



The Concept of “*Al-Hakimiyya*” between Religion, Politics, and Violence

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Abstract

The principle of *Al-Hakimiyya* (governance) is one of the most prominent religious terms adopted by Islamic groups in consolidating their position on governance, the ruler, and all state institutions. Some of these groups refused to engage in political work in Parliament, as it legislates human-made laws, and because it is a form of disputing God with regard to one of his jurisdictions in legislation. In addition, they rejected the statutory constitution, as it states that sovereignty is for the people, which also disputes God’s sovereignty overall. The first to put forward the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* is the *Khawarij*, because of their objection to the arbitration incident between Imam Ali bin Abi Talib and Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, and then it was recently re-presented by Abu Al-Ala Al-Mawdudi and translated into Arabic by Sayyid Qutb. Islamism sought to link religion with politics and to prove that Islam is inclusive of all aspects of life, including politics. Hassan Al-Banna believed that politics is closely related to religion and he was interested in the political aspect, unlike other religious groups. Moreover, Sayyid Qutb declared that all contemporary societies are *Jahiliya* (ignorant) societies because they do not worship God alone, but worship the rulers who made laws and constitutions. Therefore, violence had emerged from radical Islamic movements that considered that their opponents were infidels and thus wanted to achieve *Al-Hakimiyya* for God alone through jihad, as they claim. As we saw in the 9/11 attacks and the terrorist operations that have been and are still being carried out by Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and ISIS in the name of religion and in the name of the desire to establish the Islamic state. In addition to the Islamism thought in *Al-Hakimiyya*, I will present the views of those who refute any relationship between religion and politics and thus assert that the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya* has no basis in the Islamic religion, and that it is just a claim by Islamists who have purely political purposes that have nothing to do with religion.

Subject Areas

Politics

Keywords

Islamism, *Al-Hakimiyya*, Violence, Power, Muslim Brotherhood, *Jihad*

1. Introduction

Is religion a purely spiritual relationship between humans and God, or is there a relationship between religion and politics?

Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers of the United States, believed that in the case of a union of religion and politics, civil rule falls, and in the event of their separation, it revives. On this note, Jefferson was briefly introducing a traditional idea that was considered mainly an American idea: the separation of the church from the state, this idea was not entirely new, as it had some precedence in the writings of Espinosa, Locke, and the philosophers of the European Enlightenment, but the United States was the first to give this idea strength Law, and gradually over two centuries this principle became a reality [1].

In the Islamic world, there is confusion between the civil government and the religious government that has led many to think that the caliphate is a religious system necessary to fulfill the belief and that the civil government is an infidel government because it does not apply the provisions of God. Therefore, we must distinguish between civil government and religious government. The civil government system is the system that the group establishes on the basis of its values and will; if religious rulings are applied, the application always remains the application of people and the work remains always the work of the people which has neither infallibility nor sanctity. On the other hand, the religious government is a religious system that gives the ruler religious legality so that, what he says is the words of God and what he does is the action of God and his judgments are the judgments of God. Thus, it is permissible to kill whoever opposes the ruler according to Sharia, and this is the meaning of “*Al-Hakimiyya*”.

After the death of the Prophet, we find that the first issue Muslims faced immediately was the issue of the caliphate. At that time, the followers had to innovate regarding the form and nature of government, and since that time, scholars in the Islamic world have been divided into two groups. There is a group that believed that Islam has been politicized in a historical process, and there are those who believed that politics and religion are inseparable. Thus, Muslims have been divided over the idea of a religious state in Islam. Some believed that the Prophet established the Islamic State in *Madina*, and some denied this idea and provided historical evidence to support their position. Therefore, I must first address an important question about, **from where the belief that there is a link between religion and politics has emerged?**

1.1. First, The Main Reason behind the Belief That There Is a Close Relationship between Islam and Politics Is the Prophet's Leadership of the Army in Order to Spread *Al-Dawa al Islamia (Jihad)*

I want to explain that the Prophet was nothing but a messenger of a purely religious *Dawa* (the call) he had no inclination to be a ruler or to establish a state. The prophet just wanted to establish the rules of new religion around the world because Islam is not only an Arab religion, nor Arab unity, but a religion for the world. Thus, during the founding period, he had to make invasions and invite various nations to believe in the new religion. His invasions were religious, not political. He didn't want to establish an Islamic state; he just wanted to spread *Al-Dawa*.

Therefore, to spread the new religion, the prophet not only invaded the Arab countries that invalidated his religion, but he extended his sight beyond the Arabian Peninsula and prepared to send his army across the countries of the earth. Moreover, he had already begun to wrestle with the Roman state in the West, calling for his religion, Kisra in the East, and Najashi in Abyssinia, Muqawqis in Egypt.

Thus, the prophet needed to convey *Al-Dawa* of Islam to the people, because God did not send a Messenger with the truth unless he wanted his *Dawa* to be fulfilled and its foundations to be established. God wanted his Prophet to invite all people to *Al-Dawa*; thus, there would be no sedition and the religion would be entirely for God [2]. Therefore, during the establishment of *Al-Dawa*, religion was associated with politics to spread and extend influence, but the prophet deliberately left the matter to civil rule. He was the commander of the army, he led the army, but he left the rule to be civilian. He led the army in order to spread *Al-Dawa* and consolidate its foundation, and for this, he made treaties and called rulers from different countries to the religion of God.

As a result, the Prophet's leadership was religious, and he was obeyed among his people in what he said because what he said was sent from heaven, and the submission of Muslims to the prophet was the submission to faith, not the submission to government and authority. Abu Hurairah, said "I heard the Messenger of God say, you must avoid what I have commanded you not to do, and what I have commanded you to do, do as much of it as you can" [3]. Thus, Muslims were obliged to obey the prophet in what he said in matters of religion and their meeting with him was purely religious. However, during invasions and other worldly matters, he consulted the Companions and did not impose his opinion.

