

THE CONSTRUCT OF MUSLIM SOCIETY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF SAYYID QUTB

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Abstract

This article aims to explicate the construction of Muslims society in the perspective of Sayyid Qutb. In Qutb's perspective, the Islamic community has to be built on the same faith, not the other way round. However, as practised by liberal countries today, they found their social hierarchy on race, class, and nationality. It is what he termed as an ideal society that it simultaneously evaluated the life of jahiliyyah (the age of ignorance). Through the exploration of his two masterpieces (The Milestones) Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq and Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān, this research will explicate the construct of Islamic society, which is wished in Qutb's perspective encompasses several elements including the systems of social, economy, politic, the relationship of individual and society, equality of humans and freedom, attitudes towards the West, and justice's concept.

Keywords: *Islamic Community, Sayyid Qutb, Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq, Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān*

Abstrak

Artikel ini ingin menjelaskan tentang konstruksi masyarakat Muslim dalam pandangan Sayyid Qutb. Bagi Qutb, komunitas Islam perlu dibangun atas dasar iman yang sama. Bukan sebaliknya, sebagaimana yang dipraktikkan negara-negara liberal sekarang, yang mendasarkan tatanan sosialnya pada ras, golongan dan kebangsaan. Inilah yang bagi Qutb disebutnya sebagai masyarakat ideal, yang sekaligus mengevaluasi kehidupan masa jāhiliyah. Melalui penelusuran dua karya besarnya Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq dan Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān, riset ini akan menjelaskan konstruk masyarakat islami yang dicita-citakan dalam pandangan Qutb yang meliputi beberapa unsur di antaranya sistem sosial, ekonomi, politik, hubungan individu dan masyarakat, kesetaraan umat manusia dan kebebasan, sikap terhadap Barat, serta konsep keadilan.

Kata Kunci: *Komunitas Islam, Sayyid Qutb, Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq, Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān*

Introduction

Some predicates can be granted to Sayyid Qutb (1906 - 1966),¹ or *Sayyid Qutb Ibrāhīm Ḥusayn Shādhilī*: literary critic, novelist, poet, and Islamic thinker. His influence as an Islamic political activist in Egypt even surpassed his forerunner, a founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*), *Ḥasan al-Bannā* (1906 -1949). Several writings he composed with intense colours convey the suffering of Muslims in that time. He defined ideal faith through words cited from the holy verses.²

As a literary writer and poet, Qutb took a separate political position. He refused to follow the existed political flow, moreover, he confronted and left his seniors and people e respected because of this political difference.³

The crucial period that determines Qutb's life was definitely in 1948. When he was an official at the Ministry of Education, by utilizing costs from the government, he went to the United States (US) to study Western education methods at several universities there.⁴ His tour trips to the West, particularly to the US, have changed his intellectual and religious direction. This trip has surely become his career transition from literature and educational field to the religious, socio-political commitment to its roots. The US advancement in economic and science fields is not dazzling him. In fact, he felt disappointed and angry about the political attitude of the US society who are racist, very enthusiastic about free sex, pro-Zionism.⁵

In 1953, he took part in the Muslim Brotherhood and became a weekly newspaper editor. His involvement would increasingly intensive in this movement. He got a more prominent position and was influential in Egyptian national politics at that period.

Since the beginning of 1954, more or less, Qutb's life is spent moving from one prison to another. Even when he was sick, he endured dealing with tortured over and over again. In July 1955, the court sentenced him to 15 years in prison and witnessed his friends being tortured and killed. He also passed his life in hospital for years, because his condition was very seriously ill. These traumatic scenes and experiences are convincing enough to conceptualize and explicate the

¹ Shahrough Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid" in Esposito, John L. ed. *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World* (Vol III), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 400.

² As a ten years old child, Qutb has completely memorized the entire Quran. His so intensely orientations to mental and spirituality made his life seems tangled and gloomy. Raising and Growing up in an educated environment mould his seeds of intellect. His father, Ḥājī Qutb Ibrāhīm, is an educated political activist who loves reading.

