Sayyid Qutb and Political Islam: Islamic Government from the Perspective of Sayyid Qutb

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Abstract

Islamic government is an important concept in the modern world and political literature that has been established after the death of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in certain historical periods and geographical dimensions in the Muslim world, sometimes as "caliphate" and sometimes in the form of "Imamate"; and it founded its ideological, political, social, and economic principles. The formation of the first Islamic government and its social structures was done particularly by the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in Medina, but after his death, various conflicts took place about the succession and caliphate between various Islamic sects, including Sunni and Shia; the consequences of some of these conflicts is still present in the Muslim world (especially after the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate in the important region of Middle East). Initially, this article points out succinctly the social and ideological background and context of the emergence of contemporary Islamist movements and trends in the Middle East and the Muslim world. Then, it introduces the features and characteristics of the Islamic government from the perspective of one of the effective and important thinkers in the Muslim world i.e. Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) in three macro areas of "cultural-ideological", "political" and "social-economic".

Keywords: Sayyid Qutb, Political Islam, Islamism, monotheism, caliphate, Sharia, social justice.

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Introduction

Muslim world experienced a lot of changes, turmoil, and chaos in the 19th and 20th centuries; some of them have been remained to the current era. Intellectual, scientific, and cultural stagnation and degeneration, deterioration of social, political, and economic principles, weakness of military forces, tyranny of domestic rulers, colonialism of West and foreign powers, weakness of old Ottoman Empire, confrontation with the West and West-oriented trends, challenges of tradition and modernity, development of new concepts such as democracy and secularism, and political institutions and systems arose from them such as "nation-state" in the West and transferring them to the Muslim world, incapacity of traditionalist Islam in dealing with the modernity and responding to doubts and requirements induced, the emergence and growth of East-oriented socialist and West-oriented nationalist schools, etc. all had a significant impact on the confusion and turmoil within the Islamic world (Dnaeefar, 2014:67). But it can be said that all these wounds covered under the power of the Ottoman Empire (the last of the traditional political system based on the caliphate-oriented discourse during different eras) were opened with its abolition, and the pillars of the central political power in the Islamic world collapsed. A collapse that has not been repaired, and wounds that have not been healed yet. At the beginning of the modern era, there were different political systems in the Islamic world; despite radical differences, they always found their identity in Islam and its political system. Many countries in Europe and the Middle East were dominated by the sultans of the Ottoman Empire; the Mongol Empire had drawn his power across India, and Iranian kings ruled Iran in the Shi'ite government of Safavid. These political systems all experienced fundamental challenges in the face of political and social developments of the modern era (Esposito and Wall, 2014: 19-20). It was the time of the beginning of various trends and movements including "secular", "nationalist" and "Islamist" in the Muslim world, and each of them began trying to meet the needs of the Muslim world and promote its challenges in different ways. Kemalist and secularists believed in the abolition of the traditional system of Islamic Caliphate and knew it the main cause of the decline of the Muslim world (Yılmaz 2014: 30). Islamist forces sought to create the "Islamic Government" (as the alternate system of Caliphate) which they believed could adapt to modernity. Soon afterwards, with the failure of ideologies of nationalist, Kemalist and Nasserist, (which, with the help of social and political process of secularization and with the aim of Westernization of Muslim countries, rejected Islamic concepts and structures as well as other factors that cannot described in this opportunity) willing of the Muslim's "nation" to

the Islamist trend was increased; trends and movements whose credit and importance as a suitable alternative to solve the problems of the Islamic world were increased in the minds of the vast majority of Muslim nations, especially from the 1970s onwards. The first and most important of these trends and groups were "Muslim Brotherhood" in Egypt and "Islamic Group" in South Asia, founded by Hassan al-Banna and Abul A'la Maududi, respectively (Ibid: 21). Sayyid Qutb was one of the leading members of the Muslim Brotherhood and in fact he was the intellectual and ideologues leader, who is known as the father of Islamic fundamentalism in political concepts in modern times in political literature. In this study, we tried to analyze and explain the characteristics of an Islamic government in three macro areas of "cultural-ideological", "political" and "social-economic" in the perspective of this thinker. Obviously, the article does not argue all aspects of this thinker's thought in the field of Islamic government (which requires separate comprehensive literature), and its importance is to explain the political thought of different Islamic sects in an age in which the excommunication and subtraction are the common problem in the Middle East. This study applies a comparative-historical methodology and content analysis as well as examines the recent literature

