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### Research Article

# Muslim Contestations over Islam and the State Relationship: A Critical Appraisal

Showkat Ahmad Wagay

Department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, India, [showkatwagayamu@gmail.com](mailto:showkatwagayamu@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** Recent years have seen a proliferation of academic writing on the relationship of Islam and state from both the Muslims and non-Muslim academicians alike. Mostly, this academic writing used the trend of Islamism as a peg to ponder about the relationship of Islam and the state. The advocates of this trend hold the belief that the state is the nerve centre of Islam. They believed that Islam is a holistic religion and denies the separability of religion from politics and considers political power as an indispensable mechanism to achieve the ends of Islam. They posit Islamic governance as an authentic and correct form of polity. The other trend claims that Islam is primarily silent on the issue of the "state," and that notions of an "Islamic state" or caliphate are dictatorial and antithetical to traditional Islam, though Islamic values can inform the individual in their role as a citizen within a democratic state. They proposed an alternative conceptualization of state-religion relations that avoids identifications of the state with any particular religion and ideology. This paper will briefly examine the genealogy of these two competing claims, and it will also highlight the arguments and counter-arguments of the representative scholars of both claims.

**Keywords:** Muslim secularists, Caliphate, Islamists, Private Islam

## INTRODUCTION

The worldview of Islam encompasses all aspects of human society thus inseparability of religion and politics is demonstrated in Islamic thought. Islamic scholars, on a theoretical level, make the claim that Islam and politics are interlinked. Islam is seen as a 'complete way of life'. No transcendental boundaries differentiate religion from politics in Islam. Scholars, such as Ismael and Ismael argue that "the classical paradigm of politics was founded on an image of the State that presupposed religion as the source of power and *Khilafah* [caliphate] as the framework of government".<sup>1</sup> The Islamic political thought, as a part of overall Islamic intellectual heritage, denotes conceptualizing human affairs that originated from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), whose position in the early Muslim community was of God's appointed political and religious leader. The Medinan State was established by him, where he acted as a political head of the State. The legitimacy of his rule over Medina was based on his status as the Prophet of Islam as well as on the basis of legal document that was signed between diverse religious groups popularly known as 'Constitution of Medina'.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Prophet's Muhammad (SAW) organization of Madinan society through the Constitution of Medina offered a model of applied political thought and a glimpse into the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) pragmatic approach towards the creation of a new polity.

Pertinently, it is not only Islamists who relate this assumption of unity to the particular position of the Prophet in Medina. The German Orientalist, Fritz Steppat, for instance, asserted that, from the outset, the Islamic revelation also implied the foundation of an Islamic state. In assuming a political role in Medina, so runs his paradigmatic argument, the Prophet combined religious and political functions. He was prophet and statesman at the same time, and set the example for future political developments in the Muslim world. In this way, the community of Medina came to represent the ideal of an Islamic polity.<sup>3</sup>

Suffice to say, the first challenge faced by the Muslim community arises instantaneously after the demise of its formative leader, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), in 632 CE. The challenge was in fact the problem of government and how to select a successor. That ensued to discuss between the two distinct camps immigrants and helpers who will lead to Muslim community after the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) death. The result of this debate was the selection of Abu Baker as the successor of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Hence was born the political institution of the Caliphate, a symbol of power institution, position and office that endured in some form for several decades until the abolition of Ottoman Caliphate in 1924.

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<sup>1</sup>Ismael, Tariq and Jacqueline Ismael, *Government and Politics in Islam*, (New Delhi: CBS Publishers & Distributers, 1991) p.25

<sup>2</sup>Berween, Mohamed, "Al-wathiqah: The first Islamic state constitution." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 23, no. 1 (2003): 103-120

<sup>3</sup>Jung, Dietrich. "Islam and Politics: A Fixed Relationship." *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 16.1 (2007): 19-35.

