On the Three Pivotal Doctrines of Islamism

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies of Islamism basically focus on representative scholars and their thoughts on Islamism. This article attempts to sum up the pivotal doctrines of Islamism and hopefully shed light on its future trends through a comparative study. It suggests that the doctrines of self-sufficiency and '*Jahiliyyah*' (ignorance) of Islamism, the doctrine of 'Islamic State' and Islamic Order, and the doctrine of Allah's Sovereignty and political consultation function as the three pivotal doctrines of Islamism. Relevant comparison indicates that, although specific Islamic thinkers have their own foci, their thoughts are all in a similar vein. In addition, with the development of times and the advancement of society, the analysis of Islamism, by no means a fossilised set of ideologies, also undergoes constant changes and adjustments.

KEYWORDS
Islamism; Islamic State; Islamic Order; Allah's Sovereignty; Islamic Studies

1. Introduction

As a monotheistic faith that originated in the Middle East, Islam has grown to be the world's second largest religion, with over 1.8 billion followers or 24% of the world's population. According to Islam, there is only one God (Allah), and Muhammad was the messenger of God. Unlike Islam, the term 'political Islam', along with many other similar terms, is used to define the broad and heterogeneous 'Islamic trend', which intends to make state and society 'Islamic'. However, the term remains problematic and contested. In contrast, Islamism is a largely value-free political doctrine, yet scholars have not yet reached a consensus about the definition and the meaning of this concept. It is almost certain that the term 'Islamism' was used for the first time by French writers at the end of the seventeenth century.[1] *Le Petit Robert* dictionary gives 1697 as the first reference to the word.[2] Since the nineteenth century, the concept of 'Islamism' has been used quite differently by western orientalists, Islamologists and political scientists.

In the domain of sub-religious affiliations, Islamism is divided into three main branches: Sunni, Shi'a and Wahhabi. Here, Islamism refers to both a religious and political trend, which advocates reforming society according to the founding texts of Islam, and a following movement, which calls on Muslims to fight against secularisation or westernisation through complete Islamisation. The fundamental goal of Islamism is to combat westernisation and secularisation by drawing on the original and real traditions of Islam, changing the current world order and overturning the current secular governments so as to establish a Sharia-based Islamic state and Islamic order governed by religious leaders or scholars. In terms of politics, it proposes establishing an Islamic state which embodies 'the will of Allah'; in terms of economy, it advocates social equity, equality and justice while objecting to western economic systems; in terms of law, it suggests replacing the secular legal system established under the influence of the West by the Islamic law, Sharia; in terms of culture, it opposes westernised or secular ideologies, lifestyles, ethics and values.[3]

During the long history of the development of Islamic societies before modern times, Islam played a significant political role, i.e., dominating the Islamic societies as the main engine for the political cognition, mechanism, norms and behaviour in Islamic societies. After entering modern times, however, the Islamic political mechanism of the Middle Ages started to collapse because of crises both internally and externally. At that point, colonial occupation and its political, economic and cultural impact plunged the Muslim world into turmoil. What's worse, modern ideologies such as secularism, nationalism and socialism deconstructed, shocked and undermined the traditional way of life in the Muslim world.[4] In terms of ideology, Islamism emerged right out of the interwoven contradictions and struggle between traditional and modern ideologies when Islam encountered the challenges of modern ideologies and its own crises and attempted to respond by relying on its traditional doctrines.

The origin of Islamism may date back to such pioneers as Jamaluddin al Afghani and Mohaammed Abduh. Muhammad Rashid Rida was a major representative of Islamic Reformism and a pioneer of Arab nationalism. To some extent, Abduh was like a mentor to Rida, whose thoughts were basically a combination of nationalism and Islamism.[5] Hassan Banna and Sayyid Qutb, former leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, were forerunners of modern Islamism. In the South Asian subcontinent, another Islamic ideologist, the creator of *Jamaat-E-Islam*, Syed Abul Aala Maududi, epitomised various strains of thought of modern Islamism. Of course, Hussan Abudulla Turabi also plays a significant role in the ideological system of contemporary Islamic revival and, under his leadership, the National Islamic Front once held the Sudanese government under its control.

Muhammad Rashid Rida is deemed as a key supporter of Islamic Reformism and a forerunner of Arab nationalism. Despite his significant contribution to the formation of Arab nationalism, the conservative side of his theory turned out to be an essential ideological source of Islamism in modern times, in particular, his formulation of 'the

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[3]Y. Jin, 'Contemporary Islamism', West Asia and Africa (4), (1995), p. 32.
[4]See Z. Liu, Challenges and Responses: The Relation between Nationalism in the Middle East and Islam (Beijing: World Knowledge Press, 2005), pp. 216–220.
[5]See Z. Liu, 'Commentary on 'Islamic State' thoughts of Islamism', West Asia and Africa (4), (2011), pp. 12–13.

