From Ideological Flame to Rebellious Ashes: Analyzing the Emergence and Impact of Radical Ideology in the Arab World

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Abstract

This study examines the historical and intellectual origins of radical thought in the Arab world and its evolution into organized armed movements. It investigates how ideas are selectively reinterpreted from one context to another: from Egyptian prisons where Takfir and Hijra were born to transnational jihadist organizations like Al-Qaeda and ISIS, to localized movements such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, synthesizing Qutbist categories with national liberation struggles under occupation. These results suggest that reducing radicalism to an issue of ideology is not feasible; instead, these legacies emanate from the interaction between doctrinal legacies and structural conditions, including authoritarian governance, foreign occupation, socio-economic marginalization, and the Arab state's failure to manage diversity and uphold the rule of law. These conditions were so propitious that they facilitated both recruitment and legitimized radical discourse through framing violence as a religious duty and political necessity. By situating the emergence of radical thought within its historical context and examining its specific political and legal contexts, this research offers a more nuanced understanding of how universal ideological frameworks are established in diverse political and legal contexts. This study concludes that effective confrontation with radicalism must be an integrated approach, combining religious reform with the resolution of structural injustices that radical groups exploit in their mobilization efforts.

Keywords: Radicalism, Armed groups, Khawarij, Sayyid Qutb

I. Introduction

Radicalism is characterized by a rigid position where its adherents refuse any opportunity for dialogue and discussion, steadfastly deny the potential presence of errors in their perspective, and maintain an unwavering commitment to their point of view and opinions. They assert possession of the whole truth and tend to amplify their political,

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economic, or social ideas to an extreme degree, often reaching the level of exaggeration[1]. Radicalism is based on exclusionary ideas and focuses on adhering to appearance without substance, resulting in a superficial understanding of texts. The main motive for radicalism is either due to the radical nature of ideas or behavior, or due to the ruling regime's violent and repressive methods towards those who embrace this ideology.

This radicalism undermines social cohesion, alienates society from its core issues, and entangles it in formalities and details that often obscure the true nature and root causes of radicalism. Therefore, radicalism is a set of activities, beliefs, actions, trends, feelings, and strategies adopted by a specific person or group in a way that isolates them from the prevailing conditions in society. The youth are among the most groups in society to radicalism, due to the age characteristics and special psychological traits of the youth stage[2] Young people often tend to create their own cultures that reject the values and standards practiced by adults, to emphasize their privacy and desire for independence, and their refusal to submit to the values and standards that stand in the way of their desires, even if this leads to their use of violence. Young people also tend toward the radical trend that rejects the old and aspires to renewal, and is open to modern ideologies to create a society that absorbs and understands their ideas.

Radical thought is a product of what exists in society. In this case, radicalism is a political and social tendency whose adherents often resort to violence against society or the state. Radicals want to change reality by using violence in its various types and methods, and they do not believe in the values of modernity and post-modernity. Synonymous terms for radicalism include radicalism, terrorism, excommunication, violence, tyranny, fanaticism, and extremism. The opposite of radicalism is moderation, tolerance, coexistence, dialogue, argumentation, persuasion, and the acceptance of legitimate differences.

Radicalism is one of the primary concerns of contemporary societies. It is a daily life issue whose roots extend to the structural formation of ideas, ideals, and ideologies that distinguish one society from another. Radical thought, like any cognitive system, is a social phenomenon that is affected by and affects other phenomena. It is largely linked to political, historical, religious, social, and economic circumstances. The reasons for the growth of this phenomenon stem from the ideas that have prevailed in societies over the past few decades.

In addition to the ideological roots of radicalism, it is also important to consider the broader sociological, political, and legal contexts that have spawned extremism throughout the Arab world. Persistent poverty, unemployment among young people, and

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[1] Bötticher, A. (2017). Towards Academic Consensus Definitions of Radicalism and Extremism. Perspectives on Terrorism, 11(4), 73–77. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26297896

[2] Varma, S. C. (1975). Sociology and Sociological Radicalism. Social Scientist, 3(8), 3–22. https://doi.org/10.2307/3516223

marginalization have created fertile ground for joining radical movements[3]. Politically, authoritarian rule, state repression, and foreign occupation have expanded grievances, generating a climate of hostility and resistance. Legally, the absence of the rule of law, widespread impunity, and the failed judicial institutions have reinforced the conviction that violence alone is an effective means[4]. Such structural conditions, coupled with ideological discourses, have promoted the emergence of radicalism in several Arab societies.

Instead of considering the whole Arab world as a case, the study focuses on Palestine as a case study. The Palestinian case is a unique point of intersection of Qutb-inspired ideological movements and aberrant political-legal conditions such as military occupation, divided rule, and restrictions on civil liberties. This focus not only accounts for whether Palestinian radical groups have immediate or selective roots in Qutb's thinking, but also contributes novelty to a debate that has otherwise remained abstract and general since the mid-twentieth century. Along similar lines, the Hamas example provides a concrete case where Qutb's doctrines have been localized selectively in Palestine[5].

The movement's 1988 Charter has overtly Qutbist concepts such as Hakimiyya (divine sovereignty) and Jahiliyya (ignorance), and frames the Palestinian cause as both a national liberation movement and a religious duty. Unlike transnational jihadist movements, Hamas interposes these ideological ideas in a specific political-legal environment determined by military occupation, limitation of civil rights, and restricted sovereignty. The incorporation of Qutb's intellectual heritage into the experience of blockade, displacement, and fissured governance reveals how Palestinian radical ideas emerge at the nexus between universal ideology and local legal-political realities.

The Hamas example illustrates the manner in which Qutb's ideological legacy has been relocalized within Palestinian contexts. Hamas' 1988 Charter made unambiguous use of Qutbist concepts such as Hakimiyya (divine sovereignty) and Jahiliyya (ignorance), framing the struggle in Palestine as both a national liberation movement and a religious duty. This double logic captures how Hamas combines political resistance to occupation with a Qutb-influenced rejection of secular authority and man-made law. Unlike transnational jihadist movements such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas grounds its ideological claims in specific political-legal realities: the ongoing Israeli occupation, the human consequences of the Gaza blockade, and the humiliation of engaging in democratic elections under a legal regime it ideologically resists. This adaptability suggests that Qutb's

[3] United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). (2022). *Social protection reform in Arab States: Challenges and opportunities*. United Nations. https://www.unescwa.org/publications/social-protection-reform-arab-states

[4] MENA Rights Group. (2025). *Annual report on the state of human rights in the Middle East and North Africa*. MENA Rights Group. https://www.menarights.org

[5] Hroub, K. (2000). *Hamas: Political Thought and Practice*. Institute for Palestine Studies.

writing provides an overarching template, but the proximate Palestinian realities of occupation, displacement, and division of rule color its particular application[6].

What are the most important sources of radical thought, and the groups that emerged because of this radical thought?

Therefore, we need a more in-depth examination to identify the most significant causes of radicalism and the most influential intellectual sources that fueled it in the Arab world. Two requirements are necessary: the first examines the main sources of radical thought in the Arab world, and the second assesses the most significant armed groups that have emerged in the region.