Therefore, I would like to point out that the prophet led the army just to spread *Al-Dawa Al-Islamia*, not for political purposes; otherwise, he would have identified the elements of the state and recommended his successor.

1.2. Second, When *Al-Dawa* Was Settled, A Civil Rule Was Established, and So That *Al-Risala (Message)* and Governance Would Not Be Inherited Together

When *Al-Dawa* was settled, every nation had a political and civil unity linked

only to the unity of Islam. Thus, the unity of the Arabs was Islamic, not political. And, when the Prophet died, no one after him took his religious position, and God's message was not to be inherited from the prophet. The religious leadership of the Prophet over Muslims ended with his death, and if leadership was necessary among the followers of the Prophet after his death, then this leadership was new, unlike what was with the Prophet.

The new leadership was civil or political and had nothing to do with religion. Besides, after the death of the Prophet, the Arabs were divided into nations and therefore, a state had to be established, and they already established it on the basis of their religious unity. In this regard, *Al-Muhajireen*, *Al-Ansar*, and the senior Companions competed with each other until *Al-Bay'ah* (the pledge of allegiance) was made to Abu Bakr, so he was the first caliph in Islam, and the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr was political. Thus, the Arab country was established on the basis of a religious *Dawa* (call), and therefore wanted to protect it [2].

Besides, during the era of *Al-Khulafā' Al-Rāshidūn* (Rashidun Caliphs) the Muslims were aware that they were going to set up a civil and worldly government, so it was permissible for them to rebel against it and dispute it. For example, Muslims disagreed with Abu Bakr regarding *Zakat* but were not considered infidels because they opposed the caliph and so the disagreement was political and not considered religious. In addition, Muslims knew that they disagreed about worldly matters, not a religion and that they were quarreling over a political matter that did not affect their religion.

In what follows, I will present opinions on the relationship of religion to politics, and I will start with the group that advocates the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya* (governance) and thus linking religion to politics.

2. Advocates of the Idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*

If the Prophet assured the Muslims that they are aware of their worldly affairs and that he is only responsible for what God revealed to him and that Muslims are allowed to legislate laws that suit their societies and culture, why would some religious groups want to Islamize politics and call for the establishment of a religious state? Do rulers acquire infallibility and holiness, or do they consider individuals who are not infallible? Is the government accountable to the people, or is its responsibility only before God in the afterlife?

Islamists claim that the Prophet's leadership of the army in order to spread the religious *Dawa* was political leadership, and that he established the Islamic state. Besides, they argue that jihad does not appear to be just a call to religion or to make people believe in God and his Messenger, but rather to establish authority and expand it. They have used verses from the Qur'an to support the argument that the Qur'an contains political references. For example, the word "*Al-Hukm*" (the ruling) in the Qur'an has a confused meaning, and they argue that it means sovereignty, authority, and religious rule in the name of God, while others believe that it means wisdom.

Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a supporter of the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood says that life does not know a thing called economics separated from something called sociology or politics, as life is integrated and connected. But our mind that likes to analyze, will not be able to do that because our mind tends to divide life into facets, colors, and types of relationships, some of which are called economics, others call politics, and some of them are society, morality, and religion. However, politics, when connected to religion, means justice, equality, and a victory for the oppressed over the oppressor. This is a situation when the weak can take their rights from the strong, and take care of the oppressed groups of society, such as the orphans, the needy [4].

Al-Qaradawi states that the term political Islam is a misnomer because it is the implementation of a plan drawn up by Islam's opponents based on the hash and fragmentation of Islam. Therefore, it is not a single Islam as God revealed it, and as we Muslims believe in, but rather it is multiple different types of Islam as they like. Moreover, the migration of the Prophet to Medina was nothing but an endeavor to establish a distinguished Muslim community supervised by a distinguished state. Medina was the base of the new Islamic state that was headed by the Messenger of God, as he is the leader of the Muslims and their imam [4]. Al-Qaradawi argues that Muslims did not know in their history a separation between religion and state except when a century of secularism emerged.

With regard to the concept of "*Al-Hakimiyya*", it was revived by Abu Al-Ala Al-Mawdudi, the founder of *Al-Jamā'ah Al-Islamiyah* (Islamic group) in Pakistan (1941) and who is considered one of the most famous scholars in Pakistan. He coined this concept in contemporary Islamic political thought with its legal dimension to which Islamic groups refer in their political practice or advocates of the religious root of politics. Al-Mawdudi said that the concept of "*Al-Hakimiyya*" means that it is the supreme and the absolute authority, and the supreme authority is "God Almighty". God is the originator of the rules and the law is enacted by his will, and individuals have neither will nor right [5].

We note here that Mawdudi's interpretation of the concept of "*Al-Hakimiyya*" led him to consider the Islamic caliphate as a divine caliphate performed by the Imam as the *Khalifa* of God. In addition, Mawdudi refused to use the description of democracy in the Islamic state system, but rather considered the word divine government is the most reliable expression; and therefore, Islamists reject the principle of popular governance and do not attach the principle of the election any importance. Mawdudi said that all democratic systems that have been developed in the current era are based on the assumption that the inhabitants of any country have the right to formulate laws about politics, economy, and society. However, this belief is certainly the opposite of the ideology of Islam, because there is an essential pillar of the Islamic monotheism belief that God is the Lord and ruler of people and the entire world [5].

