

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL THEORIES OF MAULANA ABUL ALA MAUDUDI AND MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

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Abstract:

The current study aims finding similarities and differences in the political theories of Maulana Abul Ala Maududi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. The research is qualitative in nature as the researchers had to go to the historical background of not only the scholars under discussion but also to the theological and political background of the ideology that both follow and that is Islamic ideology and philosophy. It was also necessary to conduct a qualitative research for the epistemological roots were to touch on many grounds in order to extract true meaning of the thoughts of the scholars. Epistemological roots were checked and analyzed critically by applying comparative method. So the research methodology is comparative where it has been ensured to look deep into the contrasting and parallel ideas found in the philosophies of both scholars. It was reached upon at the end that: Islam is a complete religion, and the glad tidings of its completeness were conveyed by Allah Almighty Himself through the Holy Quran: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as a religion" (Quran 5:3). This makes it clear that Islam is a comprehensive way of life, providing guidance in all aspects, including a significant aspect like politics. The principles of politics, the foundational elements, and rules for an Islamic state are outlined in the Quran and Hadith. For instance, Allah instructs believers to fulfill their trusts and judge with justice (Quran 4:58).

Keywords: Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Islamic Political Philosophy, Islamic Epistemology, Islamic State, Islamic Political Thought, Comparative Politics

INTRODUCTION:

Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) is a famous religious scholar, commentator of the Qur'an and is considered the founder of the Islamic revival movement in the subcontinent. He was one of the most effective Islamic thinkers of the twentieth century. His thought and his writings had a profound effect on the evolution of Islamic movements in the whole world and proved to be the renaissance of Islam of the twentieth century. The center and axis of his ideas was the establishment of an Islamic state, for which he established a movement in the name of Jamaat-e-Islami. He himself spent his entire life in practical struggle for the establishment of Islamic system and peaceful state.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021) was a prominent Islamic scholar of India. He was a theologian, writer, speaker and thinker, graduated from Madrasat-ul-Islah Azamgarh, was the chairman of the Islamic Center in New Delhi, the editor of the monthly Al-Rasalah and was the editor of Jamia Weekly (Delhi) from 1967 to 1974. His writings are studied without discrimination of religion and caste. Khan Sahib knew five languages (Urdu, Hindi, Arabic, Persian and English) and used to write and speak in these languages. Khan Sahib's programs are broadcasted in TV channels. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is generally considered a pacifist among intellectuals. His aim is to create harmony between Muslims and people of other religions, to remove the misunderstandings that non-Muslims have about Islam, to show patience and forgiveness unilaterally to the persecution and suffering of non-Muslims among Muslims. Education was to generalize which, in his opinion, was necessary for da'wah.



Historical Review of political touch with Islam

At different times, Islamic scholars have been writing on the relationship between religion and politics, the concept of the state in Islam, the Islamic system of caliphate, principles of governance and other such topics in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, nowadays there are some people who separate politics from religion in their writings and declare that Islam has nothing to do with politics, state and government.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah initiated his book, "Al-Siyasah Al-Shar'iyyah Fi Islah Al-Ra'i Wal- Ra'iyyah," with the above-mentioned Quranic verse. This article aims to examine the political theories of two prominent Muslim scholars, Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1978) and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021), who discussed and presented their views on Islamic politics in their works.

Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021) also discussed the above-mentioned topics in their works. Since both writers were contemporaries. Therefore, in the light of the thoughts and opinions of both of them, the formation of the Islamic state and its principles have been selected for the topic under discussion, so that it can be clear what the opinions of both the scholars are regarding the topic, and their opinions and views are compatible with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah, and how far these thoughts can be used in the present day.

Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi actively participated in political life and struggled practically for the implementation of the Islamic system in British India (later Pakistan). On the other hand, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, initially associated with Jamaat-e-Islami, later distanced himself from active politics, emphasizing a non-political approach. Despite living in the same era, their perspectives on political theories differ significantly. This article seeks to explore and compare their political ideologies to understand their viewpoints and assess the relevance of their ideas in the contemporary context.