This paper examines the sources of radical thought in the Arab world, highlighting the primary intellectual and ideological roots that have fueled extremist movements throughout the region. It discusses four main themes: first, the general sources of radical thought in the Arab world, considering the social, political, and religious conditions that led to its emergence; second, the key sources of radical thought, highlighting the doctrinal and ideological influences that characterized its development; third, the Khawarij thought, representing the earliest historical manifestation of extremism and the Takfiri ideology within Islamic history; and finally, three modern radical organizations-the Takfir and Hijra group, the Military Technical Organization, and the Islamic Group-each representing a particular stage in the institutionalization and spread of radical ideology within contemporary Arab societies.

Despite the technological and cultural advancements witnessed by Arab societies in recent decades, these developments have coincided with a marked rise in violent radical thought and the emergence of armed groups that adopt a strict religious discourse that intersects with political, social, and economic factors. This reality raises a central question about the roots and underlying sources of this extremist thought, and the extent to which these sources contribute to transforming intellectual radicalism into organized violent behavior that extends across the geography of the Arab world. The problem also arises in questioning the reasons for the inability of Arab societies and political systems to contain this phenomenon and their failure to confront extremist discourse intellectually, culturally, and educationally, which has made radicalism a deeply ingrained way of thinking among broad segments of society, especially the youth.

II. Sources of Radical Thought in the Arab World.

The patterns of radical political and social thought are numerous and varied, some of which are based on religious, sectarian, national, patriotic, or ethnic bases. The forms of radical thought differ according to the basis on which they are based, but they agree on

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[6] Mishal, S., & Sela, A. (2000). *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence*. Columbia University Press.

a set of features that give them the characteristic of radicalism. It is natural for religious, national, or patriotic affiliations and loyalties to exist, but when they control thought, they give it a fanatical, tribal, and sectarian character[7.]

According to the Maghrebi thinker Mohammed Arkoun, the roots of this thinking can be traced back to what he calls supreme sovereignty, which has dominated the history of societies influenced by the Islamic phenomenon. Islam, as a religion and as an application, was born as a result of the struggle that replaced the scattered and competing authorities based on the mechanical game of tribal fanaticism prevailing in the Arabian Peninsula, with a single authority based on the supreme sovereignty of the one God. This condition formed the political imagination of many radical Islamic movements that claimed to confront modernity and secularism by reconnecting religion with politics and using violence and radicalism at the level of discourse and practice, without benefiting from the early lessons provided by thinkers such as Sheikh Ali Abdel Razzaq,[8] who established proof from within the Qur'an and Sunnah that people's affairs are a matter of consultation among them, and that the methods of governance and the distribution of power are a matter of contractual agreement and not a religious obligation.[9]

Radical thought is characterized by its simplicity and reductionism, as it attributes all social phenomena to a single cause. Radical thought posits that all societal problems and dysfunctions stem fundamentally from a deficiency in faith. Radical thought is also characterized by being an absolute and non-relative interpretation, meaning that it does not recognize relativity or differences in circumstances and times. It examines things rigidly and arrogantly, interpreting them literally and evaluating them according to the principle of binary options, where there are only two options: black or white.[10] The degree of radicalism of individuals depends on the combination of more than one feature and the extent of its penetration into their thinking, such individuals become fertile ground for violent radicalism and terrorism, which turns into violence when it moves into the field of practice and is exploited by a populist elite that addresses the common people through their emotions, tickling their feelings to devote practices of obedience, submission, and compliance with orders without discussion or thought.

In the Palestinian context, these features are reinforced by daily experiences of legal and political exclusion. Practices such as administrative detention, restrictions on movement, and the absence of judicial remedies foster perceptions of systematic

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[7] Hagemann, Hannah-Lena. "Narratives of Khārijite Origins." In The Kharijites in Early Islamic Historical Tradition: Heroes and Villains, 135–64. Edinburgh University Press, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctv1vtz7tb.13.

[8] Hamid, Shadi. (2022). *The Problem of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Twenty-First Century.* Oxford University Press.

[9] Sheikh Ali Abdel Raziq, Islam and the Foundations of Governance: A Study of the Caliphate and Government in Islam, Second Edition, Misr Press, 1925.

[10] Max Abrahms, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *World Politics* 59, no. 1 (January 2007): 1–37.

injustice. When combined with Qutb's call for rejecting Jahiliyya and establishing sovereignty under divine law, these realities facilitate the selective appropriation of ideological texts as justifications for armed resistance. Thus, radicalism in Palestine cannot be explained by ideology alone but by its interaction with institutionalized legal inequality and political repression.[11]

Accordingly, this study aims to explore the most prominent radical ideologies in the Arab world, focusing on the armed groups that have drawn inspiration from the experiences of the Khawarij and the ideas of Sayyid Qutb. This aim will be achieved by addressing two key aspects: an analysis of the thought of the Khawarij and Sayyid Qutb, and the identification of influential armed groups, both contemporary and historical, in the Arab world. The goal is to derive conclusions that contribute meaningfully to the subject of the study.

III. Key Sources of Radical Thought

The thought of armed groups or organizations stems from the influential people in them, their patterns of thinking, and the extent of their involvement in the group. A group of influential factors overlap, such as the strength of the leader and the degree of the organization's members' connection to him; to transform the group's principles into an intellectual doctrine adopted by the organization, and then it can be embraced, believed in, and submitted to, and its principles applied on the ground. These groups exploit the difficult social circumstances that many people live in to attract their members; A person who is resentful and hateful of his society becomes easy prey for these groups, and after brainwashing in the training camps of the organizations, which develops a sense of alienation in him, make him feel the greatness of belonging, and delude him into fighting for the sake of bliss, the new terrorist becomes very enthusiastic to implement everything he is ordered to do.

Beyond the psychological manipulation of individuals, it is essential to acknowledge the structural conditions that enable such recruitment to be effective. In Palestine, these include the fragmentation of political authority, the absence of a sovereign state, and the daily realities of occupation. Such legal and political conditions provide fertile ground for radical narratives, as they reinforce the perception that institutional channels for justice are blocked, leaving armed resistance as the only remaining option.

In the following, we will review radical thought by presenting the most influential intellectual sources in the Arab world through two branches. The first branch discusses the thought of the Khawarij, while the second branch examines the idea of Sayyid Qutb.

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[11] Duman, T. (2024). The Muslim Brotherhood's Path Between Political Ambition and Religious Ideology: Cases of Egypt, Hezbollah, and Hamas. *Religions, 15*(11), 1352. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15111352

This section not only revisits the classical intellectual sources of radicalism but also situates them within the Palestinian context, showing how global ideological frameworks are selectively appropriated and reinterpreted in light of local grievances. This situation also helps move beyond abstract ideological explanations and provides a political-legal reading of how radical thought is adapted under occupation.