According to Mawdudi, membership in councils and parliaments that are based on democratic principles in the current era is *Haram* (forbidden), and

voting for them is also prohibited. He believed that voting means that we elect an individual whose job under the constitution is to issue legislation that is completely incompatible with the Islamic faith. Thus, Mawdudi proposed an alternative to secular democracy, which is a theocracy, where the sources of laws are the Qur'an and the absolute sovereignty of God.

2.1. *Al-Hakimiyya* and Religious Violence

The thorny and elusive concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* remains one of the most important concepts of violence among Islamist groups. This concept according to *Sayed Qutb*, means that God Almighty is the only one who has guardianship, divinity, and authority. Thus, any action is justified by claiming that this is the will of God.

In addition, Al-Mawdudi pointed out that the word "*Al-Hakimiyya*" refers to absolute rule, as he saw that the ruler has the authority to implement his rule among the state's individuals, and that they are obliged to obey him voluntarily or involuntarily, and there is no external thing that limits his powers in ruling other than his own will. Therefore, the law is enacted by the will of his ruling authority, and individuals must obey it [5].

Thus, "*Al-Hakimiyya*" means authority and control people according to the divine approach in all their affairs, and drawing legislation, methods, systems, customs, and traditions from God alone and applying his Sharia to all aspects of life. This concept inspired all Islamic groups, as if they found in it their desired goal and their need that meets their violent tendencies, such as "*Al-Takfir WA Al-Hijra*", which was inspired by *Sayyid Qutb's* ideas to build its ideology.

Sayyid Qutb called for destroying *Al-Jahiliya* (ignorance) of the twentieth century because the world according to him is nothing but *Jahiliya*. The word "*Al-Jahiliya*" in Islamic terms means the period of ignorance and barbarism before *Al-Dawa* of the Prophet in *Al-Jazeera Al-Arabia*. In fact, *Qutb* was influenced by Mawdudi's concept of *Al-Jahiliya* and used it to describe the societies of the twentieth century that seem to him contrary to the essence of Islam. By the concept of *Al-Jahiliya*, he was specifically referring to those societies that regarded themselves as Muslims but adhered to the capitalist or the communist systems, which he considered both materialistic and decadent. *Qutb* mentioned in his book *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an* (In the shadows of the Qur'an) that *Jahiliya* is not a bygone period of history, rather, *Al-Jahiliya* is every method in which human servitude to humans is represented, and this characteristic is represented today in all parts of the earth. In all the methods espoused by mankind today, people take from people like them the concepts, principles, values, and laws, and this is *Al-Jahiliya* with all its components where people worship each other without God [6].

Therefore, according to him, the true duty of a Muslim is to destroy this *Jahiliya* and establish the Islamic state on its ruins. In this regard, *Qutb* said that "Islam is the only way of life in which people are freed from human bondage be-

cause they receive the concepts, principles, values, laws from God alone. In Islam, if they obey the laws, then they obey God alone, and if they submit to the system, then they submit to God alone, and they become truly freed from human bondage to humans” [6].

Qutb believed that in the twentieth century, rulers were ignoring the commands of the Quran and embodying injustice, unlike the Muslim prince who spreads justice on the earth because he applies God’s sharia alone. For Qutb, the Muslim community must be established on the belief that there is no god but Allah and that *Al-Hakimiyya* (governance) is only for God [7]. As a result, he refused to acknowledge the rule of anyone besides God and rejected the legitimacy of any situation not based on this rule.

Consequently, for radical Islamic movements, *Al-Hakimiyya* is a good way to govern and control people in the name of God. Thus, we can realize that religious violence emerged when these movements have used the texts of the Quran in a way that served their purposes of governance. The leaders of these groups claim that they want to apply divine authority on earth; therefore, they deceived their followers to be able to reach power and rule people in the name of God.

According to these groups, no one can object, and even if he objects, he will be infidel because he opposes God. Therefore, they can kill anyone who does not agree with them even if he is a Muslim.

2.2. The Effect of the Idea of God's *Hakimiyya*

The “*Khawarij*” was the first one who entered the idea of “*Al-Hakimiyya*” of God into Islamic political thought. Subsequently, the *Umayyad and Abbasid* caliphs caught this idea and made it a part of the Islamic understanding; thus, it could serve them in their purposes, consolidate their authority over people, and justify their grievances. Here, I can give an example of Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, the founder and first caliph of the Umayyad Caliphate, the opponent of Ali bin Abi Talib and the contemporary of the first generation of the *Khawarij* when he said: “The land is for God and I am the successor of God; what I took is mine, and what I left, it’s generous of me” [8].

Therefore, although the original use of the word *Khalifa* (caliph) means the succession of a person to his predecessor and to those who preceded him in time or arrangement; *Al Hakimiyya* made caliphs successors of God, not successors to the *Khalifa* who preceded them. Consequently, the ruler was considered that he was God’s shadow on earth, or that he had a sacred right to rule. In this regard, there were jurists, who we can call the jurists of authority, who supported the idea of *Al Hakimiyya*, justified all grievances, and accused any opponent of atheism and of being corrupt on earth, and allowed his killing according to *sharia*.

In addition, if we look at history, we can see that the Islamic civilization began to decline in the fourth century AH, and in the sixteenth century, the Ottomans dominated and occupied most Middle East countries, including Egypt. They imposed extreme darkness, and violent ignorance on the nationals of the occu-

ped states; these states became in total ignorance and even forgot the scientific methods presented by the early Muslims in the early centuries. However, after the abolition of the caliphate at the hands of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1924, many Muslims were alarmed by the results that were looming in the horizons and saw that the caliphate is the axis that holds all the countries of the Islamic world and that the removal of the caliph or the abolition of the caliphate will dispel this world [8]. Aboud Al-Zumar an Egyptian Islamist who participated in the assassination of Sadat, asserted in his book *Minhaj Jamaat AL jihad Al-Islamia*, which he wrote in Tora prison in 1986, that the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate cut the ties of the state, (here he means the Islamic state) and led to the occupation of Palestine and Afghanistan and the persecution and division of Muslims [9].