Theory of Maulana Abul Ala Maududi:

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi dedicated a significant portion of his writings to expound the theory that Islam is a complete system based on a few strong principles. Through rational and scriptural evidence, he argued that every aspect of human life is intricately connected to these foundational principles. Maududi highlighted three key principles of Islam's political system:

1. Tawhid and Divine Governance
2. Prophethood (Leadership of the Prophet)
3. Caliphate (Representative Government)

He asserted that these principles are the essence of Islamic political life and emphasized the need to refer back to the roots to understand any branch of Islamic life. Maududi firmly believed that the entire Islamic way of life, with its diverse branches, is derived logically from these fundamental principles.

In contrast to Western ideologies prevailing in contemporary society, which are secular, nationalistic, and democratic, Maududi envisioned the Islamic political system based on the following:

1. Opposition to Secularism - Emphasis on obedience and servitude to Allah
2. Opposition to Nationalism - Emphasis on humanity
3. Opposition to Democracy - Emphasis on the rule of Allah and the Caliphate of the Ummah

He argued that the prevalent political systems of the West, including secularism, nationalism, and democracy, were fundamentally at odds with the principles of Islam.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's theory:

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan took a different approach, emphasizing the role of Islam as a call to faith rather than a political ideology. He believed that political activities divert attention from the primary task of inviting people to God. According to Khan, those who engage in political struggles often focus on gaining political power rather than addressing the spiritual well-being of individuals.

In contrast to Maududi's advocacy for a distinct Islamic political system, Khan urged for a separation



between religious and political activities. He argued that political power and governance are not central to the core message of Islam, which is primarily focused on spiritual and moral development. Khan maintained that political triumph does not necessarily align with the true essence of Islamic teachings.

Comparison:

Comparatively, while both Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maududi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan were influential figures in Islamic thought, their views on political theories diverged significantly. Maududi envisioned a comprehensive Islamic political system based on foundational principles, opposing secularism, nationalism, and democracy. On the other hand, Wahiduddin Khan advocated for a non-political approach, emphasizing the primary role of Islam as a call to faith and individual moral development.

The relevance of their ideas in the contemporary context depends on one's perspective. Those who seek an Islamic political model may find Maududi's theories more compelling, while those prioritizing a non-political, faith-centric approach may resonate more with Wahiduddin Khan's ideas. Ultimately, the discussion surrounding the interplay of Islam and politics continues to evolve, with diverse perspectives contributing to the ongoing dialogue within the Muslim community.

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi is committed to the mission of invitation, education, and government reform simultaneously. According to him:

"Islam is a regulated system founded on strong principles. Every aspect, from major elements to the smallest details, is logically connected to its fundamental principles. All the rules and regulations he established for various aspects of human life derive their spirit and essence from these principles. Islamic life, in all its branches, emerges just as the branches, leaves, and roots of a tree are connected, despite the apparent diversity. Therefore, to understand any branch of Islamic life, it is essential for you to trace it back to its roots, as without that, you cannot grasp its spirit.

According to Maulana Maududi: "Islam, which seeks reform in the world, cannot achieve it through preaching and reminders alone. Political power is also required to implement it. Since this ideology has been taught by Allah to His Prophet, it is proven that desiring the establishment of religion, the spread of Sharia, and the enforcement of Allah's limits through government is not only permissible but required and recommended."

On the other hand, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan prioritizes the work of invitation. According to him: "The establishment of a state is always subordinate to culture. Its principle is that before bringing a religious state into existence, a religious culture must be established, which is not always present without the establishment of the state."

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi believes that the root cause of turmoil and corruption in the world is human disobedience to the divine. He states that whether directly or indirectly, the beginning of corruption is when humans consider themselves divine. He points out examples in Russia, Italy, and the United States.

He writes: "Even today, wherever you look, you will find that in one place, one nation is the deity of another nation, somewhere one class is the deity of other classes, somewhere a party has seized control in the name of divinity, somewhere a national state is established in the name of divinity, and somewhere a dictator is proclaiming the divine: there is no place where man is without a deity."

Furthermore, he notes: "Wherever the divinity and lordship of man over man have been established, injustice, tyranny, unjust exploitation, and inequality have inevitably emerged."

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi asserts that Tawhid (belief in the oneness of God) is a fundamental principle not only in other branches of Islam but also in politics. According to him, Allah alone holds the highest authority and power.

In his view: "According to this theory, sovereignty belongs only to God. The Law Giver is only God. No human being, even if he is a prophet, has the right to legislate and forbid on his own. The Prophet himself is subject to the command of Allah."