1. Cultural-ideological characteristics

1.1 Monotheism: The Center of gravity of the Islamic worldview

Islamic worldview and its features have a special place in the thought of Sayyid Qutb, so that he named one of his books as "ideological features of Islamic worldview", and analyzed all of the characteristics from different aspects. In the thought of Sayyid Qutb "Ideology" and worldview are the sources of all change and transformation in the world. In his idea, with his 'action' and will, which are derived from his belief, attached to his divine nature and spirit; therefore, he is able to change and break down the social structures. Structures born and developed by human that, in his idea, put the yoke of domineering on his neck in humanitarian law, and the whip of outrage over him. He believes that among the diverse and colorful beliefs, which are common in the world in the form of different economic and social schools and ideas, Islamic religious belief is the only one that can prevent humans from anxiety, distortions, abuses and degeneration and lead them to the "straight path". In this regard, he writes: "Religious belief is a wide and general way of thinking that connects the human to the overt and covert force of the world, and gives certainty and tranquility to the human spirit; it grants a power that enables the human to face with the vicious and unfounded

forces, and began to fight with the help of the forces of certainty and victory and confidence in God" (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 a: 36). He believes that the Islamic and monotheistic belief is not a personal idea, but it puts all the world powers on the basis of "one axis", and affects all human issues and activities, both individual and social; and thus, its practical extension in society leads to the formation of an Islamic government (Ibid: 37). In other words, in Sayyid Qutb's idea, worldview and concept of Islamic monotheism, is a general belief that is considered as a theoretical background of the "Islamic Government" and is the reason of changes that should be executed in the Islamic society and government. It is here that the talk of "sovereignty" and the "rule of God" and rejection of the human sovereignty (the concepts in which Sayyid Qutb was totally affected by Abul A'la Maududi) arises. In his view, the monotheistic worldview and ideology, which are revealed to the heart of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in the form of revelation, and must be popularized and implemented in human society in the garment of "Sharia" and lead the human to the straight path, are fulfilled through a determination that does not manifest but with the formation of the "Islamic government". The government that belongs to Allah and denies human's sovereignty and superiority over other humans. Hence, we must seek the origin of all social, political and cultural ideas of Sayyid Qutb in the Islamic and monotheistic belief and worldview. He knows "monotheism" as the first and most fundamental pillar in the Islamic worldview which makes it distinctive and superior over other materialistic, philosophical, or even religious (which has been distorted) thoughts; he knows the range of monotheism very broad and do not consider it merely theoretical: "The light of monotheism sheds light on all aspects of his [a Muslim] life, hidden or visible, micro and macro, important or not important, from the tradition to the Sharia, from the belief to the practice, individual or social, earthly or heavenly, in a way that its all-encompassing and pervasive monotheism does not skip a bit." (Sayyid Qutb, 1990: 298). He believes that the Islamic worldview is based on two basic and important principles: 1-Divinity and 2-Servitude, the divinity and legislation are specific to "Allah", and servitude, obedience, acceptance, and submission (conversion to Islam), are specific to the beings of His Essence and especially humans. Sayyid Qutb knows the acceptance of this principle as the first basis of the Islamic worldview, and believes that all other Islamic rules derive from this principle and are based on it (Ibid: 298). Review of theoretical and practical monotheistic worldview from the perspective of Sayyid Qutb can be summarized in the principle of "*There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God.*" From his perspective, Declaration of Faith is the fundamental foundation in the monotheistic worldview that includes a proof and a denial: denial of human sovereignty and proof of the rule of Allah.

The first part is specific to Allah that demonstrates His absolute and undisputed power, sovereignty, and reign, which is revealed to human in the form of legislation and regulation; and the second part reflects the principle that Islam is the only way that has the ability to generalize and enforce the law and Sharia of God in human existence and human societies. The Islam in which the accurate understanding of its book and the tradition of the Prophet's life and absolute faith in them lead the Muslim missionaries and preachers in all ages and historical eras (Alipur, 2009: 102-103). Qutb collects the characteristics of the Islamic worldview under seven principles: It is 1-divine 2-constant 3-inclusive 4- coordinated 5-pragmatic 6-realistic and 7-monotheistic. He elaborates "divine" as: this worldview is all from God and there is no evolution and change in it and humans cannot add anything to or cut anything from it, and it is the reference and source of all other principles (Sayyid Qutb, 1990: 97). In other words, in his view, other principles are translated "along with" and in line with this principle, elaboration of which is not the scope of this article.

1.2 Islam: A general ideology

After the negation of all systems throughout the world, both East and West, which are ruling contrary to the law of God (which he knew ignorant systems steeped in ignorance), Sayyid Qutb knows Islam and returns to Islamic sharia as the only way of salvation. He believes that Islam is a general and comprehensive school that, in the current situation of darkness and ignorance in the world, can bring a complete and universal mindset that covers all aspects of the conscience, law, legislation, social and economic programs, etc. which obey the human's conscience and nature and is based on his divine and monotheistic worldview. Sayyid Qutb believes that Islam presents an attitude to the world that is superior and more comprehensive than materialistic schools in Europe and America and the Soviet Union and East and West of the world. With this belief that Islam should take human leadership, Sayyid Qutb says that the place of Islam is not in the end of the humanitarian convoy, it should be in the vanguard position (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 382-383). He believes that happens by the formation of an Islamic government and system and writes: "We want a better life, a new world full and a perfect human society; we want a system in which the "Sovereignty" is not specific to an individual or a class and group of the human beings; absolute sovereignty belongs only to God; we want a government in which all correct religious believers can live in freedom and equality; we call for the establishment of such a social system, and we must now ask why some groups or governments [in the East or the West] are afraid of the establishment of such a

system in a corner of the world?" (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 b: 31-34). He believes that in such an Islam-based system, true peace can be established in the consciousness of human beings, real equality and freedom are granted to everybody, social equality and cooperation are established efficiently, the international links are set up based on the coexistence and friendship with the countries that do not oppress and aggress; in addition to material needs, spiritual needs of human beings are also met, humans worship God alone and obey Him (ibid: 33). Saying that in the current situation of the world in which the foliage of old and decaying and hollow tree of ignorance has taken us from all sides, we must hope for the future with no fear, Sayyid Qutb concluded that the future is undoubtedly in the territory of Islam and it is "the angel of salvation" of human beings. According to him;