Moreover, even Muslims forgot the tragedies, strife, and wars that resulted from the caliphate, and they overlooked the injustices and tribulations that were at the core of the Ottoman Caliphate and which Muslims suffered from the misery of torment. Therefore, we can notice here that, Muslims mixed the caliphate with Islam; even they thought that they were one thing. They believed that the Ottoman caliphate is part of Islam and that the political, religious, and social systems established by the *Khalifa* were themselves Islamic history and heritage [8]. Consequently, many sought to take advantage of the opportunity of mixing the Caliphate with Islam, and some royal families looked to it. Besides these families, some Islamic groups called for the restoration of the Islamic caliphate under the command of this or that family. Even the leaders of these groups wanted one of them to be the expected *Khalifa*.

2.3. Muslim Brotherhood and the Idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*

The sources of Islamism and current Islamist organizations can be found in the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded by Hasan Al-Banna in Egypt in 1928, and the Pakistani Islamist group, which was established by Abu Al-Ala Al-Mawdawi in 1941. And, I want to make it clear that both movements are completely independent of one another, but the congruence between their slogans is clear, and cultural ties have been established between them and even that one of Al-Mawdawi's students met Sayyid Qutb.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt combined Islam with a political program; Hassan Al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb played an important role in formulating its ideology directly. Al-Banna indicated that there is no room for thinking about any solution to any problem outside the scope of Islamic law. He thought that liberation from colonial domination (the English occupation of Egypt) can only be achieved through *Jihad*, as *Jihad* is the duty of Islam. Al-Banna said, "Brothers! You are not a charitable Society, nor a political party, nor an organization with limited aims. You are a new spirit that makes its way to the heart of this *Umma*, reviving it with the Quran. You are a new light that shines, dispelling the darkness of materialism by knowing God. You are a resounding voice that raises

the message of the prophet (peace is upon him). In truth and without exaggeration, you must feel that you are bearing this burden, which humanity has neglected.” [10]

Islamic groups, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, took advantage of most Muslims’ ignorance of Islamic history and began to promote the idea of the caliphate as a pure good. They claimed that with the restoration of the Ottoman Caliphate, the values of justice and equality and the application of God’s rulings would be implemented by the Caliph, the spokesman for God. Consequently, Islamic groups use jihad and advocate the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*, and if any Muslim thinker reminded them of the crimes that occurred in the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Ottoman caliphate; they would accuse him of infidelity and atheism. They promote the idea that, they alone are Muslims, and that others are not believers in the Islamic faith and want to create sedition. Qutb said that the believers must be loyal to their leadership and to their religious group; thus, they should not favor anyone who does not believe in their faith, does not follow their approach, is not subject to their system and does not receive from their leadership [6].

As a result, the slogans of religious policy were based on several formulas such as *Al-Hakimiyya* is for God alone and there is no governance for human beings. Therefore, there must be a religious government to establish the Islamic system, and that jihad is an absent duty that must be restored to confront the enemies of Islam, whether rulers or thinkers and to apply Islamic *Sharia*. In addition, they claim that the community that does not apply the divine *Sharia* is *Jahily* (ignorant), disbeliever in God, and that Islam is the only solution to face all the problems of the national and international community. In this regard, Islam becomes a religion and a state, and a Muslim should not have any nationality except Islam. Therefore, he should not have loyalty to his country but to the Muslim community.

In this regard, Al-Qaradawi mentioned that according to Hassan Al-Banna, the difference between the Brotherhood and the advocates of patriotism is that the Brotherhood considers that faith defines the boundaries of patriotism, while others believe that geographical boundaries determine them. According to Al-Banna, every place where there is a Muslim is considered a homeland for us and is considered sacred, so we must be faithful to it. Moreover, all Muslims in all geographical countries are our people and brothers, we care about them and we feel about them. As for those who advocate patriotism, they only care about a limited, narrow spot of the earth [11].

Thus, they do not support the idea of patriotism, but rather call for an Islamic state in which there are no affiliations to a particular country, but where all Muslims are brothers. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood believes that they feel a sense of belonging to their brothers in Malaysia and not to their fellow citizens in Egypt. Thus, they call for the Islamic state that has no geographical borders; they want to gather Muslims from all over the world under the umbrella of the

Islamic state.

In the sixties of the twentieth century, the Islamists began targeting power and were convinced that it is not enough for the society to consist of Muslims but rather the society must be Islamic in the basics. Therefore, the Muslim brotherhoods believed that the Islamization of society is the result of social and political action and that, it is necessary to get out of the mosque and enter directly into political life. Besides, the Islamists believed that it is necessary to rebel against the corrupt Muslim state and to expiate the ruler who is considered an apostate [8]. Qutb said that Islam sought to establish and protect the divine system on earth, and it had the right to strive to destroy the oppressive systems that are based on human servitude to humans and in which slaves claim the position of divinity. Therefore, those oppressive regimes must be resisted and crushed, so that Islam may announce its lofty regime on earth. Moreover, this jihad to establish this system is still obligatory upon the Muslims [6].

