Possibility of Islamic Theory of International Relations
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International Relations is dominated by Western’s (Euro-American) enterprise on theories, methods, praxes and narratives. In order to have a more inclusive and truly globalized IR, it has to substantially acknowledge diversity of existence, stories, voices, realities, cosmologies, and locally produced knowledge systems particularly from non-Western or Global South societies. Calls for reexamination and rethinking of its traditions of thoughts so as to accommodate changes and new issues in the international system are highly needed. One of its explorations is the call for the possibility of doing an Islamic theorizing about IR. Four steps were provided. First is to set up the background for generally identifying relations among religion & IR, and of Islam & IR. Second is to analyze one of the unit of analyses of IR, i.e. the nation-state. Its elements and constitutional cases are explored and provided the counterpart understandings of Muslim governance. Third is a further discussion of the element on authority by selecting four distinct Muslim scholars and decipher their conceptions on ruling in Muslim thought. The last step is assessing a practical case of a contemporary Muslim society in congruence with the analyses of previous steps. It concluded that the prospects of doing Islamic theorizing about IR falls under the condition of ‘pre-theory’.

Introduction

For several years of studying International Relations (IR), there is a sense of discomfort and eagerness to unlearn what I have learned. A lost place of where IR really stands on, repetitive narratives (Westphalia, great debates, clash of civilizations, among others) of white males/females with Western IR education, and finding voices of stories, experiences, worldviews and realities beyond Euro-America. With all of these disheartening universal cosmology of Western IR, I did not lose hope despite the unrelenting hurdles, discouragements and seldom depressions.

Some scholars have questioned why there is no non-Western theory of IR or trying to challenge the creativity and innovative thinking of scholars from non-Western countries. Song Xinning’s ‘Building International Relations Theory with Chinese Characteristics’ published in the Journal of Contemporary China in 2001 or Abdulhamid Abusulayman’s ‘Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Methodology and Thought’ published by the International Institute of Islamic Thought in 1987 were prime examples of attempts to build Chinese or Islamic interpretations of IR. There are two probable reasons why these literatures on non-Western interpretation of IR were kept in the periphery and not mainstreamed. One is the distribution of publications is not widespread, and second is little attention is given or vehemently ignored by prominent scholars, practitioners, and students from the West. Further details are discussed in an edited book by Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan’s Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives On and Beyond Asia published by Routledge in 2009.

Questions
This thesis asks whether there is a possibility for doing Islamic theorizing about the International Relations. If yes? What ways or procedural steps we can think of in attaining it?
The discipline of IR is sometimes perceived as an ‘American social science’, a term coined by Stanley Hoffman. It is a relatively young discipline compared with History or Philosophy, but it is gaining popularity all over the world. Several programs, departments, professional organizations, journals, etcetera are proliferating especially in Global South countries. However, their curriculum is dominated by Western IR’s enterprise on theories, methods, praxes and narratives. The disciples of IR teaching in Global South countries are mostly Western trained scholars. Only centers of learning of IR can be found in Euro-American universities which also contained the prominent IR scholars.

However, the question here is how can we find pluralistic voices that are inclusive of diverse experiences, stories, realities, existence, and cosmologies outside the Western IR pedigree? How can we include locally produced knowledge systems outside the West and advance shared destinies for IR? How can we conceptualize a truly globalized IR? There is a need of reexamination of traditions of thoughts of Western IR that hopefully may lead to the accommodation of other traditions and experiences. As the world is changing constantly, IR is confronted and challenged by new issues, problématiques, trends, and actors. Several voices that call for an inclusive IR which may need for a reassessment or ‘rethinking’ of its theories, methods, and empiricisms.

In 2013, Hamid Dabashi asked the question: Can non-Europeans think? He was appalled of the universality and ‘global claims’ of continental (European) philosophy while others are called ethno-philosophies particularly from Asia, Africa or Latin America. Dabashi poignantly writes:

‘The question is rather the manner in which non-European thinking can reach self-consciousness and evident universality, not at the cost of whatever European philosophers may think of themselves for the world at large, but for the purpose of offering alternative (complementary or contradictory) visions of reality more rooted in the lived experiences of people in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America….’

In retrospect, we may also ask how do we theorize the ‘international’? Is there a matrix that affects one’s theorizing skills, particularly the individuals’ view of the world? Is ‘theory is always for someone and for some purpose?’ We always speculate things and observe phenomena. We postulate supposition of ideas to explain something we are curious of. Or account for situations we desire to provide justifications. Theory has four chronological efficacies or properties: It describes, explains, interprets and predicts phenomena. There is a demarcation of understanding the nature of IR theory between American and European traditions. Americans conditioned its theorizing efforts through positivistic way, i.e., sets out its operational terms, presents its causality, and generates testable hypotheses. While for Europeans a theory is understood in a reflectivist manner where structuring general-specific questions are organized, and systematically produced a coherent set of interrelated concepts and categories.

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For Acharya and Buzan, ‘theory is therefore about simplifying reality. It starts from the supposition that in some quite fundamental sense, each event is not unique, but can be clustered together with others that share some important similarities.’ The domination of Western IR theory is cemented by their systemic understanding of issues and affairs worldwide, by their successful linkage of their historical past to their present continuity, by their hegemonic experience of colonizing Global South through incomparable military strength, by their vast resources in finances, research institutes, universities, thinkers, literature, among others, and by poor conditions of non-Western academic IR community including cultural and linguistic obstacles.

They (Acharya and Buzan) provided conditions upon which non-Western theorizing can be considered as IR theory, and these are 1) extensive acknowledgment as a theory by IR scholars, 2) it is identified as IR theory by its creator regardless of non-recognition by mainstream academic IR community, or 3) that there is a systematic attempt to theorize IR (refers to ‘pre-theory’ which provide possible starting points). This thesis falls into their third condition which contemplates probable Islamic theorizing about IR.

**Terminologies**

There are two important terms that are operationally defined in this thesis: the notion of ‘international’ and the contested ‘Islam’. Various scholars defined ‘international’ into two invigorating descriptions, one has something to do with the narrow version which only talks about conventional relations among modern states, while the other one discusses its broader view of interactions among humans and of their societies that go beyond their locality. The thesis affirms the broader version.

The second term is the highly contested ‘Islam’. Some may talk about the theological pretexts that originated from revealed messages and constructed into laws that guides human lives, while others may talk about its cultural aspect where figural art or icons, music and even wine drinking are considered Islamic. The thesis operates Islam as anything related to or produced by Muslims – whether in ruling or adaption of foreign cultural traditions such as when Islam was expanding from Arabia to Persia, India, and China. It is not monolithic in its orientations but with multiple understandings and interpretations across peoples, cultures, spaces and times.

**Delimitations**

It avoided hard positivistic process (the American style) of providing potentialities for Islamic theorizing about IR because the author finds it difficult to relegate religion, specifically Islam, as a mere scientific variable subjected for empirical observations and testable hypothesis. The thesis is more inclined with the European reflectivist version of making theorizing efforts where question(s) was/were posited and based from that postulation, coherent presentations of interrelated conceptions and categories are then analyzed.

Simple transliterations of Arabic words are provided. The author is incapable of comprehending Arabic, Persian or Ottoman texts. Thus, all sources are secondarily translated in English. Any linguistic errors found are the fault of the author.

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4 Acharya and Buzan, 2007, p. 292.
Structure
In order to answer the question of the thesis, whether if it is possible to do Islamic theorizing of International Relations, the author provided four procedural steps in contemplating or reflecting on the possibility of doing it.

STEP ONE asks the operational definitions of IR and religion. It inquires critical scholarship about religion. Explores the religious roots of IR and continues to interrogate the general relations of IR and religion, particularly its conceptualizing problematics of religion by IR community, attempts of integrating it to mainstream IR theories, and shortcomings on the study of religion and IR. Afterwards, it investigates the relations of IR and Islam as part of the non-Western IR movements.

