

Transformations of Salafī Thought: From the Ḥanbalī School to Ibn Taymīyah and Beyond

تحولات الفكر السلفي: من المدرسة الحنبلية إلى ابن تيمية وما بعدها

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Abstract

Salafism represents a complex and evolving ideological framework that synthesizes traditional Salafī creed with modern Jihādī thought, resulting in a militant fundamentalist paradigm with global aspirations. Rooted in the jurisprudential teachings of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and further developed by figures such as Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, this ideology incorporates al-Mawdūdī's concept of Sovereignty (Ḥākīmīyah) and Sayyid Quṭb's influential work, *Ma'ālim fī al-Ṭarīq* (Milestones in the Road). It departs from classical exegesis by

employing novel interpretative methods that eschew historical contextualization.

Contemporary Salafism integrates experiential knowledge from the Afghan jihād against Soviet forces and the Ikhwānī movements in Egypt and Syria, culminating in a rearticulated theory of Jihād that strategically shifts focus from the "far enemy" to the "near enemy." This shift is accompanied by a doctrinal transformation from advocating peaceful missionary change to endorsing armed struggle, thereby expanding the scope from domestic reform to the establishment of internationally oriented militant

groups.

The ideology establishes a clear rupture with prevailing intellectual currents by rejecting Western modernity and critical inquiry, categorically repudiating concepts such as democracy, civil society, pluralism, interfaith dialogue, and critical religious scholarship as heretical innovations. It re-theorizes the jurisprudence of jihād to accommodate contemporary realities, including the removal of the requirement for ruler's permission and the elevation of jihād from a collective to an individual obligation incumbent upon all Muslims.

Salafism further repudiates traditional loyalty to rulers in favor of legitimizing rebellion, drawing on Khawārij doctrines, and transforms the concept of Sovereignty into political coercion through the enforcement of Sharī'ah irrespective of individual belief. It redefines the criteria for Dār al-Islām based on legalistic enforcement of Sharī'ah rather than demographic faith adherence, thereby imposing a fundamentalist legal framework independent of social consent.

Finally, the ideology maintains a strict adherence to the sayings of the Salaf, rejecting legislative or theological development through human reason, and asserts that jihād constitutes the exclusive legal framework governing relations between Muslims and non-

Muslims. This synthesis culminates in the emergence of global Jihādī fundamentalist movements, grounded in historical antecedents and ongoing doctrinal evolution.

ملخص البحث :

للسلفية مجموعة مرتكزات فكريّة منها: إنها حلقة متناصلة في سلسلة المسار المتشدد، وإنها دمجت مفاهيم العقيدة السلفية من آراء أحمد بن حنبل مروراً بابن تيمية وابن عبد الوهاب، وحاكمية المودودي ومعالم سيد قطب، تلك الأفكار التي تستفيد من ظاهر النص وتجزئته من دون الرجوع إلى تفسيراته التاريخيّة في من أمهات المصادر، ولا تجمع ما يرتبط به من الايات الاخر بل تلوي عنقه لتبرير ارائها. وان السلفية المعاصرة دمجت بين تجربة أفغانستان، والجهاد الإخواني في مصر وسوريا، واستفادات من تجارب جهادية ميدانية أخرى، وأضافت تلك الخبرات لبعضها للإفادة من التراكم العملي، وأدخلت تحولات مهمة مثل التنازل عن جهاد العدو الأبعد، للأقرب (كما يطلقونها). وإدخلت تأويلات على بعض مواطن الفكر السلفي التقليدي مثل: «تغيير النهج الدعوي إلى «التغيير بالقوة المسلحة»، تحت عنوان «الجهاد»، وتقديم المنطق الجهادي على المنطق الدعوي، والانتقال من التغيير في بلدانهم فقط إلى تشكيل جماعات تقود

ثورةً إسلاميةً عالميةً في مختلف البلدان ، وتبنوا عدم اشتراط إذن الحاكم في مشروعية الجهاد، لتغيير نوع الجهاد من كونه من فروض الكفاية إلى فرض عين على كل الأمة، ولا يقتصر الجهاد على جهاد الدفاع، إنما الواجب الجهاد المبادر لإعلاء كلمة الله، وصار القانون الوحيد الذي يحكم العلاقة بين المسلمين والأمم الأخرى . وقامت بتأسيس القطيعة مع الفكر الإنساني المعاصر و إشاعة الكراهية ورفض الحداثة و رفض نقد العقائد والمفاهيم السلفية، ورفض التحليل التنويري واعتبار الافكار الغربية مفاهيم كفرية مثل الديمقراطية، ومفاهيم المجتمع المدني، والتعددية، وحوار الحضارات، وحوار الأديان وقاموا بإعادة تنظير فقه الجهاد، واعتبروا ان فقهه تقليدي تـكـوـن في سياق تاريخي مختلف عن ظروفنا اليوم ، لذلك أسسوا فهما جديدا للجهاد يراعي متطلبات العنف الميداني .

واسقط الفكر السلفي مبدأ حصانة الحاكم الجائر التي كانت متبناة في الفكر السلفي التقليدي واعتماد مقولات مشروعية التمرد التي قد صيغت بأسلوب جديد اتفقت مع المفاهيم الارهابية وتحول عندهم مفهوم الحاكمية من مبدأ «لا إكراه في الدين» إلى مبدأ إكراه الناس على فهمهم بتحكيم الشريعة، . كذلك يُراعي المفهوم الأصولي مبدأ اعتبار البلد من ديار الإسلام شرط وجود حاكم يطبق الشريعة فيه

، من دون أن ينظر إلى تطبيق الناس لها متبعا «أمودج دولة الخلافة». وتحول مفهوم دار الإسلام ودار الكفر من معنى الغالبية السكانية إلى تطبيق الشريعة، فما كان فيه الشرع مطبقاً فهو دار الإسلام بصرف النظر عن الناس والعكس صحيح. وهذا يعني فرض النموذج دون الاختيار المجتمعي. وظهر رفض أي إمكانية لتطوير التشريع والفكر الديني بالعقل الإنساني.

هكذا، يتكامل التأسيس الأيديولوجي الأصولي في رؤية عالمية ذو نزعة عنيفة مشبعة بالروح الحربية، وبهيكل مركب من العقيدة السلفية، ونظرية الحاكمية الجهادية (القطبية). فقد انتقوا من ابن تيمية فتواه في أهل ماردين، وأدخلوها ضمن الجذور الدينية للفكرة الجهادية، وحولوا حاكمية المودودي إلى منطلق، وأدخلوا معالم سيد قطب ضمن العقيدة السلفية، فتكامل المنظور الفكري والعقائدي للنظرية الأصولية العالمية. وبذلك، يكون النموذج الأخير للحركات الأصولية الجهادية حاصل تلك الجذور التاريخية المتطورة للرؤى الأصولية والممارسات الجهادية.

1. Introduction

The Ḥanbalī School refers to the collective adherence to the opinions of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal concerning creed ('aqīdah') and its specifics, as well as the juristic rulings ('aḥkām

fiqhīyah') derived from his *Musnad* (a renowned ḥadīth collection). However, subsequent generations of Ḥanbalīs did not strictly adhere to Aḥmad's original opinions; rather, they developed and attributed additional views to him. These additions later became known as "Ḥanbalī thought" or the "Salafī school."

During the first half of the second century AH (eighth century CE), juristic schools ('madhāhib fiqhīyah') and creedal sects ('firaq 'aqā'idīyah') emerged within the Islamic tradition. It is important to distinguish between the terms 'madhhab' (school) and 'firqah' (sect). A 'madhhab' constitutes a set of methodological principles for deriving practical rulings from religious sources such as the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, 'ijmā' (consensus), and other legislative sources. Conversely, a 'firqah' encompasses a collection of ideas, beliefs, perceptions, and propositions related to creed and faith, compiled within the discipline known as 'ilm al-kalām' (Islamic Theology). The second century AH witnessed the emergence of major creedal sects including the Mu'tazilah, Shī'ah, and Ashā'irah. Concurrently, juristic schools such as those founded by Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (d. 148 AH / 765 CE), Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150 AH / 767 CE), Mālik ibn Anas (d. 178 AH / 794 CE), and al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204 AH / 820 CE) were

established. The school of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal emerged subsequently in the third century AH (d. 241 AH / 855 CE), marking the last of the officially recognized juristic schools in historical sequence.

The period spanning 150-250 AH (circa 767-864 CE) is characterized by the political stabilization of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate and a significant expansion in translation activities, notably the translation of Greek knowledge into Arabic. This era saw the widespread dissemination of various sciences, fostering prolific authorship and translation efforts, alongside vigorous debates concerning the fundamentals of creed ('uṣūl al-'aqīdah') and branches of jurisprudence ('furū' al-fiqh'). This period also marked the commencement of the classification of foundational sources within religious sciences.

1. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal

Among the prominent figures of this era was the ḥadīth scholar ('muḥaddith') Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal,¹ an eminent juristic authority and author of the renowned ḥadīth collection *al-Musnad*. He is also recognized for his theoretical contributions to numerous creedal positions and perceptions (Ibn Shaṭṭī, 1998, p. 14; al-Mas'ūdī, n.d., Vol. 4, p. 102; Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 10, p. 340).

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal gained particular

prominence during the controversy concerning (the createdness of the Qur'ān). The 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Ma'mūn mandated that scholars ('ulamā') endorse the doctrine of the Qur'ān's createdness, a position he personally supported and which was advocated by the Mu'tazilah through rational and textual arguments.

When the governor of Baghdād convened the ḥadīth scholars to communicate al-Ma'mūn's directive, most acquiesced. However, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal refused, resulting in his imprisonment and flogging under Caliph al-Mu'taṣim, after which he was released. This ordeal ('miḥnah') significantly enhanced his reputation, with his persecution viewed as a pivotal factor in consolidating support for his doctrinal positions.