In addition, Al-Banna urged the members of the group to Jihad and martyrdom, and promised them paradise; he assured them that God promised the *mujahideen* with victory or martyrdom. For Qutb, he organized and developed Al-Banna's ideas and adopted some of the concepts released by al-Mawdudi; moreover, Qutb's most important contribution to revolutionary Islamism was the redefinition of the concept of *Al-Jahiliya* and the call for *Al-Hakimiyya*. He emphasized that all constitutions and laws are infidels because they are created by humans and that we must all derive laws from God alone so that *Al-Hakimiyya* is only for God. Qutb indicated that when we submit and obey the laws that exist in our countries, we thus worship rulers who made these laws, and therefore he believed that we must be freed from the bondage of these rulers and worship God alone. He believed that Under the Islamic system, people either follow this system or depart from it, knowing that if they deviate from it, they will deviate from Islam. Therefore, Qutb saw that the Islamic system is a divine system, and it is not permissible to disagree with it; moreover, people are not allowed to leave it because if they did, they would be infidels [6].

2.4. Jihad as a Means to Achieve *Al-Hakimiyya* on Earth

The mechanism of some Islamic movements to achieve change was migration, which means that the homeland is a land of infidelity and war, from which it is necessary to migrate to the mountains and caves to prepare to fight its people through a three-way strategy that begins with migration, preparation, and training, then starting the fight defensively and then offensively according to reality. Qutb said that Muslims should emigrate from *Dar Al-Harb* (the war house), which is every place where the *Sharia* of Islam does not exist, in order to join the Muslim group that its leadership and authority has been established on the earth. Therefore, they will be under an Islamic leadership, not an infidel leadership [6].

For Islamists, jihad means the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth

and taking power out from the hands of its usurpers, and returning it to God alone. They believe that through the rule of the divine *Sharia*, human laws will be eliminated, and to accomplish this goal, they will use the sword. However, they think that achieving this goal requires the establishment of the Islamic state internally, and in order to do so, they need to establish a system of government that adheres to the application of Islamic *Sharia* and the values of Islam in the management of society, especially since this society has moved away from Islam and returned to the pre-Islamic regimes.

Islamists called for jihad against Muslims and non-Muslims in order to establish the Islamic State. And here, I want to ask a question, is the only meaning of *jihad* related to the death for the sake of God?

Jihad is an Arabic word that means struggle and has become familiar in the West. This word plays an important role on the political level in Islamic and Western societies. There are many Islamic fundamentalist or Jihadist groups nowadays who define their struggle against their adversaries as Jihad. But, struggling against unbelievers is not the exclusive meaning of Jihad, because the original Arabic word “jihad” means that struggle for God’s sake in a religious context may express a struggle against one’s evil inclinations. Jihad *Al-Sayf* (The Jihad of the sword) is called the Lesser Jihad, in contrast to the Greater Jihad which refers to the form of Self-Jihad; however, today, Jihad is often used without any religious connotation [12].

The origin of the term *Jihad* is exerting effort for a specific purpose, and the meaning of the word has evolved in the Noble Qur’an according to the circumstances of revelation and the conditions of the times, and then this meaning has changed throughout history.

A major change by which in many cases it departed from its original meaning. Moreover, Jihad is a flexible word that its umbrella includes the Jihad by which God commands, and what is called for by some preachers, including war, killing, and corruption. Furthermore, Jihad in the view of non-Muslims, is a war against them with swords hanging over their necks, and in the view of most Muslims, it is a religious duty to invite non-Muslims to the true religion by good example and a good debate. However, in the view of a group of fanatics, Jihad is a religious obligation that is still absent and will not return except by swords and declaring wars on all Muslims and non-Muslims who disagree with them in their thoughts and beliefs, until the matter ends with the predominance of what they believe in.

The meaning of Jihad has been distorted by some jurists and deliberately distorted by some political authorities in Islamic history. In addition, some jurists have influenced the Islamic mind, saying that the link between Islam and other countries or societies is always war and that peace is nothing but a temporary truce until Muslims prepare for war. It happened in the early days of the Islamic era that the *Khawarij* came out against Ali bin Abi Talib and considered the war against him to be a Jihad, and they considered his killing and the killing of Muawiya and Amr Ibn al-Aas as Jihad for the sake of God. But only Ali bin Abi Talib was killed in the name of Jihad, for the sake of God, and God from that is in-

nocent. Thus, since the emergence of the *Khawarij*, their bloody, deadly ideology and their erroneous interpretation of Jihad has become a permanent method in Islamic history.

For Islamism, there is only “*Hezb Allah*”, which is the party that includes leaders and followers of this “*Hezb*”. As for *Satan’s party*, it is the party that includes those who are other than them in the whole world. Therefore, “*Hezb Allah*” must declare Jihad and the holy war on Satan’s party until it is destroyed, and then the “*Hakimiyya*” returns to God alone. However, some of the extremist groups who adhere to the interpretation stated in the traditional books of jurisprudence call for the use of violence to defeat the existing governments face a serious religious problem because they declare an armed revolution against the Muslim ruler, while Islamic Sharia does not permit revolution except in extremely rare circumstances. One of these rare circumstances is for a ruler to abandon Islam, and since the apostate deserves the death penalty, his fight is permissible [13]. Thus, throughout Islamic history, Islamic movements have declared that their Muslim opponents are apostates or infidels to justify their struggle against them. Besides, contemporary extremist Islamic groups use this reasoning to legitimize their use of weapons against rulers in the modern era. These views were promoted by fundamentalists such as Sayyid Qutb and Abu Ali al-Mawdudi.

According to Al-Mawdudi, Islam opposes kingdoms that are based on principles that contradict Islam and wanted to eliminate them and did not hesitate to use military force to do so. He called to take power from those who believe in false principles and systems, and this clarifies Mawdudi’s vision of *Jihad* and reflects his understanding of the state that is based on faith as the main determinant of it without concern for geographical borders.

Therefore, to establish this model, Mawdudi started from Jihad. In addition, he rejected the classical division of Jihad into offensive and defensive. Islamic Jihad in his view is both offensive and defensive at the same time, offensive because the Islamic party opposes kingdoms that are based on principles contrary to Islam, and defensive because it is compelled to build the kingdom’s structure and consolidate its foundations [14].

