Chapter III

Salient Features of the Political Thought of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi
1. Introduction

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi (1903-1979) was a well-known Islamic scholar, revivalist, thinker, researcher and Quran exegetist of the subcontinent. He asserted that Islam was the only panacea to treat all the ills of the present world. Consequently he tried to solve the socio-economic, cultural, religious and political problems of his times through the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. He was a highly influential scholar of the modern world. His thought generated many debates among both traditionalists and modernists, but despite that he also received great respect from both.

Before the partition of India, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi seriously engaged in debates in order to build an Islamic state and society. Later, he and his party, Jamā‘at-i Islami, played an eminent role in the constitutional debate of Pakistan.

His thought is influential as it is still guiding principle for the political activities of Jamā‘at-i Islami of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. His intellectual legacy spread not only in South Asia, but also across the whole world. As Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, an eminent critic of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi says:

“He was one of the first Islamic thinkers to develop a systematic political reading of Islam and a plan for social action to realize his vision. His creation of a coherent Islamic ideology, articulated in terms of the elaborate organization of an Islamic state, constitutes the essential breakthrough that led to the rise of contemporary revivalism. His writings were prolific, and the indefatigable efforts of his party, the Jama‘at-i Islami (Islamic party), first in India and later in Pakistan, disseminated them far and wide.
Mawdudi is without doubt the most influential of contemporary revivalist thinkers. His views have influenced revivalism from Morocco to Malaysia, leaving their mark on thinkers such as Sayyid Qutb and on events such as the Iranian revolution of 1978-1979, and have influenced the spread of Islamic revivalism in Central Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Asia.”¹

2. Life of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi (1903-1979) was born at Aurangabad, a city of the then Hyderabad province, into a family of which had a long religious tradition. His father Ahmad Hasan was a highly devout person and a lawyer by profession. His mother Ruqayya Begam was the daughter of Mirza Quraban ‘Ali Khan, a disciple of Ghalib, the well-known poet.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi acquired primary education at home, under his father. Later he joined Madrasa Fawqaniya, a high school which combined modern education with Islamic. After successfully completing secondary education he joined Dar al-‘Ulūm, Hyderabad, for undergraduate studies, but his formal education was disrupted due to the illness and eventual death of his father. However, this did not prevent him from continuing his studies. By the 1920s, he had learnt Arabic, English and Persian along with Urdu. This helped him to acquire knowledge through different languages.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi turned to journalism in 1918 C.E. as a contributor to an Urdu newspaper, Al-Madina, published from Bijnawr. In 1920 he became editor of Taj weekly, published from Jabalpur. By the end of 1920 he went to Delhi and first undertook the editorship of the newspaper Muslim (1921-1923) and later of Al-Jamī‘at (1925-1928). Both publications were the

organs of Jamī‘at-i ‘Ulama-i Hind. Within a short period he turned them into leading newspapers popular among Indian Muslims.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi started taking an interest in politics around the year 1920 which was a period of nationalist struggle. He soon joined the Khilafat movement and delivered speeches to rouse the people of Jabalpur. During this period he also associated with Tahrik-i Hijrat, an anti-British movement which urged Muslims to migrate en masse to Afghanistan. Soon he realized that both movements had been established on weak foundations.\(^2\) Thenceforth he confined himself to journalistic and academic pursuits.

In this period Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi translated four books, three from English and one from Arabic. He also wrote his first academic work, *al-Jihād fi al-Islam*, a masterly treatise which analyzed the concept of war and peace in Islam. The work was first serialized in *Al-Jamī‘at* and later published in book form in 1930. It was highly appreciated by the well-known leader of the Khilafat Movement, Mawlana Muhammad ‘Ali Jawhar (d. 1931), the well-known poet and philosopher Allama Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938) and others.

In 1928 Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi resigned from *Al-Jamī‘at* and moved to Hyderabad, where he devoted himself to research. In 1933 he took over the magazine *Tarjuman al-Quran* which soon became a major vehicle for the dissemination of his thought. Initially he analyzed the basic principles of Islam, compared the modern and Islamic concepts and suggested solutions for problems of the modern world, from an Islamic perspective. His scholarly writings made the magazine very popular. Articles which he wrote

during this period were later published in the form of two books: *Islami Tahdīb aur Uske Usul-o Mabādi* and *Tafhīmat*.

In 1938, an invitation from Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the well-known poet-philosopher, persuaded Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi to leave Hyderabad and settle down in Pathankot, Punjab. There Chawdhami Niyaz ‘Ali, a philanthropist, provided him a center, named *Dar al-Islam*, which was meant to train competent scholars to produce outstanding contributions on Islam, aimed at an Islamic revival.

By 1940, through the *Tarjuman al-Quran*, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi conveyed his plan to establish an organization, Jama‘at-i Islami. Consequently, on 26 August 1941, in the presence of seventy-five Muslim scholars and intellectuals from different parts of the country, he established the organization. They elected him as its first *amīr* (leader) and he remained in the post till 1972.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi opposed the idea of Pakistan, but he moved to Pakistan when it was established because he thought that it was the appropriate place to establish an Islamic political system. Thus he shifted to Lahore and made it the center of his activism.³

In Pakistan Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi concentrated all his activities on the creation of a truly Islamic nation. Consistent with this aim, he wrote a large number of books, pamphlets and articles and delivered numerous speeches. He criticized the policies of successive governments of Pakistan, arguing that those who had demanded a nation on the basis of Islam did not have any plan to make it Islamic; rather they wanted to make it secular and

materialistic. The government reacted to this with severe reprisal. He was often arrested and imprisoned for long spells.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi wrote around 120 books and pamphlets, and delivered over a thousand speeches and press statements. He was a prolific and versatile writer. He analyzed an extensive variety of problems: theological, social, cultural, economic and political, and made efforts to explain how Islam could be a solution to these.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi undertook several journeys during the last two decades of his life. They provided him an opportunity to acquire first-hand knowledge and to interact with many intellectuals and notable personalities of the world. During these travels he lectured in Makkah, Madina, Jeddah, Palestine, Damascus, Cairo, Istanbul, Amman, Rabat, Kuwait, Toronto, New York, London etc.

When Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi visited Saudi Arabia, King Saud bin‘Abdul Aziz invited him to serve on the committee which prepared curricula for the Islamic University of Madina. He had partaken in the university’s Academic Council ever since it was established in 1962.

In 1962, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi was the only delegate from Pakistan to the World Muslim Conference, held at Makkah. The conference led to the formation of the Rābitah al-‘Ālam al-Islami (Muslim World League) and Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi became one of its founding members.