Numerous narratives and legends emerged surrounding Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, including accounts of miraculous gifts ('karāmāt'). Although the ordeal concerning the Qur'ān's createdness affected many scholars, particularly conservative ḥadīth scholars, it became closely associated with Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Consequently, scholars of sects, creeds, and beliefs closely examined Aḥmad's opinions and his conceptualizations of religious fundamentals ('uṣūl al-dīn'). For instance, al-Jāḥiẓ described Aḥmad's stance as permitting

dissimulation ('taqīyah') solely in the "abode of polytheism" ('dār al-shirk'), which underpinned his rejection of state-imposed doctrine and his open refusal to affirm the Qur'ān's createdness. Upon al-Mutawakkil's accession following al-Mu'taṣim, he endorsed the views of the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (People of Ḥadīth) and the Salafī orientation, persecuted the Mu'tazilah, and empowered the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* to propagate their views within mosques. This led to intensified attacks against the Mu'tazilah aimed at dismantling their doctrines.

During this period, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's stature rose considerably, with numerous accounts extolling his virtues ('manāqib') and miraculous gifts ('karāmāt') (Ibn Abī Ya'lā, 1378 AH, Vol. 1, p. 14; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1417 AH, Vol. 10, p. 31; al-Dhahabī, 1957, Vol. 2, p. 17; al-'Asqalānī, 1325 AH, Vol. 9, p. 67). He concentrated on ḥadīth narration and was regarded as the leading figure of what is presently termed the 'madhhab' of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (al-Kathīrī, 2008, p. 152). His juristic reasoning ('ijtihād') aligned with the *Akhhārīyūn* (traditionists), who issued fatwās based on ḥadīth texts, 'āthār' (Companions' narrations), and transmitted 'sunan' (practices) (Subhānī, 1402 AH, Vol. 1, p. 313; Abū Zahrah, 1956, p. 155). Notably, he did not author a jurisprudential ('fiqh')

text, composing only ḥadīth in his *Musnad*. Nonetheless, an overview of his beliefs can be discerned through study of this work.

2.1. Beliefs of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal

Contemporary scholars debate the extent to which the beliefs attributed to the Ḥanābilah, a stringent creedal and juristic school postdating Aḥmad, genuinely reflect his own views. Questions arise as to whether certain doctrines, such as anthropomorphism ('tajsīm') regarding informational attributes ('ṣifāt khabarīyah') (al-Ḥajwī, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 22), the concept of 'bid'ah' (heretical innovation), and the rejection of 'ta'wīl' (Hermeneutic interpretation), are later innovations erroneously ascribed to him.

Upon thorough investigation, the prevailing scholarly consensus suggests that the contemporary Ḥanbalī creed, or "madhhab al-Salaf", largely represents the views formulated, compiled, and attributed by the Ḥashwīyah, the Ḥanbalī faction later, rather than Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal himself (al-Kathīrī, 2008, p. 156). For example, Aḥmad's opinion on 'istiwā'' (establishment on the Throne) includes a narration that when Allah sits on the 'Kursī' (Throne/Chair), a creaking sound ('aṭīṭ') is heard (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1406 AH, p. 79). This notion was subsequently developed into anthropomorphic interpretations

('tajsīm').

Thus, this consensus differentiates between Aḥmad's personal opinions and those fabricated by later Ḥanābilah adherents. The overlap in certain views arises from Aḥmad's textualist approach to creed, which his followers later applied rigidly to theological ('kalām') concepts, including the rejection of 'ta'wīl', necessitating a literalist interpretation of texts.

Reviewing Aḥmad's opinions reveals the range of compatibility between his narrations and the intellectual orientation developed by his students. Regarding 'ta'wīl' (Hermeneutic interpretation), *Jam' al-Jawāmi'* defines 'ta'wīl' as prioritizing an improbable meaning over the apparent one, intending the improbable to be considered preponderant (al-Subkī, 1341 AH, p. 117). Others define it as applying personal opinion ('ra'y') to divine law ('shar') matters. Aḥmad rejected 'ta'wīl' as a scholarly method, whereas the Ḥanbalī school adopted a position of 'takfīr' (excommunication) against practitioners of 'ta'wīl', especially among Ḥanbalī jurists. However, early scholars disagreed on this issue (al-Fayrūzābādī, 1426 AH, Vol. 2, p. 110; Ibn Manẓūr, 1426 AH, Vol. 6, p. 361).

2.2. Views of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal espoused numerous creedal and juristic views relevant to

the intellectual and historical roots of contemporary fundamentalism.

a. Regarding the jurisprudence of authority ('fiqh al-sulṭah'), he maintained that the Caliphate was exclusively reserved for the Quraysh tribe, even if a Qurayshī ruler was oppressive or unjust. Obedience to such a ruler was obligatory, rebellion forbidden, and prayer behind him permissible, regardless of his righteousness or wickedness. Later Ḥanābilah interpretations transformed this stance, permitting 'takfīr' (excommunication) and rebellion against rulers violating the 'Sunnah', as advocated by subsequent fundamentalists.

b. Concerning Faith ('īmān'), he defined it as verbal profession, physical action, and heartfelt conviction, which fluctuates—growing with obedience and diminishing with sin and ignorance. He held that committing a major sin ('kabīrah') temporarily expels one from faith, with return possible only through repentance. This contrasts with his followers, who endorsed excommunication for those abandoning prayer ('ṣalāh') and opposing ritual practices, permitting execution in such cases.

c. Aḥmad refrained from declaring excommunication ('takfīr') against any Muslim, except those who willfully abandoned prayer. He believed minor sins could be expiated through

seeking forgiveness ('istighfār') and repentance ('tawbah'), and that the fate of sinners who die unrepentant rests with Allah. Posthumously, the grounds for 'takfīr' expanded.

d. Regarding 'bid'ah' (heretical innovation), he considered it any novel introduction into religion absent from beliefs, sayings, or actions, contradicting the 'Sunnah' or unsupported by the conduct of the 'Ṣaḥābah' (the Prophet's Companions), 'Tābi'īn' (Followers of the Ṣaḥābah), and their followers. He regarded 'bid'ah' as more perilous than disbelief ('kufr'), asserting no repentance for those advocating 'bid'ah', whereas repentance was possible for disbelievers. He further posited that 'jihād' against proponents of 'bid'ah' superseded that against disbelievers (al-Tamīmī, 2001, p. 11). The Ḥanbalī school later elaborated these ideas into a formal theory of excommunication ('takfīr').

e. Aḥmad endorsed the concept of *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (the saved sect), identifying the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* as the saved group. He maintained, based on transmitted ḥadīth, that other sects were destined for Hellfire,² with the saved group possessing the greatest religious authority. This notion later underpinned the *al-tā'ifah al-manṣūrah* (victorious group) ideology among Jihādī-Salafī movements.

f. He established a hierarchy

for categorizing those contradicting ḥadīths, emphasizing the inviolability of 'tawātur' (mass-transmitted) reports and 'ijmā' (consensus). Contradicting a 'tawātur' report or consensus rendered one misguided ('dāll'), while contradicting a 'khabar al-wāḥid' (solitary report) despite its acceptability marked one as a 'fāsiq' (transgressor). In contrast, the Ḥanbalī school deems contradiction of a 'mutawātir' ḥadīth as 'kufr' (disbelief), with some extending this to solitary ḥadīths, reflecting the early historical paradigm. Aḥmad relied on *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* (exegesis based on tradition), declared the Qur'ān's createdness a 'bid'ah', and classified lands where such 'bid'ah' prevailed as 'dār kufr' (abode of disbelief). He diminished the role of 'qiyās' (analogical reasoning) and asserted that divine justice transcends human rational faculties ('uqūl') (Abū Zahrah, 1956, p. 310), forming the epistemological foundation for later fundamentalist groups.

g. Aḥmad's unwavering commitment to the 'adālah al-ṣaḥābī' (impeccable probity of every Companion), even when contrary evidence existed, led to several doctrinal consequences. These included adopting the Companions' opinions as normative and establishing the 'Salaf's' reading of religious texts as authoritative, later formalized as 'ijmā' (consensus).

h. He rejected 'ta'wīl' (allegorical interpretation), rationalism, 'fiqh al-maqāṣid' (jurisprudence of higher objectives), and the evidentiary value of 'istiqrā'' (induction) and 'qiyās' (analogy).

The principal methodological principles derived from Aḥmad's thought, which remain influential in Salafī intellect, include:

1. Adoption of a textualist methodology and literalist interpretation as the epistemological framework for understanding religious texts among fundamentalists.
2. Rigidity against rationalist 'ijtihād', thereby limiting critical engagement with religious thought.
3. Adherence to a specific historical period as the normative paradigm for subsequent eras, imposing a past-oriented standard on contemporary contexts.
4. Justification of conflicts between Ḥanbalī adherents and other Islamic sects, particularly from the fifth century AH onward, under the pretext of combating 'bid'ah'. This led to the development of a special jurisprudence concerning 'bid'ah', 'tafsīq' (declaring transgressors), and 'takfīr', which evolved into evaluative social behaviors.
5. Propagation of the *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (saved sect) concept, fostering claims of exclusive religious truth and

differentiation among believers based on detailed doctrinal positions.

6. Emergence of novel concepts of worship ('ibādah'), rituals, and rites. These methodological and epistemological principles constitute foundational elements of extremist thought that emerged following Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's era within the Ḥanbalī school and continued to develop among subsequent generations, extending to contemporary groups.

3. The Development of Ḥanbalī Rigidity
The foundational creedal principles established by ibn Ḥanbal subsequently evolved to form the theoretical basis for the creedal thought characteristic of Salafī orientations. This framework integrated his original opinions with additional elements introduced by the Ḥanābilah to the sources of 'aqīdah' (creed).

Traditionally, the sources of 'aqīdah' recognized by Muslims comprised the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. However, ibn Ḥanbal introduced a third source: the understanding of the 'aqīdah' by the 'Salaf' (predecessors), which he regarded as the correct and normative interpretation for all subsequent generations. This is also identified as the consensus ('ijmā') of the "virtuous centuries" ('al-qurūn al-fāḍilah').