Consequently, revolutionary Islamists appeared in the late 1960s, influenced by this thought; they rejected democracy, which they regard as an illegitimate, man-made system of government that usurps God’s sovereignty. They aimed to reach power through armed struggle in order to impose God’s rule. Besides, some historians believed that the Jihad movement began in Egypt its march against the regime after the mid-sixties when the Nasser regime launched its famous campaign in 1965 against the Muslim Brotherhood and the execution of Sayyid Qutb.

Saleh Sariya is considered the first theorist of the Jihad organizations in Egypt and elsewhere. For Muhammad Abdulsalam Faraj, he succeeded in uniting the various Jihadist groups, and *Al-Tanzim* (the organization) was able to assassinate President Sadat during his celebration of the October Victory Day in 1981, which is known as the issue of the Great Jihad [9]. Faraj, the author of the book

“*Jihad: Al-Farida al-gha’iba*.” (The Neglected Duty) has confirmed the necessity of establishing the Islamic state and the caliphate. He believed that this is an obligation that some Muslims have denied and some have neglected. He indicated that since God’s rulings are imposed on Muslims, the establishment of the Islamic State was a duty on Muslims. Moreover, if the state cannot be established without fighting, then we must fight [9]. Faraj said that Muslims are unanimously agreed on the principle of establishing the Islamic caliphate, and declaring the caliphate depends on the existence of the Islamic state. Moreover, every Muslim must strive to restore the caliphate, because the rulers in this era have abandoned Islam even if they claim to be Muslims. Therefore, the apostate must be killed, and every sect that deviated from the apparent *Sharia* of Islam must also be fought [15].

As for the suicide operations, the Jihadists call them “martyrdom operations”. Although they all acknowledge that these operations are among the updated jurisprudential issues that have no sign in the Quranic text; suicide operations became a distinctive pattern for the practices of Al-Qaeda later on.

In addition, the concept of Jihadist-Salafism, which has emerged since the early 1990s, has replaced the concept of Jihadism as a reference for the movements of religious violence that seek Islamic change through changing regimes by fighting them based on their infidels. Jihadist-Salafism is based on the atonement of the ruling Muslim countries with man-made laws that contradict their perceptions regarding issues of politics and governance. Moreover, Salafism expiates anyone who rejects the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*; and therefore, this atonement can be applied to any Islamic city, whether it is Mecca or Cairo. They exclude only countries under their own governments, such as the Taliban or the Sunni caliphate declared by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria 2014. As a result, Jihadist-Salafism believes that Jihad is the only law for dealing with non-Muslims until they become Muslims [9]. Therefore, the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* has many dimensions. It is politically manifested in the rejection to rule by other than what God has revealed, and atonement, disobedience, and fighting against rulers who are committed to man-made laws. While manifests itself socially in describing the society as Jahily. Thus, this concept remains the first basis upon which the rest of the central and effective concepts of Jihadist Salafism and its affiliated organizations are based.

Consequently, Jihad has not become only a concept through which the political battle for control of power is fought, rather, it has turned into one of the most powerful weapons used by extremist groups in their terrorist acts. Jihad became a means and a weapon by which worldly battles are fought, which are controlled and directed by the conflicting interests of humankind.

3. Now, I Will Turn to the Team That Refutes the Idea of Al-Hakimiyya

If the Prophet established a political state or proceeded to establish it, why was

his state devoid of many of the pillars of state and governance? Why did his system not know the appointment of judges and governors?

The thinkers who deny any connection between Islam and politics argue that one of the most conclusive pieces of evidence for the lack of connection between Islam and politics is that the Qur'an did not regulate matters of politics in general or in detail, but rather ordered justice and charity, forbade indecency and immorality, and set general boundaries for them; then left people to manage their affairs as they want on the condition that they do not go beyond these limits.

Besides, this group points out that the Prophet himself did not set out through his Sunnah, a specific system for governance or politics, nor did he appoint any of his companions to be his successor over Muslims under a written or unwritten covenant when he got sick. Rather, the Prophet ordered Abu Bakr to lead their prayer, and then Muslims said, "the Prophet has accepted him for the matters of our religion; thus, what prevents us from accepting him for the matters of our world?"

Additionally, this group believes that if Muslims had a political system brought down from heaven, the Qur'an would have determined it and the Prophet would have demonstrated its boundaries and principles; therefore, Muslims were supposed to believe in it without argument or dispute.

The scholar Taha Hussein in his book "*The Great Fitna*" (the great sedition) stated that the regime in the era of the Prophet was not a divine system sent from heaven, but rather, *Al-bay'ea* (Pledge of allegiance) was the one that the prophet enacted for the Muslims even in his days. In addition, there is a lot of evidence from the hadith that indicate that the Prophet used the *shura* system with the Companions. For instance, for the battle of *Badr*, the prophet did not order them to participate in it, but he called them for it and promised them with the order of God is one of the two good ones (either victory or death and win paradise). In addition, the covenant between him and the "*Ansar*" indicated that he should not take them out to fight, and they should defend him in case he was harmed [16].

Therefore, when the battle of "*Badr*" was taking place, the prophet consulted his companions and waited for them to give their opinions and did not proceed with them to fight until the leaders of the *Ansar* said to him that, "If you cross this sea, we will follow you" and he knew that they would like to go out with him to fight. Besides, he did not order his companions to fight "*Quraysh*" when they informed him that it had deceived the companion Uthman ibn Affan on the day of *Hudaybiyah*, but he delegated them for that. As a result, they pledged allegiance to him; and if one of them had wanted to not pledge allegiance, he could have had a way out, but they all pledged allegiance to him because they believed in him and God who sent him [16].

