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**THE POSITION OF CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM
SCHOLARS ON SECULARISM:
THE COMPARATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

THE POSITION OF ISLAMIC CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS ON SECULARISM: THE COMPARATIVE ANALYTICAL STUDY

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This thesis deals with the attitude of four contemporary Muslim scholars regarding the system of government in Islam, especially vis-à-vis the western notion of secularism. The research focuses on four prominent figures from different intellectual backgrounds, two Sunnis and two Shiites. The former side is represented by Sayyid Qutb and Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, while the latter side is represented by Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin and Dr. Adel Daher. These Muslim intellectuals have been directly involved in discussions on the issue of governance in Islam in a number of their works and have devoted some of their writings on secularism. These works will be examined in the light of works that have been recently published in Western academia such as the works of Talal Asad and Sabah Mahmood.

The approach used in this research is analytical. The views of these intellectuals on governance in Islam and secularism are portrayed with quotations from their works or speeches. Since the so-called Arab Spring, issues and problems have been raised about the position of Islam vis-à-vis modern governments. The most important issue discussed in this context was secularism. Some people argue that Islam has no longer sees secularism as a great problem. There are many individuals in Muslim societies who think there is a real role for secularism to play in the modern world, whereas others have protested the position of reconciling Islam with secular thought. So, this research revolves around the question of “Does Islam actually have a problem with secularism?”

ÖZET

ÇAĞDAŞ MÜSLÜMAN ALİMLERİN SEKÜLERİZME BAKIŞI: KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ANALİTİK BİR ÇALIŞMA

Aya MWAFK

Bu araştırma, dört çağdaş Müslüman düşünürün İslam'ın yönetim anlayışı ve sekülerlik hakkındaki görüşlerini incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Araştırmada farklı entelektüel çevreden gelen Seyyid Kutub, Dr. Yusuf el-Karadavi, Muhammed Mehdi Şemsuddin ve Dr. Adel Daher'in kitaplarında konuyla ilgili ifade ettikleri görüşleri konu edilecektir. Bu dört şahsın eserlerindeki tartışmadan önce girişte Batı akademiyasında sekülerlik üzerine devam etmekte olan tartışmanın bir özeti Talal Esad ve Sabah Mahmood'un eserleri temel alınarak verilmiştir.

Sekülerlik modernizmin üzerine dayandığı parametrelerden birisidir. Bunun anlamı; sekülerlik olmadan modernizmin olmayacağıdır. İşte tam da bu nokta, sekülerlik kavramı ve onun türevlerine dair tartışmaların daha çok modernizmin çerçevesinde konuşulmasına yol açmaktadır.

Arap Baharı bu şahısların görüşleri arasında bir karşılaştırma yapmayı gerekli kılmıştır. Son zamanlarda, bazı İslam ülkeleri yönetimle ilgili büyük sorunlarla yüz yüze gelmiştir. Bu bağlamda öne çıkan en önemli konu sekülerizmdir. Bazı Müslüman düşünürler İslam'ın artık laikliği bir sorun olarak görmediğini söylemektedir. Müslüman toplumlarda laikliğin modern dünyada gerçek bir role sahip olduğunu söyleyen pek çok kişi vardır. Öte yandan İslam'ı seküler düşünce ile bağdaştırmayı doğru bulmayanlar da mevcuttur. Kısaca bu araştırmanın özünü İslam'ın sekülerlikle bir probleminin olup olmadığı sorusu oluşturmaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the nineteenth century, the relationship of Islam and modernity has been a major topic of investigation and discussion in the ex-Ottoman domains. The main point of discussion has been the role of secularism and how Islam and secularism are to find some form of a negotiable relationship after the fall of the Ottoman government in the wake of World War I. While the Turkish Republic, the successor of the Ottoman state, chose a clear secular path, the Arab states that emerged from the Ottoman territories have yet to find a similar position regarding their own secular identities. However, even in the Turkish Republic, the conceptualization of secular governance and Islam are continually subject to discussion and debate. Recently in the Arab world, especially since the so-called “Arab Spring”, the idea of Islam and secularism has once again become discussed within the political and intellectual environments, in which works of Arab thinkers both past and present discuss whether Islam and secularism are in fact compatible. However, this emphasis due to the new conditions makes interesting reading over whether Arab society is ready to have this debate. As a result, this research shall analyse how secularism which is one of the most important topics from the 17th /18th centuries in the Middle Eastern region continues to be a source of controversy.

Secularism in the Context of Islamic Culture

One of the constant debates surrounding secularism, both among Muslims and more generally, is whether secularism is a distinct feature of European society with a Christian heritage or if secularism can be universally implemented in each society and civilization, and hence possibly applicable to Islam. This debate is still ongoing in the Muslim world. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, the Renaissance, was where “This period was characterized by its zeal for the materialization and secularization of the ideal man in an ideal society.”¹ This led Western culture to neglect or even ignore religion in its pursuit of knowledge, or even implementing “non-religious” ideas, meaning moderate secularism, which became a model that

¹ Syed Muhammad Naquib al Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) Kuala Lumpur 1993, p.37.

was introduced in Western countries four centuries ago. This further produced the capitalist system, and it produced the present Western civilization as evidenced by its values such as the media, economics, politics, ethics, social relations and art.

The first secular state in the Muslim world began with Turkey after the abolition of the first Ottoman Constitution with some Islamic laws being replaced. In 1924, the Turkish constitution abolished the Caliphate and removed the phrase “the state’s religion is Islam” along with other articles. After the overthrow of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government, with the succession of Mustafa Kemal, later to be known as Atatürk, in 1927, the Turkish army became both the first guard of the country and also the dominant guardian of the secular republic. In the amendment of the constitution in 1937, the word “*laiklik*” (from the French *laïcité*) was added to the Turkish constitution. However, the current president of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, mentioned secularism during his visit to Egypt during its democratic transition following the Arab Spring protests, as follows:

One must not distrust secularism. I am a non-secular Muslim,” he said, “but I am the prime minister of a secular state and I say, ‘I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt.’ One must not be afraid of secularism. Egypt will grow in democracy and those called upon to draw up the constitution must understand it must respect all religions, while also keep themselves equidistant from the followers of all religions so that people can live in security.²

Malaysia, another Islamic country, was another Muslim state that embraced a model of a secular state structure in which secularism was perceived as an equalizer between the differing religious groups in Malaysia. Malaysia has three religions representing its three major races: Malay Muslims with a majority of 53%, followed by Chinese with more than 25%, some of whom are Buddhist, Hindu Indians with 15%, where there are many Christian Indians as well as a large population of Muslim Indians, and other ethnic minorities. After the bloody events between Malay Muslims and Chinese Buddhists due to Singapore’s secession in 1969, the Malaysian Constitution came up with a set of legal articles based on the principle of respect for races and other religions to achieve social justice and access to national development, and reduced the reasons that promote

² Mirenzi, Nicola, “Erdoğan and Secularism” *Reset Dialogues on Civilizations*, 27 September 2011, <https://www.resetdoc.org/story/erdogan-and-secularism/>.

the great disparity in living standards and economic capacity between the two groups, which resulted from the unfair distribution of wealth where the Chinese dominated in the economy and trade, while the Malays were confined to a cycle of poverty and ignorance.

Despite the fact that the Malaysian state is a source of strength and progress due to the importance it gives to national unity and multiple identities, there are debates and controversies over conversion from one religion to another, the use of the word “Allah” in Christianity and so forth. However, here is Muhammed Mahatir, the prime minister of Malaysia from 1981 to 2003 expressed about Islam, saying: “Islam was and will remain, in my view, the tolerant religion which existed with all other religions. Perhaps in Malaysia we do not apply what Sharia stipulated, but we follow the teachings of Islam by defending and achieving justice for all in this multi-religious country, and keeping the nation away from conflict and insecurity.”³ So, according to Muhammed Mahatir, the true application of the Sharia is when freedom, equality, justice, honesty, efficiency and responsibility, are all applied. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, a Malaysian professor and thinker who is familiar with the history of both Islamic and Western philosophical thought, popularized the concept of the “Islamization of knowledge” and established the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC). Al-Attas, in general, called for the need for re-Islamization, especially in the sphere of knowledge, where academic space and ideas had become exclusively associated as a Western product during recent centuries, and sees itself as a product of awareness of the impact of non-Islamic philosophies and ideological methodologies in shaping that product. Al-Attas emphasized on that idea saying: “So it is manifestly erroneous for Muslims particularly some “ulema” who follow the so-called “modernist” trend set by some scholars and intellectuals, and those scholars and intellectuals themselves who have some experience of Western knowledge and culture and civilization.”⁴

Secularism and the Islamic Context

كيف فهم الدكتور مهاتير محمد الإسلام والأسلمة - رأي اليوم³

<https://www.raialyoum.com/index.php>

⁴ Syed Muhammad Naquib al Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, p.43.

The continuous development of secularism, the diversity of its manifestations, the multiplicity of its translations and the violent political and ideological debate around it made it unclear and vague. Finally, secularism is understood to be the anti-thesis of religion, and both of them represent a borderline.

This insight, as keen as it is, does not appear to go far when the topic under consideration is Islam. Instead, its worldliness notwithstanding, the antagonism between “secular” and “religious” is assumed to be all the more acute in Islam, as the latter is understood to defy the distinction because sacred and profane, and modern Muslim movements seem bent on sustaining the non-existing of this boundary in favour of religion, according to which an act, idea, and institution can be described as either Islamic or secular, but never both.⁵

Thus, it seems that it is necessary to select between the two. Hence this dichotomy becomes more complicated as “secularism is an exclusively Western cultural project,”⁶ and stems from the problems of “Church and State” or “Religion and Politics” in Christianity. Therefore, it is seen as a problem that has nothing to do with the Islamic context and a cure for a disease from which the Islamic nation does not suffer. It is adopted like this hypothesis that Christianity, as a religion which does not have an integrated law to regulate the affairs of social life, provides a clear separation between religion and politics and “render unto Caesar to Caesar and God to God.”⁷ Moreover, Christianity is an institutionalized religion with a Church that embodies religious authority and has a known religious class in the clerics, both of which do not exist in the Islamic situation.

In Islam, there has been no separation between religion and politics since the time of the Prophet Mohammed. Thus, jurists postulated that the Caliphate is the basis of both religion and the world together, and the Islamic world is comprehensive, with provisions on political, economic

⁵ Sherman A. Jackson, “The Islamic Secular”, *American Journal of Islam and Society*, 34, 2 (2018), p. 2.

⁶ Beshara, Azmi: *al-Din wa al-'almaniyye fi al-siyak al-tarihi [Religion and Secularism in the Historical Context]*, Beirut, The Arabic Center of Research and Study of Policies, 2015, p. 44.

⁷ Immanuel Wallerstein: “Render unto Caesar? The Dilemmas of a Multicultural World”, *Sociology of Religion*, 66, 2 (2005), p.121.

and social affairs. In contrast, Islam has no “institutional religious authority” or “clergy”⁸ to struggle with secular political authority.

However, in spite of the fact that Islam is a political religion par excellence, with religious and political authority merged in the state of Medina since the beginning, as well as Islamic law touching on political and social legislation, this integration did not last long. After the Prophet Mohammed, (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), who met in his dignified personality the political and religious authorities of the state, despite the jurisprudents’ texts that the imamate is the succession of the Prophet in both authorities, the religious character of political authority gradually fell from the Caliphate to the succession of Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, since the year 41 AH (After Hijrah in the Islamic calendar). Then with the conquest of the Sultans over the Caliphs in the middle of the fourth century AH, the religious nature of political authority shrunk, coinciding with the growth of the secular institutions away from the state. Hence in the bosom of nation during the second and third centuries AH, the secular institutions became mature which led to the power to move from the state to these institutions, so this differentiation led to constant tension between them.

The Modern Nation-state in the Arab World

While the Turkish Republic has a more evident narrative regarding the introduction of secularism from the late 19th century onwards, the Arab World has a different set of challenges, some of which are interrelated and others of a more local character. In the Arab World, there are indeed also some scholars who argue for the compatibility of Islam and secularism. The Egyptian writer Sayyid Mahmoud Ali Qemany defended secularism arguing: “Secularism socio-politically is a way of organizing society by a social contract that guarantees the safety of the society according to its members, individuals, sects, races, and religions.”⁹ Moreover, Qemany considered Islam as “a big danger that faces the world.” Qemany later considered himself as “infidel”.

⁸ Abdul Wahab al-Messiri, *al-Almaniyye al-jouz‘iyye wa al- almaniyye al-shamila [The Partial Secularism and the Comprehensive Secularism]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, p.69, 2011.

⁹ Sayyid Qemany, “Ilmaniyye ka-darura zamaniye” [Secularism as a Temporal Necessity], *al-Hewar al-mutamaddin*, 19.09.2016, www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=370477.

Regarding the denial of holiness from political practice and the failure to subordinate state authorities to the authority and control of the clergy, the signs of its entry into the Arab and Muslim world can be noticed from the first shock caused by the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in the hearts of Arabs and Muslims. The Arabs and Muslims discovered the state of underdevelopment in which they were located, who were the best nation produced for the people, comparing the aspects to the state of progress and excellence in the Christian/ infidel European countries. Thereafter, many different projects were put forward to chart the foundations of the Arab Renaissance. This led to an adoption of the Western/ European approach in building society and the state, so that the religious establishment would not have authority over the wheels of state and government. Salama Musa and Shibli Shamil are the pioneers of this trend, the Arab Renaissance and others.

Moreover, there is the experience of Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, who sought to make religious practice an individual affair in which the state does not interfere with its laws, i.e., the state is not a representative of God in coercing people to worship him, and political practice is not a religious affair subject to the control of the jurists and regulated to the scale of halal and haram. In addition to this secular liberal trend, another trend is the leftist communist and socialist trend, which reinforced its presence in the Arab world with the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet Union; however, both trends, liberal and the leftist have failed to build a fully-integrated secular state. Therefore, this research revolves around this problem. Thus, even in the Arab world, this question continues to arise, and our contention is to examine how there are multiple ways of imagining the notion of secularism as are their ‘multiple secularisms’? Does Islam actually accept secularism? Because until now, this issue, secularism, is considered a controversial source, because some scholars, like Murad Wehba, even went to say that Islam no longer sees in secularism the great problem, emphasizing that secularism, according to Wehba, became as “a weapon capable of confronting religious fundamentalism.” So, to answer this question, it is necessary to speak about the thought of some contemporary Islamic scholars who have left clear imprints in the Arab and Islamic societies and all the contemporary Islamic movements.

Moreover, Arab Christians in the Islamic world have played a major role in regards to their marketing, promotion and advocacy of secularism, (Fares Nimr), and the facilitation of a host

of secular movements and organizations such as the Arab al-Fattah organization, the Syrian National Party (Antoine Saadeh) and the Arab organization Ba'ath Party (Michell Aflaq), whose ideas and sayings were promoted in the newspapers like *al-Jinan*, *al-Muqtataf*, and *al-Healal* and so on with their editors, such as Nassif El Yazji, Yakub Sarrouf, and Jerji Zidane, represented the vanguard of secularism in the Islamic East. These Arab Christians raised a host of arguments that became challenging for Muslim scholars who opposed the notion of secularism especially given the popular Arab slogan, "Religion for God, and the Homeland for all." This slogan in fact supports the secular worldview in the region in an abbreviated form, as it separates between god 'religion' and people 'homeland', making a separation between religion and life.

The appearance of Orientalism is one of the reasons for the emergence of secularism in the Islamic World. Orientalism is a movement devoted mostly to protest and object to the Islamic heritage, and challenge its constants such as prophecy, the Quran and Islamic history as a whole, including the religious state. They established research centres, wrote books that attempted to challenge and question Islam, its law and provision. Not only to question Islam but also to make a man accept stray thoughts and false opinions. Also, there are a lot of supporters and followers who promote its thought and advocate its position, leading to secularism being a reality in which the Muslims live. This led to civil courts being built and positive or statute law becoming the determinant of people's affairs and conditions. Napoleon in Egypt is a suitable example with the Islamic Sharia being replaced by, until nothing remained of the Sharia except for Personal Status Law as the only bastion of Sharia in many Islamic countries. This is a clear effect of colonialism and its intellectual and political expansion, and the domination of secularism in the Islamic World.

Justification of Research

The emergence of "Enlightenment movement in Europe inspired a great controversy which led to conflict with the church and its followers, due to the religious class's rejection of these principles. However, the centuries long conflict was settled in favour of the secular, especially after the Christian religion no longer existed as an independent institution, but came under the rule of the state as a state religion, so it was natural to be in favour of secularism, and create a kind of possibility of parallel coexistence between the Church and secular institutions.

Many Eastern intellectuals imported and commercialized the European experience to the Arab and Islamic world, arguing that the European world attained its scientific and technological progress due to secularism, not remembering the difference between scientific and social progress and the variance between the European and Islamic societies and the Christian and Islamic religions. Salama Musa, the pioneer of Egyptian socialism, emphasized the necessity for cooperation with the British, forgetting the great differences between the Egyptians and the British, saying: “If we sincerely intended with the British, we may agree with them if we guaranteed their interests; at the same time, if they sincerely intended to us, we may eliminate reactionary centres in Egypt, so let us turn our faces to Europe.”¹⁰ However, if the latter, the Christian religion, reconciled with secularism because there is nothing within it that diminishes its principles since it is not a state, the Islamic religion does not accept the secular formula because Islam is a totalitarian worldview about life that organizes society at all levels from the origins of governance and state administration to individual worship of the Muslim. This is clear when George Bernard Shaw said: “If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam”. “I[George] hope the time is not far off when I shall be able to unite all the wise and educated men of all the countries and establish a uniform regime based on the principles of the Quran on which alone are true and which alone can lead men to happiness.”¹¹ Hence George Bernard Shaw declared that religion both in England and Europe could be Islam if there were a chance of selecting it.

Therefore, it is natural that any application of secularism would be at the expense of religion or part of it. Since then, there has been an intellectual struggle between Muslim clerics and the secular, struggle and debates continue until today as the main and basic aspect of secularism is to isolate religion, to separate religion from authority, and, some scholars may argue, from many aspects of life. It is obvious when George Jacob Holyoake had defined secularism as “a code of deputy pertaining to this life, founded on considerations purely human.” So, as a set of measures

¹⁰ Salama, Musa, *al-Yawm wa al-ghad [Today and Tomorrow]*, al-Jiza, Dar al-Muhrer al-Adabi, 2015. p.239.

¹¹ Shaw, George Bernard, “The Genuine Islam”, Vol.1, No.8, 1936.
<https://uktamilan.wordpress.com/2015/03/05/sir>.

came as a result of the long conflict between the religious and secular authorities in Europe that aimed at the adoption of the separation of religion from state. So, Islam came to enlighten the world in its entirety, and it is worth mentioning to say that “Islam is the last bulwark to face secularism” because this contradiction between them spends the demise of one on the expense of the sovereignty of the other because as al-Attas expressed “There can never really be an 'Islamic Secularism'; and secularization can never really be a part of Islam.”¹²

The researcher has presented multiple definitions of secular terminology both lexical definitions or definition of thinkers and philosophers. The purpose of this presentation was firstly to infer the difference in the concept of secularism or, more obviously, the absence of an agreed definition among most who promote the concept of “secularism”. Despite the above-mentioned differences, there is a common denominator between all definitions which is necessary for this research. Moreover, this research is not a philosophical treatise only; rather this type has been attached to the philosophical specialties of the Islamic- Christian studies. So, what concerns us in this research is the common denominator among all the definitions of secularism which is the separation of religion from general social and political practice agreed upon by all thinkers, which is necessarily to mention without mentioning to all other surplus meanings.

At the end, this thesis argues that the ruling on this degree of secular will lead necessarily to withdraw all other shapes of secularism, so the chosen definition, which is separation of religion from political life as referred in the previous paragraph, is available and suitable. Thus, separation from public life means separation from political practice in both governance and the general social system of government. After this brief of introduction, we can turn to the presentation of this research.

¹² al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib, *Islam and Secularism*, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, 1993, p.44.

First Chapter

THE GENERAL GLANCE ABOUT SECULARISM

1.1. The Problematic of Secularism in the Arab and Muslim Context

Secularism has largely taken place in the Arab and Muslim thought, because it includes many definitions as we will see later. In the wake of the Arab revolutions, clashes between religion and secularism increased among political foes, as supporters of the former saw the latter as a kind of Trojan horse, which was eventually able to implement the counter revolution to halt the process of democratic transformation in the Arab Spring countries such as Egypt and Tunisia. Ideological motives played an important role not only because of the political elites but also due to their use by elites in the propaganda war and in the crowd and counter crowd, which deepened ill understanding and reduced and distorted stereotypes about the meaning of secularism. To deal with this problem, it is necessary at the beginning to know and dismantle the reasons of such misunderstandings and clashes with some prevailing perceptions concerning secularism to propose a more comprehensive definition of secularism and its manifestations.

1.1.1. Conceptual Controversies: Secularism or Non-Religious or Laicism?!

When studying any phenomenon, researchers usually start by defining it linguistically as an entry-point for their research. However, this does not capture the phenomenon itself, as phenomena acquire their truth neither from the linguistic root of the term expressed, nor even from people's connotation of the term. This problem is further exacerbated in the case of secularism due to many reasons: firstly, secularism is a social phenomenon with historical roots and it also continues to evolve, and it has manifestations different in dissimilar times and contexts. Secularism in Europe in the 19th century is different from secularism in the 21st century, just as secularism in the United States today is different from secularism in France or in the Middle East, etc. Thus, secularism is not an esoteric term with a specific definition, "but a phenomenon that is being

verified.”¹³ Secondly, secularism is a term that does not describe a neutral historical phenomenon, but rather one that witnesses severe epistemological and political conflict. Thirdly, the religious-secular dialectical has multiple levels of interactions, such as: institutional, normative, epistemological, ontological and so forth. So, when this term, secularism, is used in an academic or political debate, it is difficult, if not impossible for its meaning to be understood or to be fully clear. “Is it merely an organized institutional separation between the religious institution and the state institution, the normative separation, where politics, education and the like have their subjective normative values different from those [values] of religion? Or “Is it a rejection of the religious methodology and the emphasis on the applied scientific methodology?”¹⁴ Or perhaps “Is it used as a contrasting and antagonistic paradigm to religion that has a material worldview?”¹⁵ Fourthly, there is the problem of translation, as the term “secularism” has been translated into more than one way into Arabic, not to mention the problem of Laicism: “it is a translation of the French style of secularism which is distinguished by radicalism.”¹⁶ In addition to other translations like “temporal” versus “eternity” or “worldly” versus “the other world”, there is conflict on whether the most widely-used translation in Arabic should be vocalized as *ilmaniyah*, understood as coming from *ilm* or knowledge, or as *almaniyah*, that is understood as coming from *alim*, the world.”¹⁷

Moreover, many people believe that secularism is atheism, forgetting that atheism existed alongside Islam, far before secularism. Therefore, we cannot pretend that any person has a secular aspect, simply because secularism is the character of the state, and a believer of a secular state may be a religious man, leftist, progressive or even fascist. If we want to analyse this sclerotic,

¹³ al-Messiri, Abdul Wahab, *al-Almaniyye al-jouz'iyee wa al- almaniyye al-shamila [Partial Secularism and the Comprehensive Secularism]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 2011, p.15.

