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## Rise of Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: Mawdudi, Qutb and Faraj

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**Abstract:** The turbulence and political instability in several key Muslim countries have now global consequences, as thousands of Moslems leave their countries, because they cannot live or even survive there. This is an enormous shame for the huge Islamic civilization, harbouring more than 1 billion believers in the prophet Mohammed. It should be pointed out that the coordination bodies in the Islamic civilisation – the Arab League and the Muslim Conference – have done little to stop the on-going civil wars and horrific political violence. Similarly, the rich Gulf States offer no help for refugees, turning instead to the EU with its protection for human rights. How can we understand this collapse of the Koranic civilisation? The ultimate reason is the rise of Islamic fundamentalism within the Sunni community during the 20th century. And it will not disappear soon. Islamic terrorism against Westerners, Shias, religious minorities in the Middle East could not have occurred on the present scale, if it did not have legitimation among radical fundamentalism. To understand the major changes in Islamic political thought and Koranic religion, one must go to the three men who reinterpreted Islam along radical new fundamentalism, namely Mawdudi (islamisation) (India-Pakistan), Qutb (caliphate) and Faraj (jihad) (Egypt). Their books and pamphlets are studied all over the Koranic civilisation, which is much larger than Arabia. The three inspired Ben Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri (Al Qaeda) as well as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (ISIL) and Abu Bakr al-Baghdad (ISIS).

**Keywords:** Civilisation of Islam; Islamic fundamentalism; Salafism; Deobandi; Wahabism; Sunnis against Shias; Moderates against fundamentalists; civil war; Anarchy Maududi; Qutb and Faraj.

### 1. Introduction

To understand the 20<sup>th</sup> century emergence of radical Islamic fundamentalism and its doctrines about *Jahiliyyah*, *Caliphate and Jihad*, I will look at the *three key personalities* behind the ideology or religion of radical Islam movements: Mawdudi, Qutb and Faraj. The ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi knows their lethal message in and out, as is true of Al Qaeda leader al-Zawahiri and its now dead warriors in Iraq al-Zarqawi and al-Masri. Modern Islamic fundamentalism was to a significant extent conceived in the Indian *Deobandi* movement, from which comes Mawdudi, the Pakistani who inspired the Egyptians: Qutb and Faraj. Their ideas about islamisation, caliphate and jihad constitute the very *theoretical legitimation* of terrorist events, such as the Paris events or other bombings almost everywhere in the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The civil wars, insurgencies and terrorist attacks linked with developments in Muslim countries have now taken on such a scale globally as well as brutality and ferocity that one must ask what the beliefs are that drive radical Sunni fundamentalism. It is a coherent set of three ideas linked with three scholars: Islamisation (Mawdudi), Caliphate (Qutb) and Jihad (Faraj). When put into practice by the terrorist groupings, it brings untold misery to Muslim men, women and children.

When searching for the roots of radical Islam, one cannot bypass Moslem thought in greater India under British rule. Several non-Arab scholars had a profound influence on Islam in Arabia, such as for instance Mawdudi, theorising not only islamisation but also the relevance of the now blossoming *Islamic finance*. More research is needed to uncover the influence of Muslim thought in India before partition on the Koranic civilisation, especially the Deobandi School.

### 2. Islam: The Moslem Civilisation

Radical Islamic fundamentalism has as its main objective to guard the borders of the Koranic civilisation to other religions. Thus, they fear proselytise or mission or conversion campaigns by other religions, the occurrence of apostasy among their own adherents as well as the emergence of schisms or dogmatic splits within their own ranks. All the world religions have reacted with violence against these three threats. Perhaps the posture of Islam is the least

open or tolerant in these matters. In the Muslim civilisation marriage, for instance, entails that a woman adhering to another religion than Islam converts to the same religion as her husband. It is not difficult to find within the Koran very strong admonitions against proselytism, apostasy and schisms.

Global radical Islamic terrorism has a disastrous impact not only upon the groups targeted but also upon the Muslim countries themselves, setting in motion millions fleeing. In his comparative religion studies, Max Weber put the concept of *jihad* at the centre of Islam – “a religion of warriors” - in his short historical analysis of the fate of this religion with the Prophet and after him. Several Muslim scholars would sharply deny the correctness of Weber’s theory of Islam as a religion of warriors, pointing to the fundamental fact that Islam has just five fundamental duties, which do not include jihad (Huff and Schluchter, 1999).