Relatedly, the abolition of caliphate sent convulsive waves of shock and lament throughout the lands of Islam, the idea of its return inspiring numerous movements and intellectual projects. In the wake of breakdown of caliphate, diverse trends have emerged in the Islamic polity that have debating the model of Islamic conception of state. Among them the two dominating the Islamic political thought are: *One that proposes the restoration of the Caliphate and gives rationale of basic sources* and are engaged in the project of Islamization of the modern state. The advocates of this thought process desired to gain control of the state and make the state to implement and enforce the *Shariah*. This trend is predominately labelled as Islamism. *The other trend denies such claim by arguing basic sources of Islam are silent on the subject and the proponents of this claim attempt to limit the political role of religion or in other words a retreat from the idea of creating an Islamic state.* Asef Bayet (Contemporary authority on Political Sociology) calls this trend as post Islamism. He argues post Islamism wants to marry Islam with individual choice and freedom, with democracy and modernity, to achieve what some have called an “alternative modernity” by blending religiosity with rights, faith with freedom, Islam with liberty.<sup>4</sup>

### **Private Islam: The case of Muslim secularists**

The scholars who challenge the political role of Islam in public sphere advocate that Islam has nothing to say about the state, that any conception of an Islamic state or a caliphate is a non-religious construction and that to believe in such a form of government is to believe in an authoritarian, unaccountable sovereign figure. In the words of Ovaimar Anjum

The objections to the idea of resurrecting the caliphate, too, appear formidable. These are of three types: that it is undesirable, unfeasible, and/or religiously unnecessary. It is undesirable because it is a medieval, absolutist political system (if it can be called a system at all); it beckons to a primitive age prior to human rights, progress, citizenship, democracy, and religious freedom. Moreover, it is associated with terrorist outfits like ISIS and draws the worst kind of attention from both its supporters and its adversaries. It is unfeasible because the nation-state, whatever its flaws, is here to stay. Finally, it is religiously unnecessary because the caliphate, it is claimed, is not an Islamic religious institution to begin with but only a historical institution and one that never even existed for long in its ideal form as a united authority over all Muslims.<sup>5</sup>

The history of such views within Islamic scholarship can be delineated back to Ali Abdul Raziq, an Egyptian al-Azhar graduate. He wrote a book called *Al-Islam Wa Usool Al-Hukm*<sup>6</sup> (Islam and the Fundamentals of Ruling) published in 1925 in the wake of the abolition of Ottoman caliphate. Pertinently, in recent Islamic scholarship the

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<sup>4</sup>Bayat, Asef, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007) p.11

<sup>5</sup>Anjum, Ovaimir, “who wants caliphate”, *yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research* (Oct, 2019) p.3

<sup>6</sup>Raziq, Ali Abdul “Al-Islam Wa Usool Al-Hukm,” in *Al-Islam Wa Usool Al-Hukm—Darasa Wa Watha’iq*, ed., Mohammad ‘Amara (Beirut: Al-Mua’sasa al-Arabiyya li-al-darasat wa al-nashr, 1972)

central arguments raised by the proponents of private Islam<sup>7</sup> were raised by Raziq in this early work. According to Mohammad Amara, “Raziq appeared as a critic dressed in “Islamic clothing,” who compared the rule of the Caliphate to the rule of the Church, and so for him secularism became “an Islamic solution to an Islamic problem”.<sup>8</sup> However, as Adams explains, “in this work he advocated the abolition of the caliphate, and in the course of his argument took a number of other advanced positions which thoroughly aroused controversy, and on all sides the author was bitterly assailed. In a short time, a number of books written in reply to his views had made their appearance”.<sup>9</sup> Raziq was formally condemned for his book by a council of the leading Muslim scholars, which also pronounced that he was not fit to perform any public function

He develops the argument that the state that was established by Prophet, “was an Islamic unity and not a political unity” with “the leadership of the Messenger between them a religious leadership” and “their subservience to him was one of belief, not subservience to government and authority.”<sup>10</sup> He further claims that the rule of those who came after the demise of the Prophet, including the first generation of Muslims, “was not connected to the Message and was not established upon the *Deen*,” and rather than being an Islamic state it was in fact an imperial Arab entity.<sup>11</sup>

