



It Had Commenced Full-fledged ... then Ended as a Mock and Sardonic “Caliphate” whose are not Caliphs

Nowadays, writing the word “Caliph”, i.e. Successor, and adding it, as a title, to the name of anyone is an infringement of the Islamic Sharia, unless the requirements of Caliphate are reverted into application. In the light thereof, there is a secular error related to the falsification of history, misinforming the public, and discreditable to the Islamic Caliphs who had held that Title by legitimate right and an underestimation to their stature, as their characteristics are over of other politicians in Islamic and Arab history. It goes even worse and as a “sin” When Caliphate is asked by one of the politicians or who is in a humbler rank than them. As the Sharia Rule apparently stated that: Whoever among people asks for it, i.e. Caliphate, he would be the least efficient and the least realizing of its concept. Accordingly, he is not fit to take it over. As Allah Almighty said: {That eternal Home in the Hereafter We reserve only for those who seek neither tyranny nor corruption on the earth. The ultimate outcome belongs only to the righteous} (Surah Al-Qasas: 83).

And in the noble Hadith, on the authority of Abu Musa Ash'ari (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I called on the Prophet (PBUH) with two of my cousins. One of them said to him: "O Messenger of Allah (PBUH), appoint me governor of some land over which Allah has given you authority." The other also requested for something of the same nature. Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "By Allah we do not appoint someone to this post who seeks it or someone who contends for it." In accordance with this rule, the Caliphate is neither taken through demand nor through the war and fight but it is by Shura, i.e. by mutual consultation, among Muslims.

Caliphate has two dimensions: Religious and Secular; should they have been met, it would take place. However, if such dimensions have been split, it would be demolished.

The first practical application of Islamic Caliphate was during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (40-11 AH\661-632 AD) may Allah be pleased with them; as they took it by the Shura, i.e. by mutual consultation, and they applied its electoral and Shura properties and they took care of Muslim House of Money trust; where nothing was neither disbursed and nor received except as stipulated in the Sharia.

However, as for after Ali bin Abi Talib (deceased: 40 AH\661 AD), a disagreement occurred on the matter of entitlement of Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan (deceased: 60 AH\680 AD) to the Caliphate. Where the opinions that ruled that his era was an era of complete Islamic Caliphate, are persuasive and balanced opinions, considering that Al-Hassan bin Ali ceded the Caliphate to Muawiya after pledging allegiance of it to Al-Hassan.

Thereafter, the matter remained controversial on the issue of the succession for the Caliphate, and the consensus of the people in authority. All these opinions and differences about the Islamic Caliphate were addressed by Jurists and Specialists in Sharia Policy through research and discussion; until Abu Al-Hassan Ali bin Muhammad bin Habib Al-Basri Al-Mawardi (deceased: 450 AH\1058 AD) defined seven conditions for Islamic Caliphate and he mentioned them in his book named “Al-Ahkam As-Sultaniyah w'at wilayat al Dinniyya”, namely: justice; knowledge leading to diligence in calamities and rulings; healthy senses of hearing, sight and tongue; healthy organs from a lack that prevents the progression of movement and timely response; Opinion leading to control the people and manage their interests; courage and help leading to protect territories and Jihad, i.e. fighting enemies; and lineage that is to be from the Quraysh. These conditions that combine the religious exigencies and secular requirements are the most agreed among the diligent people of knowledge. Yet, this does not mean the illegality of any other presidency, though it adopted methods of governance other than the Caliphate. The most important is that it meets the principle of applying Sharia, protection, security, and all other basic necessities that supposed to be the privileges of any Islamic Government. Nevertheless, the Islamic Caliphate as a post must meet such seven conditions. Therefore, any misalignment would transform it from a Caliphate to be merely a government.

Definition of Caliphate:

..“Khalaf fulan fulanan” means someone came after another one and hit him beyond his back, “Istakhalaf fulanan men fulan” means to make him in his place, “Khalaf fulan fulanan” if he is his successor. It is said “Khalafuh fi qaumah khelafah” he became his successor in his people. The Holy Quran says: {Moses commanded his brother Aaron, “Take my place among my people,} (Al-Araf: 142).

Legitimately, the Caliphate (Arabic: خَلِيفَة khil fah) is known as the government that achieves the policy and management of the group in accordance with Islamic law and the application of the provisions of Islam. Therefore, Amani Saleh has referred to Al-Mawardi definition regarding the Caliphate concept as the succession of prophecy in guarding religion and managing the world policy. In the same context, Ibn Khaldun has defined Caliphate as it is the succession of the Shar'a holder in guarding religion, managing the world policy, and obliging all to apply Shara' in their otherworldly and worldly interests. Amani Saleh has considered that ibn Khaldun's concept was wiser and more controlled.

In this context, a Caliphate has two important dimensions: religious and secular. These two dimensions may agree or disagree, In case of agreement, the Caliphate shall happen on its terms, Otherwise, the government without a succession shall be occurred, In both cases, all Islamic dimensions follow either the Caliphate or the government, as long as The Shara' is applied, and the people are prejudiced in accordance with God's will.

The Caliphate in Sunnis and Shiites:

The religious and secular dimensions of the Caliphate have been mixed up a lot in the history, Many historians have talked about the Caliphate through different perceptions, and mostly directed at the realization of preconceived notions. Hence, Some Muslim rulers and sultans were given the title of Caliphate; however, they did not apply the religious dimension of the Caliphate. Thus, the sacred divine right theory has emerged into the historical thought. The caliph's title gives an aura of holiness and greatness, so some historians used to glorify and deify those who have such title approaching the ancient thought of mythical divine dynasties.

