CONTEMPORARY DEBATES IN ISLAM
AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERNIST AND FUNDAMENTALIST THOUGHT

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CHAPTER 22

THE Pillars of an Islamic State

Imam Ruhullah Khomeini


The Common Misunderstanding

It is a common mistake that any one of the present systems of Government is considered as Islamic State. And having its good and bad qualities in mind, discussions begin on the topic of the Islamic State. In fact, the label of the Islamic State cannot be afforded to any prevalent form of government in the whole world. The Islamic State is neither a despotic nor a dictatorial one that plays with the lives of the people according to the whims of despots or dictators. The dictatorial government’s daughters its opponents and rewards its favorite ones. Such powers have been generally used by dictators and kings. Even the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) and his Caliphs and Hazrat Ameer (Ali) did not enjoy such powers. An Islamic State has neither the parliamentary form of government in which the people elect a group of people who enact laws and impose them upon the people, nor is an Islamic State a presidential form of government in which the people elect a president who, along with his other colleagues, makes laws and imposes them upon the people.

The Government of the Laws of Allah

If the nomenclature of Islamic State could be labeled, it would be known as the "government of law" and that law is neither made by a man nor by a group of
THE PILGRIMS OF AN ISLAMIC STATE

THE ORDER OF THE PERIOD OF ABSENCE

The period of absence, the umrah or hajj, is to be performed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the companions of the Prophet (SAW). Those who are unable to perform the pilgrimage should make preparations for it. The order of the period of absence is:

1. The period of preparation
2. The period of travel
3. The period of pilgrimage
4. The period of return

According to Shiekh Fethullah Gulen, the period of absence is a period of spiritual and moral purification. It is a time for reflection, self-discipline, and inner growth. The period of absence is a time for the Muslim to reflect on his or her beliefs, values, and actions. It is a time for the Muslim to renew his or her commitment to the Islamic way of life.

THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ISLAMIC STATE

1. The Islamic state is based on the principles of justice, equality, and freedom.
2. The Islamic state is a community of believers who are united in their faith and commitment to Islamic values.
3. The Islamic state is a state of peace, where all citizens are equal before the law.
4. The Islamic state is a state of prosperity, where all citizens are provided with the necessary resources to live a decent life.
5. The Islamic state is a state of education, where all citizens are provided with the opportunity to receive a quality education.

THE POWERS OF THE HEAD OF STATE

The head of state is the source of all legislative, executive, and judicial powers. The head of state is the embodiment of the Islamic state and its sovereignty. The head of state is vested with the authority to make decisions and take actions on behalf of the Islamic state.

The head of state is the representative of the Islamic state in the international community. The head of state has the responsibility to protect the interests of the Islamic state and its citizens.

The head of state is the custodian of the Islamic state. The head of state is responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the protection of the rights of the citizens.

The head of state is the leader of the Islamic state. The head of state is responsible for the direction and guidance of the Islamic state.

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welfare of the people as they (the Holy Prophet [S.A.W] and the Holy Caliphs) did. The condition is the same that they (heads of the Islamic State) must be learned and just.

To sum up, the argument is that, at present, no one is appointed on the basis of the revelation but the object is determined and its necessity has become all the more essential in recent times. It is probable that the Imam of the age may not reappear for a long time. We do not know the Will of Allah and it may be that he may reappear at the time of Doomsday as is apparent from the traditions. Does that mean that the injunctions of Islam will remain suspended until then? Can the intellect accept the ruinism of the Islamic character, Islamic prayers, Islamic laws, and Islamic punishments at the command of Allah, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), the Caliphs, and the Imams? Is it possible that we keep quite at the disappearance of Islamic Laws? Hence it is essential to have an Islamic Government for the enforcement of Islamic laws and to prevent anti-Islamic forces from penetrating into Muslim countries with a view to mislead the Muslims. This objective cannot be achieved without the establishment of a Government based on Islamic Law. However, those who would run the Islamic Government must be earnest, virtuous, and just Muslims. Those rulers are useless who are tyrants and do not possess the power to enforce Islamic Law.