> The only human savor from the clutches of the danger which comes closer every moment and takes him to the lasso of the charming civilization of the West, it is the only "school" that can offer a program tailored to meet the real needs of human nature, and the only program that can make a harmony between creative material and spiritual and mental forces. Islam is the only way of thinking that can design a program guaranteeing this harmony and correlation; it can provide the uniformity that human being cannot remember except in the time of "Islamic Government" (Sayyid Qutb, 1994: 130).

2. Political characteristics

2.1 Islam and Politics: Islam should rule

Sayyid Qutb believes that religious and political laws of Islam are not separate from one another, he knows Islam as an "indivisible whole" in which the "religious rituals" are not isolated from its law and "transactional" rules (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 31). He (based on previous discussions) believes in the Islamic government and its involvement in all political, social and cultural affairs. In addition to the ideological discussions, social and political topics have tangible presence in his books. He believes that Islam is a comprehensive school whose law (Sharia) should be implemented in all facets of Islamic society. He suggests that Islamic societies consider the official religion of the country appearance apparently, and it is enough to know themselves Muslims, while they only have the Islamic appearances and traditions at the corner of their hearts, and Islam does not have any representation in their social lives

(Alipur, 2009: 68). This is why we see that political and philosophical secularism has no place in the ideas of Sayyid Qutb, and he strongly disagrees the separation of religion and state, and those who deem it personal and individual; in his idea, Islam can save people when it rules. He argues that this religion has not only come to crawl in the hearts and temples, and be confined to preach, but the main aim is legislation and the establishment of social and political structures and institutions. Comparing Islam with the distorted Christianity (not the original), he states that in the Christendom, church has become a very personal and sacred space where the Christians spend some of their time, and relieve their souls with church bells, remembrances, litanies, prayers, and incense, and once they get out of the church and step into the society, there is a law that is not have the slightest compatibility with the teachings of original Christianity. In his view, Islam, unlike the above-said secular approach, must manifest in the social context, and its laws should be presented in the form of an Islamic government under the rule and sovereignty of Allah (Sayyid Qutb, 1971: 82-84). In a non-secular look at the religion, he writes:

> We have heard the Europeans say that religion is an interest and love between the individual and his God, and religion has no right to interfere in the life of civilization ... [in addition] we see that among abject people - we live in their environment – there are some people who pose themselves as intellectual, and say that religion should be separated from politics. They say religion should only handle the mental and spiritual aspects of people, and social destiny should be in the hands of the ground rules. Yes, in the era of social degeneration among the original nations, these strange miseries and misguidances can be found (Ibid: 85-86).

In this perspective of Sayyid Qutb, integration of religion and politics and formation of the Islamic government does not come true through going to mosques and respecting provisions, addresses and being absorbed and digested in circles of the "Sufis and dervishes" and seclusion, etc. About the scholars and saints who do not get involved in politics, he writes: "having great board of scholars who look at these [political and social] issues silently until the opportunity is lost and morality and virtue are declined, then they sit, whine, preach, and lament: Oh, religion, morals, and the country are deteriorated. None of these can heal the sufferings of the people" (Ibid: 88). Finally, he says that the only way to cure the pains of the

human societies is to spread the Islamic law in the government and its implementation in the life of the people through political and social structures.

2.2 The principles of the constitution in an Islamic government: human or divine?

The term and concept of "Sharia" can be seen in most of the works of Sayyid Qutb; Sharia in the vocabulary of his thought includes unchangeable divine traditions and laws which are placed embedded in the body of the universe. In Sayyid Qutb's view, separation between the natural laws governing the matter (nature) and divine laws governing the human spirit, nature and society, or in other words, separation between natural laws and divine laws (Sharia), the source of both of which is Allah, is the main cause of human degradation and misery throughout periods of history, especially contemporary times. In the introduction to his "Fi Zalal Al-Qoran" (In the Shade of the Quran), he has spoken on the subject in detail, and according to Verse 50 of Surah Al-Qasas, verse 36 of Surah Ahzab, and verses 18 and 19 of Surah Jaathiah, he concludes "According to Quran, returning to God has only one way, only one way and not more than that, and it is returning all affairs of life [both individual and social affairs] to the teachings of God and divine "way", laws [Sharia] of which have been cleared by God in His book, the Quran" (Sayyid Qutb, 2014: 1/23). In his idea, it is a book whose laws and the rules and laws derived from it must be practiced by humans in the life. He knows this as a measure for recognizing the Islamic and non-Islamic communities and governments. Converging to the definition offered by Maududi in the book of "the principles of Islam" on the word "Islam", Sayyid Qutb defines Islam as submission to Allah and the rules and laws of Him in all aspects of life and getting free from the rules formulated by the human (or in other words, secular laws); he believes that this leads to coordination between volitional and natural aspects of human on one hand, and his existence and the universe on the one hand (Sayyid Qutb, 1999: 32-33). From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, in order to form an Islamic government, constitution of the society must be taken from a divine root, and everyone (especially the structures and institutions) must be obedient to the law and the right of sovereignty and legislation should be transferred from humans to God. He believes that since the time that humans accepted laws other than the laws of God (for example, customary, human, and secular laws) to guide the humanitarian convoy, the structure of the Islamic society and sovereignty fell apart and its implications disappeared from the universe and human life (Sayyid Qutb, 1986: 235-237). It should be noted that based on the principles of "Considerations of public interest" and "Blocking the means" and in order to attract public

