijmalan*). In the pure heart of the Prophet, the divine speech becomes apparent in the identical form in which it appears in the Supernal Plenum (*hazira-t al-quds*). The Prophet thus comes to know by conviction that this is the word of God. Subsequently, as the need arises,

⁹⁸ Rahman, **Islam**, 31.

⁹⁹ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 14. See also Prakosa, “Approaching the Word of God,” 121.

¹⁰⁰ **Ibid.**

¹⁰¹ **Ibid.**

well-strung speech is brought out of the rational faculties of the prophet through the agency of angel.¹⁰²

Of course, in this perspective what Rahman wants to deliver related to his statement, namely “the Quran is entirely the word of God and, in an ordinary sense, also entirely the words of Muhammad” does not mean that the Quran is the word or the work of the Prophet, but he wants to accentuate that the revelation cannot be separate from the role, religious personality, the work and mission of the Prophet and the socio historical context in which the Quran was revealed. Based on this perspective, basically, Rahman tries to construct his methodology of Quranic commentary, called the double movement theory which will be elaborated profoundly later, in which through this perspective every interpreter will have a very comprehensive spectrum in interpreting the Quran where the aspects of social-historical view will become a significant consideration in the understanding the Quran, remembering that the orthodox never did account on these aspects in interpreting the Quran.¹⁰³

In this sense, Rahman also attempts to prove that actually revelation is a form of cognition and knowledge in the shape of idea-words, which are parts of a creative divine action. Otherwise, the Quran is not limited in the sense of a verbal revelation, whose style, words, idioms were uncreated, divine and eternal as claimed by the orthodox. The Quran is a combination of divinely revealed idea-words that is delivered to the human being in the Prophet’s sound words.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 14. See also, Amhar Rasyid, “Some Quranic Legal Texts in the Context of Fazlur Rahman’s Hermeneutical Method,” **M.A. thesis**, McGill University, 1994), 14.

¹⁰³ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 14.

¹⁰⁴ Rahman contends that the revelation that the Prophet Muhammad receives in the process of delivering revelation basically produces an actual mental sound and not a physically sound, and it is an idea word and not a physically acoustic word. See, Fazlur Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1980, 69. On the other hand, Akbar attempts to give an analysis to this issue saying that the other important aspect related to Rahman’s nature of revelation is associated with some kinds of “feeling having been created in the Prophet’s heart.” Therefore, according to Akbar, Rahman concludes that the nature of revelation basically is constructed from the combination between feeling, idea and word (not an acoustic word) existing and working in the Prophet’s heart during the process of delivering revelation. See, Akbar, “The Origins of Fazlur Rahman’s Theory of Revelation,” 92.

Therefore, according to Rahman, the main problem concerning the orthodox understanding of the nature of revelation lies in fact that the orthodoxy just gives a mechanical and externalist view regarding the relationship between the revelation and the Prophet. He adds that how the Prophet could not have any role in the process of revelation while he was an integral part of the process. Therefore, if it is true that the Prophet was not involved in the process so the process of delivering revelation will be like a postman delivering a letter to someone, in which Gabriel's role is as a postman, and this case is certainly contradictory with the fact that the Prophet was a part of internal agent of this process of revelation as mentioned previously. The disability of the orthodoxy to enclose the relation between the Prophet and the revelation is because "the orthodoxy (indeed all medieval thought) lacked the necessary intellectual tools to combine in its formulation of the dogma the otherness and verbal character of the revelation on the other hand, and its intimate connection with the work and religious personality of the prophet on the other, i.e. It lacked the intellectual capacity to say both that the Quran is entirely the word of God and, in an ordinary sense, also entirely the words of Muhammad."¹⁰⁵

Apart from his idea of the nature of revelation and his disagreement to the orthodox notion concerning this issue, Rahman states that the Quran is fundamentally a book of morality, which explicitly emphasizes on the aspects of monotheism and social justice. Rahman states that the moral law is perennial, and human beings cannot create and produce it, where only God who deserves to create the moral law and the human's duty is to submit and dedicate themselves to it. Further, Rahman states that the total submission to the moral law is basically the substance and core teaching of what is called as Islam and its implementation in the whole aspects of life is called as worship to God (*ibada*).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Rahman, **Islam**, 31.

¹⁰⁶ **Ibid.**, 32.

2.2.2. The Double Movement Theory

As pertained briefly in the previous part of this chapter, one of the important aspects of Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary is his "double movement theory". Basically, this theory cannot be separated from Rahman's notion of the nature of revelation, which centred on the relationship between the revelation itself and the history of religious personality of the prophet as explained prior. Therefore, it can be said that his idea of the nature of revelation becomes the most fundamental pillar of his double movement theory, which emphasizes and focuses on the aspect of the relation between the socio-historical context in terms of the life, mission and all activities of the Prophet and the revelation itself.¹⁰⁷

Rahman views that all the time, the Quran has been understood and interpreted by the Muslim based on the orthodox approach, which is literal and partial, in which the social and historical aspects are not taken into account. Based on this approach, they ultimately fail to grasp the comprehensive understanding and the underlying unity of the Quran, particularly related to the social and historical context. For instance, in the case of the penal law called *hudud* in which the Muslim orthodoxy attempts to interpret the Quranic verses related to *hudud* textually and partially without taking the socio-historical aspects into account as one of the main consideration that used interpreting those verses. Finally, it produces an interpretation that is not satisfactory and not comprehensive associated. It is further exacerbated by the fact that the instrument they use in interpreting the Quran called *qiyas* (analogical reasoning) is imperfect and imprecise due to the lack of method and approach used in comprehending the Quran.¹⁰⁸

Rahman states that the Quran basically consists of the social pronouncements, religious, cultural, and historical dimension which comes as a response over various problems occurring in the society when the prophetic era. Occasionally, the Quran directly provides an answer to a problem, which happens in certain situation in the clear statement. Sometimes, it also gives a respond to certain cases through the semi-

¹⁰⁷ Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 11.

¹⁰⁸ **Ibid.**, 2.

explicit statement. It indicates that the Quran basically is a divine response as the answer and solution to certain situations that cannot be segregated from all aspects of the history of the personal religious of the Prophet and the development of the Islamic community in the prophetic era.¹⁰⁹ Based on this fact, therefore, to understand the Quran, the social and historical context absolutely must be considered, in order that the Quran can be interpreted more broadly and comprehensively, not partially or literally.

Related to this matter, Rahman attempts to propose his methodology of Quranic commentary, which accentuates the socio-historical context as the main consideration used in interpreting the Quran, and he calls his theory as the double movement theory.¹¹⁰ Principally, this theory has two fundamental movements; the first movement is a movement from the present situation to the Quranic times, and the second movement is a movement from the Quranic times then back to the present.¹¹¹

Further, the first movement basically has two steps that should be implemented before moving to the second movement. The first step is to conceive the meaning of a given statement of the Quran related to certain problems by tracing and analysing its socio - historical context, in which the Quranic statement was revealed as the answer and solution to the problem. In this step, the most important thing before studying the specific text is that the social and historical studies related to the macro situation of society in all aspects of life including politics, religions, economic, customs and cultures particularly associated with the Arab society (Mecca and Medina) and the other societies around Mecca and Medina such as Sassanid Persia and Byzantium where the text of the Quran was revealed, must be

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

¹¹⁰ Basically, Rahman's double movement theory is influenced by the hermeneutical theory of the objectivity school belongs to Betti saying that the interpretation towards an idea should be based on objective values and not based on values of subjectivity and with the interests of interpreters. For detailed explanation, see Rahman, **Islam and Modernity**, 8-10. And also Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 17-23. See also, Muhammad El-Tahir El-Mesawi, "The Methodology of al-Tafsir al-Mawdu'i: A Comparative Analysis," **Intellectual all Discourse**, vol. 13, no. 1, 2005, 19. On the other hand, according to Heru Prakoso, Rahman's double movement theory is not something new; it is "just the modification of the technique of analogical reasoning *qiyas*." See, Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God," 124.

¹¹¹ Rahman, **Islam and Modernity**, 7.

comprehended and analysed profoundly. On the other hand, the aspect of the micro-situation in terms of the concepts of occasional of revelation (*asbabun nuzul*) and abrogation (*naskh*) also must be studied and scrutinized profoundly in this step. Further, an accurate analysis and comprehensive implementation related to its micro and macro context in this step will ultimately result a comprehensive understanding of meaning of the Quran in terms of the certain principles that point to the specific situation. Therefore, the main goal of this step is basically to comprehend “the meaning of the Quran as a whole as well in terms of specific tenets that constitute responses to specific situations.”¹¹²

The second step is to generalize those specific answers produced in the first step, and making it as a statement of the general moral-social objectives which can be filtered from the specific texts through the socio-historical analysis and also explaining its *rationes legis*.¹¹³ In this sense, Rahman seemingly wants to confirm that the specific instruction of the text of the Quran must be differentiated from moral objectives of the Quran which is the most important aspect of the Quran. Therefore, what Rahman wants to emphasize in this context is that although the Quran is a response to the social-historical situations or problems in the prophetic era, the Quran is not a book of law but a book of moral and religion consisting the moral principles and religious values. Therefore, the moral principles and the values of the Quran must become the source of the Islamic law and not its literal text.

However, Rahman admits that to find the moral objectives of the Quran is not an easy work. This is because, in fact, the Quran only provides solutions for specific historical problems and not all problems. He argues that all Quranic statements just give the reasons from which the moral principles of the Quran can be derived to be an answer and solution to the certain problems, in which the Quran does not give clear answer and statement. Therefore, the first movement which consists of two

¹¹² Rahman, **Islam and Modernity**, 6.

¹¹³ *Rationes legis* is the reason why the law is being mentioned. According to Rahman, *Rationes legis* is “the essence of the matter, the actual legislation being its embodiment so long as it faithfully and correctly realizes the ratio; if it does not, and the law has to be changed, when the situation so changes that the laws fail to reflect the ratio, the law must change.” For a comprehensive understanding related to *rationes legis* see, Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 33.

steps basically is a movement that focuses on the specification and particularization of the Quranic statements in order to obtain and systematize its common principles and long range objectives.