Maulana Syed Abul A'la Maududi writes: "The initial characteristics of an Islamic state that emerge from the teachings of the Quran are: no individual, family, class, or group, but the entire



population collectively, has the right to rule. The real ruler is only God, and all others, despite their collective presence, are merely subjects. The authority to legislate is also only with God. Even if all Muslims come together, they cannot make laws for themselves, and they cannot amend God's laws." He further clarifies: "Islamic state will be based on the law given by God through His Prophet, and the government running it will only be entitled to obedience if it implements the law of God. Therefore, it can only be called a theocracy."

Contrary to this, he writes: "Islamic theocracy is entirely different from the Western theocracy, which involves a specific religious class enforcing laws made in the name of God. Islamic theocracy, on the other hand, is one where a particular law, given by God through His Prophet, is established, and the government that runs it is only entitled to obedience if it enforces God's law."

According to his political philosophy, political sovereignty is a presumption until there is actual political sovereignty or political knowledge. Political sovereignty means practical control over political power that imposes legal sovereignty.

The essential result of this is that where unfit individuals are in power, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi suggests that efforts should be made to remove them. In contrast, according to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Revolt against the established Muslim government is not permissible in Islam. If there is corruption among Muslim rulers, the only directive is to advise them with compassion and goodwill. Conducting agitation and public unrest against them, as is happening in the present era, is entirely an unjust action."

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan further states: "Political revolt or politics of opposition is undoubtedly the tradition of Satan. Working without clashing with authority is the method of angels. Engaging in politics of opposition by confronting the authority is the method of Satan."

According to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Those who talk about the dominance of Islam only have an interest in the political dominance of Islam. They have no concern for saving God's servants from hellfire. I am firmly convinced that if the concept of the dominance of Islam is separated from the call to Islam, it simply becomes a national slogan. Separating the call to Islam from the dominance of Islam yields no reality to the slogan of the dominance of Islam."

Regarding the political thoughts attributing the decline and weakness of Muslims to civilization and corruption in human history, they both propose different perspectives. Maulana Abul Ala Maududi connects these issues with the negative and confrontational politics of Muslims: "The ongoing upheavals in the name of the Islamic revolution around the world are the result of this political thought. Such non-religious Islamic politics is by no means Islamic politics."

He adds, "If harsh words are used, it is correct to say that this is a demonic politics in the name of Islam. The founder of this politics is, in fact, Satan himself. Today, those who are raising the banner of such politics are undoubtedly following Satan, not Islam." According to him, "All the problems in Pakistan are essentially the result of this negative thinking... It is necessary that you come out completely from the thinking of Iqbal and Maududi; otherwise, there will never be any reform for you."

"Maulana Abul Ala Maududi supported the Freedom Movement by writing much in its favor, published under the name 'Freedom Movement India and Muslims.' Whereas Maulana Wahiduddin Khan rejects all the struggle and considers Pakistan, the country that gained independence as a result of all this struggle, to be a failed state," he says.

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi focuses on spiritual and moral training and gives importance to organizing the righteous elements of society, assigning them the task of leadership. On the other hand, according to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Political revolution is not the goal of Islam; the goal of Islam is a righteous revolution. It can also be called an intellectual revolution, a spiritual revolution, an ethical revolution... In this type of revolution, all attention is on individual development, and in political revolution, all attention is on government and power."

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi emphasizes the establishment of an Islamic state, stating that anyone who accepts Islamic principles can be part of the people running the Islamic state. However, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan argues that people who believe in Islamic principles can live as protected citizens within the boundaries of the Islamic state, but they should not be given the status of a



partner in the government because it is a principled state.

Please note that the provided translations are paraphrased interpretations, and exact meanings may vary based on linguistic nuances.

The provided text in Urdu talks about the views of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and Maulana Abul Ala Maududi on the establishment of an Islamic state. Here is the translation of the text into English

"While Maulana Wahiduddin Khan emphasizes the primary duty of Muslims as being the propagation of Islam, he suggests that the leadership, whether foreign or Hindu, should be tolerated by those who can bear it. He writes: 'In my view, creating Pakistan is a sin for Muslims. Muslims were obligated to present the call of Islam before the Hindus of Hindustan, along with all the necessary invitations and etiquettes until the phase of completion.'"