Among the Palestinians, Sayyid Qutb's influence is best observed in the ideological features of groups such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The 1988 founding charter of Hamas depicts Qutbist ideas of Jahiliyya and Hakimiyya, imagining the conflict as a religious duty to usher in divine sovereignty and not nationalist competition. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad, founded during the late 1970s, also drew ideas from Qutb's conception of armed struggle as the only viable means of resisting occupation. In contrast to Al-Qaeda, however, they are founded on a particular territorial and national dispute, which makes clear how Qutb's transnational ideological legacy has been localized to the Palestinian social-political context.[12]

Hamas defines itself simultaneously as a national liberation movement and a religiously inspired organization. Its original 1988 Charter explicitly reflected Qutbist concepts such as *ḥakīmiyya* (divine sovereignty) and *jahīliyya* (ignorance of God's rule), portraying the Palestinian struggle as a sacred duty to restore God's authority on earth. However, the revised 2017 "Document of General Principles and Policies" marks a clear ideological shift. While maintaining Islam as the source of identity and legitimacy, the 2017 text abandons overt Qutbist language and adopts a more pragmatic political framework. It distinguishes between Judaism as a religion and Zionism as a colonial project and accepts the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders as a "national consensus formula." This evolution demonstrates how Hamas has reinterpreted Qutb's ideas to fit the Palestinian socio-political reality, softening their radical tone while preserving their theological foundation. The shift reflects a localized adaptation of Qutbist thought shaped by the conditions of occupation, blockade, and political participation.[13]

What distinguishes the Palestinian case is the interaction between Qutb's ideology and the exceptional political-legal realities of prolonged occupation, administrative detention, and restrictions on political participation. These conditions amplify the appeal of radical interpretations, but they also differentiate Palestinian movements from transnational jihadist organizations. By anchoring Qutbist ideas in a national liberation struggle, Palestinian groups demonstrate that radicalism cannot be reduced to ideology alone; rather, it emerges at the intersection of doctrinal inspiration and structural injustice.

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[12] Bartal, S. (2023). Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Between Nationalism and Religion. *Islam and Salvation in Palestine*, 161–168. https://doi.org/10.1080/21520844.2022.2146400

[13] Hamas. A Document of General Principles and Policies. 2017. Official English translation. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/21st_century/hamas-2017.asp

IV. The Khawarij Thought

From here, the disintegration and division of the Islamic community began to appear. These events were followed by Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan's followers fighting Ali in a battle known as the Battle of Siffin,[14] which lasted for several days. The balance tipped in favor of Ali's army. Here, Amr ibn al-'Aṣ suggested to Muawiyah a plan to increase their strength: to make the Qur'an rule among them. If Ali agreed, they would be able to end the battle in which their loss was certain. If he refused, there would be a group of the army that would accept it, and strife would occur among them. Ali rejected it considering it a deception, and warned his army against going along with it. However, a group of the army refused to obey Ali's orders to continue fighting and gave him the choice of either accepting, handing him over to them, or killing him as they had done with Uthman. Ali agreed to arbitration and negotiations, but he did not obtain satisfactory results, as the division among the Muslims increased.[15]

As soon as Ali's army reached Kufa, the group that supported arbitration split off and settled in an area called *Harura* and became known as the Khawarij. Later, Ali tried to reconcile with them and restore unity and cohesion to the Islamic community, but they refused. As a result, a battle known as the Battle of Nahrawan took place in which the Khawarij were greatly defeated, but it was not enough to eliminate them, and they continued to spread their Takfiri ideology, as the matter ended with Ali being killed by a group affiliated with them.

While the Khawarij represent the earliest historical roots of Takfiri thought, the relevance of their ideas today lies in how later thinkers and movements have selectively appropriated their legacy. In the Palestinian context, the Khawarij's uncompromising stance is often cited rhetorically by radical preachers to delegitimize opponents and justify violence. However, unlike other Arab countries, the Palestinian case is shaped by occupation and legal disenfranchisement, which alter how such ideas are framed and mobilized in practice.

Qutb says in his book: "The whole world today lives in ignorance from the perspective of the origin from which the components of life emerge, and its systems are ignorance, and these material facilitations and this superior scientific creativity do not alleviate them in the least. This ignorance is based on aggression against God's authority on earth and on the most special characteristic of divinity, which is sovereignty. So, sovereignty here is attributed to humans in the form of claiming the right to establish concepts and values,

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[14] Gaiser, A. R. (2010). What Do We Learn About the Early Khārijites and Ibāḍiyya from Their Coins? Journal of the American Oriental Society, 130(2), 167–187. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23044513

[15] Ali Mohammed Al-Sallabi, The Reality of Disagreement Among the Companions in the Battles of the Camel and Siffin and the Issue of Arbitration, Ibn Al-Jawzi Publishing House, Cairo, 2007, pp. 83–86.

laws and regulations, systems and situations, in isolation from God's approach to life, and in what God has not permitted.[16]

Today, people are likely to be in a state of ignorance, like the ignorance that Islam witnessed, or worse. Everything around us is ignorance. People's concepts and beliefs, their customs and traditions, the resources of their culture, their arts and literature, their laws and regulations, and even much of what we regard as Islamic culture, references, philosophy, and thought, are also the product of ignorance. Therefore, the values of Islam do not stand straight in our souls, and it is not clear in our minds that a generation of people of the type that Islam first created will not arise among us, for Islam only knows two kinds of societies: an Islamic society and a pre-Islamic society.

Thus, Qutb laid the ideological foundation for rebelling against society and the ruling systems, and the basic means of this change, as he says: "is the offensive jihad aimed at establishing the kingdom of God on earth, eliminating the kingdom of humans, and seizing authority from the hands of those who have usurped it from among the servants and returning it to God alone. All of this is not accomplished by mere notification and clarification, because those who have power over the necks of the servants and usurp God's authority on earth do not surrender their authority by mere notification and clarification.[17]

This literature did not go beyond consecrating the idea of sovereignty as formulated by (Abu Al-A'la Al-Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb), but rather worked to reproduce this idea, which is based on the fact that working with the sharia is a doctrinal basis. People should not resort to man-made laws that humans established, and whoever among the Muslims does not rule with the sharia is an infidel. It is worth noting that Al-Mawdudi was against the separation of powers because it is the right of God, not the people.[18]

The idea of sovereignty, with its Takfiri dimension, prepared its followers to transform their homelands into battlefields, war, and destruction, under the cover of jihad against the infidels who worship God without applying His law. Instead, the theorists of the jihadist movements went further than that, so they included in their ideological discourse a new fatwa that represents the jihad against the apostate infidel, who, from their point of view, represents the near enemy, over jihad against the original infidel who represents the distant enemy. That is, fighting the apostates is more important than fighting other infidels, and their punishment is more severe in this world and the hereafter. No covenant, no truce, no peace treaty is made with them, and they accept nothing except repentance or the sword. Jihad to change these governments is an

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[16] Sayyid Qutb, Milestones, Sixth Edition, Dar Al-Shorouk, Beirut, 1979, pp. 8–10.