¹⁴ William H. Swatos and Kevin J. Christiano, “Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept”, *Sociology of Religion* 60, 3 (1999), 212.

¹⁵ Tamimi, Azzam, “The Origin of Arab Secularism” in **Islam and Secularism in the Middle East**, eds. John Esposito and Azzam Tamimi (London: C. Hurst& Co., 2002, p.15).

¹⁶ al-Messiri, Abdul Wahab, *al-Almaniyye al-jouz'iyee wa al- almaniyye al-shamila*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 2011, p.17.

¹⁷ Assad, Talal, **Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003, p.206-207.

inflexible, religious view towards secularism, we can return back to the era of Arab Renaissance where Mouhammed Abduh was able to find the term which is considered to be the most suitable and effective in terms of his translation of the meaning of secularism in the second half of nineteenth century as “Dahrism” or “materialism” at the time. To strike an example, Jamal al-Din al- Afghani, who was concerned with the subjection of the Muslim world by Western colonial powers, whose major aims were the liberation, independence, and unity of the Islamic world, established a form of modernism applicable to Islam, spoke about materialists in one of his articles as follows:

Those Dahriyyins, materialists, are not like those in Europe. Those who leave religion aside in Europe have the love of the homeland and the adore of scarification by their soul for the sake of their nation. Whereas concerning the Arab Dahriyyins, as they call people to renounce religion, they also call them to underestimate the interests of their homeland and make it easier for foreigners to control them as well as they strive to erase religious and national monuments”, ending his article by saying: “And this is how the Dahriyyins in the East are distinguished from those in the West by vileness and baseness after disbelief and heresy.¹⁸

Hence the problem with secularism has been created in the Arab World ever since, and like any reading of theories, we cannot delete or isolate the speech of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani from its historical context because it witnessed the era of colonial domination in its old forms, a sense of dependence and weakness towards it and suspicion of anything coming from the West.

However, if we go back a little to the previous quotation, we notice that al-Afghani speaks about the sanctification of the state in the West which has abandoned religion, something which is in contradiction to the essence of the true secularism which did not present and put forward the idea of abandoning the sanctity of religion to uphold the sanctity of the state, as at the end of the Galileo era European enlightenment, there was no conflict between religion and secularism. But with the emergence of nation-states, there was a desire to subordinate religion to the state, and the war between the sanctity of the state and the sanctity of religion was broken out using symbols until now in order to replace religion like the unknown soldier, reverence for martyrdom as a

¹⁸ al-Makhzoumi, M.Pasha, “ *al-Mohawara beyna al-sharq wa al-gharb*” [*The Dialogue between the East and the West*] , *Khatirat Jamal al-Din al-Afghani* [*Thoughts of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani*], Cairo, al-Iskanderia Library, first printed in 1931, p. 354-360.

sacrifice for the homeland, a leader etc. All of these led to an increase in tension and conflict, and even blood. At that time, John Locke, known as “the Father of Liberalism”, had solved this problem by re-examining the earlier stage of Galileo’s era declaring that the guarantee of exercising the religious rites must be ensured by the state as a liberal right. When the state allows the Jews to wear the hat, and allows the Christian to wear the cross, it is the liberal right guaranteed by the state; moreover, at the same time the Church has no right to interfere in the civil rights of people and is not permitted to impose anything on individuals. We all know that imposing of religion forcibly on people will turn them, people, into hypocrisy which is considered to be one of the major sins which deserve the most severe punishment in all religions. Whoever wants to check more will find that the Syrian revolution was the most effective example of the possibility of a secular state with religion without any objection. The people who demanded freedom, i.e. the guarantee of his personal right of life, demanded the overthrow of the regime. That to say the same people who fought for the guarantee of their right to political expression and called for a civil state, were the same people who said: “Allahu Akbar,” and “O Allah we have no god other than You” and so forth. This people spontaneously could appear the great agreement to and was able to show the harmony in those mottos.

1.2. The Selected Contemporary Scholars in This Research

If we ask the following question: Is secularism merely a perception that does not exist on the ground? Talal Asad denies that. In his view, Secularism exists and it is effective, but its existence as ‘a perception and experience’ cannot be in isolation from religion as suggested by the model of Charles Taylor and Jose Casanova. In other word, the structural differentiation of modern societies that imposed the differentiation of economy from politics, of education from the meeting, of legislative authorities from the executive ones----etc, and all these are different from religion, does not mean that that the latter, religion, is no longer found in both authority and politics, or out of events of all these areas. If the hypothesis of secularization no longer has as important a role as before, this does not mean that it is not true, but rather that it is more likely to overlap with religion and politics than it appears to be. That is to say that secularism is a very controversial term like “modernization”, “enlightenment”, and “globalization”.

So, this research deals with the attitude of some Arab contemporary scholars of Islam concerning the concept of secularism; how they perceive it and what is their ruling on it, that is to present their views and to provide their examination at the system of the government in Islam as well as the form of its Islamic state as a necessary introduction to demonstrate their rule on secularism. Since the failure of the so-called Arab spring, a host of commentators in the Arab world in particular have started to discuss the issues pertaining to secularism in the region. This is due to the fissures and gaps to government and Islam at the same time. However, this is not the first time that such discussions have been made in the region, as I hope to show how these ideas were first examined. This thesis covers four figures: two of them are Sunni and the other two are Shiites.¹⁹ The former side is represented by Sayyid Qutb and Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, while the latter is represented by Muhammad Mehdi Shamsuddin and Dr. Adel Daher.

The reason for the selection of these characters is that they have directly written on the issue of governance in Islam in a number of their works, and have devoted their own writings on secularism, so the richness in the scientific material of these characters affects the enrichment of research. The approach used in this research is analytical where it quotes some words of the scholars from the standpoint of public ideas which determine the philosophy of their speakers. In

¹⁹ Let us present in brief the main differences between the Sunni and Shia. Islam is the largest religion known to mankind and the official religion for many countries in the world whose origins dated back to the seventieth century where the Prophet, Muhammed bin Abdullah, [Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him], is the Messenger of Islam who created this religion. All the Muslims were as whole, no division among them; however, after the death of the Messenger and the Prophet, there appeared two major sects: Sunnis and Shiites. The word Sunni means one that follows the tradition of the Prophet, while the word Shiite means Shiite man which means his own and his beloved companion, so the Shiite of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib is for his beloved infallible sons. Both of these sects in Islam follow the same teachings and practice the same rituals like praying, fasting, etc. which are considered to the similarities between the two trends. Nevertheless, there are differences between the two where the Sunni-Shiite dispute is a historical one between the two largest Muslim sects and there are several axes of differences: some of them are related to doctrine which is the main dispute, and the others are related to issues of jurisprudence. The main point of disagreement lies on in the character of the legitimate caliph of the Prophet, Muhammed. While the Sunnis believe that the Prophet, Muhammed died and did not specify the Islamic nation caliph after him which led to the meeting of a number of companions to select the successor of the Prophet, i.e. to a leader should be elected, the Shiites believe that the Prophet declared that Ali bin Abi Talib is the caliph. So, Shiite's followers are allies of Ali Bin Talib who as the followers' thought should be the caliphs of the Prophet Mohammed, instead of him, Abu Baker and Omar Ibn al-Khattab took it from him. Some tribes refuse them totally and radically, and they insult them claiming that Abu Bakr and Omar are *mushrikoon* "polytheist", hence this kind of tribes is called *raafidah*, "rejectors".

addition, comparison is made among these figures in terms of points of agreement and disagreement. In general, what they agree on can be said as originally from religion, whereas what they disagreed can be said as doctrines differing from the other, such as the doctrine that secularism should keep government out of the purview of religion and religion out of the purview of government. However, it should distinguish between non-atheist or moderate secularism and atheist secularism. While the former, the non-atheist or moderate secularism, is a type of secularism which does not deny religion and the existence of Allah, the Creator, and allows the practice of religious rites in the country, but religion is not permitted to interfere with life, the latter, atheist secularism, is depended on the denial of religion and the existence of Allah as well, and is hostile towards any expression of faith. Moreover, it fights Islamic religion and Islamic rule as in the case of Dr. Adel Daher. In brief, it is necessary to show that many contemporary Islamic scholars who have created clear imprints in the Arab and Islamic societies have to be introduced to that idea, secularism, as well as all contemporary Islamic movements.

1.2.1. Sayyid Qutb Ibrahim Hussein al-Shazly

Sayyid Qutb, Ibrahim Hussein al-Shazly, was a writer, poet, an Islamic Egyptian scholar, and the author of the important literary exegesis of the Quran, "*Fi zilal al-Quran*" [*In the Shadow of Quran*]. He was a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood's Guidance Office, and the former head of the Brotherhood. The most significant reason that led to the selection of Sayyid Qutb among the research figures is not immediately related to secularism as in the case with Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi or Sheikh Muhammad Mahdi Shamsuddin, but the importance of Qutb lies in the fact that he was significantly exposed to the concept of *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) in Islam, which means, the rule of Islamic law in the human community. It seems that Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi is proud of him that is evident when he, al-Qaradawi, said:

If you ask me: Who is Sayyid Qutb? I say: Really Sayyid Qutb is one of the great men in our nation. If we measure greatness by the scale of creativity in literature and literary criticism, he is a great preacher; if we measure greatness by the power of influence in preaching and guidance, he is a great scholar and thinker, who has an impact of (Islamic) science and thought; if we measure greatness by the independence of thought and the authenticity of (Islamic) science, he is also a great Muslim; if we measure greatness by sacrifice to Allah, it is sadness to say that Qutb had presented his blood and life for the sake of the call in which he believed. So, this man gave his neck as a sacrifice for the call that

he believes in. I, (al-Qaradawi) thought that he was sincere in his calling whether he reached his desired goal or made a mistake. And I thought that he was from those to whom the saying of Allah included.²⁰ “Say, ‘My prayers and sacrifice, my life and death, are all for God, Lord of all the Worlds.’”²¹

While controversial for many, nonetheless in the Arabic speaking world Qutb is also considered one of the important Islamic thinkers of the twentieth century, and his thought is still a spiritual reference for many of the Islamic movements active throughout the Muslim Ummah, so one cannot discuss about secularism among the thinkers of contemporary Islam without recognizing and examining a character as important as Sayyid Qutb.

Sayyid Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood under the severe regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser, against which he would eventually rebel. Moreover, because of the brutal treatment taken from the regime of Gamal Abdel al-Nasser, Qutb insisted on that Egypt had become corrupted and he was convinced that this corruption was due to Western secularism. In his famous article “*American Islam*” in his book *al-Dirasat al-islamiya [Islamic Studies]* published in 1952 exposed the policy of America and its agents in the region [both Arab and American], he said:

The Islam that the Americans and their allies want is not Islam that resists colonialism, nor does it resist tyranny, but only Islam that resists communism. They do not want Islam to rule, because when Islam will rule, people will create another genesis, and will teach that the preparation of force is obligatory, and that the expulsion of the colonizer is mandatory.²²

Hence, Qutb was imprisoned due to this accusation of sedition with a group of Brother leaders. During his time in prison, he wrote a book titled *Ma’aleem fi al-tareeq [Milestones]* in 1964. In addition, Qutb was one of the most important figures in modern Sunni Islamic revivalism. One of his central concepts was *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) in Islam, meaning that ultimate sovereignty belongs only to Allah, as Allah is the Creator of all the universe and of man, so He is the sole one worthy of worship or obedience. Then Allah gives it to whoever He wants. The obedience of the Prophet, governor, father, is granted and conditional. Allah has commanded that society should

²⁰ <https://m.al-sharq.com> , "القرضاوي: سيد قطب أحد عظماء الرجال في أمتنا و تاريخنا الحديث ,

²¹ Abdel Haleem, M. A. S. *The Qur'an: A New Translation*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005. Surat al- An'am 162-163.

²² <https://www.aljazeera.net/opinions/2016/8/30/المظلوم-سيد-قطب-ذلك>.

strive to His law which is suitable for all places and times and has the sufficient authority to evaluate and correct society by spreading justice, benefit, away from the human passion.

The reason why Qutb focused on the concept of *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) without any other concepts is that Sayyid Qutb lived in a society that did not accept the falling of the Islamic State as well as the arbitration of the different illegal laws from Islam because “The apparent purpose of Allah’s law on earth is not merely the work of the Hereafter. The world and the Hereafter are two complementary phases, and it is the law of Allah that coordinates the two phases.”²³ This period, Gamal Abdel Nasser’s, as Qutb considered was a period of oppression and persecution by the Arab nationalists and other secularists who inherited the rule of the country that was as a part of the Islamic state. Most of his writings revolve around the concept of sovereignty and about the nature of the Islamic society which is different from other societies as the application of Islamic law and adoption of it as a regulator of society in all aspects. Therefore, Sayyid Qutb recrystallized the concept of *al-hakimiyya* in an attempt to demonstrate the illegality, the regimes that were built on the ruins of the Islamic state and revive the concept of Sharia’s application in Islamic societies. The link between a figure like Qutb and secularism is a clear one as *al-hakimiyya* in Islam coincides with the perception of secularism. So, the idea of *al-hakimiyya* revolves around one issue that constitutes the logical opposite of the idea of secularism. While the issue of *al-hakimiyya* speaks about the necessity of arbitration of the judgment of Allah in its entirety in society, secularism claims in its simplest form to remove religion from judgment. Therefore, we notice the negative relationship between *al-hakimiyya* and secularism, so it is natural to draw an indisputable ruling on Qutb's perception of secularism as we will see later.

1.2.2. Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi

Dr. Yusuf al -Qaradawi is an Egyptian Muslim scholar and the president of the World Federation of Muslim Scholars. He completed the memorization of the Holy Quran under the age of ten years as well as he mastered the provisions of Tajwid. Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi is considered the most important figure in Islam in the present era in Islamic science and thought, advocacy, and

²³ www.maqola.net/quote/12928/ . The sayings for Sayyid Qutb.

jihad (struggle). Concerning his activities, they were not limited to the servicing of Islam on one side, but entire fields were expanded thanks to him, namely: the field of Islamic economics, advocacy and guidance, jurisprudence and *fatwah* (advisory opinion), the field of visits and lectures, the scope of participation in the membership of boards and institutions, the field of social work, rationalization of awakening, the field of seminars and conferences, and the field of work of *jihad* (struggle) which is, according to the author al-Qaradawi, very important issue, where he wrote a book named “*Fiqh al-jihad*” [*The Jurisprudence of Struggle*] in which the author drew the general idea of *al-jihad* in Islam through the texts of the book (Quran) and the Sunnah interacting with the system of interpretation and jurisprudence as it manifested in its historical context.

So, the author spoke deeply about *al-jihad*.²⁴ Generally, according to the author, *al-jihad* is of two types: military *jihad* in the sense of fighting enemies if they assault Muslims by force, which requires preparation for this when the reasons are available, a kind meant by states. The second kind is a civil spiritual *jihad* which includes the scientific, cultural, social, economic, educational, medical, health, and environmental fields. The goal of this type of *al-jihad* is to make more effort for the sake of Allah in order to teach the ignorant, employ the unemployed, train the worker, satisfy the hungry, build schools, cover the naked, accommodate the homeless, treat the sick, and provide enough money to every needy.

Moreover, he is one of the main influencers on the lives of Muslims in all Arab and Islamic countries because al-Qaradawi attempted to prove rationality that religion is not in conflict with science as it is based on the mind. To be clearer, al-Qaradawi explained that in Europe there is a problem between religion and science, which is historically known through many books. The

²⁴ because unfortunately this term, *al-jihad*, lost its real meaning among Muslims because there is a group that wants to abolish *al-jihad* from the life of the nation and to spread the spirit of resignation and surrounding by various claims, such as, the call for tolerance and peace, so the author described them as “agents for colonialism”. In return, there is a group that makes *al-jihad* a fierce war against the whole world. So, the author addresses this extremism through his linguistic analysis of the subject of *al-jihad* and makes the exerting effort at the end to distinguish between fighting and *al-jihad* which was mentioned in the Holly Quran in Mecca, where *al-jihad* was not a fight but mere *al-jihad*; it is clear in *Surat al-Furqan*: “So do not obey the disbelievers, and strive against them with the Qur'an a great striving” (52_ 53), which indicates that *al-jihad* has several meaning like: fighting the enemy, fighting the devil, fighting the soul, all this makes *al-jihad* wider and broader than fighting. Jihad as quoted by Ibn Taymiyah is to be in heart, a call to Islam, establish the argument on the invalid, and make opinion and measure in which Muslim will earn benefit and experience. Furthermore, the writer emphasizes on the intellectual and cultural *al-jihad* by establishing specialized Islamic scientific centers that include outstanding youth.

conflict was between science and religion known in Europe which was based on the famous inquisitions which condemned several scientists to death.²⁵ However, in Islamic society there is no such a conflict because religion, for us, is science and science is religion. So, how can science and religion meet in Islam? Religion has science because it is dependent on the basis of reason which is the basis of transport. Hence, our Islamic beliefs can be proved by the mind. It is obvious in Surat al-Baqarah: “Say, produce your evidence, if you are telling the truth.”²⁶ So, al-Qaradawi expressed that there is no problem between the mind and transportation, or between thought and beliefs, or between Sharia and wisdom.

Furthermore, it is valuable to examine the position of Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi on secularism because Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi is one of the key thinkers in the Arab world who has written extensively on the subject of secularism in more than one work, the most notable of which is *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*. Taking from his personal experience, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi in 1985 was in Germany in order to receive treatment due to spinal pain, where he stumbled upon an article titled “The Religious Issue in Contemporary Egypt” by Fouad Zakariya, an Egyptian professor. Fouad Zakariya attacked Dr. al-Qaradawi as well as the preachers of Islam in general. This incident thus forced a response by al-Qaradawi where he first explained then wrote a set of works on the subject matter of secularism. To

²⁵ The most important reason that led to the appearance of secularism in the West was the conflict between the Church and science. It was in this era, which the volcano of science and rationalism became prominent, in the sense that the church was gradually being contested by rationalist thinkers, which facilitated a culture of tension at times between the church and scientists, as we will see later. The scientists of nature broke the chains of the religious traditions, with the first priest who broke the chains was Nicolaus Copernicus, a Polish scientist, who contradicted the theory of Ptolemy in which the earth held its place at the center of the universe with the sun, moon, planets, and stars revolving around it in circular orbits at increasing distances, so Nicolaus proposed in his book *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (On the Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres) in 1532 that the planets instead revolved around the sun. Because of this, the revolution of the Church took place, but before taking him to inquisition Copernic died, thus at the end, the Church forbade his book saying: “what is in it is a Satanic beast, and prevented in contrary to the spirit of the Gospel”. Another famous scientist named Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher, was also considered by the Church as a dangerous heretic because he held the theory of Copernicus, the Church had him burned at the Stake in 1600. Also, the Italian scientist Galileo Galilei constructed a telescope and supported the Copernican theory, which supported the sun-centered solar system. He was accused twice of heresy by the Church because of his beliefs. However, he declared his repentance and retraced his opinions.

²⁶ Surat al-Baqara, 111.

Zakariya's direct claims regarding the article, al-Qaradawi responded by saying: "As for what he [Fouad Zakariya] said about me: "that I [al-Qaradawi] was able to acquire the masses emotionally", the people who witnessed the seminar know certainly that I was primarily rational, objective, and logical to the greatest extent."²⁷ Moreover, Zakariya claimed Al-Qaradawi that he was raising his voice to influence the emotions of the audience, but Al-Qaradawi responded: "I -thank Allah- that I always raise my voice and do not lower it, and I ask Him [Allah] to make my voice loud all the time, to make its loudness for the sake of saying truth and right."²⁸ The point of contention here is that al-Qaradawi like most of the ulema class have often been presented as emotional and irrational preachers who neither understand secularism nor detail their opposition to the masses, but instead provide emotional arguments. As a result, it is worth examining some of al-Qaradawi's ideas to attain to what extent these allegations are true and how he understands the idea of secularism.

In addition, millions of people have watched his religious sermons on the program *al-Shari'a wa al-hayat* [Sharia and Life] on al-Jazeera TV (Arabic). He immediately discussed secularism in more than one work, especially in his book named *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh* [Islam and Secularism Face to Face], which is sufficient for this research as it is a collection of all his various thoughts on the subject matter developed over time. In this book, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi presents his perceptions about Islam as a preface to his critique of secularism. It is worth mentioning that the above- mentioned book is enough for the subject of research, but it is still useful to quote some of Dr. al-Qaradawi other works at times, especially if the relevant subject cannot be found in this book. So, as we know about Sayyid Qutb's position about secularism that it is rejected because it, secularism, separates religion from all aspects of life and any community that does not arbitrate the law of Allah is similar to the Pre-Islamic "Jahaliyya," we will also see that al-Qaradawi argues for the rejection of secularism from a religious perspective, that is, secularism cannot accept the coexistence with religion that the Prophet Muhammad, [Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him], has received. In his opinion, in the best case, secularism can accept that religion is limited to the individual conscience without agreeing the beliefs of

²⁷ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh* [Islam and Secularism Face to Face], Cairo, Wahba Library, 1997, p.8.

²⁸ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p.9.

commitment of Allah. In addition, if secularism is applied, it makes religion only a personal and individual direction that regulates the relationship of the individual to his Lord. Moreover, we will notice that al-Qaradawi sees that there is no relation between secularism and science in terms of the linguistic root, that is, secularism does not link to science and its derivatives at all, as a response to those who want to market the term as being science- based, and the correct translation of secularism is “non- religious.” It is due to this being the case that Dr. al-Qaradawi sees “anti- religion” as a suitable translation. Hence, rejection of secularism is from a purely religious perspective, in the sense that religion and secularism cannot be gathered at all.

1.2.3. Sheikh Mohammed Mehdi Shamsuddin

Mohammed Mehdi Shamsuddin is an Iraqi religious and a contemporary Islamic scholar and the president of the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council. He began his scientific and political activities in the city of Najaf. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, despite his positive stance towards the Islamic Revolution, he emphasized the importance of Shiites in Lebanon existing as an independent entity. Shamsuddin is considered a moderate cleric and an advocate of Christian-Muslim coexistence. The establishment of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the bloody clashes that took place between the Amal and Hezbollah influenced deeply impacted his thought and political behaviour which led to formation of the mandate of the nation on its own, rather than Khomeini’s theory of “Wilayat al-Faqih” or “Jurisprudent’s Rule.” In 1969, he returned to Lebanon and assumed the presidency of the Charitable and Cultural Union which was founded in 1966 and started his cultural, intellectual and informational activities.