STEP TWO is divided into two parts, one is exploring the elements and constitutional cases of nation-state, while the second is analyzing the understandings of Muslim governance regarding those elements and provided some counterpart constitutional cases. Nation-state, one of the unit or level of analyses of IR, is selected in this thesis because of its ubiquitous and prominent role in IR theory, and that although its significance is being challenged by globalization, regionalization, among others: It is still by far the omnipresent polity worldwide which was adapted by almost all Muslim societies. Its role in shaping the international system is undeniably magnanimous.

STEP THREE collects accumulated ideas by selecting four distinct Muslim scholars during the Islamic Golden Age and decipher their conceptions on ruling in Muslim thought. It is somehow linked to the previous step where ‘authority’, one of the most contested element in Muslim governance, is further examined.

STEP FOUR is the last way of doing Islamic theorizing of IR. It presented a practical case of a contemporary Muslim society (the Bangsamoro) and relates its reconfiguration of political arrangement under the context of comparative analysis of elements between nation-state and Muslim governance. The third step is linked to this step because one of the selected scholar’s work served as theoretical blueprint of structuring its basic laws or constitution. No one has ever done or contributed in the literature regarding the Bangsamoro polity, almost all Arab countries, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia have been thoroughly studied.

Religion, IR, and Islam

For the past few decades there is a tremendous increase of IR scholars studying religion, and evidently, a dedicated section called ‘REL (Religion and International Relations) was established at the International Studies Association (ISA) in 2013. Prior to this, there are similar sections, committees, and caucuses that focused on religion and politics, and some of them are: International Political Science Association (IPSA), the American Political Science Association (APSA), the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), among others. The ISA-REL members are steadily growing in numbers including its sponsored panels each year. It is without a doubt that literature on IR and religion rapidly proliferated, particularly after the tragic 9/11 event occurred in the USA.
Several scholars are talking about the ‘global resurgence of religion’ or the need to ‘bring religion back into IR from its exile’. Was religion really on its exile? How come IR scholars are recently paying attention to religion? How do IR scholars see religion in their analyses? Is there a possibility of integrating religion into IR? These are the prominent issues as regards to the study of religion and IR. Operational descriptions on IR and religion are firstly provided below.

‘Islamic IR’ as part of non-Western IR movements

IR scholars have been discussing the necessity for, possibility, and the nature of non-Western IR since the 1990s. Several classic works have shaped the debate. Martin Wight asked why there is no International theory. His understanding of theory was normative: ideas about order and progress at international level and ways to achieve them. Later, Stanley Hoffman identified IR as an ‘American Social Science’: policy-relevant studies flourished in American universities in tandem with the America’s rise to hegemony after the WWII. Even later, rejecting the notion of value-free social science, Robert Cox argued that theory is for someone and some purpose: ‘problem-solving’ theories aim to explain the structure of world politics as it is and suggest policies to fix its problems; ‘critical’ theories aim to deconstruct the structure of world politics to understand what value and interest the current structures, norms, and institutions promote and ignore. Following Cox’s view, a generation of critical scholars has persuasively argued that Western IR is hegemonic, in the Gramscian sense of the world, and it ‘continues to speak for and to the West’.

Since the 1990s, three developments intensified the debate on IR Theory’s ‘parochialism and ethnocentrism’ and prompted the debate on non-Western IR theory. First, the rise of new approaches to IR theory, such as constructivism, feminism, post-modern, post-positivist, Critical IR, expanded the notion of ‘theory’, rejected the possibility and, in some cases, the desirability of value free IR Theory and demanded a self-reflective attitude from the IR theoreticians. Among these approaches, post-colonial and subaltern perspectives have paved way to the development of non-Western IR. Second, IR departments in non-Western countries have grown in numbers and quality. These departments in Japan, China, India, Turkey, Brazil, and Russia have introduced local knowledge, perspectives, and sensitivities into IR. Finally, the rise of non-Western powers with their alternative visions of world order promoted scholars to discuss the implications these visions for IR.

It is premature to argue that these developments shook the Western intellectual hegemony particularly in IR Theory. Echoing Wight, suggesting that non-Western IR theory is underdeveloped, Acharya and Buzan provocingly ask, ‘Why is there no non-Western international

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7 Cox, Approaches to World Order, 1996.
relations theory? They offer several reasons for it: belief in superiority of Western IR in explaining world politics, the hegemony of Western IR, inaccessibility of non-Western IR theories to Western IR community, lack of resources, such as funding levels (and free speech environment) comparable to Western IR community; the intellectual development takes time and non-Western IR theory communities are in the process of catching up.

There are somehow failed attempts in building a systemic theoretical understanding of Islamic IR particularly by those who have studied Islamic political thought and Islam in international affairs. This so called ‘under-theorization’ is occurring because of the following reasons. Firstly, siyar (i.e. jurisprudential relations between Muslims and non-Muslims) dominated the analysis of Islam in IR. Secondly, the attempt to build an Islamic IR that can be traced back to the 1980s’ discourse on Islamization of science movement, a decade and half before the non-Western IR movement. Thirdly, the rigorous Islamist challenge to the structural and normative underpinnings of contemporary international relations.

Most of the studies done that conclusively regarded as Islamic IR are mainly normative and not empirical; it scaffolds Islamic ideals and values applicable to international relations rather than identifying regularities and patterns in international relations. Several normative interpretations of Islamic ideals and values produced various approaches to IR, and these could be summed up whether: political theology (orientation towards the legitimacy of international society), sectarian (shia, sunni), ethnic (Moro, Kurdish or Arab), cultural (Javanese and Sebarang cultures in Indonesia), and national (Indonesian, Turkish, Iranian). Thus there are multiplication of Islamic IR theoretical approaches rather than a single and overarching Islamic IR theory or approach.

Yet these approaches are Islamic because they engage with the Qur’an, Sunnah, and siyar. For example, these approaches will take the notion of ummah (that Muslims constitute a distinct and separate community) as given because it is well-established in the Qur’an and sunnah. Medieval jurists further elaborated, systemized, and developed Quran’s and sunnah’s implication for Muslim relations with non-Muslims, the part of jurisprudence known as siyar, which sometimes translated as Islamic law of nation. Most, if not all, medieval jurists have constructed a bi-compartmentalized approach to foreign relations.

In this juridical, if not theological, view, for Muslims the world is divided into two spheres: dar al-Islam (the abode of Islam) and dar al-Harb (the abode of war), especially in Hanafi jurisprudence. Siyar also addressed issues such as: musta‘man, giving subjects of a state that’s at war with Muslim safe entrance, or aman, into Muslim lands; dhimmi, the jurisprudence of non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim ruler; jizyah, tax non-Muslims pay to a Muslim ruler; kharaj, tributary payment that a non-Muslim ruler or community give to a Muslim ruler; dar al Ahd (or

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Dar al Sulh), non-Muslim ruler or societies that are in treaty agreement with Muslims that include non-fighting.\textsuperscript{15}

Sohail Hashmi argues that although contemporary Islamic thought moved away from the Medieval Muslim jurists’ Manichean worldview, the notion of ummah continues to shape Islamic political thought.\textsuperscript{16} Because of the centrality and legitimacy of Qur’an, sunnah and jurists’ interpretations, most systematic approaches to Islamic IR start with a discussion on relevance of this tradition. Most engage in usul-u fiqh (methodology of Islamic jurisprudence) to justify how the relevance of these sources on contemporary international relations should be understood. There are at least five versions\textsuperscript{17} of probable Islamic IR existing in the literature: Conservative, Solidarist, Iranian, Islamization of knowledge project\textsuperscript{18}, and Empirical.