In 1979, when the government of Saudi Arabia instituted the Shah Faisal Award, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi was selected as its first recipient. He contributed the large sum awarded, to different Muslim educational institutions.
In 1979, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi went to America for medical treatment and died in New York. \(^4\) His funeral prayers were offered in three continents, America (New York), Europe (London) and Asia (Lahore), where he was buried.

### 3. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s Revivalism

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi himself defines his intellectual revolution and political struggle in terms of *tajdīd* (Islamic revivalism). He defines it as a struggle between Islam and *jāhiliyyah* (ignorance), or good and evil. \(^5\)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi developed his thought in the period of British imperialism and the subsequent rise of Hindu nationalism and secularism. His thought aimed to free Muslims from modern philosophies of the West. The process was termed by Khurshid Ahmad, his longtime follower, as ‘intellectual decolonization’ \(^6\). He rejected the culture and ideologies of the West, but adopted its tools of progress to interpret Islam in the changing time and context and to debate with Western modernity. Maryam Jameelah explains this approach thus: “We Muslims are therefore determined to make full use of modern knowledge but for our own purpose which will be in conformity to our cultural values and ideals.” \(^7\) He opposed those ideas which were meant to subjugate Muslims. As Khurshid Ahmad says, the aim of his

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movement was modernizing Islam without compromising on its values and principles. He accepted modernization, but rejected blind westernization.\(^8\)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi tried to modernize the Islamic world, believing that modern science was a body which could accommodate any spirit, values and thought. For instance a radio disseminates both Islamic and un-Islamic messages at the same frequency. Concerning Islamic ethics, he said that even a computer and bulldozer can be utilized to serve Allah. Maryam Jameelah says that inventions and technologies are pure in their origin, but have been made impure by Western civilization.\(^9\)

The worldview of Mawdudi is totally different from modernist Muslims. He tries to Islamize modern scientific thought, while the latter accept it and try to interpret Islam accordingly. Seyyed Vali Nasr says: “The Modernists wanted to modernize Islam whereas Mawdudi wanted to also Islamize modernity. The distinction was enough to permit Mawdudi to inveigh against his modernist rivals.”\(^10\)

He believes Islam to be a panacea,\(^11\) and wants to cleanse Muslims from Western influences through Islam. By establishing the superiority of Islamic dogma and modernizing its structure, he presents the faith as the only alternative to combat Western influence. He believed in the revival of Islam as it was practiced in his day. He observed that current Islam had swayed away from its true values, morals, and appropriate structure. Hence his

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struggles were to re-read its doctrines in the contemporary era. Thus was the way in which Islam could achieve power and influence. He wanted to pave the way for the emergence of Islam as a powerful and glorious culture.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi recognizes that the fall of Islam in the present world is not only a product of intellectual failure or historical change, but also the result of a decline in the moral attitude of Muslims, especially at the individual level. Therefore he is not content with interpreting Islam only as a moral attitude which guarantees salvation; rather he asserts that the revival of Islam starts with the refinement of Muslims at the individual level.

He was not a theoretician who did nothing for the practical application of his ideas. He constantly made efforts for the application of his ideas in individual and collective life. For this he used all possible means such as delivering speeches, writing books, articles, letters and pamphlets, organizing protests and campaigns and established an organization.

4. Political Thought

The significant character of the political thought of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi is that there is no conflict or separation between spiritual and mundane life. He believes that Islam is not confined to the purification of spirit and morals; rather it extends to all spheres of life. By moulding individual and social behavior, he wants to establish the kingdom of Allah on earth.

3.1. Basic Postulates

In order to organize Islam into a political system, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi reinterprets the four basic tenets of the Quran, *ilāh*, *rabb*, *‘ibādah* and *dīn*. Drawing a consistent link across these terms, he invokes a worldview which obligates Muslims to accept the authority of Allah in all spheres of life, including the political, and to concentrate all their worship, obedience and submission to Him alone. Mawdudi believes that the terminologies collectively define the essence of Islam and delineate its boundaries.

3.1.1. *Ilāh*

According to Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi the word *ilāh* means God or Allah. It implies the ability, superiority and power to fulfill others’ requirements, to provide them protection and shelter and to relieve them from agitation and distress. Everything is His creation, subservient to Him and all blessings and grace flow from Him alone. Everything in the earth and heaven is bound by His law and therefore willingly or unwillingly, is submissive and subservient to Him. None else possesses any power or share in authority. Therefore Allah, who is the only Creator, Provider, Controller and Administrator alone deserves *‘ibādah*.

3.1.2. *Rabb*

The word *rubūbiyyah* is a synonym for sovereignty. It implies that Allah, who is the Cherisher, Provider and Sustainer, is the absolute Monarch, the sole Lord and Master of everything including man.

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The mission of all Prophets was to convey divine guidance to mankind; call them to acknowledge the absolute Sovereign, Allah and render unalloyed obedience to Him. If their mission was merely to call them to bow before one God and allow their followers full freedom in other affairs, thereby allying with and carrying out the will of others, no dispute would ever have arisen between Prophets and the ruling class.\textsuperscript{15}

The Quran\textsuperscript{16} clearly states that the polytheists and non-believers who opposed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not deny the existence of Allah, rather they believed that He was their sole Creator. They also believed that the forces of nature were in His control. Disagreement arose only over the demand of the Prophets for recognition on Allah as the sole Rabb and Ilāh.\textsuperscript{17}

3.1.3. ‘Ibādah

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s definition of the term ‘ibādah implies three different meanings: worship, slavery and obedience.\textsuperscript{18} As Allah is the Ilāh and Rabb, only He deserves to be worshipped. A believer should turn to Him with hope, fear, utter obedience and complete submission. Thus addressing prayers to other than Allah or obeying anyone against His commands is against the concept of ‘ibādah.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, pp. 34-70.
\textsuperscript{16} Al-Quran 10: 31.
\textsuperscript{18} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, Four Basic Quranic Terms, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, p. 84.
3.1.4. Dīn

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s discourse on dīn has particular significance. He believes that in traditional sources of Islam the social and political dimensions of the term have been minimized. He interprets the term to mean an all-encompassing code of life. He defines dīn as a synonym for the Islamic system of life, which acknowledges the supreme authority of Allah.20

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi also defines the code of conduct, rules and regulations of Islam (i.e. the shari‘ah) which a Muslim follows in his entire life as dīn.21 Here he explains the term dīn as the guidelines that help one to perform religious duties and govern transactions of believers. Hence, beyond the traditional meanings, dīn is regarded as the moral commitment and practical way of obeying Allah, which is the sole purpose of faith.