Islamic State' has had a profound impact on Islamism. He elaborated his theory of the Islamic State in his *The Caliphate* or the *Grand Imamate*, which happened to be published on the eve of the victory of the Turkish Revolution. He expounded his theory mainly from the following three perspectives: first, the fundamental role of the Caliphate in Islamic political theories; second, the discord between the political theories and practice of the Sunnis; and third, his vision of an ideal Islamic State.[6] Rida's theory about the 'Islamic State' was a response to Kemal's abolishment of the Caliphate and the Sultanate during the Turkish Revolution. Therefore, building on his reform of traditional Islamic political theories, Rida developed his own conception of the 'Islamic State', which mainly suggests institutionalising the implementation of the Sharia by establishing a constitution, fulfilling 'Islamic democracy' through 'consultancy' and allowing religious scholars high prestige in political life.

Hassan Banna made a significant contribution to Islamism. The founding of the Muslim Brotherhood marked the maturity of modern Islamism in terms of organisational construction and theoretical development. Above all, as to organisational construction, the Muslim Brotherhood has grown to be an Islamic organisation with the characteristics and capacity of a modern religious party. It set an example for the establishment of other Islamic organisations or religious parties. Additionally, it's establishment also meant that Egypt had turned into a camp for the modern Islamic renaissance movement. 'In all respects, the Muslim Brotherhood, since its birth, has been operating like a political party', 'it was the first organized Islamic popular movement', 'as a matter of fact, among all the political parties in the history of modern Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood has been one of the most modern ones.'[7] Second, in terms of theoretical development, Hassan Banna and Sayyid Qutb, two renowned theorists of the Muslim Brotherhood and founders of the Islamic Renaissance Movement in modern times, provided a basic theoretical framework for the contemporary Islamic Renaissance Movement. Qutb seemed even more radical. His theory has had a significant impact on many Islamic extremists who insist on resorting to violence or terrorism. Finally, as a precursor of the contemporary Islamic Renaissance Movement, the Muslim Brotherhood played an important role in the internationalisation of the Islamic Renaissance Movement. Apart from the deep impact that Egypt had on the establishment of many Islamic organisations in other countries or regions, most Islamic organisations are related to the Muslim Brotherhood one way or another.[8]

Syed Abul A'ala Maududi was a major Pakistani Islamist thinker. His ideas about the 'sovereignty of God (hakimiya)' 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.

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[6]H. Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought, The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni to the Twentieth Century (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982), pp. 69–70.
[7]S. Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State, Essays on Political and Movements in the Middle East (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 50.
[8]See J. Chen, ed., Modern Islamism (Beijing: Economic Daily Press, 1998), pp. 281–284.

(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 (rida al awam) 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', 'it may be said that the fundamental goal of the Jamaat-e-Islami founded by Maududi is to 'Islamise' or 'rebuild' Pakistan, transforming it from a modern national state into a 'true' Islamic state.'[9]

Although Ruhollah Mussavi Khomeini came from a separate Iranian Shia tradition and developed his thinking quite independently of the earlier Sunni intellectuals, he epitomised the varied thoughts of contemporary Islamism. Khomeini not only contributed to the theoretic development and innovation of traditional Islamism but also miraculously led the 1979 Iranian Revolution to victory, which then led to the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ruhollah Mussavi Khomeini not only put forward comprehensive thoughts of Islamism and led the Iranian Revolution to victory in 1979 but also made great efforts to export the Iranian Revolution to other countries. Khomeini proved to be a master who epitomised modern Islamism. His thoughts are mainly embodied in works like Islamic Government: Governance of the Jurist and Islam and Revolution, which mainly include the following ideas: the separation of politics and religion must be resolutely opposed; an Islamic state should be established so as to realise the governance of the jurist; advocacy of Islamic Republicanism instead of monarchy; fight against colonialism, imperialism, westernisation and secularisation; and establish an Islamic world order by exporting the Islamic revolution to other countries.[10]

Hussan Abudulla Turabi also played an important role in the contemporary Islamic ideology. He suggested that existing 'Islamic states' be rebuilt. He first identified the nature of 'Islamic states' through negation, then elucidated the state outlook of Islamism: firstly, an Islamic state is not a secular one; secondly, nor is it a national state; thirdly, it is not an absolute sovereign entity, it is merely an instrument which 'delegates' Allah's sovereignty; finally, it is not a prototype of any state, the primitive state form in a Muslim society is the everlasting ummah.[11] The thoughts of Turabi had an important impact on the Islamisation promoted by the Sudanese government in the 1990s.

Previous studies of Islamism basically focus on representative scholars of Islamism and their thoughts. Although different theorists have different foci in their doctrines, their core theories can be summed up as the following three pivotal doctrines, namely, the doctrines of self-sufficiency and 'Jahiliyyah', 'Islamic State' and Islamic

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[9]See Y. Wu and X. Zhou, Islamic Ideological Trend and Movement in Modern and Contemporary Times (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2000), pp. 399–400.
[10]See Z. Liu, Contemporary Islamic Renaissance Movement in the Middle East (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Social Science Press, 2004), pp. 81–89.
[11]J. Esposito, ed. Voice of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 241–251.

Order, and Allah's Sovereignty and political consultation. This article, therefore, attempts to sum up the pivotal doctrines of Islamism and shed light on its future trend through a comparative study of these doctrines.