Moreover, he stated that “There is no Lebanon without its Christians, and there is no Lebanon without its Muslims”. Shamsuddin did not agree with al-Khomeini²⁹ concerning the establishing of an Islamic state in Iran. Shamsuddin conceived the subject of governance and administration as being part of Islam, and in particular, he devoted a special work to illustrate his

²⁹ Ruhollah Mustafavi Musavi Khomeini is an Iranian Shia jurist who established the theory of *Wilayat al-Faqih* [the mandate of jurists] which is a new idea in connection with the Shiite where it declared that the jurist has the right to do what the absent Imam does in everything except the Great Jihad, and that many of the Shiite jurists today are qualified to carry out this mandate, but it is he, Khomeini, who took over the whole process, in addition to building up the Islamic state in Iran.

position on and vision of secularism. His addressing of these issues in a specific book is one reason he was picked for this thesis. Sheikh Shamsuddin dealt with secularism in this context of raising it to remedy a certain political reality that happened in Lebanon, not in the case of a purely theoretical philosophical report, so he was looking at secularism and claiming that it is a solution to a society like Lebanon, which has high sectarian diversity. However, in the folds of his books, he clarified his conception of secularism and what is meant in this research. What is more important is the matter of administration and government and administration in Islam. A lot of his famous books written in regard to Islam explain his position towards secularism, especially his book *Fi al-ijtima' al-siyasi al-islam [On Islamic Political Unity]* and *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam [The System of Governance and Administration in Islam]*. Furthermore, Shamsuddin treated secularism within a particular political reality and not within a purely theoretical philosophical field. He saw secularism as the solution to the Lebanese society's religiously diversity. However, in the folds of his book he delineated his conception of secularism and his position on it. He wrote his book as well to counter secular trends in order to approve the existence of such a model of the system in Islam as well as in response to the statement "separation of religion from politics".

1.2.4. Dr. Adel Daher

Dr. Adel Daher is a Lebanese-born figure from Jabal Amal in Nabatiyeh, he tends to a Shiite source from *raafidah*, which is explained in the previous paragraphs. He is a Lebanese journalist and a researcher. He studied at the American University of Beirut as well as at universities of Frankfurt and New York, from which he took a doctorate in Philosophy in 1967. He participated in the establishment of "Mawaqif" magazine, and was a member of the editorial board. Currently, he is the editor of the journal "Arab Philosophia." Moreover, he wrote many books in Arabic, such as *Al-Falsephe wa al-siyasa [Philosophy and Politics]*, *al-Akhlaq wa al-aqil [Ethics and Mind]*, *Awlawiyyet al-aqil [Priority of Mind]*; moreover, he has books in English literature such as **A Philosophical Critique of Islamism, The Challenge of Pluralism: Paradigms from Muslim Contexts**, as well as a number of articles written in English. However, the most important book which will be mentioned in the course of this thesis is *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, in which Dr. Adel Daher also spoke about

secularism, but in a completely different manner. It is different from the other scholars mentioned above, because, generally, every supposition has many points of view which are similar to or different from the others. In addition, we live in the Middle East, generally, in the Muslim- majority countries, more specifically, we live in a tragic crisis, because we are going on in the mixture of present and future existence with wills, forces, and concepts. In the philosophical foundations of the concept of secularism, Dr. Daher, through twelve chapters with the analysis concerning the humanly and logical justification of that term, addresses the most important statements, ideas and claims related to the term of secularism. During his philosophical consolidation, the author puts that concept in its pivotal position, a suitable and necessary position, to come to the process of cognitive, political, and social development in an attempt to compensate for the most important factors that led to relate to that concept. It is not the purpose of his book to achieve the comprehensive critical philosophical movement whose roots work in all aspects of value, politics, meeting, and religion, but in order to provide it with an evolutionary context to consolidate the concept of secularism in thought and society, especially in the face of the comprehensive and systematic attack on secularism by Islamic scholars and Islamic thinkers who make that concept, secularism, synonymous to atheism.

During his writing about secularism, Dr. Adel Daher differentiates between *ilmania* which takes the scientific knowledge as represented in the natural science, and *almania* which is the basis of philosophical establishment in his book *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, defining it as a position of humanity, values, and religion, which means that the role of man in the world and the assertion of the independence of the human mind are epistemology of any position on the nature of practical knowledge and on the nature of its relationship to religious knowledge.

Second Chapter

SAYYID QUTB AND SECULARISM

2.1. *al-Hakimiyya* according to Qutb in the Holy Quran as a Reference

In the Quran, there are many verses that indicate directly the necessity of Islamic Sharia's arbitration in human society at all its levels with all its aspects. There are some verses that mention this directly and some indirectly, as it is known by the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence as the concept of the text whose meaning is intended where Sayyid Qutb focused on the axis of meaning and its basic position. For example, in Surat "Al-Saff," Sayyid Qutb points out that "this Surat targets two fundamental things: firstly, it declares in the conscience of man that religion is a method of Allah for all mankind....., secondly, the life of apostles was reincarnated in the same religion."³⁰ However, we will limit ourselves here to only to Sayyid Qutb's interpretation of verses that speak directly on Islamic Sharia governance, after that we shall see his opinion on the concepts of these verses which enable us to form a clear perception of *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) at the hands of Sayyid Qutb.

In his interpretation of verses 60 to 65 of Surat al-Nisa, Sayyid Qutb said "By the Quran the nation has been created and established", in the sense that the Quran plans and affirms the new features of Islam in the Muslim community that it took from *al-jahiliyya* (ignorance), and it obscures and erases the features of ignorance in its life, souls and sediments. In addition, it organizes its community on the basis of this new birth. It urged the Muslim community to face *al-jahiliyya* fixed in its heart and its conditions from the environment's remnants which the Lord's approach took, in and around the face of ignorance represented in the Jews of city and its hypocrites in addition to the polytheists of Mecca and its surroundings.

As such, in his view, the Quran began to establish for the true Muslim community correct manifestation of Islam by using the condition: "[*Iman* (faith) unites Islam], and connects this perception in this particular point to its basic system which distinguishes its existence from the

³⁰ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran [In the Shadow of the Quran]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 2005, vol.8 p.3550.

existence of *al-jahiliyya*, and its uniqueness of this nation from the features of the nation which it went out to explicate to people in order to lead them to Allah, the divine system.”³¹ Here are several important points about the perception of Sayyid Qutb regarding ignorance:

Firstly, Sayyid Qutb compares between *al-jahiliyya* (ignorance) and Islam, where the concept of *al-jahiliyya* for him is any rule which is not based on the arbitration of Islamic law in life. As he said in the previous paragraph: “When it (the Quran) was fighting by the Muslim community to face *al-jahiliyya* fixed in its heart and its conditions from the remnants of the environment”. So, Islam came to confront *al-jahiliyya* (ignorance) and build Islam. For him, moreover, Islam is met by ignorance; that is to say, any system, which is not based on Islam, is a system of ignorance. This is clear by his saying: “When the Quran was establishing all this (i.e. it is like a weapon used by the Muslims to face *al-jahiliyya*), it was beginning to establish for the Muslim community its correct manifestation by its condition: “*Iman* (faith) unites Islam, and to relate this perception, in this particular point, to its basic system which distinguishes its existence from the existence *al-jahiliyya* around it”, so Islam, as Sayyid Qutb sees, is the standard of differentiation from ignorance.

Secondly, faith is neither completed by an individual nor in the community generally except by the will to resort to the law of Allah in accordance with Allah's saying: “By your Lord, they will not be true believers until they let you decide between them in all matters of dispute, and find no resistance in their souls to your decisions, accepting them totally.”³² Sayyid Qutb comments on what he understood from that Surat saying: “People do not believe initially; rather, they should try to follow the path of Allah represented in life the Prophet, (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), and founded after him two sources: the Quran and the Sunna, so it is not enough to judge-to be believers- rather, they [people] should be satisfied while taking the orders, and judgement: {But know, by the Lord, they will not (really) believe until they make you (O Muhammad) judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and find in themselves no discomfort

³¹ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.2 p. 686.

³² Surat al-Nisa, 65.

from what you have judged and submit in (full willing) submission}, so, this is the condition, which is, ‘*Iman* (faith) that unites Islam.’³³

According to Qutb, whoever claims that whoever is a believer without achieving in their self that capacity which is to resort to the law of Allah and consent to it, then they will be a liar in what they claim. Hence, the name of hypocrite is applied to them, that is, a person who pretends to have virtues, morals, religious beliefs or principles, but actually does not possess what they claim. Thus, Sayyid Qutb comments on this by continuing his previous quotation: “Do you [Prophet] not see those who claim to believe in what has been sent down to you, and in what was sent down before you, yet still want to turn to unjust tyrants for judgement, although they have been ordered to reject them? Satan wants to lead them far astray.”³⁴ The sign of hypocrisy is that to refrain from and turn away from what Allah has revealed as well as from invoking the Messenger of Allah. “And if it is said to them ‘come’ to what Allah has revealed and to the Messenger, you saw the hypocrites turned their back completely.”³⁵

Finally, Sayyid Qutb sees the arbitration to anything other than sharia of Allah is a kind of *shirk* (polytheism), which is the way out of the religion of Islam, “representing their real trap” in the worship of deity; moreover, “Following human beings in morals, traditions, customs and fashion is practicing polytheism in its own truth as well as contrary to the testimony “There is no God but Allah and Muhammed, (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), is the Messenger of Allah” in its own truth.”³⁶ So, Qutb comments on what Allah, the Almighty, said in Surat al-Nisa which is: “Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He does forgive what is less than that that for whom He will,” saying: “The Jew's arbitration to the monks and rabbis who had the right to make *halal* and *haram* whenever they wanted from themselves is a kind of polytheism to which the Holy Quran referred; ” this is what Sayyid Qutb connects on, that is to say, anyone who is subject to another kind of judgment without taking into consideration the judgement of

³³ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.2 p. 687.

³⁴ Surat al-Nisa, 60.

³⁵ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.2 p. 687.

³⁶ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.4, p.2033.

Allah is considered to be an infidel or disbeliever. However, this ruling in Islam is related only to those who think that Islamic law does not have the right to judge. However, those who live in a society in that Sharia does not rule do not have any polytheism in itself; otherwise, it is forced for anyone not to enter to Islam in our current era, something a sensible person could not say or believe, which means, that religion does not cost anyone a duty to turn regimes and replace them with the Islamic regime until he is ruled by his Islam.

What is clear from the perspective of Qutb is that in some way he is equating any law outside of the Sharia as unacceptable. Furthermore, if one was to examine his ideas further, it seems that he is suggesting that secularism is both an indication of ignorance and a modern form of paganism, where the Islamic tradition was strongly against it since its inception. It is this idea of Qutb which is worth investigating in which Qutb is alluding to the point that many modern symbols can be presented as metaphoric idols, of which secularism is one of them. This leads one to ask whether this idea can be extended to everything, and whether Qutb is laying a charge towards all ideas that do not agree with his vision of Islam. Qutb then is not simply criticising forms of governance, but philosophy also.

Sayyid Qutb goes on to explain his interpretation at the same pace and moves to Surat of al-Maida dealing directly with the issue of *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) which decides that the Islamic Sharia should be arbitrated, and whoever changes it or satisfies with the other one is a disbeliever. It is clear in the Holy Quran: “Do they want judgement according to the time of pagan ignorance? Is there any better judge than God for those of firm faith?”³⁷ Sayyid Qutb cited these verses which are used in conveying his complete meaning required by saying: “The issue of governance, law, and litigation, including the issue of divinity, unity, faith, and the issue at its core is the answer about the following questions: Would judgment, Sharia, and litigation be according to the covenants, contracts, and laws of Allah that the owners of the monotheistic religions preserved one after the other, and wrote them on the Apostles, and on those who take charge after them to follow their guidance? Or is it all for the volatile whims and interests that are not due to a fixed origin of the law of Allah and the custom are called upon? In other words: Is it

³⁷ Surat al-Maida 50.

the divinity, godliness, and the stewardship of Allah in the earth and in the lives of people? Or are they all or some for one of His creatures prescribed and available to people unless authorised by Allah?” According to Qutb,

Believers are the ones who rule by what Allah has revealed, they do not cut out of it a letter or change anything from it; and the unbelievers, the evil oppressors, are those who do not judge what Allah has revealed; it is either the rulers who depend on the law of Allah, so they are in the scope of faith, or they depend on another law that was not authorised by Allah. Hence, they are unbelievers, the oppressors....³⁸

We can see in this quote that Sayyid Qutb has linked between judgment and divine perception. Satisfaction of judgement of Allah is based on the true perception of Allah, which means the belief of Allah's total deity and sovereignty in addition to the creation's full bondage. On the contrary, satisfaction without the law of Allah indicates poor perception of Allah. Allah is the only Creator of the universe who knows everything about His creatures, so the Creator (Allah) is the most appropriate to direct that creature [man] that is in this existence unstable, unable to answer the major questions about his existence, and knows nothing about which system is the most suitable one for him to report and take. However, the matter, as Sayyid Qutb says, is not to select the best choice as an issue of priority; rather, the issue is the arbitration of the law of Allah as a reference to faith. In addition, the rejection of that is considered as accusation of the divine denial, which is the refusal and lack of faith, so Qutb argues that: “Whoever rules without what Allah has been revealed rejects the divinity and characteristics of Allah in one hand, and claims for himself the right of divinity and its characteristics on the other hand.”³⁹

Moreover, Sayyid Qutb refers to the basic issue that stems from it and comes back to the same point which is the arbitration of the law of Allah, and without it there is a swing between *kufir* (disbelief) and *iman* (faith). Therefore, Sayyid Qutb above concluded that he sees ruling as the most important issue for which a believer lives. When Allah took the prophetic society away from ignorance, he ordered His law for them. Governance represents the most important issue of

³⁸ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.2, p.888.

³⁹ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran*, vol.2, p.898.

apostles, the greatest manifestation of the effort of prophets, and it represents the separation between the ignorant society marked by all qualities of inferiority, ignorance and inhumanity, and from the Lordly society based on justice. Therefore, for Sayyid Qutb, as we have seen before, the one who refuses or does not resort to the law of Allah, which is, more detailing, a rejection to prophets that brought humanity out of darkness, darkness of disbelief, to the light of faith; and refuses the will of Allah, his divinity and sovereignty which leads to the divine denial especially when the belief of preference was produced by the human mind over what Allah wanted to man and from man, hence this is contrary to the pure revelation came by prophets. This is the conclusion of Sayyid Qutb's opinion about governance in his interpretation of *Fi zilalil al-Quran [In the Shadow of Quran]*, This perception, moreover, will be completed by an overview of the concept of governance over society and the components of Islamic society in the rest of his works.

2.2. Sovereignty's Projections and the Form of the Islamic Community

The first part of this chapter contained the vision of Sayyid Qutb based on the Quranic verses that speak directly on the subject of Sharia governance. This section deals with the general perception of sovereignty in Sayyid Qutb's thought and how to apply this perception on human society through knowledge of features of Islamic societies by applying the general characteristics suitable to his perception of sovereignty mentioned in the previous section. To do so, we can use such prominent intellectual works of Sayyid Qutb as: *Ma'lem fi al-Tareeq [Milestones]*, *Anaser al-Mujtama'a al-Islami [Elements of Islamic Society]*, *al-Adala al-ijtimaiyya fi al-Islam [Social Justice in Islam]*, *Nahwa Mujtama'a Islami [Towards an Islamic Society]* and *Khasais al-tasawwur al-Islami wa Mukawimatihi [Characteristics of Islamic Perception and its Components]*. While interpreting the Quran, scholars are usually limited to the context of verses and meanings of words to gain a general perception. But in other kinds of books, the intellectual, intellectual books for example, can express his ideas more clearly and freely than when dealing with the sacred text. In many of his above- mentioned books, Sayyid Qutb spoke about the nature of Islamic society based on governance which originated from the Muslim community, and it is a unique society marked by a trait which is not found in the rest of communities in the intellectual foundations on which it was based.

The reason for the uniqueness of the Muslim community is because it is “a society of special law that came from Allah”, as Sayyid Qutb says in his book, *Fi Zilalil Quran*; so “The main problem in the uniqueness of the Islamic community in its own system is that it is a society made of a special law, completely since its inception; it has not been historically listed...This is the law that created this society and established its basic foundations on what Allah wanted for his servants, not that some of these people wanted for some”⁴⁰ So, it is the feature of the Muslim community which is based on a divine law, not made by human beings, and the rest of societies, with differences of their fundamental foundations, remain man-made, even if they depend on distorted religious principles. He says as well “The rule on which the Islamic system is based differs from the rules on which all human systems are based.... It depends on the fact that the rule of Allah alone is the one which is legislated alone”⁴¹, hence it is the fundamental difference between the Islamic community and other different societies. The main characteristic that distinguishes the Islamic social system from all other social systems that mankind has known before and after Islam is that it is “the rabbinic system which it is a set of systems, so from this characteristic all other features are found out which define the nature of this system”⁴².

2.3. Perfection of *al-Hakimiyya* (Sovereignty) and Its Realization in Society

Sovereignty for Sayyid Qutb is not an empty slogan without real content on the ground. In the Islamic conception, it is not limited to receiving laws from Allah alone and taking into consideration their judgments alone; “Sharia” in Islam is neither confined to legal legislation, nor even to principles, rules, conditions and origins of government. So, this narrow meaning does not represent the meaning of Sharia and Islamic perception. “{The law of Allah} means that whatever Allah has legitimated is to organize human life....., and this represents in the origins of belief, the

⁴⁰ Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama'a islami [Towards the Islamic Society]*, Cairo, Dar al-Shouroq, 1993, p.63.

⁴¹ Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama'a islami*, p.76.

⁴² Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama'a islami*, p.136.

origins of governance, the origins of ethics, the origins of behaviour and the origins of knowledge as well.”⁴³

Sovereignty, *al-hakimiyya*, is not a formality of political manifestations. Rather, it is a fundamental matter rooted in society, in which it represents the philosophy of government and the foundations of legislation. Moreover, it is not limited to the political side of the power of government and sovereignty with their sources; if it was so, it is for satisfaction of people for this system. As previously mentioned, to deny the law of Allah is *kufir* (disbelief), so the Muslim who lives in the Islamic State’s shadow governing with the law of Allah should be satisfied with this rule. Even more, he should follow its morals and behaviours until *al-hakimiyya* becomes a comprehensive system of social life, from individual behaviour to the country’s constitution and governance system.

2.3.1. Sovereignty and “*La Ilaha Illa Allah*” (No God but Allah)

The word of *tawhid* “*La ilaha illa Allah*” is the key article of faith among Muslims. Whenever an individual declares it, he/she becomes legitimately part of the group of believers. So, it is the most important thing in Islam, more obviously, Islam is not to be built without it. Furthermore, “*La ilaha illa Allah*” is not an empty slogan, rather, in the perception of Qutb, it is an apparent statement consistent with the fundamental belief in the content of “*La ilaha illa Allah*”. More clearly, Sayyid Qutb comments on this by saying:

The theoretical rule on which Islam is based - throughout human history - is the rule: {Testimony that there is no god but Allah,} that is, divinity, deity, authority and governance are for Allah, Almighty Determining this rule from the theoretical point of view is that the life of all human beings returns to Allah only. That is, they do not spend any thing of their aspects from themselves. Rather, they must return to the law of Allah to follow Him. This law of Allah is known from one source which He communicates to them. It is the first pillar of Islam which is: {The testimony that Muhammed is the Messenger of Allah}.⁴⁴

The aim of this rule theoretically is to return human life back to Allah; in the sense that they can do nothing by themselves, nor do they spend any aspect by themselves. Rather, they must

⁴³ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma’alem fi al-tareeq [Milestones]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 1979, p.124.

⁴⁴ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma’alem fi al-tareeq*, p.49.

come back to the rule of Allah in order to survive and they should follow Him. They must know the law of Allah from a source, which is the most important thing, that is the cornerstone of Islam: the testimony that Muhammad, (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), is the Messenger of Allah". So "This is the theoretical basis by which Islam is represented and on which Islam is based."⁴⁵

However, for Qutb, it is not enough to have a belief only in the heart; rather, being a religion, Islam calls for working with this belief both on the individual level and on the social level. "La ilaha illa Allah" (No God but Allah), the key of faith and Islam, can only be achieved by accepting the meaning of full governance in society. The perfection of faith represented in "La ilaha illa Allah", requires making the arbitration the law of Allah and be satisfied with it. It is necessary to be dissatisfied with the arbitration of the law of another god, except Allah or to share another law with Allah's rule, so this leads to the lack of application of the Sharia which causes the proportion of shortfalls in the self- divine. It means that the proportion of inability to legislate rule for the sake of human beings, thus this contrasts with "there is no god but Allah" "La ilaha illa Allah", which is a kind of disbelief as stated by Sayyid Qutb.

2.3.2. The Necessity of the Arbitration of Allah's Law

The issue of applying the Sharia is not an issue based on a choice of preferences, rather, it is a legitimate duty in which a Muslim does not have any choice. Hence, this corresponds with the following paragraphs by connecting governance to faith and vice versa. It is clear when Sayyid Qutb said: "The Islamic social system, which has emerged from the Islamic faith and adopted to the Islamic law, must always be subject in its growth and renewal to its origins from which it originated, and for Sharia which adopted its existence. So, the Islamic Sharia should be dominant to all developments in the Islamic community system....."⁴⁶

Sayyid Qutb stresses this issue in another work saying: "Since religion is to worship Allah alone, following the approach of Him alone in all aspects of life, receiving from Allah alone in all

⁴⁵ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma'alem fi al-tareeq*, p.49.

⁴⁶ Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama'a islami*, p.138.

these affairs, and the servitude to Allah alone in obedience to His method, law, system and worshiping of Allah whether in ritual worship or in a system of real life.”⁴⁷ Hence it is not possible to distinguish between individual worship and social governance. Islam, as Sayyid Qutb states, is either taken as whole or left entirely.

2.3.3. The Bottom Line on Sovereignty in Qutb’s Thought

In this research, we have seen the sequence in the presentation of Sayyid Qutb’s concept of sovereignty, the meaning of *tawhid* and its essential part of sovereignty due to it being the local place of worship, faith and submission, in addition to the basic concepts of Islam at the social level and evidence of the subordination of the human society to Allah politically and socially, so all this can be considered the solid foundation in Islam. As a result of the aforementioned meaning, it is obligatory to arbitrate the Sharia in the human meeting, as it is of complete faith and indicative of it. So, it is necessary for the characteristics of Muslim community to distinguish them from the others. The most famous features of the Muslim community as stated by Sayyid Qutb are: firstly, it is a society based on servitude to Allah in whole matters; secondly, the ruler and the ruled have been subject to the law of Allah, and finally, the legislative system is neither in the hands of the people, nor the ruler. In contrary, the loss of these characteristics will be detrimental to the Islamic community by violating the Islamization of society. This is a brief look at Sayyid Qutb’s concept of sovereignty. The nature of this research requires a little expansion in this concept because of its importance in the position of secularism at Sayyid Qutb, which is the intended issue of this research.