3.2. Fundamental Principles

The political thought of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi is based on three fundamental principles: tawhīd (unity of God), risālah (prophet-hood) and al-khilāfah (vicegerency). The traditional Islamic worldview emphasizes salvation of mankind as the sole purpose of religious rituals, whereas he remarks that their central motive is absolute obedience to Allah. Hence the entire life of man should be organized to obey Allah. He does not think that the supremacy of God rests merely on affirming His attributes, but in accepting what they entitle and in leading a life accordingly. The concept of tawhīd implies accepting the ulūhiyyah and the rubūbiyyah of Allah. Believing that

21 Ibid, pp. 90-91.
Allah is the only Creator, Sustainer and Master, man is obliged to accept His sovereignty and to worship, obey and submit to Him alone.\(^{22}\)

Explaining *tawḥīd* in such a way, Abu al-Aʿla Mawdudi altogether negates the political and legal sovereignty of human beings. In his assessment, Islam implies an active submission to Allah by rigorously enforcing Islamic values and principles with the intention of establishing the ideal Islamic order in all domains of life. Several scholars of Islam criticize Mawdudi for this exposition of faith. Mawlana Abu al-Hasan Al-Nadwi says that piety and religious practices, including ‘*ibādah* are not to be directed to any aim other than salvation which is the higher end.\(^{23}\)

*Risālah* is the medium of transmitting the law of Allah to humanity. The Prophet (peace be upon him) provided necessary details and exemplification of the Quran. The combination of the commandments of the Quran and the *Sunnah* is called the *sharī‘ah* in Islamic terminology.\(^{24}\) The *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the ideal for Muslims not only in their personal affairs, but also their political life. The political system which he established is the ideal political order to emulate.\(^{25}\) This kind of appropriation of the Quran and *Sunnah* led Abu al-Aʿla Mawdudi to extend his thought from individual piety to the quest for political power.


Al-khilāfah signifies the vicegerency of the real Master, Allah. The real status of man on earth is that of a representative of Allah. Therefore he is able to exercise only the powers which are delegated to him by Allah.  

3.3. Secularism, Nationalism and Democracy

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi ruthlessly criticizes modern theories of secularism, nationalism and democracy. He says that if anyone accepts Allah as the only Creator, Master and Sovereign, it is meaningless to believe that His law is limited to private affairs; such a limitation implies that man is simultaneously obeying another authority which is able to provide him better guidance than Allah. Therefore excluding Him from collective life is an open rebellion against the Creator, Master and Sovereign.

Critically analyzing nationalism, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi recognizes it as un-Islamic and a cultural and political threat to Muslims, because Islam is a universal faith and Allah has bestowed his mercy upon all human beings irrespective of their color, race, language or gender. Instead of discrimination on the basis of nation, Islam seeks unity of all mankind for a good cause. The major feature of modern nationalism is love and patriotism towards one’s own nation. It is permitted by Islam, but if it implies unreasonable favoritism towards one’s nation and hatred of others’, this is forbidden. Nationalism divides men, so that whenever a nation gets a chance to get the upper hand against another, all sentiments of propriety and justice are ignored.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi emphasizes the democratic nature of Islam while explaining the concept of *al-khilāfah*. However, he opposes modern democracy as it always favors the majority’s opinion which may be right or wrong. It also obliges the minority to live according to the law made by the majority. However, he does not allow for a society where people don’t enjoy freedom of expression, freedom of assembly or freedom of action etc. or of a social system where a few individuals enjoy some special rights on the basis of birth, race, class and color. He believes the Islamic state is the ideal state because its law is the *sharī‘ah* which promotes all the good aspects of modern democracy while it prevents all the vices and corruption. However, in practical politics he was forced to support modern democracy. Thus he might have considered this as the best way to make the environment conducive for religious activism.

Ideologically, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi affirms that both Islam and modern theories are different. Submission and obedience to the Sovereign God, universalism and Allah’s vicegerency of man on earth are the Islamic alternatives of secularism, nationalism and modern democracy respectively, which must be replaced by the above alternatives.

### 3.3.1. Sovereignty of Allah

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that those who believe in the sovereignty of Allah should not divide their life into sacred and profane. All domains of life are to be dedicated to Allah. He believed that Allah is not only the Creator of the universe, but also its Ruler and Governor. He did not sever his connection to the universe after creating it nor did He leave it to be ruled by

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others; rather He is still the authority in charge of its control and maintenance. Everything, from the smallest particle to the biggest stars is under His direct command and obeys Him unconditionally. Therefore the supremacy of His will and law is inevitable.\textsuperscript{31}

The Quran states that He ‘ascended His throne’,\textsuperscript{32} possibly meaning that He has fixed certain places as the centers of this cosmos from where He governs the universe. The ‘throne’ (\textit{al-‘arsh}) of Allah is a symbol of His power and suzerainty, i.e. being the Ruler and King of the universe, He assumed the reins of power.\textsuperscript{33}

In the Quran Allah repeatedly uses the terms ‘Lord, King and Sovereign’ to elucidate the relationship between Him and His creatures because all sovereignty vests in Him. Hence, those who claim complete or partial sovereignty are only cherishing an illusion. Man, who is created and being governed by Him should not acknowledge anyone else as the object of worship, a sovereign, or law-giver.\textsuperscript{34}

The word \textit{mulk} in the Quran implies kingship, sovereignty and supremacy, i.e. Allah is the absolute King, Ruler and Governor of the entire universe. There is none to share even a shred of His sovereignty. Allah, who possesses authority and commanding power and is able to change destinies, is the only one deserving of worship, obedience and submission.\textsuperscript{35}

The differences between Prophets and non-believers arose because the former called the latter to acknowledge the sovereignty of Allah and obey

\textsuperscript{31} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Tafhim al-Quran} (D4 Media: Version 2.0) 7: 54, note: 41.
\textsuperscript{32} Al-Quran 7: 54.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 7: 54, note: 41.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, 25: 2, note: 7.
Him alone. However non-believers, who were tribal leaders, kings and monarchs, refused to forgo their legal and political authority over the common people and submit to the sovereignty of Allah. For instance, Pharaoh, who proclaimed himself god, did not demand worship or claim that he had created everything, rather he claimed that he was to be obeyed unconditionally by Egyptians. The Quran cites Pharaoh’s instruction to Hāmān for building him a tower to see Allah. Egyptians had been worshipping a host of deities and Pharaoh was a worshipper of these deities and considered himself the descendant of the sun-god. His position was similar to modern states which claim political and legal sovereignty over their subjects and pride themselves that their self-made law is superior to that revealed by God.