interests and repel harm, he admits that at the time of legislation, according to time requirements, we "must" use all human laws and regulations which are in accordance with the Islamic principles and correct life (Sayyid Qutb, 1392: 365). Sayyid Qutb's opposition to democracy and democratic systems comes also from here that, in his view, in these systems, desires and wills of the people are the source and origin of legislation and regulation and not the will of God. According to verse 116 of Surah An'am, he introduces the democratic system as violation and deviation from the path of religion; in his views on Islam, decree is the decree of Allah and not the popular mandate, this is God who owns the legislative authority. In the Muslim communities, he knows the majority of nation as Muslim, and believes that they want the rule of Islam (Alipur, 2009: 107).

2.2 Role of the ruler and the people in the Islamic government

After explaining the theoretical concepts of monotheism, sovereignty and ignorance, and describing the importance and necessity of forming an Islamic government to promote ignorance and establishing and continuing the will and law of God in the body of human society, and converting the "the house of war" to "the house of Islam", Sayyid Qutb explains the structures of Islamic government in order to fulfill Allah's sovereignty and law; he also describes the correct, honest and common political and social relations including the type of interaction between the ruler (or political power) and the people (or the civil power). He believes that the system of government in Islam is based on three principles: 1-Justice of the rulers, 2-Obedience of people, and 3-Consultation between the rulers and the people (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 151). He considers the Justice of rulers essential a necessary principle for the realization of Islamic rule, and knows it an absolute justice whose scale is not affected by love and hatred, and does not discriminate, and kinship, enmity, position, wealth, etc. do not affect its fulfillment. On the other hand, he stresses the people's obedience to the Islamic ruling, and based on verse 59 of Surah Nisa (Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you) he concludes that: the integration and order of God and the Messenger and those charged with authority in this verse, in fact, refer to quality, and "limits" of obedience. From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, obey "those charged with authority" is in the path of obedience to Allah and His Messenger. In his idea, the position and authority of "those charged with authority" until they practice the Sharia and laws of God and the Prophet and move in that direction, are the same as the Prophet (PBUH). He believes that "those charged with authority" are not essentially and intrinsically obeyable and obedience to them is

subject to the execution and implementation of the Sharia of Allah, and if they deviate from the path, or commit negligence in the exercise of them, the right to govern will be taken from him. In his view, in the Islamic political system, the certain form of which is the Council, people elect the Islamic ruler with "full discretion" and "absolute freedom", the ruler who is only the "enforcer of the divine law" and not "the legislator." In the expression of quality and features of "those charged with authority", Sayyid Qutb states two conditions: 1-justice in the government and 2-obedience to God; he knows the government – under any title –Islamic until the Islamic Sharia is practiced Islamic, otherwise, it is non-Islamic (Ibid: 152-154). He eventually discusses the principle of consultation between rulers and people; and according to verse 159 of Surah Al-Imran and verse 37 of Surah Shora, he notes the principle of consultation between the ruler and the people, and creation of connections between them and the open space of criticism and freedom of expression and opinion. He knows this the reason for involvement of people in their governmental and social works and believes that this approach lead to the elimination of hatred and anger from the hearts of people and plantation of the seeds of love and satisfaction and trust and comfort. In his view, the system of government in Islam guarantees the efficient communication between the ruler and the people, and is based on peace, justice and trust, and cornerstone of a competent social system is based upon it. From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, the ruler (in the belief of Shia, in the absence of the Imam) obtains the government only through the absolute willingness and desire of the people (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 A: 190-191). An Islamic government whose legitimacy depends on the implementation of the law of Allah, and its acceptability-which is the base for its establishment- depends on the people's vote and opinion: "The absolute selection and discretion of Muslims are the only factor of the foundation of the government" (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 267).