The world religions have often in history been conducive to the occurrence of large scale political conflict. And all of them have developed some form or other of fundamentalism that are violent in the twentieth century (Juergensmeyer, 2000).

Yet, two things should be underlined when speaking about the concept of jihad in the Muslim civilisation: first, Jihad as a core element in Islam is a concept that was launched in the twentieth century; second, legitimate Jihad within Islamic fundamentalism presents mainly two different aspects: (i) violence against foreign intrusion into the Muslim countries, the heartland of Islam; and (ii) violence towards internal sources of secularisation within the Muslim societies.

The new concept of jihad together with the new caliphate, based upon the notion of “pagan ignorance” (*jahiliyyah*) constitute the core of the radical transformation of Islam in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by three men. But it has not brought happiness and prosperity to Moslems in general.

### 3. Mawdudi: “Islamisation”

Mawdudi, Abul ‘Ala’ (1903–1979) has been considered as the architect of contemporary Islamic revival. He is considered by many to be the most outstanding Islamic thinker of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mawdudi was influenced by Hasan al-Banna and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. He founded the *Jama’at-i-Islami* movement in 1941 in the Indian sub-continent, an extremely well-organised association committed to the establishment of an Islamic world order that has played an important role in the politics of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and other South-East Asian countries.

The Muslim community in India responded to the British destruction of the Mogul Empire in 1859 with a seminary in Deobandi in 1866 by former students of the Delhi madrasa, destroyed after the “Revolt of 1857”. The new seminary in Deobandi aimed at (1) indoctrinating Muslim youth with Islamic values, and (2) cultivating intense hatred towards the British and all foreign (i.e. non-Islamic) influences. The seminary exposed their students only to the spiritual and philosophical traditions of Islam with the goal of islamisation of state and society in view.

However, the Aligarh movement would serve Moslems better than the Deobandi School. Aligarh became famous as a centre for various movements that shaped India with the start of the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1875. This College became Aligarh Muslim University – a hub for bridging the gulf between Islamic and Western cultures. For Mawdudi the *Jama’at* was an elite vanguard of the Islamic revival and revolution, working for a gradual appropriation of power in the state. Mawdudi produced 73 books, written more than 120 books and pamphlets, and delivered some 1000 speeches and press statements. He worked 30 years on a translation (tafsir) in Urdu of the Qur’an, *Tafhim ul-Qur’an* (The Meaning of the Qur’an). It became widely read throughout the South Asia and has been translated into several languages. Mawdudi’s six-volume Tafhimul Qur’an, published in 1972, impacted upon Muslims all over the world. Other books include for instance: Fundamentals of Islam, Let Us be Muslims and Four Key Concepts of Islam, read almost like pamphlets all over the Muslim world, where the non-Arab part is larger than the Arab one in terms of population.

Mawdudi was born in Aurangabad in south India studied traditional Islam as a young man, and then acquired a Western modern education on his own. He was involved in the *Khilafat movement* 1921–1924 that hoped to preserve the Ottoman Caliphate (abolished 1924). Later he tried to revive Islam as the sole answer to the Muslim communal problem in India. Mawdudi began his public career as a journalist, where he stayed for many years. He left journalism in 1927 for literary and historical pursuits. In 1933 he assumed editorship of *Tarjuman al-Quran*, which became a vehicle for the propagation of his new ideas. In the early 1920, he studied with Abdusallam Niyazi in Delhi and later with the Deobandi ulema at Fatihpuri mosque’s seminary, also in Delhi. He moved to Hyderabad, a Muslim enclave in India, in 1928 to lead the Muslim community there.

Mawdudi opposed to the secularist nationalist Muslim League led by Jinnah, but on the formation of independent Pakistan he emigrated there, hoping to influence a change from being merely a state for Muslims to an

Islamic state. His political involvement and criticism of government policies, as well as his anti-Ahmadiya agitation, led to his imprisonment in 1953, but the death sentence passed was never carried out.

Mawdudi saw Islam as threatened by a wave of Westernisation. He criticised the West and the Westernised Muslim elites as degenerate, and he called for a renewal and purification of Islam. He conceived of true Islam as a total comprehensive system and ideology, incorporating society, politics and the state. Mawdudi differentiated sharply between jahiliyyah, which included most contemporary Muslim societies and true Islam. His goal was an ideological Islamic state based on God's sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) and on Sharia. As an explanation for the decline of Muslim power, Mawdudi concluded that diversity was the culprit: the centuries old practice of interfaith mixing had weakened and watered down Muslim thought and practice in that region of India. In his reinterpretation of Islam, he suggested the following:

(Q1) "Islam is a revolutionary faith that comes to destroy any government made by man. Islam doesn't look for a nation to be in better condition than another nation. Islam doesn't care about the land or who own the land. The goal of Islam is to rule the entire world and submit all of mankind to the faith of Islam. Any nation or power in this world that tries to get in the way of that goal, Islam will fight and destroy."