3.3.2. Universalism

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi presents universalism as an alternative to nationalism. He says that Islam as a religion is not limited to a national group or geographical area. It signifies submission and obedience to Allah, who has nothing to do with distinctions of race, color, language and nation. It does not tolerate selfishness, prejudice and racial pride. It is not a national system, but an ideological one which is based on certain permanent values and eternal principles. Its door is always open for those who accept it and they will be provided equality of rights without invidious distinctions.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi encourages national love, patriotism and good-will for the nation, but he does not permit national prejudice and selfishness. He

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36 Al-Quran 28: 38.
37 Ibid, 7: 127.
39 Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, Our Message, p. 27.
asserts that national freedom is legal, but exploitation of a nation by another is illegal. The purpose of division into nations is not to hate or suppress others. Instead of competing with one another, all nations are required to co-operate for human welfare and share financial resources and cultural ideas.40

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi envisioned a cosmopolitan state or federation of nation-states established on the basis of fraternity. Its Master is Allah and all people of the world are its citizens. They look upon other city-states or nations as their own. The cosmopolitan state is bound by universal principles. There all men are equal, absolutely free and have opportunities for unrestricted communication. As Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi points out:

“Our eyes wish to see again how a modern Ibn Batuta can go about from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific and not be treated as an alien anywhere; but where opportunities are open to him everywhere to become a judge, a magistrate, a minister, or an ambassador.”41

3.3.3. Vicegerency (Al-Khilāfah)

Al-khilāfah implies delegation or viceroyalty of Allah on earth. Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone and man is only a divine agent on earth i.e. he does not possess absolute sovereignty in the political and legal sense because his power is limited and governed by divine commands. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi remarks that instead of hākimiyyah (sovereignty) the Quran designated al-khilāfah (vicegerency of the Supreme Sovereign) as the position of man on earth. Hence the only Sovereign (ḥākim) is Allah and men who hold power and rule according to the sharī’ah are His vicegerents (al-khulfā’) who do not free to act according to their own will; rather they have to follow the

40 Ibid, p. 28.
41 Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, Our Message, p. 29; Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, Nationalism and India, p. 13.
guidance and commandments of his Sovereign Master. Disobeying these would amount to disbelief, transgression and rebellion.

The theory of *al-khilāfah* implies that only legislative authority is Allah. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi points out that the authority of permitting or prohibiting something belongs to Allah alone; none else has even a fragment of it. If anyone transgresses the limits and adjudicates in accordance with his own will, the Quran describes him as one of ‘those inventing lies against Allah’.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s Islamic state is a ‘popular vicegerency’ because he believes that Allah has promised the responsibility of ruling over the earth to all Muslims, so that all of them are repositories of the *khilāfah* in their individual capacity, and answerable to Allah. He confines the responsibility of *al-khilāfah* only to Muslims, i.e. those who believe in Allah and submit to Him, whereas in the Quran Allah calls all of mankind His vicegerents on earth. This is because he feels that since non-Muslims don’t believe in the necessity of implementing Islamic law, they are unable to fulfill the functions of a *khalīfah* on the earth.

In the Islamic state individual ability and character are the only criteria of superiority. No person or group suffers any lack of opportunity due to their birth, profession or social status. The way to progress is open to all. This unlimited scope of personal achievements is the hallmark of the Islamic

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46 Al-Quran 2: 30.
state. Even a slave can be appointed as a khalīfah, governor or military chief and men of noble families are obliged to obey and serve him without hesitation. Thus weavers, cloth-sellers and cobblers were leaders, judges and heroes of Islam.\footnote{Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Islam and Ignorance} (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, 2013) pp. 32-33.}

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi does not permit any kind of dictatorship in the state because all Muslims are \textit{khulafā’} of Allah on earth. The leader who handles political affairs of the state performs the duty on their behalf, so that the right of electing a leader belongs to all Muslims of the state.\footnote{Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Our Message}, p. 31.} The elected leader is answerable to both Allah and his fellow \textit{khulafā’}. Since adult and sane Muslim men and women are repositories of the \textit{khalīfah}, they are free to express their opinion.\footnote{Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Human Rights in Islam}, pp. 9-10.}

The state is run in a spirit of piety because both the ruler and the ruled know that they are only trustees who perform their functions according to the \textit{sharī‘ah}. Hence all personnel, from an ordinary warrior to the \textit{khalīfah}, fulfil their duty with piety because they believe that this is a form of ‘\textit{ibādah}’ (worship) of Allah.\footnote{Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Islam and Ignorance}, p. 34; Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Fundamentals of Islam}, Khurram Murad, ed. (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, 2014), pp. 292-293.}

\subsection*{3.4. Individualism, Collectivism and Islam}

Islam is completely different from capitalism and socialism in spirit, objectives and methods. Capitalism believes in private ownership and socialism in ownership by society or the state. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that Islam teaches that the Master of everything including man is Allah man’s role on earth is that of a vicegerent who handles his personal and
collective affairs according to his Sovereign’s injunctions. The moral norms and reforming programs of the Islamic state extend over all spheres of life. It adopts a middle path and an excellent balance, providing individual liberty and abstaining from any trace of dictatorship. It safeguards individual rights of all citizens and prescribes for them certain responsibilities towards society. Thus both individualism and collectivism are harmonized, so that the individual gets full opportunity to develop his potential and employ his developed faculties in the service of society.

3.5. Islamic State

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi employs the western term ‘state’ for explaining the nature and character of the Islamic political system which is totally different from that of the West. For him, the spirit of both the Islamic state and Islamic religious practices is the same, i.e. obedience to Allah. Unlike modern states, the prime concern of the Islamic state is the reform and purification of the individual and collective life of man.

Explaining the characteristics and features of the Islamic state, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi modernizes the classical doctrine of the Divine Caliphate. He recognizes that in Islam there are no boundaries between the worldly and spiritual aspects of life. The manifestation of obedience and submission to Allah is the establishment of religion (iqāmat-i dīn); its corollary is divine

government (*hukūmat-i ilāhi*), headed by a virtuous leadership (*imāmat-i ṣāliḥah*).\(^{56}\)

### 3.5.1. Necessity of the Islamic State

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi believes that the establishment of the Islamic state is a *farḍ al-kifāyah* (collective religious obligation). He points out that religion cannot be fully enforced without power. In Islam human life is devoted to Allah, whose guidance is to be followed in all its spheres. The Quran is not only a book of ethical principles, but also a guide of socio-political and economic affairs. Its injunctions and economic principles cannot be fully implemented without the existence of an Islamic state.\(^{57}\)

The state is necessary in order to implement all the Islamic injunctions in daily life. The practice of prayers, fasting, *zakāh* and *hajj* by individual Muslims amounts to only a partial fulfillment of religion. Islam is not only a religion of personal rituals but also of civil and criminal laws, so that, along with practising the rituals of Islam, the Muslim community is responsible for implementing its laws in the land.\(^{58}\)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi remarks that in the Quran,\(^{59}\) Allah asks the Prophet (peace be upon him) to pray for the granting of power or the assistance of a ruling authority, so that he may establish good, eradicate evil and administer justice in accordance with the law of Allah. This implies that the reforms which Islam intends cannot be carried out without political power.\(^{60}\)

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\(^{59}\) Al-Quran 17: 80.