[17] Fisk, R. (2002, February 4). My Holy War. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/02/04/my-holy-war

[18] Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky. *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

individual obligation on every Muslim man and woman because it is the only way to establish the Islamic state, and it is not permissible to befriend infidels and infidel regimes.[19]

With a general look at the ideological structure of the jihadist movements, we see that the main problem lies in their concept of sovereignty, which conflicts with the idea of the modern nation-state, which can be within geographical areas that possess different cultures and religions, and in which Muslims share with others the state, land, and sovereignty. This understanding of sovereignty inevitably leads to an ideology that fosters a mentality among people who do not feel a sense of belonging to their countries or societies, but rather feel hostile towards their countries and estranged from their national societies. Their concept of sovereignty equates all societies that do not apply God's law, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, under the concept of the House of War.[20]

By exploring this ideological structure, we see the reason for the association of the demise of tyrannical regimes and the consecration of private and public freedoms in some Arab countries with the development and growth of jihadist work, since such political transformations, of which they were a part, do not represent to them anything more than facilitating their activity and movement to transform their homelands into battlefields, in which they practice It contains all kinds of killing, destruction, sabotage and intimidation, all under the title of jihad against the infidels.

Here, the distinction between transnational jihadist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS and Palestinian movements becomes critical. While the former universalizes their struggle, the latter often tie their ideological justifications to legal and political realities on the ground, including restricted movement, house demolitions, and administrative detention. This localization demonstrates that radicalism in Palestine cannot be explained merely by theological argument, but by its interaction with systematic political repression and legal inequality.

Therefore, the radical religious thought adopted by many armed groups was not a mere coincidence or an emergency incident, but rather goes back to a past that was manufactured and formulated by religious groups and sects that invented a new philosophy, which these groups adopted and through which they developed their jurisprudence. It relies on a set of rules, the most prominent and dangerous of which is excommunication. Through this thought, ambiguous verses are adopted, clear verses of God are abandoned, details are emphasized, generalities are overlooked, superficial appearances are adhered to, and objectives are neglected. These groups spread their ideas among the youth and the public. This thought is similar to what the Khawarij believed in, which emerged after the death of the Messenger of God, and differed among

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[19] The Charter of the Islamic Group for Preaching and Fighting: Summaries of Key Writings on Islamic Groups, Dubai, Al-Mesbar Studies and Research Center, 2011, p. 55.

[20] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement" (Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 2006)

themselves over the right to assume the caliphate. Consequently, each group began to defend its approach, considering it the correct one, and viewed anything else as slander and misguidance.

From here, the idea of excommunication and apostasy emerged, and its impact grew until these groups reached the point of using violence and terrorism against those who disagreed with them and did not accept their principles and proposals. These ideas gained popularity and spread in Islamic society. In every era, someone appeared who believed in this thought, called for it, defended it, and fought for it. In our present time, groups emerged that adopted these ideas and practiced violent practices in their path. To understand the roots of this radical thought and the stages of its emergence and development in Islamic society, the most prominent radical groups will be discussed in terms of their historical roots, geographical extent, influence in the region, and network of relationships.

Several armed groups have emerged in the Arab and Islamic world, characterized by radicalism and extreme violence, gaining regional and international prominence in terms of influence and spread. By situating the Khawarij and Qutb within the Palestinian context, this study contributes to the debate in a novel way. It moves beyond generalized accounts of radicalism to show how historical and ideological legacies are reinterpreted under occupation. This localized reading clarifies why Palestinian groups selectively invoke Qutb or Khawarij rhetoric while remaining primarily driven by political-legal realities unique to their national context.

V. The Takfir and Hijra Group

This group was founded by Shukri Mustafa in Egyptian prisons in 1969. It was called the Takfir wal-Hijra group. The ideology of this group centers on the belief that existing societies must be changed due to their inherent ignorance. Whoever receives the group's call and fails to follow it is considered an infidel and must be punished. This group also believes in the necessity of declaring society itself as an infidel and isolating it as a deviant community in preparation for what they call the empowerment phase. This group revived the ideology of the Khawarij and insisted on declaring all those who committed a major sin an infidel and insisted on it an infidels. It also declared rulers to be infidels in an absolute manner because they did not apply God's law among themselves. They also called for declaring the rulers infidels for their silence regarding the rulers and declaring scholars infidels for not rebelling against the rulers. It is worth noting that this group was

remarkably active in 1973, and its star faded in 1977 when it assassinated Sheikh Hussein al-Dzahabi.[21]

The ideas and principles of the Takfir wal-Hijra group grew inside Egyptian prisons, especially after the arrests of 1965, when Sayyid Qutb and his companions were executed. Sayyid Qutb's writings spread in Egyptian prisons, particularly the books Milestones and in the Shade of the Quran, as well as the ideas of Abu Al-A'la Al-Maududi regarding divinity and sovereignty. A group of the group's followers in prisons adopted these ideas, and thus, the environment was prepared to nurture these radical ideas, especially considering the questions that the detainees were asking about whether those who torture us and those who give them orders are Muslims.

Therefore, radical thought was developed in prisons. In 1967, security officials asked the detained preachers to support and pledge allegiance to the head of state (at that time Gamal Abdel Nasser) in exchange for their release. Their reactions varied. Some responded and supported the president and his regime in the hope of being released, while others preferred to remain silent, neither opposing nor supporting. Others declared the head of state and his regime infidels and refused to support them at all. This group went further, considering those among their peers who supported the president and his regime as apostates from Islam, and anyone who did not acknowledge their infidelity was an infidel. The group also believes that the educational and legislative systems, parliaments, and all calls for democracy and scholars who call for Islamic work, such as the Muslim Brotherhood movement, are enemies of God and His Messenger and are against Islam itself.

Shukri Mustafa worked hard in prison to codify the theory of takfir and did so, but after his release from prison in 1971, he crossed the lines of movement that were set for the Takfir and Hijra group, which involved itself in conflicts with Al-Azhar men, intellectuals and scholars, so that the group ended up being liquidated through the execution of its leader and four of its cadres, in addition to lengthy prison sentences for its other members. The group's intellectual axes were based on a set of principles such as rejecting and denying the Islamic heritage, isolation from contemporary worship, and encouraging illiteracy. They interpreted the hadith reported from the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, in a superficial way, saying: *"We are an illiterate nation; we do not write or calculate…"* They denied studying in universities, whether Islamic or non-Islamic, because they are institutions of the tyrant, and it is not permissible to join them. They also claimed that the call to eliminate illiteracy is a Jewish plot to distract people from learning Islam, with the sciences of disbelief, and that knowledge for them is limited to what they learn in their private lessons. They also called on their supporters to abandon

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[21] Arab News. (2021, December 23). Deadly history of extremism narratives in Egypt. Arab News. https://www.arabnews.com/node/2045876/spa/aggregate

congregational prayer in mosques, because all mosques are harmful and their imams are disbelievers except for four mosques: the Sacred Mosque, the Prophet's Mosque, the Quba Mosque, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. For people to pray in these mosques, the imam must be one of them.