(Q2) "It [Jamaat-e-Islami] is not a missionary organisation or a body of preachers or evangelists, but an organisation of God's troopers."

(Q3) "In our domain we neither allow any Muslim to change his religion nor allow any other religion to propagate its faith."

(Q4) "Leaves no room of human legislation in an Islamic state, because herein all legislative functions vest in God and the only function left for Muslims lies in their observance of the God-made law."

Thus, Mawdudi sought to purge Islam of what he looked upon as alien elements. Moreover, the social and political ties with Hindus must be severed. Non-Muslims, for Mawdudi, constituted a threat to Muslims and to Islam and must be contained by restricting their rights. Mawdudi and others founded the Jama'at al-Islami Party in Lahore, Pakistan in 1941. Mawdudi based his call to arms against those who reject Islam on Sura 2: 190–193 from the Koran and on the Hadith, "I have been ordered to fight people (al-nas) until they say 'There is no God but God'. If they say it, they have protected their blood, their wealth from me. Their recompense is with God".

Mawdudi envisioned a particular set of institutions for his ideal Islamic state. An Islamic state will have a President, an elected *shura* council (consisting only of Muslims who have been elected solely by Muslim suffrage), an independent judiciary and a cabinet formed by a Prime Minister. Dhimmis (non-Muslims living under Muslim protection) would have the right to vote in lower-level (i.e. municipal) elections as well as the right to serve on municipal councils and in other local organisations. Mawdudi's objective was jihad until the whole natural universe has been brought under the rule of Islam, as he states, quoted here from *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam* (1996):

(Q5) "Islam wants the whole earth and does not content itself with only a part thereof. It wants and requires the entire inhabited world. It does not want this in order that one nation dominates the earth and monopolizes its sources of wealth, after having taken them away from one or more other nations. Islam requires the earth in order that the human race altogether can enjoy the concept and practical program of human happiness, by means of which God has honoured Islam and put it above the other religions and laws. In order to realize this lofty desire, Islam employs all forces and means that can be employed for bringing about a universal all-embracing revolution sparing no efforts for the achievement of his supreme objective. This far-reaching struggle that continuously exhausts all forces and this employment of all possible means are called Jihad." (Peters, 1996) the idea of islamization wreaks havoc in Muslim countries. Since he included the Shias in the set of non-believers, he bears responsibility for the tragic civil war in the Koranic civilisation:

(Q6) Mawdudi wrote regarding the Imami Ja'fari Shia, "despite their moderate views (relative to other Shia sects), they are swimming in disbelief like white blood cells in blood or like fish in water."

Mawdudi's thought shows without doubt that non-Arabs have played a major role in Islamic religion and philosophy. His ideas were taken up by two important Arab scholars, thus continuing the very important and dire Deobandi link in present Islam.

#### 4. Qutb: "Caliphate"

Radical Islamic societies (*jama'at*) have emerged out of the Muslim Brotherhood founded 1928, but drawing mainly on the thought of its main ideologue, Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966). Qutb's reinterpretation of several key Islamic concepts inspired some to split off from the Brotherhood and use his writings to legitimise violence against the regime. He argued that the existing society and government were not Muslim but rather dominated by "pagan ignorance" (*jahiliyyah*). The duty of righteous Muslims was to bring about God's sovereignty (*hakimmiyya*) over society, denounce the unbelief (*takfir*) of the current national leaders, and carry out a holy struggle (jihad) against them.

The Saudi Arabian city of Medina is known in the Muslim world as Dar al-hijra, the first place of refuge. In Islamic teachings, Medina is traditionally where the persecuted of Islam withdraw to begin again and return in triumph to the unbelieving lands through jihad. The Muslim calendar begins with the hijra, Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD to avoid death at the hands of "infidels" who denounced his teachings. The word *hijra* literally represents the emigration of a Muslim from hostile surroundings to a supportive population from which a *mujahidin* will then plan and regroup to launch jihad. It is Mohammed's hijra to Medina that is considered the pivotal event in Islamic history.