³ Qutb also criticized and left two people who contributed in reforming his intellect, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889 - 1973) whom he considered pro-Western, and 'Abbās al-'Aqqād (1889 -1964) whose writings were considered merely contained intellectual acrobatics. In his 30s, he enjoyed his political adventures, initially, he joined the Wafd Sa'd Zaghlūl Party, but then he left this party and joined its fraction, the Sa'dist Party. (Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", 401).

⁴ He is conferred degree Master of Arts by Stanford University. In the summer of 1950, he left the US, and continued to visit various European countries (Britain, Switzerland, Italy), before finally, he landed again in Egypt in 1951.

⁵ After rejecting the promotion of his position as an advisor of the Ministry of Education, Qutb began a new career. He became a writer and analyzed socio-political issues, and his writings were scattered and published in the various newspaper. (Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", 401.)

moral basis of the formation of 'paramilitary' secret cadre. He believed that violent resistance is justified by the authoritarian regime, which is cruel with no rules, and unfair.⁶ After a few months breathing in the air of freedom (May 1964), he was arrested again on charges of being an instigator and terrorist (August 1965). Despite pressure from the international community, Gamal Abdel Nasser's government sentenced the revolutionary figure to hang (August 29, 1966).

Islamic Society

The construct of Islamic society, as described by Qutb, is 'start from the Quran and end in the Quran'.⁷ As the first Muslim community was built on 'faith', then the current Islamic community also should be. He believed that the spiritual basis of all is confession *lā 'ilāha 'il 'allāh*. The construct of society must be based on faith. In other words, society is a community that is built not based on race, class, or nationality, but the identical faith.⁸

Qutb's idea on ideal society was written in *Ma'alim fi al-Tarīq*.⁹ The key message of his writing is to correct the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*), which is marked by the absorption of contemporary culture in the Islamic world and undermining Islamic values. This idea is not approached through an innovative way or creating a new ideal society, but restorative. He wants to restore society as God wants. Since the beginning of time, God creates humans to bow to Him and fully follow His teachings. As human is deemed to have deviated from this ideal, then there needs to be restoration.

There are two models of society, according to Qutb, that has to be the reference in the restoration project: Firstly, the earliest communities of humankind are the community of Prophet Adam, his family, and his descendants.¹⁰ They lived in a single community, appreciated the same way of life, with the same belief that Allah is the Lord.¹¹ This initial community grew and developed along with the presence of a new culture. Afterwards, the prophets were sent to establish the truth. They educated ummah (community) to distinguish the true teachings instead of the deviant.

Qutb considered that the Quran is not the only one Scripture, yet all revelations have come from God since the early communities. All Scriptures teach that Allah is a Lord, at the same time, shows the mistakes of the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*). Despite these warnings, they continued the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*). Second, the Qurani community in the Prophet Muhammad

⁶ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", p. 401.

⁷ Sayyid Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, (Trans, Rahman Zainnudin), (Jakarta: Media Da'wah, 2010), 18.

⁸ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, pp. 35 -36, p. 76.

⁹ *Ma'alim fi al-Tarīq* (Milestones) (first published 1964, 12 chapters, 160 pages) is a book written by Qutb as an agenda containing his calls to exterminate the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) and reconstruct Muslim in the world with the basis of Quran's teachings. This is the book that marks the thought of a modern literacy critic, an activist writer, and an Islamic revolutionary reached its peak. It is written when he was in prison, and four chapters were originated from *Fī Zīlāl al Qur'ān*.

¹⁰ Luke Loboda, "The Thought of Sayyid Qutb", Ashbrook Statesmanship Thesis, <http://www.ashbrook.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2004-Loboda-The-Thought-of-Sayyid-Qutb-PDF.pdf>, retrieved April 15, 2014, p. 24.