2.4 Foreign relations and policy in the Islamic government

In the foreign policy of the Islamic government, based on the Islamic worldview, Sayyid Qutb believes in the unity of the Islamic world and gathering of all Muslims (both Shia and Sunni) under a single flag with the slogan of "monotheism". In his view, Muslims are obliged to elect a single flag and unite and integrate with other nations that are under the shadow of the flag. He believes that Muslim nations will never be able to remain separate and dispersed, or to join the nations in the East and the West who fight against Islam; his emphasizes the rejection of Marxism, nationalism, Zionism and capitalism and the formation of a united and independent

Islamic union, and writes: "We [all Muslim nations] have only one way ahead, we have to form a third and independent bloc [between the two blocs of East and West] which is not affiliated with any of the Eastern or Western blocs, because the East and the West, both are trying to destroy us with conspiracy and cooperation" (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 b, 91). According to him, colonial policies of the East and the West are focused on the absence of the independent bloc; a bloc or camp that - he thinks - can gather "six hundred million" Muslims (in that time), with the same belief, history, economic interests and geographical locations under one flag (Ibid: 96-98). He raises the issue of "American or Western Islam" on the other hand; he believes that these days, America and the West have come back to Islam based on the need and for functional exploitation. In his view, they (colonizer Westerners and their allies in the Middle East) want an Islam which fights against "communism", not colonialism and authoritarianism. On the other hand, he believes that the West is seeking to promote a "Western Islam" in the region that gives fatwa in invalidators and faults of ablution, but does not interfere in the social, economic and political conditions of the Muslim world. Finally, he considers communism like capitalism as a "dangerous cholera" that seeks hostility and aggression against the Muslim world, and we should fight it like the Western capitalism (Ibid: 101-104). Sayyid Qutb suggests that the fear of the colonial system of the soul and the latent spiritual force in Islam is a factor that has united all the Western and Eastern nations, including the communist Russia, and the capitalist America. He states the history of enmity of Zionism and the Jews with the Islamic world on the other hand and writes: "We do not forget the role of the international Zionist's hatred and cunning against Islam and gathering forces against it in the crusader colonial world and communist material world in parallel. Basically, this is a permanent role that Jews have taken and practiced from the day of migration of the Holy Prophet to Medina and the emergence of the Islamic Government" (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 333). In terms of the communication and interaction between Islamic countries and other countries, he believes that Muslims, and Islamic governments and even financial and commercial institutions and companies in "the house of Islam" should boycott any political or economic relationship and cooperation with the hostile and aggressive countries. In his view, the governments such as: England, France, America, West Germany and Israel have been the symbols of oppression against Muslim nations (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 b: 111-115). About the occupiers of the Muslim lands and the way of dealing with them, he writes: "England and America, in collaboration with Soviet Union participated in expelling us [Muslims] from "Palestine"—every Muslim land is our land. France fought against us in North Africa and we took part in the persecution and they are still against us and our religion. Therefore, according

to Islam, any treaty and any cooperation with these countries are ill-gotten and illegal" (Ibid: 112). In his view, this does not mean thinking and social withdrawal and economic isolation from the vast majority of human civilization, it means avoiding integration with splendid trappings of civilization that have been obtained by force and oppression (Alipur, 2009: 81-82). He - as emphasized in the preface of the book named "Ma'alem Fi-Tariq" (Signs of the Path) believes in a kind of connection and disconnection to (simultaneously) in interaction with the West. This means that: the positive points of the material civilization must be obtained, and the injustice of it should be rejected (Sayyid Qutb, 1999: 3-4).

3. Socio-Economic characteristics

3.1 Social Justice in Islam

Sayyid Qutb considers the "social justice" (which is also the name of one of his books) as a comprehensive and inclusive justice that is the fundamental pillar of the Islamic government. In his view, social justice encompasses all facets of Islamic society (both material and spiritual) based on human equality and social cooperation, and "economic justice" is the only one of its derivatives. He believes that Islam seeks to achieve a full social justice that is not limited to the economic dimension; and legal and structural regulations are not merely the guarantee of its implementation. He knows the realization of public, social, and human justice based on two simultaneous principles: 1- the heart and conscience from the within, 2- proper legislation in social settings (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 120). Sayyid Qutb argues that the social justice in the Islamic government is not limited to Muslims; in his view, protection of the rights of religious, ethnic, and racial minorities are guaranteed in the Islamic government, and every non-Muslim (with any race) can obey the heavenly commandments of his religion in his personal life, and benefit from the social cooperation and justice in the Islamic government at the same time. (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 b: 31) In his view, throughout its history, Islam has always guaranteed the dignity, freedom and rights of religious minorities who have lived under Islamic rule to the highest degree (Sayyid Qutb, 1970: 119). He believes that to build an ideal society, in addition to advice and moral emphasis on social justice – that lead to institutionalization and internalization of the moral individualities in the heart of the human and the common conscience of the human society – Islam puts emphasis on the formation of an Islamic government and its close relationship with the social justice.

