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## Development of Ibn Taymiyyah's Ideas in the Works of Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966)

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**Abstract**--In modern Islam, Sayyid Qutb is considered one of the main ideologues of fundamentalism. S. Qutb reinterpreted traditional Islamic concepts for use in political activities. His ideas had a huge impact on the jihadist takfiris. In turn, the worldview and subsequent political concepts of Qutb himself were formed under the influence of many medieval thinkers, including Ibn Taymiyyah. Since the study of the influence of Ibn Taymiyyah on the worldview of this religious and political figure has not received sufficient attention from researchers, this determines the relevance of this work. The purpose of the study is to study the influence of the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah on S. Qutb, and his interpretation of the teachings of this religious figure. The scientific novelty lies in a comprehensive study of the influence of Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas on the worldview of S. Qutb. In the course of studying this issue, the following methods of scientific research were used: analysis, comparison, chronology, historical-comparative method, which contributed to the establishment of objective and subjective factors that influenced the formation of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah and Sayyid Qutb. During the comparative analysis of the political situation, it was noted that the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah had a serious impact on the worldview of S. Qutb, especially on the formation of his concepts of jahiliyyah, hakimiyya and jihad, which subsequently led to their specific interpretation and the development of various forms of modern terrorism.

**Keywords**---community, dari language, hakimiyya, islam, islamic culture, islamic terrorism, islamic theologians, jahiliyyah, jihad, muslims.

## Introduction

Islamic state is one of the most important concepts in political, historical, religious and religious studies thinking. The Islamic state appeared in the 7th century, and the first state, in fact, was the Medina community of the Prophet Muhammad. Further in history, the Islamic theocratic state existed in the form of a caliphate, or an imamate, and several such states could exist simultaneously (Bouzarinejad et al., 2016). The first Islamic government and its social structures were formed, in particular, by the prophet Muhammad in Medina, but after his death, there were various conflicts over succession and caliphate between various Islamic directions, including Sunnis and Shiites. It is worth noting that the consequences of some of these conflicts are still felt in the Muslim world (Bouzarinejad et al., 2016).

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) is considered one of the main ideologues of the jihadists of the mid-20th century. His ideas had a key influence on Muhammad Abdussalam Faraj, Abdullah Azzam, Ayman al-Zawahiri and others. It should be noted that all of them, like S. Qutb, at different times were members of the Muslim Brotherhood party or its branches. A. Az-Zawahiri, along with A. Faraj, was arrested on suspicion of an attempt on the life of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, but, unlike Faraj, was subsequently released (Zohdi, 2017; Muslimah et al., 2020). All these ideologues of jihad were influenced to one degree or another by the legacy of the medieval author Ibn Taymiyyah, therefore it is relevant to study his ideas in the context of the influence on S. Qutba, who became the ideological mentor of subsequent generations of takfiri-jihadists. Thus, the purpose of the study is to show the influence of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328) on the worldview of S. Qutb (1906-1966).

Researcher R. Azoulay emphasised that before S. Qutb, the ideological predecessor of the ideological platform of the Muslim Brotherhood party, Rashid Rida, addressed the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah (Azoulay, 2015). S. Qutb joined the party in 1953, and already in 1954 with a group of supporters made an attempt to assassinate the President of Egypt A. Nasser. As a result, he was jailed for 15 years. However, in 1964 he was released for a short time, but in 1966 he again ended up in a Cairo prison, where he was executed.

Researcher D. Zimmerman believes that it is impossible to understand the true causes of the terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, without studying the influence of S. Qutb's ideas on them (Zimmerman, 2004). His works have influenced the activities of virtually all modern radical Islamic organisations (Zimmerman, 2004). Zimmerman emphasises that the cornerstone of Qutb's teachings was the demand to overthrow a government that does not practice Sharia law through jihad, and he also prohibited the use of secular courts.

A. Soage, in turn, believed that S. Qutb was one of the most influential Islamic thinkers of the 20th century. However, he was a member of Egypt's liberal intelligentsia for most of his life, and published a range of works ranging from literary criticism to romantic fiction. It was his disillusionment with the corrupt parliamentary democracy of pre-revolutionary Egypt that made him turn to Islam as a solution to all problems. In the early 1950s, S. Qutb became the main

ideologist of the Muslim Brotherhood. Imprisoned in 1954, he wrote much of his propaganda behind bars, where his thought became increasingly radical (Soage, 2009).