The group also called for abandoning contemporary thought and its material products.. They rejected the issue of ijtihad and stipulated that its validity must be by the literal text. If it is without a literal text, it is a human opinion that is highly subject to error and cannot be taken. The group also refuses the concept of analogy, public interest, and other Islamic jurisprudential rules. The Quran and the Sunnah are the proof, and anything else is invalid. Here it is noted that despite the group's non-recognition of jurisprudential rules, as we mentioned earlier, they are committed to the jurisprudential ijtihad rules that Shukri Mustafa invented and considered them the indisputable truth, such as the rule: "Those who persist in sin are infidels." The group's followers also reject following the jurists and emphasize that it is possible to understand the Book and the Sunnah without referring to the opinions of the jurists, relying on the Almighty's saying ("And We have certainly made the Qur'an easy to remember, so is there anyone who will be mindful?" Qur'an 54:17) [22]

In the same intellectual vein, Shukri Mustafa established a new jurisprudential rule, which states that "whoever imitates is an unbeliever," meaning that one should not refer to jurists and religious scholars and should be content with oneself to understand the Qur'anic texts and the Sunnah of the Prophet, based on the Almighty's saying: "They have taken their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allah."[23]

The group believes that it is not permissible to clash kinetically with reality. They do not believe in the idea of jihad or the necessity of establishing an Islamic state at this time, explaining that there are no texts in the Qur'an and Sunnah in this regard. Still, rather than jihad will be at a specific time and will only be with the sword and spear between the Muslims and the Romans, and that will be at the end of time.[24]

VI. The Military Technical Organization

This organization adopts the idea of eradicating and changing the ruling regimes by violence and force because they are, as he describes them, infidel regimes and must be replaced by Muslim regimes. This organization was established by Saleh Seriya, the owner of the exclusionary ideology, and he was the first to begin applying the principle of change

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[22] The Qur'an. (n.d.). Surah Al-Qamar (54), Verse 17. Translated by M. Khan & M. al-Hilali. Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.

[23] The Qur'an. (n.d.). *Surah At-Tawbah (9), Verse 31*. Translated by M. Khan & M. al-Hilali. Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.

[24] Joshua L. Gleis ،"National Security Implications of Al-Takfir Wal-Hijra" ،*Al Nakhlah: The Fletcher School Online Journal for Issues Related to Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization* ،2005 ، https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/aln/aln_spring05/aln_spring05c.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

by violence in Egypt in 1974. In his letter of faith, written in 1973, Saleh Serriya considered that all Islamic regimes and counHe described the prevailing thought in Egypt as the thought of tyrants and that it will not be removed except by force and the swordtries with curricula, systems, and legislations outside the Quran and Sunnah were systems that disbelieved in God, lords having elevated themselves to the status of gods and lords. Therefore, anyone who obeyed these regimes and countries, convinced of them, was an infidel. He believed that the laws of governance and legislation were the first duties, as they were the basis of monotheism and polytheism in this age, and he attributed this to Sayyid Qutb. He stated in the introduction to his letter that one of the best interpretations for arriving at a true understanding of the Holy Quran was the book "In the Shade of the Quran," in its latest modified editions, to which Sayyid Qutb added the concepts of sovereignty, ignorance, and excommunication.

Sirriyyah put forth this thought in his book (The Message of Faith), which was published in 1973, he He sought to implement his ideas in a practical way when he founded the Military Technical Organization in Egypt in 1974 and tried to overthrow Egyptian President Sadat and kill him. Later, the book (The Message of Faith) became the primary reference for the Takfiri groups in the jurisprudential rules and terms that they invented and introduced into their thought, which is still accepted today, such as: (the House of Islam, the House of Unbelief, the ignorant society, the believing group, the unbelievers, the application of God's law, the tyrant, etc). In his book (The Message of Faith), Saleh Sirriyyah presented a definition of the House of Islam as: "that in which Islamic law is ruled and the final word is for God, even if all its citizens are unbelievers. The House of Unbelief is one in which Islamic law is not ruled, even if all its citizens are Muslims.[25]

Sirriyyah went further and declared anyone who participates in a communist or Ba'athist party an unbeliever. Or nationalist or socialist, explaining that participation in these parties is considered explicit blasphemy, and ignorance of these matters does not benefit its owner. The ideas of the Military Technical Organization have been described as more dangerous than the rule of (Sayyid Qutb and Abu Al-A'la Al-Mawdudi) combined, because the thought and terminology of this organization still feed the thoughts of (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda. As Saleh Seria's book explains, there are contemporary polytheistic rituals that have emerged in this era, including saluting the flag, playing the republican anthem, and saluting the grave of the unknown soldier. And everyone who performs these actions is considered a polytheist who worships idols. It is worth noting that in the past few years, specifically in 2012, in the first session of the Brotherhood's

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[25] Al Mayadeen. (2021). The message of faith – The jurisprudence of révolutions. Retriever Vidéo from https://www.almayadeen.net/episodes/1459442

parliament during the rule of (Mohamed Morsi), some representatives rejected saluting the flag because they considered it blasphemy.[26]

In the conclusion of his book, Sirri presented three rules for excommunication. The first rule revolves around the fact that belief in God requires individuals to believe that God alone is the one who draws the path for people and establishes laws for them, and that individuals must follow what God has legislated; whoever does not do so is considered an infidel. As for the second rule, Islam is not limited to worship, and whoever opposes Islam's intervention in politics has committed an act of disbelief. As for the third rule, it can be summarized as follows: acknowledging the heart, speaking with the tongue, and acting upon the pillars. Whoever lacks one of these pillars is deemed an infidel, disregarding the fact that faith fluctuates according to the hadiths of the Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace. Later, the Egyptian judiciary sentenced Saleh Seriya, Talal Al-Ansari, and Karim Al-Anadolu, as well as some other leaders of the organization, to life imprisonment with hard labor, and released forty defendants, including the accused Hassan Halawi, the organization's emir in Cairo. Thus, the organization was dissolved, but its ideas continued to encourage more radicalism and violence.[27]

VII. The Islamic Group

He described the prevailing thought in Egypt as the thought of tyrants and that it will not be removed except by force The late seventies and mid-nineties of the last century witnessed the involvement of the Islamic Group in violent terrorist operations, the main targets of which were police officers, tourists, and Copts. As a result of these operations, many of its members were arrested and thrown into Egyptian prisons. On October 6, 1981, the Islamic Group assassinated Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.[28] . On October 8, 1981, some cadres of the military wing of the Islamic Group attacked the Security Directorate in Assiut, in addition to trying to control the city[29]. Violent confrontations took place between them and the Egyptian security forces, leading to the killing of many members of the police and special forces.

The group also played a prominent role in the Afghan war, where a number of its members were killed, most notably Ali Abdel Fattah, the emir of the group's military wing. From there, the group issued the magazine (Al-Murābitūn) and established several military bases in Afghanistan. On the domestic front, the group, through its military arm,

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[26] Mahmoud Al-Warwari, Saleh Sariya, Salem Rahal, and the Idea of Global Jihad, Al-Ain News, 2019. See the website:

[27] Saleh Sariya: Charisma and the Path of Armed Islamic Revolution, Islamist Movements Portal, 2016. See the website: https://www.islamist-movements.com/36514

[28] Skare, E. (2021). *Hamas according to Hamas: A reading of its Document of General Principles*. *Cambridge University Press*.