3.2 Financial and economic system of Islam

From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, Islam is a multi-dimensional religion that promotes spiritual needs and ensures the material needs of human as well. He believes "living" is a very important thing in Islam that Islam is not concerned about it less than other material schools. In his view, an Islamic government's inattention to the problem of poverty and deprivation and lack of realization of basic needs of living in Muslim societies lead to failure of inner spiritual desires and faith in the hearts and minds of Muslims at the beginning. Of course, Islam considers the economy and living of a Muslim – as a person's life - as a "mean", not the "target". He believes that Islam knows the Muslim as a "human" recognizing all the mental, physical, material, and spiritual needs, and never confines him within the mere material and economic frames (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 A: 206-207). To provide material and living requirements proportionate to proper distribution of wealth and economic justice, in addition to emphasizing the moral precepts of Islam, such as Zakat, charity, avoiding "hoarding", kindness and forgiveness, etc. (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 124-136) - that have more innate and inner role – he emphasizes the problem of social "balance" which is enforced in the form of divine laws in the social body. He believes that the authority of social systems and structures on the adequacy of the salaries of citizens, and ensuring economic justice and the elimination of poverty and discrimination are important issues in the Islamic government to realize a comprehensive and general social justice. He believes that in order to achieve socio-economic balance in the body of Islamic society, Islam has a set of rules and principles that should be spread and enforce by the Islamic government in economic relations between structures, institutions and individuals. The ten rules of Qutb's views are: 1-law of the circulation of wealth in the hands of all, 2-law of considerations of public interest, 3-law of blocking the means, 4-law of boycotting usury, 5-law of boycotting hoarding, 6-law of public resources, 7-law of boycotting orgy and extravagance, 8-law of boycotting Kenz (hoarding), 9-law of where did you get that?, and 10- law of Zakat (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 A: 212-229). Sayyid Qutb elaborates the above laws and concludes that the Islamic economic system in the Islamic government, while recognizing the benefits of personal property (conditioned) that the capitalist system has predilection for it, destroys the corruptions that the communist system imposes on the individual property, and chose a middle way which is away from extremes and is based on accurate and common human nature (Ibid: 229).

3.3 Women and family and their position in the Islamic government

Sayyid Qutb suggests that Islam has emphasized "full equality" between people, both male and female. He believes that Islam does not consider "natural" and "humanitarian" difference between the two sexes of male and female; based on the verse 124 of Surah Nisa, Verse 97 of Surah Nahl, and verse 195 of Surah Al-Imran, Islam has made an absolute "natural" and "humanitarian" equality between them in both worldly and spiritual affairs. If there are differences in issues such as inheritance, leadership and authority of man in the house, and the female witness, her presence in public life, etc., they are not in favor of natural primacy and absolute and unquestioned sexual domination of sex on the other and inequality of them, but they are in line with the talents and psychological and physiological features of both parties that would result in better instinctive and temperament adjustment and an excellent and comprehensive interaction in the home and community. According to verses 7, 19 and 24 of Surah Nisa, Verse 231 of Surah Baqarah, and verse 189 of Sura A'raf, he concludes that: According to Islam, both man and woman are equal in having rights such as ownership and economic tenure, religious equality and equity in the business and ownership, and satisfaction at the time of marriage as well as other rights in marriage (no difference, the woman is divorced or not) (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 91-94, see also Sayyid Qutb, 1986: 90-93). He believes that the concept of respecting the dignity and the personality of women in Islam and the Islamic government is of great importance, unlike other new-emerged human schools and constituted governments – in which the woman are turned out to a "thing" and a mere sex commodity to satisfy their carnal instincts. He believes that unlike the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome and the ossified priests of the medieval Christianity, and philosophers and thinkers freed from the repression of the Church in the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution (which has always gone to extremes), Islam's attitude to women is perfectly balanced and consistent based on the character and nature and the characteristics of their existence (Shahri, 2012: 86-91). He believes that the potential Islamic law – that must become real in the Islamic government - has the ability to supply true freedom to women. Sayyid Qutb does not consider this real freedom the same as the freedom of the West in the form of female employment outside the home, breadwinning, or freedom of presence in parliament. From his perspective, Islam has given all the above-said rights to women if necessary, but their authenticity is not given. He writes on the limits of freedom of women in the Islamic state:

> What we know of Islam and we believe seriously is that no good woman
> has the right to have fear of Islam, because Islam gives her a respectful
> freedom, as much as the freedom given to an honorable person; the

women who went to the mosque for prayer in the era of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and those who went to battlefields to encourage and care for their men. But Islam and Islamic government want the woman to be in a dress that is tailored to her dignity and character. Yes, Islam prohibits the half-naked woman out of the house which attracts the romantic and lusty looks and gives dissolute laughter to men. Yes, who want this kind of women's freedom, must be afraid of an Islamic government ... [but] what is the fear of Islam for a good woman, when she wants in this Islamic government to have vitality within the borders of honor and dignity? (Sayyid Qutb, 1971: 116-118).

In the lexicon of idea of Sayyid Qutb, Islam and the Islamic government have given the woman the right to work, in the case of necessity (inadequate alimony, etc.), but the originality and priority are granted based on her nature and ability to conduct household chores and the laborious role of "Motherhood", here is the point where the importance of women in the development and strengthening of the family institution becomes clear. Sayyid Qutb knows the family the fundamental unit of an Islamic society, and by relying on verse 21 of Surah Rome and verse 187 of Surah Baqarah, he believes that in order to extend and fulfill its moral values, such as peace, unity, humanity, spirituality, etc. and before addressing the social environment and international arena, and parallel to the institutionalization of peace and calm temperament in the individual conscience, Islam tries to plant the seeds of love and affection in the context of the family. He believes that to accomplish this, Islam is not simply limited to mental, spiritual irradiations and strict moral exhortations, but it provides social, economic, political, and cultural conditions by the Islamic government and in the form of solid legal programs and strong legislative guarantees for the "sacred bond of marriage" and formation of a family. Some of these rules are: 1-necessity of woman's satisfaction and interest from the heart in the marriage, 2-publicity of marriage and clear "offer and acceptance" of the parties among a group of witnesses, 3-permanence of marriage (Shiite ideas differ in this case) (Sayyid Qutb, 2012 A: 118-120). He believes that in the Islamic government, the establishment of family structure, its consolidation and continuity, are based on the authority and interaction and accurate and fair division of labor between couples according to their character and innate talents, and not hostility, conflict and struggle. In his view, for these reasons, with the aim of developing a favorable environment for creating and strengthening the family in order to promote instinctive, emotional, material and spiritual