Following ibn Ḥanbal's reasoning, it was concluded that those adhering to the 'aqīdah' and understanding of the

'Salaf' constitute the sole "true group" ('al-jamā'ah al-ḥaqqah'). Adherents of this methodology are deemed the "saved sect" ('al-firqah al-nājiyah') in the Hereafter and the "victorious group" ('al-ṭā'ifah al-manṣūrah') in this world. Consequently, the Ḥanbalī orientation asserts that a particular group embodies the pure paradigm, while all others are considered invalid. This conceptual framework anchors Islamic thought in subsequent eras to the early centuries of Islam (the 'Ṣaḥābah' [Prophet's Companions], the 'Tābi'ūn' [their successors], and the 'Atbā' al-Tābi'in' [Followers of the successors]), disregarding the differing historical contexts that shaped their understanding and capacities, as well as the nature of knowledge available during their times. This stance is justified by the assertion that the early generations were the best of the 'Ummah' (community), the most knowledgeable of the truth, and the most deserving of it, supported by textual evidence ('dalīl naqlī'), notably the ḥadīth referring to the "best centuries."

As a result, subsequent Muslim generations are historically bound to a specific temporal context characterized by unique social, epistemological, and political conditions. This approach effectively denies later eras the right to 'ijtihād' (juristic reasoning)

and the capacity to incorporate epistemological discoveries influencing creedal perceptions. The spiritual and moral legitimacy of alternative creedal orientations is negated; indeed, they are explicitly labeled as falsehoods to be resisted.

Aligned with this development is ibn Ḥanbal's stance on 'ilm al-kalām' (Islamic theology) and rational inquiry ('al-naẓar al-'aqlī'); prohibiting the discussion of 'aqīdah' through rational inquiry, reason, or 'kalām', thereby severing the connection between reasoned dialogue and 'aqīdah'. The 'aqīdah', in all its particulars, remains sacrosanct—beyond verification, questioning, or critique. Consequently, the ideas protected from critique are regarded as the purest, albeit on ideological rather than demonstrative grounds.

This theorization establishes a textualist, tradition-based ('atharī') methodology for interpreting religious texts and posits a historical paradigm as the normative standard for religion, asserting that the Salafī belief regards this era as one of creedal purity. It also privileges the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (People of Ḥadīth) as the "saved sect." Given that 'aqīdah' is to be understood through literal interpretation and historical paradigm, the use of reason, inquiry, critique, and theological debate ('jadāl kalāmī') poses a significant challenge

to such a creed. This necessitated adherence to the 'āthār' (traditions) and 'sunan' (practices) transmitted from the 'Ṣaḥābah', 'Tābi'ūn', and their followers, irrespective of their reliability. The *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad is known to contain ḥadīths of varying authenticity. These creedal foundations persisted beyond his era and later influenced modern fundamentalist ('uṣūlī') thought.

It is important to acknowledge that ibn Ḥanbal also espoused peaceful principles, which underwent transformation among contemporary fundamentalists. For example, he did not sanction rebellion against an unjust or 'fāsiq' (transgressing) ruler; this stance aligns with the 'madhhab' (way) of the 'Salaf', as articulated by Aḥmad and his followers. Ibn Ḥanbal exhorted patience in the face of injustice and regarded those who broke the oath of allegiance ('bay'ah') to the ruler as heretics who had separated from the community.

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal distanced himself from political authority, neither participating in nor legitimizing its policies, perceiving it as oppressive and unjust, not governed by divine permissions and prohibitions. Nevertheless, he refrained from issuing a fatwā endorsing rebellion or armed resistance. Although authorities—both Mu'tazilī and Salafī—demanded

absolute loyalty, his opposition to the doctrine of the Qur'ān's createdness during the reigns of al-Ma'mūn and al-Mu'taṣim, and his refusal of gifts from rulers during al-Mutawakkil's time, constituted clear dissent. This opposition, however, was expressed through peaceful means. Despite this, ibn Ḥanbal did not forbid praying behind an unjust or 'fāsiq' ruler, nor did he prohibit giving zakāh to such a ruler or participating in jihād alongside him. Historical records indicate that when his followers supported Salafī authorities during al-Mutawakkil's era, he warned them, expressing concern for their safety from both the authorities and 'fitnah' (strife/temptation) (Ūmlīl, 1996, p. 53), fearing complicity in sin against Allah by aligning with unjust rulers (Zāhid, 2013, p. 288).

A pertinent inquiry arises: Why did the Ḥanābilah adopt the rigid aspects of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's views rather than his peaceful ones? It may be posited that rigid and extremist creedal ideas exert a stronger influence on individuals than moderate and centrist ideas, particularly in ethically underdeveloped environments or societies where rationalism is minimal or ineffective. Under such conditions, groups tend to embrace extremism and conform to its behavioral demands more readily than to peaceful,

dialogical, rational, and cooperative centrist values. Consequently, extremism manifests in their 'aqīdah' (creed), piety, and rituals.

The Ḥanbalī orientation thus provided an extremist religious framework for society following Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. The fourth century AH (tenth century CE), described by Adam Mez as the "Renaissance of Islam," witnessed the emergence of the Ḥanbalī orientation as a rigid faction. Historical records document numerous instances of extremist behavior by these groups. Adam Mez identified the Ḥanābilah as the most significant school among the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* and noted that, contrary to their later status, they were not initially recognized as jurists ('fuqahā'). Upon the death of Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (310 AH/923 CE), his burial was obstructed by Ḥanbalī commoners due to his omission of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal from his compilation of jurists, describing Aḥmad instead as a 'muḥaddith' (ḥadīth scholar). This provoked intense hostility from Salafī groups towards al-Ṭabarī. The recognition of the Ḥanābilah as a juristic school ('madhhab fiqhī') was delayed until after the fourth century AH (Mez, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 370; Ibn al-Jawzī, n.d., Vol. 4, p. 408; Ibn al-Athīr, 1995, Vol. 8, p. 98; al-Suyūṭī, 1967, Vol. 1, p. 228). Mez further reported that the

Ḥanābilah in Baghdād constituted the largest group challenging governmental authority, using a mosque as a base for fomenting unrest and 'fitnah' (strife) (*Kitāb al-Wuzarā'*, n.d., p. 335 as cited in Mez, 1957). Their influence escalated to the point of causing turmoil in Baghdād, engaging in conflict with theologians ('mutakallimūn') and directing particular animosity toward the Shī'ah. Shāfi'ī jurists forcefully debated them, resulting in verbal and juristic confrontations as well as episodes of violence, despite admonitions from moderate jurists advocating against religious extremism and urging restraint to preserve Muslim unity (al-Maqdisī, 1411 AH, p. 366).

The historian Ibn al-'Ibrī documented that by 323 AH (ca. 935 CE), the Ḥanābilah's power had grown sufficiently to conduct raids on commanders' and civilians' homes, destroying alcoholic beverages and assaulting singing girls, thereby inciting turmoil in Baghdād (Ibn al-'Ibrī, 1997, Vol. 1, p. 94). The Ḥanābilah leader, al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī Khalaf al-Barbahārī, was notably severe toward those he deemed heretics (Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 11, p. 172).

Ibn Khaldūn recorded conflicts in Baghdād over the leadership of prayer ('imāmat al-ṣalāh') between the Shāfi'īs and Ḥanābilah, with the

latter openly endorsing 'tashbīh' (anthropomorphism), a position attributed to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Neither the Buwayhīyūn (Buyids) nor the Salājiqah (Seljuks) succeeded in resolving these disputes (Ibn Khaldūn, 2003, Vol. 3, p. 477) or curbing the rigidity displayed by the Ḥanbalī faction in the religious and political spheres.

Historical accounts detail numerous violent clashes between the Ḥanābilah and other schools over creedal differences, resulting in thousands of casualties. Notable incidents occurred in 317 AH (ca. 929 CE), 349 AH (ca. 960 CE), 354 AH (ca. 965 CE), 362 AH (ca. 973 CE), 375 AH (ca. 985 CE), 389 AH (ca. 999 CE), 408 AH (ca. 1017 CE), and 447 AH (ca. 1055 CE) (Abū al-Fidā', n.d., Vol. 1, p. 200; Ibn Taghrībirdī, 1930, Vol. 3, p. 323; Ibn al-Athīr, 1995, Vol. 8, p. 533; Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 11, p. 254; Ibn al-Wardī, 1996, Vol. 1, p. 460). Among these, the Ḥanābilah attacked the Imām of the Great Mosque in Baghdād for his Ash'arī views and assaulted al-Qushayrī (d. 514 AH/1120 CE)³ for affirming the legitimacy of Sufism. Adam Mez noted that the Ḥanābilah's agitation led to street fighting, compelling al-Qushayrī to leave Baghdād (Mez, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 362). In response, the government intervened in the early fifth century AH by instituting the "Qādirī Creed"

(*al-I'tiqād al-Qādirī*) (Ibn al-Jawzī, n.d., pp. 383-384), a creedal charter intended to quell sectarian conflicts. While effective in restoring order, this marked the cessation of 'ilm al-kalām' development in Islamic thought (Mez, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 363).

This rigid ideological trajectory, characterized by extremist creedal views, persisted prominently until the fall of the Caliphate (658 AH / 1260 CE) and continued into the era of Ibn Taymīyah.

4. Salafism According to Ibn Taymīyah
Ibn Taymīyah's opinions constitute the fourth foundational root of Islamic fundamentalist ('uṣūlī') thought and belief. Previously, the first root was identified as the literalist textual approach during the Prophet's era and its immediate aftermath, extending until the emergence of the Khawārij school (37 AH / ca. 657 CE), which represents the second root.

The formation of the Ḥanbalī school—from Imām Aḥmad's creedal emergence (d. 241 AH / 855 CE) until the fall of Baghdād (656 AH / 1258 CE), and their reliance on the Saljūq state (447 AH / ca. 1055 CE) to enforce their creedal paradigm—constitutes the third root of fanatic fundamentalist thought. This tradition attributed to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal a set of opinions and beliefs labeled variously as the "Creed of the Salaf" ('Aqīdat al-Salaf'),

"School of the People of Ḥadīth" ('Madhhab Ahl al-Ḥadīth'), the "Saved Sect" ('al-Firqah al-Nājiyah'), and the "Victorious Group" ('al-Ṭā'ifah al-Manṣūrah'), among other designations asserting a monopoly on religious truth and purity.