CHAPTER 23

THE NECESSITY OF ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

Imam Ruhullah Khomeini


A BODY OF LAWS IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR A SOCIETY TO BE reformulated. In order for law to ensure the reform and happiness of man, there must be an executive power and an executor. For this reason, God Almighty, in addition to revealing a body of law (i.e., the ordinances of the shari'ah), has laid down a particular form of government, together with executive and administrative institutions. The Most Noble Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) herded the executive and administrative institutions of Muslim society. In addition to conveying the revelation and expounding and interpreting the articles of faith and the ordinances and institutions of Islam, he undertook the implementation of law and the establishment of the ordinances of Islam, thereby bringing into being the Islamic state. He did not content himself with the promulgation of law; rather, he implemented it at the same time, cutting off hands and administering lashings and stonings. After the Most Noble Messenger, his successor had the same duty and function. When the Prophet appointed a successor, it was not for the purpose of expounding articles of faith and law; it was for the implementation of law and the execution of God's ordinances. It was this function—the execution of law and the establishment of Islamic institutions—that made the appointment of a successor such an important matter that the Prophet would have failed to fulfill his mission if he had neglected it. For after the Prophet, the Muslims still needed someone to execute laws and establish the institutions of Islam in society, so that they might attain happiness in this world and the hereafter.
education, defense, and economic development. Even in countries with the

In order to achieve these objectives, the budget must be

distributed in such a way that it is as equitable and efficient as possible.

The budget should be based on a thorough analysis of the country's

resources, including both natural and human resources. The budget

should also take into account the country's international obligations.

The budget should be approved by the parliament and the cabinet,

and should be subject to review by the audit committee.

The budget should be transparent and open to public scrutiny.

The budget should be revised regularly to ensure that it is in line

with the needs of the country.

The budget should be used to promote social and economic

development, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

The budget should also be used to combat corruption and

decrease poverty.

The budget should be used to support the country's foreign

policy objectives, including promoting peace and stability.

The budget should be used to support the country's domestic

policy objectives, including promoting economic growth and

social welfare.

The budget should be used to support the country's

international obligations, including those pertaining to human

rights and the environment.

The budget should be used to support the country's

development priorities, including those pertaining to education,

healthcare, and infrastructure.

The budget should be used to support the country's

national security, including the defense of the country and

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The budget should be used to support the country's

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and deprived. It is our duty to be a helper to the oppressed and an enemy to the oppressor. This is nothing other than the duty that the Commander of the Faithful (upon whom be peace) enjoined to his two great opponents: in his celebrated testament, "It is our duty to be a helper to the oppressed."

The scholars of Islam have a duty to struggle against all attempts by the oppressors to establish a monopoly over the sources of wealth or to make illicit use of them. They must always be hungry and deprived while planning to suppress the sources of wealth and live in opulence. The Commander of the Faithful (upon whom be peace) says: "I have accepted the task of government because God, Exalted and Almighty, has commanded from the time of Islam a pledge not to sit on wealth and idle in the face of the gluttony and plundering of the oppressors, on the one hand, and the hunger and deprivations of the oppressed, on the other." Here is the full text of the passage we refer to:

I swear by Him Who causes the seed to sprout and creates the souls of all living things that were it not for the presence of those who have come to swear allegiances to me, were it not for the obligation of fellowship now imposed upon me by the availability of aid and support, and were it not for the pledge that God has taken from the scholars of Islam not to remain silent in the face of the gluttony and plundering of the oppressors, on the one hand, and the harrowing hunger and deprivation of the oppressed, on the other,—were it not for all of this, then I would abandon the rule of government and in no way seek it. You would see that this world is yours, with all of its passion and rank, is less in my eyes than the moisture that comes from the stem of a grain.

How can we stay silent and idle today when we see that a hand of traitors and usurpers, the agents of foreign powers, have appropriated the wealth and the fruits of labor of hundreds of millions of Muslims—thanks to the support of their masters and through the power of the bayonet—granting the Muslims not the right to progress? It is the duty of Islamic scholars and all Muslims to put an end to this system of oppression and, for the sake of the well-being of the millions of human beings, to overthrow these oppressive governments and form an Islamic government.