needs of couples and also to provide a suitable ground for education of children, Islam introduces the main role and responsibility of a man working outside the home, and covering the costs and complete alimony of the woman and also leading family and handling the economy and outdoors; and responsibility and central role of a woman as "motherhood" and proper upbringing of children and integrating home affairs and setting the internal order. In this division of labor, natural and psychological factors are considered. From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, the mother who dedicates all her concern to matters outside the home such as working, because of boredom and fatigue caused by it, she does not find the chance to conduct her marital and family responsibilities efficiently. He writes: "Truth of home [and family] does not come into existence unless it is created by the woman, and the breeze of home does not blow in the house environment, unless the spring of woman comes! And the spirit of kindness and friendship cannot be found in the house, unless the "mother" is the head of the household" (Ibid: 123). However, he believes that if there is social and family need or the alimony is not adequate (that man is obliged to supply enough) the woman can work outside the home while respecting Islamic criteria. In his view, in order to strengthen the family bond, Islam has determined constraints and rules with moral principles and administrative structures through Islamic government that prevent damages of marital life, and loss of mental peace and quiet atmosphere in the family, and help to keep it chaste, pure and kind. He outlines some of these rules as follows: Abstaining from intercourse, make-up and free and promiscuous relationships with other men, inviting men to cover their eyes and maintain chastity, and avoid relationships with other women, to avoid hurting the feelings of the spouse, etc. In Sayyid Qutb's view, punishments in Islam are to protect the family and prevent the outbreak of family foundation and spread of prostitution. Finally, about the importance of the family in the quality of construction and development of the human personality and the way of his socialization, he writes: "The person who does not enjoy peace at home, will not understand the true value of peace and will not taste its flavor; and the person who is nervous and has anxiety in his soul and heart, will not be pro-[social, global and international] peace" (Ibid: 167).

3.4 Place of science, university and educational institutions in the Islamic government

Sayyid Qutb believes that Islam and the Islamic government are not opposed to science and civilization, but also support them. In his idea, Islam is not the enemy of science and civilization, or even nothing against them, but it is a framework in which the science and

human civilization should be placed, and rotate around its axis, in order to avoid violations and deviations from the path of human nature and humanity. He believes that science and civilization born of the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution in Europe are also influenced by the Muslim world; and he knows the importance of science in Islam to the extent that even the initiative and invention of the sensory and experiential method (which the West used Monopolistically after the Enlightenment) are specific to the Muslim world (reflected from the Quranic revelations about the contemplation in the honors of the universe, etc.) (Sayyid Qutb, 1994: 122-124). He writes: "Briold and Duhrange, the writers in the West, admit that the empirical approach of Islam is the basis of theories of Roger Bacon and Francis Bacon (who have falsely been called the father of empirical methods), who founded a new school in science" (Ibid: 125). But on the other hand, he believes that the West is, however, affected by the empirical and scientific methods adopted in Europe in the Middle Ages from Andalusia and the Islamic East, but "deep philosophical and divine roots" have not been transferred during this transition, and hence, nature of human and all spiritual and innate needs are mesmerized and repressed, and the purely material and experimental civilization of the human has been converted in way that now it is completely incompatible with human beings (Sayyid Qutb, 1986: 143-144). Sayyid Qutb believes that in Islam and the Islamic government law, civilization laws and material progress are not isolated from other divine laws and honors, and both have been endowed by Allah in the mind and heart of the human for his perfection and guidance and the satisfaction of material and spiritual needs. Human freedom and happiness do not contradict these two laws, but are in coordination and coherence. He values creativity and innovation and education in Islam to the extent that he knows them as a form of worship (Sayyid Qutb, 2014: 1 / 25-27). From the perspective of Sayyid Qutb, the material civilization of the West has many strengths and weaknesses, the strengths of which must be used, and the weaknesses should be rejected. His approach to fight of Islamic world with the West and the modern science (or modernity) is as follows: he believes in the unconditional, with no slowness, delay and doubt application of the Western "pure science" and all its branches in different types on one hand, and limitation and caution in the exploitation of sciences that have fundamental roles in the general interpretation of life, the form of existence, nature of human and the world and human knowledge – such as philosophy, literature, history, sociology, psychology, law, etc., on the other hand (Sayyid Qutb, 2013: 346). In line with the rejection of western humanities and infrastructure and basic philosophies such as materialism, Empiricism, secularism, Marxism, Freudism, Darwinism, pragmatism, etc. on one hand, and absolute reliance on the sources and foundations of the