\textit{Conservative:} The notion of ummah and the solidarity it entails negate the fundamental unit of IR: nation-states, legitimacy of sovereign territoriality, and the Westphalian system are Western products and have no place in Islamic political thought. Nations, states, and empires come and go but Islam and the ummah persist. Thus, Muslims should strive to achieve Pan-Islamism. The division between dar-al-Islam and dar-al-Harb and the perpetual conflict between them continue. There may also be non-Muslim societies that are dar al-Ahd, which Muslim societies can sign treaties not to fight for a (redeemable) ten years.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Solidarist:} Nation-states, territorial sovereignty, and the Westphalian order are legitimate. What Muslims should do is to build institutions at transnational and intergovernmental level, similar to European Union, to bring the ummah together. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is a good start but its current form does not allow Muslims to achieve the OIC’s full potential. But regardless of its failure, ‘the existence of OIC as a host of other multilateral Islamic institutions is testimony to the influence of these internationalist ideals’.\textsuperscript{20} The abode of Islam versus abode of war/enemy distinction is a reflection of medieval jurists’ legal and political answer to the international environment of their period with little relevance to contemporary international relations. The interactions with non-Muslims should be grounded on dialogue and diplomacy rather than hostility and war.\textsuperscript{21}

\textit{Iranian:} International relations is a struggle between mustakbirun (arrogant imperialist powers) and mustadafun (the oppressed of the world), reflecting the perennial struggle between Imams (religious) and sultans (temporal). The unjust nature of existing international system is likely to continue until a just powerful prophetic voice emerges (the return of Mahdi). Until that time,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{17} These versions were introduced to me by Turan Kayaoğlu.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} According to the conveners (referring to the International Institute of Islamic Knowledge and founders of the International Islamic University of Malaysia), this project is no longer pursued. Instead, they are presently interested in connecting the so-called Islamic knowledge with modern physical and social sciences.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Shaybani, 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Hashmi, 2002, p. 157.
\end{itemize}
Muslim should coalesce around Iran who provides the best opportunity for Muslims to resist imperialist powers. In other words, similar to Khomeini’s Vilayat-e Faqih (guardianship of Muslim jurists) which established the voice for justice in Iran, with its commitment to anti-imperialism and Islamic values, Iran represent voice of justice for Muslims and deserve to be the leading Muslim state.\textsuperscript{22}

\textit{Islamization of knowledge project:} Emerged among intellectuals of American-Muslim, in particular in the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) under the leadership of Ismael Al-Faruki, the Islamization of sciences movement advocated synthesis of modern knowledge and Islamic legacy, aiming to connect Islamic moral teachings and the ultimate end to social sciences. Al Faruki says: Islamization means ‘to redefine and reorder data, to rethink the reasoning and relating the data, to re-evaluate the conclusions, to reproject the goals—and to do so in such a way to make the disciplines enrich and serve the cause of Islam’.\textsuperscript{23} Works in this genre attempted to answer epistemological and methodological issues in developing the new approaches. For example, AbuSulayman argued, ‘the narrow application of classical Muslim methodology has led to rigidity and exclusiveness’.\textsuperscript{24} The classical framework is no longer related to current international affairs.

As we see it, this traditional approach in the world politics of today is bound to be static and superficial and offers no help for contemporary Muslim policy makers. He advocated historicist approach, which accepts basic norms but put a greater emphasis on context and strategic agility/creativity within the context—rather than taking these decisions as universal rules that should be applied across time and geography. In other words, he worked to develop more contextualized understanding of Quranic verses and Prophet’s teachings that gives a dynamic and flexible reading of these early sources.

To date, only few scholars developed this approach or explore its implications for IR. The recent approach to Shari’ah emphasize \textit{maqasid} (goals or purposes) has also been developed and advocated by the same group: \textit{maqasid al-sharia} (higher objectives of the law) and \textit{maslaha} (public interest) to endorse interpretations of sharia that minimize contradictions with international norms. But the full implications of \textit{maqasid} on IR remain unexplored.

\textit{Empirical:} Although, Islamic IR has been normative, Muslim philosophers have also developed empirical theories. Among these none has been as famous as Ibn Khaldun. From IR perspective, his work on ‘the tripartite relationship between the rise of civilization, economic prosperity, and social disintegration’ is most relevant.\textsuperscript{25} His works have inspired scholars of contemporary international relations. Ibn Khaldun’s work grounded in Islamic epistemology. For example, he assumed human nature that combines ‘animal’ and ‘human’ qualities. He rejected the notion of

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\item \textsuperscript{24} AbuSulayman, 1987, p. 142.
\end{itemize}
state of nature and emphasized cooperation in society as his basic premise. He accepted that civilizations and culture are central to development of societies and relations between them.

On these premises, Ibn Khaldun developed his understanding of state. Unlike the contemporary reification and assumption of state an essential and permanent building block of international order, Ibn Khaldun problematized the construction, maintenance, and place of state in the world order. For Ibn Khaldun, states emerge, mature, and decline. This repetitive pattern of rise and demise of state should be contextualized within the broader historical, social, and political processes. Unlike reducing politics to state, in Ibn Khaldun’s view, state is in part of continuum of politics, from the formation of tribe to a growth of empire. Although still falls short from the Platonic idea that states are highest reflection of human virtue, even this attribute a level of role to state as important actor for power and politics that diverge from Islamic political thought in which state ‘never attained the absolute claims accorded in European history’. 26

Ibn Khaldun built two interrelated concepts that are particularly relevant to IR: asabiyyah (loosely translated as solidarity) and cycle approach to history of human societies are also generalizable to international society, and the rise of and fall of states and great powers. According to Ibn Khaldun’s cyclic understanding of history, ‘all states experience gives phases in their evolutionary path: establishment, consolidation, prosperity, complacency and decline. A similar, though not the same, trajectory is followed by the city, economic life, and relations between sedentary and primitive forms of culture’. 27 Following Ibn Khaldun’s approach, Pasha further argues that ‘Ibn Khaldun would also acknowledge that the roots of this crisis are primarily internal to Islamic civilization, only reinforced by outside forces … Yet, in times of crisis, those who are the margins of world order may be better situated to propose alternatives’. 28

In sum for all these versions, the big question for the Islamic IR is how to ‘disentangle Islamic ethics from medieval Islamic law (Shari’ah)’. 29 Historicist account in attempting to understand the Qur’an and the traditions (sunnah) of the Prophet in their historical context is one way. The other path that is unexplored is maqasid approach which allows ‘to elaborate new principles of Shari’ah on issues relating to international society by treating the Qur’an as a complete ethical system’. 30 In order to be effective, this accommodation should go beyond merely accepting ‘prevailing international norms’ or assimilating them ‘into Islamic political thought’, but offering new ways to thinking and envisioning international relations and world order.

Aside from these versions of probable Islamic IR, there are also Islamic versions on civilization that served as responses to Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’. 31 His thesis became one of the prominent theoretical frameworks of global politics in late 20th to early 21st centuries claiming that fault lines of world conflicts will no longer be rivalries between nation-states but reducible to

27 Pasha, 1997, p. 60.
cultural, religious (Islam) and ideological identities of ‘nations and groups of different civilizations’.

**Islamic Civilizations in IR**

There is no consensual and singular Islamic understanding and meaning of the word ‘civilization’ among Islamicists (jurists and/or scholars). Each has his own imagination, view, and perception regarding civilization, but they all agree and submit that the magnanimous factor and persuasive message of (and powerful idea about) Islam have had highly affected the socio-political developments and multicultural cohesions of individuals and human societies where Islam plays an important role in their intellectual advancement and economical progress. Although Ibn Khaldun was previously discussed as part of the ‘empirical version of Islamic IR’, below provides detailed information on his conception of ‘asabiyyah’. Afterwards, brief overviews of understandings of Bennabi, Kamali, and Şentürk are presented.