2. The Theory of Self-sufficiency of Islam and '*Jahiliyyah*'

The decline and divisions of the Islamic world, together with the colonial invasion by Western countries in modern times, plunged Islamic civilisation and Islamic societies into disastrous crises. One starting point of Islamism lies in its efforts of seeking a method of crisis resolution from traditional Islam. Apparently, Islamism attaches much significance to the self-sufficiency of Islam, which is believed to be able to help Islamic societies tackle the crises they may encounter in their pursuit of revival of Islamic civilisation.

Almost all the Islamist ideologists attach great importance to the self-sufficiency and inclusiveness of Islam. As Hassan Banna puts it, 'Islam is a unity of faith and leadership, religion and state, spirit and action, prayer and Jihad, compliance and rule, the Quran and the sword'[12]; Islam is the ultimate aim of human life and capable of properly organising all the affairs in this world and the hereafter; the doctrine of Islam knows no limits and unconditionally applies to humankind at all times and all places because Islam means 'state and homeland, government and nation; creation and power, mercy and equity; culture and law, science and destiny; material and wealth, profit and abundance; Jihad and mission, pious faith and correct beliefs.'[13]

Khomeini also pointed out, 'only the lofty and universal values of Islam can save all the nations and people and give them happiness; only Islam can solve all the problems of mankind.' 'Islam is a universal and almighty religion, that is, a religion of mankind, regulating the present and future of all human beings. Therefore, all mankind must learn, understand and believe in Islam and follow it.' 'As the only system which is able to guide mankind to a better life, better equity and greater peace, Islam deserves the worship of all the people in the world.'[14]

The purpose of Islamist ideologists' demonstration of the self-sufficiency of Islam is to help Islamic societies shake off 'ignorance'. The concept 'ignorance' derives from the Arabic term '*Jahiliyyah*' (or '*Jahilia*'), a term that Islamist ideologists and historians use to refer to the pre-Islamic period. It basically means that the birth of Islam suggested that Islamic societies had entered the 'age of civilization' and the pre-Islamic period was simply a period of '*Jahiliyyah*'. The theory of '*Jahiliyyah*' was the new development of such thoughts by scholars such as Maududi and Sayyid Qutb. According to them, the only way for the Islamic world, lost again in '*Jahiliyyah*' because of crises in modern times, to advance out of '*Jahiliyyah*' lies in the revival of Islam, because the self-sufficiency of Islam meets with the need of Islamic societies to shake off '*Jahiliyyah*'.

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[12]S. Zhong, 'Birth and development of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt', West Asia and Africa (1), (1982), p. 39.
[13]H. Yang, 'Islamic fundamentalism and secularism reflected in the theory and practice of Hassan Banna', World History (6), (1997), p. 3.
[14]J. Chen, ed., Modern Islamism (Beijing: Economic Daily Press, 1998), pp. 130–131.

It should be noted that Maududi made an innovative contribution to modern Islamism. He referred to the contemporary period as Jahilliyya, i.e., a period in which rulers and most Muslims were only nominally Muslims since in their belief and conduct they had deviated very far from the tenets of their faith. According to Maududi, the decline of Islam was due to both the internal reason, '*Jahiliyyah*', and the external reason, the modern '*Jahiliyyah*' in the West. The internal root of the backwardness of Islamic societies lies in the fact that the social basis of Islamic countries and Islamic societies had completely returned to '*Jahiliyyah*' from Islam since the Umayyad Caliphate. When the power of secular sovereignty replaced that of Allah, 'rule by Allah' turned into 'rule by man'. Consequently, Islamic countries parted ways with Islam, becoming '*Kafir* (apostate) countries', '*Kafir* governments' or '*Kafir* societies'. The external root of the decline of Islamic societies is the 'modern *Jahiliyyah*' in the West. Not long after the birth of Islam, he suggested, Greek philosophy, Roman philosophy and Persian philosophy started to spread obscurantism in all spheres of Islamic societies. Since the 1700s, along with the worsening of internal '*Jahiliyyah*', Western culture, or 'modern *Jahiliyyah*', also began to spread in the Islamic world. The main characteristic of the ignorance of Western culture lies in its secularism and the separation of state, government, society, education and science from religion. Such ignorance is the root of the falling, enduring impoverishment and debility of Islamic countries in modern times and the biggest enemy of the revival of Islam. As for the socialism and nationalism in the Orient, although they are different from the capitalism in the West, they also oppose theocracy and advocate separation of politics and religion. As they originate from the secularism in the West, they are merely a different version of 'modern *Jahiliyyah*,' thereby they are also an enemy of the revival of Islam.[15]

Sayyid Qutb, a leading thinker of the Muslim Brotherhood, very much accepted Maududi's idea of 'jahiliyyah'. He said, the contemporary world, including all the Islamic countries, is still in a state of '*Jahiliyyah*'. Even all those things which are taken to be Islamic culture, sources of Islam or Islamic philosophy and ideologies are actually part of such '*Jahiliyyah*'. As he put it, communism, fascism, capitalism and the nationalism and socialism popular in the Arab world are all in a state of '*Jahiliyyah*'. In politics, the power of Allah is abused, allowing some people privileges in the fields of institutions, law and ethics. Qutb believed that the most effective way to shake off '*Jahiliyyah*' was to establish the absolute sovereignty and dominion of Allah. 'Declaring the unique divinity of God … means opposing any form of rule by man, devastating any kingdom of man on earth … retrieving power from all human usurpers and returning it to the unique Allah, rescinding any law of man and establishing the unique and supreme divine law.' To realise the rule of Allah, he suggested, all Muslims must '*Hijira*' (migrate), completely break away from 'Jihiliyyah', extricate themselves from the influence of non-Islamic ideologies such as nationalism and patriotism and rebuild a pure Islamic state and society.[16]

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[15]Ibid, pp. 152–153.
[16]Y. Jin, ed., Islam and World Politics (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 1996), p. 212.