However, the position of Sayyid Qutb on secularism can only be clarified by forming a complete conception of the term of governance. Secularism is the first to target what is known as *al-hakimiyya* in Islam. Knowing the position of Sayyid Qutb on sovereignty can provide a more accurate reflection of secularism from his ideas and views. The second demand of this research is

⁴⁷ Qutb, Sayyid, *Khasais al-tasawwur al-islami wa muqawimatihi [The Characteristics and Values of Islamic Conduct]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 1977, p.189.

Sayyid Qutb's perception of secularism through his words which are mentioned in his writings, which dealt with secularism directly.

2.4. Characteristics of the Muslim Community

It is worth mentioning here that to apply the Sharia of Allah, special characteristics should be taken into consideration. What is meant by the characteristics here are the special features of the Islamic society which is governed by the law of Allah alone. This arbitration emanates from a society with certain characteristics, most notably: firstly, it is a society based on subjection to Allah alone in its whole matter as Sayyid Qutb says: “The first distinguishing characteristic of the nature of the Muslim community is that this society depends on the basis of the subjection to Allah alone in all its matter And this is represented in belief’s perception as well as in the ritual worship and in legal laws.”⁴⁸ According to his words, Sayyid Qutb refers to a basic feature of the Islamic religion which is the concept of “worship”, which is broader than personal worship at the level of individuals manifested in prayer or fasting.....or other personal worship, but Islam came to decide the meaning of worship which is wider than this narrow concept settled in the mind of some people, which is the meaning for the whole universe to worship the One, the Almighty, Allah. This means that all exists in this life whether individuals and groups, the animate or the inanimate, are subject to the One, Allah, who created everything and his creation was improved.

Secondly, the ruler and the ruled, both of them, are subject to the law of Allah. Sayyid Qutb comments on this saying:

.....And we return to follow some traces of the doctrine of Islamic monotheism in the realization of the privilege of the Lord in Islamic system. The first of these traces is the *tawhid* of any individual and group, the ruler and the ruled, the worker and the employer, the producer and the consumer, and the giver and taker...., this single vector is the worship for the pleasure of Allah: “I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me.”⁴⁹, ⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma’alem fi al-tareeq*, p.84-85.

⁴⁹ Surat al-Dharyat, 56.

⁵⁰ Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama’a islami*, p.146.

The ruler is neither God, nor the deputy, as in the case with a theocracy; rather, the ruler and the ruled, both of them, are subject to the law of Allah in government, politics and economy and so forth. It is the advantage of the Muslim community that is independent from the two of them, the ruler and the ruled, and it is not one of them, but it is an independent type of governance.

Thirdly and finally, the legislative system is not in the hand of the people, nor even the ruler. So, Sayyid Qutb comments on this by saying: “*al-Hakimiyya* (sovereignty) in the unique divine system is for Allah alone; there is no governance for a prince and a parish. Allah alone is the only legislator, and the work of man is the application and implementation of the divine law.”⁵¹ Thus, all things of mankind as well as other creatures should be put by the administration of Allah because Allah is the Creator and man has nothing to do except, he receives the power from Allah due to Allah is the only legislator all over the world.

2.5. Sayyid Qutb and Secularism

When we consider Sayyid Qutb's conception of secularism, we should note the historical context that Sayyid Qutb considered as an accurate point to reach the secular situation. Secularism, in its first cradle, was not a breakthrough, a leap, or a conscious intellectual product, but a reaction of a certain reality that prevailed in Europe. Secularism is an intellectual context resulted from the socio-political situation in Europe which led to the emergence of its ideas.⁵²

⁵¹ Qutb, Sayyid, *Nahwa mujtama'a islami*, p.150.

⁵² Here is a brief overview of the emergence of secularism in Europe that changed the world from the 17th/18th centuries until now. Secularism appeared because of many historical, social, economic, political, scientific and regional circumstances. Secularism, emerged from Europe, historically had its roots of separating the notion of 'Church' from the 'state'. The Church was accused of corruption and exploiting religious authority to achieve and satisfy their relevance within the structures of authority. Moreover, as William Durant stated: “The Church became the largest feudal lord in Europe and the Church had vast tracts of agricultural lands as a precinct of the Church”. Concerning political oppression, the authority of the pope, who was the dominant authority over the political and administrative authorities, reached its peak to the extent that the pope was able to crown kings and emperors and remove their crowns if they disobeyed or rejected his orders. John Wycliffe, the first reformer of the Church said: “The Church owns lands of England, and takes the high taxes from the rest”, and he demanded the abolition of these endowments and accused the clerics that they are “the followers of Caesars not the followers of God” (Fisher, see, “*The History of Europe*”, [2- 362- 364]). In addition, it was the conflict between the Church and science, the era of volcano of science and rationalism which became prominent as we said before.

Sayyid Qutb sees that the conditions prevailing in Europe, which preceded the emergence of secular ideas, greatly helped to develop the ideas that were established to isolate religion from public life, Sayyid Qutb supports this idea by saying:

Those people saw that religion is not fit for life, so they said: Religion is a link between the servant and the Lord and it is not wrong to share its (religion) shadow in the church and to let its names in the Holy Temple, then to face the struggle of life in society with their barbaric traditions and let the sword judge during their barbarity, in addition to invite the civil law to rule after they attend. Religion stayed in its emotional isolation there in the hearts and consciences in the holy throne, and the throne of recognition Christianity is never there in the system that dominates all life and connects the kingdom of the earth with the kingdom of the heaven. Hence isolation was between religion and life in the lives of Europeans.⁵³

In addition, Qutb believes that Christianity, when it failed to meet the social needs in Europe, enflamed class, economic, and military conflicts without having the ability to resolve disputes. When all these dilemmas failed, the establishing of isolation between religion and community was the seed of secular ideas. The first conception of Sayyid Qutb towards secularism is that the latter is a separation from the religion and an attempt to arrange life away from it. As for what secularism is in terms of terminology, Sayyid Qutb sees secularism as synonymous with one word which is *la-diniyye* [non-religious]. So, secularism for him is, in short, “non-religious”, which has been based on the ruins of the state ruled by Islamic law, which means a state governed by Sharia, hence this will be useful in investigating the position of Sayyid Qutb regarding secularism in the next section. Thus, secularism for Sayyid Qutb is a phenomenon of non-religiosity that arose out of socio-political conditions that prevailed in a certain historical era in Europe.

Moreover, as for a society in which secularism is applied in a partial or a comprehensive way to the aspects of life, Sayyid Qutb sees that it falls under the so called “pre-Islamic society” (Ignorant society). Sayyid Qutb comments on this saying:

The Jahili society is every society other than the Muslim community. If we want the objective identification, we would say: It is every society that does not worship Allah which is represented by the perception of belief [faith], by religious rituals and by the Sharia.

⁵³ Qutb, Sayyid, *al-Adala al-ijtimai'ya fi al-islam [Social Justice in Islam]*, Cairo, Dar al-Shouroq, 1993, p.9.

Because of that objective definition, all societies existed actually today on earth are within the framework of the “Ignorant society!”⁵⁴

In other words, secular society is a society in which the supreme rule is for the people or for the political parties, that is to say, in which governance is not for Allah.

In conclusion, according to Sayyid Qutb, secularism is a product of the socio-political conditions prevailed in the European world during a certain period of time accompanied by the inability of the Christian religious regime to solve the problems that occurred at that time. This led people to secularize and take negative attitude towards religion. In addition, according to Sayyid Qutb's opinion about secularism, he notices that secularism in its terminology, with circumstances that led to its inception and what followed these circumstances, proves that it is synonymous with “non-religious”. Sayyid Qutb also adds that the secular society is an Ignorance community, *al-jahiliyya*, which is equal to pagan societies and other ones. They have one main characteristic: supreme governance in these societies is for other than God, whether that other god is human beings, parties, or non- religious principles.

2.6. Sayyid Qutb’s Ruling on Secularism

After completing the vision of what is Islamic governance for Sayyid Qutb and how he sees the Islamic society and what its components are as well as we see the whole image of Sayyid Qutb about secularism, there will be no difficulty in devising the ruling of secularism according to Qutb. Sayyid Qutb believes that a Muslim should believe in the unity of the governance in the law of Allah, and the society in which the law of Allah is fully applied is a Muslim community. The non-application of the Sharia in society leads to an ignorant community, as well as the satisfaction of Muslim in anything other than the law of Allah is a way out of Islam.

If we look at the above, we find that secularism in its simplest form, the partial secularism, is based on the idea of separating religion from general political life, that is to say, the reference of governance in society is the collective human will. That is to say, these put before the rejection metaphysics, any influence on the mind from outside it. Although these neither impose on people

⁵⁴ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma’alem fi al-tareeq*, p.88.

their own beliefs, nor compel people to adopt them on a personal level, they reject the Sharia as the final arbitrator of community. In that case, we will note the total contradiction between secularism and governance. The latter sees human space as being limited and its authority is over the entire area. If anything is applied by secularism, it will be in that spot and that area. Hence any application of anything from secularism, will be on the equal expense of governance, and that for Sayyid Qutb contrasts with Allah's sovereignty, which as mentioned before means governance is comprehensive over all aspects of life, even the human subcontractor is charged of satisfaction with it, governance, as a general reference of society. Thus, the secular community is the opposite of the Islamic community, due to that the former, the secular community, is called, in Sayyid Qutb's opinion, a Jahili community because of its method which is other than the law of Allah.

Third Chapter

DR. YUSUF AL-QARADAWI AND SECULARISM

3.1. The Conception of Islam according to Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi

The reader of Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi's books will note that, before discussing any idea which corresponds to Islam, he tends to provide an understanding of Islam on the corresponding idea, in the sense that he gives a clear integrated idea about Islam, before working to compare it with another idea. This is clear when he said:

Define for us your identities frankly, interlocutors, and say for us: 'Who are you' in order to be in a clear vision..... As for us, our position - thanking for Allah- is specific [known] and our identity is as obvious as the sun shining in a day We are 'Muslims' accepting Allah as a Lord, Islam as a religion, Muhammed [Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him] as a Messenger and a Prophet, and the Quran as a way to follow the law.⁵⁵

Al-Qaradawi here in the book entitled, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]* first presents the concept of Islam, before turning to the subject of secularism. It is useful to convey his words as they are because of the totality in his explanation of the concept of Islam in which he gives details. Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi says:

The concept of Islam in which we believe and for which we call as we see is a way of survival in this world and the Hereafter. So, it is the religion that Allah revealed by the last books of the Quran and sent by the Seal of His Messengers, Muhammad, during doctrines, worships, ethics, and transactions..... The source of this religion is the Holy Quran which Allah has guaranteed to preserve, and to remain as Allah revealed it fourteen centuries ago in which no word or letter had changed. What this Quran shows and is explained by the true Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed and which Allah has assigned to him, is to explain the Quran with words, deeds and reports.⁵⁶

Dr. al-Qaradawi defines the Islamic religion as an indivisible integral whole. So, it is based on how the Prophet Muhammad came and any change in its general rules or in its principles removes it out of the name by which the Prophet Mohammed has reached as well as by which Allah

⁵⁵ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*, Cairo, Wahba Library, 1997, p.14-15.

⁵⁶ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 22.

made it suitable as a religion for people. Hence, Islam for Dr. al-Qaradawi is the sum of private and public legislation. The former, private legislation, organizes the relationship between individual and his Lord including the individual's belief and worship. Whereas the latter, that is public legislation, organizes society and people's relations including ethics, relations, and transactions.

Dr. al-Qaradawi comments on the importance of implementing these legislations, private and public, in an integrated way in people's lives at all levels, both private and public, thus any ruling that does not call for the full application of legislation is considered negative. He then proceeds to explain the sources of this religion, represented in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah according to the understanding of the Companions and consensus of the ulema. These are the basic sources of the Islamic religion as well as of jurisprudence in the developing judgments for new cases that occur over time.

According to the deviations of some people who belong to Islam, the Islamic religion does not bear their consequences. No one can make Islam bear the individual's mistakes, and behavioural error cannot be based on the origin of any thought if there is veto or lack unless this behaviour directly calls for that thought. Then Dr. al-Qaradawi begins a statement of the basic features of Islam for which he calls:

Islam, which is we call for, is not a gelatinous substance or material, formed by whoever pleases; rather, it is an integrated civilizational project, explained by its advocates and preachers who built its landmarks and clarified its rules in a way that removes all obscurity and ambiguity, so there is no room to say the following: you call us to a fog or darkness that know neither its origins nor its proportion. However, our Islam which we adopted is as clear as the sun during the day.⁵⁷

For Dr. al-Qaradawi Islam is “an integrated civilizational project” that shows that Islam encompasses all aspects of life, both private and public. This indicates that Islam has a religion and a state, because the state and all related concepts such as authority, rule, law and so forth. All these are essential parts of civilization, and when it is talked about civilization, it means all these things from the beginning. Hence Islam being “an integrated civilizational project” means that Islam has a culture and it is a comprehensive system of an entire society at all its levels.

⁵⁷ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 27.

Dr. al-Qaradawi in his book *Madkhal li ma'rifet al-islam [Introduction to Knowing Islam]* spoke about the characteristics of Islam, as he sees it, that “The first characteristic of the general Islamic characteristics is *Rabaniyya*.”⁵⁸ So, what is meant by *rabaniyya*, as Dr. al-Qaradawi says, are two things: “firstly, *rabaniyya* of purpose and destination; secondly, *rabaniyya* of the source and methodology.”⁵⁹ What is meant by the *rabaniyya* of purpose and destination is that “Islam's last goal and purpose is the good and pure connection with Allah, Almighty, and to obtain His satisfaction, so this is the goal of Islam.”⁶⁰ So, this represents the destination related to the worship of Allah Almighty for the sake of gaining his satisfaction in this world and the Hereafter. Moreover, the meaning of “*rabaniyya* of the source and methodology” is that “what Islam has drawn to reach its goal and its objectives is purely divine because its source is Allah's revelation to the Seal of His Messenger, Muhammad.”⁶¹ Hence, this is the origin of the first characteristic; moreover, the greatness of methodology is a branch of the greatness of its Maker, the Creator, Allah.

However, what is important to us from this unique feature, namely, the “*rabaniyya* of Islam” is what Dr. al-Qaradawi said about the nature of Islamic rulings, the nature of Islamic legislation and its position in the Muslim community. Islamic legislations for Dr. al-Qaradawi are provisions and rights to control the life of the individual and family, society and nations. But they are not human provisions driven by psychological desires and praised by human limitations. Rather, they are the divine legislation which intended to raise and elevate the human meeting to a reality which is worthy of this creature whom Allah glorified and for whom Allah employed all the universe. This advantage of Islamic legislation over other legislation makes it the more appropriate and greater than all other human legal systems. This feature necessarily necessitates belief that the only legislator is Allah. Hence, this belief is the essence of *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty). It is necessary to make legislation be at the hand of Allah Almighty, neither at the hand of jurisprudents

⁵⁸ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *Madkhal li ma'rifet al-islam [An Introduction to Knowing Islam]*, Cairo, Mustafa Library, 1985, p.41.

⁵⁹ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *Madkhal li ma'rifet al-islam*, p.41.

⁶⁰ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *Madkhal li ma'rifet al-islam*, p.41.

⁶¹ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *Madkhal li ma'rifet al-islam*, p.44.

or even if this person were the Prophet Muhammed, [peace and blessings of Allah be upon him], who is only sent by Allah, because the legitimate ruling is created only by the Legislator, Allah. So, it is natural and appropriate to withdraw this matter, which means the legitimate ruling from any character of the Ummah, whether jurists or its scholars, because they only revealed the verdict (the legitimate ruling) from its sources, but were not its creators.

Hence, we understand from the previous ideas of Dr. al-Qaradawi the following: firstly, the Islamic legislation is comprehensive of all aspects of life, whether private and individual or public and social, and it is based on Allah Almighty, so it is infallible. Secondly, the only legislator is Allah, that is, this property is limited only to the divine will, and there is no validity for any person to be a legislator, so this is what Dr. al-Qaradawi mentioned immediately when he said that no one other than Allah has the absolute legislation except that which is authorized by Allah. Even the matters of jurists only reveal the ruling of Sharia contained in the text, even political legislation, with no conclusive text, are benefited as a right from Allah who exclusively has that right. Finally, the one who assigns this function to other than Allah has been labelled as a polytheist, which means a *mushrik*. This argument is similar to Qutb's when he announced that anyone who denied the arbitration of the law of Allah is an "unbeliever". Giving this right to a person or a party is an act that is equivalent to the action of those who have substituted the religion of Allah and changed His law. So, they permit what it is forbidden and forbid what is permitted.

In the end, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi sees Islam as an enactment, legislation, for all kinds of life beginning with the individual person, so it organizes his relationship with Allah after it has been shown the complete perception of existence, values and knowledge under the so-called "belief" which organizes as well the subject of worship. Moreover, it regulates social life starting from the rule and its policy to the smallest cell of society, the family, passing through all laws that organize society between these two levels.

3.2. The Perception of Dr. al-Qaradawi of the Islamic State

The view of Dr. al-Qaradawi of the Sharia rulings as being comprehensive for all aspects of life as well as the exclusive source of *rabaniyya* is a special view in the Islamic community. A Muslim society is not Islamic unless it is a pure Islam, that is the provisions of Islam are applied

in a full manner without any discretion. If the provisions of the Sharia are comprehensive in all aspects of life, the Muslim community can only be achieved within an Islamic state as Dr. al-Qaradawi says:

If the Islamic solution means the establishment of an Islamic community pure to Islam represented in the ingredients of the Islamic community and its characteristics, so the first condition for this is to have in some areas of the land a pure Islamic rule leading the community with the words of Allah and the guidance of Allah; a model of virtues of Islam in its clarity, comprehensiveness, balance, integration, and deepness, embodied in a society; a rule in which people see a model of the Muslim community and of a Muslim nation as based on the doctrine of Islam, the law of Islam, the ethics of Islam and the concepts of Islam.⁶²

Dr. al-Qaradawi believes that the provisions of Islam came to establish an Islamic society, and its characteristics are a total and serious application of the provisions of Islam. In addition, seeing as these provisions are comprehensive, the state must be governed by the Sharia, hence the Islamic state is a necessary condition for the establishment of the Muslim community which demands legislation and it is the community that is pure of every thought that conflicts with Islam in any way or another. However, the words of Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi refers to the material constituents of the Islamic state in an indirect manner and he mentions to the land (the region), which is the first component of the state as well as the application of legislation. He also refers to judgment (power or leadership), which consists of people who are responsible for the application of provisions and legislations which organize the human community. The phrase of Dr. al-Qaradawi “embodied in a society” demonstrates that the most important component of the state is the human element. These are three elements: the region, the power and the human component represent, in contemporary political scholars, which can be considered to be the material components of the state. The vision of Dr. al-Qaradawi is clear and integrated based on the integration of material and cultural elements of civilization to establish a real state.

Moreover, in connection with the nature of this government, Dr. al-Qaradawi says:

I really call for an Islamic government, not a religious government (a theocratic one). The religious government is in the government of priests, and Islam does not know the

⁶² al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Hall al-islami: farida wa darora [The Islamic Solution: An Obligation and a Necessity]*, Cairo, Dar al-Risala, 1974, p.88.

priesthood, and the Islamic government is a civil government based on Islam and considers it as a higher reference. Knowledge of the Sharia is not exclusive to anyone. Rather it is a science and a study and the one who carries it is the one who judges and teaches.⁶³

Here al-Qaradawi emphasizes the importance of the role of the ulema, who can direct, teach, educate a person, preach, and invite him to Allah. Hence “The ulema can be the secrets of man and the secrets of life” as stated by al-Qaradawi in one interview on the official channel, al-Jazeera. Explicitly, Dr. al-Qaradawi calls for the establishment of an Islamic state under Islamic law in its entirety and which considers it the sole legal authority, because Islam’s two main pillars which enable it, Islam, to stand alone: “justice, unity and Shura binding Shura” as stated by al-Qaradawi which means that Islam affirms the nation to select its government because of the three aforementioned pillars. Moreover, the Islamic state Dr. al-Qaradawi mentions is not theocratic in which God’s sovereignty and authority are deputized to a class of priests who control the fate of people to serve their own personal interests. It is also not a civil government in which sovereignty and authority belong to the people. Rather, it is an Islamic government that prevails and has Islamic legislation and the authority belongs to the Shura Council. It is not a class state that confines the presidency to family, tribe, or race, but it is a state in which scholars predominate and make all kinds of science available for all who wants regardless of his social class or race or his component. Al-Qaradawi confirms this saying:

A state or government in this- albeit <<Islamic>>- state is not a <<religious >> state in the way which the West knew in the Middle Ages. Rather, it is a government of thought and message.....It is based on allegiance, consultation, justice, and advice which are ruled by a constitution or a law which it [state] puts and which it cannot change, [because] it is a law of the Lord [Allah], and the religious scholars are nothing but experts [within this state].⁶⁴

3.3. The Concept of Secularism according to Dr. al-Qaradawi

The requirement is intended to present the vision of Dr. al-Qaradawi on secularism, which is incredibly important to our research. Dr. al-Qaradawi, as we have seen, has written a work

⁶³ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 43.

⁶⁴ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 36.

specifically on this subject and which presents the concept of Islam and secularism. Therefore, this work, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]* will also be a suitable reference for this section.

3.3.1 The Concept of Secularism and Its Relation to Scientificism and Atheism

After finishing his integrated explanation of Islam, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi in his book *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh* singled out a special chapter, entitled “The Concept of Secularism”, whose aim is to convey the complete and correct meaning of secularism, as he sees it. Dr. al-Qaradawi opens his chapter with the question “What is secularism?” He argues that *al-Ilmaniye* is translated inaccurately. That is, it is incorrectly translated to the English “secularism” or “secularite” or “Laique” in French, which has no relations whatsoever to the word “science” nor does it belong to any of its derivations.”⁶⁵ *Ilim* (science) in English and French are expressed as “science,” and the scientific part is called “scientism” according to “scientific” or “scientifique” in French. So “The correct translation of this word is “non-religious” or “mundane” to be more specific, which has nothing to do with religion or what its relationship with religion is antagonistic.”⁶⁶

The word “secularism” was translated as “secularism” because those who took the translation did not understand these two words “religion” and “science” except what the Western Christians understood. “Religion and science are completely opposed, that is, what is religious is not scientific and what is scientific is not religious. So, science and the mind are the opposite of religion, that is, secularism and rationality are in the anti- religious class.”⁶⁷ Here is a pause in regards to this text by Dr. al-Qaradawi, where the concept of secularism is crystallized, so several points can be extracted: firstly, there is no relation between secularism and science in terms of the linguistic root. That is, secularism does not link to science and its derivatives at all, so this is a

⁶⁵ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 42.