However, the Ḥanābilah's views lacked an integrated intellectual or methodological framework and did not develop into a comprehensive orientation with established premises until the advent of Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah al-Ḥarrānī. Ibn Taymīyah,⁴ born and raised in Ḥarrān—a Ḥanbalī stronghold—was immersed in the Ḥanbalī tradition, which had been dominant there for over a century (Abd al-Ḥamīd, 1997, p. 49). This environment fostered a style of rigidity and fanaticism within the Ḥanbalī school.

Ibn Taymīyah's era was marked by numerous crises, including the Mongol (Tatar) invasions of the Islamic world. Shortly before his birth, the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate's capital fell, and the Tatars advanced into al-Shām (the Levant) and Egypt. During this period, the Tatars supported suppressed Islamic orientations within the 'Dār al-Islām' (Abode of Islam) to foment creedal conflicts. Various sects emerged, such as the Ismā'īliyah, Karrāmīyah, and Nuṣayrīyah. Concurrently, Sufism proliferated, with the establishment

of numerous 'zāwiyahs' (lodges) and 'takāyā' (hostels). Prominent intellectual figures such as al-Suhrawardī (d. 587 AH / ca. 1191 CE) and Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638 AH / ca. 1240 CE) had recently emerged, producing profound Sufi gnostic ('irfānī') thought that continues to provoke debate. In this period, the fatwā issued by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī prohibited the study of philosophy and logic, restricted the issuance of fatwās to the four established schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and effectively halted the practice of 'ijtihād'. Consequently, judges and fatwā issuers were confined to these schools ('Abd al-Ḥamīd, 1997, p. 51). This royal decree, promulgated by al-Zāhir Baybars in 663 AH (circa 1265 CE), was enforced throughout the Islamic world. Although all four schools retained the authority to issue fatwās and judicial rulings, the Ḥanābilah gained increasing dominance in political affairs. They reported the Shāfi'ī jurist al-'Izz ibn 'Abd al-Salām to the Ayyūbid ruler al-Ashraf, persuading him that their 'aqīdah' represented the correct doctrine, aligned with the 'Salaf', and that Ibn 'Abd al-Salām deviated from this path. As a result, the ruler prohibited Ibn 'Abd al-Salām from issuing fatwās, placed him under house arrest, and forbade consultations with him (al-Subkī, 1413 AH, Vol. 8, p. 218; al-Zirikī, 2002, Vol.

5, p. 135).

Within this context, Ibn Taymīyah emerged as a prominent preacher and orator following his father's death. Initially recognized as a narrator of ḥadīth with expertise in identifying its defects ('ilal'), he subsequently engaged in polemics against various groups, including the Ashā'irah, the Mu'tazilah, the Sufis, and the Shī'ah. Adhering to the Ḥanbalī creed, he introduced novel concepts and engaged in numerous theological disputes until his death in 728 AH (1328 CE). He was interred in a Sufi cemetery.

Ibn Taymīyah demonstrated a particular interest in the study and memorization of ḥadīth, emphasizing the importance of assessing the strength of a ḥadīth and its 'sanad' (chain of narration). Ibn al-Wardī remarked that any ḥadīth unknown to Ibn Taymīyah could not be considered authentic (Ibn al-Wardī, 1996, Vol. 2, p. 409). He also engaged in Qur'ānic exegesis ('tafsīr'), employing the methodology of *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* (interpretation based on transmitted reports). He regarded al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* as exemplary, as it conveyed the opinions of the 'Salaf' with their chains of narration and was free from 'bida' (heresies). He rejected narrations from those he deemed unreliable, such as Muqātil and al-Kalbī (Ibn Taymīyah, 1995, p. 3). Notably, Ibn

Taymīyah showed no interest in ‘ilm al-kalām’ (Islamic theology based on rational discourse); rather, he forbade its study, cautioned against associating with the ‘Ahl al-Kalām’ (theologians), and criticized the ‘mutakallimūn’. His works include “Refutation of Logic” (*Naqḍ al-Manṭiq*) and “Response to the Philosophers” (*al-Radd ‘alā al-Falāsifah*) (Ibn ‘Abd al-Hādī, 1356 AH, p. 57).

Ibn Taymīyah advocated for the establishment of a religious state (‘al-dawlah al-dīnīyah’) (Little, 1973) governed by the people of religion, who must assume political authority in accordance with the model of the ‘Salaf’. He observed that when rulers succumbed to desires for wealth and status, they became estranged from the principles of faith in governance, leading to a widespread perception that leadership (‘imārah’) was incompatible with faith. Conversely, religious scholars, initially reluctant to engage in political affairs, eventually recognized that their interests could only be secured through authority (Ibn Taymīyah, 1418 AH, p. 217). Thus, Ibn Taymīyah affirmed the necessity of establishing a religious state grounded in the historical paradigm of the Prophet, his Caliphs, his Companions, and their followers (Ibn Taymīyah, 1418 AH, p. 218).

Despite this, Ibn Taymīyah did not

advocate rebellion against existing rulers, maintaining that the creed of the ‘Salaf’ prohibits such actions, even in the face of unjust governance. He regarded rebellion as inherently evil with no redeeming qualities, regardless of the ruler’s oppression or immorality (Ibn Taymīyah, 1406 AH, Vol. 2, p. 241).

Ibn Taymīyah was known for his stringent stance on matters of doctrine and jurisprudence, exhibiting severity toward dissenters, whether individuals or entire schools of thought. Examples of his doctrinal positions include:

a. He issued a fatwā declaring the ‘takfīr’ (excommunication) of the Ashā’irah, despite their status as part of the ‘Ahl al-Sunnah’, in his work *Dar’ Ta’āruḍ al-‘Aql wa-al-Naql* (Averting the Conflict between Reason and Revelation) (Ibn Taymīyah, n.d., p. 77). He also declared the deviation of Abū Maṣū‘ al-Māturīdī, the Ḥanafī theologian and jurist who founded his own theological school (Ibn Taymīyah, n.d., Vol. 7, p. 33; Ibn Taymīyah, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 362). Additionally, he was highly critical of al-Rāzī, author of *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*.

b. He issued a fatwā declaring the ‘takfīr’ (excommunication) of the Nuṣayrīyah and mandated their killing. Beyond issuing the fatwā, he actively participated in military campaigns against them, accompanying

commanders in battles that resulted in significant casualties among the Nuṣayrīyah in 705 AH (circa 1305 CE) (Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 14, p. 37; *al-Juḥanī*, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 317). Ibn Taymīyah considered them greater disbelievers than Jews, Christians, and many polytheists. He led raids in the Kasrawān mountains and urged the Sultan to execute their leaders.

c. He wrote about the 'takfīr' (excommunication) of the Jahmīyah, who espoused determinism ('jabr'), and declared 'takfīr' on the Mu'tazilah, condemning their perceived misguidance and heresies.

d. He authored a treatise on the permissibility of fighting the Shī'ah (Ibn Taymīyah, 1406 AH, Vol. 2, p. 267; Ibn Taymīyah, 1997, Vol. 2, p. 477).

e. He engaged in polemics against the Sufis, accusing them of 'bid'ah' (heresy), declaring 'takfīr' on al-Suhrawardī and Ibn 'Arabī, and disparaging al-Ghazālī.

f. He composed a refutation of Christianity titled *al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ liman Baddala Dīn al-Masīḥ* (The Correct Answer to Those Who Altered the Religion of Jesus). Notably, Muḥammad Abū Zahrah described this work as the "calmest" among Ibn Taymīyah's writings, in contrast to his denunciations of other Muslim sects.

g. Ibn Taymīyah emphasized that the "saved sect" ('al-firqah al-nājiyah')

comprises the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, followers of the path of the *Sābiqūn* (predecessors) from the *Muhājirūn* (Emigrants) and the *Anṣār* (Helpers).

From these positions, it is evident that Ibn Taymīyah formulated a singular creedal theory he deemed correct, condemning all other orientations as erroneous. In doing so, he consolidated preceding ideas into a unified sectarian framework, collectively rejecting alternative doctrines.

4.1. Ibn Taymīyah's Views in Creed and Jurisprudence

Regarding creed and jurisprudence, Ibn Taymīyah opposed the acceptance of the "closure of 'ijtihād'" by the four juristic schools. He rejected the legitimacy of this fatwā and defended the continuation of 'ijtihād', insisting it be derived directly from the Qur'ān and Sunnah without reliance on intermediary juristic principles ('uṣūl'). He openly defied Sultan Baybars's decree restricting 'ijtihād' to the four schools, seeking instead to establish his own *madhhab* (school) based on the opinions of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and his successors.

He argued that any qualified individual is permitted to perform absolute 'ijtihād'. If such a person finds one of two juristic opinions more compelling, they should act accordingly. This applies to those capable of *ijtihād al-takhrīj* (derivational reasoning);

otherwise, one should engage in ‘taqlīd’ (imitation) of a qualified scholar. Ibn Taymīyah did not specify the qualifications for ‘ijtihād’, leaving this determination to the individual. Importantly, he maintained that a *mujtahid* (practitioner of ‘ijtihād’) receives divine reward even if mistaken, and their error is forgiven (Ibn Taymīyah, n.d., p. 84). This stance explains why some of Ibn Taymīyah’s fatwās contradict those of the four established schools (al-Kathīrī, 2008, p. 210).

He also held that the consensus (‘ijmā’) of the *Ṣaḥābah* (the Prophet’s Companions) is infallible, as truth does not extend beyond them. Similarly, if a Companion expressed an opinion uncontradicted by others and unsupported by any known text (‘naṣṣ’), or if the opinion became widely accepted without objection, it constitutes an “affirmative consensus” (‘al-ijmā’ al-iqrārī’) (‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, 1997, p. 106). This aligns with the theory of the “virtuous centuries.” However, if Companions disagreed, neither opinion constitutes definitive proof (‘ḥujjah qāṭi’ah’), unless both are permissible, in which case the individual subject to the ruling (‘mukallaf’) may choose. Ibn Taymīyah frequently stated, “The consensus of the *Ṣaḥābah* is a definitive proof, and their difference (‘ikhtilāf’) is a vast

mercy” (Ibn Taymīyah, 2001, p. 113).