McGregor believed that S. Qutb, relying on the materials of the controversial medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyyah, suggested that the existing Egyptian state could be overthrown as an “un-Islamic” that promotes modern jahiliyyah (McGregor, 2005). K. Wiktorowicz pointed out that certain thinkers such as Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792), Abu Ala al-Maududi (1903-1979) and S. Qutb (1906-1966), proposed a new understanding of religious texts that challenged generally accepted Islamic interpretations (Wiktorowicz, 2005).

Mohamed Yasin, in turn, thought that S. Qutb revealed a different logic in the spread of jihad, considering it the main means of political transformation (Mohamed, 2008). He was the ideologue of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood movement in the 1950s, and in the 1960s became the most influential theorist of the Islamic revolution in Egypt and beyond. Its influence is felt by the Islamic world to this day. Nadia Duvall in 2019 released a paper on the study of the thinking of Sayyid Qutb, starting from his early age (Duvall, 2019).

K. Armstrong identified S. Qutb as the main ideologue of fundamentalism in modern Islam. Nevertheless, Middle Eastern scholars considered S. Qutb one of the leading scholars in Islamic history. His ideas, according to Abu Rabi, became the basis of many radical groups, especially in Egypt. At the moment, there is a huge amount of information about radical ideas in the Islamic world, but still, S. Qutb has always been given a central place in scientific works devoted to the phenomenon of political Islam. Researcher L. Osborne believes that this Egyptian thinker of the twentieth century. S. Qutb was the most widely studied as a political thinker (Osborne, 2019).

V. Shepard made a special emphasis on the fact that S. Qutb began writing works on religious and political topics in 1948, and at first they were of a moderate nature. The radicalisation of views took place gradually, and his imprisonment had a special influence on this process. The most extremist works appeared after 1957 (Shepard, 2003). J. Toth in 2013 noted that Sayyid Qutb formed his concept of jahiliyyah under the influence of Abu Ala Maududi (India – Pakistan) and Abu Hasan Al-Nadvi (India), as well as Ibn Taymiyyah. Qutb was convinced that modern Egypt was in a state of jahiliyyah – pre-Islamic ignorance (Toth, 2013). It is believed that the concept of “modern jahiliyyah” was first introduced into circulation by A. Maududi in 1939, and then it was picked up and developed to a higher degree by S. Qutb. Robert Rabil pointed out that Qutb's ideas had a key influence on the formation of the worldview of the supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood party Fathi Yakan from Lebanon (Rabil, 2013).

From this it is clear that S. Qutb and his teachings constantly attract the attention of researchers. However, no works were found devoted to the study of the influence of Ibn Taymiyyah on the worldview of this religious and political figure, therefore this study is intended to fill this gap in scientific knowledge. In the course of studying this issue, the following methods of scientific research were

used: analysis, comparison, chronology, historical-comparative method, which contributed to the establishment of objective and subjective factors that influenced the formation of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah and Sayyid Qutb, conducting a comparative analysis of the political situation (Laird et al., 2007; Schotter & Abdelzaher, 2013).

### **Analysis of Qutb's religious and philosophical views on the concept of Jahiliyyah**

It is known that S. Qutb rethought traditional Islamic concepts in order to adapt them for use in political activity, and the main goal was to justify the violent seizure of power in the state (Mohamed, 2008). He viewed Islam as a purely political movement, a political system, therefore he rejected the traditional point of view of the Sunnis and Shiites, who pushed political jihad into the background, using it in exceptional cases. He borrowed the conviction of the obligation of waging jihad by every Muslim in the works of Ibn Taymiyyah. This is evidenced, first of all, by his book "Maalim fi Tarik" ("Milestones on the Path"), which was published in 1964. He also expounds his view of modern jahiliyyah in the book "Fi zilal al-Quran" ("In the shadow of the Koran"). This article analysed the influence of Ibn Taymiyyah on two main concepts that shaped the radical thought of Qutb, namely: his view of jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic ignorance) and jihad (fight for faith) (Mohamed, 2008).

For the first time, an article criticising jahiliyyah appeared in the magazine "Al-Fikr al-Jadid" and then he developed his ideas in the other works. One of the most important contributions of Ibn Taymiyyah to the radical thought of his adherents was the development of the concept of the Oneness of God, Monotheism (tawhid). He divided the unity of God into several categories, and among them, he distinguished the unity of dominion and the unity of worship. The first relates to belief in God as the only Sovereign and Creator of the universe. All Muslims readily accept this. The second is the affirmation of God as the only one worthy of worship and obedience. Ibn Taymiyyah argued that this component of Divine Unity requires strict adherence to the laws of God, that is, observance of Sharia (Wiktorowicz, 2005).