*Ibn Khaldun’s ‘Asabiyyah’ of Civilization* He is considered as one of the founding fathers of modern historiography, sociology, and economics who lived from 1332 to 1406. He pioneered the idea of two types of society: (1) primitive society and (2) civilized society. These societies move from simple to complex, in all its phases, including the livelihood, crafts, customs, and sciences. In primitive society the members feel they belong together and a single unit. He referred to two types of control; namely, the control in the desert by tribal leaders and traditions, and the control by the ruler and court in the city. The concept of ‘asabiyyah’ (i.e. solidarity or bond among humans that may lead to a formation of secured communities and support social movements) can survive only in a civilized society. The establishment of a society occurred prior to the city because the former leads to the latter.

Moreover, cities require aids which only society can secure. The existence of a society is a fundamental pre-requisite for the establishment of the city, and when the city is finally built according to the design of its founder it will have a certain span of life. There are two factors considered for tribal leadership: (1) moral characteristics and (2) nobility of family. The leadership of the tribe is, usually, in the hands of one family but its political power depends on two factors: joint economic activity and ‘esprit de corps’ (solidarity). For him luxury is of the very nature of kingship or established government, but it is also the most destructive factor to society. A society is created, approached perfection, declined, and then replaced by another society.

To Ibn Khaldun, every person, in every society, is subject to some degree of regulation by others. Each society must strike a balance between the freedoms enjoyed by its members and the controls exerted over individuals, by the government. Law consists of the formalization of social controls, which limit and regulate individual action and which, of equal importance, control the government in its exercise of power over the individual. A society is natural and necessary, since the isolated individual can neither sustained himself nor provide his economic needs. He maintained that a civilized society is subject to law in three stages.

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First is the primary stage (birth): In this stage there is none of luxury which flourishes in a settled or sedentary life. The distinguishing feature of this stage is its intense ‘asabiyyah’, which may foster a rise to power and domination. A new religion strengthens group solidarity and reinforces the state because it creates a spirit of unity of interests for common ends even to the extent of replacing or reinforcing the ‘asabiyyah’ itself. Also, the simple economic activity of the group depends on the simplicity of the physical environment.

Second stage is settlement or civilization (youth): Nomads necessarily live a sedentary life after they accomplish their victory and establish a society. Ibn Khaldun concludes that the establishment of towns must necessarily follow the establishment of city. In this civilized state the nomadic people learn a new way of life. They imitate their predecessors as well as other civilized people in their habits and customs. Civilization is the opposite of the essence of nomadism for two interrelated reasons. First, civilization demands an organized body of government which will necessarily be dominated by a ruling group. Second, the ruler must fight against the possessors of social solidarity to maintain his position. Thus it becomes inevitable that the power of the ‘asabiyyah’ have to be curbed and weakened, so that they will never try to dispute the rule of the leader who is to become the only ruler.

The last stage is senility (old age): This stage is characterized by disintegration in both the political and economic life of the civilized society. Among its distinguishing features are the increasing monopoly of power by the ruler, greater pomp and luxury, and complete breakdown of the ‘asabiyyah’. The result of a luxurious life is poverty because when the expenses of government increased it will levy for more taxes and find new ways for robbing the masses, which inevitably declines the power of ‘asabiyyah’.

Malek Bennabi’s Equation of Civilization: Mr. Bennabi (1905-1973) was an Algerian writer and philosopher, who wrote about human society, particularly Muslim society with a focus on the reasons behind the fall of Muslim civilization. He viewed the development of civilization as a catalytic process involving three agents: man, land (“soil”), and time. He viewed “psycho-temporal” ideas, especially religion, as foundational. Regarding Muslim civilization, this psycho-temporal/spiritual stage’s trajectory ended with the divisive Battle of Siffin in 659 CE, and soon afterward the establishment of the Umayyad Caliphate. A second temporal/rational stage then appeared (as the civilization’s “soul” flat-lines).

After centuries, ending with the life and times of Ibn Khaldun, Muslim civilization became stagnant and began to decline toward an “instinctual primitive stage,” an ancestral condition.34 “The era of decadence,” Bennabi explains, “began with the Post-Almohadean man.” Unlike the “man of Muslim civilization,” post-Almohadean man has lost his curiosity, his inquiry, and his historical and social consciousness. Instead, he is resigned to intellectual and moral torpor.35

Mohammad Hashim Kamali’s Middle Grounds of Islamic Civilization (The Qur’ānic Principle of Wasatiyyah): Kamali is professor of law at the International Islamic University of Malaysia. He

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has taught Islamic law and jurisprudence since 1985. His idea of Wasaṭiyyah (or the principle of moderation and balance) is an aspect of self-identity and worldview of the ‘ummah’ and that is also valued in all major religions and civilizations.\(^{36}\) He begins his analysis with a discussion of the leading Qur’ānic verse on wasaṭiyyah: ‘Thus, we have made of you a community justly balanced that you might be witnesses over the nations and the Messenger a witness over yourselves.’\(^{37}\)

According to him, the Prophet himself has been addressed in the Qur’ān in the following way: “And become moderate in thy pace and lower thy voice….” He argued that “whether one reads this verse literally or metaphorically (but preferably the latter), it can sustain two meanings: to moderate one’s ‘pace’ and one’s ‘voice’ that signifies a cultural refinement and courtesy in one’s encounter with others; it also implies moderation and balance in the context of contacts with other communities and civilizations.”\(^{38}\)

**Recep Şentürk’s Islam as an Open Civilizations:** Şentürk is the current director of the Alliance of Civilizations Institute at the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University in Istanbul. According to him, Muslims built an Open Civilization from Andalusia to India where people from different cultures lived together. Islamic unity in diversity or Open Civilization is rooted in the multiplex Islamic thought. He divided civilizations into two groups: open civilizations and closed civilizations. By open civilizations, he meant those that recognize other civilizations and their right to coexist. In contrast, closed civilizations are the opposite.\(^{39}\)

A prerequisite for open civilization is open law. It reflects the need to allow peaceful cohabitation of different communities in the age of globalization. In addition, it calls for democratic and pluralistic discoursed community in law. He concluded by claiming that there must be five requirements for a probable open civilization: first, present normative system must be symmetrically open to their own cultures, traditions, and of others’ legal cultures and traditions (be they secular or religious) as well. Second, the “truth” in legal and moral matters should be seen as multiple and multiplex. In other words, normative truth has many levels, each level with many dimensions.

Third, there should be an employment of multi-valued and fussy logic, along with the presently used binary logic, which is based on the simple duality of legal versus illegal, right versus wrong, without recognizing the gray areas in between. Fourth, a relational approach to the question of moral good and bad must be adapted, instead of an essentialist one. This may produce a “relative-relativism” as opposed to the “absolute-relativism” of post-modernity which eventually leads to nihilism. Fifth, an anti-exceptionalist approach must be adapted with an emphasis on commonalities in different legal traditions to counter exceptionalism and replace it with a universalist perspective.\(^{40}\)

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\(^{38}\) Kamali, 2008, p. 12.


The overall transcending theme among these civilizational understandings as form of responses to Huntington’s thesis is that throughout the history of Muslim civilization there have been openness of Islam towards foreign cultures and ideologies. And that oftentimes Muslims have adapted, copied and innovated (with the guidance of the Qur’an and Sunnah) their socio-political spaces of foreign cultures especially if they are deemed beneficial for strengthening the ummah (or community). Now that we have provided multi-versions of Islam(s) and how they may relate to the ‘international’, the succeeding discussion tells us how we could contemplate Islam in relation to IR.

Thinking Islam within or beyond IR?