Abu al-A'la Mawdudi believed that mere preaching is not sufficient to create a society according to the vision of Islam. According to Maryam Jameelah, once Mawlana Maudoodi told her that the Jama‘at-i Islami was so actively engaged in political activity because preaching, printed works and even education was of little benefit unless Islam could be practically enforced in a vigorous Islamic state.61

3.5.2. Theo-Democracy

In Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s assessment, the Islamic political order is simultaneously both a theocracy and a democracy, but these are totally different from unchecked domination of priests and the majority respectively. The Islamic state is the ‘kingdom of Allah,’ which provides ‘limited popular sovereignty under the suzerainty of God’.62 It is a democracy, but the power of man is subdued to the commands of Allah. The executive of the state is constituted and deposed by the will of the common people but it takes decisions only on those matters which do not have explicit injunctions in the sharī‘ah. Any Muslim who is able and qualified to express a sound opinion on matters of the sharī‘ah, is entitled to interpret matters that come up for discussion, in the light of the Quran and Sunnah. Since the Islamic political system combines features of both theocracy and democracy, it is called a ‘theo-democracy’63 ‘divine democratic government’64 or ‘the divine Caliphate’65.

63 Ibid, pp. 21-22.
64 Ibid, pp. 21-22.
3.5.3. The Process of Revolution

Islamic revolution to Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi is a peaceful and gradual evolution of society. It leads to a slow and steady transfer of power from wicked persons of society to virtuous hands. It is a process of cultural engineering which aims at establishing society on strong religious foundations and thereby the preparation of a suitable environment for the Islamic state.

According to Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, the establishment of the Islamic state is not a sudden event. At the beginning an organized party with pure Islamic spirit, character and morals is to be created. The leaders and workers of the party are obliged to demonstrate the ideal moral standards of Islam in their daily life. Further, they have to make ceaseless efforts to create the same spirit and mental attitude in the public. They have to establish educational and training institutes to produce capable intellectuals, philosophers, scientists, historians, politicians, economists, and scholars. With their support, the party has to make efforts to establish justice and eradicate evil in the world. Its members are obliged to sacrifice their life and wealth. They have to exemplify and represent the ideology of Islam. Those who do not entirely lack truth and justice are attracted to the movement and will inevitably join it.66

The revolution first takes place in the psyche of common people. They yearn for the Islamic state and are unwilling to accept any other system. Ultimately they overthrow the prevalent system and establish the Islamic one. The preparation of the background in such a way also gives birth to

administrators and office-bearers who are capable and are experts in Islam. This is because they have been educated and trained in the institutions set up in the earlier stages.⁶⁷

3.5.4. Objectives of the State

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s Islamic state is not a purposeless one. It has to achieve certain objectives. It has to establish and maintain virtue, purity and prosperity which Allah wants human life to be enriched with and to eradicate and prevent evils, injustice, exploitation and disorder which are abhorrent to Him.⁶⁸

The establishment of justice is the primary objective of the state. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi says that Allah assigned Prophets the responsibility to practically enforce justice and punish those who disrupt it.⁶⁹ Hence, reforming the corrupt world, checking sin and implementing justice are the major objectives of the Islamic state.⁷⁰

The state is also obliged to enforce all that Islam prescribes for the prosperity and betterment of mankind. Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi says that the reformation programs of Islam have to be accomplished utilizing all the resources of the state. Like the personal life of the khālīfah, his social affairs also should be good i.e. he is not only obliged to offer prayers but also establish them in the collective life of the people. Likewise, he has to keep away from extravagance and arrange for a system to collect and distribute

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⁷⁰ Ibid 17: 80, note: 100.
zakāt, so that wealth is equally distributed in society and thus the welfare function of the state will be fulfilled.\textsuperscript{71}

The Islamic state is also obliged to make efforts for popularizing and promoting all those virtues which Islam wants to spread and discourage all forms of evils which it desires to eradicate.\textsuperscript{72} The other objectives of the state are certain universally acknowledged duties such as protecting its subjects from foreign attacks, safeguarding their liberty, establishing peace and making efforts to raize the living standard of its citizens.\textsuperscript{73}

### 3.5.5. Loyalty to the State

Analyzing verses from the Quran, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that both ruler and ruled are obliged to be loyal to Allah, the Absolute Sovereign. A Muslim is primarily a slave (‘abd) of Allah, and hence obliged to obey Him. None is allowed to prevent him from obeying Allah. They are also required to obey the Prophet (peace be upon him). The obedience and loyalty to the Prophet is the practical manifestation of the loyalty to Allah. Following anything which is not permitted by the Prophet (peace be upon him) is un-Islamic. The third object of loyalty and obedience in the state are men of authority or the government (ulu al-amr). This loyalty is subservient to the obedience of Allah and His Messenger.\textsuperscript{74}

The word *ulu al-amr* implies those who control the affairs of the state and handle its administration. Everyone from the head of the state to a mayor of a municipality or in-charge of any other local organization come under the category of *ulu al-amr*. All those in charge of any affairs of Muslims are

\textsuperscript{73} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, p. 248.
\textsuperscript{74} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, *Tafhim al-Quran*, 4: 59, note: 89.
required to be obeyed. None is permitted to unnecessarily incite rebellion against them. However the *ulu al-amr* are required to obey Allah and His messenger (peace be upon him).  

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi believes that Muslims should rebel against the *ulu al-amr* if they do not offer prayer or abolish congregational prayer because abolition of the institution of *ṣalāh* (prayer) at the collective level implies that *ulu al-amr* is not ready to implement even the primary requirement of Islam.

Whenever a dispute occurs in the state it should be decided according to the injunctions of the Quran and *Sunnah*. Matters about which there is no particular injunction in the Quran and *Sunnah* will be decided by Muslims, within the limits prescribed by the *sharī‘ah*. This is a distinguishing feature of the Islamic state.