Therefore, the use of man-made laws is tantamount to obeying or worshipping someone other than God, and therefore apostasy. A. Maudoodi, and after him S. Qutb, took this position and drew a sharp line between the "party of God" and the "party of Satan". The second party, in their opinion, included Muslims who adhered to man-made laws. S. Qutb in his teaching combined A. Maududi's concept of "modern jahiliyyah" with the views of Ibn Taymiyyah that the unity of God requires that Muslims follow the divine law, creating a synthesis that would strengthen the sharp difference between the Party of God and the Party of Satan: all those who do not follow the Islamic legal system and do not obey the commands of God are part of the modern jahiliyyah and have moved away from Islam, that is, they are apostates (Jafari & Scott, 2014; Brown, 2006).

These postulates echo the Kharijite idea of the "hakimiyya" that only God can judge a person. Now representatives of various extremist organizations are actively calling for this principle. By the way, it is worth noting that the term

jahiliyyah was actively used by Ibn Taymiyyah in his writings. He said that before the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad, people were in ignorance. After that, ignorance could no longer be spread everywhere, but only in one city or country. Therefore, those who believe that the whole world is in ignorance contradict the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah.

S. Qutb believed that modern jahiliyyah appeared due to the fact that the government did not apply the Sharia law in practice. In the concept of modern Islamic radical groups, this concept fell under the influence of the Mongolian fatwas of Ibn Taymiyyah (Mohamed, 2008). S. Qutb wrote in the book “Milestones on the Path” that the whole world is currently in pagan ignorance (jahiliyyah), and that today people live in conditions of pagan ignorance, similar to the one that existed at the dawn of Islam, and maybe even a darker past. He believed that this ignorance was based on encroachment on the omnipotence of Allah on earth, encroachment on the most characteristic attribute of divinity, namely, the rule of Allah (Kutb, 1997). It was in this book that he first gave a clear definition of the enemy as belonging to the jahiliyyah system and called for its destruction. The means for eliminating this system of power, in his opinion, is jihad, which protects the Islamic faith. Therefore, these two points in his teaching are inextricably linked, since jihad is an instrument for eliminating jahiliyyah. Jahiliyyah, in his opinion, means the domination (hakimiyya) of a person over a person, or, rather, the subordination of a person to a person, and not to Allah. It means rejecting the divinity of God and worshiping mortals.

Jahiliyyah was for him an all-encompassing concept, social, political, moral and intellectual. Jihad against Jahiliyyah also takes all these forms. S. Qutb believed that much of what people accustomed to refer to Islamic culture, Islamic institutions, Islamic philosophy and Islamic worldview, in fact, bears the stamp of pagan ignorance. Therefore, the concept of jahiliyyah is one of the most radical ideas in his theory (Cheema, 2006; Ritonga et al., 2021).

According to the researcher J. Kepel in the book “Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam” (“Jihad. Expansion and decline of Islamism”), S. Qutb died before he could develop his concept of jahiliyyah to the logical end. Therefore, his teaching in this matter remained open for further development and interpretation by his adherents. He identified several approaches to the interpretation of the concept of jahiliyyah among his followers: the former accused the entire Islamic community of disbelief, except for their members; the latter made takfir only to the address of the rulers of any country if they did not rule according to the Sharia. They also believed that the break with the society of ignorant people meant, first of all, a spiritual alienation from them, and not a material and social break (Keppel, 2006; Suroso et al., 2021). He also expresses a fully justified point of view that the ideas of A. Maududi and S. Qutb overlap, and they, first of all, influenced the adherents of the Sunni direction in Islam. In “Milestones on the Path”, he refers to the book of Abu Al al-Maududi, “The Principles of Islam”.

Thus, he had both moderate and radical followers. The first group takes a softer approach to social change and places more emphasis on spreading the divine message than on physical jihad. The second group interprets his legacy more radically, and often uses violent methods to spread their views. It should be noted

that S. Qutb preached a radical break with the established in the country and established in religion for centuries, which attracted a certain part of young people, both educated and poor, to him. However, this circumstance led to the fact that his ideas became unacceptable to most of the Islamic clergy and the middle classes. Note that at one time, the views of Ibn Taymiyyah caused rejection from Islamic theologians. He, in turn, criticised them for the depoliticisation of Islam and cooperation with the “despots” of that time.