⁶⁶ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 42.

⁶⁷ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 42.

response to those who want to market secularism as being science- based. Secondly, the correct translation of secularism is “non- religious”, the fact that this is the case at Dr. al-Qaradawi which is suitable to be “anti- religion”, not to be met as one coin. Finally, those who marketed secularism as being based on science proceeded from different ideological perspectives from the nature of the Islamic community. These, instead, are European intellectual perspectives whose thought sees conflict between religion and science, which is one of the most important differences that distinguish the Islamic community from the Christian one, and the Islamic community from the European community.

As for the concept of secularism Dr. al-Qaradawi, summarized it by saying: “Secularism is *la-diniyye* (not religious) as the agreed-upon meaning of secularism is “the isolation of religion from the state and the life of the individual keeping it locked in the conscience of the individual, no longer exceeding the private relationship between him and his Lord. If it is allowed for him to express about it, it is in the rituals of worship and ceremonies related to marriage, death and the like.”⁶⁸ This means that secularism which Dr. al-Qaradawi expressed contradicts religion, in the sense of isolating religion from the social and public life, keeping it as a personal behaviour which does not exceed the individual’s relationship with his Lord or some slogans without having an entrance to public life in any of life's forms. In addition, Dr. al-Qaradawi sees that secularism is an attempt to delay religion from public life, its exclusion, and replace it with other provisions that confront religion and do not agree with it. If we meditate the historical-social context in which the term of “secularism” originated, we see that it arose initially from what is not religious, then it ends with the meaning of what is in the place of religion, that is, a shift from being purely descriptive to a philosophical indication of isolation from religion and excluding it from life. Eventually, it becomes time to isolate religion from even the personal life of individual. Thus Al-Qaradawi stated that: “In Islam- unsimilar to our contemporary time- it has no religious education; it has non-religious education; there were no people called clerics, or men of science or politics or *dunya* [world]. Religion was mixed of life as whole.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 45.

⁶⁹ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 46.

Moreover, secularism, as Dr. al-Qaradawi sees, is against Islamic law governing Islamic life, therefore it collides with the Islamic religion in that the latter, the Islamic legislation, organizes the walks of society. Secularism for Dr. al-Qaradawi, is an experiment that has developed in non-Muslim lands, which is alien to culture and civilization, hence it is wrong to apply it especially since Muslims have an integrated legislative system that does not lack to import provisions from outside to fill any gap in it, so Dr. al-Qaradawi comments saying:

The thing that secularism stands up explicitly against is that it is “legislation” that organizes through its provisions the Islamic life putting calm (guiding) rules, avoiding derivations, whether in relation to the family “personal matters”, or to the community or even the state; whether it is in its relationship internal or external, peaceful or war which is what the Islamic jurisprudence means in all its different schools and various facets. It, Islam, has left for us a great wealth of legislation enough with no need to import laws from others, laws that did not stem from our beliefs, values, and customs. Hence, they are still alien to us, linked with our mind and heart with invasive colonization imposed on us without our will or choice.⁷⁰

Islam has encompassed various human issues, including those related to politics and governance, or judiciary and legislation, or organizing life, whether private or public, so what is the need to devise another system as long as religion did not leave a gap that constitutes legislative shortcomings in Islam? So, secularism is a strange phenomenon that arose out by certain circumstances and conditions that were not available in our Islamic community in order to be imported and dropped on it without noting the cultural and civilizational differences between two societies and this is by itself a serious scientific and philosophical mistake.

3.3.2 Between Secular and Scientific

Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi in his book, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye Wajhan Li wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*, presents, as previously mentioned, an important issue which is the intersection between secularism and science. Some people even went to a sensitive point which is “fraud” or “deceiving” by claiming that secularism is synonymous with science, like the writer Eid al-Dwihis in his book *Al-ilmaniye fi Mizani al-akil [Secularism in Balance with the Mind]*, where

⁷⁰ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 74.

he stated that “secularism is not contrary with the scientific”, in an attempt to market secularism making people accept it by telling that secularism does not oppose religion; rather, it has another branch which is only the scientific work. This is clear when Dr. al-Qaradawi pointed out that: “Some secularists have taken advantage of the misinterpretation of the word "secularism", trying to make it synonymous with “scientific” where they said: Secularism means the use of mind and science, or more clearly stated, that Islam is against the reason and science.”⁷¹ The secular discourse speaks of this trend, so in the most time, secularists speak in a way that suggests that they have monopolized science and scientific doctrine. Hence all of their opponents oppose them because of the necessity of science. Thus, the followers of religions are a group of ignorant followers of legendary myths to which they resort due to their inability to explain the mysterious aspects of existence. So, Dr. al-Qaradawi sums up secularists in an attempt to claim the conformity and correspondence of secularism with science with the word "opportunism" of misinterpretation, which is known as “fraud”.

Dr. al-Qaradawi replied on this attempt saying: “This is an open fallacy, the vast gap between science and secularism, and we say: ‘Yes’ to the first, and ‘No’ to the second.”⁷² This is the fallacy (misconception) as Dr. al-Qaradawi sees it, so he seeks to define all concepts to unveil the clamour which secularists claimed. Hence, he says about the ‘scientific’: “‘Scientific’ belongs to science in all areas of life: material and literary, civil and military, political and economic, individual and social. And the ‘scientists’ are those who adopt this destination; they respect what science decides and they apply its rule according to which they adopt their lives”⁷³. The ‘scientific’ has its own domain which is a completely different field from the field of secularism. Science deals with material things through observation, experimentation, organization, administration and other fields. Secularism is a field of philosophy that has a view of existence and values, so even if secularism claims so, there is no necessary link between the two fields, science and secularism.

In addition, Dr. al-Qaradawi clarifies what is the aim of science in the ‘scientific’ saying:

⁷¹ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 57.

⁷² al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 57.

⁷³ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 57.

We want by “science” here what is based on conclusive evidences, so how many cases were introduced under the title of science and they have no relation to science in anything. There are a lot of results of human and social sciences where some of followers want to dress them the absolute science, and there are no more than conclusions of uncertain introductions, some of them are been accepted and rejected, and perhaps all of them are been rejected. There is no evidence from the difference of results in the different intellectual schools to which their scholars belong East to West, between the right to the left, so the difference is according to its grade from right of the right to left of the left.⁷⁴

Dr. al-Qaradawi believes that the claiming ‘scientific’ for everything that comes to the mind of any person is a principle contrary, in itself, to the ‘scientific’, and we cannot formulate philosophical views in terms of religion, society, and politics, which are absolutely intellectual dangers which the guide of mental or sensory cannot conclusively support. We beautify them by ‘scientific’ then we say to those who take an objective position, using the standard of mind and logic to check them, so they reject what is useless and accept what has conclusive evidence. We cannot say to those who have this position “you are hostile to science” in an attempt to demonize them and drop their value in front of people. Hence, the ‘scientific’ is not anyone’s monopoly; rather, it is the standard to which all people and ideas return, so no one can make from his thought a standard over scientific and corresponding ideas. By this, Dr. al-Qaradawi separates between the scientific and secularism, stating that secularism does not require scientific, nor obligatory. However, secularism and all other ideas should be exposed to scientific criteria to determine what is acceptable and agreed absolutely with both reason and sense.

At the end, if we look at the intellectual output of the liberal doctrine, we find that there is this tendency to monopolize scientific criterion within the doctrine. Democracy monopolizes freedom in its doctrine and makes itself a criterion for it, and every member of it is free to the extent that it is close to the application of democracy. Socialism has also monopolized the concept of social justice in its philosophical doctrine, and social justice can exist only in a socialist society and so on.

⁷⁴ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 57.

3.4. Is Secularism Possible or Applicable? According to al-Qaradawi

This subject tends to, in the light of the foregoing in the preceding paragraphs, to strip the position of Dr. Qaradawi towards secularism in his known books, *Al-islam wa al-ilmaniyye Wajhan Li wajh*, so the matter does not require much meditation because the title of his book can give a preliminary perception of Dr. al-Qaradawi's position and his sayings about Islam and secularism that they are *Wajhan Li wajh* "face to face", an expression that indicates confrontation and conflict between the two. However, the idea of not combining them may not be possible or clear from the title, so Dr. al-Qaradawi needs to give deeper details deeply in his work. In his aforementioned book Dr. al-Qaradawi says in his chapter named "*al-Ilamniye dita al-din*" [*"Secularism Against Religion"*]: "Secularism, in the sense that it is been shown, has been rejected.....By any standard to which we mastered, and the first is religion."⁷⁵ Dr. al-Qaradawi believes that the rejection of secularism is from a religious perspective, that is, secularism cannot accept coexistence with the religion that the Prophet Muhammad has received, but in its best case, secularism accepts that religion is limited to the conscience of individual without agreeing the beliefs of commitment of Allah. It also accepts the individual's acts of worship of which the state does not take care. It does not see the legality of the obligatory, nor even its ethical standards governing the community. Most of what it accepts is individual self- monitoring that does not have any general or social input. So, Dr. al-Qaradawi summed up the chapter entitled "*al-Ilamniye dita al-din*" [*"Secularism Against Religion"*] believing that secularism is contrary to religion, more specifically, that is, religion and secularism cannot meet at all. Dr. al-Qaradawi sees that secularism first rejects religion. Even if secularism has been rejected by religion because secularism cannot be established except by excluding religion from life, its growth then depends on the decline and death of religion.

Moreover, he also declared that if secularism is applied, it makes religion only a personal, individual direction that regulates the relationship of the individual to his Lord. While religion calls for the control of all human relations, both at the personal level with Lord, or at the general level by regulating the relations of individuals with one another, secularism, in particular, has a problem with the Sharia and seeks to reduce it. The one who looks at the intellectual foundations on which

⁷⁵ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 74.

secularism was based and the historical context ended with its emergence sees that religion is older than it, and secularism came to face the application of religion in a society by excluding it from public life. So Dr. al-Qaradawi is right when he considered that secularism, even if secularism is rejected religiously, was the first to establish hostility against religion. Hence, the relationship between religion and secularism has “hostility”, as Dr. al-Qaradawi stated. Thus, there is no way to agree with each other and there can be no consensus between the two because the nature of each is in complete contradiction with the other.

While Islam aims to implement the law of Allah in all the walks of life, secularism seeks to exclude religion from public life, and this is the most important point that cannot be achieved at all. Thus, Dr. al-Qaradawi said: “Secularism with the criterion of religion is rejected.” Therefore, it cannot be permissible to adopt secularism whatever its degree and level were; moreover, it is, in all its forms, been rejected by religion of Islam and its scholars. So, the relationship between secularism and Islam, especially in the Islamic religion of its universality, is a contradictory relationship, that is, there is a prohibition against gathering. They cannot co-exist together and a society either applies religion at all various levels or isolates it from public life. So this is what ‘secularization’ means in its simplest form. As for those who accept secularism or adopt it, Dr. al-Qaradawi says:

The secular person who refuses the ‘principles’ of the application of Sharia from the beginning has no Islam, except in name and he is certainly an apostate from Islam. He should be punished and he should ask forgiveness, otherwise the argument will be made against him; moreover, he will be sentenced to apostasy, stripped from his belonging to Islam, or withdrawn from him ‘the Islamic nationality’, separated from his wife and child, and sentenced to apostasy in life and after death.⁷⁶

The secularist, who refuse to arbitrate the Sharia in his life, is considered to be apostate in the eyes of Dr. al-Qaradawi, and it is applied upon him the provisions of infidels in this world and the Hereafter. This judgment of Dr. al-Qaradawi is identical to the necessities of religion. The arbitration of Sharia in both private and public life of the human society is a known imposition of

⁷⁶ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh*, p. 67.

religion which should not be denied; otherwise, a person will disrupt the original corner of Islamic pillars which is being set him apart from being a Muslim.

From here, we see that Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi considers the issue of belief in the necessity of Sharia arbitration in life and the human satisfaction in doing so as the very nature of *iman* (faith). If a man denies that, he undermines the construction of faith in such a way that even if he believes in the rest of issues of monotheism, he is a *kafir*, unbeliever, and apostate because the Islamic faith is all connected and harmonious, either to take the whole or to leave it in its entirety. In this section, we conclude that Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Sayyid Qutb agreed that secularism is *la-diniyye* [non-religious], and it is been rejected by both Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Sayyid Qutb. Moreover, if we follow the position of other Sunnah contemporary scholars, we see that there is agreement among them which is rejection of secularism in all forms and degrees. In addition, any application of secularism in any way will inevitably be at the expense of something of Islam, and that matter for them is unacceptable at all.

Fourth Chapter

SHEIKH MOHAMMAD MAHDI SHAMSUDDIN AND SECULARISM

4.1. The Principle of Islam in Politics and Governance for Sheikh Shamsuddin

4.1.1. The Necessity of the Islamic State

So far in this thesis, we have presented each figure's thought on governance, administration, and rule in Islam, we then clarified each figure's position towards secularism after showing his conception of it. Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin speaks about the necessity of the Islamic state based on the innate social necessity of rule in society, regardless of its particular form. Sheikh Shamsuddin says: "The care of Islam in the matter of governance is not an innovation. Rather, it is a response to the necessity required by the man meeting by itself regardless of the existence of a law and a system of life that regulates the life of man in all its aspects and conditions as it is the case of Islam."⁷⁷ Since the dawn of history, human societies have only been established by a law that controls the work of people and curbs the elements that cause chaos, a law that regulates human society within a family, then a tribe and a state, a law that cannot talk about human meeting without its existence. So, it is natural to say that human social life cannot be established without controls regulating the social, economic, educational and criminal life by taking criminals and preventing them from corrupting society and individuals. Hence all this indicates to a great fact, that wherever human beings meet, there is necessarily a law regulating their meeting. According to Sheikh Shamsuddin, what Islam has called for is a necessity required by common sense.

People, since ancient times, have sought to establish authority in every human society in an attempt to control this society and keep it from chaos and the spread of crime and vice in it.

⁷⁷ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Fi al-ijtima' al-siyasi al-islam, [On Political Islamic Unity]*, Cairo, Dar al-Kitap, 1992, p. 65.

Regardless of the doctrine of this rule, it remains an unquestionable necessity for the protection and advancement of society, so the integrity of human life, which means social life, depends on rhythm that controls this life and directs it towards progress and advancement, and needs the presence of authority to control and direct that rhythm. Sheikh Shamsuddin proceeded from this socio-logical postulate and returns to confirm, saying:

The state is a social necessity that cannot be dispensed with all its cases, because human society has a psychological need for the human being. It is obvious that the individual cannot be freed from this instinct, the instinct of society, even if he tries to be emancipated. If a human society is found, complex social relations are found as well as the multi-faceted social activity is found in various fields, so in this case there must have some supervision of any community that regulates its relation, an organizing that prevents it from disintegration by the collision of interests between individuals and groups. The laws are enacted to protect the rights and duties of individuals. These are the basic functions of the state, and since this activity is necessary for society, the state therefore is necessary.⁷⁸

This text, like the previous one, shows the basic function of the state and authority, so the state donates a fundamental psychological need in the human component; it is the need for laws that control the human social reality. Wherever man is found, humans meet, and wherever humans meet, governing authority is required in order to organize this meeting.

With regards to the Islamic government, it falls within the general framework of governments as a social necessity. Therefore, all that remains here is to speak about whether the government should be Islamic. Sheikh Shamsuddin has paved the way to talk about the necessity of government's Islamization in order to eliminate the state of distortions and falsification which the world's major religions has fallen into (See the previous reference, from page19 to page 27), then he said:

Islam, which grew up in this degenerated social environment, must send true life throughout this society in order to unite its ranks and work to spread the Islamic religion in all parts of the Earth. Islam and its principles state that Islam is the end of religions which should give to people a colour of life which is the highest of all colours. Whoever said about the isolation of religion from the social life cannot be in the position of confidence to take and listen to his words to concerning the Islamic religion, and that the opposite of Islam and its spirit is the complete abstraction and escaping from the constraints of space and time. Islam

⁷⁸ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam [The System of Governance and Administration in Islam]*, Beirut, International Institution for Studies and Publishing, 2000, p.39.

is the religion that has facilitated the path of everyone to achieve the human perfection. It is based on the fact that the human being is composed of matter, spirit and goodness of human life, which depends on the mixing of matter, and spirit in the human entity.⁷⁹

Islam, according to Sheikh Shamsuddin, as stated in this text, came to bridge the gaps that afflicted other religions due to their distortions. As such, Islam had to avoid these deviations and even work to address and process them. The most important deviation is the “issue of governance” which organizes society at the material [physical] and spiritual [religious] levels. Furthermore, there must be balance between both levels in order to achieve happiness and goodness in this world and the Hereafter. Seeing as Islam is the end of religions, it has to be as it is, ruling law in times and places in the sense that Allah did not let humankind flounder. Therefore, in his view, Islam does not know any isolation between religion and politics. Rather, it is an integrated law applicable to all levels of human existence in every time and place.

Thus, Sheikh Shamsuddin clearly sees the establishment of an Islamic state as a logical, social, and innate necessity required by human nature and divine wisdom. It is useful to quote a text summarizing the above in which he says: “The idea of state and government -in Islam- is a necessity that stems from the nature of Islamic law, not merely a legislation separated from total of its legislations. And it is a response to the instinct and the necessity required by the human society which cannot be rationally achieved without it. The Islamic community is no exception and is not an anomaly beyond that instinct and necessity.”⁸⁰ Seeing as the state is a natural necessity for human society and seeing as how Islam, which is the religion of Allah, came in order to regulate the human life, the idea of the state as the institution that achieves the best way and means to apply Islam, necessarily had to come by the Prophet Mohammed, [peace and blessing of Allah be upon him], so it is the religion of all integrated legislations.

⁷⁹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam*, p.28.

⁸⁰ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Fi al-ijtima' al-siyasi al-islam*, p.79.

4.1.2. The Nature of the Islamic State in Sh. Shamsuddin's Thought

If Sheikh Shamsuddin sees the need to establish the Islamic state as seen in the first section, what then is the nature of this state? Sheikh Shamsuddin answers this question quoting texts from the Quran and the Sunnah referring to politics and governance saying:

These texts and others which we did not mention indicate to the nature of this government. It is the religious government based on the Book of Allah-----The Islamic state which he calls for is "a religious government" which is based on the Book of Allah, which means, the last legislative reference is a revelation from Allah, which is mentioned by evidences and texts taken from the Quran and Sunnah, decided that it [a religious government] has been held by the consensus of the jurists and scholars.⁸¹

Giving more evidence where Sheikh Shamsuddin stated that "Islam is not only a religion whose teachings are limited to human relations with its Lord, but also a strict political system and a complete social system. We have also known that the goal of Islam is to form the ideal society, and it pleads for this purpose by providing the moral element in the same person."⁸²

Islam is not a ritual religion based on special spiritual practices, but a system of integrated life that organizes human society at all levels: private and public, individual and collective. Through which Islam seeks, which means through its application, to build up an ideal human society, not just as perfect as the Utopian city of Platonism, but as an exemplary human society, that is perfect for human communion. In order to achieve its status as Islamic, it must be achieved with its motto, that is, by being Islamic, by adhering to the provisions of Islam totally, without discretion or selectivity, the Sharia should be arbitrated in all parts of society at all levels in order to become an Islamic society. Sheikh Shamsuddin added a sign by focusing on the element of ethics as a fundamental component of Muslim community. So, the society in which moral virtues are not its guiding centre is condemned to destruction even if it claims to be Islam.

4.2. Sh. Shamsuddin's Position on Secularism

Sheikh Shamsuddin wrote a book, named, *Al-Almaniyye [Secularism]* which reflected Shamsuddin's vision towards secularism after rapidly telling and recounting the social and political

⁸¹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam*, p.41.

⁸² Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam*, p.43.

conditions of our world today explicating what the Arab and Islamic world face in a wave of a cultural invasion which happened due to sectarian difference. He then presents secularism in terms of whether or not it can be solution for sectarianism of Lebanese society or not. Therefore, he defined secularism in the context of his research as a prelude to the answer to the problem.

4.2.1. The Concept of Secularism in Sh. Shamsuddin's thought

In his book, *al-Almaniyye [Secularism]*, Sheikh Shamsuddin addressed the question of secularism, but not from a purely theoretical or philosophical standpoint. It came within the framework of researching the problem that has been a reality of Lebanese life and politics. From 1969 to 1975, Lebanon witnessed years of anxiety, tension, rising social resentment and conflicting political ideas which led to the beginning of the bloody sedition and civil war in 1975. Some scholars have called for the application of secularism as a solution to the sectarian conflict in Lebanon, just as secularism was seen in Europe as an ideology that can arbitrate between religions to facilitate equality and restrain religious violence. However, this does not mean that Sheikh Shamsuddin did not establish “secularism” philosophically and theoretically; but rather, he did so as a necessary step to dealing with it practically. Therefore, in his book, Sheikh Shamsuddin defines secularism as, “This term refers to *a'lam- al-a'lam* (world- the world)”, which means that Shamsuddin's definition about secularism is not like its general meaning which is “non-religious”. The term is meant to “take over the leadership of the state: ruling, its organs, institutions, and services who are men of the time who did not derive their plans and methods from religion, but draw on their human experience in administration, law, and lifestyle; and the general spirit which guides the state and society in all its cultural, political, legislative and other institutions is a spirit which is non- religious.”⁸³ So, secularism for Sheikh Shamsuddin takes place in the context of a society in which religion has no input in matters of legislation, planning and administration. Rather, it is based on human experience and its accumulation through successive civilizations. As for its field, it is in the domain of politics and governance where the institutions of the state are subject to law which does not find any of its final theses any relation to religion.

⁸³ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye [Secularism]*, The Institution of University for Studies, Beirut, Publishing and Distribution, 1983, p.125.

From the above, we can note that Sheikh Shamsuddin agreed with the previous figures covered by this thesis, that is, secularism as *la-diniyye* [non- religious], in the sense of rejecting its association in all its domains and areas of what is “religious”, “holy” or “sacred”, and in seeking to establish a governance in which religion has no income or any link. Moreover, Sheikh Shamsuddin sees that secularism arose in socio-political conditions that affected the emergence of the basic concepts associated with them. Sheikh Shamsuddin comments on that saying: “The content of the term “secularism” is related to the circumstances in which this political doctrine emerged and developed in Europe in the European Renaissance and the conflict between the Church on the one hand and the new powers in the fields of trade, science, art, meeting, politics, and other fields of life in the political society.”⁸⁴ So, what Sheikh Shamsuddin discussed in these lines is a must for every researcher to observe the social and political conditions in which secularism originated, and the historical context in which this is formed in order to complete his vision and perception of this claim. The conflict between the Church and the arising powers in a society, and the attitude of the Church in which there was a confrontation of all intellectual, scientific, and economic achievements had the greatest influence in these powers taking a negative position of the Church and therefore, by extension, religion. So, all this led to the emergence and origin of secularism in this society, a concept which seeks to exclude religion from social life.