Apart from the first movement, according to Rahman, the second movement is to formulate and realize the general principle values of the Quran generated in the first movement. Before implementing those general principles (the result of the first movement) in the contemporary era, Rahman states that it will certainly need a very accurate study of present situation and deep analysis related to all components of the situation. Then all aspects related to the current situation including the whole social changes happening in the present situation can be understood comprehensively, so that it will lead an interpreter to comprehend and determine some urgent priorities that are required by the community at current time. Hence, the Quranic values ultimately can be implemented in accordance with the people's necessity in that time so the principles of the Quran will become alive and accordance with the times.¹¹⁴

On the other hand, Rahman asserts that in order that the implementation of the second movement runs well and achieve a maximum result, then the implementation must be supported with the use of modern social-sciences and humanities that developed in the present. These sciences should be used as the main instrument to analyse various developments and changes that take place in the present, so that the implementation of the second movement will produce a comprehensive outcome and become a positive solution for a problem that occurs at this time. He adds that the second movement also functions to check and correct the outcome of the first movement. If the results of commentary produced in the first movement fail to be implemented in the present, then the mistake probably should have taken place either in observing of the present context which is practised in the second movement or the fail in grasping the comprehensive meaning of the Quran which is implemented in the first movement.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Rahman, **Islam and Modernity**, 7. See also, **Rahman Revival and Reform in Islam**, 16

¹¹⁵ **Ibid.**

Principally, the double movement theory is a kind of dialectical process between the past and the present based on the socio-historical aspects. In other words, to produce a comprehensive and systematic understanding of the Quran, all elements related to the Quran in the past should be observed profoundly and accurately. On the other hand, an accurate analysis and observation associated with the dynamic changes and development that happen in the present must be performed comprehensively. The combined observation between the socio-historical context of the Quran in the past and an accurate study of the current context will bring the interpreter to grasp and produce the meaning of the Quran systematically and comprehensively. Ultimately, it will lead the Quran interpreted as a unified whole, in which it will no longer be understood in the context of partial and literal understanding.

In sum, for Rahman, the spirit of the first movement would lead Muslims to the root of the Islamic sources that is the Quran, in which every Muslim is demanded to learn and understand this source comprehensively and profoundly. On the other hand, the zeal of the second movement lies in the fact that the implementation of the second movement will bring the Muslim to have a comprehensive and dynamic interpretation and understanding of the Quran, where based on this comprehensive understanding of the Quran, they finally will able to answer all problems and challenges of the times.

Apart from the discussion of the elaboration of Rahman's double movement theory, in order to facilitate the understanding of this theory, the case of laws of inheritance (QS: 4:7-12, 176) can be examined. The Quran says that a daughter get a half of the share of a son based on the assumption that the obligation to feed the family is the duty of a man as the head of household, while for women this function is not required. Historically, based on the socio-cultural conditions of Arab society at the time, it is clear that the provisions of inheritance 2:1, which introduced the Quran above, is a form of adaptation measures with the Arab culture. This is because Arabs follow the concept of patriarchal tribe, in which man is more dominant than

woman.¹¹⁶ Therefore, it is very reasonable when Islam still give a larger portion to man in the laws of inheritance. Based on this historical fact, many provisions of Islam are modified form of the provisions of the pre-Islam. On the other hand, the system of kinship according to the Quran it is bilateral and not patrilineal or matrilineal. Therefore, it takes a certain method of commentary that can accommodate these circumstances, in order to know the intrinsic implicit moral message behind the text of the Quran. But today, many women work in various sectors and they can earn money. Therefore, this fact leads to the assumption that it is not only men who can feed for a family's needs but not a few women who work for feeding the needs of families as men and vice versa. Therefore, based on this assumption, it must be a new interpretation towards QS: 4:7-12, 176, related to laws of inheritance, in which woman's share in laws of inheritance should be equal to the man part.¹¹⁷

Based on the double movement theory, there are two important points should be implemented related to this issue; first is to find the general principle through the historical approach and second is using this general principle to set the specific legislation related the case that occurs in the present (laws of inheritance) in order to generate a new interpretation related to laws of inheritance that the ratio between the male and female must be equal, namely 1:1.

Hence, through the historical perspective approach that explained above related to the issue of laws of inheritance, it can be derived that basically there is the different function between women in the past and present. Today, women are already able to counter balance role of men namely to earn wealth and feed families' needs, therefore, it seems unfair, if women get a half of the share of a man, they (women) should get the equal provision (1:1) of the inheritance as men get it in order to achieve a sense of equality and equality so that a sense of justice can be realized well. It is certainly not independent of the shifting social reality from time to time. And this is a simple example of the implementation of the double movement theory.

¹¹⁶ Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 33-36.

¹¹⁷ **Ibid.**, 36.

2.3. Rahman's Political Thought

2.3.1. Rahman's Idea of State

Rahman's opinion concerning state in the perspective of Islam cannot be separated from the tight relationship between the state as a structural organization and Muslim community. He states that the state gets its mandate and authority from the people (Muslim society). In other word, the people entrust and give their power and mandate to be executed and implemented by the state. In this sense, Rahman states that the state in the sight of Islam, which later named as the Islamic state is completely democratic.¹¹⁸

As it was alluded previously that the most important aspect of the Islamic state according to Rahman is the Muslim community, he states that the state and Muslim society is basically integrated and inseparable. This is because without the existence of the Muslim society which according to Rahman, is as "the best community produced for mankind who command good and forbid evil and believe in God" (QS: 3:104 &110), the state cannot exist. Further, the society which consists of individuals who have correct belief and robust commitment to obey God's laws on earth, finally, they unite themselves to establish an Islamic state, where their function is to be "those who, if give them power on earth, shall establish prayer, pay zakat, command good, and forbid evil" (QS: 22:41).¹¹⁹

What was mentioned in the Quran (QS: 22:41) according to Rahman denotes some characteristics of the duty of the Muslim community such as; commanding good, forbidding evil, performing prayer, paying and collecting zakat. On the other hand, these features indicates that the Quran principally instructs the Muslims to set up a state and a political order on earth based on the principles of justice, morality, equality "for the sake of creating an egalitarian and just moral-social

¹¹⁸ Fazlur Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu," **Islamic Studies**, 6, no. 3, 1967, 205.

¹¹⁹ Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 115.

order.”¹²⁰ Hence, in this sense, Rahman regards that the state becomes an important need for Muslims because through the state, they will easily and effectively be able to uphold and implement the principles of equality, egalitarianism, justice and moral social order among the people as the basic teachings of God.

However, Rahman argues that the state cannot be established before the Muslim society is established. This is because the existence of the Muslim community is the main requirement required to build a state, because the state, which is established and not preceded by constructing a Muslim community, basically, is quite vulnerable towards the abuse of political power. To substantiate his argument, Rahman highlights the failure of the current fundamentalist movements in the Islamic worlds, particularly in the Middle East, the Subcontinent, and Southeast Asia which according to him caused by a fact that these countries was successful in establishing a political power but failed to create a Muslim community before the political power was set up.¹²¹ Therefore, the absence of the existence of the Muslim community ultimately leads the countries in a failure to establish the social order based on the values of justice, equality and egalitarianism as the main principles of Islam.

Further, Rahman explains that the main problem of these states is related to the deviations of political practices done by leaders who rule and control these countries. The leaders basically use the issue of the Islamic state which is based on *sharia* as their campaign tool to influence and impress the people in order that they will support the leader in achieving their political goal and ambition namely to dominate and control the political power and authority in the states. In fact, the leaders’ aim is not to build an Islamic state but to get the people’s support for the sake of their political interest. On the other hand, the people who were enthralled by the issue of the Islamic state which is voiced and delivered by the leaders would think that after they supported the leaders to gain and control the power, so all things would become automatically Islamic based on the Islamic laws. On the contrary,

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹²¹ Fazlur Rahman, “Some Key Ethical Concepts of the Quran,” *Journal of Religious Ethics*, no. 2, vol. 11, fall 1983, 183.

after the leaders attained the political power and some of them control the power, then, they just focused on how to maintain and strengthen their power, in which they gradually would not talk of anything regarding the establishment of the Islamic state as they promised before reaching the power. Hence, Rahman states that to avoid the deviation of the political power, therefore, before creating the state, the Muslim is demanded and obliged to set up a Muslim community who have some qualified criteria as mentioned in the Quran (QS: 3:104 &110).

In spite of his explanation related to the abuse of political power in some parts of the Middle East, the Subcontinent, and Southeast Asia, Rahman states that main objective of the state is to protect the safety and integrity of it and to maintain the four fundamental rights and freedoms for the human being that are; freedom of life, freedom of belief, freedom of property and freedom of dignity, and also to safeguard the law and order and to develop the country where every citizen will have the same right and opportunity to advance his ability and to realize his potential, in order that they can contribute for the development and progress of their country.¹²²

Of course, to actualize these objectives, the state needs a strong government and a solid central authority led by a visionary leader who has vision and capability to take every decision accurately and proportionally, and to enforce the citizens in the interest of the progress of the state. Therefore, the leader must be selected and supported by the Muslim society, which is the most significant element of the state.¹²³

Besides the strong government led by the visionary leader as the head of executive, to embody these goals, the state needs an adequate administrative structure which functions to aid the leader in executing all governmental affairs because without these professional administration, it will be difficult for the executive to carry out his duties. Rahman emphasizes that the administrations should

¹²² Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu," 205. Rahman states that the state must protect four fundamental freedoms or rights of human as it was mentioned in the Quran: for life, (QS: 5:32); for religion and belief: (QS: 2:256); for man's nobility and dignity: (QS: 2:30); and for property, all verses pertaining to the earning of wealth and *zakat*. See, Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 31.

¹²³ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu," 205.

be professional and competent in implementing their tasks. Mainly, the important point related to the administration according to Rahman, is that the administration must be capable to recognize itself with the aspiration of the people. In other word, the administration is demanded to understand and catch the will of the people.¹²⁴

Apart from the discussion of the administration, Rahman argues that all Muslims affairs, including the governmental matters must be organized and decided through *shura* (mutual consultation) as instructed by the Quran(QS: 3:159, 42:38). For Rahman, basically, the structure of *shura* is like the legislative assembly where members of its committee are elected by the people through the political parties as practiced in modern democracies, in which through this legislative assembly where the people's aspiration and will can be represented.¹²⁵ Principally, the function of the legislative assembly is to legislate and produce some policy and legislation and also to help the leader on the other hand. Every decision and policy decided by the head of executive must be consulted to this legislative assembly for the sake of obtaining the qualified decisions in accordance with the people's aspiration. In other words, if all government affairs are organized based on the principle of *shura*, according to Rahman, it will lead the Muslim society into an effective and sound government that is far from the deviation of power.

The other important aspect of the state is related to the legislation, which according to Rahman is not a personal business but it is a business of community as a whole. Rahman adds that the members of legislative who sit in the legislative assembly function as the policies and laws maker related to the people's needs, interests and aspiration. Therefore, the members of legislative should have a qualified ability as the primary requirement to be chosen by the people to become the members of legislative. Rahman states that they might come from different

¹²⁴ **Ibid.**

¹²⁵ Rahman contends that the state can use single party or multi party systems, but he tends to the single party system, particularly in the developed countries. This is because according to him, the multi party systems are potentially to weaken responsible thought and action among many politicians; while on the other hand, the single party must become a dynamic party which fully represents the people's interest. See, Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu," 206.

disciplines and backgrounds, but of course, they must be competent and professional in their fields.