### 3.5.6. Requisites of the Ruler

On the basis of authoritative sources of Islam, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi prescribes certain requirements for the ruler of the Islamic state. The primary qualifications of those entrusted with the affairs of the state are piety, honesty, trustworthiness and love of justice. All other qualities shall be considered only if the candidate has these primary qualities. The leadership of an aggressor is not valid.

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75 Ibid, 4: 59, note: 89.  
76 Ibid  
77 Ibid, 4: 59, note: 89.  
The ruler is required to be a Muslim because his responsibility is implementing the Islamic system of governance. It cannot be given to those who do not accept Islam. He should be a sane, male adult who possesses intellectual and physical capacity to run the system of *al-khilāfah*, is knowledgeable, competent and efficient, not a fool or ignoramus; and is a citizen of the concerned state. A person who desires to become the ruler and proposes his own candidature is ineligible.

### 3.5.7. Election of the Ruler

Both the Quran and the *Sunnah* do not give any particular injunction regarding the mode of appointing the ruler. Hence Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi believes that Islam does not want to limit the available choices. The differences of place, time and context may demand different methods of selection to pick those who enjoy the confidence of the nation the most. However, citing the modes which were adopted by the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to elect the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi lays down certain general principles. They are: the election procedure should be decided according to the common will of Muslims; none has the right to forcibly install himself as the *khalīfah*; any family or class of people, even the Quraysh, does not have a monopoly over the *khilāfah*; the election should reflect the independent will of Muslim citizens; and any kind of external force or coercion is not permitted.

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80 Ibid, pp. 21-22.  
86 Ibid, pp. 231-235.
Here Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi gives the right to elect the khilāfah only to Muslim citizens because he thinks that those who do not have firm faith in Allah and the sharī‘ah not qualified to elect a ruler who is the vicegerent of Allah.\textsuperscript{87} He also believes that since all Muslims of the state are vicegerents of Allah, the ruler is designated to rule on their behalf.\textsuperscript{88}

### 3.5.8. Mutual Consultation (Shūra)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi recognizes mutual consultation (shūra) as an important element of the Islamic state. He asserts that the Islamic state is to be run through mutual consultation (shūra) of the Muslim community or its delegates, so that all Muslims can freely express their views and actively participate in policy-making. The \textit{de-facto} responsibility of the administration rests with the khalīfah, but he should consult the shūra members. He is not obliged to follow its decisions, rather he is allowed to enforce his own decisions with confidence, determination and full trust in Allah. The decision of the khalīfah is to be obeyed by both the public and the shūra members unless it is against the sharī‘ah.\textsuperscript{89}

During the Pious Caliphate the khalīfah was not obliged to adopt the unanimous or even majority opinion of the shūra, if he felt that it was against the interest of the state. There were only two incidents during the caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr when he ignored the unanimous opinion of the shūra. One was the matter of permitting Hazrat Usamah to continue his military campaign and the other was the case of waging war against the apostates. On these two occasions the shūra ungrudgingly accepted his

\textsuperscript{87} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{The Islamic Law and Constitution}, p. 264.
decisions because they did not doubt the deep insight and wisdom of the khalīfah. Unlike the modern parliamentary system, shūra was not made up of members of the ruling and opposition political parties. Their decisions were not prepared in advance according to the policies and programs of the respective parties, rather all of them partook in the shūra with an open and unbiased mind. However, since in the modern period people with such a caliber and Islamic spirit are unavailable, the khalīfah or executive must be subordinated to the majority decisions of the legislature (shūra). If he wants to exercise his veto against the opinion of the shūra, he should seek a referendum from the public and accept the decision of the majority. The decision of the khalīfah is to be obeyed by both the public and the shūra members unless it is against the sharī‘ah.\textsuperscript{90}

3.5.9. Legislature, Executive and Judiciary

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi describes the legislature, executive and judiciary as the three major organs of the Islamic state. The legislature is known as ahl ḥall wa al-‘aqd (those who resolve and prescribe) in the terminology of Islamic jurisprudence. They shouldn’t alter or amend the law prescribed by Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) but they can interpret the injunctions of the Quran and the Sunnah. In matters where more than one interpretation is possible, they have to determine which of them must be placed into law.\textsuperscript{91}

The Quran and the ahādīth uses two different terms for the executive, ulu al-amr and umarā’ respectively. The function of the executive is enforcement of the sharī‘ah in the individual and collective life of the people. They are

\textsuperscript{90} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{The Islamic Law and Constitution}, pp. 247-248.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, pp. 237-239; Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{The Islamic Way of Life}, p. 35.
also obliged to obey Allah and His messenger (peace be upon him) and to abstain from transgression.\(^92\)

The judiciary is the third important organ of the Islamic state. Its function is the enforcement of divine law in the state, and prevention of its violation. Judges are appointed by the \textit{khalīfah}, but the judiciary functions independently. In ordinary circumstances the \textit{khalīfah} is not allowed to terminate the service of judges or influence their decision. No one including the \textit{khalīfah}, is exempt from appearing before them in civil and criminal cases.\(^93\)

The supreme head of all three organs is the \textit{khalīfah}, but the organs functions separately. The legislature consults the \textit{khalīfah} in administration, state policy and law. The executive works under the direct supervision and guidance of the \textit{khalīfah} and aids him in administration. The judiciary enforces the \textit{sharī‘ah} and prevents its violation.

### 3.5.10. Citizenship

The idea of citizenship is very significant in the political thought of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi. He believes that Islam adopts a very honorable, just and rational approach towards citizens. There are two kinds of citizens in the Islamic state: Muslims and \textit{dhimmis}.

#### 3.5.10.1. Muslim Citizens

What can be observed as the most challenging for Muslim citizens is running the state in accordance with the teachings of Islam and enforcing all its moral, religious, political, cultural and economic directives in their

\(^{92}\) Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{The Islamic Law and Constitution}, p. 240.
individual and collective life. They are obliged to make sacrifices for safeguarding the state from external attack. Protecting the life, beliefs and property of *dhimmis* is the responsibility not only of the state but also of Muslim citizens. *Dhimmis* are exempted from military service. This is because only those who believe in the ideology of Islam can sincerely fight for the state and promote Islamic morals in war and peace. Muslim citizens also have the right to designate the *khalîfah*, to partake in *shūra* and to be appointed to key posts of the state, and thus make policies of the state in conformity with Islamic principles.\(^9^4\)