S. Qutb strove to form a “new Quranic generation”, whose main goal was to create a new Islamic community on the ruins of nationalism, just as the Prophet Muhammad and his companions built a state from a community of faithful on the ruins of pagan teachings. The opposite of jahiliyyah, according to S. Qutb, is Islam, which he defined in accordance with two concepts borrowed from A. Maududi: *ubudiyyah* (serving exclusively God) and *hakimiyya* (exclusively divine power). In his opinion, only God is ruling over all his creatures, and only he is worthy of worship (Al-Romi, 2000; Dewiyanti & Kusuma, 2012). The idea of divine rule is based on the interpretation of the Qur'an, traditionally translated as divine judgment, but for the Qutb, this primarily meant the rule of God. Thus, in his opinion, jahiliyyah refers to all forms of government that do not comply with divine law. During the life of S. Qutb, this referred to the capitalist and socialist (communist) forms of government.

### **The role of Sayyid Qutb's concept of “jihad” in the development of radical ideas of Islam**

Now the author turns to a consideration of his second concept, the concept of jihad. S. Qutb advocated the creation of an Islamic state through jihad. At the same time, he opposed the well-established Islamic legal views that jihad is, first of all, a fight with one's soul (*jihad al-nafs*) or a defensive war to protect the Muslim community. He argued that strength is needed to break the chains of oppression so that Islamic truth can prevail (Cleveland et al., 2013; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). More importantly, since the rulers of the Muslim world used non-Islamic legal codes, they were part of modern Jahiliyyah and therefore were not true Muslims. He believed that it was necessary to fight them as infidels and remove them from power, because the main goal of Muslims was to establish the rule of God on earth (divine hukm).

Jihad, according to S. Qutb, is the most effective way to combat jahiliyyah, which is an obstacle to a just and free society based on the principles of tawhid. It was also noted that he, following Ibn Taymiyyah, denied the division of jihad into small and great. Although adherents of radical interpretations of jihad recognise the general prohibition on killing civilians, they still constantly resort to the opinion of Ibn al-Qayyim, Al-Shawqani, Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Taymiyyah, emphasising that when infidels kill peaceful Muslims, it becomes permitted to kill enemy civilians (Wiktorowicz, 2005). The jihadists have transformed Ibn Taymiyyah's argument to their advantage and adopted the principle that people who help an enemy army in battle, even if they are not soldiers, are legitimate targets for destruction. Initially, such radical interpretations of jihad methods came from the teachings of various Kharijite sects.

In the book “Milestones on the Path”, considering the issues of the rules of waging jihad, S. Qutb directly refers to the book of one of the disciples of Ibn Taymiyyah – Ibn Qayim “Zadul Maad” (“Treasure of the One Preparing for Eternal Life”). It is worth noting that no direct references to Ibn Taymiyah were found in this book, but only his ideas were borrowed. It should be noted that S. Qutb mentions Ibn Taymiyyah in a positive context in his work “The Future Belongs to Islam”, where he writes that Muslims were led into battle by the Islamic spirituality of Imam Ibn Taymiyyah, who carried out spiritual mobilisation and went into battle in the forefront (Kutb, 1993). It should be emphasised that the American politician Henry Kissinger in 2014 characterised the work of S. Kutb “Milestones on the Path” as “a declaration of war against the existing world order”, as well as “the fundamental text of modern Islamism” (Kissinger, 2014).

It should be noted that the brother of S. Qutb, Muhammad Qutb, was one of the mentors of Osama bin Laden and he was even considered the “philosopher of Al-Qaeda” (Thorpe, 2015). This is most likely why he also appealed to Ibn Taymiyyah's anti-Mongol fatwas, arguing that the Saudi government, which expelled him from the country, and before that gave permission for the deployment of American troops during the Gulf War, belongs to the Jahiliyyah system (Worth, 2001). Among the students of S. Qutb, Fathi Yakan (1933-2009) (Rabil, 2013) is also called, who is considered the founder of the Al-Jamaa al-Islamiyya organisation in Lebanon. It was noted that he also chose a strategy to politicise Islam and treated religion as a political system. However, R. Rabil noted that F. Yakan did not fully agree with S. Qutb's concept of jahiliyyah and did not believe that it was necessary to break ties with the world of ignorance, but that it was necessary to change it. As a result, his ideology was formed on the synthesis of the teachings of H. al Banna (1906-1949) and S. Qutba. According to F. Yakan, any other society, except Islamic, is a Jahiliyyah society and, like S. Qutb, believed that everyone is in a state of ignorance, and considered only his supporters Muslims. He also made the main goal of his life the fight against jahiliyyah and the appeal to his ideology. He characterised jihad in terms of transformational rather than radical (revolutionary) character. Similar theses were put forward by the Egyptian group “At-Takfir wal-hijra”, which preached a break with the world of Jahiliyyah and demanded that its supporters retire to the desert and break all ties with the society of the ignorant, including with relatives who did not agree with their teaching. Note that there are no such situations in Ibn Taymiyyah.