There is a propensity in thinking or even rethinking Islam to be considered as a concept within the boundaries of IR theory, much less as a theory in its own right. Most of the literature produced especially after 9/11 see Islam as only a factor to be understood in relation to existing IR paradigms, thereby neglecting its comprehensiveness as a total knowledge system. AbuSulayman in his book, which was his PhD dissertation Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Islamic Methodology and Thought (1987) did not advance any form of dialogue with the Western IR instead he exclusively made the study of ‘international’ deeply Islamic with all theological citations from the Qur’an, Sunnah and Hadith of the Prophet.

According to Turner, the ‘Islamic International Relations is not a concept of how states interact with each other but, rather, a concept of world order that focuses on the relations between the Muslim and the non-Muslim spheres.’ This line of thought is intellectually uncomfortable because the premise is that Muslims have their own version of world order which primarily focuses only on relations between Muslims and Others. This argument echoes an orientalist pejorative, or more so of an occidentalist. If the international system is based only on the interaction between Muslims and Others, then it automatically assumed that Islam holds universal message and values which may irritate Others.

On a recurring Sunni argument and legitimized by their early juristic interpretations stated that the world is divided only between the abode (house) of Islam and the abode (house) of war/enemy, and these two are in perpetual and endless conflict. This differ with Shi’a worldview that the world is divided between the abode of the oppressor (or Muslim community) serve more confusions and ambiguity in the development of a cohesive Islamic IR. However, Turner is still adamant that Islam must not be seen as subject matter but an outstanding paradigm of IR.

There are three key principles in Islamic IR according to Turner: 1) the state and sovereignty as embodied by ummah or oneness of community that is linked by asabiyyah (solidarity). 2) The inside/outside domains of dar al-Islam and dar al-Harb and in-between domain of dar al-Sulh or dar al-Ahd (covenant or agreement). 3) The ontological belief in God (Allah), the revealed

message (Qur’an), and the traditions (Sunna) of the Prophet based on his sayings and practices. Some scholars say that *ijtihad* (independent qualified judgment) which is practiced by a trained scholar with knowledge of the primary texts (the Qur’an and Sunna) can also be a source of knowledge. These principles are applicable to these approaches but differ on certain usage of their applicability: Classical (Traditional), Reformist (Non-Traditional) and Revolutionary (Salafi/Jihadi).\(^{43}\)

**Classical (Traditional):** It is similar with the Conservative version of Islamic IR combined with ‘classical realist concepts regarding power, anarchy, war and the state of nature.’\(^{44}\) Conservatives/Traditionalists argued that pre-Islamic era was on a state of *jahiliyah* (or ignorance) and that security was acquired after the people converted or reverted to Islam. *Jihad* (or struggle) determines the success, sustenance and progress of Muslim societies. They adhered to the three key principles mentioned above. God is the sovereign one and the subsequent leaders after the prophet, caliphs, and succeeding ones (state leaders) are bestowed by God’s sovereignty in governing and leading Muslims. They constituted the *Salafi* people who believed in looking back to the formative years of Islam, particularly of the *Rashidun* (the rightly guided) caliphs, in order to accommodate change brought by Western modernity. Al-Afghani may be regarded as conservative who called for Pan-Islamic movement.

**Reformist (Non-Traditional):** It is similar with the Solidarist version of Islamic IR that promotes the virtue of cooperation with non-Muslims, adaptation of the nation-state system, and engagement with modernity in Muslim regimes. The solidarists or reformists believed in co-existence with other major powers around the world. And cooperation with non-Muslims and to everyone is achievable through projects that call for solidarity and peace. They do not subscribe to inside/outside domains because this approach is a product of a certain time or epoch, especially during when Muslim lands were conquered by Mongols. They are also adaptable to nation-state system because they view *ummah* as a concept that goes beyond territorial boundaries and considered it a metaphysical one. They differ with Traditionalists/Conservatives in terms of methodology. They regard *ijtihad* as a legitimate source of method of knowledge particularly in dealing with matters that are not extensively covered by the Qur’an and Sunnah. However, the process of *ijtihad* must be guided by these primary sources. An example of reformist is Muhammad Abduh, a student of al-Afghani.

**Revolutionary (Salafi/Jihadi):** It has no counterpart or equivalence to the Islamic versions of IR, instead it is a product of both classical and reformist schools that is prone to acts of terrorism transnationally in order to advance their interest and commit abrupt changes based on their ways of life and narrow thinking. They adhere to several tenets of traditionalists/conservatives such as rejection of modernity and nation-state system, but bizarrely uses *ijtihad*. Reformists/Solidarists used *ijtihad* in order to engage with modernity but guided by classic commentaries of previous scholars and jurists (the ulama). However, for revolutionarists they used *ijtihad* without going back to the works of past ulamas (for example, noble scholars such as al-Farabi, al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, etc.) for they see them as perpetrators who corrupted the true and pure essence of Islam. The first one who acted on this movement was Ibn Taymiyyah (who lived during the troubles with the Mongols) followed by Abd al-Wahhab, Maududi, Syed Qutb, al-Banna, etc., where almost all


experienced colonial and post-colonial persecutions both from their colonizers and fellow Muslim leaders. Thus most of them inspired people to take arms and join fundamentalist movements such as al-Qaeda and ISIS.

IR as a field is not a unilateral project rather it is an intellectual platform. The notion of ‘Islamic theory’ is way to explore Islamic contributions to the field. The inclusion of Muslim contributions is not meant to create an isolationist, judicious divide between what is Islamic and what is not. Rather, contemplating ‘Islamic IR’ creates an act that will aim for the inclusion of that knowledge as a building bloc in the IR field. Moreover, it is premised on the idea that knowledge is fluid: peoples adopt and utilize thoughts and ideas regardless of faith, gender, nation, etc. The mainstream idea that all knowledge presented by the West is from an ‘Orientalist’ perspective or that there is a ‘clash of civilizations’ are both notions that are antithetical for the gradual emergence of an ‘Islamic paradigm of IR’ or to put it frankly ‘an Islamic theory of IR’.

Scholars who would be working for the inclusion of that knowledge to IR are interested in developing and sustaining a body of knowledge that addresses the theories and practices of the Muslim civilization and of Muslim societies with regards to international affairs and to the discipline of International Relations. Another way to present this paradigm is to work on conceptualization of ideas that affect people’s thinking and behavior in their capacity to relate with IR as both discipline (International Relations) and practice (international relations).

I argue that Islam should not be conceived and studied simply in theological terms, but analyzed from different viewpoints that engage with a wide range of analytical tools offered by the political sciences, social sciences, and Islamic Studies. The primal goal of Islamic IR is to engage and challenge the established Western-based and defined epistemological and ontological foundations of the discipline, substantially contributing to worlding IR as a field of study and international relations as a field of practice by presenting and discussing a broad range of standpoints from within the Islamic civilization and the Muslim world, and offering critical analyses regarding current Muslim affairs.

Conclusion

It is difficult to discern what the future holds or look like for the entire discipline and phenomenon of International Relations. Inasmuch scholars, students, and practitioners would hope for a “happily ever after” type of an ending or process. There are more to look forward to and see as it unfolds in our very own eyes. There is no consensus among scholars about what constitute the scope and subject-matter of IR. It gradually evolves and develops paralleled with the temporal and spatial changes occurring in the state of affairs of actors in the international system. In addition, there is a serious paucity of shared ontological, epistemological, and methodological premises embedded with the conceptions of scholars on certain matters such as the notion of nation-state or of the ‘international’.

All we could do is to try contemplating our perspectives of worldviews and hoping for a balanced treatment of IR between the West and the rest of the world. That is, no more labeling the West as the “core” while the rest as the “periphery” of IR. There should be a finite line of equilibrium, which gives equal importance of shared experiences accounted by all state and non-state actors in
the international system/society. Thus, bringing in a truly globalized discipline of IR that gives equal importance of all traditions, worldviews, and experiences from different parts of the world.