For instance, al-Qaeda placed large emphasis on the importance of the hijra component to a jihad. Al-Qaeda transplanting itself from the "hostile" lands of its origin to the supportive confines of Taliban Afghanistan was clearly a form of hijra. Allowing al-Qaeda terrorists to return to Medina, Mohammed's chosen place of refuge provides a close parallel between their lives and that of Mohammed. Such a vital symbolic connection has enabled a new generation of fundamentalists to validate their claim to leadership of the *Umma*.

Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966) was an Egyptian and as a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, a prominent Islamist figure whose career spanned the middle decades of the century. His thought, deeply influenced by Mawdudi's revolutionary radicalism, falls into two distinct periods: that which occurred before President Nasser detained him in a concentration camp for political enemies (he was eventually executed in 1966), and that which emerged during the period of his internment. The first excerpt comes from an early work, Social Justice in Islam, which he wrote in 1949. Qutb builds on the Islamic idea of *tawheed* (the singularity of God and, therefore, of the universe):

"So all creation issuing as it does from one absolute, universal, and active Will, forms an all-embracing unity in which each individual part is in harmonious order with the remainder ... Thus, then, all creation is a unity comprising different parts; it has a common origin, a common providence and purpose, because it was produced by a single, absolute, and comprehensive Will ... So the universe cannot be hostile to life, or to man; nor can "Nature" in our modern phrase be held to be antagonistic to man, opposed to him, or striving against him. Rather she is a friend whose purposes are one with those of life and of mankind. And the task of living beings is not to contend with Nature, for they have grown up in her bosom, and she and they together form a part of the single universe which proceeds from the single will." (Social Justice in Islam)

In 1964, Qutb, having suffered torture as well as 10 years of incarceration in Nasser's concentration camps, published perhaps his best known work, Milestones (Ma'alim fi'l Tariq), a work that has inspired some of the more extreme expressions of Islamic revivalism, such as Islamic Jihad and Takfir wa-l Hijra. Qutb's concept of jahiliyyah ("pagan ignorance") was deeply influenced by his unpleasant experience when living in the United States from 1948 until 1951. He had been sent to the United States to study American educational institutions. Qutb was deeply offended by the racism he observed (and experienced first-hand) and was scandalised by the openness between the sexes in American society. In Milestones he wrote (Qureshi, 1980):

"If we look at the sources and foundations of modern ways of living, it becomes clear that the whole world is steeped in Jahiliyyah (pagan ignorance of divine guidance), and all the marvellous material comforts and high-level inventions do not diminish this Ignorance. This Jahiliyyah is based on rebellion against God's sovereignty on earth: It transfers to man one of the greatest attributes of God, namely sovereignty, and makes some men lords over others. It is now not in that simple and primitive form of the ancient Jahiliyyah, but takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behaviour, and to choose any way of life rests with men, without regard to what God has prescribed. The result of this rebellion against the authority of God is the oppression of His creatures." Qutb rejected all forms of study of religions, or a faculty of religion at Western universities. There is only ONE true religion in the world! His most important achievements to Moslems were his reinterpretation of traditional concepts such as hakimiyya, jahiliyyah and takfir as well as the caliphate, turning them into contemporary revolutionary concepts in his Islamic ideological system.

"The Islamic civilisation can take various forms in its material and organisational structure, but the principles and values on which it is based are eternal and unchangeable. These are: the worship of God alone, the foundation of human relationships on the belief in the Unity of God, the supremacy of the humanity of man over material things, the development of human values and the control of animalistic desires, respect for the family, the assumption of the vice regency of God on earth according to His guidance and instruction, and in all affairs of this vice-regency, the rule of God's law (Sharia) and the way of life prescribed by Him."

Qutb is one of the most widely read Islamic writers whose works have been translated from Arabic into many other languages. Qutb was born in the village of Musha near Asyut in Upper Egypt, into a family of rural nobles. His father was a delegate of Mustafa Kamil's National Party. Qutb went to the state school in the village and had memorised the Koran on his own by the time he was 10 years old. In 1921 Qutb moved to Cairo. In 1933 he graduated from Dar al-Ulum teacher training college with a B.A. in Arts Education. Qutb was then employed as a

teacher by the Ministry of Public Instruction, starting his career in the provinces, and was later transferred to Helwan, a suburb of Cairo. From 1940 to 1948 he served as an inspector for the Ministry.