Hence, based on this argument, Rahman strongly rejects the claim of many Muslim thinkers that the committee members of legislative assembly must come only from the Islamic jurists (*fuqaha*). According to him, in the history of the development of the Islamic laws, the Islamic jurists were not the creator of the Islamic laws but made by the administrators. He adds that the duty of ulama is not to produce the laws or to veto it. Their function is to create and set up the religious leadership for the society. Basically, this religious leadership will aid to produce the useful and beneficial ideas, where these ideas will be scattered among the people and discussed widely among them via media. Ultimately, these ideas will crystallize becoming the general public opinion where they will be actualized into a form of law by the representative of the people.¹²⁶

2.3.2. Shura and Democracy

When talking about the concept of *shura*, Rahman directly refers to the Quran “And by the mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah’s) forgiveness for them, and consult them in affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)” (03:159) and “And those who answer the Call of their lord [i.e. to believe that He is the only one Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him alone] and perform *As-Salat* (*Iqamat Al-Salat*), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and spend of what We have bestowed on them” (QS: 42:38).¹²⁷

Principally, he views that these verses gives a very obvious injunction for every Muslim to solve and decide all their affairs; politically, economically, socially,

¹²⁶ Rahman, “Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistan Milieu,” 206.

¹²⁷ Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 29.

and religiously based on the principle of *shura* or mutual consultation among them. Basically, for Rahman, it is concerning the concept of *shura* is no other the collective decision-making council has existed in Arabs before Islam. Historically, they had an institution called the Assembly (*Nadi*), where the leaders of the tribe chose or selected the head of the tribe or government through mutual deliberation among them.¹²⁸ And then this custom or norm (*Nadi*) was further democratized and eternalized by the Quran, which uses for it the term *shura*. Rahman adds that in the history of Islam, *shura* was implemented and practised by the Prophet and his companions democratically based on the principles of equality in the whole aspects of their matters. Then, the practice of this concept was distorted by Khawarij into a practical consultation which is controlled and dominated by some elite rulers of them.¹²⁹

Certainly, the concept of *shura* is one of the important parts of Islamic teachings. It can be viewed from the fact that although the prophet Muhammad lived under the guidance of God's revelation, where the prophet basically was able to decide all matters based on the revelation without having to undertake a mutual deliberation with his companions, God through the Quran (QS: 3:159) explicitly still instructs the prophet himself to perform a mutual consultation with leaders of the people in making a decision related to their collective affairs as practiced by the Prophet in the Uhud battle, where the Prophet conducted a mutual consultation with his companions to decide where they would fight the unbelievers whether in the inside of Medina city or outside it.

On the other hand, Rahman believes that people's interest and will can effectively be delivered and expressed through mutual deliberation (*shura*) through a representative mechanism as implemented in the democratic countries. Other than that, the Quran explicitly emphasizes that the Muslims must govern their affairs, including political affairs through *shura* as explained prior. Hence, it denotes that the

¹²⁸ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of the State in the Pakistani Milieu," 207.

¹²⁹ *Khawarij* is a group of Muslim which originated in the time of the caliph Usman and Ali. This group represent the earliest example of radical dissent in Islam and where the first, in a series movement, to offer a different concept of the nature of the community and its leadership John L. Esposito, **Islam in the Straight Path**, 3rd ed. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, 221.

duty to implement *shura* for Muslims is commonly something general related to the context space and time. Therefore, the implementation of *shura* does not prevail only in the Prophetic era but even after the death of the Prophet. The obligation to carry out *shura* must continually be implemented, particularly related to political affair in terms of an establishment of some kind of collective leadership and responsibility based on the principle of *shura* as informed in the Quran (QS: 42:38).¹³⁰

However, Rahman states that although Islam commands Muslims to run their affairs based on *shura*, they must know that *shura* cannot be implemented completely if the people who are involved within the mutual consultation cannot consult and discuss with each other with a collective purpose based on mutual respect and do not confront each other as it happens in certain cases in the In Western democratic societies, on the other hand, the aspect of confidence and responsibility are elements of *shura*, where all forms of suspicion should be exterminated by all people who are engaged in *shura*.¹³¹ Therefore, Rahman states that the concept of *shura* basically requires a high degree of social cohesion based on confidence and responsibility while without both aspects, *shura* cannot work completely.

Related to the criteria of the member of *shura*, as it was mentioned in the last part of Rahman's notion of state, he strongly rejects the claim the only ulama can be the member committee of *shura*. Every Muslim might be its members on the condition he must be competent and qualified in his field. Therefore, he criticizes *Sunni*¹³² Muslim political theorists who try to distort the practise of *shura* to the extent of ruler's consulting people whom they consider proper for consultation. On the other hand, he also delivers his critic towards *Shia*¹³³ Muslim political theorists,

¹³⁰ Rahman, **Major Themes of the Quran**, 29.

¹³¹ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 210.

¹³² *Sunni* is the largest Muslim group in Islam which makes up 87-90% of all Muslims in 2009. There are four sects within *Sunni*: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali. They believe in the legitimacy of the four caliphs; Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali. Sunni beliefs are based on the Quran and *Sunnah*. Esposito, **Islam in the Straight Path**, 43-46, and also see, Pew Research Centre, **Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population**, Washington, Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2009, 1-9.

¹³³ *Shia* is a branch of Islam which believes that the Prophet Muhammad had appointed Ali to become his successor (Caliph). *Shia* is contradictory with *Sunni* regarding the successor/caliph after the Prophet, in which *Sunni* believe that the caliph after the Prophet is Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali,

in which according to him, they attempt to claim that only the ulama (religious teacher) are equitable to be member of *shura* because they have the faith and comprehensive knowledge.

Other than that, the important aspect of *shura* is related to how to implement it in contemporary context especially associated with its implementation in the aspect of politics and government. Regarding this issue, Rahman argues that the practice of *shura* should involve the participation of community in the affairs of government through an establishment of representative form of government, where the members of the government could be chosen through the election as well as be practiced in a democratic system. Further, in this representative government, the will and interests of the people can be effectively and easily expressed and delivered through their representative. Consequently, the popular will be the main and the decisive factor in every decision-making process. Additionally, the form of representative government where the concept of *shura* is implemented can adopt the modern democratic institutions as Rahman does not consider that the adoption of these institutions in this context to be un-Islamic.¹³⁴

In this sense, Rahman regards that *shura* is compatible with democracy. Moreover, the implementation of *shura* in the early Muslims generation indicates that they had implemented the principle of democracy such as the case of the first caliph, like Abu Bakar (d. 634) who was chosen by the prominent figures from both early Muslims from Medina called *Anshor* and Mecca who emigrated from Mecca to Medina called *Muhajirin* after they had performed a mutual consultation among them. Finally, Abu Bakar was supported and endorsed by them to be their leader which legally means that he had received the mandate to execute the affairs of government. According to Rahman, the case of Abu Bakar denotes that the principles of democracy were really implemented by them in which the leader of state was

while Shia rejects the legitimacy and validity of the three previous caliph (Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman) and they just believe in the validity of Ali as the caliph after the death of the Prophet. Esposito, **Islam in the Straight Path**, 44. Of the total of Muslim population in the world, 10-13% are Shia followers, where most of them living in Iran, Iraq, India and Pakistan. See, Pew Research Centre, **Mapping the Global Muslim Population**, 1.

¹³⁴ Tauseef Ahmad Parray, "Islamic Democracy or Democracy in Islam: Some Key Operational Democratic Concepts and Notions," **World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization**, no. 2, vol. 2, 2012, 78.

elected by the people. Therefore, Rahman argues that what is completely democratic. He adds that in modern era, the concept of democracy can be practiced and used in diverse forms; direct or indirect, presidential or parliamentary, liberal or constitutional and so forth depending on the social and political conditions.¹³⁵

The significant point that should be noticed related to Rahman's agreement saying that *shura* principally is compatible with democracy is that model democracy aimed by Rahman in this sense is not a kind of democracy as practised in Western countries, in which they make the will of the majority of people who have no vision and good moral to be involved in every decision making. Rahman also states that the people who engage in every democratic practice such as elections and voting do not use moral, ethical and religious principles as the main basis in the activities. On the contrary, in the implementation of democracy, the materialistic, individualistic consideration and narrow minded interests become their main basis.¹³⁶

In this context, Rahman agrees with the critique from Muslims saying that the quality of democracy which is implemented in the Western countries does not denote the implementation of the real principles of democracy. According to him, what should pay attention to this perspective is that there is no error with the democracy itself and its forms which are applied in those countries. The problem lies with the Western societies which are secular, and they have undergone the moral decline which has led them to the narrow minded understanding of democracy. So that, the problem here is not about democracy itself but the quality of the people, therefore, democracy principally is not contradictory with Islam, even the Quran as the main source in Islam has supported democracy through the mechanism of *shura* as explained prior. In addition, Rahman adds that it will be much better for Muslims to colour the whole aspects of individual and collective life of community with ethical substance of Islamic teachings such as the value of justice and morality.¹³⁷

Although, Rahman contends that democracy is compatible with Islam, particularly related to the concept of *shura* which is possible to be applied in the

¹³⁵ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 207.

¹³⁶ Rahman, "Some Key Ethical Concepts of the Quran," 185.

¹³⁷ **Ibid.**

Muslim societies, according to Rahman, the fact that the large numbers of Muslims are not educated and are illiterate and then most of them living in under-developed countries, will become a very serious obstacle for the efforts to implement and practise democracy in these countries. Therefore, Rahman argues that under such circumstances, democracy is quite difficult to be practiced because to implement democracy in a country, of course, it needs the participation from the citizens of state, where they are required to understand comprehensively the principles and the values of democracy. In other words, democracy only can be implemented by an educated and civilized people and community.

Associated with the Muslim countries where most of these states are categorised as under-developed countries, the question that arises is what is required by these countries? According to Rahman, these states certainly need a strong government which is able to centralize all planning and to control whole aspects associated with the economic development. Then, he adds that only by having the strong government, the main problem faced by all these under-development countries that is concerning the need and the desire for rapid economic development can be solved. In this condition, Rahman contends that the state is allowed to have strong men to carry out all government affairs on condition that at same time the spirit of democracy is truly and gradually developed and cultivated by the citizens.¹³⁸

2.3.3. People's Sovereignty versus God's Sovereignty

Related to the concept of sovereignty, Fazlur Rahman supports the idea of the people's sovereignty as it is implemented in some democratic states in the Western countries and disagrees with the concept of the sovereignty of God (*hakimiyyah*) in terms of political context. He argues that the idea of the sovereignty of God is not clear and causes much confusion and misunderstanding among the Muslims. Even some Muslim scholars have fallen in a serious perplexity concerning this notion. Basically, the notion of sovereignty of God is based on the opinion that

¹³⁸ Rahman, "Some Key Ethical Concepts of the Quran," 210.