¹¹ Qur'ān, 2:213

(PBUH) era. The vision of a restored society, according to Qutb, must be a Quranic generation. The generation they referred to is the earliest Muslims, the companions of the Prophet. There is no society, both before and after, equal to this generation. The uniqueness of this generation can be elaborated in three reasons.

First, they merely hold the Quran as the only a reference to build a comprehensive life system.¹² This community does not keep this principle narrowly and blindly. They (communities) also realize other cultures and sources of wisdom. However, they choose the Quran, that is a divine knowledge from Allah SWT, as the only one source. The following Islamic society then sought other sources such as Greek philosophy, Persian knowledge, Jewish ideas, which made Islam is not pure anymore. Besides, Qutb assumed that Muslim excessively focused on jurisprudence (fiqh); thus, they employed their minds and rationality too far.¹³ In this case, it makes ideas and understanding about Islam diverse and fragmented. By this history, the lesson can be drawn; it is needed to return to the first generation and 'return to the Qur'an and Sunnah'.

Second, the early Muslim community assumed the Quran as an instructive book, a guide to behave and practice the faith.¹⁴ Here, Qutb refers to QS 17:106, that the revelation which has separated by intervals made ummah can practically implement it, and it meets the current needs. The lesson form the early Muslim community is to correct opinion that Islam is merely theoretical, abstract, and reflective.¹⁵

Third, when this community embraces Islam, they entirely separate themselves from the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*). It contrasts with the Muslim community that is observed by Qutb in that time. They tended to many compromise and mixed other beliefs and ideas, especially Western ideas and philosophy.¹⁶ This kind of integration created real Islamic values that never seep to the people's heart and minds, so they never are enlightened by Islamic teachings and values.

The essential work of Qutb as a political activist is the Milestone (*Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq*). The key message of his writing is to correct the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) which is marked by the absorption of contemporary culture in the Islamic world and undermining Islamic values. The uncompromising commitment fills the writing style to the texts and the holy verses. It never crossed in his mind that a Muslim needs to reinterpret the Quran and Tradition to meet the challenge of an era. Quran is self-evident. Similarly, Islam is a timeless reality. It is always compatible with all eras.¹⁷

The Milestones (*Ma'alim fi al-Ṭarīq*) is a book written by Qutb as an agenda containing his calls to exterminate the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) and reconstruct Muslim in the world with the

¹² Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, 18.

¹³ He is consistent with what he considered as truth, and it is proved by the fact that he never involves or associates with any school (madhab) like Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali.

¹⁴ Some people argued, it is the uniqueness of the Quran, if it compares to the bible, which is viewed by Christians as a Guide Book for spiritual reflection and it is not sufficient enough to be a practical guide.

¹⁵ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, 21 –23, 71 –72.

¹⁶ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, 24.

¹⁷ Shahrough Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid" in Esposito, John L. ed. *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World (Vol III)*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 402.

basis of the Quran's teachings. It is the book that marks the thought of a modern literacy critic, an activist writer, and an Islamic revolutionary reached its peak. It is written when he was in prison, and four chapters were originated from *Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān*. Therefore, this article will explore *Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān* (Zīlal) first. Exploring the historical socio-political context associated with the author's biography of Zīlal writing process will clarify how Qutb elaborates the construct of the Muslim community he wished.

First, Formation Process. The masterpiece Sayyid Qutb, *Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān*, must not be finished in one night. This monumental work is established through faith and intellectual process accompanied by his struggle in social and political life for an extended period. Understanding history is not merely about recognizing and note taking numerous events in the timeline. It comprises the complexity of socio-political-economic-and cultural context that shape an event or work. *Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān* does not have an exception to this concept.¹⁸

Zīlal is a form of the Qutb expression that wants to elucidate and prove that the Quran is relevant and always compatible to meet the changing challenge of the era. Specifically, this work provides Quranic guidance for the ummah to encounter socio-political problems. Qutb, behind his book, holds a moral belief that a society has to be built on Islamic teachings¹⁹

His exploration is started with the belief that the Quran is a genuine grip to all humans. The Quran is a source of truth for all human problems. He drew on this conclusion after directly passed through several socio-political stages, including his sufferings in Egyptian political prison. Accordingly, Zīlal, his work of the *tafsir* Quran, is an answer to various questions in the modern world. The formation of the society, where Islam teachings are its pillar and joint, becomes an aim that must be fought.²⁰

Qutb represents the younger generation with identical concerns.²¹ The study of the Quran with a philological and legal approach does not successfully attract his attention.²² His interest is to prove that the Quran answers the development of the modern era.