original Islamic worldview, (in his view, morality and human nature demands that derive from revelation and are in the direction of human evolution, are settling as a mere animal and chosen as the ultimate goal) for the "revival of Islamic civilization" on the other hand, he writes: "Muslims, from the day they want to renew their life with borrowing Western ways of thinking and behavior in life, are surrendered to failure and will fall and collapse in the life they wanted to renew, because from the first step, they will be deflected from the only original and natural path" (Ibid: 341-342). This is where the cultural and educational theories of Sayyid Qutb, which are based on monotheism and Islamic worldview, are inferred. He believes that with the educational system which is in the inside and in all Western philosophical, physical, epistemological origins, and promote and enforce ideas and thoughts in the minds of the youth population in the form of local education centers and universities, an Islamic culture and education cannot be created. He counts two reasons to prove his claim: 1- developing Western way of thinking, worldview and culture is based on pure material teachings, 2-Western culture's overt or covert conflict with Islam is the main and historic component in its development and maturing (Ibid: 344). This is why Sayyid Qutb puts emphasis on the refinement of the philosophical, epistemological and cultural resources of Islamic worldview and thought, and avoiding mixing it with the foundations and principles of Western culture, philosophy and worldview; and considers these actions as the important requirements of the education and the education system, from primary to higher education in the Islamic government. They must be exercised considering the circumstances of time by executive professionals.

Conclusion

As mentioned in previous sections, this paper aimed to review and explain the features of the Islamic government in three macro areas of "cultural-ideological", "political", and "social-economic" in the political thought of Sayyid Qutb. Cultural-ideological section is prioritized because it has a fundamental position in the epistemological framework of ideas of Sayyid Qutb, both theoretically and practically. He believes that Allah is the legislator of Sharia and laws, and he is the undisputed and absolute ruler of the universe with all its laws, and "government" and "sovereignty" are only his merit, without any need for it. In Qutb's thought, monotheism is the foundation and basis of formation and establishment of divine sovereignty, which must be implemented in all cultural, political, economic, and social structures and institutions by a competent human and successor of God and His Messenger and in the form

of "Islamic government" and with the absolute willingness of the masses of Muslims. He should try to return the sovereignty usurped by human and violate the laws enacted by him under the guise of "evil" or "ignorant" nations and governments. Hence, it can be deduced that Sayyid Qutb does not accept the foundations of any of the Western, Eastern, and even Islamic "governments" (because they have been distorted and mesmerized). He rejects all of them and introduces materialism and bowing before non-divine governments as the reasons for misfortune and misery of the modern world. He believes that the salvation is to return to Islam and institutionalize its laws in the social structures. He also knows Islam as a comprehensive, inclusive, and universal school beyond the time and place which has the responsibility of guiding and leading human beings from the beginning to end, and responding and promoting their doubts and needs. In his opinion, in which absolute ignorant and evil governments are ruling over the world from East to West, Islam and "Islamic government" is the only savior of the modern humans. He believes in the bond between religious and political behaviors of Islam, and rejects secular intellectuals and Clergymen. Sayyid Qutb introduces the "sacred Sharia" as the principles of the constitution, and knows the ruler (Caliph) and the ruling class as "enforcer" of the Allah's laws not "legislator". They will be illegitimate once they violate the sacred Sharia. On the political side as well, Sayyid Qutb knows the government's approval dependent on the vote and opinion of Muslim masses and that the establishment of an Islamic government depends on the will of the people. In the domestic and foreign policy, he has an orderly at the same time approximate/Takfiri approach, and puts emphasis on strengthening the internal relations and social cooperation and reinforcing the unity between various sects (both Shia and Sunni) in the Muslim world and forming a united line on one hand, and queuing in front of the West and East and the international Zionism on the other hand. In social and economic dimensions, he insists on the maximum economic and social justice in the Islamic government for the Muslim nations and even other religious minorities, and the elimination of poverty and discrimination and better economy, life, education, health, etc. as "means" for the ideal Islamic society and establishing of the sovereignty of Allah and promoting the spiritual and moral education in the humans. He believes in respect for chaste and sacred dignity and privacy of women in the Islamic government and her freedom to participate in productive social, scientific and economic activities. He introduces the family an important and original institution in the Islamic government, and finally endorses the value of knowledge, education, and edification in the Islamic government, and calls for honor and luck to them (with a transcendental approach, especially in the social sciences and humanities). As mentioned in the introduction to this

article, the purpose of this article is not a comprehensive analysis of ideas of Sayyid Qutb, and the narrowness and limitations governing the form and writing of the articles have led us to summarize and combine, and subsequently scrutinize more words, and articles prevented the article from expanding different strains of thought and expression of this scholar in the scope of Islamic government. Undoubtedly, addressing the concept and features of Islamic government or issues like these, in the comparative and analytical studies in a varied and diverse scientific articles and books (which naturally open the way for the elaboration of these issues) between Sayyid Qutb and other influential thinkers in the Muslim world can in the future lead to more development and maturing of the understanding of Islamic Political Thought in modern times, explaining how they deal with concepts, and modern and new-emerging Eastern and Western institutions, analyzing the way and the reason of the rise of jihadist and Salafist currents in the Middle East and around the world, etc. we hope that this paper represents a step and a way, however small and narrow, to take and open this path.

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