During that time Qutb had a liberal worldview influenced by Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad and Taha Hussein, and wrote literary criticism as well as poetry, short stories and articles for newspapers and journals. Following a visit to the United States from 1948 to 1951 he turned to fundamentalist Islam, joined the Muslim Brotherhood, was soon elected to their leadership council and became their chief spokesman in the 1950s and 1960s. During the short honeymoon between the Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood, Qutb served for a short time as the only civilian on the Revolutionary Council. With the crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood following the 1954 assassination attempt on Nasser, Qutb was arrested and spent 10 years in prison. He was freed in 1964, but re-arrested in 1965, tortured and executed in 1966. While in prison he wrote his greatest work, an eight-volume tafsir of the Koran, *Fi Zilal al-Quran*. Towards the end of his imprisonment he wrote *Milestones* (Ma'alim fil-Tariq) that has become the key manifesto of radical Islamic groups. Qutb endorses Mawdudi's idea of islamisation and applies it in the union of secular and religious power, the old caliphate notion:

(Q2) "Humanity will see no tranquillity or accord, no peace, progress or material and spiritual advances without total recourse to Allāh. This, from the Qur'ānic point of view, can mean only one thing: the organisation of all aspects of human life in the Qur'ān. The alternative would be corruption, regression and misery."

"Qutubism" stands for the core of radical Sunni fundamentalism. Qutb is most widely read in the Koranic civilisation – especially his *Milestones*, but also feared for his violent message. If the idea of islamisation is combined with the notion of the caliphate, the third logical element in the new Islamic terrorism is the re-interpretation of the idea of jihad.

## 5. Faraj: "Jihad"

Faraj, an electrical engineer who worked at Cairo University, was born into a devout Muslim family, his father a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. Faraj, however, became disillusioned by the passivity and gradualism of the Muslim Brotherhood and he joined activist radical groups, finally founding al-Jihad in 1979. Faraj recruited for his organisation mainly in ahli (independent) mosques in the poor quarters of Cairo, where he delivered Friday sermons. He succeeded in recruiting members of the presidential guard, military intelligence and civil bureaucracy, as well as university students. Faraj's short book *Al-Farida al-Gha'iba (The Neglected Duty)* had an immense impact on all radical Islamic movements. Following Sadat's assassination, Faraj was executed in 1982.

Whereas Mawdudi was a learned theologian writing massively on The Koran and its interpretations, delivering a long list of books and pamphlets, Faraj only published one text. But its message about jihad added the explosive fuse to the ideas of Mawdudi and Qutb concerning islamisation and unification of religious and secular leadership. Faraj was read among the radicals, in seminaries or in prison, who later went on to set up terrorist groups, in and outside of Egypt. It should be emphasized that the many well-known leaders of these groups had known each other, reading and discussing Qutb and Faraj.

Let me take a few quotations (Q) from Faraj:

(Q1) "Hence the implementation of Islamic law is incumbent upon the Muslims. Therefore establishing the Islamic State is obligatory upon them because the means by which the obligation is fulfilled becomes obligatory itself. By the same token, if the state can only be established by fighting, then it is compulsory on us to fight. Besides the Muslims were agreed upon the obligation of establishing the Khilaafah, the declaration of which depends on the existence of the core, which is the Islamic State." (page 20)

(Q2) "So fighting in Islam is to raise Allah's word highest, either offensively or defensively. Also, Islam was spread by the sword, but only against the leaders of kufr, who veiled it from reaching the people, and after that no one was forced to embrace it. It is obligatory upon the Muslims to raise their swords against the rulers who are hiding the truth and manifesting falsehood, otherwise the truth will never reach the hearts of the people." (page 51-52)

(Q3) "As for the Muslim lands, the enemy resides in their countries. In fact the enemy is controlling everything. The enemies are these rulers who have snatched the leadership of the Muslims. Thence Jihad against them is fardh 'ayn. Besides, the Islamic Jihad is now in need of the effort of every Muslim. And it should be borne in mind that when Jihad is fardh 'ayn (an individual obligation), it is not required to seek permission from one's parents for the to march forth as scholars said: 'it becomes like praying and fasting.'" (page 61)