Moreover, Sheikh Shamsuddin sees that this background, which had an influence on the emergence of this term, with no doubt, constituted the term which transcends linguistic significance to socio-political and religious significance. Sheikh Shamsuddin shows the contrasts between secularism and its opponent, the religious state, in the sense that he wanted to state a thing by stating its opposite, saying:

Secularism means that it stands on life in a society and an authority in the light of data available and provided by the course of normal life in the world which is raised by the life of man in the world (time). In exchange for this term, can the term “religious” be placed as “theocratic”? This means, a state in which society and authority are organized on the basis

⁸⁴ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.125-126.

of religion, and are directly or indirectly led by clerics and religious institutions and in which the spirit of religion and its cosmic vision are spread.⁸⁵

Thus they, secularism and religious state, are opposites which cannot meet as Sheikh Shamsuddin sees them stating: “These two political concepts, which are expressed by these two terms, may be the result of a conviction which is established in a certain historical circumstances that human society in its political systems and others does not exist and continue to exist except on the basis of one of these formulas (either secularism or the religious state), and there can be no third between these two”⁸⁶. Thus, a judgment can find its last basic and final theses, either in religion or in non-religion; these are the only logical possibilities, so upon this, secularism is negatively associated with religious rule in the holistic sense in Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin’s view.

4.2.2. The Concept of the Secular State in Sh. Shamsuddin’s Thought

Sheikh Shamsuddin not only demonstrates the concept of secularism, but also digs deeply by presenting the conceptual framework of secularism to present its practical application by clarifying the essence of the secular state. So as for this sense, Sheikh Shamsuddin says: “There are two things that represent two basic conditions without which the state is not secular: the first: it is the source of legitimacy in political authority; the second: it is constitutional and legal legislation in the state.”⁸⁷ The state is not a secular state unless there are these two conditions. In other words, any state in which these two conditions are found is a secular state even if its founders claim otherwise. According to the first condition which is the source of legitimacy in political authority, “legitimacy is not derived from Allah or from religion”, [as Sheikh Shamsuddin explains], which is not the source of legitimacy in the secular state, and the authority’s legitimacy does not stop on recognition of Allah or religion in it.”⁸⁸ The final source of legitimacy is not

⁸⁵ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.126.

⁸⁶ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.126.

⁸⁷ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.128.

⁸⁸ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.130.

religion in the secular state. It finds its end in human thought which works to formulate a mental system and authority. Religion, whatever it is, can have no role in legislation and in the formulation of the governing regime. So, it is the most essential feature which differentiates between the secular state and non- secular state. Sheikh Shamsuddin wants to justify the requirement of this condition, in which he saw the semantic meaning of the term. The socio-political conditions that led to secularism prevailed in Europe during the conflict with the Church during its ruling days. Secular legislation attempts to stand in the contradicted side of the rule prevailed in Europe during the reign on the Church in the sense that the secular legislation builds its foundations on the contrary of the foundations on which the Church was based.

According to the second condition, which is “constitutional and legal legislation of the state,” Sheikh Shamsuddin explains that constitutional and legal legislations cannot be based on religious grounds, but on public and private legislation, concerning the individual: his life, his transaction, his marriage, his divorce and so forth, or related to society in terms of its organizing, care, and relations. We see that the second condition is a branch of the first condition in which all legislation must not be derived from a religious basis. The first condition defines the last reference of the provisions, while the second one represents the control of all legislations, so both of them lead to a socio-political system that is neither based on, nor refers to any religious ground. Sheikh Shamsuddin has already considered morality to be the essential component of the Islamic state. He sees on the contrary that the secular state lacks this component, the moral one by saying: “Another characteristic of the secular state branched from the legislative aspect is the religious values and ethics which are no longer respected from the real point of view of the state, and if the governing organs in some cases pretend to be jealous, it is only to silence the public opinion if it still has the rest of the sense of values and religious ethics.”⁸⁹ This paragraph represents the conclusion of Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin’s view of secularism and the secular state, not only because this state lacks morality in its philosophy of ruling, but it also leads to the emergence of public opinion that lacks morality as well, as if Sheikh Shamsuddin observes that the political system has no great impact in the formation of personalities in a community. Therefore, the characteristics of

⁸⁹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.130.

social figures are separated from the form of system and ethics. Thus, the secular state for Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Shamsuddin is a state whose authority does not derive its legitimacy from Allah, as well as basing its legislation and law on non- religious grounds. Moreover, if so, it lacks a moral system governing human relations. This notice is a reference to the physical nature of the secular state in which human dualism is outside the framework of its concerns and beyond the scope of its interests.

4.3. Shamsuddin's Final Notes on Secularism

It is necessary to draw attention to an important issue, which may come to mind when reading that Sheikh Shamsuddin put forward the question of adopting secularism in Lebanon as a solution to the sectarian conflict because "Islam is capable of solving the problems which secularism is meant to solve in a non-Islamic community as well as Islamic community is supposed to be not suffering from the problems which secular shepherds spoke about and from which other societies which did not know Islam before suffered in their lives."⁹⁰ Hence secularism imposed itself as a reality because Sheikh Shamsuddin intended to put this problem to be dealt with after the repudiation of many of those who called for secularization. So, the answer to the question "Islam or Secularism" which Shamsuddin presented is known. So, the discussion about secularism in the face of Islam is an irrelevant topic. "However, the topic was designed mainly to answer the second question, the question raised by the current and present situation in Lebanon, and the currents that have drawn in this regard by those working in the field of general politics."⁹¹ The issue is not an intellectual thesis that promotes secularism and Sheikh Shamsuddin does not compare between Islam and secularism to select the latter, secularism. Rather, he is writing in the context of searching for what is possible in the Lebanese situation as well as the political and social situation. To return to Sheikh Shamsuddin's position towards secularism, it is entirely possible to predict it just through Sheikh Shamsuddin's view on the Islamic state and its last reference. However, it is necessary to explore more on his position in dealing with secularism itself. In

⁹⁰ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.130.

⁹¹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.112.

principle, Sheikh Shamsuddin believes that socio-political justification that led to the emergence of secularism in Europe and its controls over the rule did not exist in Islamic community.

In the Islamic community, Sheikh Shamsuddin believes that there is nothing found in the Christian literature of the so-called “clergy” in the social class sense as found in Europe. In Islam, there is no legislation which creates a “priesthood” comparable to that of Christianity’s. “Rather, in Islam, scholars are specialized in the Sharia based on their knowledge as a specialization available to all people, not a group of secrets. Hence, they are specialists in the scientific field; therefore, they are as a reference in their specialization, that is, each specialist is a reference in his cognitive state.”⁹² Regarding the petrification of laws, Sheikh Shamsuddin sees that this matter is far from the Islamic Sharia, due to what Sheikh Shamsuddin says: ‘It is not put by representatives of a certain class, and therefore it does not protect the interests of a particular class.’⁹³ And because *ijtihad*, (judgment on the juristic system or an independent opinion), in Islamic law guarantees its validity and flexibility in all times and places

Concerning religious coercion, Sheikh Shamsuddin believes that “The practices of the Church in Europe including inquisition, among other things, did not exist in Islam, but it guaranteed to non-Muslims the complete freedom in Islamic communities as well as singled them out for special legislation which is evidence of recognizing them.”⁹⁴ Therefore, Sheikh Shamsuddin sees that secularism did not find social justifications in Islamic communities. However, it collided with the fundamentals of the Islamic religion, and was applied purely from the standpoint of the colonial to implement the scheme planned for the Islamic world. The man who looks at Islam and society which is based on its principles believed that when Islam is a religion that includes all integrated legislations that take all the issues of human meeting, beginning from the rule passing to the privacy of the individual, will not necessarily face the dilemmas which emerged in European society, those dilemmas, as the researcher sees, are found because of the great gaps in administration, politics and rule which were not discussed in the Christian religion due to not being a political religion. So, this

⁹² Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.162.

⁹³ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.166.

⁹⁴ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p.174.

led the Christians in the medieval ages to intervene to fill these gaps through legislation that is not based on a religious or mental approach and took unjustified beliefs, so it crushed science and its practitioners, which led to the emergence of fundamentals of secularism.

Thus, all of this has not been found in Islam. The Islamic religion is comprehensive in all aspects of life. In politics, it gives the general guidelines and basic fundamentals; in religion, it left the matter of *ijtihad* (judgment) to suit the era and does not depart from the constants to the hard-working. Thus, this gave Islam its flexibility in judgment and prevented the emergence of the problems which faced European society in the Middle Ages. Moreover, concerning the fundamental issue of secularism represented in the separation between religion and politics, Sheikh Shamsuddin sees that this idea is incompatible with the nature of Islam and the state of the Prophet Muhammad. Sheikh Shamsuddin has this to comment on the issue:

The idea of the Islamic government which was called by the Prophet, (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as it is revealed to him by the Quran or what he spoke about to his Companions is that there are no two authorities in Islam in the case of presence of the Prophet: the authority of time and the authority of religion. Rather, it is one single religious-temporal authority that meets in the hands of one man who is the Prophet and is the reference in relation to it and to all which emanates from it.⁹⁵

So, the separation between two authorities violated what the Prophet Muhammad did. Thus, secularism contradicts the Sharia on this point, that is in politics and governance. Secularism has the principle of religious separation from temporal, hence that is contrary to the Prophet's deciding, because the reasons of this experience in the Christian Europe did not be existed in the Muslim community, so its application is not needed.

Based on Sheikh Shamsuddin's conception of the Islamic state, secularism is considered to be incompatible with the Sharia. Therefore, it is unacceptable, and its application is not legally permissible in Islam. Moreover, Sheikh Shamsuddin even when he presents secularism as a solution to the Lebanese problem, he presents it in the framework of pre-existing calls that emerged at that time demanding the application of secularism. However, at the end of his work, Sheikh Shamsuddin refused it and he said:

⁹⁵ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p. 40.

After this presentation and analysis of secularism in itself and of secularism in the face of Christianity and then of secularism in the face of Islam, the research ends up confronting the call for secularism in Lebanon under the slogans raised in these days by politicians, intellectuals and journalists about the good that will be upon Lebanon when it establishes a secular regime and about the evil and suffering that will be overcome by secularism.⁹⁶

Sheikh Shamsuddin raised this issue as a way in order to counter the persistent appeals of secularists, but he returned and commented on it, ending with its illegitimacy as well as adopting the idea of confronting this proposition which has no justification at all. In his book, Sheikh Shamsuddin considers the proponents of secularism practice a sophisticated deception by linking material progress to belief which, according to him, is a mistake that is not supported by reality and tried to demonstrate this error by giving real and social models.

The speculator cannot see the connection which the secularists make between religion and ignorance or scientific backwardness. Do scientific experiments require a specific religion or lack thereof? Scientific experiments depend on research in the framework of article without interruption or stopping a thought or a belief. If science is considered as accumulation of knowledge throughout history, history itself attests to the fact that the civilizations that followed human history have had more or less contributions to the progress of science, and both human and scientific knowledge have been transmitted from civilization to civilization. Every civilization would take scientific knowledge from the previous civilization and add on to it. Then it inherited it to the next and so forth until science is what it has reached today; it is a development that will not stop at all for us. If the accumulation of knowledge has passed through different civilizations as before, were science and knowledge influenced by the beliefs that prevailed in those civilizations? Those civilizations include pagan, polytheist, totemist and other contradictory beliefs; however, scientific progress continued. Hence, what the secularists are trying to spread is an imaginative relationship between religion and ignorance. In conclusion, Sheikh Shamsuddin believes that secularism is incompatible with Islamic legislation which rejects separation between the religious and the temporal especially in the Islamic community which did not experience the socio-political conditions that led to secularism in the European society. It also refuses the logic of secularists who see this relationship

⁹⁶ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye*, p. 178.

between belief and material progress, and it is seen as sophistry in its place, and what is witnessed in some countries which are different intellectually, ideologically, socially and politically attests to it.



Fifth Chapter

DR. ADEL DAHER AND SECULARISM

5.1. Reasons for Writing *Al Usus al-Falsafiya lil Ilmaniye*

Dr. Adel Daher is one of the figures who discussed the topic of secularism with an interpretation different from our previous thinkers who tended to maintain of what can be called a traditionalist position, whereas Daher's position is that a newer reading is needed. There are many reasons that led Dr. Daher to write the book *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, which is a large book of approximately 429 pages divided into twelve chapters; however, despite the fact that this book is huge, despite the density of his book, his ideas do not exceed forty pages. So, if it indicates anything, it indicates that the book is full of repetition. Having lived in the West, Dr. Daher reflected this point of view on secularism as we will see later.

From the beginning, the writer opened his book mocking those people who reconcile between Islam and Arab nationalism, where he said: "We find, above all, a funny race by some prominent theorists of Arab nationalist thought to reconcile Islam with Arab nationalism, and to highlight the role and importance of Islam."⁹⁷ This point is extremely important because Adel Daher, like the authors before him, does not believe that Islam and secularism are compatible, but rather than attempting to accommodate the two, either via ideology or a practical need due to the reality, Daher instead more boldly attempts to diminish the role of Islam in the political sphere. He attempts to highlight about the incompatibility regarding the idea of a secular Islam or an attempt to derive secularism from religion where secularism is published in the Islamic religion through a book called *Al-Islam wa Usulul Hukmi [Islam and the Origins of Governance]* by Ali Abdul Razzaq and those who follow him to the present day such as Muhammad Arkoun, Nasr Hamed Abu Zaid, and others where they all try to derive secularism from religion, in the implicit sense where they state that religion is not to be eliminated only by the sword of religion. So, Adel Daher has revealed in his writings that by returning it to a philosophical reference saying:

⁹⁷ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.5.

The most dangerous of all this and the most illustrative of the decline of secular thought by the secular thinkers in their position are by resorting to Islam itself- to the Quran and the Sunnah- unaware that they are making the biggest concessions to anti-secular movements, and that they are anything, the most dangerous, contradicting themselves, where they make the religious text their last reference in defence of their secularism.⁹⁸

The writer noticed a decline in secularism in the Arab arena due to the concessions made by the members and associates of secularism in some of their attempts to reconcile and fabricate between the principles of secularism and the contents of religious texts, or among some nationalist thinkers. For example, one of the most important of these nationalist thinkers is Mohammed Abed al-Jabiri who considered secularism an artificial or a false problem in contemporary Arab thought without realistic justifications or historical necessity, instead of focusing on secularism, democracy and rationality which should be realistic demands and expressing the aspirations of the Arab peoples, regardless of their sectarian or doctrinal affiliation. In other words, Mohammed Abed al-Jabiri, the owner of the Arab Mind Criticism Project, focused on democracy and rationality as fundamental demands that go beyond the demands of secularism; this is clear when al-Jabiri said:

The issue of secularism in the Arab World is a false issue, in the sense that it expresses needs with implications that are not identical to those needs: the need of independence within a single national identity, the need of democracy that respects the rights of minorities, and the need of rational exercise of politics which is actually an objective need. These demands are reasonable and necessary in our Arab World, but they loss their reasonableness, necessity and even legitimacy when they are expressed in a dubious slogan such a slogan of secularism.⁹⁹

On the other hand, the writer Adel Daher praises the position of Mohamed Arkoun, the Algerian thinker of secularism as a thinker who addressed secularism as a position on the issue of knowledge, since the thinker Mohamed Arkoun considered that secularism is “a position of the soul as it struggles to own the truth or to come to the truth”. Given the above, it seems that there are two fundamental problems: the first problem relates to how to know or recognize reality

⁹⁸ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.5.

⁹⁹ al-Jabiri, Mohammed Abed, *Wijhat nazar, nahwa bina'a kadaya al-fikr al-Arabi al-mu'asir [Point of View towards Issues of Contemporary Arabic Thought]*, Beirut & Casablanca, The Arab Cultural Center, First Edition in 1992, p.111.

properly and correctly, or how one can obtain knowledge that is consistent and that has mental compatibility and is also accepted by every seeker of truth. So, this problem, in the eyes of Arkoun, makes the researcher transcend all the cultural, historical, and even religious characteristics. The second issue relates to the question after the truth, how can a property of knowledge find a convenient way to connect one's knowledge to the other without tying it up or restricting it? So, at this level the problems of teachings and learning at Mouhammad Arkoun are located. Through these two problems, secularism has, according to Arkoun, an act that does not disappear and "tension" that has no solution but only possessing knowledge. Thus, these problems posed by Arkoun are not far from those posed by the philosopher Emmanuel Kant, through his project on criticism of the human mind and the critique of practical reason, where he wondered about the nature of human knowledge, how it is perceived and its dimensions and manifestations.

One of the reasons which encouraged the author to write his book is the fragility of secularism in the Islamic nation, i.e. it was not produced through a philosophical struggle within the Arab nation unlike the emergence of secularism in the West. Daher said: "Our secularism emerged under conditions that did not help to link our understanding to a sophisticated understanding of the nature of politics and society and whatever related to it, it was a secularism based on fragile foundations, which made it unable to withstand the test."¹⁰⁰ The writer wants to say that there are enlightened people who have emerged in the West. So, the Western situation is the result of philosophers through a philosophical conflict through the social contract, the call for freedom, and the French Revolution. Thus, secularism in Europe was resulted and produced, stressing that secularism was not like this in the Islamic world, but imposed. That is to say, it was not the result of a philosophical movement in this nation, not at the level of the elite, or at the level of scientists, or even at the level of philosophers, but secularism is a slogan with no foundation and it is in fact a recognition that secularism is an external import. This is clear when Daher said: "The prevailing understanding of secularism, in our educated and uneducated society, which believes in

¹⁰⁰ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.6.

secularism and is opposed to it, has a very superficial understanding based on the definition of the purposes and aims targeted by secular movements in the West.”¹⁰¹

Then, there is the following question: Does the reader think that Dr. Adel Daher has gone to ideas, given ideas, without preconceived rules? Did the writer of the book deal with the readers without prior information? The author wanted to shock the readers that they, like him and others, are the owners of the preconceived ideology, that is, the secular, is trying ideas with no prior information. In the other words, the author classified his interest on his understanding of the others using the aspect of measurement. In other words, it is noted here that the pillar of the writer is based on the intellectual basis, the mind, and it has precedence before the transfer; therefore, whatever decides the validity of the transfer is only the mind. Thus, he considered that the mind is the most fundamental matter commenting on that:

The purpose of the book is to contribute to the removal of this flagrant lack of our Secular thought---Secularism, as we understand it, as we will explain through the chapters of the book is a comprehensive and coherent position of the nature of religion, the nature of reason, the nature of values and the nature of politics; considerations that make the secular position justified, from a mental point of view, are much deeper than historical and sociological considerations.¹⁰²

In addition to that, there are a lot of points of contention that require investigation when examining the writer’s style, for example, if God has created reason for us for the sake of knowing sin and reward, why would he, God, then take it away from us after the transfer? This is clear when the author said in his book: “One of the most important of these considerations is that God might have given the human mind a fundamental normative function, i.e., using his reason because by which he knows everything; in the other hand, God wanted man to know God, and normative knowledge is essential to know God.”¹⁰³ God created for man reason and preferred him over all other creatures. Humans though their possession of reason and ability to distinguish right from wrong, can reach God by discovering the truth that of his existence. After that, we note that the writer contradicts what he wrote through his claim that, “God commands us, the Muslims, to

¹⁰¹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.9.

¹⁰² Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.6.

¹⁰³ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.6.

organize our society, regardless of temporal and spatial circumstances, according to principles inspired by the teachings of Islam, so that God has decided that the question of ends and principles is not the competence of our minds (that is, God has stripped the human mind of any fundamental -normative function.)”¹⁰⁴ We can say that there is an incompatibility in the author’s style and he claims many fallacies. According to Islam, one understands that when Allah addressed humanity through the prophets, he addressed them to explore the Creator whom man should worship. We find that some of the philosophers who came out of the framework of revelation, as the writer Adel Daher did, did not follow or agree on one rule, unlike the prophets, that they rose to something specific, which means they agreed on a certain presupposition such as “What is your truth?” “What is the relationship between this Universe and your Creator?” “Why are you here?” Thus, the prophets agreed on that reality, unlike philosophers who do not have certain and stable things.

Moreover, Daher claims that the divine command does not fit the mind, as there is a kind of fallacy and folly. He gives the example of God’s ordering the destruction of entire villages which is basically groundless and has no basis, because the writer did not care for the reason for the destruction, so this is clear when he said: “If God wanted us to do this, on the current proposal, we would have been morally obliged to destroy an entire city on the heads of its innocent inhabitants. The last result that this analysis brings us is a violation and contrary to the mind.”¹⁰⁵ In Daher’s opinion, religious wisdom did not see such an example, as a result Adel Daher raised the issue that the divine command contradicts reason; furthermore, he says that mental wisdom is preconceived or practical.

5.2. The Concept of Secularism in Dr. Adel Daher’s Thought

Dr. Daher discussed secularism not only through ideological synonyms that form the basis of the political or economic theory of secularism, but also by referring to its philosophical origins. In other words, it can be argued that just as Daher has made the claim that the likes of the ulema simply preach religious rhetoric and are ideologically driven, on closer examination of his work

¹⁰⁴ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-’ilmaniye*, p.6.

¹⁰⁵ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-’ilmaniye*, p.6.

one could claim that his work is equally an emotional tract that offers very little in terms of scientific or rational argumentation. It seems he made the reader extends his attention to the intellectual and philosophical side to form an indispensable reference for the researcher whether the reader agrees ideologically with the writer Daher or disagrees with him. This means that Daher considered people who adopted secularism through its purposes, would come or reach, as he says, “either mistaken in their understanding of Islam or that Islam is contradictory internally.”¹⁰⁶ Thus, secularism, due to Dr. Adel Daher, is a system of knowledge in the sense of Islamic religion in every sense of the word where secularists can adopt Islam, but without reference to a religious text committed to it, rather through the use of reason.

Moreover, in contrast to the author of the book *al-Ilmaniye min wejhet nazer mukhtalifa* (*Secularism from a Different Perspective*) by Aziz Azma who attributed secularism to the word “science”, unlike Muhammad when Yahya he said: “The secularist is the one who takes scientific knowledge as represented in the natural sciences as a model for all types of knowledge,”¹⁰⁷ the author, Daher, makes secularism related to the word “world” and he expressed his opposition saying:

What matters to us is secularism, by opening *al-ain* and *al-lam* (*almaniye*), and this does not include a position from the nature of knowledge, in general, and nor about the nature of scientific knowledge, in particular, it is primarily defined by the role of man in the world and by affirming the independence of the human mind in the process of employing the human mind in any areas or fields in which it employs.¹⁰⁸

Consequently, Adel Daher does not view secularism from the perspective of being an epistemological position. That is to say, the attitude of the nature of practical knowledge, and the nature of its relationship with religious knowledge, in the sense that the fundamental issue raised by secularism is to determine the relations and control between the temporal authority and the religious authority. That is, between the state and the church, or the religious institution whatever

¹⁰⁶ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.7.