The caliphate, according to Raziq, “was only ever, and still remains, a calamity upon Islam and Muslims.”<sup>12</sup> A contemporary articulation of this view can be seen in Javid Ghamidi (b.1951) leading figure in private and Public media, arrived with a counter narrative on Islamic state who criticizes the formulations of the caliphate. He argues, neither is *Khilafah* a religious term nor its establishment at global level is a directive of Islam. This can be seen in his own words:

At that time, no effort or struggle is needed to achieve the supremacy of Islam at the collective level; Islam automatically manifests itself through the social, cultural and political mannerisms and attitudes of people. Thus if in the Shariah of God, there is any directive related to the society, they are prepared to implement it without any hesitation.... This is an Islamic government. When it comes into existence in this way, it becomes a manifestation of God’s mercy on earth; however, if it does not come into existence, even then one should not be worried because the objective of Islam is not the formation of an Islamic government but the attainment of *Tazkiyah* (self-purification). Its call is to the kingdom of

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<sup>7</sup> In this paper I have used the term “Private Islam” and “Muslim secularism” interchangeably in order to distinguish from the Islamists. *Muslim secularists perceived governance in completely non-religious terms, which leaves subjects to determine their political system based on human reasoning.* They challenge the legitimacy of the Islamic state and also objects to the politicization of Islam

<sup>8</sup> Amara, Mohammad, *Ma’raka Al-Islam Wa Usool Al-Hukm* (Cairo: Dar al-Sharook, 1997) p. 171

<sup>9</sup> Adams, Charles, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt* (Oxford University Press, 1933) p. 261

<sup>10</sup> Raziq, Abdul, “*Usool Al-Hukm*,” p. 163

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174–5

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

God which people will attain on the Day of Judgement as a resultattaining this *Tazkiyah*<sup>13</sup>

Healsochallenges those who advocateIslamization of state and arguesthat state is a neutral entityand it is fallacious to think that state also has a religion and there is a need to Islamize it. He substantiates his claim by arguing that anyendeavour for achieving this goal gives themessage to the non-Muslims that they are in fact second rate citizens who at best occupy the status of a protected minority and that if they want to demand anything from the real owners of the state they must do this in this capacity of theirs.<sup>14</sup>

He further argues that establishment of governance is a human urge and in the historyofmankind, politics and Government have originated as a result of this urge of man.<sup>15</sup>His views on Islam and politics reveal that he approached the politics from outsideof religion. In essence he minimizes the role of religion in public sphere. However,regarding the place of democracy in Islam, he maintains Islam does not imply specificform of government and insists on upholding democratic principle. He validates hisclaim by showing that guided Caliphs were elected to their power position based ondemocratic majority principle of the then prevalent tribal method.<sup>16</sup> He develops hisargument from Qur'anic Verse "there system is based on their consultation" (42:38)

Ghamidi argues this verse implies a pure democratic principle that closelycorresponds to institutional forms of modern democracy and encloses all systematicaspects such as Union council affairs, legislative procedures, interpretation ofreligion.<sup>17</sup>91 Moreover, he asserts the entire political system is itself based onconsultation and all the citizens enjoy equal rights in consultation, the government canbe dissolved if the majority turns against it. However, in case of disagreement themajority principle plays the decisive role.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, El-Affendi (b.1955) a well-known Islamic scholar and political philosopherfrom Sudan, presently based in London. His thoughts on Islam and democracydiscourse resembles with Ghamidi, however, he also makes critique on Islamistsregarding establishment of the State. In his latest book titled "*Who Needs an IslamicState*" argues democratic mechanism is desirable for application of Islamic principles.He contends his claim by showing the central value governing the Islamic polity isfreedom.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, for him democracy is an alternative for an advanced

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<sup>13</sup>Ghamidi Javed, "The Rule of an Islamic Government", *Renaissance*, November 2011; (Tr.by:Dr.ShehzadSaleem); <http://www.monthly-renaissance.com/issue/content.aspx?id=1289> Accessed 05/10/2016.