Muslims/people are not sovereign or the sovereignty does not belong to the people but God, or God is sovereign.¹³⁹

One of the influential Muslims thinkers to espouse this idea is Abu al-A'la al-Maududi, who claims that there is no any sovereignty except God's sovereignty and God politically is sovereign. Maududi refuses the concept of democracy and even equalizes it with *shirk* (share in divinity).¹⁴⁰ He adds that although people in a democratic state can legislate and embody their aspiration based on the principle of democracy and otherwise the Muslims cannot do so. This is because the Muslims' liberty is limited by the laws of God. In addition, Maududi contends that the Muslims are not allowed to use and implement the idea of democracy as practised in the Western countries which contradicts with Islam, particularly related to the idea of sovereignty which will be explained later.

Unlike Maududi, Rahman views that democracy with one of its aspects; namely, the people's sovereignty basically is a political system which is based on some main principles such as freedom, justice and equality. These values are not contradictory with Islam which also put an emphasis on these values as mentioned in the sections of Rahman and Qutb's notions about the state. Therefore, it is not true that democracy is a negative political system consisting of immoral teachings which invites and commands people to legalize all bad activities such as immorality, inequality, injustice, murder, theft, corruption and so on but on the contrary, the main values of democracy contradict with those negative values.

Apart from Rahman's rejection of the claim that democracy is not compatible with Islam, he criticizes the idea of God's sovereignty supported by Maududi. Rahman states that the greatest confusion concerning the concept of sovereignty of God lies with suggestion that God is politically sovereign. Rahman argues this argument is absolutely not true. How could God be sovereign politically while the term sovereignty in this context is a political term which is a new invention and creation as a cultural product?

¹³⁹ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 208.

¹⁴⁰ **Ibid.**

He further indicates that definite and defined factor in a society rightfully belong coercive force in order to obtain obedience to its will. Therefore, in this respect, God is basically not sovereign but those who are sovereign are the people, since only to them belong the ultimate coercive force. Rahman's view in this sense shows that basically the definition of sovereignty in the political context is different from the meaning of sovereignty which refers to God as the creator of universe. According to Rahman, it is true that God is the most Supreme Judge and His power encompasses over the heaven and the earth as it is stated by Him in many verses of the Quran, but this fact does not have any relation with the meaning of the terms sovereignty in the political context.¹⁴¹

Therefore, what Rahman explains related to the idea of God's sovereignty above indicates that Maududi misunderstands this concept. This is because Maududi fails to understand many statements of God in the Quran saying that God is the most Supreme Judge and his power covers the heaven and the earth. Further, Rahman argues that this declaration substantially does not refer to the legal and political sovereignty, but what is aimed in this statement is that God creates or gives certain natural laws to the universe, where they are integrated with these laws and cannot escape from it such as the law of causality, law of gravity and so forth.¹⁴²

Surely, the important question in this chapter is related to how Rahman defines the meaning of God's sovereignty? Rahman argues that the most important principle which is repeatedly mentioned in the Quran is the principle of justice; therefore, the concept of justice becomes the core of God's injunction for the mankind. Hence, the most important task for people is how to perform and uphold the justice on earth. Therefore, according to Rahman, when the mankind accepts and commits to implement the justice as their main basis of life as it is hinted and instructed by the Quran, in which the parameter of the implementation of justice self is the value of objectivity and impartiality and do not rely on the subjective interests of the people, hence, in this context, they basically implement and accept the sovereignty of God. This is because the core of the sovereignty of God is loyalty to

¹⁴¹ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 208.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 209.

the principles of justice. According to Rahman, in this respect, people are not only demanded to comprehend and identify the principles of justice but more important than that, they must implement and uphold this principle in all aspects of life as a form of recognition and admission of God's sovereignty on earth.¹⁴³

Certainly, when Muslims realize that the obligation to find and implement the justice is their main duty as mentioned in the Quran and as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, this awareness will lead them to establish Muslims society based on one mission, namely to uphold the justice. Of course, they know that to actualize their mission, certainly, they need a state as an effective instrument to embody their mission. Finally, they will establish the Islamic state which is based on principles of justice as explained prior. Rahman's view related to the Islamic state gives a very clear picture that the most important aspect of the Islamic state is associated with the usage of the justice as the main basis of the state. Therefore, although certain states claim that they use the laws of Islam becoming their basis of the state but; in fact, the political actions which are shown by them are contradictory with the values of justice so that according to Rahman, this state is not the Islamic state. On the contrary, if there are some states that use democracy as their political system based on the basis of justice, he categorizes it as the Islamic state.

After Muslim community build the Islamic state, the next question is what the connection between the Islamic state and the people's sovereignty is. Rahman states that after the state is built, to maintain the existence of the state, of course the people of the state must delegate their sovereignty and authority to the leader elected by them as the head of executive to run the government based on the values of justice and to the members of legislative assembly as the law-maker.¹⁴⁴

Therefore, in this sense, the people's sovereignty is the only source of political power and authority which belongs to the people/Muslims. Then, they entrust it to the leader of the state and legislative assembly to run the government based on the values of the justice. Hence, the power of the leader and legislative

¹⁴³ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 209.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

assembly in the state is not absolute, because the political sovereignty which the leader and the members of Parliament have is essentially a mandate from the people. Therefore, if the leader and parliament deviate from the goals of the state and the interest of the people, the people can retake their sovereignty and authority from both sides based on certain procedures.

Rahman claims that the supreme body of the government in the Islamic state is not the leader but the Muslim legislature's function to make and produce the laws.¹⁴⁵ The members of this legislature are elected by people through the election procedure as practised in the democratic states and the members can come from any various backgrounds as mentioned previously in the discussion of Rahman's notion of the state. Basically, the legislation and laws produced by the legislature can be altered by other laws which are more adequate and beneficial for the Muslims' interest. Finally, based on these arguments, Rahman states that God neither acts as a political Sovereign nor as a law maker. But the people or Muslims themselves are the sovereign and the law-maker. And what is claimed by Maududi that God is politically sovereign is absolutely wrong as the result of Maududi's misunderstanding in defining the term sovereignty as a political term and rather than the greatest attribute of God which is the creator of universe.

2.3.4. Rahman's Conception of *Sharia*

According to Fazlur Rahman, *sharia* literally means "the path or the way leading and heading to the water."¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, Rahman understands *sharia* as the way of life, which is ordained by God for mankind, which people must follow and conduct to realize the Divine Will on earth. He adds that *sharia* is a comprehensive concept functioning to describe Islam related to its practises.

¹⁴⁵ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 209.

¹⁴⁶ Rahman, **Islam**, 100. Basically, the terms *sharia*, often translated to the term Islamic law. The word *sharia* is a Quranic term that can be found in QS: 45: 18 "Thus We put you on the right way [*syari'atan*] of religion. So follow it and follow not the whimsical desire (*hawa*) of those who have no knowledge." And according to Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation, the word "*syari'atan*" means "the right way of religion which is wider than legal provisions." For further explanation see, Muhammad Hasyim Kamali, **Sharia Law: an Introduction**, Oxford, One world Publication, 2008, 1-7.

Therefore, in order that the function of Islam can be practised completely, *sharia* should be understood properly. Further, Rahman also states that the meaning of *sharia* has a correlation with the meaning of *dien*, which literally implies submission. While *sharia* is the Divine way, its subject is God and *dien* is the following of the path and its subjects are men. Rahman defends his argument related to this correlation by quoting some verses of the Quran. “God has ordained for you a way to be followed” (QS: 42:13) and also “Do they, then, have any partners of God who have ordained for the path to be followed.” (QS: 42:21)

Rahman states that *sharia* and *dien* (religion) basically are not two different things and the both refer to the sense of the way or the path whose contents are connected to each other. Therefore, the terms *sharia* and *dien* in this understanding can be used interchangeably. On the other hand, Rahman also explains about the reason why the term *dien* and its almost equivalent Islam are often used more frequently than the terms *sharia*. This is because the basic mood of Quran always refers to the moral advices for human, such suggestions to follow and to submit. Hence, the term *dien* becomes more popular and frequently used than the terms *sharia*. The reason behind why Rahman attempts to explain these terms in detail is that the Muslims will not be confused and misunderstand these terms.¹⁴⁷

As the total way of life which is ordained by God, *sharia* basically includes all aspects of life; faith in oneness of God and religious practices such as prayer, fasting, alms, pilgrimage, and also all social and political interaction, individually and communally, and so forth. Therefore, *sharia* must be implemented by the Muslims who have committed to submit themselves to God. But what are the sources of *sharia*? Rahman states that there are sources of *sharia*, which are also known as the basic principles of Islamic thought; the Quran, *Sunnah*, *ijtihad* and *ijma*. In addition, Rahman argues that the evolution and development of these sources from time to time has given a very significant impact concerning how the laws of *sharia* have been understood and implemented by Muslims. In this respect, Rahman

¹⁴⁷ Rahman, **Islam**, 100. See also, Lily Zakiyah Munir, General Introduction to Islamic Law, 5. Accessed October 20, 2016, http://www.lfip.org/laws718/docs/lily-pdf/introduction_to_islamic_law.pdf.

contends that the development of Muslim society cannot be separated from how they understand and implement laws of *sharia*.

Related to this matter, Rahman did a historical research and wrote it in a book entitled *Islamic Methodology in History* (1965), which was also motivated by his efforts to reform the Islamic law (*sharia*) in Pakistan under the regime of Muhammad Ayyub Khan (d. 1974). This research had finally brought him to an important agenda, namely to reformulate the interpretation of the Quran as the main source of the *sharia* based on socio-historical approach, where the laws of *sharia* in the Quran can be re-interpreted through his approach in order that the results of the commentary can be used to answer the contemporary issues faced by Muslims. This is because according to Rahman, the decline of Muslims has occurred due to the failure of Muslims in understanding *sharia*. Then, in his historical research, Rahman found the organic relationship between *Sunnah*, *ijtihad* and *ijma*, which will be explained further.¹⁴⁸

Rahman states that *Sunnah*¹⁴⁹ or living *Sunnah* in early generation of Muslims is identical with *ijma*¹⁵⁰ that was understood as the practice of the Muslims themselves, which is the result of personal *ijtihad*¹⁵¹ through the instrument of *qiyas* (analogy) towards the ideal *Sunnah* of the prophet which were practised and exemplified by the prophet Muhammad in his daily life. On the other hand, the early Muslims comprehended that the ideal *Sunnah* is the real picture of the interpretation of the Quran by the Prophet related to all aspect of life, particularly related to laws of

¹⁴⁸ Fazlur Rahman, **Islamic Methodology in History**, Reprint, Islamabad, Islamic Research Institute, 1995, v.

¹⁴⁹ The term of *Sunnah* according to Rahman means the practices and the Customs of the Prophet. See, Fazlur Rahman, **Revival and Reform in Islam**, 209. On the other hand, the concrete details of *Sunnah* covering the Prophet's speech and decision is called as 'Hadith'. See, Wael B. Hallaq, **an Introduction to Islamic Law** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2011), 15.