The challenge here is to what extent IR is open to non-Western traditions of thoughts, alternative cosmologies, and knowledge systems that are locally produced. Theorizing in the International Relations discipline remains a Global North (mainly North America and Western Europe) enterprise that continues to be the primary knowledge, especially theory-producing hub shaping its foundational parameters and key problematiques. Many, if not most, alternate intellectual formulations, concepts and tools offered by scholars from the Global South are de-valued on account of being ‘metaphysical’, ‘spiritual’, or, at best alternative ‘belief systems’—none of which meet the ultimate gold standards of rationality and scientific spirit—or, largely as a source of knowledge about local realities, but never of theory and hence considered as ‘second class’.

The world is indeed home to different cosmologies with diverse knowledge systems and, each of these may have different ways of knowing and, often these are indeed constitutive of different realities. The challenges for scholars who are trying to think through ways of doing IR differently, which may well entail stepping out of the precincts of IR to engage with other disciplines and other ways of knowing realities seem to refer to:45

- Critical interrogation of both epistemological and ontological standpoints for knowledge creation in International Relations, with due recognition to the inherent multiplicity of ontologies.
- The historical pasts of different civilizations including the Islamic, the Indian, the Chinese, the Egyptian, the Aztec, the Maya or the Inca located in the Global South or, those located in the recessive margins of the Global North such as the Aboriginal and Indigenous people of the North and South Americas and Australia, for devising new (alternate?) knowledge practices in International Relations.
- Exploration of ways to expose, unravel and, possibly transform the deeply embedded practices of ‘othering’ in International Relations that work through inscribing a whole range of binaries such as ‘men versus native’, ‘men versus women’, ‘white (wo)man versus black (wo)man’ to ‘reason versus belief’, ‘objective versus subjective’, ‘order versus chaos’, north vs south and ‘primitive’ vs ‘modern’—all of which are cast in an explicit or implicit hierarchy where the ‘self’ or the first category is privileged, most often also de-legitimizing the ‘other’.

Consequently, the challenges continue in discovering ways for the probable systematization of an Islamic theory of International Relations. **STEP ONE** had established the background of relations among ‘religion & IR’, and ‘Islam & IR’. This background generally discusses the relations of religion and IR, and of the eventual emergence of Islam in the forefront of theorizing efforts. Although there is an ontological predicament as to the nature and existence of religion, Islam may serve to fill the lacuna of religion’s ambiguity especially its relations with IR. Religion starts off as an ambiguous variable to IR scholars. Religion’s essential and uniqueness characterization pertain to the adherence to supernatural beings or ‘being’ held as sacred or holy in the eyes of their followers. Scholars critical to religion instigated that ‘religion’ or ‘religions’ are modern inventions

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45 These are the challenges discussed by the Delhi Group’s workshop which was organized by the World International Studies Committee (WISC) and Institute for Research on India and International Studies (IRIIS) last January 2016 in New Delhi, India.
that are made to appear ubiquitous and self-privatized. The marginalization of religion in IR is an actual effect of the religious-secular binary which argued for religion’s insignificance to rational life. Thus the reification of religion in IR is a result of identifying religion of having its own properties and characteristics subject for empirical analysis and observation.

However, that simplistic comparison does not purveys the complexity of relations between religion and IR. The good-bad binary outlook of religion as seen by IR scholars convey an unstable ‘variable’ of observation. It is no wonder that the growing importance of religious factors affecting, for instance, the behavior of states is undeniable nowadays. Religion serves as source of social and cultural identifications for some groups of peoples or communities, and the legitimacy of their religious identity may inadvertently afflict political legitimacy. That, in turn, may also shapes foreign policy makings. There are instances where IR scholars tried to integrate religion to IR theory but none so far had the audacity to work or produce new theories based on religious pretext and explanatory power. Some had find ways of contemplating its inclusion to compatibly insert religion to mainstream theories such as social constructivism and liberalism; while others looked for its probability of integrating it into realism particularly political/classical realism.

All these efforts permeated to opening a door for Islam whether providing its version(s) of IR or integrating it within or around the boundaries of IR. Islam, so far, has not provided a systematic IR theorizing effort, and in particular tensions on normative understandings of so-called ‘Islamic IR’ aggravated failed attempts of building a cohesive Islamic theory of IR. For the past decades, whenever someone tried to understand Islamic IR it is always within the spaces of political theology coupled with siyar (concentrating on relations between Muslims and non-Muslims) and supported by the ‘Islamization of knowledge’ movement. Hence, Islamic versions of IR are somehow seen as antithetical to present structure of IR.

The two-part **STEP TWO** analyzed the elements (these are, citizenry, authority, territoriality, and sovereignty) including constitutional cases and comparing them between nation-state and Muslim governance since both possessed differing traditions of thoughts and empirical experiences. The former was a result of ingrained European’s socio-political and cultural empiricism, while the latter was the denouement of culminated empiricism of Muslims’ historical past. Both have different epoch of existence: nation-state (1648-present) and Muslim governance (632-1924).

The unpleasant encounter between Muslims and modern Europeans, particularly in 18th century with the invasion of Napoleon Bonaparte of Egypt, was colored by hostility and conflict, especially that they had previous encounters (e.g. Crusaders period, Battle of Lepanto, etcetera). The proliferation of Orientalist works that painted Muslims as inferior and supplanted by European’s superiority in politics, culture, arts, language, social values, philosophy, and among others. Most importantly, the unjust depiction of Muslims by international Western media, especially with the emergence of ISIS, is very prominent nowadays.

The goal of selecting those elements and constitutional cases is to conspicuously show contrapuntal readings (compare and contrast) between them and not to alienate the Western IR community. The purpose for that selection is to speak with the Western IR community regarding how Muslims (their thinkers and experiences) relate to the specified elements instead of concentrating on unfamiliar theological precepts. Thus, I decided to remain within the parameters
of these elements in order to clearly see their palpable differences, and also desired to discover some commonalities or shared understandings along the way. Comparisons of elements and constitutional cases between nation-state and Muslim governance are shown below:

Citizenry
The historical basis of ascribing oneself as member of a nation-state is confraternity, while in Muslim governance it is faith. Nowadays, membership to a polity (i.e. citizenship) can be acquired in several manners (e.g. *jus soli*, *jus sanguinis* or naturalization by marriage, period and status of residency, etc.) depending on the laws of the granting authority, which is the state. Citizenship laws are consensually legislated by the intellectual and political elites associated in a political community through the regulations of the government, while laws in Islam are already legislated by God through the revealed Qur’an and the Prophet’s Sunnah, and if there are issues that may not be explicitly addressed, then, they could be consulted (*shura*) until a consensus (*ijma*) of majority of Islamic jurists and scholars is achieved.

During the medieval age, it was commented by later scholars that citizenship gradually developed through the formation of European city-states where an individual (outsider or insider) pledge allegiance to the higher authority (monarch or feudal lords), thus, entitling him/her full rights, protection, and qualification to serves in any offices s/he aspired. It was further institutionalized with the emergence of territorial sovereignty and defining it based on certain borders or boundaries. However, the present notion of citizenship is becoming more complex as several criteria (e.g. ethnicity, culture, religion, language, economic status, etc.) are taken into full consideration before the state bestows citizenship.

In addition, citizenship in European middle ages is accorded full rights to their members regardless of geographic origin, status or gender as long as they submit their allegiance to their authority. This is similar with being a member of the ummah that requires no geographic, racial, and gender preferences as long as that individual submits to the will of God. Even non-Muslims (particularly members of the people of the book) can become citizens in Muslim regimes and are protected via a social contract, for example, the Medina Charter.