4.2. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah

Ibn Taymīyah’s student, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah (d. 751 AH / circa 1350 CE), is regarded as his most prominent successor. He accompanied Ibn Taymīyah from 712 AH (circa 1312 CE) until the latter’s death in 728 AH (1328 CE) (al-Ṣafadī, 1410 AH, Vol. 2, p. 270; Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 14, p. 246).

Historians note that although Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah recognized the necessity of ‘ijtihād’, he adhered closely to his teacher’s positions, deviating not “so much as a fingertip.” He championed Ibn Taymīyah’s views, edited, and disseminated his works (al-‘Asqalānī, 1349 AH, Vol. 1, p. 480). He was imprisoned alongside Ibn Taymīyah in the Damascus Citadel for two years and released shortly after his teacher’s death. Subsequently, he continued to propagate Ibn Taymīyah’s teachings, particularly his critiques of other sects, schools, and creedal orientations deemed heresies, despite their widespread acceptance among Muslims. He actively suppressed what he considered creedal deviations and advocated adherence to the understanding and conduct of the ‘Salaf’ (Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, 1973, Vol. 1, p. 8; Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 4, p. 246).

Numerous creedal conflicts arose between Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah’s

followers and adherents of other orientations. Notably, clashes between the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth wa-al-Athar* (People of Ḥadīth and Tradition) and the Shāfi'īs (with Ash'arī inclinations) in Muḥarram 716 AH (circa 1316 CE) resulted in significant casualties on both sides (al-Sayyid, 1990, p. 119). Ibn al-Qayyim emphasized his teacher's methodology, underscoring the necessity of adhering to textual sources ('nuṣūṣ') and traditions ('āthār') in formulating 'aqā'id' (creeds) while rejecting rational deduction. Scholars attribute to him over seventy treatises and books, some contributing to the development of extremist thought. Among these are *Ijtimā' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmīyah 'alá Ghazw al-Firqah al-Jahīmah* (The Assembling of the Islamic Armies to Invade the Jahmīyah Sect), which adopts creedal propositions and refutes the *Ahl al-Ta'tīl* (those who divest Allah of attributes) (al-Sayyid, 1990, p. 119). Other works include treatises on 'ijtihād' and 'taqlīd', *Aḥkām Ahl al-Dhimmah* (Rulings Concerning the People of the Covenant), *Uṣūl al-Tafsīr* (Principles of Exegesis), *A'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn* (Signs of the Signatories), which rejects rational deduction and analogy ('qiyās'), and *al-Ṭuruq al-Ḥikmīyah* (The Judicial Methods), addressing judiciary and Shari'a governance (al-Sayyid, 1990, p. 121). Following the eighth century AH

(fourteenth century CE), the Islamic world experienced a profound intellectual and civilizational stagnation. The avenues for development and enlightenment were closed, resulting in a prolonged period of decline until the early thirteenth century AH (late eighteenth/early nineteenth century CE). Amid this intellectual dormancy, a reform movement emerged in Najd and al-Ḥijāz, led by Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Najdī, who initiated what became known as the 'Wahhābīyah' (Wahhābism).

5. The Wahhābī Movement and Its Extensions within Salafism

The Islamic world has historically experienced religious rigidity (tashaddud), excommunication (takfīr), and violence as significant elements of its religious development across successive eras. This phenomenon has progressively intensified, culminating in the contemporary context as a historical consequence of these antecedents. The origins trace back to the earliest literalist tendency (al-naz'ah al-ḥarfīyah) during the Prophet Muhammad's era, which found practical expression in the Khawārij movement from the first century AH (36 AH / circa 657 CE) until the decline of the Umayyad state (132 AH / circa 750 CE). Subsequently, this tendency evolved theoretically

through the jurisprudential opinions of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, who elaborated and substantiated these concepts with ḥadīths and traditions (āthār) transmitted from the Companions (Ṣaḥābah) and their successors (Tābi'īn).

This trajectory intensified through the accumulation of rigid Ḥanbalī perspectives attributed to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, which Ibn Taymīyah later systematized into a scholarly doctrine. This orientation engendered significant conflict with adherents of other theological schools during the fourth and fifth centuries AH. The persistence of rigid thought continued to provoke controversy and doctrinal disputes until the era of Ibn Taymīyah. It is posited that the political fragmentation and emergence of Islamic statelets in the seventh century AH created a conducive environment for rigidity, contributing to the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad's inability to repel the Tatar (Mongol) invasion (656 AH / 1258 CE). Consequently, the Islamic world, encompassing its social and doctrinal components, entered a crisis marked by diminished capacity to advance its civilizational and intellectual vision. This period witnessed the rapid expansion of rigidity, which capitalized on widespread anxieties regarding religious identity and intensified resistance to the perceived infidel

(kāfir) invasion. This milieu facilitated the survival and expansion of the Ḥanābilah, enabling them to influence popular sentiment. Prominent figures in this continuum of rigidity include Ibn Taymīyah, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, and other extremist personalities. This dynamic persisted until the era of Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808 AH / circa 1406 CE), whose seminal work, the *Muqaddimah*, asserted that group solidarity ('aṣabīyah') and doctrinal concentration ('al-tarakkuz al-'aḳā'idī') constitute the foundation of states, which dissolve when such concentration—manifested as rigidity—disintegrates.

Ibn Khaldūn's analysis of the internal decline of Islamic state and society during the sixth and seventh centuries AH is reflected externally in the waning of moderation and the concomitant rise of rigidity. Subsequent generations perpetuated violent, rigid fundamentalism. The Islamic world experienced the consequences of the cessation of *ijtihād* (juristic reasoning), prohibition of philosophical inquiry, and delegitimization of theology ('ilm al-kalām'). This intellectual stagnation rendered the community susceptible to superstitions and illusions, resulting in a civilizational defeat. The *Ummah* no longer relied on the laws of causality to achieve its goals, nor was its economy based on the laws of production.

Instead, people relied on unproven metaphysical beliefs, veneration of saints, jinn, angels, and intercession by holy figures. Practices such as tawassul (seeking blessings) at sites associated with the pious increased.

Within this context, the Wahhābī vision emerged, initially presenting itself as a corrective movement aimed at reforming religious beliefs and perceptions, albeit employing violent and coercive methods. This section will examine its doctrines, beliefs, and methodologies following an overview of its founder, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb.

5.1. Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb

Born in the early eighteenth century CE (1703 CE / 1115 AH) in al-'Uyaynah, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Najdī received his foundational religious education from Ḥanbalī scholars and adherents of Ibn Taymīyah's teachings. He furthered his studies in prominent Islamic cities including Makkah al-Mukarramah, al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, and al-Baṣrah, focusing on ḥadīth studies and ḥadīth methodology (dirāyah). Returning to Najd, he settled in al-Ḥuraymilah and began disseminating his views on tawḥīd (monotheism), shirk (polytheism), and 'ibādah (worship). His seminal work, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd (The Book of Monotheism),

critiques contemporary practices such as tawassul (seeking intercession through saints (awliyā'), their stations (maqāmāt), and graves. This critique formed the foundation of his corrective vision aimed at restoring Muslims to the fundamentals of their faith, purged of creedal and juristic distortions (al-Najdī, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 8).

Facing resistance, he relocated to al-Dir'īyah, where he allied with its ruler, Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd. Their agreement entailed Ibn Sa'ūd providing political and military support in exchange for sovereignty (imārah) over annexed territories, while Shaykh Muḥammad assumed responsibility for ideological, fatwā, and religious guidance. This alliance significantly contributed to the establishment of the Saudi state, and their political position was strengthened by tribal alliances with them (al-Būṭāmī, 1404 AH, p. 16). They engaged in religious wars against opposing factions beginning in 1158 AH (circa 1745 CE), culminating in the capture of al-Riyāḍ in 1187 AH (circa 1773 CE), a pivotal expansion of Wahhābī influence.

Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb died in 1206 AH (circa 1792 CE). His sons and grandsons succeeded him in the religious positions within the Saudi entity, which extended across most of the Peninsula (Ibn Bāz, 1411 AH, p. 19; al-Turkī, n.d., p. 34).

The conquests under the leadership of his son, ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Shaykh. They followed the same methodology of demolishing graves, mosques built on graves, and domes. They called for the application of Sharī‘ah, the establishment of ḥudūd (prescribed punishments), and the combating of bida’ (heretical innovations). They then moved to capture Makkah al-Mukarramah in 1218 AH (ca. 1803 CE), where they demolished domes and monuments. Two years later, they seized al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah and did the same there.

These actions provoked military responses from Istanbul and Cairo, resulting in prolonged conflict (1226-1233 AH / circa 1811-1818 CE). Ultimately, the House of Sa‘ūd consolidated control over the Arabian Peninsula (Ibrāhīm, 2009, p. 24), culminating in the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

5.2. Common Characteristics of Wahhābism and Historical Fundamentalism

- a. Adoption of the Salaf’s creed-al paradigm as normative, consistent with preceding Salafī movements.
- b. Assertion of its vision as the absolute, divinely sanctioned truth, extending the concept of the “saved sect” (al-firqah al-nājiyah), whereby opposition is deemed misguided (ḍāll) and classified as disbelievers (kāfir)

whose blood and property are forfeitable.

- c. The belief that Muslim lands corrupted by bida’ have become abodes of disbelief (diyār kufr), justifying their invasion (ghazwahā) and forced adherence to the Wahhābī creed.