¹⁵⁰ The terms *ijma* basically means agreement and consensus. Principally, "*ijma* originates from the fact that an individual jurist's opinion is accorded little weight by the entire community of believers, largely because jurists are entitled to offer their own learned opinion of what God's law should be in a given situation. If, however, a consensus can be reached about a particular matter, that consensus is regarded as conclusive and therefore as a binding law upon the community of believers." For further elaboration see, Hamid Khan, J.D., "Practitioner's Guide Islamic Law," **Inprol-International Network to Promote the Rule of Law**, July 2013, 25.

¹⁵¹ *Ijtihad* is a process of reasoning that is practiced by jurist to solve and produce a law towards a case. See, Khan, J.D., "Practitioner's Guide Islamic Law," 27. Rahman contends that *ijtihad* is the effort to comprehend the meaning of the relevant text (the Quran and the Prophetic tradition/Hadith) containing the rule to produce a law. See, Rahman, **Islam and Modernity**, 8.

sharia, which were practiced by prophet in his daily activities. Therefore, Rahman states that the ideal *Sunnah* was the most important basis of early thought activities of the Muslims while *ijtihad* and *ijma* were its complement.

Apart from that, the organic relation between *Sunnah*, *ijtihad* and *ijma* basically is preceded by a process where the companions of prophet attempt to interpret all activities of prophet (the ideal *Sunnah*) based on their needs, and when they were successful in this step, then the result of this step would crystallize to become a living *Sunnah* or *ijma* which consisted of the laws and rules of life practised by them. So that from this perspective, the differences between the ideal *Sunnah*, living *Sunnah* and *ijma* become very clear. According to Rahman, this perspective will answer the misunderstanding and confusion related to the meaning of *Sunnah* among Muslims.

Another important point from this perspective is that the concept of *ijma* which is one of the important elements in this organic relation is not a static concept related to its practices, but a dynamic concept which flourishes constantly in a creative and democratic way as shown by the early Muslims when they practised this concept. This is because *ijma*, the last piece element of this organic relation cannot be generated except when they engage in *ijtihad* towards the ideal *Sunnah*. *Ijtihad* in this sense is an investigation and analysis towards the ideal *Sunnah* through *qiyas* as its main instrument. Therefore, *ijtihad* plays a very important role in this relationship, where it determines the result of *ijma*. Hence, by using *ijtihad* as the main instrument in this relation, it gives a guarantee that *ijma* as the result of this connection will remain dynamic.¹⁵²

But the situation changed after the mass scale Hadith movement particularly related to its codifying happened in the first century but found a strong impulse in the second century “in the name of a uniform authority - the Prophet - and in the sphere jurisprudence was spearheaded by Shafi’i whose decisive and successful intervention in the freely- moving Islamic-stream resulted in the fundamental formulation of the principle of Islamic jurisprudence as the succeeding age have known and accepted

¹⁵² Rahman, **Islamic Methodology in History**, 30.

them.”¹⁵³ Of course, the change gives a positive impact to the development of Hadiths as the source of Islamic laws and as the science, but it alters the position and role of living *Sunnah* to be something literal and specific which does not function as a common directive. The change also induces a shift meaning of *ijma* from the synonym of *Sunnah* becoming the agreements among Muslim scholars, in which every disagreement would not have any room in *ijma* and would be regarded as a part of it.¹⁵⁴

In this sense, *ijma* is not the result of personal *ijtihad* any more through the instrument of *qiyas* towards the ideal *Sunnah* as practised by the early Muslims. Consequently, *ijma* has changed into a static concept that is not dynamic. This condition has altered the natural order of the organic relation, namely from the scheme *ijtihad-ijma* into *ijma-ijtihad* which led the Muslims to a stagnant situation and lack of dynamism, particularly with respect to comprehending the laws of *sharia* and their inability to implement its principles in accordance with the dynamics of the times. And this condition was getting worse when the door of *ijtihad* was closed by Muslims during the preceding centuries. Since then, according to Rahman, the Islamic civilization had been in decline.

However, Rahman believes that the door of *ijtihad* theoretically and practically is always open and never closed, where Muslims are sued to practice *ijtihad* throughout the ages. He totally rejects the proposition in Islam saying that the door and gate of *ijtihad* was closed but it would be always open throughout the ages. On the other hand, the right to perform *ijtihad* does not belong to the particular and exclusive person and group. It belongs to every Muslim who is qualified. He also argues that the main reason why the Muslims today live in the backwardness is that they are reluctant to do *ijtihad* towards new problems occurring in the contemporary, in which this condition leads them to the stagnant condition.¹⁵⁵

Hence, to liberate the Muslims from such a situation, Rahman argues that Muslims should return to the Quran which is the prime source of *sharia* where they

¹⁵³ Rahman, *Islamic Methodology in History*, 21.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 149-150.

should do a review and reform towards the laws of *sharia* through formulating of new methodology of interpretation of the Quran in order to revive the new spirit for a re-evaluation of their religious and moral attitude towards the new problems of life emerging in the modern era. The Quran as the main source of *sharia* should be interpreted comprehensively, systematically and democratically based on the socio-historical context in order to produce a thorough understanding of *sharia*, which is the way of life for Muslims to deal with all challenges and problems of life in the modern era. According to Rahman, based on this context, *ijtihad* is absolutely needed. Then the question is how to implement it.

And related to this issue, Rahman proposes a new approach called ‘the double movement theory’ as explained previously.¹⁵⁶ Based on the theory, the Quran as the main source of Islamic laws must be comprehended comprehensively through a social-historical approach so that the meaning of the Quran can be understood as a unified whole. Through this methodology of Quranic commentary, the partial understanding of the Quran can be avoided. Therefore, based on this approach, the laws of *sharia*, which is the contents of the Quran, would evolve dynamically in accordance with the times.

The main goal wanted by Rahman related to his theory is to invite Muslims in order to conceive the laws of *sharia* in the Quran comprehensively and dynamically. Rahman claims that the concept of *sharia* serves to explain Islam in its functional and practical aspect. In other words, the real picture of Islam can be seen in the implementation of *sharia*. Therefore, Muslims must understand it comprehensively in accordance with the needs and challenges of the times. On the other hand, he believes that the *sharia* itself is a completed law provided by God for mankind. *Sharia* is not a static law, but something dynamic that moves creatively through different social forms. Hence, Muslims are demanded to strive constantly in order to interpret it according to the needs and challenges of the times. This is because Islamic *sharia* is a complete and dynamic law that prevails in every period.

¹⁵⁶ See the beginning chapter of this thesis related to the discussion of the double movement theory

In term of the implementation of the *sharia* in a community, Rahman views that the implementation should not be seen as the measurement for the success of political Islam. This is because the aim of *sharia* is not associated with the political interests and goals, even when *sharia* in some states such as Afghanistan under the Taliban, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Sudan was implemented based on their understanding, although according to Rahman, these states have not fulfilled the Islamic ideals.¹⁵⁷

In this sense, Rahman apparently does not demand that the implementation of *sharia* must be performed by the state through the Islamic state, in which *sharia* becomes the constitution of the state. He views that the most important aspect related to its implementation is associated with the implementation of the substances of *sharia* itself based on the principle of justice which is the ultimate goal of the implementation of *sharia* and the vision of the Quran. Hence, in this context, the substances of *sharia* become the significant aspect related to application of *sharia*. Hence, *sharia* can be implemented under all political systems such as democracy and so forth, since these systems are not contradictory with the visions of *sharia*.

On the other hand, the implementation of *sharia* through the Islamic state in which *sharia* is formalized to be the laws of the state would reduce the goal and the visions of *sharia*, namely to establish an ideal social order on earth based on the principle of justice and morality. The formulation of *sharia* becoming the constitution of the state potentially triggers the occurrence of the politicization of *sharia* for the class interest of certain groups as happened in some countries such as Afghanistan under the Taliban, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and so forth, where they institutionalize *sharia* to be the laws of the state for their political interests and not for the sake of their awareness to implement *sharia* in order to build and create a higher ethical social order based on the principle of justice.

¹⁵⁷ Halim Rane, "The Relevance of a Maqasid Approach for Political Islam Post Arab Revolutions," *Journal of Law and Religion*, vol. XXVIII, 6/6/2013, 502.

CHAPTER THREE

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

3.1. Comparative Analysis of Methodological Approaches in Qutb's and Rahman's Quranic Commentaries

What I have tried to present and reflect related to Qutb's and Rahman's methodology of Quranic interpretation above is basically aimed to grasp how both authors' methodologies were influential over their political thought. Qutb's and Rahman's political ideas were presented within this framework in the first and second chapters. Qutb's methodology consists of three important elements, namely, the Quran is to be lived, and not just intellectually appreciated; only the Quran itself should be the basis for understanding of the Quran, and the understanding of the Quran should be conducted in an existential seclusion from non-Islam (*jahiliyya*).¹⁵⁸ The first element that brings the Quran in daily activities is certainly plausible; in this context Qutb gives a very positive contribution to Muslims related to the relation between the Quran and Muslims, reminding them not to treat the Quran just for the sake of intellectual needs but should be implemented in daily life activities.¹⁵⁹

The second element that is only the Quran itself should be the basis for understanding of the Quran is also very difficult to be implemented.¹⁶⁰ This is because it would be very hard to understand the Quran based on the Quran itself due to a fact that every verse of the Quran was revealed to the Prophet and could not be separated from certain reasons; micro and macro aspects particularly related to the socio-historical context where the Quran was revealed. Therefore, to obtain a comprehensive meaning of the Quran, of course, we need other sources and devices such historical sources, linguistics and so forth. How could a Muslim understand all meaning of the Quran profoundly if he does not know at all about Arabic language? Hence, it would be almost impossible that an interpreter could be able to comprehend

¹⁵⁸ Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 359. See also, Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: a Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," 125

¹⁵⁹ **Ibid.**

¹⁶⁰ **Ibid.**

the meaning of the Quran comprehensively only based on the Quran as the only sources and references without using other sources and devices

The third element of Qutb's methodology is related to the existential seclusion, which is the most radical approach that I want to focus on. Based on this approach, Qutb believes that the Quran cannot be understood purely and comprehensively except through the way that was traversed and implemented by the Quranic unique generation in the early history of Islam by isolating themselves from idea and non-Islamic sources that are assumed as *jahiliyya*. This is because according to Qutb, Islam cannot compromise with anything that is non-Islamic teachings.

Principally, what Qutb means related to the concept of the existential seclusion is quite difficult to be understood and impossible to be implemented. This is because the concept demands people to seclude themselves totally from any other communities in which it was absolutely impossible in its practice, due to a fact that it was contradictory with the basic character of human being as a social creature in which they could not live lonely without others. Even if the existential seclusion from *jahiliyya* (non-Islamic culture) possibly can be implemented, but according to Nayed, it will become a bad idea. This is because, "it would lead to a fragile self-enclosed emptiness that fails to reach benefit from the richness of human experience in general, and from the struggles of fellow human beings to make sense of, to live in, and perhaps to improve the world."¹⁶¹ Therefore, in this sense, the implementation of the doctrine of existential seclusion would cause a condition, in which every human being's cultures and efforts emerging in every generation except the Quranic unique generation's culture would not be appreciated.