Reason, law of Islam, the practice of the Prophet (upon whom be peace and blessings) and that of the Commander of the Faithful (upon whom be peace), the parable of various Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions—all indicate the necessity of forming a government. An example of the traditions of the Imams, I now quote the following tradition of Imam Riza (upon whom be peace):

Abu al-Walid ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abbas said, "I was told by Abu Haasan 'Abd ibn Muhammad ibn Qayyana ibn Naufal that he was told by Abu Muhammad al-Fadl ibn Sharaf al-Naqshab, this tradition: If someone asks, 'Why has God, the All Wise, appointed the leaders of authority and commanded us to obey them?' then we answer, 'For numerous reasons. One reason is that the government must be able to observe certain limits and not to transgress them in order to avoid corruption. This cannot be achieved or established without those being appointed over them a trustee who will ensure that they remain within the limits of the act and prevent them from causing themselves into the danger of transgression. Were it not for such a trustee, no one would abandon his own pleasure and benefit because of the corruption it might entail for another. Another reason is that we find no group or nation of men that ever existed without a ruler and leader, since it is required by both religion and worldly interest. It would not be compatible with divine will to leave mankind to its own devices. For He, the All Wise, knows that man needs a ruler for their survival. It is through the leadership he provides that men make war against their enemies, divide among themselves the spoils of war, and preserve their communal solidarity, preventing the oppression of the oppressed by the oppressor. A further reason is this: God did not appoint over men a solicitous, trustworthy, protecting, reliable leader; the community would decline, religion would depart, and the norms and ordinances that have been revealed would undergo change. Innovators would increase and disbelievers would enslave religion, including dogma in the Muslims. For we see that rats are needy and deceitful, judging by their differences of opinion and inclination and their diversity of state. Were a trustee, then, not appointed to preserve what has been revealed through the Prophet, corruption would ensue in the manner we have described. Revealed laws, norms, ordinances, and faith would be altogether changed, and therein would lie the corruption of all mankind.'"
over by a ruler who will be a trustworthy and righteous trustee. Those who presently govern us act of no use at all for they are tyrannical, corrupt, and highly incompetent.

In the past we did not act in concert and solidarity in order to establish proper government and overthrow tyrannical and corrupt rulers. Some people were apathetic and reluctant even to discuss the theory of Islamic government, and some went so far as to praise oppressive rulers. It is for this reason that we find ourselves in our present state. The influence and sovereignty of Islam in society have declined; the nation of Islam has fallen victim to division and weakness; the laws of Islam have remained in abeyance and been subjected to change and mutilation, and the imperialists have propagated foreign laws and alien culture among the Muslims through their agents for the sake of their evil purposes, causing people to be infatuated with the West. It was our lack of a leader, a guardian, and our lack of institutions of leadership that made all this possible. We need righteous and proper organs of government; that much is self-evident.

NOTES
1. Vasilii the "one who holds authority," a term derived from Qur’an 4:59: "You who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger and the holders of authority (all-hurayrurur) from among you."  
2. Sana: the name of the Prophet, accepted by Muslims as the norm and ideal for all Muslim behavior.
3. Lesser Oath: gharibat-i sagra, the period of about 70 years (260 AH/882 CE—339 AH/950 CE) when, according to Shi’i belief, Muhammad al-Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam, absented himself from the physical plane but remained in continuous communication with his followers through a succession of four-appointed Imams. At the death of the Imam, the imam successor was named, and the Greater Oath (gharibat-i kalb) began, and continues to this day.
4. The Allahu is probably to the Bahais, who claim to have received a succession of post-Qur’anic revelations.
5. Tax: a tax levied on non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim state in exchange for the protection they receive and in lieu of the war, while as a tax that only Muslims pay.
7. In the Bahais: one of the most important collections of Shi’i hadith, compiled by Shykh Ali as-Safi al-Illahi (269 AH/884 CE). Two incunabula have recently been translated into English by Sayyid Muhammad Hanif Rizvi and published in Tehran.
8. The Qur’an, 16:89.
9. The reference is probably to Imam Jafar as-Sadiq, whose sayings on this subject are quoted by Allama Ihtiyat in his Al-Imam al-Taher al-Qur’an (Beirut, 1919/1976), XII, pp. 272-276.
10. Sayyids: the descendants of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima and son-in-law Ali, the first of the Twelve Imams.
11. Zekeri: a tax levied on non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim state in exchange for the protection they receive and in lieu of the war, while as a tax that only Muslims pay.
11. All adh-ßilmama: non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim state, whose rights and obli-
gations are contractually determined.
12. Unrest: the crease Islamic Community, without territorial or ethnic distinction.
13. Masjid al-Aqsa: the site in Jerusalem where the Prophet ascended to heaven in

the eleventh year of his mission (Quran, 17:1); also the complex of mosques and build-
ings erected on the site. The chief of these was extensively damaged by arson in