3. The Theory of 'Islamic State' and Islamic Order

In one voice all the Islamic thinkers emphasise that the only way forward for Islamic society is to establish a genuine Islamic state and order via Islamisation. Based on the revision of traditional theories of Islamic politics, Muhammad Rashid Rida put forward a concept of 'Islamic State'. Rida used different terms to refer to the political system of his ideal and genuine 'Islamic State', such as Islamic Government, Islamic Caliphate, Government of Caliphate, to name a few.[17] The basic assumptions in his theory of 'Islamic State' include[18]: above all, a constitution should be made so as to enforce Islamic law, under which Muslim politicians manage political, economic and social affairs according to the Quran, the *Hadith* (sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad) and the historical lessons of Arab caliphates in earlier times.[19] Second of all, a 'consultation' institution, or 'Islamic democracy institution' should be established to deal with political affairs. The Head of State should be elected by those with a good command of the Islamic law, a noble character and high prestige and a great sense of justice. Finally, the state should make Sharia, which incarnates the will of Allah, the paramount guideline. Accordingly, *Faqihs* (experts on Sharia) enjoy prestige in the political life, yet they must stick to the principle of 'independent judgment' in their interpretation of law and exercise necessary flexibility in so doing so as to invigorate the law.

The Islamic State and Order, argued Hassan Banna, should have at least two characteristics: First, politics and religion must be integrated rather than separated. He strongly advocated restoring the Caliphate. The Caliphate, he suggested, is not only a symbol of Islamic Union and an indication of the bonds between the nations of Islam but also a natural framework for the enforcement of *Sharia*. In 1938, on the fifth General Conference of the Muslim Brotherhood, Banna said, 'The Muslim Brotherhood believes that the caliphate is a symbol of Islamic Union and an indication of the bonds between the nations of Islam. It is a ritual of Islam, which all Muslims must hold in respect.'[20] Second, all statutes should be discarded and Sharia should be strictly implemented. According to Banna, Sharia is the revealed will of Allah. It has established an ideal, righteous and rational order in this world and the hereafter for mankind. Therefore, the almighty Sharia should be implemented in all areas, civilian, criminal, business or international relations. The primary task at present, Qutb said, is to eliminate the existing non-Islamic order and establish an Islamic society. However, he did not make any systematic theoretic account on what the future society should look like. He insisted that it is impossible to talk about specific laws or institutions of the future Islamic society before the existing non-Islamic social order is eliminated.

To restore and revive Islam, as Maududi put it, a genuine Islamic state based on the Quran and '*Hadith*' must be established; and its governance must be in accordance with Sharia. To realize the revival of Islam and rebuild an Islamic State, the

[17]H. Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1982), p. 77.
[18]See Y. Wu and X. Zhou, Islamic Ideological Trend and Movement in Modern and Contemporary Times (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2000), pp. 254–255.
[19]E. Rózsa, 'Models of state-formation in the Middle East', Asian Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies 12(1), (2018), p. 25.
[20]Xinhua News Agency, ed., The Muslim World (Restricted Publication, 1984), p. 117.

internal and external 'Jahiliyyah' must be eradicated and all the western and other non-Islamic influence discarded. Islamic values should be restored and maintained through the exemplary behavior of Muslims. Likewise, the Islamic society should be rebuilt through the practical actions of Muslims. A real Muslim should not only accept the teachings of Islam but also take an active part in the collective action of 'poetic justice', that is, enhance the value of Islam in their actual political, economic, legal and cultural life so as to free themselves from 'Jahiliyyah'.

Khomeini strongly opposed the separation of politics and religion. He put forward a systematic theory of 'Islamic Government', which is mainly embodied in his work *Islamic Government: Governance of the Jurist* and *Islam and Revolution*. The main points of his thoughts include:

First, it is imperative to rebuild an Islamic Government so as to restore the Islamic Order. Khomeini elaborated on the necessity of forming an Islamic Government. His arguments mainly include six aspects. (1) It is necessary for the establishment of an executive power. As an almighty and supreme divine law, the Islamic sharia must have 'an executive power and an executor' to administrate the society. (2) It is necessary for carrying on the Prophetic tradition. 'Since the Most Noble Messenger promulgated the divine command through his act of appointing a successor, he also implicitly stated the necessity for establishing a government.' (3) It is necessary for implementing the Islamic Law. 'It is self-evident that the necessity for enactment of the law, which necessitated the formation of a government by the Prophet (upon whom be peace), was not confined or restricted to his time and was sure to continue after his departure from this world.' (4) It is necessary for carrying out a political revolution. 'Both the Islamic law and reason suggest that we must not permit governments to retain this non-Islamic or anti-Islamic character. In reality we have no choice but to destroy those systems of government that are corrupt in themselves and also entail the corruption of others, and to overthrow all treacherous, corrupt, oppressive, and criminal regimes so as to achieve the triumphant political revolution of Islam.' (5) It is necessary for the unity of the Islamic *Ummah* (Muslim Community). ' … in order to liberate the Islamic homeland from occupation and penetration by the imperialists and their puppet governments, it is imperative that we establish a government.' (6) It is necessary for saving the oppressed and deprived. 'The imperialists have also imposed on us an unjust economic order, and thereby divided our people into two groups: oppressors and oppressed.' '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 hundreds of millions of human beings, to overthrow these oppressive governments and form an Islamic government.'[21]