<sup>14</sup>Javed Ahmad Ghamidi,*Islam and the State: A Counter Narrative*. It is Originally a lecture later on it was rendered into English by Shazadsaleem, (Lahore:Al Mawrid,2016)

<sup>15</sup>Ghamidi Javed,*Islam: A Comprehensive Introduction*. English translation of *Meezan*by ShehzadSaleem(Lahore: Al-Mawrid,2010),p.451

<sup>16</sup>GML, 83-B, Can be accessed at: <http://www.tv-almawrid.org/>)

<sup>17</sup>Ghamidi Javed, "Islam: A Comprehensive Introduction.p.494

<sup>18</sup>GML, 83-A. Can be accessed at: <http://www.tv-almawrid.org/>)

<sup>19</sup>Wan Saiful Wan Jan's "Preface" in Abdelwahab El-Affendi, *Who Needs an Islamic State?* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (UK: Malaysia Think Tank London, 2008), p. 14

revival upon the enforcement of Islamic *Shariah* and a righteous *Khilafah*, claiming the principles of democracy similar to Islam, he suggests Muslims to struggle hard to ensure that democracy should prevail in all Muslim lands.<sup>20</sup>

In the same vein, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im (b.1946) a Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law at Emory University, went on extreme position, in his new work entitled "*Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shariah*" overtly endorses a secular state as the best form of government for Muslims and for the flourishing of Islam. He argues that Muslims need a secular state to live their religious lives as a matter of religious obligation not as the outcome of coercion by the state. He substantiates his claim by arguing that the coercive enforcement of *Shariah* by the state denounces the Qur'an's command on voluntary acceptance of Islam. Furthermore, he asserts *Shariah* should be freed from the control of the State and Muslims should act from conviction and choice to follow God's will. He further argues that the claim of the so-called Islamic state to coercively enforce *Shariah* repudiates the fundamental role of Islam in the socialization and sanctification of social institutions and relationships.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, for him when observed with voluntarily compliance *Shariah* plays a fundamental role in shaping and developing ethical norms and values that can be reflected in general legislation and public policy through the democratic political process. Moreover, he substantiates his claim against the State enforcement of *Shariah* by asserting that when *Shariah* is enforced by State its principles lose their religious authority and value. Religious compliance must be completely voluntary according to personal pious intention and argues coercive enforcement promotes hypocrisy which is categorically condemned by the Qur'an.<sup>22</sup>

He thus challenges the idea of an 'Islamic state' which he defines as a 'postcolonial innovation'.<sup>23</sup> From these arguments one might infer that Professor Naim, wishes for Islam to become a private and individualistic faith and to be divorced from public life. *He limits Islam to certain morals and ethics, devoid of political substance and makes Islam subservient to the state.*

It is noteworthy, in recent times the arguments developed by these scholars for the critic to the project of Islamization of state are largely in line with the contentions and proposals initially raised by Raziq

### Maximizing the role of Islam; The case of Islamists

The arguments of Muslim scholars such as Mawdudi, Nabahani and Qaradawi are completely opposed to the scholars who approach the politics from outside the domain of religion and they encourage the concept that there is no separation between the *deen* (religion) and the *dowla* (state). They subscribe the view that unity of religion and politics extend back to the first century of Islam, something which has

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<sup>20</sup>El-Affendi, Esposito, and Tamimi. "Rationality of politics and politics of rationality." *Sciences* 29, no. 4 (2000): 63-86.

<sup>21</sup>An-Na'im, Abdullahi, *Islam and the Secular state: Negotiating the Future of Shariah* (Harvard University Press, 2008) pp.2-3

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p.4

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p.3

been challenged and contested by the proponents of the "Private Islam" As Mohammed Ayooob a noted scholar on political Islam, contends that the concept of the Islamic State is based on the European model of nation-state. It emerged as a response towards colonial ascendancy and in the post-colonial period this response got fully developed into a concrete ideology in the form of Islamism and in which the Islamists attempted to Islamize the existing states as the governing elite failed to deliver on the promises they had made during colonial bondage.<sup>24</sup>

In order to evaluate the claim of unity of religion and state, we will critically analyse the opinions of Muslim scholars and prominent personalities of the twentieth century who have extensively contributed the promotion of unity of religion and state. Tunisian scholar Mohammad ibn 'Ashoor goes on to claim that the caliphate was "an expression of the government of the Islamic nation," "the necessary sovereign power to protect the community" and "the establishment of the Islamic State upon its basis." He also believed that "Islam is supported by the State" and that "its state is part of it" because of the "mixing of religion (*deen*) with the state (*dowla*)" in Islamic tradition.<sup>25</sup>