Qutb started to write Zīlal in 1951. Initially, he wrote it in monthly magazine *Al-Muslimūn* in the rubric entitled *Fī Zīlal al Qur'ān*. His first writing discussed Surah Al-Fatiha and Al-Baqarah, which immediately received positive responses from many readers. They admired his maturity

¹⁸ Al-Khalidi, *Pengantar Memahami Tafsir Fi Zhilalil*, 54 –65.

¹⁹ Asyraf Hj. Ab. Rahman et al., "Fi Zīlal al-Qur'an: Sayyid Qutb's Contemporary Commentary on the Qur'an", *International Journal of Business and Social Science* Vol. 2 No. 12; July 2011: 281, <http://ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol. 2 No. 12; July 2011/31.pdf>, retrieved March 21, 2014.

²⁰ We find further in *Zīlal*, 1:209, 304, 328, 597; 2:657, 673, 767, 795, 874; 3:1388, 1735; 4:207; 6:3334, 3342, 3344, 3345 (Asyraf Hj. Ab. Rahman et al., "Fi Zīlal al-Qur'an", 281).

²¹ Basically, Qutb is not unique among other reformers thinkers His several forerunners such as Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1838 - 1897), Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849 - 1905), and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865 – 1935) is thinkers who have interpreted the Quran to elaborate the world problems and seek the answers and solutions, which are purely Islamic and without Western influences. By this experiment, they (Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad 'Abduh, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā) attempted to prove that the Quran is not a died or still text, but a living and dynamic text accompanying the changing eras.

²² Qur'ān 5: 3.

and accuracy in elaborating these surah followed by words choice and a style that touches the readers.

After his two years of contribution in *Al-Muslimūn*, further he concentrated on pursuing his work of *tafsir* the Quran more intensively. Qutb's commentary on Surah Al-Baqarah chapter 2 verses 103 in the Journal, an early edition of 1952, is his last writing.²³

Qutb progressively published his more complete works. Zilal first volume was released on Oktober 1952, then followed by other volumes. In early 1954, Zilal had become 16 volumes. When he was in prison from January to March 1954, he added two more volumes. After a few months of being free on charges of planning to murder President Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970), he and several members of the Brotherhood (Al-Ikhwan) were thrown back into prison and sentenced to 15 years in Liman Thurrah. This period is used to finish and complete Zilal.²⁴

The first sixteen volumes written before the 'prison period '(1954) are depictions of the beauty of the Quran. There is not much pressure on doctrine and sharia. His writing changed when he wrote in prison. He did not discern the Quran as a bland text that can only be admired in its aesthetic aspects. The style of *tafsir* changed to be a dynamic text, with the capacity to deliver revolutionary messages in order to overhaul society and offer solutions to various Muslim problems. Thus, he immediately revised his previous works and voiced the tone of his social transformation.²⁵

As his health condition deteriorated, opportunities were really limited while in prison, and even his life was finally stopped when he was executed in 1966, Qutb only revised the first ten volumes. The volumes 11 to 27 were not touched with the new approach that integrates with contemporary topics such as law, politic, and economics.

Second, the Vision and Mision. When Qutb wrote Zilal, he had a dream that his notes and writings can bring the readers and Muslim in general to love and be interested with the Quran. He expected people to recite the Quran not merely to obtain only spiritual blessings, but rather than to make the Quran as a source of action dealing with numerous modern challenges.