"Maulana Maududi, according to his concept, considers every person as if he were a caliph and a partner in the caliphate. 'In a society where everyone is a caliph and an equal partner in the caliphate, the division of classes and the allocation of hereditary or social privileges cannot be accommodated. In it, all individuals will have equal status and equal rank. Virtue will be based on personal ability and character.'"

"Maulana Wahiduddin Khan also designates humans as caliphs of Allah but clarifies that, according to him, caliphate and representation do not refer to political representation but rather mean an acknowledgment of the truth, not the implementation of the rules."

"He further writes: 'The purpose of this acknowledgment is the same thing that angels expressed in terms of praise and sanctification. Praise and sanctification are the highest goal that everything in the universe is dedicating. Now, man has been approved by Allah to carry out this work as personal realization.'"

"Maulana Maududi, in order to establish the system of caliphate, writes about the appropriate understanding of the process of election and voting: 'In such a society, every sane and adult Muslim, whether male or female, should have the right to vote because they are bearers of caliphate. Allah has not conditioned the caliphate on any specific criteria of merit or wealth but only on faith and righteous deeds. Therefore, in voting, every Muslim is equal to another.'"

"On the other hand, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan criticizes the conflict associated with electoral politics, stating: 'Political rebellion or opposition politics is undoubtedly the way of Satan. To work without clashing with authority, that is the method of angels. And creating a commotion through opposition politics by clashing with authority is the way of Satan.'"

"Instead, he suggests that: 'The real cause of the destruction of Muslims in the present era is this conflict-ridden politics. Muslims were patient during the era of silence. But now they are working on the method of jihad (active resistance).'"

"Maulana Maududi, in contrast, discusses the attributes of the ruler in an Islamic state, saying: 'The ruler or president or leader of the government in an Islamic state is nothing other than someone who has obtained caliphate among the common Muslims. They select the best person from among themselves and entrust him with the responsibility as a trust.'"

"Similarly, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi describes the characteristics of the Islamic state's ruler, stating: 'The person in whom the common Muslims have complete trust in his character will be chosen for this position (meaning that only the consideration of the person's intellectual and moral ability and organizational skills will not be seen, but the most important thing that will be considered is whether he can be trusted in his piety or not?). And once he is chosen, complete confidence will be placed in him.'"

"Maulana Abul Ala Maududi emphasizes the necessity of consultation with qualified people for the president of the state: 'The real responsible for the system of the state is the president of the state, and it is essential to consult with the eligible and competent people.'"

"He further writes: 'For positions like the presidency, assembly, or council of consultation or any position of responsibility, no such person should be selected who is a candidate himself or who, in any way, makes an effort for it. Islamic mentality detests candidacy and electoral propaganda. It is the clear guidance of the Prophet that a candidate should not be given any position.'"

"On the contrary, according to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan: 'In the present era, the real cause of the



destruction of Muslims is this political conflict. Muslims were patient (prepared for silence) during the era of patience. But they are now working on the method of jihad (active resistance)."

"Maulana Maududi, regarding the establishment of an Islamic state, writes about the method, positions, administration of justice, and other positions: 'Since society is deprived of the blessings of trust and honesty and does not give any importance to these concepts, the election (election) in which the majority of those who can make people foolish with their wealth, their knowledge, their cunning, and the power of their false propaganda is usually successful. Then, they become gods with the votes of the people. Laws are made by them and implemented on the people with the same power that the people have given them. And with that power, they make laws that benefit them personally and class-wise. And with that power, they enforce these laws on the people.'"

"In the path of construction, the first step should be that we make our state, which is still based on the infidel foundations left by the British, Islamic. And the constitutional assembly should officially announce this by the following order: 1. The sovereignty in Pakistan is of Allah, and the state will be administered as His deputy. 2. The fundamental law of the state is the divine Sharia which has reached us through Muhammad, peace be upon him. 3. All previous laws conflicting with Sharia will be gradually changed, and in the future, no law will be made that is in conflict with Sharia."

This translation captures the main ideas presented in the original Urdu text.