In this respect, Qutb forsakes the fact that basically human beings' lives from time to time would always develop and change and generate various types of culture and civilization, in which every product of culture in every generation should be responded and accommodated positively as a tribute and appreciation towards human's effort and struggle. On the other hand, the fact indicated that not all of

¹⁶¹ Nayed, "The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb," 361, and see also Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God," 127.

human products of culture and civilization appearing and existing after the era of the Quranic unique generation are contradictory with the teachings of the Quran. Therefore, it would be quite naive that to obtain the holistic interpretation of the Quran, all products of human cultures except the culture of the Quranic human generation should be denied and do not take into account as other additional sources and devices used in understanding the Quran

Further, Nayed also argues that the existential seclusion from non-Islamic culture “would lead to the most sinister of all human vices, arrogance. To say that everything around is not Islam (*jahiliyya*), and is, therefore, not worthy of consideration or respect, is an act of utmost violence against other Muslim who hold different views, and most importantly against humanity at large.”¹⁶² In this perspective, this seclusion potentially generates a literal and radical understanding of the Quran, in which all different commentaries of the Quran would not be respected and considered. This condition would lead to a claim that the single truth of the understanding of Islam just belongs to certain Muslim groups, while other groups who have different understandings with them would be regarded as the others (infidels). Consequently, it would lead to the emerging of radical Islamic terrorist movements among Muslims, where these groups usually is easy to blame and accuse other Muslim groups who have different perspectives of the understanding of the Quran in particular and non-Muslims in general as infidels as it happens today, especially related to some Islamic terrorist movements such *Islamic Jihad* and *al-Qaeda*.¹⁶³ They campaign and spread various terrors around the world and justify their terror in the name of Islam because they believe that Islam legally allows them to fight against those infidels as a part of religious duties called *jihad*.

In spite of that, Qutb’s methodology of Quranic commentary, which, according Nayed, is categorized as a radical approach, ultimately, produces a literal and radical understanding of Islam (Quran) in all aspects, economically and politically particularly related to the relationship between Islam and state as the main

¹⁶² Nayed, “The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb,” 361.

¹⁶³ Laboda, “The Thought of Sayyid Qutb,” 3. See also Nayed, “The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb,” 358.

object of research in this thesis, and showing clearly his antipathy and rejection to all things that come from the Western culture and civilization. Generally, Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary, especially regarding the doctrine of the existential seclusion, basically, leads to a dichotomy and distinction between what is called as an Islamic teaching and non-Islamic teaching or *jahiliyya* as the main feature of the radical Islamist groups who "strongly emphasize the distinctiveness of Islam."¹⁶⁴ Hence, Qutb purposely creates this distinction in order to confirm that Islam cannot compromise with non-Islamic teachings as implemented by radical Islamist figures such as Maududi, by a tendency and "wanting to turn to the clock to seventh century Arabia" (the unique Quranic generation).¹⁶⁵ Finally, Qutb's distinction between Islamic and non-Islamic teaching becomes his main basis on how he comprehends Islam including his perspective towards the relation between Islam and state.

Indeed, the result of the implementation of Qutb's Quranic approach could be found in his Quranic exegesis book titled *In the Shade of the Quran*, which shows the distinction between Islam versus *jahiliyya* or God's sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) versus people's sovereignty and exposing Qutb's personal commitment towards Islam to be the "dominant socio-political force in Muslim society."¹⁶⁶

On the other hand, Rahman's methodology of Quranic commentary called "double movement theory", which has two movements seemingly gives a new model perspective towards an interpreter in understanding the Quran. Actually, this theory is basically not something new in Islamic scientific tradition, it just a modification of what called as the technique of analogical reasoning (*qiyas*), which is one of the four Islamic law sources accepted by the Sunni schools. The historical approach as the

¹⁶⁴ Shepard, "Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology," 314.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 315. In fact, Qutb's thought was really influenced by Maududi. It could be traced from Qutb's idea such as the concept of *hakimiyya*, *jahiliyya*, *jihad* which referred to Maududi's work titled "The Four Terminologies in the Quran." For a detailed explanation, see, Asyraf Hj. A.B. Rahman and Nooraihan Ali, "The Influence of Al-Mawdudi and The Jama'at Al Islami Movement on Sayyid Qutb Writing," *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2, 4, 2012, 232-236.

¹⁶⁶ Abdullah, *Interpreting the Quran*, 18. According to Saeed Abdullah, Qutb's Quranic interpretation is "a personal reflective nature" and "somewhat divorced from standard exegetical tradition in its more free-flowing ideas around the text; it draws in the modern world and its challenge, and refuses to follow any approach to *tafsir*." See, Abdullah, *Interpreting the Quran*, 18.

main aspect of this theory through the identification of the circumstances of revelation (*asbabun nuzul*) and abrogation (*nask*) is also not a novelty in Islam. It has been implemented by previous Muslim thinkers such as Ibnu Kathir, Imam At-Thabari and so on, although in fact, Rahman's theory is more systematic and comprehensive.¹⁶⁷

Apart from that, one of the risks in implementing the first movement of the double movement theory is subjectivism. The reason lies in the process of finding the whole meaning of the text as the main purpose of the first movement through the socio-historical approach because the interpretation generated in this movement cannot be separated from subjectivism, tendency and background of every interpreter. On the other hand, Rahman really understands this risk. Therefore, to solve this problem, he demands every interpreter to find the moral principles in every text after finding the meaning of it, although Rahman realizes that to discover the moral principles of the text is not easy. However, according to him, it could be kind of *ijtihad* to find it. Hence, in this context, every interpreter could have different perspective of the commentary. Yet, Muslims should not be worried of the different interpretations generated in this context, since it is aimed to attain a real comprehensive commentary and not just an arbitrary reason.¹⁶⁸

Another risk of the implementation of the first movement is associated with a tendency of the interpreter to limit the meaning of the Quran to the certain historical context. In this respect, Rahman obliges every interpreter who implements the first movement of his theory to differentiate between the meanings of the Quran according to the historical context and to restrict the message of the Quran to certain historical contexts because according to Rahman both things are totally different.¹⁶⁹

Related to the second movement, the current situation, which is totally different from the situation where the Quran was revealed, would a very serious

¹⁶⁷ Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: A Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," 124.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 123-124.

¹⁶⁹ Rahman contends that to obtain a comprehensive meaning of the Quran in the first movement and to avoid a tendency of every interpreter to restrict the message of the Quran, therefore, the interpreter must distinguish between the historical context of the Quran and the certain historical context of it. See, Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: A Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," 124.

challenge in the application of the general principles of the Quran in the present situation. It will potentially create a deviation of the legislation of the Quran as the result of the implementation of the general/moral principles of the Quran in the current situation. But according to Rahman, Muslims should not be afraid of this possibility, because it would never happen, due to the fact that general principles of the Quran will never fail in controlling, answering and solving all necessity and challenges of the current situation.

Basically, Rahman's methodology gives a positive perspective and accommodative approach in understanding the Quran, in which the Quran through the double movement theory would be comprehended comprehensively, not literal and atomistic. On the other hand, through this theory, every interpreter would not stop in the literal meaning of the Quran in understanding it, but it would go profoundly into the basic and fundamental meaning of its meaning. Hence, the Quran would be comprehended more comprehensively encompassing by combining its literal meaning, socio-historical context and its general moral principles.

His double movement theory also denotes a dynamic way to understand the Quran, in which this theory would bring Muslims to respect the traditional Quranic approach and modern methodology of Quranic commentary based on modern social sciences that grow rapidly in the Western countries.¹⁷⁰ Therefore, Rahman's theory of double movement apparently is quite accommodative theory, which combines the aspect of modernisation and tradition. Through this theory, Muslims are demanded to learn deeply classical Islamic methodology of Quranic commentary and also modern sciences.

4.1. Comparative Analysis of Political Thought

In terms of Qutb's idea of state as it was explained in the second chapter, Qutb contends that state and Islam is inseparable and integrated because he believes

¹⁷⁰ Muhamed El-Taher El-Mesawi, "The Methodology of Tafsir al-Mawdu'i: A Comparative Analysis," *Intellectual Discourse*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2005, 23. See also, Prakoso, "Approaching the Word of God: A Study on Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb," 129.

that “Islam is for all aspects as social as well as personal life.”¹⁷¹ Therefore, in this sense, Qutb obviously can be categorized in the group of Muslim thinkers who support the integrated paradigm in the context of the relationship between Islam and state. On the other hand, Qutb also believes that a state cannot be Islamic since Islamic law is not dominant in the governance, although Muslims are majority in the and vice versa. Therefore, the Islamic state must be secluded from non-Islamic teachings, in which the Islamic law must become the fundamental pillar of the state.

Hence, based on distinction between Islam and non-Islam/*jahiliyya*, Qutb divides the state into two parts; *dar-ul-Islam* and *dar-ul-harb*. His idea of *dar-ul-Islam* and *dar-ul-harb* denotes that he consistently attempt to implement the distinction between Islamic and *jahili* teaching and to emphasize that an Islamic state could not deal and compromise with all influences from non-Islamic sources as a main type of a radical Islamist who insistently tries to avoid Muslims from following non-Islamic teachings. But in fact, Qutb does not stop to this point concerning idea of state. Besides his distinction between *dar-ul-Islam* and *dar-ul-harb*, Qutb also argues that all non-Islamic state (*dar-ul-harbi*) dominated and controlled by rulers who do not implement the Islamic laws/ *jahili* and satanic laws must be toppled from the power through *jihad*.¹⁷²

Indeed, Qutb’s distinction between *dar-ul-Islam* and *dar-ul-harb* is quite dangerous to be implemented nowadays and potentially leads to the emergence of antagonism and conflicts among people in general and Muslims in particular as how it is happening nowadays, where radical Islamic groups, such as *al-Qaida*, *Islamic Jihad* and so forth have borrowed Qutb’s idea of the distinction to justify their terror and violence in the name of upholding the Islamic state and eliminating non-Islamic state.¹⁷³ This is because those groups believe that *dar-ul-harb* is part of *jahiliyya* including all modern states at the present. Its consequence is that the people who live in *dar-ul-harb* are infidels, in which as the infidels, those people can be fought and toppled from the power through *jihad* which is the second important pillar in Islam

¹⁷¹ Shepard, “Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology,” 314.

¹⁷² Qutb, *Milestones*, 81.