Citing exegeses of the Quran written by early Muslim scholars, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that ‘*wilāyah*’ the Arabic term which means support, kinship, protection, assistance, patronage, friendship, relationship and guardianship etc. is used by the Holy Quran to denote the relationship of citizens towards the state, and between all citizens. Hence there should be mutual support, assistance, friendship and patronage etc., as the term indicates. Hence Allah expects all the meanings of the term ‘*wilāyah*’.\(^9^5\)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s idea of Islamic state does not bind its laws to those who live outside its boundaries. Its citizenship is confined only to those who live within its territory. The Muslims who live outside the state are not under the guardianship of the state and any kind of legal responsibility does not remain on it regarding Muslims of other nations. The legal guardianship of the state binds them only when they permanently migrate to it.\(^9^6\)

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s notion of guardianship reflects in the foreign policy of the Islamic state as well. He says that protecting minorities of neighboring

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\(^9^6\) Ibid, 8:72, note: 50.
non-Muslim states may lead to complications and wars which are not permitted by Islam. However, if Muslims of other nations have been subjected to tyranny and seek protection of the Islamic state, it is obliged to protect them. If the tyrant nation has a treaty of peace with the Islamic state, the latter has to openly repudiate the treaty; else it cannot extend its help as it would contravene the treaty.

3.5.10.2. Dhimmis

The political thought of Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi examines the status of dhimmis in the Islamic state. The term dhimmis not only implies those who are born in the state, but also those who choose to live therein. Being born in the state is not a criterion to be a dhimmi. Anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, is able to permanently migrate to the state and to live there.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s political thought guarantees protection of life, limb, property, honor, faith and culture to all those dhimmis who propose to live in the Islamic state. They get equal justice in civil and criminal affairs. They are eligible for government employment except for key posts. There is no difference between Muslim citizens and dhimmis in economic matters as well, but the latter are exempted from the defence of the state.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that Islam is most tolerant, just and generous towards dhimmis. It has an equitable and very humane approach towards them. It grants them freedom to perform their religious rites. They may

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97 Ibid, 8:72, note: 50.
98 Ibid, 8: 73, note: 51.
embrace Islam any time irrespective of their caste, color and race. Then they will be able to participate in the policy-making of the state as well.\footnote{101}{Abu al-A'la Mawdudi, \textit{The Islamic Law and Constitution}, pp. 265-266, 295-297.}

The position of \textit{dhimmis} who accept the supremacy of Islam without war and come under the Islamic state as contractees is decided according to the terms of the contract which they make with the state. Neither the state nor its Muslim citizens can initiate the violation of the contract even if they feel any distastefulness in it. They are obliged to observe the covenant in letter and spirit.\footnote{102}{Ibid, pp. 300-301, 306.}

The life, honor and property of conquered \textit{dhimmis} who fight against Muslims until they are defeated are to be protected by the state as long as they pay \textit{jizyah}, which shows their loyalty to the state and is their contributory compensation for exempting them from military service. Benevolence and kindness are required from the state in the collection of \textit{jizyah}. The amount of \textit{jizyah} is not fixed by the \textit{shari'ah}, rather it is determined according to the financial status of \textit{dhimmis}. The state is not allowed to impose a huge amount as \textit{jizyah} and thereby make it a burden on them. It is to be levied only on those who are physically fit for participating in war. Non-combatant \textit{dhimmis} like children, women, slaves and the aged and physically challenged are exempted from paying \textit{jizyah}. Monks of monasteries, servants of temples and the clergy are also exempted. \textit{Dhimmis} who are bankrupt, sick and old are not only excluded from \textit{jizyah}, but also have to be helped by the government. If the government is unable to protect \textit{dhimmis}, the \textit{jizyah} should be returned. Only simple imprisonment as a corrective measure is prescribed for those who do not pay \textit{jizyah}. If a
**dhimmi** dies without paying *jizyah*, it can neither be deducted from his wealth nor can it be claimed from his heirs.\(^{103}\)

The personal affairs of *dhimmis* are to be determined according to their own religious law. The corresponding Islamic law is not to be implemented regarding personal matters. Things which are prohibited for Muslims according to Islamic law may be permitted for non-Muslims. However, if a *dhimmi* wants to follow the *sharī’ah*, he can. However, if a case comes up in the court where one of the clients is a Muslim, the matter will be taken up and decided as per *sharī’ah* laws.\(^{104}\)

Muslim citizens and *dhimmis* are alike in matters of criminal law. The punishment of adultery and theft are similar for both. Banking and trade based on interest and other unlawful means are prohibited for both Muslims and *dhimmis*, but preparing, selling and having liquor and pork are lawful for *dhimmis*. If anyone, including Muslims, destroys or damages their wine, they have to pay compensation for the loss. Abuse, assault or injury to a *dhimmi* by a Muslim is considered equivalent to doing these to a Muslim. Committing a crime does not exclude a *dhimmi* from his status. He will be punished for the crime, but will not be declared as a rebel. Only supporting the state’s enemies, openly revolting against it and making efforts to overthrow the Islamic government can deprive him of his position.\(^{105}\)

Observing religious festivals and rites are allowed for *dhimmis* according to their beliefs in their respective regions of residence. However, in pure Muslim habitations they can be restricted from performing these rites publicly, but are allowed to perform them within the boundaries of their

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\(^{103}\) Ibid, pp. 301-304; 310-313.

\(^{104}\) Ibid, p. 308.

places of worship or inside their homes. New places of worship cannot be built by non-Muslims in pure Muslim habitations, but those built earlier cannot be destroyed. In those areas which are not purely Muslim habitations, both dhimmis and Muslims are free to build their places of worship.\textsuperscript{106}

Those who do not believe in Islam cannot be members of the shūra. However in a parliament or legislature, non-Muslims can be members. In that case, an assenting authority made up of Muslims has to be constituted to ensure that decisions passed by the parliament or the legislature are not contrary to the authoritative sources of Islam. The state is also permitted to set up a separate assembly for dhimmis through which they can demand and propose laws and amendments regarding their personal law, submit suggestions and objections regarding the decisions of the parliament and make queries to the government regarding affairs of the state.\textsuperscript{107}

Dhimmis are free to criticize the ruler, government and officials. They are free to preach their creed. If any dhimmi leaves his religion and embraces another, the state does not have any objection, but Muslims are not allowed to embrace other creeds. If any Muslim left his religion it will be considered as his mistake, not of somebody who influenced him to change his mind.\textsuperscript{108}

The government is obliged to establish educational institutions throughout the domain. Dhimmis can admit their children in these. They are not obliged to study Islam, but the state is required to arrange for them to study it if they wish to. It also has to provide religious education for dhimmis about their

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid, pp. 308-309.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, pp. 316-318.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid, p. 318.
faith in schools, colleges and universities. It has to provide dhimmis space in schools, colleges and universities to learn about their religion.