It is known that F. Yakan adhered to the views of S. Qutb not only on jahiliyyah, but also on jihad, and, like the Kharijites, actively developed the thesis about the hakimiyya of power, supremacy and court according to the laws of God. He emphasised that jihad is an individual responsibility of a Muslim. He was especially attracted by the methods of S. Kutba's activities in terms of spreading his appeal. It is also known that F. Yakan, speaking on the pan-Arab channel Al-Jazeera, supported the activities of Osama bin Laden, and called him true to the principles of his religion and jihad (Rabil, 2013). It is known that F. Yakan did not condemn the terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001 in the United States. It is noteworthy that the radical organisation founded by F. Yakan in 1957 was called Al-Jamaat al-Qaeda. In the middle of the 20th century, T. Nabakhani (1909-1977) had similar views, the founder of the Hizb ut-Tahrir

party, who based his ideology mainly on the Mu'tazilite doctrine. It should be noted that Ibn Taymiyyah opposed the teachings of this sect, but despite this, he included some of its views in his teachings. It is noted that S. Qutb's ideas also interested the Afghan political and religious figure Burhanuddin Rabbani (leader of the Islamic Society of Afghanistan Islamist Party), who translated his book "Milestones on the Path" into the Dari language, which is spread in Afghanistan.

Having studied the views of S. Qutb based on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah, the author tried to predict the development trends of radical ideas based on his religious and political ideology in the modern world. It is worth noting that the development of jihadist thought is characterised by the erosion of any restrictions used to contain war and violence in classical Islamic theology. It is known that most Islamic scholars throughout history have defined apostates as those who explicitly abandon the faith, declaring themselves to be non-Muslims or rejecting key Islamic tenets. Adherents of a radical interpretation of jihad argue that any Islamic ruler who does not comply with and does not follow Islamic law (in their interpretation) is an apostate. Most scholars reject violent uprisings to remove rulers as long as they allow prayer and have a tiny bit of respect for the pillars of Islam. However, jihadists believe it is necessary, and it is a duty, to wage jihad against rulers who refuse to accept their radical interpretation of Islamic law (Zarandian et al., 2016; Yusof & Jusoh, 2014).

While there is a general understanding throughout Islamic history that civilians should not be targeted in war, extremist groups have defined the term "civilian population" in such a way as to make every person living in Western countries a target of terrorist attacks. These premises indicate that jihadists will target ever broader categories of people. This is already the case with the Shiite communities in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. A number of radical organisations, back in the early 1990s, announced their intention to kill Shiites, and over the years this position has become more and more popular with extremists and acquires more and more radical forms, until it led to the genocide of the Shiite population by ISIS. In their activities, they are all guided by hate to this religious group, like Ibn Taymiyyah.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, it can be noted that S. Qutb's approach and development of the concept of jahiliyyah and jihad became a radical departure from the traditional point of view of Islamic theologians, and even from the position of the founders of the Muslim Brotherhood party. It is believed that he did not bring the development of these postulates to a logical conclusion, but his followers, especially A. Faraj and A. Zawahiri, made interpretations of these concepts more militant and directed them not only to change the government but also to fight the whole society. In their opinion, the entire Egyptian society is not Muslim. This position is a Kharijite point of view, and most of the uluma over the centuries did not adhere to it, because following it leads to divisions within the community. It was these concepts that paved the way for the development of various forms of modern terrorism. Various interpretations of the teachings of S. Qutba spread beyond the borders of Egypt.



Obviously, the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah influenced the formation of S. Qutb's worldview so much that he equated the intellectual and political struggle of Ibn Taymiyyah against the Mongols with his own struggle against Gamal Abdel Nasser and other Arab rulers of that time. As a result, it was the book "Milestones on the Path" that inspired Islamic militarist movements around the world. Therefore, today Western scholars reasonably assert that S. Qutb is the main ideologue of modern Islamic terrorism.

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