The most acute crisis about the concept of Caliphate was between Sunnis and Shiites. Every group has its interpretations, the Sunnis believe that the caliph shall be elected unanimously; however, the Shiites believe that Caliph is determined by a divine order. Moreover, Ali Al-Wardi (a Shiite) (died: 1416 Ah/1995AD) referred to something even further in Shi'a, saying: They believe that the caliph should be determined by revelation, like prophets and apostles, and thus, the caliph's disobedience shall be achieved.

Furthermore, Al-wardi quotes Dutchman Reinhard Dozy's statement (died: 1300 AH / 1883 AD), who says: that Sunnis considers the Caliphate via their nomadic nature, which tends to democracy, while the Shiites are influenced by the sacred divine right theory and the Persian view attached to it. Contradicting with his quotation, Al-Wardi says that the difference between the two sects is not between democracy and slavery, but the difference is based on realism and idealism with regard to the concept of Caliphate.

Between Arabs and Persians, its conception is governed by denominational differences.

From the same point of view, the quotation of Al-Wardi from Dozy and his dissenting opinion begins to repeat the idea of difference between the two sects starting from the Caliphate and other subjects to the nature of the old and eternal conflict between Arabs and Persians. He considers that the Sunni view is in harmony with the Arabs' nature and beliefs while the Shiites view emerges from a Persian view with its entire ancient legacy, which contradict with Arabs' nature

Transforming to The Government:

By shedding light on the practical application of the term Caliphate, we can say that the Caliphate was applied in the Period of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs according to what is legally included, as well as with Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, the matter of transferring the Caliphate to him was justified, but after that the matter was changed and deviated from the clear principle of the Caliphate, as the matters were disrupted by naming the crown prince, when it was entrusted to Yazid bin Muawiya Al-Baya'a during the reign of his father, and four years before his death, which means that consultation (shura) and pledge of allegiance became confined to one option. The people of Levant, Iraq and the Hijaz and had not pledge of allegiance to him after they compared him to others.

We can say that since the pledge of allegiance to Yazid with the Caliphate until the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad in (656 AH / 1258 AD), the political Caliphate was not complete and clear, rather it was subjugated by personal interests, and it became only features of the first Caliphate, so the statement of Thomas Arnold (dies: 1349 AH / 1930 AD) depicts the reality of the Caliphate, as the act of Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan in terms of inheriting the Caliphate was a precedent until the last times of the Abbasid Period, as the caliphs declare the crown princes from their eldest sons or the best of their relatives. Thus; the oath of loyalty and obedience were made to them. Abdul Razzaq Al-Sanhouri (died: 1391 AH / 1971AD) supports Arnold view, as he differentiated between the Caliphate as a system and fact. He pointed out that the Caliphate had been weakened despite the strength of the Islamic state, then the Caliphate had deteriorated since the end of the Abbasid Al-Ma'moun's Period (died: 218 AH / 833 AD) until it fell by the Mongols. All the more this deterioration deviated from the true concept of the Caliphate and its legal system, even it was gradually. The matters in the Caliphate system and the position of the caliph after Yazid bin Muawiyah were not as it became in the late Abbasid state from weakness, feebleness and poor policy. The major feature of this historical narrative of the Caliphate is that during the historical period extending from the Period of the Rightly guided Caliphs to the fall of the Abbasid state; The position of the caliph did not deviate from the lineage, which is considered one of the Caliphate's conditions even in the period when the position of the caliph was a shadow caliph in Cairo during the Mamluk Period, when the Caliphate took place in the lineage of the Quraish from the Banu al- Abbas, after they came under the authority of the Mamluks, and after al-Zahir Baybars (died: 675 AH / 1277 AD had called the uncle of the last caliphs of Banu Al-Abbas, Ahmad ibn al-Caliph al-Zahir, nicknamed al-Mustansir Billah (died: 659 AH / 1261 AD), who fled from Baghdad to Cairo, he was appointed as shadow caliph. This Shadow position continued until the fall of the Mamluk state in (923 AH / 1517 AD), the number of the successors of the Banu al-Abbas in Cairo was 13.

A number of historians, including al-Maqrizi (died: 845 AH / 1441 AD) and al-Suyuti (died: 911 AH / 1505 AD), indicated that the Abbasid caliphs in Cairo were as veils of the Mamluk sultans, as prestige, power, and politics were under the control of the Mamluks, and the caliphs were always with them. The matter developed as the Abbasids did not have the right to express an opinion, they spent their times amongst the princes and senior officials, beseeching them and asking for their loyalty, to the extent that Qalawun, the Mamluk Sultan arrested Caliph Al-Mustakfi Billah Sulayman bin Al-Hakim bi Amr Allah (died: 740 AH / 1340 AD) and imprisoned him, which suggests the powerlessness of the caliph before the Sultanate. This supports the saying that the Caliphate in Cairo during the Mamluk Period had not reflected the true image of the position of the Caliph in law; it was only to keep a position that people were bound to during previous centuries, and its impact began to fade away, and its importance is diminished until it became a formal position with time, given to those who offer their loyalty and blind obedience to the sultans. Thus; it does not differ from the different religious positions. The concept of the Caliphate was confined until it became nothing more than a spiritual and religious matter.

Therefore, the position of the Caliph went through different stages, as it started at the top tierarchy of power in the Islamic history, then it became worthless, useless and lost its team. It contradicted with the goals and lines for which it was planned, so the caliph does not observe his affairs as well as he observes the status of people and their interests, and those who allege it became a subject ridicule and sarcasm.

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