Moreover, Anas bin Malik mentioned that the Prophet Muhammad passed by people who had pollinated palm trees, and he said: If you had not done so, it would have been good. However, the production of dates was poor. Then, the

prophet asked them, why that happened, and they told him that you said such-and-such. The prophet said: You are more knowledgeable about your worldly matters [3]. Therefore, we can conclude here that the Prophet left people to run their lives as they wished and did not impose his opinion on them.

Consequently, Taha Hussein believed that the regime in the days of the Prophet was not a sacred theocracy, but rather, it was a matter of people's affairs in which right and wrong occurred. However, after a few hours following the prophet's death, Islam has come to know a new kind of theocracy that is closely related to the ruling, when Muslims spoke about the issue of the caliphate.

According to Taha Hussein, after the death of the Prophet, the Muslim community was growing rapidly and its lands extended to what is known as Al-Jazeera Al-Arabia. Quraish tribe was the most powerful tribe in Mecca; Muhammad and most of the Muslim elite at that time were descended from that tribe. Thus, Quraish realized that in order to maintain their dominant position, they had to choose one of them as a successor to the Prophet; therefore, they chose Abu Bakr as the successor to the Prophet. However, the selection procedures caused great damage to the unity of the Muslim community as it led to a hostile division within the Islamic world that continues to this day between Sunnis and Shiites, as the Shiites believed that Muhammad had appointed Ali as his successor. Thus, the dispute over the succession was not a religious issue but a political one [16].

Additionally, Ali Abd El-Razek the author of the book *Al-Islam WA Usul Al-Hukm* (Islam and the principles of governance) pointed out that the Caliphate is a strange regime from Islam, and does not have a foundation in approved sources and assets for the religion by Muslims, including the Quran, Sunnah, and consensus. Moreover, he refused to sanctify the caliphate as a component of the doctrine of Islam and he tried to prove that it is a purely historical invention and that it has nothing to do with the true religion, and that it was never a divine or a legal duty. Abdel-Razek criticized the evidence of the jurists on the Caliphate, and he stated that the ruling, the judiciary, and state centers are pure political plans that have no relation with religion. Therefore, God has left people free to manage their worldly conditions [2].

Abd El-Razek pointed out that the basic functions of governments did not exist in the days of the Prophet, to the extent that it can be said that the Prophet did not appoint governors in the countries that God opened for him to manage their affairs. Thus, according to him, we cannot say that there was a prophetic system of government in the days of the Prophet. In addition, according to Islamic history, we do not find that the Prophet was exposed to anything of politics or methods of governance, and we did not hear that he dismissed a governor or appointed a judge. Moreover, he did not set rules for trade, industry, or agriculture, but left all these matters, and told Muslims that you know your world's affairs better [2].

Muhammad Al-Ashmawy believed that the idea of the caliphate is not a pillar of faith or a provision of the Sharia, but it is part of the history of Islam. He in-

dedicated that mixing Islam with history is a grave mistake and a severe failure that has made some incorrectly believe that “the Islamic caliphate” is Islam, and then it is viewed from an emotional perspective, in which any error is denied and every virtue is added to it. It contained images of dreams claiming that the Islamic caliphate had praised the values of Islam and achieved an ideal Islamic society, but all of this is an illusion and a dream that was not realized except in distant moments and separate places that are unreliable [17]. Those thinkers believe that *Khalifa* did not serve Islam, but rather it harmed it, as it linked religion with politics, mixed Sharia with the ruling system, and made the ruling hereditary, therefore it became an absolute tyranny. They indicate that *Khalifa* wasted the right of Islam and the right of Muslims; moreover, it did not achieve the unity of the Islamic world, as there were at the same time: The Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt, and the Umayyad Caliphate in Andalusia [17].

In addition, in the noble hadith, the Prophet said that the ruling may last on polytheism, but it does not last on injustice. Therefore, Justice becomes the basis of the ruling, and every government that works for the achievement of political, social, and judicial justice is Islamic, and as this group asserted, since the beginning of human history until God’s will, no government can be described as absolute justice.

This group indicates that if Islam is originally contained values like justice, freedom, equality, and mercy, and if the caliphate, as the facts of history and events show, is an example of injustice and tyranny; it cannot be a symbol of Islam and whoever considers it a symbol, is offending Islam and tarnishing its reputation and distorting its image because he matches justice with injustice. [8] This group believes that if the caliphate or the imamate was at the core of the Islamic faith, it would have been necessary for the Qur’an to stipulate that and define the form of this government. They think that the term “*Al-Hukm*” in the Qur’an does not mean political judgment, but rather means judiciary in disputes or wisdom and that these verses have been distorted to serve political ends.

In addition, for *Mithaq of Medina* (Charter), which the Islamists claim to be the constitution of Islam, it was a simple tribal method for organizing the affairs of society at that time and had nothing to do with the political aspects of Islam. These alliances were practiced before Islam and continued to be practiced after Islam. Thus, the *mithaq of Medina* can be considered nothing more than a union of some tribes in the face of an imminent attack from *Quraysh* tribe in Mecca and their allies [18].

Additionally, they argue that no verse or hadith defines the specialization of those who called clerics because Islam is firmly aware that the reliance of any political authority on a religious claim and the reliance of any scholar on a religious right must lead to the emergence of political tyranny in the name of religion that takes people out of the worship of the one God to the worship of the ruler.

According to this group, in Islam and among the majority of Sunnis, political authority is not religious at all and was never religious, but is based on the will of the believers; rulers are considered human beings without infallibility or holiness. Besides, the Egyptian thinker Faraj Fouda who was assassinated by extremist groups mentioned in his book the absent truth that political Islam is an invention and a soft way to gain power in the name of Islam, and the type of regime is often tyrannical and expiatory for its opponents, even if they are Muslims [19].