¹⁷³ Laboda, “The Thought of Sayyid Qutb,” 3.

after *iman* (belief) on the perspective of Qutb. On the other hand, the obligation to establish an Islamic state is the primary task for Muslim because the main Muslims' duty as God's vicegerent on earth is to worship and to uphold God's laws on earth.¹⁷⁴

On the other hand, based on his distinction between Islam and *jahiliyya* and his idea that Islam cannot compromise and deal with all kind of *jahili* systems, ultimately, brings to his rejection towards all Western political ideas and systems such as the idea of democracy and people's sovereignty which according to him is human-made products and contradictory with Islam. For instance, his refutation towards the idea of democracy which according to him is not compatible (Islam) especially related to the concept *shura* is based on the main reason that democracy is the Western's product (non-Islamic teachings) and it cannot be compromised with Islam. In this respect, as mentioned above as a radical Islamist, Qutb would consistently warns Muslims from imitating and following Western models including political system model (democracy).

In spite of the reason above, Qutb's rejection of democracy based on his analysis and conclusion towards the practice of democracy in Western countries, in which according to him is full of deviation and abuse based on his conclusion that democracy as a political system which is relied on the majority voices as implemented in Western countries through parliamentary system had been controlled and dominated by capitalist. Therefore, every decision made by members of parliament is only for the sake of capitalists' interest and not for the sake of people. In this respect, he concludes that democracy is contradictory with the main principles of Islam, namely the principle of justice and equality

In this sense, Qutb is objectively not right because he regards and deduces that the distortion happening in the implementation of democracy in the Western was the result of the poor teachings of democracy itself. In fact, the deviation of implementation of democracy in the West which is marked by the domination of capitalists in controlling the practise of democracy is purely related to actors who distort the basic teaching of democracy and is not related to the fact that democracy

¹⁷⁴ Qutb, *Milestones*, 24-26.

is a negative concept consisting of bad teachings as shown in the implementation democracy in the Western countries.

Actually, the mistake is not related to the fact that democracy teaches deviant teachings such greediness, injustice, inequality and so on as portrayed in the implementation of democracy in Western countries. Basically, what happened in the Western is contradictory with the basic meaning of democracy itself as “a universally recognised ideal as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by peoples throughout the world community irrespective of cultural, political, social and economic differences. It is thus a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity.”¹⁷⁵

Therefore, based on the basic meaning of democracy above, it indicates that the substance of democracy is compatible with the principle of Islam, in which the political order constructed by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina was absolutely democratic as it was based on fundamental principles and values of Islamic teaching such is “*shura*, rule of law, justice, equality, freedom, brotherhood, protection of human rights” and so forth.¹⁷⁶ Besides that, the spirit of the decision making-process in democratic system is not different with the decision making-process in the concept of *shura*, in which every decision is made based on the majority voices and consultation for the sake of people’s interest, transparency, justice, equality and so on. Therefore, based on what it was explained above, it would not be quite fair to judge that the concept of democracy totally is *jahili* system and contradictory with Islam based on the reason that democracy is Western product and likening the distortion of the practice of democracy in the Western as the picture of the basic teaching of democracy.

Besides the concept of democracy, Qutb also contends that the concept of people’s sovereignty is part of *jahili* system, in which it is totally not in accordance

¹⁷⁵ Cherif Bassiouni at al., **Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement**, Geneva, Inter-Parliamentary Union, 1998, IV.

¹⁷⁶ Sanaa Tahzeeb, “A Comparative Study of Islam and Modern Democratic Ideals,” **Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture**, vol. 2, no. 1, March, 2014, 48.

with Islamic belief that there is no other sovereignty except God's sovereignty and there is no legislation and law-maker except God. In this context, Qutb does not believe that there was other source of legislation besides God; therefore, he convinces that God is sovereign and the manifestation of His sovereignty is the laws of God (*sharia*), where these laws cover all aspects of human beings' lives including the aspect of politics. Its consequence is that other source of legislation particularly related to the concept of people's sovereignty is a kind of human's rebellion against God to replace God's position as the law-maker and source of authority and power, and every rebellion towards God's sovereignty is a main character of *jahiliyya*.

In this context, Qutb consistently attempts to prevent Muslims from following the Western political system and to convince them to follow the political model of the unique Quranic generation, in which according to Qutb, the generation achieved the glory of Islam and became the best generation in the history of Islam because they just used God's sovereignty as the sole source of power and authority, while people's tasks are just to obey and implement the laws of God on earth. Hence, Qutb's understanding of God's sovereignty and his rejection towards the concept of people's sovereignty in the political perspective cannot be separated from his idea of distinction between Islam and *jahiliyya* which is rooted from his idea of the existential seclusion. Further, his labelling toward the concept of people's sovereignty as a Western and modern *jahiliyya* based on a reason that the concept actually neglects human's spiritual needs, and leading to the suffering and disharmony throughout the world, so bringing to the dominance of the evil which finally undermining society, basically, confirms that Muslim society totally must be avoided and separated from the *jahili* system (people's sovereignty). Therefore, Qutb believes that Islam must be separated from this *jahili* system (people's sovereignty).¹⁷⁷

In this respect, Qutb's rejection towards the concept of people's sovereignty as the result of the existential seclusion from *jahili* culture (Western culture) just brings the people to the most malicious of all human faults that is arrogance and

¹⁷⁷ Laboda, "The Thought of Sayyid Qutb," 17.

egoism. This is because “to say that everything around is *jahiliyya* and therefore not worthy of consideration or respect is an act of utmost violence against other Muslims who hold different views and most importantly against humanity at large.”¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, this seclusion just leads people to ignore and underestimate the other humans’ creativity and innovation.

Apart from that, Qutb believes that the most important aspect from the state is *sharia*. Qutb’s identification towards the Islamic state depends on how dominant *sharia* in the state is. If *sharia* is dominant in the state, the state will be categorized as an Islamic state and vice versa. *Sharia* as the divine law and the way of life gives a guarantee to bring people to the harmonious life in worldly and hereafter life because it comes from God. On the contrary, human-made laws as the opposite of *sharia* will lead people to the destruction because it is a human-made product law full of humans’ desire and interest. And only through the state *sharia* will be implemented completely for Muslim. On the other hand, to implement and uphold *sharia* as the basis of the Islamic state is the primary obligation of Muslims, while to eliminate all human-made law is also Muslims’ duties as part of *jihad* in way of God.

Actually, Qutb’s tendency to make *sharia* as the main pillar of the state is reasonable due to the fact that contents of *sharia* sourced from the Quran are certainly qualified. However, the problem is related to how Qutb comprehends the Quran through his methodology of Quranic commentary, which is based on three steps, particularly associated with the second and third step namely that only the Quran itself should be the basis for understanding the Quran and the understanding the Quran should be done in an existential seclusion from all non-Islamic teachings (*jahiliyya*). In fact, the two steps are quite difficult to be implemented as explained in the beginning of this chapter. It just leads Qutb to produce a radical, literal and inflexibility understanding of the Quran especially related to the Islamic laws (*sharia*), where *sharia* as a way of life would be understood in a narrow minded sense.

¹⁷⁸ Nayed, “The Radical Quranic Hermeneutics of Sayyid Qutb,” 361.

On the other hand, Qutb seemingly believes that only through his methodology of Quranic commentary, a pure *sharia*, which is taken and sourced, can be maintained. Qutb also believes that a pure *sharia* as a divine revelation cannot be mixed and compromise with any man-made law, where Qutb claims that only through an Islamic state the implementation of *sharia* would be work effectively. This is because he believes that the success of the unique Quranic generations to construct the model of an Islamic state in the first period of Islam is caused by their steadfastness to maintain the purity of *sharia* as the main basic of the their life from any influence of non-Islamic cultures that existed before Islam such as the Roman and Persian cultures.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, there is no way except returning to *sharia* and making it as a way of life and the foundation of Islamic state, so that the Muslims today will be able to achieve and reiterate what ever achieved by the unique Quranic generation in the past.

Indeed, Qutb's literal and radical understanding of *sharia* and his rejection towards all human-made laws brings him and inspires radical Muslim groups nowadays as mentioned above to have less respecting against others who have a different views and understanding, whereas the only way to respect and worship God is to appreciate all of God's creatures and to respect all diversities. Moreover, *sharia* as the manifestation of Islam functions to arrange people's life to become peaceful and harmonious by respecting each other and not creating any antagonism and conflict among people.

On the other hand, Rahman's political thought particularly concerning the relationship between Islam and state cannot be separated from his methodology of Quranic commentary used in understanding the Quran, namely double movement theory, in which this theory puts its emphasis towards socio-historical context and conversion all the specific cases in the Quran and *Sunnah* into the moral objectives and principles, and finally producing a new re-interpretation of the Quran in an

¹⁷⁹ Qutb, *Milestones*, 30.

extreme form as the main and distinctive mark of what called by Sheppard as the “neo modernism.”¹⁸⁰

The influence of Rahman’s Quranic theory towards his political thought can be seen from his idea of state. Through the historical approach, Rahman attempts to trace the idea and form of state in the Quran and history of Islam, in which he finally concludes that state in Islam is really a democratic state and should be based on the basis of justice, equality, egalitarianism and morality as the core of Islam as established by the Prophet Muhammad and developed by the four caliphs of *Khulafaur Rasyidin* (Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali).

In this context, Rahman apparently tries to accommodate and find the root of democracy in Islam through the historical approach and tries to discover the similarity between the substance of democracy and Islam. In this sense, Rahman seems that he attempts to mediate and bridge the conflict and difference between a radical or fundamental Islamist Muslim group who believes that Islam is a complete and holistic religion covering all aspects of life and rejecting non-Islamic teachings and a secularist Muslim group who totally separated Islam and state, where the aspect of religion is certainly different from state (secularistic paradigm),¹⁸¹ by offering a new reinterpretation in the context of relation between Islam and state confirming that Islam and state probably can work together and having mutuality relationship or symbiotic relationship. Therefore, in terms of relationship between Islam and state, Rahman’s position in this context can be categorized as “a symbiotic paradigm.” Through this paradigm, the state could actively implement the core principles of the Quran (Islam), namely the principles of equality, egalitarianism, justice and moral social order among the people as the basic teachings of God to create an egalitarian and just moral-social order.

¹⁸⁰ Shepard, “Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology,” 326.

¹⁸¹ Related to secularism in Islam, Rahman says, “Secularism in Islam, properly speaking, is the acceptance of laws and other social and political institution without reference to Islam, i.e., without being derived or organically linked to the principle of the Quran and *Sunnah*.... Islamic Modernism.... means precisely the induction of change into the content of *sharia*-large-scale and multilateral change indeed.” See, Fazlur Rahman, “Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Alternatives,” **Int. F. Middle East. Studies**, vol. 1, 1970, 331.

Principally, Rahman's political thoughts can be defined and identified as a part of symbiotic paradigm due to the fact that he believes, although the term "Islamic state" was not mentioned in the Quran and *Sunnah*, but Islam still provides ethics and concepts related to value of justice that should become the main basis of the state and *shura* concept that become a main principle for the state to decide and solve all political problems and policy. In spite of that, Rahman also believes that Islam and state have a tight reciprocal relation and both concepts can work each other such as his argument related to the implementation of *shura* that can be practised by adopting democratic institutions such as representative government and legislative assembly. It denotes that Islam and state can cooperate and complete each other, in which religious concepts and laws like *shura* (as mentioned prior) can be taken and implemented to become a part of political system and institution in a democratic state. Therefore, based on these reasons, Rahman cannot be identified as secularist as well as Ali Abdel Raziq who believes that state and Islam should be totally separated because the domain of Islam is not related to the profane matters but its domain is religious and spiritual area, on the contrary, politic and state are integrated with worldly matters.