Life - under the auspices of the Quran - is happiness. However, it can be proven, only if they have experienced and felt it themselves. They will felt stronger, blessed, and pure, as what Qutb has given his evidence.²⁶

Qutb keeps several social agenda behind the Zilal writing project:²⁷ (1) Affirming the role of humans as a 'successor '(Arabic Khalifah) of Allah SWT. Humans 'role as a successor is to bow

²³ Shalah Abdul Fatah Al-Khalidi, (Translator, Salafuddin Abu Sayyid), *Pengantar Memahami Tafsir Fi Zhilalil Quran Sayyid Qutub* (Solo: Intermedia, 2001), p. 54 -55.

²⁴ Al-Khalidi, *Pengantar Memahami Tafsir Fi Zhilalil*, pp. 55 -58.

²⁵ Al-Khalidi, *Pengantar Memahami Tafsir Fi Zhilalil*, pp. 62 -63, pp. 126 - 127.

²⁶ Cited by Muhammad Chirzin, *Jihad Menurut Sayid Qutub dalam Tafsir Zhilal* (Solo: Inter Media, 2001), 135 -136.

²⁷ Al-Khalidi, *Pengantar Memahami Tafsir Fi Zhilalil*, 128 - 139; Loboda, "The Thought of Sayyid Qutb", p. 24

to Allah and arrange their lives following His teachings. The relationship between humans and the universe and His creatures occurs through cooperation following the creed (hereafter mentioned as *aqidah*); (2) Educate and introduce Muslims about the principles of the Qur'an. Ummah should establish and have a Muslim personality, understand their role as a Muslim, based on the teachings of the Qur'an; (3) Build a fair and moral society based on the teachings of the Qur'an. Qutb recognizes Medina society - in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) era - is still relevant to be a model in the current era. The revelation of the Qur'an is a source of teachings to build a society in the Prophet era; (4) Turn sharia and *aqidah* as the basis of the Islamic system. Qutb emphasizes that a solid faith accompanied by a fear of Allah is an essential element to carry out Islamic values; (5) Reveal the fallacy of materialistic thought. Qutb believes that when materialistic values and beliefs dominate humans thought and their behaviours, humans will be empty. Materialistic temptation can only be resisted by *aqidah* that Allah is the Lord of the world with absolute power.

Third, Methodology of Tafsir. Through the perspective above, *Zilal* can be drawn as a dynamic *tafsir* book (*haraki*).²⁸ The author intends to bring the readers beyond the literal understanding and general meaning of the Qur'an. By reading the Qur'an, the readers must reach an awareness of reality occurred and respond it with really excited and enthusiastic.

In this case, it can be seen the modernity of approach constructed by Qutb. Unlike traditional *tafsir* approach that emphasizes much on philology and hadith to understand the Qur'an, Qutb modern approach seeks the relevance to the changing challenge of the era.

The *tafsir* style of Qutb understands the Qur'an through the Qur'an (*tafsir al-Qur'an bi'l-Qur'an*). It means the Qur'an is sufficient for itself and can be appropriately comprehended in its *lafadz*.

Changing of *Zilal* writing approach is from artistic and ideologies (*al-manhaj al-jamaliwa'l-fikri*) to dynamic (*al-manhaj al-haraki*) at the end of 1953 to 1954, the author also involved in (The Muslim Brotherhood) *Al-Ikhwān* movement. Qutb has been jailed for 15 years, or since 1954, he can shape his view to see outside jail under tortured and isolated. In the silence of jail, Qutb believes that *Al-Qur'an* is a guiding to travel in modern life and a foundation to build fair Muslim society. He views *Jahiliyyah* situation more clearly, for instance, there were many corruptions in Nasser's government, Muslim's faith is weak, and Qur'an spirit is gone.²⁹

Elements of Islamic Society

²⁸ *Manhaj haraki* or dynamic method is one of modern Quranic *tafsir* which has been introduced in early of the twentieth century. In general, it is said that this method has been developed in the circle of the Muslim Brotherhood. Applying qualitative and descriptive analysis methods are not considered as an innovative approach, but a rebranding of the previous method carried out by the Prophet and the companions in understanding the Qur'an. The implementation of this method aims to draw Muslim closer and grasp it as a practical guide in humans life. (Haziyah Hussin and Sohirin M. Solihin, "Manhaj haraki in the Revival of Quranic Exegesis", *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 16 (1): 09-17, 2013, [http://www.idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr16\(1\)13/2.pdf](http://www.idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr16(1)13/2.pdf)).