5.3. Doctrines of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb

- a. Emphasis on exclusive worship of Allah alone, rejecting association with any partner, including angels or messengers, termed Tawḥīd al-Ulūhīyah (Monotheism of Divinity).
- b. Prohibition of seeking closeness to Allah through saints (awliyā’), considering such acts shirk (polytheism), misguidance (ḍalāl), and disbelief (kufr).
- c. Forbiddance of tawassul (intercession) through the Prophet or other figures posthumously, labeling practitioners as kāfir.
- d. Restriction of pilgrimage to the three mosques: al-Masjid al-Ḥarām (Makkah), al-Masjid al-Nabawī (al-Madīnah), and Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem).
- e. Prohibition of constructing edifices over graves, covering them with cloth (kiswah), lighting lamps, and performing rituals such as ziyārah al-shirkīyah (polytheistic visitation), tamassuḥ (wiping), and ṭawāf (circumambulation) around graves. Wahhābīs

were mandated to demolish such structures and punish those engaging in tawassul through them.

f. Affirmation of Allah's names and attributes (al-asmā' wa-al-ṣifāt) without anthropomorphism (tamthīl), formation (tak'yīf), or hermeneutic interpretation (ta'wīl).

g. Rejection of bida' such as celebrating the Prophet's birthday (al-Mawlid al-Nabawī) and Sufi practices.

h. Assertion that contemporary Muslims engaging in bida' and misguidance commit a graver sin than the polytheists of old, because the latter were polytheists from the outset.

5.4. Works of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb

Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb authored several works, including Kitāb al-Tawḥīd (The Book of Monotheism), which delineates sins constituting kufr; al-Uṣūl al-Thalāthah (The Three Fundamentals: Allah, Islam, the Prophet); al-Uṣūl al-Sittah (The Six Fundamentals: behavioral recommendations); and a collection of fifty epistles (Rasā'il) addressed to contemporary scholars, compiled into a five-part volume.

Central to Wahhābī thought are two pillars: linking worship (ībādah) to monotheism (tawḥīd), positing tawḥīd as the specific antidote to bida'; and branding others as polytheists due to their customary and traditional practices.

Regarding the link between worship and tawḥīd, they hold that tawḥīd has two forms. The first is Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyah (Monotheism of Lordship: i.e., creation and providence). The second is Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyah (Monotheism of Divinity), which is Allah's sole right to worship and obedience. Accordingly, Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyah is not satisfied by mere verbal profession; it requires worshipful action. Whoever does not comply with worship *as the Wahhābīs define it* is a kāfir. Sincere worship of Him alone prohibits tawassul (seeking intercession) through any other means, including awliyā' (saints), prophets, and Ṣaḥābah (Companions). Seeking tawassul through them is kufr. The concept of tawḥīd is considered the fundamental call of Islam because it is a monotheistic call that negates shirk. Traditional Muslim scholars detailed the discussions of tawḥīd and clarified its seven levels: tawḥīd of Essence (al-dhātī), Creatorship (al-khāliqiyah), Lordship (al-rubūbiyah), then in Legislation (al-tashrī'), Obedience (al-ṭā'ah), Sovereignty (al-ḥākimiyyah), and Worship (al-ībādah). However, late Salafism only recognizes three types of tawḥīd: Rubūbiyah (deism), Ulūhiyah (divinity), and Tawḥīd al-Ṣifāt (Monotheism of Attributes) (Subḥānī, 1402 AH, Vol. 4, p. 67). The concept of Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyah is to affirm Allah alone in creatorship and care for His

creation.

As for Tawḥīd al-Ulūhīyah, it proceeds from the premise that ‘ibādah (worship) is both an external action and an internal, heartfelt belief; that is, the belief is manifested through worship. The necessary consequence of this is that whoever seeks tawassul through other than Allah is making that entity equal to Allah in power. That entity is perceived as either independent in power or a partner with Allah, and both are kufr. The beings through whom people seek intercession to the One, the Singular, are not owners of absolute power, independently, nor are they partners with Allah. The sole distinction is that the correct belief is that Allah is the independent actor to whom all command is delegated. Based on this theorizing, pretexts are established to accuse Muslims of shirk if they seek tawassul through a saint (walī), seek their intercession, or visit their graves.

Linguistically, ‘ibādah denotes submission (al-khuḍū‘) and humility (al-tadhallul), defined as obedience (ṭā‘ah) coupled with belief in the worshipped’s divinity, lordship, and independence of action. Tawassul to others contradicts this independence, implying partnership or independent power, both forms of kufr.

Wahhābīs also reject taqlīd (imitation), deeming adherence to a specific

madhhab (school of law) as kufr. They advocate direct derivation of rulings from the Qur’ān and Sunnah, particularly from texts such as al-Muwaṭṭa‘, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, and the Sunan collections. This approach fosters individual ijtihād without rigorous methodological control.

The Wahhābī call (al-da‘wah al-Wahhābīyah) has historically faced extensive refutation and criticism, with numerous works dedicated to challenging its propositions and innovations. Notable among these are the refutation by Shaykh Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Najdī, a brother of Wahhābīyah’s founder (Ibn Marzūq, n.d., Vol. 2, p. 260), and Fitnat al-Wahhābīyah (The Wahhābī Tribulation) by Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān, a Shāfi‘ī jurist from Makkah.⁵

Following the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the early last century and the stabilization of its rule, a large number of people were influenced by the thought of the global Islamic movement and became acquainted with its intellectual output and the Wahhābī governance. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia absorbed the members and leaders of the Islamic movements. It initiated the embrace of cadres from Islamic movements fleeing their countries, specifically those from persecuted Islamist groups.

It prepared a refuge for them in order to spread the Wahhābī vision among them. This happened, for example, to groups of the *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn* (Muslim Brotherhood) who fled Egypt after the execution of Sayyid Quṭb, those fleeing the battles in the Syrian city of Ḥamāh, and those who came from countries around the world to work and study. Consequently, we find that most of the Jihādī Islamic organizations were founded, grew, and were nurtured in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and spread to the countries of the Islamic world, and indeed, the entire globe.

6. Salafism in the Modern Era: The Contributions of al-Mawdūdī and Sayyid Quṭb

Contemporary fundamentalism emerged primarily as a response to Western colonialism, particularly the British occupation of the Indian subcontinent. This occupation, which preceded Western incursions into the Middle East and the Arab world, fostered a spirit of resistance that utilized Islamic doctrines as a framework for opposing colonial domination and mobilizing efforts to overcome its effects. Abū al-A'lā al-Mawdūdī, born in 1903 in Ḥaydarābād decades after British colonization, was deeply influenced by calls to resist colonial rule. After completing his scholarly training in Islamic

sciences and the Arabic and Persian languages, he engaged in journalism and intellectual-political discourse, significantly shaping the political trajectory of Indian Muslims and the establishment of Pakistan.

In 1941, al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmīyah (the Islamic Group) was founded and al-Mawdūdī became its Amīr (leader). He authored twenty-one books, with key works relevant to this study including *al-Islām wa-al-Jāhilīyah* (Islam and Jāhilīyah), *al-Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh* (Jihād in the Path of Allah), and *al-Dīn al-Qayyim* (The True Religion) ('Imārah, 1987, p. 69; al-Turābī, 1987). In these texts, al-Mawdūdī articulated a foundational theoretical and methodological framework for reviving traditional religious concepts through a fundamentalist lens, systematically organized into an ideological theory. He elaborated on four principal concepts:

1. Kingship, sovereignty, and supremacy ('al-mulk, al-sultān, al-ghalabah') representing knowledge of Allah.
2. Obedience, humility, and servitude ('al-ṭā'ah, al-dhull, al-'ubūdīyah') denoting humanity's duties in the world.
3. Recompense, reward, and reckoning ('al-jazā', al-mukāfa'ah, al-ḥisāb') concerning humanity's reward in the Hereafter.

4. The way and methodology (‘al-ṭarīqah, al-manhaj’) to attain the kingdom of Allah, constituting the methodology for paradigm creation. Although these concepts existed within Islamic ‘ilm al-kalām (Islamic theology), al-Mawdūdī reinterpreted them with intentional ideological mobilization. His objective was to construct a fundamentalist creed capable of confronting modern Western social and political theories, particularly those advocating the separation of religion and politics. He posited Islam as both *sharī‘ah* (law) and *aqīdah* (creed), suitable for governing all aspects of human affairs across cultures, lands, and eras. For al-Mawdūdī, Islam represented the sole true and correct methodology for human and civilizational development, constituting the final paradigm (al-Mawdūdī, 1981, pp. 5-8). Al-Mawdūdī further asserted that humanity, despite cultural and ethnic diversity, constitutes a single fixed species governed by universal laws established by Allah. The universe and nature operate under eternal formative laws, which correspond to Islam’s legislative laws, forming two pillars: creed (‘*aqīdah*) and law (*sharī‘ah*). He concluded that Islam offers an integrated synthesis between these legislative and formative laws, thereby providing a civilizational

project that must govern humanity universally (Sa’d, 2006, p. 27).

Through this theological and juridical reinterpretation, al-Mawdūdī reinstated the “fixed” (*al-thābit*) element in religious knowledge while negating the “variable” (*al-mutaghayyir*) aspect. Anthropologically, he presented Islam as a call for comprehensive change and renewal, a revolutionary project aimed at liberation from human tyranny and corruption. Islam’s antithesis is perpetually *Jāhilīyah* (ignorance), which it combats across all eras, necessitating spiritual practice and resistance to the renewed *Jāhilīyah* (Sa’d, 2006, p. 105).

al-Mawdūdī’s reinterpretation profoundly influenced subsequent fundamentalist thought, notably that of Sayyid Quṭb (‘Imād, Ed., 2013, Vol. 1, p. 90). Quṭb extended al-Mawdūdī’s concepts, particularly the principle of *Ḥākīmīyah* (sovereignty) and the notion of the “New *Jāhilīyah*,” imbuing them with an activist dimension. al-Mawdūdī contended that many who profess the Shahādātayn (the two testimonies of faith) misunderstand *Ḥākīmīyah*, initiating the concept of the New *Jāhilīyah* with creedal ignorance (*al-jahl al-‘aqā’idī*). This skepticism allowed some to claim the authority to examine others’ faith and, subsequently, to perform *takfīr*

(excommunication) against those deemed nonconforming—a practice adopted by many followers of al-Mawdūdī's interpretations ('Imād, Ed., 2013, Vol. 1, p. 81).