(Q4) "And what if the scholars of the Salaf saw our scholars of today - except those upon whom Allah has shown Mercy - who have inclined to these tyrants, beautified their actions to them, made fair their murders of the Muslims, the mujahedeen (upholders of Tawheed - Oneness of Allah), weakening their honour by issuing fatwa (legal verdicts) after fatwa to make their thrones firm, and safeguard their kingdoms, by labelling everyone opposed

to them as a rebel or khaariji (one of the extreme deviant sect of the khawaarij)? Such that some of them have titled the Nusayri (worshippers of ‘Ali τ - we seek refuge in Allah!) ruler (previous) of Syria as the Ameer ulMu’mineen (chief believer). They covered the deen for the people until they turned a blind eye to the tyrants; the exchangers of Allah’s law, those who govern the slaves of Allah with that which Allah did not reveal- what if the scholars of the salaf saw this group which has sold its deen for worldly gains which will disappear, makes fair seeming for them what they do, and permits the murder of every truthful Muslim and the murders of Sayyid Qutb, Khalid alIslaambouli, and his brave associates are not far from us.” (page 108)

“Holy terror” is a term for “holy assassination” and was propagated by Muhammad Abd al Salam Faraj (1954–1982) in his booklet, *The Neglected or Absent Duty*. Faraj arrived at this jihad (holy war) duty by considering and rejecting non-violent options: participation in benevolent societies; obedience to God, education, abundance of acts of devotion, and occupation with the quest of knowledge; exerting oneself in order to obtain an important position; and democratic options such as engaging in civil liberties such as freedom of speech, the founding of a political party to compete freely with other parties in elections, and the creation of a broad base of support resulting in majority rule. Faraj believed that none of these would lead to the messianic goal of establishing of an Islamic state and ultimately reintroducing the caliphate.

Thus, the main ideologue of jihad was Faraj, a former Muslim Brotherhood member, who was disillusioned by its passivity. But al-Jihad did not restrict itself to theory alone. It quickly became involved in sectarian conflicts and disturbances in Upper Egypt and Cairo. After the assassination of Sadat at a military parade, al-Jihad supporters fought a three-day revolt in Asyut, seeking to spark a revolution, before being defeated. In contrast to Takfir, al-Jihad was not led by one charismatic leader but by a collective leadership. It built up a sophisticated organisation run by a leadership apparatus in charge of overall strategy, as well as a 10-member consultation committee headed by Sheikh Umar’Abd al-Rahman. Everyday operations were run by a three-department supervisory apparatus. Members were organised in small semi-autonomous groups and cells. There were two distinct branches, one in Cairo and the other in Upper Egypt. In recruiting, both Takfir and al-Jihad relied heavily on kinship and friendship ties, recruiting predominantly students from rural areas and from lower-middleclass backgrounds who had recently migrated to the big cities and were alienated and disoriented in their new environment. Most members were well educated, particularly in technology and the sciences.

Both groups agreed that authentic Islam had existed only in the “golden age” of the Prophet’s original state in Medina and under the “rightly guided” first four Caliphs (622–661). Muslims must rediscover its principles, free them from innovations and actively implement them in the present society. This was in line with revivalist (salafi) views, and contradicted the traditionalist view of Islam as the total of the sacred source texts of Koran and the Prophet’s example and traditions (Sunna), plus all scholarly interpretation and consensus over the ages.

The ultimate goal for both groups was the establishment of a renewed universal Islamic nation (Umma) under a true caliph, fully implementing Islamic sacred law (Sharia) as God’s ideal form of Islamic government. Until the establishment of this caliphate (khilafa), the Islamic societies would form the embryo and vanguard of the true Islamic nation in its struggle against internal and external enemies. The takeover of power in individual Muslim states would be a necessary first step toward the ultimate goal.

The views of al-Jihad were roughly parallel: true Muslims must wage war against the infidel rulers of all states, including Muslim states. In contrast to the traditional religious scholars, who proclaimed the necessity of submission to any ruler claiming to be a Muslim, they insisted that acceptance of a government was only possible when the Islamic legal system is fully implemented. Implementation of Sharia becomes the criterion of the legitimacy of regimes. Traditional scholars viewed the concept of the “age of ignorance” or paganism (jahiliyyah) as an historic condition in pre-Islamic Arabia. However, “ignorance” (jahiliyyah) is a present condition of a society which is not properly Islamic because it does not implement the full Sharia and hence is rebelling against God’s sovereignty. All the regimes currently in power in Muslim countries are thus not acceptably Islamic and it is both right and necessary to rebel against them. The two radical groups Takfir and al-Jihad differed.