Basically, the implementation of Rahman's idea of state above in developed countries especially in Middle East, the Subcontinent, and Southeast Asia where most of those countries are inhabited by the majority of Muslim would become an effective solution to end the abuse and distortion of power on behalf of *sharia* by first creating a civil society as the main pillar of the state. This is because the existence of the Muslim society will automatically lead to the establishment of an Islamic state, where the authority of leader of state will be controlled by the Muslim community to avoid the abuse of power.

Apart from the above, his agreement that the concept of democracy is compatible with *shura* in terms of political system indicates that actually he strives to convert certain verses related to idea of *shura* into a general principles (as a main part of the second step in the first movement of his double movement

theory)¹⁸² which are nowadays can be implemented in the mechanism of democracy, in which all legislation and decision are made by the members of committee in a parliament, where the members of assembly are elected by the people through a general election. On the other hand, the compatibility between *shura* and democracy can be traced from the angle of the Islamic history particularly related to the history the first caliph, namely Abu Bakr who was elected by the Muslims to be their caliph. It indicates that the leader gets a mandate and authority from the people, which according to him is completely democratic. In this sense, Rahman principally is in a line with Muhammad Iqbal (d.1938) that democracy is compatible with the principle of Islam (*shura*) proven by the fact of history of Abu Bakar, when he was elected by the Muslims.¹⁸³

In this perspective also, what Rahman wants to accentuate is that although the terms democracy is not a Quranic term but the spirit of consultation and participation as the important element of democracy is in accordance and in line with the spirit of the concept of *shura* which is a Quranic terms and a part of Islamic features. In other word, it can be said that the substance of *shura* is not contradictory with the substance of democracy, namely that both concept invite people to participate in all political activity and do mutual consultation in solving all problem, and legislating certain political policy and legislation. Therefore, in this respect, Rahman seemingly tries to give a fresh reinterpretation concerning the conformity between the idea of *shura* and democracy, and showing that in this context, democracy substantially is similar to the concept of *shura* and both are basically a form of consultative system of government based on the principle of deliberation and participation of the people.

One of the most important things related to Rahman's idea concerning democracy is that democracy would be quite difficult to be implemented in the under developed countries, where its citizens are not educated remembering that democracy principally is a high political system. It will be effectively practiced by developed

¹⁸² For a detailed explanation of the second step in the first movement of Rahman's double movement theory, see the third chapter of this thesis related to Rahman's Quranic methodology.

¹⁸³ Tauseef Ahmed Parray, "Allama Iqbal on Islam-Democracy Discourse: An Analysis of His Views on Compatibility and Incompatibility," **Islam and Muslim Societies-a Social Science Journal**, vol. 4, no. 2, 2011, 2.

and advanced states where their citizens are educated and really understand the core, aim and goal of democracy. In this respect, Rahman wants to emphasize that before implementing the concept of democracy in a state, a civil society consisting of the people who certainly comprehend all aspect of democracy need to be built firstly. It is aimed to avoid the possibility of irregularities towards the implementation of democracy.

Apart from that, Rahman's distinction between sovereignty in the context of politics and theology as a critique towards Maududi's idea of God sovereignty is quite interesting to be noticed, in which according to Rahman, the notion of God's sovereignty brings too much confusion and misunderstanding among the Muslim. Through his double movement theory in understanding the Quran, Rahman finds that the concept God's sovereignty in the Quran is related to principle of justice and fairplay which are frequently enunciated in the Quran. Therefore, in terms of political context, God is not sovereign but people are sovereign, where the people as the holder of sovereignty should implement this sovereignty in the political system of government in the state based on the principle justice. Hence, if the people in a democratic state legislate and produce legislation and laws based on the principle of justice and fairplay, so they are basically are accepting the concept of God's Sovereignty, "since the standards of justice are objective and do not depend on or even necessarily conform to, the subjective wishes of people."¹⁸⁴

In this respect, Rahman seemingly wants to dismantle a literal understanding of the concept God's sovereignty associated with the context of politics, where Muslim figures such as Maududi and Qutb literally claim that God's sovereignty certainly pervades all aspect and fields of sovereignty politically, economically and so forth, and even Maududi regards that the idea of people's sovereignty is as a part of *syirk* as it was explained in the third chapter. Through his double movement theory, Rahman strives to discover the general principles concerning the idea sovereignty in the Quran. Of course, God is the most sovereign and Supreme Judge, because He is the creator of the universe, but this point does not refer to the legal

¹⁸⁴ Rahman, "Implementation of the Islamic Concept of State in the Pakistani Milieu," 209.

political sovereignty. But the principles of justice and fairplay which have been mentioned in the Quran and practiced by the Prophet Muhammad are basically general moral objectives related to the idea of sovereignty. Therefore, these principles potentially are able to implement in current situation through a concept of people's sovereignty in the democratic state.

In addition, related to this context, it seems to me that Rahman seemingly wants to explain that not all ideas of Muslim scholars correct and in accordance with the principles of Islam, but there are also certain thoughts of them that are not accord with principles of the Quran. Likewise, concerning the Western cultural products, cannot always be identified with all the depravity and negative things and totally contradictory with Islam. There are still good and positive things from the Western cultures which can be taken into the building of Islamic intellectuals. Therefore, in this case, Muslims are required to address and treat it objectively and critically because an objective and critical treatment will lead Muslims to be able to establish an Islamic order with various dimensions within the framework intact, thorough and systematic, reflecting the values of the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet, in which the Muslims will be able to exist in the modern world and simultaneously remain Islamic values.

Associated with *sharia*, Rahman's idea is that *sharia* should be reinterpreted through the way of *ijtihad*. According to Rahman, the gate of *ijtihad* will be always opened for all Muslim and not belongs either to certain Muslims or an exclusive group of Muslims. In this perspective, Rahman through historical approach as the main of his methodology of Quranic commentary invites Muslims turning back to the organic relation (*ijtihad-ijma*) in interpreting the Islamic laws (*sharia*) as it was practiced by the early Muslim generation, in which it will bring Muslims to have a more dynamic interpretation of *sharia*.

Rahman also calls Muslim to re-interpret the meaning of *Ijma* as the synonym of *Sunnah* consisting of all conduct of the Prophet as it was understood by the Prophet's companions and uses it as the main element of *ijtihad* by using *qiyas* to produce a comprehensive interpretation of *sharia*. Therefore, through this approach,

Rahman believes that Muslims would have neither stagnation nor lack of dynamism of the interpretation of *sharia* but vice versa.

On the other hand, based on my own perspective, in this sense, based on Rahman's Quranic approach, in the interpretation of the Quran and *Sunnah* as the main source of *sharia*, Rahman wants to differentiate between the historical normative context of Islam which is mentioned in the Quran and historical Islam which are things understood and implemented by Muslims and depicting the real picture of their life from generation to generation starting from the Prophet and his companions and up to present and next generation as the manifestation and implementation of the whole teachings of the Quran. And the historical Islam as the tradition of Muslims basically always allows and needs revitalization in every generation of Muslim. This revitalization will not happen if Muslims close the gate of *ijtihad* towards the Islamic laws and do not want to turn back to implement the organic relation (*Ijma-Ijtihad*) in understanding of *sharia*. Otherwise, Muslims will permanently stay and live in stagnant condition and lack of dynamism.

CONCLUSION

Sayyid Qutb and Fazlur Rahman offer a comprehensive understanding of Islamic political thought, which is based on their methodology of Quranic commentary. Qutb presents Islam as a holistic and comprehensive system of life, where the best way to comprehend this teaching and implement it is by following the way passed and exemplified by the unique Quranic generation through avoiding the whole non-Islamic sources (*jahiliyya*) including the modern Western civilization and just using the Quran as the only source to guide their life. Based on this way, Qutb concludes that Islam and *jahiliyya* must be distinguished and both impossibly to be compromised each other. This is because the main basis of Islam is the monotheistic values and, on the contrary, *jahiliyya* is built on the basis of materialistic values. And only through this way, Qutb believes that the Muslims today would live harmoniously and would be able to achieve the glory of Islam.

On the other hand, Qutb also believes that only through an Islamic state, this Islamic teaching could be implemented completely and effectively. Therefore, to build an Islamic state is a duty of every Muslim through *jihad*, which is the second important element in Islamic doctrine after *iman* (faith) according to Qutb. The establishment of the Islamic state which Muslim society live in it would become an ideal alternative for Muslim today to compete and defeat Western civilization.

In spite of that, a brief picture above as a simply conclusion of Qutb's thoughts basically indicates that to trace genealogy and development of Qutb's political thoughts comprehensively, the understanding of Qutb's methodology of Quranic commentary absolutely must be taken into account, due to the fact that all of Qutb's thoughts particularly his political thought was constructed through his Quranic approach in understanding the Quran. In other word, Qutb's methodology in interpreting the Quran gives a very significant influence towards his understanding of Islam including his political thought particularly related to the relationship between Islam and state.

True that Qutb's methodology in comprehending the Quran has led him to produce a radical understanding of Islam which is widely adopted by Islamic radical

group to establish an Islamic state by using violence in the name of Islam and launching various acts of terror to people who disagree and have different view with the radical group but, on the other hand, Qutb's ideas and his contribution should be appreciated and must be learned comprehensively as one of the important treasures of knowledge in spite of all the negative sides of Qutb's thoughts.

In contrast to Sayyid Qutb, Rahman's Quranic approach (double movement theory) tries to provide a comprehensive, accommodative and moderate understanding of Islam. Rahman sees that to comprehend Islam from the Quran, reviewing the aspect of social and historical context and using of modern sciences developed by Western civilization absolutely must be combined and used in interpreting the Quran. This way finally results a complete understanding of Islam that is not radical. Rahman realized that the backwardness of Muslims from Western civilization nowadays due to the fact that Muslims today comprehend the Islamic teachings in the Quran partially and literally and their unwillingness to implement reinterpretation towards the Islamic laws through the gate of *ijtihad* because they believe that the door of *ijtihad* has been closed.

In addition, by using the theory of double movement in understanding the relationship between Islam and the state in the Quran and Prophetic tradition, Rahman concludes that religion and state should cooperate with each other, where the state (democratic state) should be built on the foundation of justice as a main tenet of Quran. The main component of the state is a Muslim society (civil / educated society) that must be established before the state is built. This is because only by civil society, all possible deviations and power abuse can be anticipated due to a fact that Muslim community is civilized community (cognitively, mentally, spiritually) and which is able to control and to become a balancing the ruling government in a state.

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