Second, Islamic Government is constitutional and against monarchy. As Khomeini put it, Islamic Government does not correspond to any of the existing forms of government. It is neither tyrannical nor absolute, but constitutional. It is constitutional in the sense that the governing and administering of the country must observe the Quran and *Hadith*. 'In an Islamic government, a simple planning body takes the place of the legislative assembly that is one of the three branches of government. This body

[21]Khomeini, Hamid Algar, trans., Islam and Revolution (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 40–51.

draws up programs for the different ministries in the light of the ordinances of Islam and thereby determines how public services are to be provided across the country.'[22] Khomeini argued that Islam is set against monarchy because there's no record of practicing monarchy in either the Quran or *Hadith*. On the contrary, there are ordinances critical of monarchy. To him, 'Monarchy and succession to the crown are both ominous and valueless political institutions'[23], 'monarchy and hereditary succession are wrong and invalid, it is the duty of all Muslims to rise up against tyrants.'[24]

Third, to establish the Islamic world order through exporting the Islamic revolution. The Islamic revolution, Khomeini suggested, not only intends to establish an Islamic government in Iran but also establish an 'Islamic world order' in the world. As colonial powers are seeking hegemony and practicing the law of the jungle around the world, the existing world system is an evil one. Only by establishing a 'real world government' can justice and equity be restored across the globe. To this end, the best choice is to establish an Islamic government first in Iran, and then export the 'Islamic Revolution' to other Islamic countries and finally the rest of the world. On many occasions Khomeini reiterated that 'this people's revolution, this revolt of Islam, this divine movement should not be limited to this land; it should be exported to the world', 'Where there is a weak nation, under the iron heel of hegemonism, shouting for help, Iran will go and assist her.'[25] He even wrote a letter to the leader of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev, advising the Soviet Union to abandon its socialist ideology and convert to Islam. He pointed out that as Islam is 'the only system which is capable of leading mankind to a better life, better equity and greater peace, Islam deserves the worship of all the people in the world.'[26]

The Islamic political thoughts of Khomeini had a profound impact on the Islamic Revolution and the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran. His theory about the nature and functions of Islamic government, the power and function of Islamic scholars, anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, and anti-secularisation were implemented as the guidelines of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Aside from that, Khomeini's theory and the Islamic revolution that he led to victory significantly motivated Muslims to fight for the revival of Islam. 'Ruhollah Khomeini's call for Islamic revolution resonated with many followers, who believed it to be a message of fighting against imperialism, condemnation of the unreasonable, unjust and oppressive governments and a prediction of the establishment of a society with ethical equity.'[27]

Since Ahmed Bashir came to power in Sudan in 1989, the domestic and foreign policies of the Sudanese government have had distinct characteristics of Islamism while the Islamic political ideology of Hassan Turabi has been regarded as the theoretical basis of Islamisation in Sudan. In terms of politics, Turabi argued that the only legal state system in any Islamic society is the earlier Caliphate featuring the

[22]Khomeini, Islam and Revolution, Hamid Algar, trans., (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 55–56.
[23]K. Karpat, H. Chen etc. trans., Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1992), p. 619.
[24]Khomeini, Islam and Revolution, Hamid Algar, trans., (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), p. 31.
[25]C. Zhou, F. Chen, and Y. Chen, eds., Political Ideological Trends in Contemporary Orient (Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Press, 1993), p. 855.
[26]J. Chen, ed., Modern Islamism (Beijing: Economic Daily Press, 1998), pp. 130–131.
[27]J. Esposito, F. Dong etc., trans., Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 1999), p. 21.

integration of politics and religion; the ideal form of polity for mankind is Islamic par-liamentary republic. An Islamic state is neither capitalist nor socialist, it is an Islamic theo-democracy. Most contemporary democracies, dictatorships and monarchies that claim to be Islamic countries do not correspond to Islam and their governments should be overthrown.[28]

In terms of economy, science and education, Turabi suggested that development must be closely integrated with Islam. As for the economy, he suggested that Islamic Sharia is more reliable than Western laws in guaranteeing private ownership. A free economic institution should be implemented yet it must remain Islamic in nature. What an Islamic government should persist in is Islamic privatisation instead of capital-ist privatisation. He paid much attention to the importance of self-reliance, arguing that Islamic countries are still able to grow even without the economic assistance of the West. He also stated that *Riba* (interest) in all forms should be prohibited while the practice of *Zakat* (religious tax) should be restored. As for science and education, he suggested the revival of Islam is not going back to the past or looking up to Saudi Arabia. Instead, it means the combination of cultural diversity and modernity. Nothing in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad clashes with modernism or science and technology. The education system should not be separated from 'Shurra', 'Sharia' or ethical requirements, otherwise academic freedom would become a licentious destruc-tion of social norms and lead to social decay.[29]