Therefore, the title of Caliph of the Messenger of God was one of the reasons for the error that infiltrated all Muslims; it seemed to them that the caliphate was religious and that whoever takes over the affairs of Muslims can take the place of the Prophet. Consequently, the claim that the caliphate was religious has spread among Muslims since the first era, and it was in the interest of the sultans to spread that mistake among the people so that they take the religion as shields that protect their thrones. They even convinced the people that obedience to the imams is obedience to God, and their disobedience is disobedience to God [2].

Moreover, I would also like to draw attention to the origin of the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*, if we look for the statement that says that ruling is only for God in the political form with which it is raised, we find that it is not an Islamic saying. Rather it is an idea that originated in ancient Egypt and then spread in Christian societies in the Middle Ages. In ancient Egypt, the pharaoh (the ruler) was in their belief an image of God on earth, and when the courts issued a death sentence, they raised it to the pharaoh, who alone had the right to take life from any of his subjects [8].

In the middle Ages, clerics and philosophers justified the tyranny of rulers with theories dating back to this ancient Egyptian idea. The clergy said in justifying the tyranny of rulers, that the ruler is the shadow of God on earth, and he has a sacred right to rule because he came to rule and decisions are issued by him according to the divine providence that arranged his mandate and actions [8].

Thus, we can see that “*Al-Hakimiyya*” is not an Islamic concept, but rather an attribute attached to the tyrannical ruler who justifies his actions in the name of God. Therefore, according to this group, the caliphate is related to political affairs and has nothing to do with religion, because Islam did not pose the caliphate nor forbid it, but rather left Muslims free to manage their affairs.

Ahmed Al-Tayeb, Sheikh of Al-Azhar, emphasized in a press interview that the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* is not limited to God Almighty, but rather is a common matter between God and human beings. In many verses, the Qur’an made man a ruler, and the ruling was attributed to him. He states that whoever says that judgment is only for God is taking a verse from the Qur’an and turns a blind eye to the rest of the verses that must be understood in their context. Al-Tayeb confirms that the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* for God is different from its concept for humans. Human governance is related to new legislation related to the Islamic moral and legislative space, but *Hakimiyya* of God is related to the

halal, the haram, and the belief. In addition, Al-Tayeb states that Takfirists are taking advantage of the concept of “*Al-Hakimiyya*” to commit acts of violence and terrorism.

Al-Tayeb emphasizes the necessity of correcting people’s culture on the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* by spreading the belief of the Sunnis, and stating that human rule that is disciplined according to the rules of Sharia, never contradicts with the governance of God, but rather is one of them, moreover, atonement is a fitna that affected ancient and modern societies. This statement is said only by one who dares to God or is ignorant of his teachings [20].

Therefore, we can see that religious violence emerged when Jurisprudence became a religion, opinions were turned to beliefs, and assets were replaced by branches; when Islamists began to control the awareness and behavior of believers. Religious violence prevailed when people believed that the opinions of men were beliefs for which one would fight and die to defend and spread them. Muslims fought among themselves over differences in the branches of religion, how to pray, or how to understand the text.

As a result, for centuries, many Muslims believed that they were fighting for the sake of the religion of God, but they were killing each other for the sake of human opinions suggested by this or that party, their violence was delusional but destructive. Thus, does religion permit fighting between followers of the same religion or fighting other people? Does religion permit terrorizing and threatening people? Does religion permit burning the living and enjoying it?

4. Conclusions

Opinions between Muslim thinkers are divided about the relationship between religion and politics. Some believe that there is no relationship between religion and politics. This group believes that the Qur’anic verses that were interpreted to be related to politics were revealed at a specific time and for specific reasons and not in general. Consequently, this group wants to preserve the spirituality of religion and to keep it away from politics and the conflicts associated with it. On the other hand, there is another group that links religion to politics and supports this with verses from the Qur’an that it interprets with an interpretation contrary to the first group. This team interprets the Quranic verses in a way that serves its understanding, and this team often uses religion to reach a judgment. Therefore, religion is a means of controlling and ruling in the name of God and accusing the opponent of infidelity.

The confusion between religion and politics, the politicization of religion, and the religiosity of politics divided Muslims into sects and groups; each of them holds verses from the Qur’an and Hadiths of the Prophet to defend its position; its claim is the Sharia and its truth is the Sultan. Although the dispute between Othman bin Affan and his opponents, and the dispute between Ali bin Abi Talib and Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, is essentially political, a religious character has been added to it. Therefore, each sect claimed a monopoly on the truth and be-

lief and accused the other sects of infidelity.

Moreover, corruption on earth has become a common accusation from every *tayifa* (sect) to the other, and in that, the blood of all was permitted. The groups that seek to link politics to religion wanted to return all the principles of governance to religion to prove the idea of the caliphate and the command to obey the ruler as he is a representative of the religion or because he applies the Sharia; thus, it is not permissible to disobey him. Furthermore, they believed that despite the different times and societies, Islamic teachings must be applied as they are without renewal. Therefore, they turned to violence that divided Islamists into revolutionaries on the one hand and neo-Salafists on the other.

In this regard, the jurists were divided into two types: there are jurists of authority who support the idea of *Al-Hakimiyya*, justify all grievances and accuse any opponent of atheism and of being corrupt on earth and allow his killing according to the Sharia. On the other hand, some jurists preferred to distance themselves from authority, and they never engaged in anything that related to the Sultan from near or far.

In the end, I can say that, the concept of *Al-Hakimiyya* affected the relationship of politics with religion and led to the justification of the use of violence from a religious perspective in the name of jihad.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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