[29] El-Shahat, S. (2019, October 8). *On October 8, 1981: The terrorists Asem and Alaa. Youm7.* https://youtu.be/HM3-RZ7_U3E

attempted to assassinate former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, and the Egyptian president's guard killed all of its members. On April 18, 1996, AD, the Islamic Group claimed responsibility for an attack in which 18 Greek tourists were killed and 14 others were injured in front of the Europe Hotel near the Giza Pyramids. The group explained its operation by saying that it targeted Israeli tourists. On November 17, 1997, AD, the Islamic Group also killed fifty-eight people within 45 minutes in Luxor, most of whom were Swiss tourists. This massacre was known as the Luxor Massacre or the Deir el-Bahari Massacre. One of the group's leaders, named Rafai Taha, was responsible for the operation, which is considered the most extensive terrorist operation witnessed by Egypt and had a clear impact on the Egyptian economy, as it led to the stagnation of tourism for many years.[30]

In the field of contemporary radicalism, we will discuss the two most important organizational phenomena in the Arab and Islamic worlds, which have taken on a regional and international character and have had a major impact on the increase in radicalism and violence, namely: Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS).

Al-Qaeda Organization. The period from the mid-1940s to the 1990s was marked by a Cold War between the Soviet Union and America, with both seeking to impose control over the world through the ideologies of Russian communism and American capitalism. Meanwhile, the Arab and Islamic world was part of this conflict. Afghanistan in the late 1970s was a battlefield between the Russian occupiers and the Afghan and Arab mujahideen, with open support from America, which lasted ten years until Russia left Afghanistan in 1989.[31]

During the war between the Russians and the Afghan people, the Arab countries launched calls calling on the Arab people to support their Muslim brothers in Afghanistan and fight with them against the Soviet enemy. The number of immigrants to Afghanistan increased, and they played a central role in establishing the organization, setting its basic rules, and providing it with new ideas that the organization adopted, ultimately reaching the influence and power it possessed at that time. It had extensions in other countries that it would not have reached had it not been for the new mujahideen who joined it. Groups also split from it and became more radical, fanatical, and violent.[32]

As for the Arab governments, they wanted to show their people that they still adopted the policy of resistance and jihad and affirmed their Islamic identity, while at the same

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[30] Cragin, R. Kim. "Early History of Al-Qa'ida." The Historical Journal 51, no. 4 (2008): 1047–67. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20175214.

[31] Rassler, Don. "Al-Qaida and the Pakistani Harakat Movement: Reflections and Questions about the Pre-2001 Period." Perspectives on Terrorism 11, no. 6 (2017): 38–54. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26295955.

[32] Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, trans. Anthony F. Roberts (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 138–140.

time working to improve their relations with America and align with it in positions. For its part, the United States ignored the migration of the mujahideen to Afghanistan and facilitated their exit to confront America's traditional enemy, which was the Soviet Union. Instead, it lent legitimacy to this fighting and began to search for compliant Afghan leaders to facilitate its control over the unfolding events within the Afghan arena. As for the position of the Afghan resistance, Bin Laden expressed it in his speeches, where he said: The confrontation is with all infidel countries, Arab or foreign, using his famous phrase (infidelity is one religion). In one of his lectures, he said: "There should be no distinction between America and Israel, as they are one enemy of the Islamic nation.[33]

Since jihad against the infidel occupier is an obligation on every Muslim, jihad against the infidel occupier of a Muslim country was appealing to the souls of Muslim youth. The jihad movement, with its two main branches, was launched in response to the actions of external force, and subsequently, ideas and jurisprudential rules emerged. American support for the jihadists continued until the Americans defeated the Russians, the Soviet Union disintegrated, and the Americans took control of the world. At that time, they attempted to suppress and silence these organizations. As we mentioned previously, the phenomenon of returnees from Afghanistan could end and disappear forever, especially after many Arab countries announced plans to absorb these returnees and integrate them into their societies once again.

This type of radicalism in the Arab world is the result of a political situation that was supported, financed, and encouraged by Arab regimes and some allied external powers, for deliberate political purposes. The peak of this phenomenon occurred in the 1980s and early 1990s, when, due to the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union over Afghanistan, the Mujāhidīn were employed to resist the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.[34] When the war in Afghanistan ended, the Arab regimes disavowed the phenomenon. They fought it, which produced a new type of uncontrolled violence. Still, this time it had multiple geographical extensions and formed an alliance of geographical organizations across various countries in the Islamic world. What distinguished this phenomenon was that it was able to resist a superpower, and therefore worked to form a global organizational bloc, attempting to present itself as a superpower that strikes everywhere and calling itself Al-Qaeda.

When the number of Mujāhidīn began to increase with the presence of Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam, the spiritual father of the Arab fighters, there was a need to organize this process more, so they established the House of Supporters Osama bin Laden in 1984 to receive the Mujahideen and record their data in an organized manner

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[33] Skare, E. (2021). *A History of Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Faith, Awareness, and Revolution in the Middle East*. Cambridge University Press.

[34] Xie, P. (2022). Why Did Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan After 1979 Fail so Catastrophically? *Psychology Research, 12*(3), 138–144. https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5542/2022.03.007

and creating a database for them, it was from this institution that Al-Qaeda derived its name. In the same year, Abdullah Azzam worked to establish the Services Office, through which he aimed to spread Jihadist thought and collect donations for Al-Qaeda. Thus, the House of Supporters and the Services Office formed the basic building block that worked to gather the Mujahideen and include them under the umbrella of the Global Islamic Front, which emerged after issuing its founding statement and the signing of Bin Laden, the Egyptian Islamic Group, the Jihad Group in Bangladesh, and the Jamaat Ulema in Pakistan. Its establishment was the beginning of its crystallization and transformation into Al-Qaeda, which was active on the global level in terms of spreading its radical ideas [35]and carrying out many bombings, the most prominent of which was the bombing of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2000.[36]

In February 1988, the establishment of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders was officially announced, which later became known as Al-Qaeda. Sheikh Abdullah Azzam established Al-Qaeda's ideology in his mobilization message (Join the Caravan) in 1987. In his message, he summarized sixteen reasons why Muslims must wage jihad, including the necessity of establishing a solid base for the House of Islam through an organized Islamic movement. He says in this regard: "Establishing a Muslim society on a piece of land is as necessary to Muslims as water and air, and this home will not be possible except through an organized Islamic movement that is committed to jihad in reality and slogan and adopts fighting as its fabric and cover.[37]

The veterans of the Afghan-Soviet war are considered the core nucleus that formed Al-Qaeda in 1988, to transfer the victory they achieved over the Soviets to other places around the world. Al-Qaeda was headed by Abdullah Azzam and his deputy, Osama bin Laden. After Azzam was killed in 1989, bin Laden headed the organization, and Al-Qaeda chose to be headquartered in Sudan in 1991 due to the good relations it had with the ruling National Islamic Front in Sudan. Al-Qaeda's headquarters remained in Khartoum until 1996. After great international pressure, bin Laden was forced to move Al-Qaeda's headquarters to Afghanistan, where his organization allied with the Taliban. At the end of 2001, after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in the United States, Al-Qaeda's training camps were destroyed, which led to their fragmentation. Consequently, Al-Qaeda decided to base itself in Iran and on the Pakistani border.[38]

The intellectual foundations of Al-Qaeda intersect with the intellectual foundations of Salafi jihadism. These foundations are represented in a set of ideological ideas, the first of which is the unification of sovereignty, a central concept in Al-Qaeda that has more

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[35] Skare, E. (2023). *Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Islamist Writings on Resistance and Religion.* I.B. Tauris.