3.5.11. Mutual Relationship between the State and Citizens

3.5.11.1. Responsibilities of the State towards its Citizens

In Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s view the government should be sympathetic towards its citizens. It should provide all basic necessities. Its most important responsibility towards citizens is the protection of their life, honor and property. The state is also obliged to ensure freedom of belief and opinion for all its citizens. It should provide accused citizens an opportunity to prove their innocence.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi asserts that the state is obliged to collect zakāh from Muslim citizens and distribute it among the poor. The state is not allowed to discriminate between Muslims and dhimmis in guaranteeing food, clothing and shelter.

3.5.11.2. Responsibilities of Citizens towards the State

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi prescribes certain responsibilities of citizens towards the Islamic state as well. First of all they are obliged to obey the state in all matters and circumstances unless its rules and regulations amount to disobedience of Allah. Secondly, they should hope for the betterment, prosperity and good of the state and work hard for its welfare. Finally they should sincerely co-operate with its officials and be ready to sacrifice whenever appears any danger situation.

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110 Ibid, pp. 266-269.
111 Ibid, pp. 266-269.
112 Ibid, pp. 269-270.
3.5.12.  *Jihād*

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi recognizes that *jihād* is not war in the name of Allah, but a struggle in His path.\textsuperscript{113} There is little difference between Mawdudi and traditional scholars who categorize *jihād* into two, the greater and the lesser struggle. The former is against one’s soul while the latter is against the enemies of Islam.\textsuperscript{114} Likewise, Mawdudi says that the ultimate aim of Islam is establishing the sovereignty of Allah. All efforts of man, including his physical efforts to achieve this objective, are called *jihād*. The purpose of prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage is preparing for *jihād*, but unfortunately all these activities are currently reduced to their spiritual content and the ultimate purpose is forgotten.\textsuperscript{115}

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi also affirms as *jihād*, all efforts to defend oneself from external attack, to protect persecuted people, establish justice, eliminate evil and injustice, provide facilities for pious and God-fearing people to live in peace and fearlessness and make them able to work for eradicating evils which are against the Divine.\textsuperscript{116} He declares that only the government of an Islamic state is authorised to declare *jihād*.\textsuperscript{117}

3.6.  Representation of Women in Politics

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi recognizes that both men and women are given different responsibilities by God. He says that the Islamic state does not consider women as dolls, like some people think. They should get maximum


chance for progress, a position of respect, honor and rights, but they should not try to find absolute equality with males. Islam burdens her with only those responsibilities which nature has placed on her.\textsuperscript{118}

Considering all the natural functions of woman, it is just and fair to exclude her from responsibilities placed nature on man. Potentialities of men and women are absolutely different by nature. Hence their responsibilities are also different. It is very difficult for women to participate equally with men in defence of the country.\textsuperscript{119}

When women share social and economic responsibilities with men they will be unable to concentrate on their natural duties. Therefore it is just and fair to place on them light responsibilities in society. Woman may strive against their natural, physical structure and temperament and achieve some level of success in the functions assigned to men. But men are not able to bring up children as successfully as women, whatever the circumstances may be.\textsuperscript{120} This will lead to an unpleasant imbalance in society.

Mawdudi argues that preparing women for doing the jobs of men is against the design of nature. It neither helps women nor humanity. Biologically and psychologically she has been endowed with the ability of rearing children. Therefore she is born with more compassion, sympathy, tender feelings of love, pity, leniency and sensitivity as compared to men. All these are her strengths, not weaknesses. Firmness, strong will-power, objective judgment and authority are necessary for the management of political affairs and


\textsuperscript{120} Ibid, pp. 153-154.
governance. Women with such innate tender qualities and nature may be unable to successfully perform functions which demand bolder skills.\textsuperscript{121}

Real empowerment is developing, polishing and refining natural gifts, and thereby providing better opportunities for action. Hence empowerment of women does not imply concealing one’s nature and attempting to acquire something in its stead. Good administrators, statesmen and generals are as important like good wives, mothers and housekeepers. The division of labor is natural. A virtuous society is that which provides women their rights and their honorable position in society.\textsuperscript{122}

Islam possesses a moderation and balance in human affairs and does not go against human nature. It recognizes that both men and women have their own nature.\textsuperscript{123} If women’s male counterparts serve Islam in any manner, they should encourage and help them, so that their burden is lightened.\textsuperscript{124}

In a speech delivered on 15\textsuperscript{th} February 1945, Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi said that women should also get military training to defend their life, property and honor. If there is need, in case of war they may participate with men, but even then they are obliged to observe the injunctions of the shari‘ah regarding mutual relations between men and women within the limits prescribed by Allah.\textsuperscript{125}

In 1965 Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi supported Fatima Jinnah against General Ayyub Khan in the presidential election of Pakistan. He made the decision

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid, pp. 155-156.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid, pp. 170-171, 174.
\textsuperscript{125} Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, \textit{Come Let Us Change this World}, pp. 94-95.
intending to put an end to the anarchy of the regime and restore an environment favorable for religious activism.

4. Conclusion

The political thought of Syed Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi is based on the premise that Allah is the only Sovereign, who exercises absolute authority and power over everything including man. Only He deserves worship, obedience and submission. Man is obliged to follow the rules and code of conduct revealed by Him. The position of man on earth is of a vicegerent who is able to exercise only those powers which are delegated by his Master.

He opposes capitalism and communism, on the basis that the spirit, methods and objects of both are totally opposed to Islam. Ruthlessly criticizing modern ideas of secularism, nationalism and democracy, he affirms the unity of religion, universalism and the _khilāfah_ respectively, as their Islamic alternatives. The Islamic state is a theo-democratic one because it is the kingdom of Allah in which a limited sovereignty is provided to man under divine suzerainty. It is a cosmopolitan state built on the principles of universalism and fraternity. Its objectives are encouraging good and forbidding evil, establishing justice throughout the land, and enforcing the reformatory programs of Islam. The center of loyalty and obedience in the state is Allah and His messenger. Rulers are also to be obeyed when their commands are lawful.

Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi’s political thought is very coherent and he tries to develop an Islamic constitution. He discusses the process of Islamic revolution, qualifications of the ruler of the Islamic state, the modes of his installation, participation of women in politics, requisites and responsibilities
of office-bearers, the Islamic concept of citizenship, the position of Muslim citizens and *dhimmis* in the Islamic state, mutual responsibilities of the state and citizens etc. He wished to liberate Muslim minds from Western slavery. Through his ceaseless efforts he tried to change the perception that Islam did not have any role in socio-economic and political affairs