Citizenship in Europe is always associated with city-states that could be extended to outsiders, while in non-European places especially in Muslim lands it is linked with kin groups, families and related clans or tribes. But this evolved with dynasties and empires, e.g., at first it was faith or submission to the will of God as the main criterion to become part of the group (usually refers to ummah). As Muslim lands expanded they have adapted several political and cultural aspects of non-Arabs and non-Muslims but guided by Islam particularly of shari’ah.

Although, there is no direct counterpart of Muslim’s citizenry with the modern notion of citizenship, it somehow transcends that with the Medina Charter which also subscribed to ruler-ruled relationship where the authority has the prerogative in delegating who is part of his regime. This was exemplified with the patrimonial and hereditary leadership of the early caliphates and of Ottoman Empire.

Truly, there is no direct jurisprudential equivalence on the part of Muslim governance or social identifying element that may conform to the modern conception of citizenship. Firstly, medieval
Muslim communities were patrimonial and no independent ‘city-like associations’ comparable with Europe existed. This also includes kinship among Arabs in pre-Islamic era. Secondly, there are no restrictions imposed with regards to mobility to travel, work, study or reside in any Muslim-dominated territories (e.g. experiences of al-Ghazali or Ibn Battuta). And lastly, non-Muslim residents enjoyed political and religious autonomy while they are levied a sort of poll tax (jizyah) for purpose of collective security.

Authority
Authority in nation-state (abbreviated as NS) is anthropomorphic with human characteristics attached to it, particularly its natural desires to impose their influence unto others. Claiming that this material actuality is their ‘right’ to issue commands and reciprocally expected to be obeyed by certain population or citizenry. The right of the authority is built upon perceived and actual legitimate actions, processes and sources such as laws and principles accorded in a constitution, external recognition by another authority (or state), structural dependent entities that comprises the government (these are: executive, legislative, and judiciary), inherited self-determination, idea of monopoly of violence, modern political maps recognized by world bodies, and among others.

Supremacy and sacredness of authority are possessed by a certain document called the constitution, the written laws consensually decided by groups of senior intellectuals and political elites. However, provisions of the constitution may still be modified if it is deemed necessary by political elites and multinational corporations controlling the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the government.

If nation-state’s authority is human-bounded and human-constructed, then in Islam authority is supernaturally-bounded and divinely-constructed but its operationalization depends on interpretations of religious elites of scholars (ulama) and jurists mostly crafted through the process of consensus (ijma) basing from the established (Sunnah) practices or traditions created by the Prophet, and laid down to his companions to generations. The Qur’an possessed supreme authority over all written human laws which also complement the Sunnah. Thus, it is universal and cannot be altered or modified. However, Shari’ah (legislated laws of the jurists) could be modified (added, omit or alter) depending on the exigencies of changing times. The idea that NS monopolize violence is equivalent to Islam’s monopoly of moral order under the dictum of ‘commands good and forbids evil’.

If NS claims the right to issue command and be followed, then the Qur’an instructed and prescribed the ummah (the population) to submit their obedience to God, to the Prophet, and to subsequent authorities. The legitimacy of ‘authorities after the demise of the Prophet’ varies between sunni and Shi’a understandings. For sunni, a leader is elective and considered the heir of the Prophet, while for Shi’a a leader is infallible and remains occulted until he appears as the true heir of the Prophet that will provide justice and peace throughout the world. In the 20th century, the power of the ulama and jurists weakened with the adaptation of nation-state by most of Muslim societies.

In similar aspects between NS and Muslim governance, the possessor of sovereignty acquires authority from reciprocated mutuality between the ruler and the ruled, which is acknowledged as the source of legitimacy, whether by ‘natural law, divine mandate, hereditary law, a constitution, or even international law.’ This is similar with Islam’s bay’ah principle which is pledging
allegiances between the ruled and the ruler. In nation-state, bodies or codes of law are considered ubiquitously as the main source of legitimacy; which is also similar with *shari’ah* (as codes of law) that provides operational legitimacy to the authority.

In NS, the degree of authority can be measured by the proximity of divergence or bifurcation between B’s orders and the preferences of A’s (full or partial) voluntarism. Thus, even if authority is supreme it is never without limit, which means that some command may be restricted or defied on the basis of consensual understanding of ethics and morality. This also echoes the overall prowess of principles of morality and ethics stated in the Qur’an that may limit the operationalization of authority.

**Territoriality**

The historical nature of territorial identification for the West is the legal system of proprietary or ownership (one of Kantian account of territorial rights) by the ruler or a social contract with its own people (members), while for the Muslims they are based on the premise of occupancy and expansion as embedded in the propagation of the Islamic faith. For example, presently there is a hybridity of ISIS as having its own territory, but not yet recognized as sovereign in the international community, is based on their specific utopian imagination of resurrecting a so-called Muslim *ummah* (community) operationalized through the system of their understanding of the Caliphate. They absolutely reject nation-states created during the colonial period because they viewed it as artificial and imaginary borders in order for the West to subjugate Muslims and pursue their socio-political and economic interests in the region.

Therefore, territoriality is loosely conceptualized as *ummah* that has physical aspects, cultural traits and lingua franca. Within ummah polities (*dawlah* or state) emerged and it evolved historically into *watan* (fatherland, which expresses the link between group of peoples and specific geographical location). The Islamic term for *watan*, land, place, house or abode is called ‘*dar*’, where in 8th century juristic interpretation two abodes were created, the abode of Islam (*dar al-Islam*) and the abode of war/enemy (*dar al-Harb*). There are also several contested abodes such as abode of truce, agreement, treaty or of friendly nations whereby Muslims are minority in non-Muslim regimes.

However, the idea of territorial sovereignty is gradually being recognized by contemporary Islamic scholarship as a result of historical conditions that something Islam recognizes it as a reality. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), in reality, operates and configured within the confines of nation-state system as opposed to the Islamic *dar* or Hanafi’s *ikhtilaf al-darayn* (i.e. territoriality). The territoriality of a nation-state postulates contiguous borders which are legally imposed and adjudicated, while boundaries in Muslim governance are adjudicated by juristic division of realms or abodes of Islam and of war/enemy including certain period of truce or peace

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46 There is also a kind of social contract among the Arabs in pre-Islamic period, and they called it *Bay’ah* (oath or pledge of allegiance). It is the signing of a covenant between the ruler and the ruled. In order to effectively implement the covenant, recognition of legitimacy must be attained through the declaration of oath of allegiance of the ruler and pledging the allegiance by the ruled. The process of bay’ah was incorporated within Islamic traditions. Prophet Muhammad and the subsequent caliphs practiced bay’ah to legitimize their political status and build confidence and trust among their subjects.
treaty and its politico-territorial unit of analysis (the ummah).

Moreover, this also includes Hanafi’s study of territoriality on the bases of security, fear, existential threat, protection, and the independent legal status of the peoples comprising the whole territory. On the other hand, it is different with the Shi’a version of territoriality (i.e. mustad’afun/mustakbirun paradigm) referring to Quranic revelations and their understanding of the message of God, which explicitly manifests justice, knowledge, and prevention of corruption. Thus, the shi’a version is vague and unclear whether it connotes territoriality or not.

Sovereignty
There are particular differences of conceptualizing sovereignty between nation-state and Muslim governance. Firstly, the source of sovereignty for most of Muslim scholars is the will of God and the basis of it is their submission and declaration of faith that there is only one God, while for citizens or defined population (as thought by selected scholars) in a nation-state the source comes from the core of their territory and it is based on the recognition internally by its population and externally by other sovereign states. Secondly, in Islam there is only one sovereign and that is God, but for nation-state there is the multiplicity of sovereigns depending if they are legitimized constitutively or declaratory.