This is also echoed by Hassan ul Banna (1906-1949) the founder of Muslim brotherhood, argued that establishing state is an obligatory act in Islam. He further argues that it was among the matters specified by the requirements of Islamic commandments, and asserts that separation between religion and politics was among that which had no basis in principle. He writes

Orthodox Islam imposes government as a basis among the foundations of the social system that it brought to people – it does not sanction chaos nor does it leave the Muslim group without an imam...whoever speculates that religion or, more precisely, Islam, is not concerned with politics or that politics is not within its realm of inquiry has wronged himself and has wronged his knowledge by this [sort of] Islam.<sup>26</sup>

In the same line, Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) poet, philosopher and political thinker, commands a profound impact on the Muslim intellectual tradition was very passionate about the need of revival of institution of *Khilafah* and expressed his grief over the collapse of institution of *Khilafah*

"The imprudent Turk has torn the cloak of the Divine Khilafah  
Look at Muslims' simplicity at other's cunningness also look"<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ayooob, Mohammed, "Political Islam: image and reality." *World Policy Journal* 21, no. 3 (2004): p.2

<sup>25</sup>Al-Tahir ibn, Mohammad 'Ashoor, *Naqd 'Ilmy Likitab Al-Islam Wa Usool Al-Hukm* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Salafiyya, 1925), 11

<sup>26</sup>Belkeziz, Abdelilah, *The State in Contemporary Islamic Thought: A historical survey of the major Muslim Political Thinkers of the modern era*. 123

<sup>27</sup>Iqbal, Muhammad, *Kulliyat-e-Iqbal*, (Bang-e-Dara, غره شوال يا بلال عيد, p. 193) (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1990), p. 209

Iqbal built his system of political philosophy upon the principle of *Tawhid*. For him *Tawhid* is the principle that brings the community together, and the essence of *Tawhid* is equality, solidarity and freedom. He argues that the state from an Islamic standpoint is a venture to transform these ideals into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization.<sup>28</sup> Iqbal's understanding of the Islamic state as a community whose membership is defined by a common religious belief led him to critique to any understanding of nation-state as a foundation of the Islamic community. He curses nationalism, believing a tool used by colonialism to dismember the Muslim world. For him its results are the estrangement of man from his fellow men, the disunity of nations, and the separation of religion and politics that had led to the downfall of Christianity.<sup>29</sup>

For his emphasis upon equality, and brotherhood he came to conclusion that democracy is the most important political ideal in Islam. However, he did not believe in democracy wholesome as it existed and functioned in west. He favoured spiritual democracy as a principle based upon the consciousness of its members. Iqbal wrote that contemporary Muslims should be allowed to "appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life" in the light of ultimate principles and evolve that "Spiritual democracy" which is the ultimate aim of Islam".<sup>30</sup> However, he believed that the success of democratic system is determined by the consciousness of its members. Thus, Iqbal did not accept the absolute democracy of undeveloped individuals. John Louis Esposito states, this is at the heart of his criticism of modern western democracy: "Democracy is a system where people are counted but not weighed".<sup>31</sup>

In the same line, while engaging with the challenges posed by the modernity. Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1926-) a Qatar based Egyptian theologian, jurist and influential theorist of Muslim Brotherhood, argues State espoused by Islam is a 'Civilian State'<sup>32</sup> not just a theocratic one as westerners have known throughout their dark history. He further argues Islamic state is a 'Constitutional State' that would operate within the constitutional framework, and its constitution is represented in the principles and rulings of *Shariah*.<sup>33</sup> He describes the Islamic state in the following words:

The Islamic state which Islam brought, and as is known in the history of the Muslims, is a civil state, political power is set up in it on the basis of the pledge of allegiance, choice and consultation, and the ruler in it is the agent of the *ummah* or its employee. It is the right of the *ummah* –

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<sup>28</sup>Esposito, John L, *Voices of Resurgent Islam*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) p.180

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p.182

<sup>30</sup>Iqbal, Muhammad, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 2<sup>nd</sup>ed., (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan and the Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986), p.142.