*Takfir* claimed that both the regime and all of society were pagan and true Muslims must separate from them. Takfir included in this condemnation all four traditional schools of Islam (madhabs) and all traditional commentators. It labelled these schools puppets of rulers who used them to monopolise Koranic interpretation to their own advantage. They had closed the door of creative interpretation (ijtihad) and set themselves up as idols (tawaghit), serving as mediators between God and believers.

The radical group *Al-Jihad*, in contrast, selected certain commentators it favoured, including the famous Hanbali medieval scholar, Ibn Taymiya. His writings were interpreted as showing that societies were partly Muslim even when the rulers are pagans who legislate according to their own whims. Al-Jihad accepted the four traditional legal schools of Islam (madhabs), much of scholarly consensus and some later commentators. Consequently, it would be

much easier for a Muslim to join al-Jihad or find some truth in its teachings. While traditional scholars and the Muslim Brotherhood would not denounce a Muslim as an infidel – accepting his claim to be Muslim at face value and leaving the judgement of his intention to God – both groups denounced Muslims as infidels, which could imply a willingness to attack or kill them.

Since Egypt's failure to implement Sharia made it an infidel pagan state placed under excommunication (Takfir), all true Muslims were duty-bound to wage holy struggle (jihad) against the regime, an idea alien to traditional Islam.

Takfir and al-Jihad agreed on the emphasis on a national revolution first: only when the infidel regimes of Muslim countries were overthrown and replaced by true Islamic states could the caliphate be restored, occupied Muslim territories liberated and Sharia rule established throughout the world.

Al-Jihad argued that killing Muslims and overthrowing a Muslim-led government was the correct interpretation of Islam. While al-Jihad enthusiastically endorsed this position, its leaders knew that theirs was a distinctly minority view. Faraj criticised other groups – most importantly, the Muslim Brotherhood – for their gradualist strategy and involvement in the political system. Such behaviour, he insisted, only strengthened the regime. He also rejected widely accepted arguments that jihad should be postponed (as Takfir claimed) or that this concept required only defensive or non-violent struggle (a widely held Muslim position). In response, Faraj insisted that active, immediate jihad would be the only strategy for achieving an Islamic state. Instead of seeing Jews and Christians as protected communities (dhimmis) and “People of the Book”, the two groups viewed them as infidels both because they had deliberately rejected the truth and because of their connections to colonialism and Zionism.

Despite the imprisonment and execution of al-Jihad's leaders following Sadat's assassination, offshoots managed to regroup, declaring jihad against Mubarak's regime. Al-Jihad has continued to be linked to terrorist incidents and outbreaks of communal violence ever since. One wing seems to be loyal to Abbud al-Zammur, one of the original founders, now imprisoned in Egypt. Another wing is called Vanguard of the Conquest or The New Jihad Group led by al-Qaeda's Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram, Al Shabaab and the Taliban are Sunni Muslim terrorist groups that consider Shias to be heretics. Osama Bin Laden, al-Zarqawi and al-Zawahiri are close to either Salafi, or Deobandi or Wahhabi brands of Sunni Islam. And the leading thinkers behind modern Islamist movements such as al-Qaeda are all Sunnis: Abul-Ala Maududi, Sayyid Qutb and Muhammad Faraj.

## 6. ISIS Replacing Al-Qaeda

How the ISIS group related to Al Qaeda in Iraq is not fully known. The key person was Abū Muṣ‘ab az-Zarqāwī, who was a leader of the insurgency against the Allied invasion of Iraq. He was not only violently anti-Western but also a sworn enemy of Shiism. He was so bloody in his strategy and tactics – suicide and car bombs – that al-Zawahiri objected, leading to a split from Al Qaeda by az-Zarqāwī. After his death, his main ideas inspired the creation of ISIS. These are the basic ideas of the man called “AMZ”:

“i. Remove the aggressor from Iraq. ii. Affirm *tawhid*, oneness of God among Muslims. iii. Propagate the message that “there is no god but God”, to all the countries in which Islam is absent. iv. Wage jihad to liberate Muslim territories from infidels and apostates. v. Fight the *taghut* ruling Muslim lands. vi. “Establish a wise Caliphate” in which the Sharia rules supreme as it did during the time of Prophet Mohammad. vii. “Spread monotheism on earth, cleanse it of polytheism, to govern according to the laws of God...” (Hashim, 2014)

When Al Qaeda asked AMZ not to target ordinary Moslems, especially Shias, the reply was in the style of future ISIS (Hashim, 2014):

“We did not initiate fighting with them, nor did we point our slings at them. It was they who started liquidating the cadres of the Sunni people, rendering them homeless, and usurping their mosques and houses.”