[36] Jason Burke. (2004). Al Qaeda. Foreign Policy, 142, 18–26. https://doi.org/10.2307/4147572

[37] Abdullah Azzam, Join the Caravan, Bayt Al-Maqdis, (Country not mentioned), 1st edition, 2018, p. 20.

[38] Christina Helmich, Al-Qaeda: The End of an Organization or the Rise of New Movements, translated by Fatima Nasr, Sutur Al-Jadidah, Cairo, 2011, pp. 33–32.

than one interpretation. On the political level, it is manifested in the rejection of ruling other than those God has revealed, declaring rulers infidels, and denying man-made laws. On the social level, it appears in the governance vision of a society dominated by the new ignorance[39].

Al-Qaeda adheres to the same theoretical approach as traditional Wahhabi and Taymi Salafism, which is based on three key principles, the first of which is the oneness of divinity and the oneness of Lordship. As evidence, they cite the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him: I have been commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and establish prayer and pay zakat. If they do that, then their blood and property are safe from me, except for the right of Islam, and their reckoning is with Allah. "I have been commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establish prayer, and pay zakah. If they do so, their lives and their property are protected from me except by the right of Islam, and their reckoning is with Allah."[40] And, his saying, I was sent with the sword before the Hour so that God alone would be worshipped, with no partner for Him. My sustenance was made under the shade of my spear, and humiliation and disgrace were made for whoever disobeyed my command. Whoever imitates a people is one of them. "*I was sent with the sword until the Hour comes, that Allah alone be worshiped without partner. My provision has been placed under the shade of my spear, and humiliation and disgrace have been imposed upon those who oppose my command. And whoever imitates a people is counted among them.*"[41]

In their view, destination monotheism (Tauhīd) is the ultimate goal, and jihad is the means to achieve it, as Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Aziz says in his book (Al-Jami' fi Talab Al-Ilm Al-Sharif): "Parliamentary representatives are masters who dispute with God the right to legislate, but they do not have the right to legislate. Thus, permitting and prohibiting without a legal text is a dispute over sovereignty and a contribution to directing servitude to anything other than God. Democracy is a call to disbelief. If voters know that by practicing the electoral process, they are authorizing representatives to practice legislation without God on their behalf, then they have committed disbelief." They find it acceptable and obligatory to compel people politically by applying the true sharia, which is the prerogative of God.

The second: the *Dār al-Kufr* (the land of disbelief) and *Dār al-Islām* (the land of Islam), where Al-Qaeda interprets this concept, which intersects with the jihadist movements,

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[39] Kfir, Isaac. "DAESH." A Primer on the Ideological and Theological Drivers of AQ and Daesh: Al-Qaeda. Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2018. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep23115.9.

[40] Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isma'il. *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Faith (Kitab al-Iman), Hadith no. 25.

[41] Al-Dhahabi, S. (2014). Siyar A'lam al-Nubala' (edited by Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut). Mu'assasat al-Risalah. Vol. 16, p. 242.

that the *Dār al-Islām* is the one whose inhabitants are Muslims, and the *Dār al-Kufr* is the one whose inhabitants are infidels. Thus, (Abdul Aqdar bin Abdul Aziz) says: The division of the lands into the House of Unbelief and the House of Islam is established by the texts and did not come from the efforts of scholars. As Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi and Abu Jandal al-Azdi see, *Dār al-Islām* turns into *Dār al-Kufr* when the word of unbelief controls its laws and is enforced, and religion has no relation to the majority of the population. This is the justification that the enemies of Islam use to fight national governments and Muslim societies because they have turned from the *Dār al-Islām* into the *Dār al-Kufr*.[42]

The third is that jihad in the Al-Qaeda ideology intersects with *tauḥīd*, and that jihad is an individual obligation on Muslims and is known from the religion by necessity and does not require obtaining the permission of the ruler when jihad is obligatory. It is the strong shield of the Islamic nation, and its danger is great to the forces of global disbelief and apostates alike. Suspending the obligation of jihad and trying to coexist with civilizations leads the nation to defeat and collapse .

Fourth: *Al-Walā' wal-Barā'*, which is understood as the duty of a Muslim to show loyalty to fellow Muslims by supporting and assisting them, while disassociating from, declaring disbelief in, and opposing non-Muslims. This concept also entails the obligation to declare as unbelievers (takfīr) rulers who govern by man-made laws, labeling them as apostates. For example, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi states in his book Imta' al-Nazr fi Kashf Shubuhat Murji'at al-Asr (Delight of Reflection in Exposing the Fallacies of the Modern Murji'ah): The first duty of a true monotheist is to disavow rulers and legislators, declare their disbelief, and reject their man-made laws."

Al-Qaeda has similarly disavowed anyone who opposes it, responding with accusations of disbelief, treachery, or caution depending on the nature of their relationship with the group. According to their perspective, *Al-Walā' wal-Barā'* is a requirement of true monotheism, citing the Quranic verse "Indeed, we dissociate ourselves from you and from whatever you worship besides Allah."[43]

Fifth: Disbelief in tyrants, as Al-Qaeda finds it necessary to disbelieve in tyrants, man-made laws, their legislators, and promoters. In this regard, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi refers in his book (The Religion of Abraham in a Message to the Tyrants of the Age, Rulers, Princes, and Kings), saying: "We are innocent of you, your laws, and your constitutions".[44]

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[42] Abdul Qadir bin Abdul Aziz, The Comprehensive Guide to Pursuing Noble Knowledge, Volume I, no publisher or country, 2004, pp. 641–644.

[43] *The Qur'an*, Surah Al-Mumtahina, 60:4.

[44] Mohammed Asim Al-Maqdisi, *The Religion of Ibrahim and the Call of Prophets and Messengers*, 2000, p. 84. See the website: https://bit.ly/3At5vwq

It is worth noting that Al-Qaeda drew its ideas from the thought of Ibn Taymiyyah and the Salafi thought, which are based on the literal interpretation of the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace, without taking into account the temporal and spatial circumstances. Osama bin Laden considered that interpreting a verse or hadith of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, while taking into account the temporal and spatial dimensions, to be nothing but slander against God and His Messenger. Verses and hadiths - from his point of view - must be taken as they are because the righteous predecessors have reached solutions long ago, and they have greater knowledge than today's scholars. There is no objection to anything the predecessors say, neither logically nor rationally, and this matter is not open to research and consultation, as they rely only on transmission from their predecessors.[45]

In this context, Ayman al-Zawahiri divided those who led Al-Qaeda after the killing of Osama bin Laden into two groups: infidels and believers. The believer follows the sharia without discussion or thought, and whoever discusses the sharia is considered irrational. What is acceptable to them is only what agrees with a previous text or ruling, which has been established in the thinking of the Salafis that there is no point in discussing people[46].