1969, two years after the Zionist usurpation of Jerusalem.
14. Umayyads: the dynasty that ruled at Damascus from 661 to 750 and transfor-
mated the caliphate into a hereditary institution. Mu'awiyah, frequently men-
tioned in these pages, was the first of the Umayyads.
15. Abbasids: the dynasty that replaced the Umayyads and established a new caliphal

capital in Baghdad. With the rise of various local rulers, generally of military origin,
the power of the Abbasids began to decline from the fourteenth century and it was
brought to an end by the Mongol conquest in 656 A.H./1258 C.E.

17. Anyone who claims the prerogatives of divinity for himself, whether explicitly or
implicitly. See also p. 92.
18. Shirk: the assignment of partners to God, either by believing in a multiplicity of

gods, or by assigning divine attributes and prerogatives to other than God.
19. "Corruption on earth": a broad term including not only moral corruption, but also

subversion of the public good, emasculation and usurpation of public wealth, com-
paring with the enemies of the community against its security, and working in gen-
neral for the overthrow of the Islamic order. See the commentary on Quran, 5:33 in
20. It may be appropriate to quote here the following passage from a secret report drawn

up in January 1946 by T.E. Lawrence, the British organizer of the so-called Arab re-
volt led by Sharif Husain of Mecca. "Husain's activity seems beneficial to us, be-
cause it marches with our immediate aims, the breakup of the Islamic bloc and the
defeat and disruption of the Ottoman Empire... The Arabs are less easy to handle
than the Turks. If properly handled they would remain in a state of political mosaic,
a tissue of small jealous principalities incapable of political cohesion." See Philip
Kingsley and Colin Simpson, The Secret Lives of Lawrence of Arabia (New York: Mc-
21. Fatimah as-Zahra, Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet and wife of Imam Ali.
22. Le, Hassan and Hassan.
24. Imams Ri'is: one of the Twelve Imams, born in 148 A.H./765 C.E. and died in 203
A.H./817 C.E. at Tur (Mashhad). According to Shi'ah belief, he was succeeded by his
grandson, the eleventh Imam, I mam Mahdi, who was the ideal model for all Shi'ah
believers.

25. The text of this tradition is to be found in Shafiyah Saddiqi, 'Iltakab al-
26. That is, the absence of the Imam or an individual deputy named by him (as was
the case during the Lesser Occultation), the task devolves upon the qanba'a as a class.
See argument on pp. 62-125.
27. Here the allusion may be in particular to the so-called Family Protection Law of
1967, which Imam Khomeini denounced as contrary to nis, fih, pp. 462-3, par.
7836, and p. 441.

CHAPTER 24
THE POLITICAL THEORY OF ISLAM

Suyyid Abul 'Ala Maududi


FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

It should be clearly understood in the very beginning that Islam

is not a jumble of unrelated ideas and incoherent notions of conduct. It is rather

a well-ordered system, a consistent whole, resting on a definite set of clear-cut prin-
ciples. Its basic tenets, as well as detailed rules of conduct, are all derived from a logi-
cal connection with its basic principles. All the rules and regulations that Islam has
laid down for the different spheres of human life are in their essence and spirit a re-

flection, an extension and corollary of its first principles. The various phases of

Islamic life and activity flow from these fundamental postulates exactly as the plant
sprouts forth from its seed. And just as even though the tree may spread in all direc-
tions, all its leaves and branches remain firmly attached to the trunk and derive suste-
nance from them and it is always the seed and the root that determine the nature and
form of the tree, similar is the case with Islam. Its entire scheme of life also flows
from its basic principles. Therefore whatever aspect of the Islamic ideology may

be studied, it must first go to the roots and look to the fundamental principles.
Then and only then can he a really correct and satisfactory understanding

of the ideology and its specific injunctions and a real appreciation of its spirit and

nature.

THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS

The mission of a prophet is to propagate Islam, disseminate the teachings of Allah,
and establish the Divine guidance in this world of flesh and bones. This was the