¹⁰⁷ Yahya, Mohammed, *al- Hakika allati yetejaheluha al-ilmaniyun: al-islam leysa kanisa!!!* [*The Reality that the Secularists ignore: Islam Is Not a Church*], Cairo, Noor Library, 2010 p. 11-12.

¹⁰⁸ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.6.

it was. The issue is much deeper than this, it is about the right position of the nature of religion, the nature of man, and the nature of values. It is based on the epistemological and logical separation between religion and politics.¹⁰⁹ In the Arab world, according to Daher, those who support Islam, religion and state “are generally confused between what is historical and what is logical. The historical relationship between Islam and politics shifts in their mind to a logical or conceptual necessity,” in the sense that the relationship between Islam and politics becomes conceptual, not historical. However, “Islam in the Muslim Brotherhood Movement” and the Islamic groups are taken as “all interrelated, each part of it is related to others, faith, the Sharia and worship are all integrated, and therefore they do not differentiate between religion and Politics and the State.”¹¹⁰ In other words, “Islam is worship and leadership, religion, state, spirituality and action, and it is inseparable from each other.”¹¹¹

From the previous paragraph, we can ask the question as follows: Is the disagreement between those who support the idea of Islam as a religion and state and their opponents limited to being a dispute on the basis of religious texts that do or do not support the separation of religion and the state? It is as if we claim that the centres of the state, and the functions of government and the judiciary are only political plans that have nothing to do with religion, so this is clear when Ali Abdul Razzaq expressed that “Religion did not know them, did not mention anything about it, did not recognize them, and did not forbid them, but left them to us, to return to the judgments of reason, the experiences of nations and the rules of politics.”¹¹² Hence, the saying “Islam is a religion and a state” applies to the so-called “civilized Islam, not to religious Islam.”¹¹³ Secularism for

¹⁰⁹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.9.

¹¹⁰ Ghannouchi, Rashid, *The Islamic Movement and Distortion*, Khartoum, Dar al-Fikr Library, 1980, p.290.

¹¹¹ al-Banna, Hassan, *Muthakkarat al-da'wa wa al-da'iyat [Dairies of Dawah and Preachers]*, Cairo, Dar al-Kalima Library, 2011, p.283.

¹¹² Abdul Razzaq, Ali, *al-Islam wa usul al-hukm [Islam and the Origins of Governance]*, Cairo, Dar al-Hilal, 1925, p.215.

¹¹³ Khalafullah, Muhammad Ahmed, *Harakat al-islamiyye al-mu'asira [Contemporary Islamic Movements]*, Center for Arab Unity Studies and the United Beirut, Nations University, 1987, p.9-69.

Daher is a right in itself, i.e. the human mind is capable of producing knowledge and producing life that pleases the human being in the world regardless of the Hereafter, as well as a comprehensive and coherent position from the nature of religion, the nature of value and the nature of politics.

5.3. The Logical Nature of Practical Knowledge and Religious Knowledge

5.3.1. Practical Knowledge

What is the logical nature of practical knowledge? Practical knowledge, as the author stated, is “Knowledge required to organize our political, social and economic affairs. Our interest in practical knowledge in this sense is dictated by the basic purpose of this book. We are interested and concerned in this book, first and foremost, with the justification of the secular situation and position in this book.”¹¹⁴ In the sense that the writer took the epistemological position of the most important aspects that make man able to access independently until he knows how to organize the affairs of his political, social and economic life and to which purpose he does so, by providing him with the necessary philosophical foundations for that organization. Therefore, the practical knowing is “knowing the ends and means, and its relationship to religious knowledge for whatever purpose we want to reach and how to achieve it”. So, this is the reason that the writer has attributed secularism to “the world”. According to him, knowledge in the end is “Theoretical knowledge”, and, ultimately, “moral” such as justice, equality, and other free utility, because what is required to know is which things are good in themselves, or for social importance or others. Whereas knowledge of means is scientific knowledge, more precisely, practical scientific knowledge. However, knowledge of the means assumes theoretical scientific knowledge. Thus, scientific knowledge can be also said to be theoretical. It is, therefore, possible to say that theoretical knowledge is included in practical knowledge, and this knowledge may be sociological knowledge if it is related to society, and may be physical if it is related to the physical environment, that is

¹¹⁴ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.104.

“practical knowledge of a social or physical nature”. Hence, Practical nature is not only a theoretical and scientific process, but also it has a “normative” nature, which means, a moral nature. This is clear when Daher said: “Normative knowledge; therefore, is an essential component of practical knowledge; it is a moral place in the first place.”¹¹⁵

5.3.2. Religious Knowledge

What Adel Daher originally means by religious knowledge at the beginning is that it was supposed to be “the concept that finds its application within the framework of monotheistic religions including the Abrahamic tradition, specifically, which is the one that belongs to Islam.”¹¹⁶ The author means that all Abrahamic religions have the same nodal nucleus of Islam. Religious knowledge is the application of the heavenly religions of fasting, prayer and reading of religious texts, but the writer does not mean only this meaning of the concept; rather, he wants the reader to sail between the lines in order to address the “logical situation of religious knowing”. In other words, he wants to discover through the nature of religion or values through logical analysis, and to know if there is anything in the nature of religion or the nature of values compatible or incompatible between religion and a state, the thing which emphasizes the quality of required pieces of knowing to organize the society politically, legally and economically, and to confirm that do those pieces of knowing find their final basis in religious knowing? Let us suppose that the knowledge required for the organization of society does not find its final basis in religious knowing, does this assumption deny the ability of man to possess this required knowledge, independent of religion? If this choice puts us in the face of two options: religious and practical, the logical nature of the issues that constitute the subjects of knowledge is therefore required. In other words, if the introductions are sincere, the results are sincere, then how do we derive normative knowledge from religious knowledge without assuming a previous or prior normative knowledge? Is it in “stripping

¹¹⁵ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.125.

¹¹⁶ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.77.

the mind of its core function as in the position of determining his ability to obtain religious knowledge?”¹¹⁷

5.4. Permissible Knowledge and Necessary Knowledge

In order to determine the logical state of any knowledge, we must know its type, “Knowledge above all is to know the truthfulness of an issue. But from issues there is what is a permissible subject and what is a necessary subject.”¹¹⁸ In the sense that, “The logical status of knowledge that takes from the sincerity of a permissible issue a subject for it is not the logical status of knowledge that takes from a necessary issue a subject for it.”¹¹⁹ Firstly, the reader must ask the following question: Is practical knowledge necessary or permissible? Hence, is religious knowledge necessary or permissible? There is a problem facing the writer which is to pretend and create a fallacy, and then prove it to be the opposite. According to what is said in his book *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye* [*The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism*], from perspective of this logical situation, we see that practical knowledge will not find its ultimate basis in religious knowledge. This is because the issues of practical knowledge do not have the same logical state as religious knowledge, since they appear to be possible and not necessary; therefore, it cannot be established epistemologically except through issues that have the same nature, which means, it is absurd to deduce religious issues, because these (religious issues) are necessary, and the necessary is a logical inherited property. Logical inheritance means that the type of property contained in introductions must be passed to the result if the reasoning, inference, is correct, because the correct reasoning, deduction, does not logically prevent the introductions from being true and the results false. The author has separated practical issues from religious issues, since the first, practical issues are possible, i.e., permissible, and the second, religious issues, are necessary. The issues of practical knowledge cannot be deduced from religious issues because the latter, religious issues, is logically inherited, due to the establishment of scientific knowledge on religious knowledge leads to the

¹¹⁷ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.33.

¹¹⁸ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.78.

¹¹⁹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.78.

view of religion as anti-secular or contrary to secularism; and since this thesis is from a religious perspective in the sense that religion by its very nature, as some Muslim theorists see it, “imposes on the Muslim a position that rejects secularism.”¹²⁰ Moreover, secularism is just a call to separate the religious institution from the state, and this understanding will make it easier for its practitioners to reach a conclusion, namely that “Secularism has no place in the life of Muslims, there is no way between the Muslim and his lord, nor the guardianship of a Muslim over others in every land which God has made fortunate through the Islamic creed: a religion, a nationality, and a creed uniting all Muslims.”¹²¹ Islam is a religion and a state where the state is considered to be in Islam and associated with it objectively and realistically; “There is no authority in Islam except the authority of the state which protects the teachings of Islam and guides nations to the fruits of both religion and the world.”¹²²

However, Dr. Adel Daher quickly seeks to prove the contradiction that practical knowledge is religious knowledge by claiming that religious knowledge is necessary, that it is inevitable, and says in his book:

The final theme of religious knowledge is God; He is the eternal, the officer of all, the good and the free and the source of moral obligation..... It goes beyond religious knowledge to knowing God's attributes, actions and purposes, because these are all overflowing with what God is, with the essence of God because it is that determines his attributes, actions and purposes. (i.e., that the essence of God, and there is nothing beyond it, is what determines His qualities, actions and purposes.¹²³

If we said this is necessary, we mean that it makes no sense that God is not entitled to it. This is the logical situation of religious issues. Hence according to Daher, the nature of God of being all the goodness and omnipotence is a necessary thing mentally to be “Fixed” and “not permissible”, so this is clear when he says: “Therefore, the actions of God are necessary only if

¹²⁰ Farhat, Mohamed Nour, *Hiwar li tatbiq al-kanun al-islami [Dialogue on Application of Islamic Law]*, Cairo, Forum for Dialogue, al-Iskandaria Library, ,1989, p.45.

¹²¹ al-Banna, Hassan , “*Risaletun beyn al-amsi wa al-yawm*” [“*A Message Between Yesterday and Today*”], <https://www.ikhwanwiki.com>, رسالة بين الأمس واليوم, p.31-32.

¹²² Mitchell, Richard P, **The Society of the Muslim Brothers**, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993, P.244.

¹²³ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.101.

two conditions are met: the first is that the mental considerations in favour of doing these acts are stronger in the overall aspect than the mental considerations in favour of the opposite; the second is that the superiority of these considerations is necessary, not permissible.”¹²⁴

Moreover, if the reader asks the following question: Can religious nature be the same as practical nature? Are we dealing with two different things in their logical nature or of the same nature? If religious nature is fixed because it has issues concerning the divine attributes and the nature of God, does practical nature find its final basis in religious knowledge? The answer is, of course, negative, because the practical nature of what we have already known is “the knowledge required to organize our political, social and economic affairs.” It is assumed that they change in accordance with the changing circumstances and the emergence of new rules or laws relating to politics or economy or matters of social life and so on. Therefore, “we cannot derive the permissible from the logically necessary” which is the final result reached by the author, and certainly according to our understanding and knowledge, it is that God is all-knowing and has absolute perfection.

5.5. The Independence and the Relationship between Revelation and Reason

The reader may wonder why should we submit revelation to the mind and not vice versa? And how can revelation be the last reference in all things if we do not subject it to the standards of reason? The answer for the writer is that the religious texts contained in the data of revelation cannot be resolved unless we subject them to independent mental standards. Let’s return a little bit to the following slogan: “Islam is religion and state.” Though it returns even to Ottoman times, this slogan has begun to turn into a motto for most of the so-called “Islamic awakening” movements, a slogan that contradicts the embracing of religious people to a secular position and shrouds logical paradoxes that cannot be avoided. However, after rejecting this, it seems that religion in the state does not go beyond being a historical or objective relationship, something which is clear in the following statement: “Islam’s relationship with politics is nothing more than a historical

¹²⁴ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-’ilmaniye*, p.101.

relationship.”¹²⁵ That is to say that the link between religion and politics does not transcend being historical, i.e. it is a changing, emergent relationship, rather than a fixed, static and original one, and historical circumstances have imposed this. It is the matter of mind which is not the competence of any religion. This is clear when the author said in his book: “The relationship between Islam and politics is a logical or conceptual relationship,” that is, the human being is subject to the standards of reason and not revelation, so this leads us to consider the moral or normative knowledge as the basis of religious knowledge. It is through this epistemological perspective, we say that knowing God through normative and moral principles means that man, by his knowledge, is capable, and he can obtain a moral and normative knowledge. If that is true, then the theoreticians of religious awakening have no basis to base their attempt to link religion and politics, because man was created freely to be independent. From this point of view, we come up with what is called independence of man, which means two dimensions: the first is independence of the mind, and the second is the moral dimension of this independence.

Moreover, what independence of the mind according to the author is an absolute priority in cognitive affairs, because knowledge is based only on mental foundations; “neither revelation nor intuition, nor any other means that can be assumed as a source of knowledge unless it is a mental priority. Every alleged cognitive claim should be put on the test of reason, otherwise it remains merely a claim.”¹²⁶ That is to say the mind has complete independence from everything external, not in theory, but in practice, because “the functions of the mind are not limited to providing scientific knowledge of reality, but the mind has a fundamental normative function, in the sense that it is the source of our knowledge of what we should adopt, and of values and standards through which we should evaluate our actions and decisions.”¹²⁷ In short, we understand that not only scientific and theoretical knowledge is the prerogative of the mind, but also normative knowledge.

¹²⁵ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.331.

¹²⁶ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.276.

¹²⁷ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.365.

Therefore, it is necessary to return to the point that independent mental evidence due to knowledge is a mental matter at its core. In other words, according to the author, we cannot accept anything or reject any belief that is claimed by its owner until it has been verified. This can only be after being subject to the standards of the mind or reason, even Adil Daher linked moral principles to the practical mind (moral mind), hence they, moral principles, are based on a direct mental knowledge, and moral values, as Daher claims, have no origin. This means that, according to Daher, moral values have an objective existence independent of revelation. Daher supports his folly from the point of view of Aquinas, since “moral knowledge is independent of theological knowledge (religious knowledge) if the basic principles of morality are self-evident and our knowledge of them is therefore non-inferential, so this inevitably means that our knowledge of them is not derived from our knowledge of divine orders and prohibitions or from any other religious or theological issues that came to us through revelation”¹²⁸. Now in matters of action, the reason directs all things in view of the end* (Saint Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica: Complete Edition*).

In addition, according to Daher, the validity of a religious text can only be proven through a mental proof saying: “Our insistence that the text, even if it is irrefutable, cannot be assumed to be issued by God without independent mental proof.”¹²⁹ Is it reasonable that religious texts should be left alone without any consideration unless they are interpreted logically? We can only say that this is the author’s point of view. Here, Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, remarks: “Whoever claimed knowing the book and religion and challenged the scholars of the Ummah is not safe to teach the religion; whoever took from the scholars and wrote doctrines without taking in consideration (neglecting) the signs of the Quran and hadith has neglected religion and the source of legislation.”

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The author, Daher, claims that divine command does not fit the mind, so there is a kind of fallacy and folly. Religious wisdom that God ordered the destruction of whole villages is essentially

¹²⁸ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.192.

¹²⁹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.292.

¹³⁰ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Sahwa al-islamiye beyna al-jumud wa al-tatarruf [Islamic Awakening between Inertia and Extremism]*, Cairo, Dar Al Shorouk, 2001, p.207.

groundless and has no basis and is unfounded, as the writer did not mention the reason for this destruction only saying: “If God wanted us to do this, based on the basis of the current proposal, we would have been morally obliged to destroy an entire city on the heads of its innocent inhabitants. The last result which this analysis leads us is contrary to the mind.”¹³¹ Because the writer did not find a suitable example for religious wisdom to satisfy his folly, he pretended and brought an example that is contrary to reason as well as actually having no originality. It is unfortunate to say that Adel Daher raised the issue that the divine command is contrary to reason and said about mental wisdom as preconceived or practical wisdom, so the evidence is clear when the author said in his book: “So, in the end, we cannot, from a mental perspective, commit ourselves to obeying or forbidding what is implying in a particular religious text, which makes a return to religious considerations (religious texts) useless in the context of trying to figure out what we should do under conditions in which we find ourselves.”¹³²

5.6. The Essential Features of the Secular System

In order to arrive at the fundamental characteristics of the secular system, it is better to start from the features of the non-secular system where religion is practiced in everyday civil life even the government takes a part of it. For instance, in the ancient state of Israel, the High Priest was the leader of the state. The first feature of the non-secular system is based on the governance of God. This principle is the basis of the non-secular regimes in the Middle Ages generally, and in Europe particularly, where the theorists of contemporary Islamic movements support this principle and adopt it as a basis for the Islamic system and demand its establishment, especially those who manage the political matters. Let us take Sayyid Qutb as a suitable example: “The Caliph, in combining the temporal and spiritual powers, represents the will of God, and therefore does nothing but implement the divine law that calls for the system of succession.”¹³³ It is absolute sovereignty, *al-hakimiyya*, for Sayyid Qutb that has the right to produce legislation for the people, the right to

¹³¹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.20.

¹³² Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.291.

¹³³ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma'alem fi al-tareeq [Landmarks in the Road]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 1979, p.167.

draw or set the curriculum for their lives, and the right to make values, which are at the head of absolute divine truths and produce life for them, and anyone who has developed a method for the life of a group of people has claimed the right of divinity to them. This idea is raised by the theorists of Islamic movements because the political commitment in the eyes of these people turns into a religious obligation, and then to obey the ruler, because his obedience to Allah, the Creator, and the ruler are the same in terms of obedience without any hesitation, no embarrassment or even doubt.

The ideological feature is one of the most important qualities of the non-secular system and the characteristics which it depends on because the non-secular system derives its project from a religious ideology. In other words, that is to say, this religious ideology is a message from Allah, Himself, and leads to call it the term absolutism, in the sense that it is the final religion of all mankind, and to have its law as the law of all people, “until it inherits the land and what is on it.”¹³⁴ Thus, the principle of “governance for Allah” is no different from that of the clergy when the writer Daher compared it to the Middle Ages where he said:

What the principle of ‘governance for Allah’ means in practice, in the Christian Middle Ages, is that the clerical class claimed a monopoly on knowledge in the affairs of both religion and the world alike, and gave itself, without any other class, the right to analyse and prohibit, on the basis that it is only possible for them to know what Allah wants from us in this world and the Hereafter.¹³⁵

In addition, what applies to Christianity, as the Islamists insist, does not apply to Islam because there is no clergy in Islam. The true Islam is as the scholars say, because only the ulema have the ability to know Islam for what it is, so “Whoever claimed knowing the book and religion and challenged the scholars of the Ummah is not a safe for the teachings of religion; whoever took from the scholars and wrote doctrines without taking inconsideration the signs of the Quran and hadith has neglected religion and the source of legislation.”¹³⁶ Unlike al-Qaradawi who emphasized

¹³⁴ Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran [In the Shadow of the Quran]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 2005, p.136.

¹³⁵ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al- 'ilmaniye*, p.391.

¹³⁶ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Sahwa al-islamiye beyna al-jumud wa al-tatarruf [Islamic Awakening between Inertia and Extremism]*, Cairo, Dar Al Shorouk, 2001, p.207.

the role of the ulema, Adel Daher suggested that this is illogical and cannot be “practical” because it is only confined to a certain class of human beings, namely, “scholars”, according to al-Qaradawi’s claims. Moreover, Daher claims that “This class of people is one which monopolizes the knowledge of the divine will. This class, then, supposes to play in the Islamic State the same role as was done in the class of clergy of the Christian State in the Middle Ages. This result cannot be avoided and there is no difference whether we call it ‘clergy’ or another name.”¹³⁷ Thus, the totalitarian ideological character is one feature of the non-secular system, which means that it “represents universal truths”, which means, “the last reference in all matters.”¹³⁸ In other words, it is absolute and has the main pillar in the non- secular system.

Furthermore, as the writer Adel stated: “However, the holistic nature of the ideology concerned is not limited to viewing it as absolute, but also it includes view, as we have shown, as a comprehensive view of the universe, art and life, a view that touches on all human affairs both religious and mundane. This is contrary to human independence.”¹³⁹ The totalitarian view presents itself as “a complete and truly comprehensive view of all human affairs, society, state, history, ethics, economics, education, relationship with nature and post-nature, and claims itself as the right and the ability to shape the human world, existence and behaviour in full form.”¹⁴⁰ In addition to being absolute by claiming validity for all times and places, “it is natural for religious groups to present an ideology that embodies a complete and comprehensive view, as long as it unites the message of religion and makes it comprehensive.”¹⁴¹ In other words, religious law has come to tame the human being, who if you left for him the freedom to spend as he wants and how he wills, he will ask for everything for himself and will sacrifice everything in order to fulfil his desires, and

¹³⁷ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al- 'ilmaniye*, p.392.

¹³⁸ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al- 'ilmaniye*, p.393.

¹³⁹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al- 'ilmaniye*, p.394.

¹⁴⁰ Abdul Karim, Khalil, *al-Josour al-tarikhiya fi al-shari'a al-islamiye [The Historical Roots of the Islamic Law]*, Beirut, Tariq al-Ilm, Book II, 1990, p.102-103.

¹⁴¹ Nassar, Nassif *Fi al-falsafa al-arabiye al-mu'asira [The Contemporary Arabic Philosophy]*, Beirut, Philosophical Conference Research, Book II, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1988, p.60-61.

selfishness that claims to rule in the name of God through these politicized groups, and the monopoly of knowledge by their scholars. All these, are only, according to Daher, contrary to the independence of man. This means that we evaluate our systems on the basis of what God commands us, but what we believe is our belief by ourselves, or by some of us, the thing that does not correspond to religious thinkers who view the government as representing god's will, and that "what true religion says is what the scholars who cooperate with the dignitaries of the nation say."¹⁴²

At the end, it is worth to mention that when the totalitarian feature is integrated or mixed with an absolute ideological nature, it does not mean that there is a position on every fundamental human issue, whether it is social, or political, or educational, or economic.... etc. Rather, it means that those who adhere to these ideologies carry the banner of certainty that expresses the convictions of these people, carrying that certainty, and this, for the writer, Daher, is contrary to independence.