Thirdly, there are various understandings of social scientists and how they conceptualized sovereignty, while in Islam there is confronting understanding of sovereignty between Islamists (e.g. Maududi, al-Banna, Qutb et al) and Islamic Modernists (e.g. Rahman, Ramadan, Tibi et al). Fourthly, multiple sovereigns create anarchy in the international system where each sovereign is not internationally accountable for their behaviors and actions, but in Islam there is political and ethical order within the Muslim domain as embodied in the Shari’ah that expresses God’s sovereignty. And lastly, nation-states have constitutional independence that extends external recognition, while Muslim polities’ constitutions are guided and supervised by Shari’ah with the insistence of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

On the other hand, two similarities are highlighted: 1) ‘government’ is the important element for the operationalization of sovereignty in both nation-state (i.e. presently most are democratic authority) and Muslim governance (formerly caliphat and sultanates, and presently theocratic, monarchical and militaristic authorities); and 2) old (pre-Westphalian) Western conception of sovereignty is understood as responsibility for the common good of everyone which is similar to the goal of Shari’ah namely, maslaha, or public interest and public welfare of all Muslims.

Constitutional Cases
It may have come as a surprise that based on my analysis there are more similarities than differences with regards to the construction and formation of constitution under the systems of nation-states and Muslim governance. All selected constitutions were a response to resolve political anomies, upheavals, conflicts and insurgencies. For example, the 622 Medina Charter was a response to the 100-year long tribal conflicts; the 1215 Magna Carta was a response to King John’s political upheavals with his barons and the Church; the 1648 Peace of Westphalia was a result to resolve the Thirty Years War; the 1945 UN Charter was a result of victors defining the terms of the World War II; and the 1979 (2008 revised) OIC Charter was a response to the criminal arson of al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. All of which was a response to the power structures and
realpolitik of their times with various configurations but commonly manifested by human conflicts.

All constitutions uphold peacemaking, promote collective security, and safeguard individual rights, equality under the rule of law, justice, religious freedom, and liberties. Both the Medina Charter and Magna Carta advocated consensual governance and cooperation, while the Treaty of Westphalia paved the way for the ideological and practical notion of territorial sovereignty, which greatly influenced both charters of the UN and the OIC including the clause on non-interference to the jurisdiction and domestic affairs of state members. These two world bodies have very common principles and objectives, and that is the promotion of peace and security, solidarity among all nations, diplomatic settlement of disputes, and expression of amicable relations in the international society. The only difference is their conceptualization of sovereignty. In the Medina Charter, sovereignty is conceptualized as justice in protecting the dignity of all individuals against oppression. In the Magna Carta, the king is sovereign but his powers are limited and checked by a commission of barons. While the last three constitutions shared the same idea that territory or definite borders is the core element that defined sovereignty.

In **STEP THREE**, the selection of a philosopher (al-Farabi), a poet (Ferdowsi), a jurist (al-Mawardi), and a bureaucrat (Nizam al-Mulk) served as practical sources of conceptualizing ‘ruling’ in Muslim thought. Whereby, it is manifested as an extension of ‘authority’ in Muslim governance for discovering a probable Islamic theorizing about IR. The selected contributions (1. The Perfect State; 2. The Epic of Kings; 3. The Ordinances of Government; and 4. The Book of Government or Rules for Kings) of these scholars provided guidelines for all Muslim nations for several centuries in the selection of temporal authority in Islamic thought. This temporal authority became the prescriptions and recommendations for the operations of *siyar* and how Muslim regimes deal with non-Muslim authorities and other dissimilar societies.

*Al-Farabi* is one of the scholars who revitalized Greek philosophy in late antiquity, and influenced great thinkers of Islamic civilization. The importance of ‘The Perfect State’ is the combination of divine and political science that justifies sound beliefs on ‘philosopher cum prophet’ as the most virtuous ruler in the world. *Ferdowsi*’s magnum opus, the Shahname, marked as one of the tools of axial moment of several Muslim nations for over centuries which until now is being recited and commemorated. It provided foundational history, cultural heritage, and national identity all throughout the Persian world, i.e., from Iran, Central Asia, to Pakistan and India. *Al-Mawardi* is the epitome of providing the sunni theory of caliphate. He had served the multi-rivaling caliphates as the one who lead major diplomatic negotiations between Abbasids and Buyids. His ‘Ordinances of Government’ became an influential theoretical blueprint in inspiring treatise, charters and constitutions in most sunni-Arab countries for several centuries. *Nizam al-Mulk*’s *Siyasatnama* served as the guiding structure and manual of the Seljuk Empire. It included ways of how the authority deals with other polities – be they Muslims or not. Some parts of the treatise also became a blueprint for contemporary bureaucratic system in the modern times.

The practical case in basing the comparative arguments from step two and linked to the step three of conceptions on ruling is **STEP FOUR**, the Bangsamoro case which represents the last step. The reconfiguration of the political arrangement or system within the Muslim society called ‘Bangsamoro’ under the Philippines’ state system (a predominant Christian country) entails:
1) The establishment of a new Bangsamoro political entity with its own structure of government (i.e., parliamentary form) supervised by the Philippines’ presidential form of government.

2) The relationship between the National and Bangsamoro governments shall be asymmetric.

3) All issues that may result in a dispute between the National and Bangsamoro governments shall be resolved by an intergovernmental relations mechanism. The nature of powers between these two governments will have reserved, concurrent, and exclusive powers.
   - Reserved powers are matters over which authority and jurisdiction are exercised by the National Government.
   - Concurrent powers refer to the powers shared between the National Government and the Bangsamoro Government.
   - Exclusive powers are matters over which authority and jurisdiction pertain to the Bangsamoro Government only.

4) Whatever power the Bangsamoro may exercise over its territory, it must be consistent with and not contravening to the country’s international obligations and commitments.

5) The Bangsamoro Government’s treasury power is exercised through the development of Islamic Banking.

6) Under the explicit language of the Bangsamoro Basic Law, the Shari’ah law shall have application over Muslims only. The national justice system will remain intact for all matters outside the jurisdiction of the Shari’ah Courts, and the inherent power of judicial review by the Supreme Court (to review any grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction by the Shari’ah Court) under the 1987 Philippine Constitution.

The overall explanation for the steps for a probable Islamic theorizing about IR is represented by the figure below.

Therefore, it is concluded that there is a potentiality for the prospect of doing an Islamic theory of International Relations. This thesis provided the probabilities of identifying the prospects of Islamic theory of IR that certainly described the ‘pre-theory’ condition imposed by Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan. A pre-theory connotes an unconscious theorization and research efforts that were developed through contemplation of relevant thoughts but are not constructed systematically. It usually refers to convergence of several disciplines with no distinct identity.

Limitations and Recommendations
While the notion of ‘international’ and ‘Islam’ were operationalized in the beginning of this thesis, the raison d'être must be clearly answered. How does the theorizing of the international based on Islam enhances our understanding of the social world and its consequent realities? The thesis was written as a contribution to the ‘Global International Relations’ movement that draws from the broader perspective of the international (i.e. human interactions beyond their localities). It critically engages and challenges Euro-American (usually referred as ‘Western’) IR’s traditions of thoughts and boundaries. It thus far encourages scholarships that adds to new understandings and
approaches to the study of the ‘international’.

However, the domains of where Islam is specifically characterized as the prime mover of state interactions and relations must be further studied. Particularly that European modernity had greatly impacted the nature and trajectories of state actors in the international system. Modernity explicitly advanced the domain of the secular and contained the religious. In another aspect, there is a comprehensive corpus of Ottoman diplomacy, political thoughts in Islam, and pre-Islamic historicity that need greater attention for utilizing the differences of international relations or affairs between pre-modern and modern Muslim societies.

Consequently, the study provided preliminaries of contemplating an Islamic theory of IR. The thesis recommends empirical cases of contemporary Muslim states’ interactions where Islam influenced their foreign policies and state affairs.