Thus, AMZ or az-Zarqāwī is much more to be seen as the forerunner of ISIS than al-Zawahiri. But his ideology or religion is the radical Sunni fundamentalism, created by the three: Mawdudi, Qutb and Faraj.

It is true that al-Zawahiri is a key personality of global jihad together with ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Ayman al-Zawahiri joined the Muslim Brotherhood at age 15, was caught in the Nasser dragnet after the 1965 assassination attempt on the Egyptian leader and was thrown into jail. An April 1968 amnesty freed most of the Brotherhood, and Ayman, in that regard following in his father's footsteps, went on to Cairo University to become a physician. Faraj, like al-Zawahiri, argued along the familiar lines that acceptance of a government was only possible and legitimate when that government fully implemented Sharia, or Islamic law. Contemporary Egypt had not done so, and was thus suffering from *jahiliyyah*. Jihad to rectify this, was not only the “neglected obligation” of Muslims, but in fact their most important duty.

Al-Zawahiri wrote several books on Islamic movements, the best known of which is *The Bitter Harvest* (1991/1992), a critical assessment of the failings of the Muslim Brotherhood. In it, he draws not only on the writings of Qutb to justify murder and terrorism, but prominently references Pakistani Jamaat-i-Islami founder and ideologue Mawdudi on the global mission of Islamic jihad. Global jihad as Mawdudi had prescribed became al-Zawahiri's obsession, however, the ISIS is now calling the shots and they employ the ruthless tactics of AMZ or az-Zarqāwī.

## 7. Conclusion: Rejecting Radical Sunni Fundamentalism

As fundamentalism with this new doctrine of Islamic terrorism becomes more wide spread within the Muslim civilisation in the early twenty-first century (Kepel, 2005; Roy, 2004), Weber's perspective – *Islam as a religion of warriors* – is more relevant than it was hundred years ago. It could be more vindicated by the new Salafists than he ever imagined himself. His concept of Islam as a religion of warriors would be verified with a terrible vengeance by the combination of salafism and jihad. According to Mawdudi the new theory of jihad entails: "Islam is a revolutionary doctrine and system that overturns governments. It seeks to overturn the whole universal social order ... and establish its structure a new ... Islam seeks the world. It is not satisfied by a piece of land but demands the whole universe ... Islamic Jihad is at the same time offensive and defensive ... The Islamic party does not hesitate to utilize the means of war to implement its goal."

Yet, the truth is that the religious community of Muslims (*umma*) has always been heterogeneous and the fusion of secular and religious power is not viable in Muslim countries (caliphate, immature). A Muslim state can only be stable and prosperous if these two facts are acknowledged by the key religious groups, the ulema or muftis, who must accept the secular nature of a modern state in the Muslim civilisation.

Islam must be interpreted in such a way that it accepts the basic principles of humanity. We believe that such an interpretation is not only possible, but also that there are Arab scholars who attempted this a long time ago, starting with the great philosophers of medieval Islam. Thus, rationalism and Islam are not irreconcilable and people who adhere to the message of the Koran can at the same time fully accept the requirements of rule of law and universal human rights. We predict that Arab societies will in this century accept a trade-off between Islam and democracy just as they accepted the market economy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The new war by and against the ISIS with massive bombings in Syria and Iraq is just a continuation of the struggle against Radical or Fundamentalist Islam with its three scholars or ideologues – Mawdudi, Qutb and Faraj. It will only bring incredible misery to ordinary people, in the West and in the Middle East, especially Muslims themselves. Islamisation is not feasible in a globalised Muslim country, as Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz testified in his many Nobel prize winning books. In 1994 Islamic extremists almost succeeded in assassinating him. He survived until 2006, permanently affected by damage to nerves in his right hand. Mahfouz could no longer write for more than a few minutes a day, delivering fewer and fewer works.

The message of radical Islamic fundamentalism (Mawdudi, Qutb, Faraj) conflicts not only with the main values in the other global civilisations. It also promotes conflicts within the Koranic civilisation, as the Sunni-Shia civil war, which can only lead to one thing: misery for not only religious or ethnic minorities in the Middle East but for all Moslems themselves, whether Sunnis or Shias. Finally, it is completely out of line with Islam during the Golden Age, characterised by prosperity, tolerance and openness of mind, in short Islamic rationalism, which made European rationalism possible.

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