In terms of diplomacy, Turabi proposed establishing a 'world Islamic front', or 'a grand chain of unity', realising conciliation among Muslims around the world through Islam and sparing no efforts in uniting all Islamic sects and believers of Islam so as to advance the career of Muslims across the globe. The way to realise the 'world Islamic front', Turabi noted, is to hold a 'Popular Arab and Islamic People Conference'. As a matter of fact, the conference met in 1991, 1993 and 1995. In addition, Turabi also suggested meeting representatives from other parts of the world and paying visits as also necessary for the establishment of the 'world Islamic front'. He even ambitiously proposed the three monotheisms, i.e., Islam, Judaism and Christianity, should unite together so as to fight for the restoration of God's power. At the same time, he sug-gested developing a coordinated relationship with the West to carry out talks with Christianity. He firmly believed the revival of Islam meant the revival of the world instead of simply that of Sudan and no force could prevent the realisation of the revival of Islam.[30]

4. The Doctrine of Allah's Sovereignty and Political Consultation

Nationalism, as a modern ideology, emerged along with the formation of modern national states in Europe and capitalist revolutions, and one of its historical contribu-tions lies in its proposition of the principle of sovereignty, which later became the basis of the construction of modern nation-states. In modern times, along with the spread of nationalism around the world, the concept of sovereignty also started to

[28]M. Daly and A. Sikainga, Civil War in the Sudan (British Academic Press, 1993), pp. 107–109.
[29]See D. Chen, 'Islamism of Turabi', West Asia and Africa (6), (1995), pp. 26–28.
[30]Ibid. p. 30.

proliferate. The Islamic world, divided and replaced by some independent nation-states in the process of colonisation, also witnessed various forms of nationalism, such as Arab nationalism, Turkish nationalism and Iranian nationalism, to name just a few. Although the different forms of nationalism in the Middle East all carry some historical traces of traditional Islamic culture, the construction of these nation-states was basically completed according to the principle of sovereignty. Besides, an independent system of nation-states also came into being in this process.

Nevertheless, the principle of national sovereignty, which has been widely recognised worldwide and become the norm in modern international relations, was completely denied by Islamism, which totally rejects popular sovereignty. The reason was closely related to the characteristics of Islamic political culture—there is no concept of national sovereignty in the modern sense in traditional Islamic doctrines. In the Islamic political philosophy, which highlights that 'Allah is One', all power, authority and might go to Allah; the dominion and sovereignty of the world and the universe are in the hands of Allah; Allah is the supreme owner of sovereignty and the supreme ruler, creator and nurturer. As Islam establishes Allah's absolute dominion and domination over mankind, it eliminates the possibility of rule by man in politics. This concept of sovereignty is totally different from the 'national sovereignty' of nationalism. It is, in essence, a concept of 'Allah's sovereignty', which actually denies national sovereignty. According to Muslim thinkers, 'Allah's sovereignty' has the following characteristics: first, absolute and supreme; second, unique, indivisible and untransferable; third, beyond time and space; fourth, infinitely powerful and almighty.[31] All the above characteristics are embodied in the holy Quran. For instance, it is pointed out in the Quran that:

> 'All that is in the heaven and on the earth- Glorifies Allah, and He is Almighty, All Wise. To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth: It is He Who gives life and causes death: And He is Able to do all things.'(57:1–2)[32]

> 'To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth: And to Allah, all affairs return (for the final decision).'(57:5)[33]

> 'O Allah! Lord of Power (and Order), You give power to whom You please, and You takeaway power from whom You please; You bless with honor whom You please, and You bring down whom You please; In Your hand is all Good. Surely, You are Able to do all things (Khadir).'(3:26)[34]

Another important concept in Islamic political philosophy is 'Prophet's authority' and 'deputy sovereignty'. Islam holds that although Allah, the master of the world and the universe, possesses 'ultimate sovereignty', Allah does not directly intervene in worldly affairs. Instead, Allah sends messengers to deliver his orders and enact the divine law. As the Quran says,' And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels; 'I will create a vicegerent on earth'.'[35] In Islam, Muhammad is a prophet sent by Allah to

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[31]M. Ma, New Thinking on Islamic Culture (Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1997), p. 176.
[32]J. Ma, trans., The Holy Quran (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1981), p. 420.
[33]Ibid.
[34]Ibid. p. 38.
[35]Ibid, p. 4.

every person and the revelations and traditions of the prophet must not be altered. The development of Islam, therefore, must not go beyond the interpretation and explanation of the words and behavior of the Prophet. It has been an important attribute for Islamic society and culture to follow, advocate and idealise tradition. 'Islam insists that the holy mission of Muslims is to fulfil the will of Allah and power that Allah grants to his deputy. It tends to regard political and social issues as religious issues instead of merely politics-related ones.'[36]