The Salafi thought did not stop at this point; rather, it went further by dividing society and the state into *Dār al-Kufr* (the land of disbelief) and *Dār al-Islam* (the land of Islam). *Dār al-Islam* refers to those who follow and implement Islamic law (Shari'a) as it was revealed by the early generations (the Salaf) without distortion or change. On the other hand, Dar al-Kufr refers to those who do not implement Shari'a as it was revealed, even if the majority of them are Muslims. According to this view, they are considered disbelievers (kuffar) and must be fought wherever they are found. Jihad, in this context, is not limited to disbelievers but also extends to Christians and Jews, the people of the book, even if they are not aggressors. This perspective ignores the verse from the Qur'an where Allah says, "Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal justly with them. Indeed, Allah loves the just."[47]

They also excommunicated (*takfīr*) Muslims who implement man-made laws, abandoning the divine teachings. These individuals are treated according to the principle of *al-walā' wa al-barā'*, which means that loyalty (*walā'*) is reserved for righteous believers who adhere to the Shari'a and the teachings of the Salaf, while disavowal (*barā'*) applies

[45] Salafist Jihadism in Brief, Al-Manar TV website, 2015: http://archive.almanar.com.lb/article.php?id=1145274

[46] Gohel, S. M. (2017). Deciphering Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Al-Qaeda's Strategic and Ideological Imperatives. Perspectives on Terrorism, 11(1), 54–67. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26297737

[47] *The Qur'an*, Surah Al-Mumtahina, 60:8.

to those who are not loyal to them, including Jews, Christians, and Muslims who do not adhere to Islamic law.

After the end of the Afghan-Soviet war and the departure of the Arab Afghans from Pakistan and Afghanistan and the settlement of most of them in Sudan, Osama bin Laden continued to monitor what was happening in Algeria, and people Through his contacts with some leaders of the Armed Islamic Group, who condemned the massacres and excommunications carried out by the group's emir, Antar Zouabri, bin Laden then suggested to leaders within the Armed Islamic Group to split from the group and establish a new organization that would correct the image of the jihadist work that (Zouabri) had harmed it, so the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat was established in August 1998 and declared its innocence of the massacres and destruction practiced by the Armed Islamic Group. Later, the name of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat was changed to (Al-Qaeda Organization for Jihad in the Islamic Maghreb) in January 2007, and thus Al-Qaeda became a base within the Maghreb region and succeeded in transforming from a local organization to an organization with a wide geographical spread in a precise and tight manner that controls the most important entrances to the Arab world.

The nature of the geographical spread: The determinants of the geographical spread of the Al-Qaeda organization highlight the nature of this spread, which is governed by three basic dimensions: the first is a spatial dimension, the second is a procedural dimension, and the third is a political dimension. The spatial dimension revolves around the transition from the national to the regional, as Al-Qaeda's allied armed organizations transform from regional organizations to those with a broader scope, encompassing activities in neighboring countries. This is what was established in the experience of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, which was transformed into the Al-Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb, as we mentioned, and was not affiliated with the Al-Qaeda organizationally. In other Maghreb countries, groups joined Al-Qaeda, such as the Moroccan Combatant Group, the Libyan Combatant Group, and the Tunisian Combatant Group. Al-Qaeda also extended through its supporters and those who joined its ranks to other countries such as (Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Egypt) and other countries. Al-Qaeda has always exploited ideology to gather the scattered Salafis. Jihadists and unify them under one ideological framework.

The procedural dimension is reflected in the recruitment of new fighters from the Maghreb region, coordinated between Al-Qaeda and the fighting groups in Tunisia, Libya, and Morocco. Some fighters are recruited, recruited, and trained in how to make explosives, explosive belts, and booby-trapped cars, while others are sent only to carry out suicide operations. Travel is facilitated for them through specific cells to countries neighboring Iraq by providing them with forged passports. We note that in the first decade of the third millennium, the organization achieved a wide geographical spread, as

its ideology acquired a new feature, becoming transnational, and its branches, cells, organizations, and elements associated with it and supporting it multiplied in many countries worldwide. The operations carried out by the organization also extended beyond the local level, expanding to include countries and continents at the global level, such as Asia, Africa, Europe, and the United States of America. As for the Arab region, the branches and cells of Al-Qaeda are present in the Levant, the Gulf region, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Maghreb as well. The organization was able to cast its shadow on the level of global politics and became a central target of the strategy of the war on terrorism as a transnational terrorist organization. It was classified as one of the main sources of danger in the world, due to its geographical spread and the expansion of its role on the global level. It became present at the level of global politics, as it is classified on the list of non-official international actors (Non-State Actors) by considering it as a transnational terrorist organization, especially after the attack, which was launched by the organization on September 11, 2001, on the World Trade Center towers, and dealt the United States of America a blow at the economic and military levels, according to the American claim. [48]

We also note that, despite the differences in the organization's orientations and its cells operating in different countries, in terms of formation conditions, goals, methods, and approaches, all branches of the organization are based on a single ideology, making it the first multinational jihadist group of the twenty-first century. The organization's expansion and geographical spread result from the overlapping of internal and external factors, both regionally and internationally. Al-Qaeda's radical ideology with religious foundations has played a significant role in the organization's geographical spread, in addition to the internal structural crises that the Arab and Islamic world suffers from. Other factors are related to regional and international factors, including the policies of the United States of America and the West towards Arabs and Muslims, which created a suitable environment for the rise and growth of radical Islamic organizations, most notably Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda's radical ideology.

The organization's political and media rhetoric, geographical structure, and movement strategies have all come together to enhance its chances of continuity, growth, and geographical spread, especially after the current communications and information revolution, in which Al-Qaeda has played a prominent role in fueling radicalism and increasing its intensity in the Arab world.

VIII.   Conclusion

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[48] Barsoum, Nadia. "Book Reviews." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 4 (2014): 84–89. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.33428/jsoutasiamiddeas.37.4.0084.

An in-depth analysis of the roots of radical thought in the Arab world reveals that it is neither a sudden nor an isolated phenomenon, but rather the product of a complex interaction between an old intellectual heritage and contemporary political and social conditions. On the one hand, the thought of the Khawarij constituted the first organized doctrinal division in Islamic history, while Sayyid Qutb reformulated the concepts of "sovereignty" and "ignorance" in the twentieth century to become an ideological reference for radical Islamic movements. On the other hand, repressive political conditions, the failure of regimes to manage diversity, deepening economic and social crises, alongside foreign occupation, all contributed to creating a fertile environment that allowed these ideas to take root and transform into organized violent behavior.

The article demonstrates how the Palestinian case presents a distinct model for the localization of radical ideas, as the Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements have implemented Qutbist concepts within a national liberation narrative, thereby gaining triple legitimacy: political, religious, and legal. Beyond justifying resistance, this narrative also served to legitimize their authority to formulate laws and social norms derived from Islamic principles, especially within Gaza's post-2007 governance. In this sense, the national liberation discourse was not only a source of political and spiritual justification but also a framework for constructing an alternative legal order grounded in divine sovereignty Hakimiyya Compared to transnational movements such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS which articulate their struggle through a global rhetoric against the "distant enemy," the Palestinian movements localized radicalism within a concrete legal-political context of occupation and fragmented governance, making it a natural component of the struggle against exclusion and deprivation.[49]

Accordingly, confronting this phenomenon requires the adoption of a comprehensive dual-dimensional strategy: first, religious and intellectual reform that restores the role of moderate interpretations and challenges isolationist readings of texts; and second, developmental, social, and cultural policies that address the structural grievances exploited by radical groups in their mobilization discourse. Combining these two paths is the most effective way to dry up the sources of extremism and redirect youth energies from closure and violence to creativity and participation in building more just and tolerant societies.

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