5.7. The Relationship between the Concept of Secularism and Religion Specifically Concerning Islam

We have already had enough information from the previous paragraphs that Daher's main purpose is to try by all means to get rid of the control of religious institutions, whatever this type of institution was. On the other hand, the historical circumstances (the control of the Church in the West) is not the main feature of secularism, as Daher tries to refute and analyse the thesis that man cannot manage the affairs of his life without God's direction, so he sees Islam is necessarily anti-secular, Islam negates secularism, supporting his idea saying: "The statement that 'Islam is a religion and a state' launched by Hassan al-Banna in the first half of this century was not intended to indicate the existence of a historical relationship between Islam and politics; rather, a reference to the existence of an alleged fundamental relationship between the two..... So that we have to

¹⁴² Tarabishi, George, *Hartakat a'n al-dimocratia, al-almaniyye, al-hadatha, wa al-mumana'a al-arabia [Heresies, on Democracy, Secularism, Modernity, and Arab Resistance]*, F:2, Beirut, Dar al-Saki, 2008, p.205.

consider that the state is included in Islam.”¹⁴³ The relationship between politics and Islam in Adel Daher’s view is a changing, emergent relationship, rather than a fixed, static and original one, i.e. historical circumstances have imposed this. It was the circumstances, in which the Muslims lived, that forced the project to issue political legislation in reaction to those circumstances. For instance, without the Quraish, the Muslims would not have migrated to Mecca and be forced to leave, hence, in Daher’s view, there is a logical correlation between Islam and secularism which leads to make Islam secular.

In response to the statement said by al-Banna, it became the slogan of most movements of “Islamic Awakening” until the relationship of Islam with their politics was established as a logical conceptual relationship, thus Daher attacks this statement and rejects it through “logical paradoxes” that necessarily led to the relationship being viewed as, in principle, unable to go beyond being a historical or objective relationship. So, in order to dismantle the thesis of Islamists, Daher resorts to two assumptions to prove its authenticity: firstly, the relationship of Islam with politics is historical or objective. What is meant is that it is a result of the historical circumstances in which Islam arose, which necessitated the establishment of a state for the purpose of consolidating religion. It is therefore the result of the objective circumstances that Islam has experienced that necessitated the orientation towards politics and not the religious doctrine of Islam. Therefore, if it were not for those historical and objective circumstances. According to Daher, Islam would not have differed from Christianity in terms of politics. Consequently, with the expiry of the objective circumstances, Islam’s relationship with politics ends, because this is not the nature of Islam as a religion. It is important to say that Adel Daher's first assumption and his alleged argument are misguided, because Islamic groups are taken into account that “every part of it is linked to others. Faith, Sharia and Worship are all integrated, and therefore do not differentiate

¹⁴³ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.327.

between religion, politics and the state.”¹⁴⁴ This means that “Islam is worship and leadership, religion and state, spirituality and action, is inseparable from each other.”¹⁴⁵

The second assumption is that the relationship between Islam and politics is a “conceptual relationship”, meaning that, “it is embedded in the heart of the religious teachings of Islam, regardless of the historical or objective circumstances in which it lives”. It is not subject, then, to this interpretation of the vicissitudes of time and changes of place, leading to the belief that “a Muslim, regardless of the historical or objective circumstances in which he finds himself, is obliged to establish his state on the basis of Islamic law” here and through the establishment of the Islamic State at the core of what is the streptococcus of a Muslim lies the problem for Daher. However, the reality, as Qaradawi points out, is that “Secularism cannot be neutral to religion, because isolating religion from the life of society or emptying its life from religion is not a neutral position, it is a position against religion, it is based on accusing religion of being harmful to life and a danger to it, it should be removed from directing and influencing life.”¹⁴⁶

As for Adel Daher, God Almighty cannot, being the eternal Creator and all goodness, interfere in the structural affairs of man because he does not resemble human beings. Man, by divine will, has been given a mind which is capable of managing his life without divine commands. If man is created to be independent, then the independence of man plays a great role because man has a mind and the mind is independent and has absolute priority in cognitive affairs, because knowledge is based only on the basis of a mentality “neither revelation, nor intuition, nor any other means that can be assumed as a source of knowledge unless it has a mental priority. However, every alleged cognitive claim of knowledge should be placed on the test of reason, otherwise it will remain merely a claim.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Ghannouchi, Rashid: Al-Turabi, Hassan, **The Islamic Movement and Distortion**, Khartoum, Dar al-Fikr Library, 1980, 290.

¹⁴⁵ *Muthakkarat al-da'wa wa al-da'iya [Dairies of Dawah and Preachers]*, Cairo, Dar al-Kalima Library, 2011, p.283.

¹⁴⁶ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Tatarruf al-almani fi muwajahat al-islam [Secular Extremism towards Islam]*, Cairo, Dar al-Shouroq, 1998, p.17.

¹⁴⁷ Daher, Adel, *al-Akhlaq wa al-Akil [Ethics and Mind]*, Amman, Dar al-Shorouk, 1990, p.276.

CONCLUSION

The four thinkers surveyed here were selected in this thesis for a particular purpose which is that the thought of these figures form the basic premises of most contemporary Islamic movements, if not all of them, where these movements' importance lies on political and social levels, even militarily. Therefore, these figures' ideas, especially concerning the term secularism which is strongly presented and discussed in our time, would reveal their position towards secularism, which is important in reading and understanding the contemporary socio-intellectual reality of Muslim and Arab World.

The Points of Agreement

It is useful to focus on agreed upon points by these thinkers, because what was agreed upon form a religious basis, not a doctrinal one, meaning that what was agreed upon is like an Islamic affair higher than a certain doctrine, so it is a matter which did not need to be discussed or be in difference. There are many points of agreements. Three of them, i.e. Sayyid Qutb, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, and Mohammed Mahdi Shamsuddin, agree on certain premises but Adel Daher significantly differs from the others.

The Concept of Secularism

Until nowadays, there is no accurate, complete or detailed definition of the term of secularism. This is, furthermore, far from being achieved because there is no absolute definition of this term, except in the general or known definition. Even secularists themselves argue and debate over the definition of secularism. Hence, what is intended here is that these scholars, Sayyid Qutb, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin and Adel Daher, in this research agreed that secularism is a call to separate religion from politics and to form governments whose legislation and values have no basis in religious laws, including the Islamic Sharia. According to Sayyid Qutb, the socio-historical conditions of Europe helped towards the emergence of secular ideas which

aimed to isolate religion from public life. This agreed aspect is what concerns us in our research in the sense that every character has his own definition and own point of view of looking at secularism. The figures mentioned here in this research agreed that secularism, in its simplest form, calls for the separation of the religious and temporal, and withdraws this until it reaches the establishment of *la-diniyye* (non-religious) states, in the sense that religion does not have any interference in public life. So, al-Qaradawi stated that: “The correct translation of this word is “non-religious” or “mundane”, with more specialty, which has nothing to do with religion or what its relationship with religion is antagonistic.”¹⁴⁸ Also, Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin referred to secularism as *a’lam al-a’lam* (world to world), “non-religious.” The term is meant to “take over the leadership of the state: ruling, its organs, institutions, and services who are men of the time who did not derive their plans and methods from religion, but draw on their human experience in administration, law, and lifestyle; and the general spirit which guides the state and society in all its cultural, political, legislative and other institutions is a spirit which is non-religious.”¹⁴⁹

Moreover, we notice that it is the same definition as Daher’s commenting: “In particular, it is primarily defined by the role of man in the world and by affirming the independence of the human mind in the process of employing the human mind in any areas or fields in which it employs.”¹⁵⁰ However, Adel Daher, unlike the other three characters mentioned above, discussed secularism not through ideological synonyms that form the basis of the political or economic theory of secularism, but through a reference to its philosophical origins that build upon it. In other words, Daher did not preach ideology that is very different from religious preaching, but he made the reader extend his attention to the intellectual and philosophical side as an indispensable reference for the researcher, whether he ideologically agreed with the writer or disagreed with the author. Adel Daher does not view secularism from the perspective of being an epistemological position,

¹⁴⁸ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*, Cairo, Wahba Library, 1997, p.42.

¹⁴⁹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye [Secularism]*, The Institution of University for Studies, Beirut, Publishing and Distribution, 1983, p.125.

¹⁵⁰ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-’ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.38.

i.e., the attitude of the nature of practical knowledge, and the nature of its relationship with religious knowledge, in the sense that:

the fundamental issue raised by secularism is to determine the relations and control between the temporal authority and the religious authority. That is, between the state and the church, or the religious institution whatever it was..... The issue is much deeper than this, it is about the right position of the nature of religion and the nature of man, and the nature of values.... It is based on the epistemological and logical separation between religion and politics.¹⁵¹

Application of the Islamic Law

These three figures: Sayyid Qutb, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin also agreed that Islamic law is comprehensive of all aspects of life at all levels, and the provisions of the Islamic law have the ability and flexibility to accommodate all new developments in life. Since the Islamic Sharia's descent on the Prophet Mohammed, it is applied inclusively, comprehensively, without leaving any level, beginning from politics and governance accessing to the most personal matters without leaving any room for the Sharia to enter it. The issue of the comprehensiveness of the Sharia is a social organizational issue. So, the arbitration of the Sharia is necessary, one of the primary focuses of Sayyid Qutb. For example, in Surat "al-Saff" Sayyid Qutb clarifies that "This Surat targets two fundamental things: firstly, it declares in the conscience of man that religion is a method of Allah for all mankind....and (secondly) the life of apostles was reincarnated in the same religion."¹⁵² Moreover, the Muslim believes, among other things, and most importantly, that the Islamic Sharia is inclusive of everything, for all walks of life, and that it is valid for every time and place, hence the Sharia is not a reflection of political systems, but a universal doctrine, law and behaviour available for all walks of life. This is also clear in Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin's view, when he comments: "Islam is not only a religion whose teachings are limited to human relations with its Lord, but also a strict political system and a

¹⁵¹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye*, p.9.

¹⁵² Qutb, Sayyid, *Fi zilal al-Quran [In the Shadow of the Quran]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 2005, vol, 6, p.3550.

complete social system. We have also known that the goal of Islam is to form the ideal society, and it pleads for this purpose by providing the moral element in the same person.”¹⁵³ Consequently,

Islam, for which we call, is not a gelatinous substance or material, formed by whoever it pleases; rather, it is an integrated civilizational project, explained by its advocates and preachers who built its landmarks and clarified its rules in a way that removes all obscurity and ambiguity, so there is no room to say the following: you call us to a fog or darkness that know neither its origins nor its proportion. However, our Islam which we adopted is clear as the sun in a day.¹⁵⁴

For Dr. al-Qaradawi, Islam is “an integrated civilizational project” that shows that Islam encompasses all aspects of life, both private and public, and indicates that Islam is both a religion and a state because the state and all concepts which are related to it, such as authority, rule, law and so forth, are all essential parts of civilization. Hence, Islam being “an integrated civilizational project” means that Islam has a culture and is a comprehensive system of an entire society at all its levels. Hence Islamic groups are taken as “all interrelated, each part of it is related to others, faith, Sharia and worship are all integrated, and therefore they do not differentiate between religion and politics and the state.”¹⁵⁵ Contrary to this, Adel Daher accused those who support Islam, religion and state “are generally confused between what is historical and what is logical.” The historical relationship between Islam and politics shifts in their mind to a logical or conceptual necessity”, in the sense that the relationship between politics and Islam by Adel Daher is a changing, emergent relationship, rather than a fixed, static and original one, i.e., historical circumstances have imposed this. Hence, according to Daher “Islam's relationship with politics is nothing more than a historical

¹⁵³ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *Nizam al-hukum wa al-idara fi al-islam [The System of Governance and Administration in Islam]*, Beirut, International Institution for Studies and Publishing, 2000, p.43.

¹⁵⁴ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*, Cairo, Wahba Library, 1997, p.27.

¹⁵⁵ Ghannouchi, Rashid: Al-Turabi, Hassan, **The Islamic Movement and Distortion**, Khartoum, Dar al-Fikr Library, 1980, p.290.

relationship.”¹⁵⁶ Only the human mind is capable of producing knowledge and producing life that pleases the human being in the world regardless of the Hereafter due to Daher.

Furthermore, these two agreed points must necessarily judge upon secularism. When the Sharia is universal, comprehensive of all walks of life and ruling upon life, any retreating in any direction would be at the expense of the Sharia. In other words, any application for secularism at any level will be at the expense of the Sharia, which contradicts the religion of Allah. Thus, Islamic law has warned of this scourge that inflicted the Israelites in their first deviations, which means that they took from the religion of God what they want, and threw away and ignored what did not conform with their appetites, so Allah criticized them promising with the most severe punishment because of their abusing or mocking of the religion of Allah. Therefore, with this in mind, we can judge secularism. Thus, according to the figures here, secularism is a thought contrary to the law of Allah, and cannot be compatible with it, or coexist with each other. The relationship between them is a contradiction, and any application of one of them is the abolition of the other according to the amount of the first application.

Due to the above, it is important to mention here that the thought of those characters and its impact on the contemporary political meeting of Islam, without any doubt is that the issue of secularism is still rejected from Islamic perspectives, something which cannot be disagreeing upon by any Muslim except those who advocate secularism. What happens, due to them, from citing of some religious characters who are irregular going towards secularism is the intellectual application in a domain which is not contrary to religion in order to hide and cover facts in front of people claiming that Islam and secularism can coexist together and side by side with each other in a community. So, this depiction is unrealistic, and it is contrary to the axioms of scientific objectivity, which requires that thought is known according to its senior figures in accordance with the outlines and constants of this thought, and not through personalities accused by their surroundings of intellectual anomalies.

The Points of Differentiation

¹⁵⁶ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.331.

Of course, every figure or thinker in this research: Sayyid Qutb, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin and Adel Daher, lived in a period of time or in a place which are different from each other. So, the way, circumstances or states are undoubtedly not the same despite the fact that they have aspects of similarities among them concerning the topic of secularism. Firstly, according to Sayyid Qutb, a society in which secularism is applied in a partial or comprehensive way to the aspects of life is called a “pre-Islamic society” (Ignorant society) commenting:

The pre- Islamic society is every society other than the Muslim community. If we want the objective identification, we would say: It is every society that appears devotion, represented, by the perception of belief, by the ritual worships and by the legal law. Because of that objective definition all societies existed actually today on earth are within the framework of the ‘Ignorant society’!”¹⁵⁷

Hence, due to him, any society that is ruled by the arbitration of the Sharia is called *jahili*, ignorant. So, *al-hakimiyya* (sovereignty) is the arbitration of the Sharia, the Law of Allah. Secondly, due to Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, he calls for the establishment of the Islamic state, not “religious state” with three important components or elements: the region, the power and the human component represent, in contemporary political scholars, which can be considered to be the material components of the state as well as be “imbodied in a society”. In addition, al-Qaradawi unmasked what the secularists claimed when they connected secularism with the word “science.” He has this to say about the “scientific”: “‘Scientific’ belongs to science in all areas of life: material and literary, civil and military, political and economic, individual and social. And the scientists are those who adopt this destination; they respect what science decides and they apply its rule according to which they adopt their lives.”¹⁵⁸ Thirdly, concerning with Sheikh Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin, the term “secularism” for him was a remedy to solve the sectarian problem that happened in Lebanon from 1969 to 1975 in spite of the fact that he considers secularism to be

¹⁵⁷ Qutb, Sayyid, *Ma’alem fi al-tareeq [Landmarks in the Road]*, Cairo, Dar al- Shouroq, 1979, p.88.

¹⁵⁸ al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, *al-Islam wa al-almaniyye wajhan li-wajh [Islam and Secularism Face to Face]*, Cairo, Wahba Library, 1997, p.57.

incompatible with the Sharia; therefore, it is unacceptable, and its application is not legally permissible in Islam. So, as for this sense, Sheikh Shamsuddin says: “There are two things that represent two basic conditions without which the state is not secular: the first: it is the source of legitimacy in political authority; the second: it is constitutional and legal legislation in the state.”¹⁵⁹ Legitimacy in political authority is not derived from Allah or from religion, as Sheikh Shamsuddin explains. Thus, the two conditions are integrated with each other, i.e. building a state without depending on the Sharia. Finally, as for Adel Daher, there is a great amount of difference between him and the other thinkers mentioned above. He wrote on the fragility of secularism in the Islamic nation, i.e. it was not produced through a philosophical struggle within the Arab nation unlike the emergence of secularism in the West, as he says: “Our secularism emerged under conditions that did not help to link our understanding to a sophisticated understanding of the nature of politics and society and whatever is related to it, it was a secularism based on fragile foundations, which made it unable to withstand the test.”¹⁶⁰ Moreover, he argues that separation of both temporal and religious authority should be based on an epistemological and logical separation between politics and religion. Thus, Daher dealt with secularism from its philosophical origins, not through ideological synonyms or through religious preaching. Moreover, Secularism, in Adel Daher’s view, is a system of knowledge in the sense of Islamic religion in every sense of the word where secularists can adopt Islam but without reference to a religious text committed to it, but through the use of reason (the mind).

Some Necessary Final notes

As for the issue of secularism, and raising it in the Arab and Islamic world, it will remain a matter of controversy and continue to be viewed as something suspicious, because of the relationship of Western secularism’s emergence to its historical, religious and social conditions, which led to its emergence as a solution to the problems that burdened the Christian West.

¹⁵⁹ Shamsuddin, M. Mahdi, *al-Almaniyye [Secularism]*, The Institution of University for Studies, Beirut, Publishing and Distribution, 1983, p.128.

¹⁶⁰ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.8.

However, the reality in the Islamic world is quite different from that in the Christian West, as we have shown before the reasons that led to the emergence of secularism in the Islamic world as long as the intellectual contradiction and the historical reality do not support to import the Western experience in the application of secularism in the Islamic World.

What is important for us in our research are the figures mentioned here, thus we can say the following: firstly, what is to be noticed is the difference between the Sharia's judgement and political vision or political position. The legal ruling is what is indicated by the texts of revelation an abstract connotation, so it is the origin in the legislation. It is considered in the Sharia's ruling to be generalized, which is the origin for the legitimate costs. As for the political position, it is often dependent on the fiqhi principle of "furthering interests and preventing the harmful." For political positions, which are usually based on interests, it is often in the status of a special *fatwa* (advisory opinion), for a special incident with special circumstances, whose origin is not general, but rather limited to that particular case. In order to be clearer, let us strike the following example: It is necessarily known from religion that submission to the enemies of Islam is unacceptable, something certainly affirmed by the books of Islamic jurisprudence certainly affirmed. It is a general rule of the Sharia, abstract, derived from the texts of divine revelation. However, if this absolute rule were applied, great harm would happen in a time where the Islamic government was in weakness, and its enemies were in a state of power, with the only result being bloodshed. Hence, interests dictate the appeasement to Islam's enemies. Even more than this, it might even dictate paying money to them, in order to avoid their viciousness due to that being in the interests of Muslims. Appeasement is a policy of agreeing to the demands of a potentially hostile nation in order to maintain peace to prevent further disagreement in arguments or war by giving to the opposing side an advantage that they have demanded. However, this position is not generalized, but the origin is the legitimate ruling, and the private rule remains special due to objective circumstances that disappeared in reality at the time. Appeasement is not a change in the legitimate ruling, but a necessity necessitated by circumstances in a particular reality in a particular time.

Returning to the scholars dealt with in this research, we find that Sayyid Qutb remained steady on what he had in his books, but paid the price of it with his life. What the Egyptian authorities at the time wanted was a single apology to take the rope away from his neck, but he

chose to pay his life for the stability of his position. Concerning sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, it is accused that al-Qaradawi has retreated from his thought, citing his participation in some national conferences positively, although the national trend is a secular one. As for Sheikh Shamsuddin, some have inferred his recommendations to the Lebanese people before his death, calling to live jointly between the Shiites and other components of society, and to fully integrate with society within the framework of the homeland, as calls to harmonize with the secular position. However, the reality is absolutely far from this, as according to those both researchers, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Muhammed Mahdi Shamsuddin, the matter is both a political position as well as a legitimate ruling. Rather, it is a position available and suitable to a certain historical moment with remaining the ruling as it is without any alternation or change. Neither al-Qaradawi nor Shamsuddin spoke about the absence of the Islamic government ruling by the law of Allah; furthermore, it is a necessity to deal with reality as it is, which means, selecting whatever is less harmful to the Islamic communities. If one of them, whether al-Qaradawi or Shamsuddin, has a choose under the secular ruling between tyrannical dictatorial ruling and democratic one in which it has some kinds of freedom; undoubtedly, they would select to live under democratic rule. However, there is no hesitation even in a minute according to both researchers, al-Qaradawi or Shamsuddin, to select the Islamic State if the choices were between the Islamic state and secularism reference, so this refers that there is no a word or a book which is contrary to what they wrote.

In regard to Dr. Adel Daher, as we have already mentioned, the way in which he spoke about secularism is different from the other three. It is more a philosophical approach instead of ideological and religious preaching by using the mind as a main pillar, the intellectual basis, not referring back to religious texts. However, by doing so, Adel Daher unveiled the mask off of any attempt to derive secularism from religion, such as the book of *al-Islam wa usulu al-hukum [Islam and the Origins of Governance]* by Ali Abdul Razzaq, and his followers until the present day such as Muhammad Arkoun, Nasr Hamed Abu Zaid, and others where they all try to derive secularism from religion. That is to say, they state that religion is not to be eliminated only by the sword of religion, so Adel Daher has unmasked this by returning secularism to its philosophical reference saying:

The most dangerous of all this and the most illustrative of the decline of secular thought by the secular thinkers in their position are by resorting to Islam itself- to the Quran and the

Sunnahs- unaware that they are making the biggest concessions to anti-secular movements, and that they are, the most dangerous, contradicting themselves, where they make the religious text their last reference in their defence of their secularism.¹⁶¹

In conclusion, Islam, as it is with its Sharia, its provisions and its nature, is one of the indisputable constants, which cannot be discussed with any kind of principles from which secularism is based. On the other hand, secularism remains in the administration of government. For example, al-Qaradawi justifies secularism in Turkey in an interview with him on the al-Jazeera's program published on 29-04-2017 on the *al-Bayan*'s channel saying: "I [al-Qaradawi] support Rajab al-Tayyip Erdoğan because he is a reliable man; he thinks; he consults, and he learns from life, people, and experiences, because he is not a closed-minded man. Closed-minded people [the one who refutes the other's thought or idea] are scary because they do not want to learn". Moreover, the current president of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, mentioned secularism during his visit to Egypt, as follows:

One must not distrust secularism. I am a non-secular Muslim," he said, "but I am the prime minister of a secular state and I say, 'I hope there will be a secular state in Egypt.' One must not be afraid of secularism. Egypt will grow in democracy and those called upon to draw up the constitution must understand that it must respect all religions, while also keep themselves equidistant from the followers of all religions so that people can live in security.¹⁶²

In addition, he says as well in the channel of "Turkey for Arabs" "Secularism is the best and honourable system on the earth implemented by Turkey, we do not care for the Sunnis or the Shiites as much as we care for man." So, there are many constants in the society in which secularism is shared as a realistic idea.

¹⁶¹ Daher, Adel, *al-Usus al-falsafiya li al-'ilmaniye [The Philosophical Foundations of Secularism]*, Beirut, Dar al-Saqi, 1998, p.5.

¹⁶² Mirenzi, Nicola, "Erdoğan and Secularism" *Reset Dialogues on Civilizations*, 27 September 2011, <https://www.resetdoc.org/story/erdogan-and-secularism/>.

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