The concept of 'Allah's sovereignty' and 'delegated sovereignty' takes the form of 'Caliphate' when it comes to political institutions. After the Prophet Muhammad died, his successor Khalifa became the holder of viceregency and the 'Caliphate', a political institution featuring the integration of politics and religion and integration of the divine and the popular. The fundamental principles of the 'Caliphate' include: First, Islam decides the 'Caliphate' is the only just, legal and ideal political institution, an indispensable one for the implementation of the Islamic law, the purpose of which is, on behalf of the Prophet, to safeguard the Islamic beliefs and Muslim countries, guarantee the fundamental rights and freedom of Muslims and maintain the normal order of Islamic societies. Second, the duty of Khalifa is to safeguard the purity of Islamic beliefs, hold trials, solve civil disputes, uphold justice, appoint officials, manage political, economic and cultural affairs, lead the army and defend the territory. Third, qualifications of Khalifa. A Khalifa must be pious, just, proficient in Sharia, capable of making independent judgment and dealing with religious, political and civil affairs, physically and mentally sound, insightful, intelligent, and so on. Fourth, choosing of a Khalifa. A Khalifa should be chosen via election and consultation. The choices should be based on merit rather than hereditary succession. Fifth, dethroning of a Khalifa. A Khalifa must carry out his duties according to law. In case a Khalifa violates the divine law and commits wrongdoings, the people have the right to dethrone him and elect another one.[37]

At the time when the Prophet Muhammad established Islam, the 'ummah' established in Medina was a community of Muslims featuring the integration of politics and religion. It was also the basis for the building of an Islamic State featuring the combination of divine power with royal power and the combination of religion with politics. During the reign of the Four Caliphs, the political institution featuring the integration of politics and religion was consummated little by little. During the Umayyad Caliphate and the Abbasid Caliphate, although the establishment of royal succession strengthened the power of the monarch, the institution of the caliphate, Sharia and representatives of religious forces, the ulamas (religious scholars), still played an extremely important part in politics, which did not come to an end till the Ottoman Empire. Even after the institution of the caliphate was abolished in 1924, the strong Islamic tradition of political consultation still existed in various forms and grew to be a factor which had a profound impact on the political life in the Middle East. Therefore, the political property of Islamic culture is mainly manifested as the political authority of the Prophet under the principle of 'There is no god but Allah'. Allah is believed to

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[36]Y. Wu and X. Zhou, Islamic Ideological Trend and Movement in Modern and Contemporary Times (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2000), p. 11.
[37]M. Ma, New Thinking on Islamic Culture (Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1997), p. 177.

be the only sovereign of a country. Together with the establishment of the principle that the ruler should 'delegate' the divine sovereignty, the traditional religious and political culture which deems Islam as the political authority gradually took root. 'This system of religious and political culture became a historical tradition and social mentality, rendering the Islamic culture such a unique, systematic and permanent property that other nationalist, socialist political culture in the Middle East has to turn to it for help in their political exchanges.'[38] Islamism, which deems faith purification, returning to the pure Islam and eliminating corruption as its religious and political ideals and has a characteristic of politicisation of religion as well as religionisation of politics, even regards this principle as the foundation of its ideological resources.

In terms of Islamist thoughts, Maududi's doctrines of 'Allah's sovereignty' and 'political consultation' are most representative. He put forward several fundamental political principles as follows:

1. The doctrine of Allah's sovereignty, or the principle of 'Hakimiyah belongs to Allah alone'. The Arabic term 'Hakimiyah' derives from 'Hakim', which means ruler, governor, legislator, judge or arbiter. To Maududi, 'Hakimiyah' means 'supreme power' and 'absolute power', which belong to Allah alone. 'So Glory be unto Him, in Whose hands is the kingdom of all things'[39], or 'Hakimiyah belongs to Allah alone'. When applied in the theory of Islamic State, this principle turns into the doctrine of Allah's sovereignty. According to this doctrine, Allah, the only creator, nurturer and dominator of everything, is the real sovereign of the country; no one, no group, class or party has the right to make or declare any law; they can only observe the holy Sharia; a state should only exercise power within the scope of the permission of the divine law. Therefore, the nature of the doctrine is to curb the 'limited' secular power by the supreme divine power.

2. The doctrine of Prophet's Authority. This is a political principle deduced from the beliefs in Allah and his messengers. It insists that Prophet Muhammad, as a 'messenger' and 'vicegerent' whom Allah sent to mankind, has the right to delegate the political and legal sovereignty of Allah; In Islamic countries, the 'Hadith', or words and teachings of the Prophet, is a major source of legislation. It enjoys a position which is second only to that of the Quran.

3. The doctrine of Delegated Sovereignty. Based on the doctrine of the Prophet's Authority, Maududi put forward an idea of 'people's Hakimiyah'. 'People's Hakimiyah' means Allah's will revealed in the world, that is, Allah's rule in the world through his vicegerent. However, the vicegerent has no right of legislation. He only has the right of enforcement, for all legislation belongs to Allah, the supreme legislator.

4. The doctrine of Political consultation. It is an extension of the doctrine of delegated sovereignty and embodiment of the principle of 'Shurra (consultation)'. It insists the vicegerency of Allah should not be monopolised or inherited by any individual, group, class or tribe. It belongs to all Muslims. Every Muslim has an

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[38]S. Peng, ed., Islam and the Modernization Process in the Middle East (Xi'an: Northwest University Press, 1997), pp. 3–4.
[39]J. Ma, trans., The Holy Quran (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1981), p. 342.

opportunity to be elected and trusted with vicegerency. Maududi referred to the traditional institution of Islamic consultation as 'Islamic democracy'. He believed that the appointment and removal of head of state and the decision-making of major policies of the state can be carried out through an extensive institution of direct consultation or an institution of indirect consultation with representatives elected by voters.