Sayyid Quṭb, influenced by one of al-Mawdūdī's books, Islamic Political Theory, transformed *Jāhilīyah* from a temporal to a socio-political-creedal condition. He argued that any system not governed by Islamic rulings constitutes a New *Jāhilīyah*, a condition pervasive in his contemporary world. His brother, Muḥammad Quṭb, authored a book titled (*Jāhilīyah of the Twentieth Century*), asserting the continuity of *Jāhilīyah* for fourteen centuries, except during the era of the *al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidīn* (Rightly Guided Caliphs), regarded as the purest *Salaf* paradigm. This interpretation narrowed the traditional scope of the "three virtuous centuries" to only one part of the first generation, extending *Jāhilīyah* to Quṭb's time. For Quṭb, the declaration of Allah's Lordship (*Rubūbiyah*) necessitates a comprehensive revolution (*al-thawrah al-shāmilah*) against *Jāhilīyah* and human sovereignty. He posited that all countries should be considered *Dār Kufr* (Abode of Disbelief) and *Dār Ḥarb* (Abode of War) unless Islamic law is applied, regardless of Muslim population presence ('Imād, Ed., 2013, Vol. 1, p. 90). This philosophy

underpins the principle of supremacy (*al-ghalabah*) and the imposition of *sharī'ah* without popular consent. Consequently, Quṭb's thought dismantled the Salafī principle of the "three virtuous centuries" and the juristic consensus (*ijmā'*) that lands with Muslim majorities practicing worship safely are *Dār Islām* (Quṭb, 1984, p. 39).

This cognitive shift justified a revolutionary movement aimed at overthrowing the "kingdom of man" to establish the "kingdom of Allah" through rebellion against rulers (*al-khurūj 'alā al-ḥukkām*), contrasting earlier Salafī thought that protected rulers (*Walī al-Amr*) from rebellion. Quṭb further argued for abolishing all human legislation, as it usurps Allah's exclusive right to legislate (*al-tashrī'*), establishing the sovereignty of tyrants. He redefined rebellion against social systems as a religious duty, reversing its prior prohibition (Quṭb, 1984, p. 68).

Quṭb proposed that the Islamic group begin as a small cell to form the "believing group", with its call (*da'wah*) initially limited to the Qur'ān, mirroring the Meccan period. Progressing from creed to action, the group would:

1. Emotionally isolate from the New *Jāhilīyah* society.
2. Functionally isolate by abstaining from its institutions.

3. Cultivate a sense of superiority over it.

4. Initiate fighting against *Jāhiliyah* to establish a new Islamic order based solely on creed.

5. Treat others according to three options: Islam, *Jizyah* (poll tax paid by non-Muslims), or fighting.

This framework reflects the necessity of a comprehensive revolution against human sovereignty (*ḥākimīyat al-bashar*), aimed at dismantling the *Jāhiliyah* paradigm. Quṭb's interpretation exhibits greater cognitive flexibility, rigorously developing concepts such as *Ḥākimīyah* and the New *Jāhiliyah*. The exclusionary nature of Quṭb's jihādī reading is evident in its endorsement of internal fighting against the "near enemy" (*al-'adūw al-aqrab*), prioritized over the "far enemy." It condemns all human theories and systems as disbelief (*kufr*), labeling rulers in Muslim countries as the abstaining/rebellious faction (*al-tā'ifah al-mumtani'ah*) and their state apparatus as "helpers of the oppressors" (*a'wān al-ẓalamah*). Quṭb's justification of indiscriminate violence, including the use of Muslims as human shields (*tatarrus*) in armed attacks, further underscores the militant dimension of his thought (Berger, 1970).

Quṭb's famous book, *Ma'ālim fī al-Ṭarīq* (Milestones in the Road), is

regarded as the foundational action theory marking the transition from peaceful fundamentalism to jihādī fundamentalism (*al-uṣūliyah al-Jihādīyah*). The book was used as judicial evidence in his trial, which resulted in his execution. It also divided fundamentalists into two camps: those who accept it as the constitution of the Islamic fundamentalist movement and those who critique and revise its propositions.

Among its critics was Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī, General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, who in *Du'āh lā Quḍāh* (Preachers, Not Judges) refuted both al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb. His critiques include:

a. The recognition of Islam is accomplished by the mere utterance of the Shahādātayn, which protects a Muslim's life, wealth, and honor without requiring comprehension of its deeper meanings or full practical application.

b. The term *Ḥākimīyah* is absent from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, representing an innovation (*muḥdathāt*) by al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb.

c. Legislation contains both fixed and variable elements, with the latter allowing human *ijtihād* (reasoning) in worldly affairs, a nuance neglected by Quṭb's theory.

d. Faith is not invalidated by sin; sincerity of creed is a matter of con-

science, which cannot be externally judged, and sinners remain Muslims (al-Huḍaybī, 1981, p. 77).

Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī also criticized Quṭb for his expansive use of *takfīr* and his strict interpretation of *Jihād*, including the assertion that the “Verse of the Sword” (Āyat al-Sayf) abrogated all peaceful verses with other nations (al-Qaraḍāwī, n.d.). While al-Qaraḍāwī’s stance has become more rigid over time, these critiques highlight ongoing debates within Islamic fundamentalism.

The faction embracing Quṭb’s militant interpretation eventually left Egypt, seeking refuge in Saudi Arabia and Sudan, from which more rigid jihādī groups emerged. These groups, despite their diversity, share foundational principles.

7. The Salafism of Ibn Lādin and al-Zawāhirī

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and the Ḥanbalī school of thought in general, established an authoritative framework alongside the Holy Qur’ān and Ḥadīth, termed the “Creed of the Salaf” (‘Aqīdat al-Salaf’), which mandates adherence to the theological understanding of the early generations of Muslims, including the Ṣaḥābah (Companions), the Tābi’īn (their followers), Atbā’ al-tābi’īn (Tābi’īn’s followers), and esteemed Imāms. This creedal orientation obligates

successive Muslim generations to eschew religious innovations, commonly referred to as ‘muḥdathāt’ or ‘bida’ (al-Atharī, 1418 AH, p. 15). Historically, various iterations of Salafism have emerged, each differing in doctrinal emphases and priorities. The Salafism of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal originated as a reaction against the incorporation of Greek philosophical knowledge into Islamic culture. Subsequently, Ibn Taymīyah critiqued Aristotelian logic and esoteric (‘bāṭiniyah’) and Sufi movements prevalent in his era. The decline of the Ottoman Empire and its intellectual influence precipitated reformist movements such as that of Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, who sought to “correct” perceived deviations from authentic Islam and resist “imported” knowledge.

In the modern period, reformist Salafism (‘al-Salafīyah al-Iṣlāḥīyah’) emerged in Egypt as a response to Western colonial knowledge, while “National Salafism” (‘al-Salafīyah al-Waṭaniyah’) in the Arab Maghrib expressed concerns regarding Western intellectual influence and colonialism. Post-1967, Salafist movements with jihādī tendencies arose, advocating armed defense of the Islamic creed (‘aqīdah’). Although sharing foundational principles with earlier Salafisms, these movements diverged

in their methods and objectives. Jihādī Salafism (‘al-Salafīyah al-Jihādīyah’) represents a particularly militant strand, positing jihād as the exclusive means for comprehensive Islamic reform. It characterizes contemporary Islamic societies as engulfed in a “New Jāhiliyah,” corrupted by Western thought and thus constituting a ‘Dār al-Ḥarb’ (Abode of War) (‘Imād, Ed., 2013, Vol. 1, p. 98). This classification is supported by scriptural (‘naṣṣ’) and consensus (‘ijmā’’) evidence. Prominent theorists include Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī, Ayman al-Ḍawāhirī, and Usāmah ibn Lādin.

The evolution of Salafism is characterized by successive waves that incorporate additions to the foundational historical thesis of preceding Salafist thought. Jihādī Salafism (al-Salafīyah al-Jihādīyah), through multiple revisions, introduced the concept of *fiqh al-wāqī’* (jurisprudence of reality) or *fiqh al-darūrah* (jurisprudence of necessity) to legitimize departures from the established tenets of the Salaf. Notably, this includes a redefinition of the scope of *jihād*, shifting from combat against recalcitrant non-believers (al-kuffār al-mu‘ānidīn) perceived as threats to the Muslim community, to intra-Muslim conflict arising from divergent interpretations of *ijtihād* (juristic

reasoning). This transformation reflects tensions between classical Salafī texts and the pragmatic imperatives of contemporary fundamentalist groups, particularly concerning tactics such as suicide operations. Consequently, modifications have been made to certain elements of the contemporary Salafī framework, diverging from traditional interpretations, which will be examined herein.