<sup>31</sup>Esposito, *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, p.180

<sup>32</sup>The concept of the civil state originates in Western political philosophy, where it traditionally has characterized a state with modern institutions such as the separation of powers (the executive, legislative and judicial branches), local governance, contracts, services, taxation, etc., as opposed to pre-modern mechanisms of government.

<sup>33</sup>al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *Min Fiqh al-Dawlah fi al-Islam* (Cairo; Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 1997), p. 32. Also quoted in Belkeziz, *The state in contemporary Islamic Thought*, p. 127



represented in the people of authority (*ahl ul hall walaqd*) among them – to take him to account; to supervise or censure him; to command him and prohibit him; and to rectify his course if he deviates, and if not – to remove him. It is among the rights of every Muslim, rather of every national citizen, to disavow him if he sees him sinning and engaging in reprehensible actions, or failing to enjoin what is just. Rather, it is incumbent on the people to declare revolution against him if they see that he is a *kafir* according to the criteria of Allah. As for the religious ‘theocratic’ state which the West knew in the Middle Ages, and which was ruled by the men of religion who retained their rule by the necks – and conscience – of people in the name of the ‘divine right’...it is rejected by Islam.<sup>34</sup>

However, in modern times the major contributor of unity of religion and state is Syed Abul A’ala Maududi. His ideas about the ‘sovereignty of God’ mainly include: (1) sovereignty of God: all Muslims admit that Allah has the absolute sovereignty. The Islamic state should be ruled on the basis of the Quran and Sharia. (2) the authority of the Prophet: all Muslims admit the Prophet to be an authority in all spheres of their life. As the ‘Messenger’ and ‘Vicegerent’ of Allah, the Prophet has the absolute political and legal sovereignty and sayings of the Prophet, or hadith, are one fundamental source of national legislation. (3) delegated sovereignty: the national sovereignty of secular states is limited, that is to say, a secular state can do nothing but delegate the judicial and executive power and the limited authority of national sovereignty must not go beyond the absolute ‘Sharia law’. (4) political consultancy (*shura*): all Muslims admit the principle of consultation, i.e., the principle of popular consent in Islam and an ‘Islamic democratic state’ can be either a direct democracy or an indirect democracy. Therefore, the fundamental goal of the ‘Islamic state’ envisioned by Maududi is to ‘establish and govern the state according to the political principles of Islam’.<sup>35</sup>

Pertinently, these ideas were not articulated by Modern Islamist scholars alone but the claim of a consensus upon the obligation of the caliphate is mirrored by everyone else who wrote on the subject. The classical writings on Islamic state emphasize on the authority of leader and unity of community. An illustration of such an emphasis is of Al-Mawardi who asserts that the purpose of an Islamic political system as continuations of the function of the Prophethood in the defence of the faith and the administration of the world affairs.<sup>36</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah argues that the greatest goal of political authority is to make sure Islam as a religion and way of life and build up all aspects of life and that Allah’s word be supreme. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) an

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<sup>34</sup>al-Qardawi, Yusuf, *al-Şahwah al-Islamiyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Şahwah, 1988), p. 188 also quoted in Abdelilah, *The State in Contemporary Islamic Thought: A historical survey of the major Muslim Political Thinkers of the modern era*, (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2009) p.127

<sup>35</sup>Maududi, Sayyid, *Political Theory of Islam* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 2019), pp.20-32

<sup>36</sup>Moten, Abdul Rashid, *Political Science: An Islamic Perspective*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996) p.96

eminent sociologist explains the relationship between al-Mawardi's 'administration of the world' and Ibn Taymiyyah's 'Allah's word being supreme' by saying that the worldly affairs, according to *Shariah*, are all considered with reference to their benefits in the Hereafter. Ibn Khaldun, therefore, makes clear the function of the Islamic polity as getting all to follow the intent of the *Shari'ah's* position in all their affairs for success in this world and in the Hereafter.<sup>37</sup>