According to the formulation of Maududi, an ideal Islamic state should respect both Allah's sovereignty and the opinions of the people. The ruler of the state (Caliph or Imam) should be a representative of both Allah and Muslims. As Head of State, he has the highest power in the state, but 'he must observe the divine law, he has no absolute power or authority, he is neither a dictator nor an autocrat.'[40] Maududi calls this ideal political institution a 'theo-democracy'.[41] Just as Esposito, an American scholar, put it, 'for Maududi, the concept of national state and the concept of Islamic state are apparently different from each other. For the former, citizenship is based on nation, race and relationship by blood; for the latter, citizenship is determined by ideology (belief and non-belief).'[42]

Hussan Turabi, an Islamist thinker in Sudan, used the negation perspective to define the property of 'Islamic state' as also revealing the political thought of 'Allah's sovereignty'[43]: First, Islamic state is not a secular state. 'Islamic state' takes the Islamic belief of 'Allah is One' as its ideological foundation, which means all the public life of its citizens should be in accord with religious revelations and the function of the state is to implement the duties stipulated by 'Allah's revelations'-based Sharia. Therefore, in nature, the Islamic state is different from a national state based on separation of politics and religion and secularity. Second, the Islamic state is not a national state. Muslim cultural identity goes beyond the religious identity of nation, race, geography and language. The national loyalty geared at consanguinity, geography and language can only be a kind of 'limited loyalty'. 'Ultimate loyalty' belongs to Allah and the foundation of communities in Muslim societies lies in faith. Therefore, an Islamic state should be an open Muslim community oriented toward faith, the 'ummah'. Third, the Islamic state is not an absolute sovereign entity. That means the state must obey the will of Allah, the 'absolute sovereign', while the state is merely an instrument which 'delegates' Allah's sovereignty. Fourth, the Islamic state is not a prototype of any state. The primitive state form in a Muslim society is ummah. The term 'Islamic state' itself is a 'misconception' because a state, as a political organisation, is purposeful and utilitarian in a narrow sense and is simply a social organisation that exists for safeguarding the welfare and interests of the believers. Therefore, a state is tentative in both its form and nature and always on the rise and fall. In contrast, the Muslim community, ummah, which emerged before the birth of the state, is eternal.

[40]J. Esposito, Islam and Politics (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1984), p. 147.
[41]J. Esposito, ed., Voice of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 117.
[42]John L. Esposito, Islam and Politics (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1984), p. 148.
[43]John L. Esposito ed., Voice of Resurgent Islam, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 241–251.

5. Conclusion

The above analysis indicates that, in terms of political identity, Islamism's identification with political communities is nothing like the national state identification with modern nationalism but identification with ummah, a religion-belief community which goes beyond race, nation and geography. It 'refers to an Islamic concept of ummah … its guarantee of existence is an Islamic government based on the Islamic law, Sharia.'[44] In terms of the nature of national power, Islamism strongly opposes the sovereignty theory of secular states and the national states based on that, and appeals for the establishment of an Islamic state based on 'Allah's sovereignty'. In terms of the relation between politics and religion, Islamism opposes the separation of politics and religion in secularism and advocates building an Islamic state featuring the integration of politics and religion, or 'a state in which governance is in accord with Sharia and the functions and authority of administration and legislation must observe and assist Sharia'.[45] In terms of democracy, Islamism objects to both dictatorship and Western democracy but advocates building Islamic democracy based on the principle of 'consultation'.

As for the goal of rebuilding an 'Islamic State' which incarnates Allah's sovereignty, the thoughts of Islamic theorists are all in a similar vein. However, specific Islamic thinkers have their own foci. For instance, in terms of specific goals, earlier thinkers such as Rashid Rida and Hassan Banna pay more attention to the severe national crises the Islamic world suffered due to colonialism and imperialism while their Islamic thoughts were more related to national liberation; contemporary Islamic thinkers such as Maududi, Khomeini and Turabi were more concerned about the development crises brought to Muslim countries by modernisation and secularisation while their thoughts were more about how to shake off Western modernisation and find a development path with Islamic characteristics. As regards specific approaches and means, different thinkers also have different emphasis. For instance, Sayyid Qutb attached great significance to violent *Jihad*, Khomeini 'Islamic revolution' and its export and Turabi mild social reform rather than radical social revolutions. Again, as regards their opposition to dictatorship, the accounts of Khomeini, a Shia thinker of Islamism, are much richer and more profound. Additionally, as regards identity, Turabi proposed the distinction between 'limited loyalty' (national state) and 'ultimate loyalty' (Islam). No doubt, it suggests that Islamism has shown a little bit of flexibility in its efforts of coordinating the relationship between national identity and religious identity.

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[44]H. Roberts, 'Radical Islamism and the dilemma of Algerian nationalism: the embattled Arians of Algiers', Third World Quarterly 10(2), (1988), p. 557.
[45]Ibid.