²⁹ Asyraf Hj. Ab. Rahman et al., "Fi *Zilal al-Qur'an*", 286 -287.

*First, Economy-Social System.*³⁰ As another dimension of life, the economic system should be regulated the shari'ah principle and rule. Islamic economy system has two targets: individual prosperity and social prosperity. These targets are achieved by legalizing practical laws to control equitable economy life. This law is expected that people still have their moral in doing economy, and do not waste money for gambling and immoral activities. Qutb believes that the economy will only grow based on the confession of faith (*iman*). Believers will not exploit other people; otherwise they will give them alms happily.

Those principles above erase classes distinction in society. Although it looks like socialist, Qutb assumes that Islam defends individual rights over possession and wealth. Islam concept of proprietary is different from western.³¹

According to Qutb –Muslim's proprietary –is more normative. When he has wealth, he has it in the name of a large community. "Wealth belongs to society; the private treasure is an obligation rather than the right and limited by public interest".³² All God's treasure utilizes for more significant interest; therefore individual treasure abuse should be corrected by other Muslims. When somebody else fails to correct it, the government will handle it, including creating regulation for preventing worse damage.

In Islam, usury (known as 'riba 'in Islam) refusal and zakat (annually obligatory payment) coercion are placed on those principals above. Usury is violence and exploitation.³³ Usury refusal is support of life goal to collect and dredge wealth. This principal will only create human suffering. Thereby, poor, servants, and refugees are not forced to pay zakat. In the individual level, believers believe that zakat can clean their inner and maintain their spiritual life. In the social level, zakat shapes love atmosphere, affection, unity, and seeks higher moral. Giving heartfelt and whole-hearted zakat based on faith is one of the factors of harmony society.³⁴

Based on the implication of this idea, Qutb rejects monolithic Islam country which intends to control every individual's action. In the new government, a leader should be confident in building system based on Allah's teachings. Nevertheless, the government should accept and confess that every individual's action will increase and be conducted based on their faith.

Second, Social Politic System.³⁵ Qutb basically never elaborated comprehensive platform for an Islamic government. He only conveys several principles without explaining detail structure and power of work. Two principles conveyed by him,³⁶ are (1) Islamic government is Allah SWT government. Islam does not know 'human sovereignty 'because Allah is only sovereign. Islamic

³⁰ *Further Explanation Sayyid Qutb, Social Justice in Islam (Trans: John B Hardie) (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2000) Especially Economic Theory in Islam", 127 so on.*

³¹ *Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, 132.*

³² *Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, 137.*

³³ *Qur'an 2:275-281 (Bdk. Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, 148 –153).*

³⁴ *Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, 162.*

³⁵ *See "Political Theory in Islam "(Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, 113 –126).*

³⁶ *Luke Loboda, "The Thought of Sayyid Qutb", Ashbrook Statesmanship Thesis, <http://www.ashbrook.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2004-Loboda-The-Thought-of-Sayyid-Qutb-PDF.pdf>, Retrieved April 15, 2014, 30 –31.*

government itself is not 'ilahiah' (divinity).³⁷ Government functions to implement sharia, but it is not allowed in the name of Allah SWT. All rulers do not have privilege because all people are equal in front of Allah. Thereby, arbitrary actions by rulers cannot be tolerated; (2) there will be mechanism of consultation between rulers and public community. When Al-Qur'an laws are written by clearly meaning, consultation is not required. It is required when Qur'an text shows different understanding. Ijtihad (effort) is required in creating laws. However Qutb provided warning, "No one can presume what they said based on sharia". Thereby, he against theocracy government, such as Iran lead by Ayatollah Khomeini, never controlled because he presumes that he earned authority from Ilahi (Allah). Ilahiah (divinity) authority is only in sharia, the rest comes from there.³⁸