Similar kind of definition is presented by eighteenth century reformist Shah Waliullah (1703-1762). He argues the 'Islamic State' (*khilafah*) is the general authority exercised on behalf of the Prophet for the establishment of *Shariah*, establishment of pillars of Islam and, carrying out the *jihad*, organizing armies and allocating the funds to them, implementation of Islamic legal punishments, elimination of tyranny and enjoining good and forbidding evil.<sup>38</sup>

From the perspectives of classical scholars and Islamists the genealogy of the idea of the necessity of an Islamic state or caliphate can justifiably be traced back to early Islamic sources. However, on the particular aspect of caliphate's religious necessity, scholars are clear that this is a matter of consensus and all the surviving Muslim schools and sects are agreed on the obligation of appointing one leader for the Muslim community.

However, it can be argued the scholars who challenge the idea of caliphate or Islamic state implicitly are also challenging the scholarly consensus on the obligation of the caliphate. Secondly, they perceived the secular premise of modern state as neutral entity. Under the guise of the argument of neutrality of modern state they overtly endorse a secular state as the best form of government for Muslims and for the flourishing of Islam. The perception of the "neutrality" of the state is the fallacious argument of Muslim secularists. To substantiate this claim, in theory state claims that it is a neutral entity but in praxis it is engaged in ontological remapping and reshaping of individuals, community, society and polity, in a perceptive analysis of this inherent compulsion of modern state, James Scott has observed. "The aspiration to such uniformity and orders alter to us fact that modern statecraft is largely a project of internal colonialization often glossed as it in the imperial rhetoric a civilizing mission, the builders of modern nation state do not merely describe observe they strive to shape a people and landscape, that will fit their techniques of observation.<sup>39</sup> In effect, the modern state is not neutral, but is ideological in this pursuit. Saba Mahmood, recently deceased anthropologist at the University of California, Berkeley, put it thus: Secularism has sought not so much to banish religion from the public domain but to reshape the form it takes, the subjectivities it endorses, and the epistemological claims it can make. The effectiveness of such a totalizing project necessarily depends upon transforming the religious domain through a variety of reforms and state injunctions. This has often meant that nation-states have had to act as de facto

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p.96

<sup>38</sup>Waliullah, Shah, *Izalah al-Khilafa'*, vol. 1 p. 28 as Quoted in Mahmood A. Ghazi, *Studies in the Political and Constitutional Thought of Islam*, (Lahore: National Book House, 1992), pp.27-239

<sup>39</sup>Scott, James, *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.98

theologians, rendering certain practices and beliefs indifferent to religious doctrine precisely so that these practices can be brought under the domain of civil law.<sup>40</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The Muslim secularists and vocal critics of Islamists shared that theology don't encourage state formation faltered on understanding the ideological apparatuses of modern state. They consider modern state as a small entity limited to service providers and ignored the power of ontological remapping and reshaping of individuals. On the other hand, Islamists perceived the modern state as a larger entity escorted with institutions and resources engages in an ontological remapping of individuals a part of the practice of modern statecraft. However, recent decades have witnessed the diverse debates and discussions on the definitions and the nature of Islamic state. Much of this owes with the emergence of colonialization ensued by ending of Ottoman Caliphate in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and then meteoric rise of ISIS as an Islamic state in the 21<sup>th</sup> century. \

he contestation on the Islamic state engaged the scholars and political pundits to establish its validity and invalidity in contemporary times. The concept evolves and develops along with the characteristics of the new currents, showing characteristics of coexistence of stability and change. Simultaneously, influenced by Western theories, in order to adapt to the real politic, the concept of state has also been gradually re-interpreted and will still maintain its vitality and influence, and continues to influence the development of the Islamic world. However, in contemporary times diverse trends have emerged in the Muslim world among them the two dominating the Islamic political thought in recent times are: One that proposes the restoration of the Caliphate and gives rationale of basic sources and the other denies such claim by arguing basic sources of Islam are silent on the subject. Despite the theological differences, the establishment of a political institution is common to them.

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**Showkat Ahmad Wagay**

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