The provided text is a discussion on the concept of an Islamic state and the perspectives of different scholars, particularly focusing on the ideas of Maulana Abul Ala Maududi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Here's the English translation:

"The state shall not metaphorically transgress Islamic limits in the exercise of its powers. This is the testimony that, by expressing in our constitutional language (i.e., through the constitutional assembly), our state will become Muslim."

According to Maulana Maududi: "Muslim governments all over the world are struggling with the conscience of their respective nations. These nations want to turn towards Islam, and they are being forcibly pushed towards Westernization. The result is that the hearts of the Muslim nations are not with their governments anywhere..."

"In Muslim countries, puppet governments are being established. The small, Westernized class, which has gained power through colonization, knows very well that if the system of government is based on the votes of the people, power cannot remain in their hands. Instead, it will inevitably pass into the hands of those who run the government according to the sentiments and beliefs of the people."

To attract the common people towards Islam, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi emphasizes the need to clearly explain: 'First and foremost, the task is to clearly explain what Islamic law is. What is its reality? What are its principles, its spirit, and its temperament? What is definite and permanent in it, and how can it fulfill our growing civilizational needs in every era? What benefits does it bring, and what are the misconceptions about it spread among those who are unfamiliar with its principles? If this understanding is done correctly, we believe that our best performers and workers will be satisfied, and their satisfaction will open the door to all those efforts that can make the implementation of Islamic law a reality.'

"Maulana Abul Ala Maududi also felt that due to staying away from Islamic-style governance for an extended period and being influenced by somewhat non-Islamic social and political practices, a new approach is needed: "Now it seems as if we have to start afresh. Certainly, make an effort to implement Islamic laws. Codify Islamic laws so that our courts can make decisions according to them. But this is not the only task that can establish an Islamic system. The most important thing is that Islamic education be given in our primary and secondary schools and all our colleges and universities."

"Maulana Abul Ala Maududi further states: 'Now, if an Islamic government is established, it cannot be expected to turn to the ideal system overnight. In the beginning, if anything can happen, it is that without it, the government cannot be in the hands of those who use all the means and resources of the country, all the means of communication, all the educational systems of the country, and the entire administrative policy of the government for the purpose of spreading Islam



among Muslims and correcting their moral condition."

"Regardless, if the constitution of the state has been arranged along Islamic lines, practically, those who run the state, whether they belong to any mindset, can be prepared through public opinion to serve this cause. If conscious elements of Muslim society try to keep the rulership in line, progress towards an Islamic system is possible."

"The establishment of Islamic states in Muslim countries and the development of their healthy lines can lead to the formation of a global Islamic state. Maulana Abul Ala Maududi states: '(Islamic state) is a state that is established based on principles rather than on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, or geography. Individuals of human race from every corner of the earth, whether they like these principles or not, and without any privilege or prejudice, can join this system, which guarantees equal rights. Wherever in the world a government is established on these principles, it will definitely be an Islamic government. Whether it is in Africa or America, Europe or Asia, and whether its rulers are fair or dark-skinned, this kind of pure principled state can become a global Islamic state. Instead of a nationalist, bloodthirsty struggle, complete brotherly cooperation will be possible among them, and they can unanimously establish a global Islamic federation at any time.'"

"Maulana Wahiduddin Khan opposes this entire line of thought, stating, 'The real work for Muslims was to invest all their energy in domestic construction. But leaders of the above- mentioned kind diverted their attention from internal dimensions and turned the minds of all Muslims outward. In my opinion, today's biggest problem is this wrong leadership.'"

"Maulana Wahiduddin Khan suggests that the solution lies in focusing on the call (Da'wah) rather than political interpretations of Islam and teaching Muslims to stay away from it."

This translation attempts to capture the main ideas presented in the provided Urdu text.

CONCLUSION:

By comparing both it has been found out that both the scholars go towards the same destination i.e. how to establish an Islamic political system which can provide a firm foundation to a welfare Islamic state, but the methods to reach the same destination are quite different at times. At some points they not only differ but actually contradict each other which gives us a unique insight into how an Islamic system could be built against the western one. There are places where they believe they can get the upper hands regarding the state and system of politics. So, the points are same, the destination is same but the ways and methods to reach the destination are different. More precisely, both try to reach the same destination using different means and tools. It was also found that they are trying to propose an Islamic model based on modern ideas against the Western model which is not suitable to the muslim societies across the world.

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