Third, The relationship between Individual and Society. Individual and society are responsible for each other. Society should consider their individual, otherwise individuals cannot do anything although they have freedom. They are independent as far as they do not harm other people.³⁹ Therefore, All society should pay zakat. "If at night someone is starving, then people around should be blamed."⁴⁰

Fourth, Human Equality. Qutb claims that Islamic society establishes human equality, regardless of those reasons. Therefore, it is written in the Quran and has ever conveyed by prophet Muhammad Saw.⁴¹ Allah SWT revelation conveys to all people and does not distinguish race, language, skin color, also men and women is universal. The difference of physical and biology between men and women are the factors that both have different role in society.⁴² To respond over critique of Western philosophers, Qutb assumed that western only express and establishes equality between men and women in economy. Islam, by acknowledging difference of sex, sees precisely holistic spiritual equality never seen by western.

Fifth, Freedom. According to Qutb's freedom concept is significantly different from Western freedom concept. Freedom should be started by freedom of spiritual faith. Other freedom comes from this freedom. All people already believed in Islam have to live under Sharia law.⁴³ People do not have to choose Islam; however they should obey Islam laws. Freedom of faith does not imply that they are allowed to disobey Allah laws.⁴⁴ However, people who do not believe Allah should live under the identical law.⁴⁵

³⁷ In contrast, medieval Christian government presumed that their leaders have ordination and 'ilahiah' (divinity) authority. Here, Qutb claims "No 'Church' in Islam", which means Islam had no Church principle where someone can speak in the name of Allah. Islam only acknowledges His single Prophet (Rasul).

³⁸ Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 122

³⁹ Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 86-88.

⁴⁰ Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 89.

⁴¹ Qur'an 4. Prophet said, "All human are equal as "(Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, p. 71).

⁴² Qur'an 2:231, 4:28 (Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, p. 28)

⁴³ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, 51; Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, p. 27.

⁴⁴ "Among those We have created are a nation who guide by the truth and do justice thereby. As for those who deny Our signs, We will draw them imperceptibly [into ruin], whence they do not know". (Qur'an 7:181-182)

⁴⁵ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, p. 79 -80.

Non-Muslim are allowed to pray by their own believe as long as not harm and hurt Islam. They can only meet and pray in private room. For example, praying with Christian cross is forbidden in public place.⁴⁶

Social-Politic Ideas

Greece ideas and Islamic philosophies are rejected by Qutb because it decreases understanding organic society. Basically Muslims accord with al-tajammu' al-ḥarakī (growing together dynamically). This is a character of ummah as living organism, dynamically growing together in diversity.⁴⁷

According to Qutb, overthrowing government does not apply Allah SWT vision is not only permissible but also mandatory. In society, Muslim community does not only implement Allah SWT laws given to them involved to society but also they are obligated or ordered to replace their leader does not implement Allah SWT laws. Qutb explained that there are many radical Islam groups inspired by jahiliyah ideas, hakimiyah, and jihad in whole world. For a present half century, no one doubts the effects of social-politic economy movements in Islam world.⁴⁸

Qutb said that individual should be responsible completely for society prosperity. There is demand behind of this 'theory' that government can act in the name of society if individuals cannot solve their problem. Based on this order, Qutb noted that government is an organizer of sharia. Here, he does not explain human creation laws further which are appropriate and not appropriate by sharia.⁴⁹ A ruler chosen by society should be replaced if he disobeys Islam laws. However, Qutb does not explain who has authority to decide a ruthless ruler. He proposed democracy system everywhere but it requires its own comprehension cannot be evaluated by applying Western and secular democracy concepts.

Qutb theology perspective is based on ahistorical philosophy. At least, he is not interested in learning of the development Islamic laws history. Qutb said that in a century, the interpretation deviates from the understanding of the Quran verses. His method is only holy book of Al-Qur'an without history.⁵⁰

This philosophy is problematic and has further discussion. At least, applying Mu'tazilah argument that the Quran is not eternal (qadim) but created, therefore content of the Quran is only miracle. Thereby, style and language of the Quran is not miracle.⁵¹ Moral messages of the Quran is relevant and eternal but the Quran 'language' requires new contextualization and interpretation which are convenient of the age development.

Qutb's background is a teacher which affects his speech intonation and writing technique. He identified any threads may possibly destroy Islam identity. Marxism is one of ideologies he

⁴⁶ Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, p. 28.

⁴⁷ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", p. 402.

⁴⁸ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", p. 403.

⁴⁹ Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, 70; Loboda, *The Thought of Sayyid Qutb*, p. 31.

⁵⁰ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", p. 403.

⁵¹ Harun Nasution, *Teologi Islam. Aliran-Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan* (Jakarta: UI Press, 2012), p. 49-50.

rejected because it has slavery ideology. He admitted Western advancement of science and technology but he presumed Western spiritual is going to be collapse and spread values against Islam.⁵²

He occasionally quotes necessary terms which is from Western concept, regardless from Qutb's rejection toward Western ideas. He explained that Western concepts such as democracy and *al-dimuqraṭīyah*, already existed in the early Islam.⁵³ By responding and discussing Western concepts, unintentionally he joins and involves Western ideas.

Conclusion

The vocabulary of *al-'adālah al-ijtimā'īyah* is available and applied by judges of Islamic Law in 20th century. Although medieval writers and philosophers talked about justice and injustice focusing on rulers and government politic, the government should be involved to guarantee public interest (*maslahah*).⁵⁴ He sought and found the Quran verses which talked Allah brings justice for His ummah.

The root ideas of Western social justice, are Nature Law and philosophy law, both are anthropocentric. Social justice consists of human struggle and conveys equality to all society element. This concept is 'subversive' for Qutb, he believes that social justice is from Vision, it is not human struggle and effort of history.⁵⁵ He is still a strong inspiration of protest movements for them who are 'Islam enemy' until 21 century, considering how ideal and abstract Qutb's ideas. Sayyid Qutb is more than any activist and philosopher after World War II, he is the strongest partisan against Western and Islam leaders deviating Allah laws. This circumstance is like the age of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*), everything can ruin and destroy Islam.

Regardless from Qutb's interesting and provocative ideas, people presume Qutb's justice concept is not social justice level but still on divine justice level.⁵⁶ He has not shown more practical concept yet in creating its theology of justice. For instance, Qutb argued when Quran has already conveyed its laws, so the government should not organize and involve further.⁵⁷

By the theology above, he has assumption that community is in themselves –by Quran guiding –it can represent social justice without government intervention. He said that every time individuals cannot establish their own justice, at that time, the government should involve and support to solve their problem. Qutb is not clearly enough to explain which problems intend to be solved by community and which problems require government's support.

⁵² Qutb, *Petunjuk Jalan*, p. 5 –7.

⁵³ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", p. 403.

⁵⁴ These thinkers are *Abū Bakr al-Ṭurṭūshū* (w. 1127), *Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī* (w. 1316), *Ibn Taymīyah* (w. 1328) dan *Abū Zayd 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khaldūn* (w. 1406).

⁵⁵ It is different from socialism philosopher 'Ali Shari'atī (1933 - 1977), his revolutionary ideas provide a strong resonation in Islam world, Qutb's idea is still ideal. (Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", 404).

⁵⁶ Akhavi, "Qutb, Sayyid", 403-404.

⁵⁷ Qur'ān 24: 2, 4; Loboda, "The Thought of Sayyid Qutb", 30.

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