In the context of the geopolitical upheavals following the defeat of June 1967 and the October 1973 War, a distinct group emerged within Saudi Arabia. This group capitalized on the influx of Islamist activists who had fled various regions of the Islamic world to propagate the Jihādī vision of Neo-Salafism. Concurrently, the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan catalyzed the expansion of these movements. The group established its own institutions, notably the *Markaz al-Khidmāt* (Services Center), founded in 1984 by Ibn Lādin and ‘Abd Allāh ‘Azzām, followed by *al-Fārūq* camp, which was designed to support and train *mujāhidīn* engaged in combat against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. These institutions received backing from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan under the guise of countering Soviet occupation. In 1988, Ibn Lādin instituted registries

to document the growing number of volunteers. The al-Qā'idah organization secured its initial success by compelling the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, an event that enhanced its legitimacy and provided significant ideological momentum. This victory encouraged the group to adopt a global perspective, independent of any particular state's interests. Consequently, during the Second Gulf War (1990–1991), the group opposed its former benefactors, with Ibn Lādin denouncing the American military presence in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (Sifaoui, 2003). This opposition led to his expulsion from Saudi Arabia and subsequent relocation to Sudan, where he declared an alliance with al-Zawāhirī. Thus, Salafī thought subsequently merged with the more radical elements of the *Ikhwānī* (Muslim Brotherhood) ideology, resulting in a stringent extremist doctrine characterized by violent objectives. Central to this ideology was the imperative to expel polytheists (*mushrikīn*) from the Arabian Peninsula, with the explicit aim that all non-Muslims within this region were subject to lethal force. The group's tactics evolved to include targeting security personnel in various Islamic countries, who were perceived as obstacles to their anti-foreign agenda. In 1998, the World Islamic Front for

Fighting Jews and Crusaders (*al-Jabhah al-Ālamīyah li-Qitāl al-Yahūd wa-al-Ṣalībīyīn*) (al-Mushawwah, 1999, p. 82) was proclaimed, marking the formal global organization of al-Qā'idah under this designation for the first time. Jihādī Salafism has a set of intellectual foundations, including:

1. It represents a late development within a rigorous religious trajectory, synthesizing the Salafī creed—originally articulated by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and subsequently developed by Ibn Taymīyah and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb—with the concepts of *Ḥākīmīyah* (Sovereignty) as proposed by al-Mawdūdī and Quṭb's *Ma'ālim*. This synthesis involves a literalist engagement with sacred texts, often disregarding established historical interpretations, thereby reinterpreting these texts to justify a novel ideological stance.
2. It successfully amalgamated the experience of *jihād* against foreign occupiers in Afghanistan with the *Ikhwānī jihād* movements in Egypt and Syria, facilitating the exchange and accumulation of practical expertise. Notably, it introduced a strategic shift by deprioritizing *jihād* against the "far enemy" (*al-'adūw al-ab'ad*) in favor of targeting the "near enemy" (*al-'adūw al-aqrab*), as conceptualized within its framework.
3. The movement introduced

reinterpretations (*ta'wīlāt*) of traditional Salafī doctrines, including the transformation of the “theory of peaceful change” into advocacy for “change by armed force” under the rubric of *jihād*. This shift prioritizes militant logic over missionary efforts (*da'wah*) and expands the scope of activism from national reform to the pursuit of a global Islamic revolution.

4. It establishes a clear rupture from contemporary intellectual currents, characterized by the propagation of hostility toward Western modernity and the rejection of critical inquiry, analysis, and enlightenment within the Islamic intellectual milieu. Concepts such as democracy, civil society, pluralism, interfaith dialogue (Nusayrah, 2008a, p. 66), and critiques of religious thought are dismissed as products of infidelity.

5. The movement re-theorizes the jurisprudence (*fiqh*) of *jihād*, contending that traditional legal frameworks were formulated under historical conditions distinct from the contemporary global context. It thus advocates for a revised understanding of *jihād* that aligns with the operational needs of fundamentalist actors.

6. It repudiates the traditional Salafī respect for the authority (*wilāyah*) of unjust rulers, instead endorsing the legitimacy of rebellion

as derived from Khawārij thought, albeit reformulated with differing terminology (For details, See: Faraj, n.d., p. 27).

7. The concept of *Hākimīyah* is transformed from the principle of “no compulsion in religion” to one advocating political coercion through the imposition of Sharī'ah law, irrespective of individual faith commitments.

8. Correspondingly, the fundamentalist paradigm defines a country as part of *Dār al-Islām* based solely on the presence of a ruler who enforces Sharī'ah ('Abd al-Raḥmān, n.d., p. 17), disregarding the populace's adherence, thereby adhering to a “Caliphate state” model.

9. The dichotomy between *Dār al-Islām* and *Dār al-Kufr* is redefined from a demographic majority basis to one centered on the application of Sharī'ah law. Jurisdictions where Sharī'ah is implemented are classified as *Dār al-Islām*, regardless of the population's beliefs, and vice versa, thereby imposing a legalistic paradigm devoid of social consent.

10. The movement rejects any potential for the evolution of legislation and religious thought through human reason.

11. Transformations in the *fiqh* of *jihād* include the removal of the requirement for a ruler's permission to

legitimize *jihād*, the reclassification of *jihād* from a collective obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*) to an individual obligation (*farḍ 'ayn*) incumbent upon the entire Muslim community (*Ummah*), the expansion of *jihād* beyond defensive measures to obligatory "initiative-based *jihād*" aimed at establishing the supremacy of Allah's word, and the assertion that *jihād* constitutes the exclusive legal framework governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslim nations (Nusayrah, 2008b, p. 5).

Thus, a fundamentalist ideological foundation was integrated into a global vision characterized by a propensity for violence and a martial ethos. This composite structure emerges from the Salafī creed combined with the Jihādī (Quṭbist) theory of Ḥākīmīyah (Sovereignty). The proponents adopted Ibn Taymīyah's fatwā concerning the people of Mārdīn, embedding it within the religious underpinnings of the Jihādī concept.⁶ Furthermore, they transformed al-Mawdūdī's notion of Ḥākīmīyah into a foundational premise and incorporated Quṭb's Ma'ālim into the Salafī creed, thereby completing the intellectual and doctrinal framework of the global fundamentalist ideology. Consequently, the prevailing paradigm of Jihādī fundamentalist movements represents the culmination of these evolving historical roots, encompassing

both fundamentalist visions and Jihādī praxis.

8. The Evolution of Salafism into Jamism/Madkhalism

Reformist figures in Saudi Arabia, notably Salmān al-'Awdah, advocated for the transformation of socio-political and religious conditions within the Kingdom and the broader Islamic world. Their efforts materialized through the establishment of groups influenced by Salafī ideology, interwoven with the *Ikhwānī* (Muslim Brotherhood) framework, reflecting a preference for reform via collective engagement via political parties. This synthesis incorporated the sovereignty theories of Quṭb and al-Mawdūdī about Ḥākīmīyah, alongside Wahhābī doctrinal principles. The resultant ideological amalgamation precipitated the emergence of some of the most militant Salafī factions within Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi state subsequently extended support to these hardline groups across various regions to propagate their influence. Among these was the movement termed "scholarly Salafism" (*al-Salafīyah al-'ilmīyah*), which concentrated on the dissemination of Ḥadīth and the establishment of rigorous jurisprudential (*fiqh*) and theological ('*aqīdah*) frameworks. Proponents such as Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī and

Muḥammad Surūr Zayn al-‘Ābidīn dedicated themselves to embedding the Salafī methodological approach in religious comprehension and practice, emphasizing the transmission of this knowledge. From this foundation, the (Jihādī) Salafī movements arose, advocating armed struggle (qitāl), the formation of militant groups, and the bearing of arms against ruling authorities as legitimate means of Islamic propagation.

These Salafī factions challenged a longstanding tenet of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*, which prohibits rebellion against rulers and authorities (ūlī al-amr), regardless of their disobedience, transgression, or injustice. The geopolitical context of the Soviet-Afghan war and the alliance between the United States and Gulf states against the Soviet Union catalyzed the internationalization of Salafī militancy, with fighters engaging in Afghanistan. This period witnessed the expansion of al-Qā‘idah into a transnational organization. Furthermore, the 1979 Iranian Revolution introduced a sectarian (madhhabī) challenge to Ḥanbalī and Wahhābī hardliners through the ascendancy of Shī‘ī Political Islam in Iran. In response, Sunni Salafī Islam formulated intellectual and strategic resistance mechanisms, including intelligence collaboration with adversaries of the Iranian regime,

to counter this Shī‘ī influence.

The pivotal moment in the evolution of Salafī thought occurred during the 1991 Gulf crisis, when Saudi Arabia invited American forces to combat Saddam Hussein’s army in the conflicts over Kuwait and al-Khafjī. At this juncture, the Reformist Salafī current (al-Salafīyah al-Iṣlāḥīyah) opposed this invitation, adhering to a fundamental principle that prohibits seeking assistance from a kāfir (non-Muslim infidel) against a fellow Muslim. This event precipitated a significant schism within the Saudi political sphere and the Wahhābī-Salafī religious community. One faction vocally protested and issued memoranda condemning the presence of American forces, while another faction supported the Saudi government, invoking the Sharī‘ah mandate to obey the Walī al-Amr (ruler) unconditionally. Leading this latter faction was the Ethiopian scholar Muḥammad ibn Amān al-Jāmī (d.1996), who argued that Muslims must obey the ruler as the arbiter of maṣlaḥah (public interest). Subsequently, a new Salafī movement emerged, termed Salafīyū al-Walā’ (Salafīs of Loyalty), characterized by their unwavering loyalty to governing authorities. This movement became known as al-Salafīyah al-Jāmīyah (Jamism) or al-Madkhalīyah (Madkhalism), named after its prominent leader Rabī’ ibn

Hādī al-Madkhalī.

The distinguishing feature of the Madkhalī movement lies in its doctrine of absolute obedience to the ruler, irrespective of the ruler's identity. Accordingly, the movement prohibits criticism of rulers and public demonstrations against them, effectively negating the right to dissenting opinions regarding governmental policies. This stance is grounded in a textualist interpretation of a principle widely accepted among Ahl al-Sunnah (People of the Tradition and Ḥadīth), which endorses acceptance of the government of the victor (al-mutaghallib) and the lesser evil (al-mafḍūl), alongside the political doctrine of political Iṛjā' (postponement of judgment).

Muḥammad ibn Amān al-Jāmī was a Wahhābī-Salafī cleric who served as an instructor at the Islamic University in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah. Of Ethiopian descent, he resided in Saudi Arabia. Among his most notable students is Shaykh Rabī' ibn Hādī al-Madkhalī (1932-1925) who, following al-Jāmī's death, assumed leadership of Jāmī Salafism, which subsequently became known as Madkhalism (al-Madkhalīyah). This movement shares foundational principles with other Salafisms, except regarding the immunity of rulers and the imperative of absolute obedience to them. They

concur with other Salafī groups on the following points:

1. The necessity of returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah, which entails disregarding the scholarly contributions of hundreds of jurists and exegetes over fourteen centuries under the premise of rejecting the established schools of law (madhāhib).
2. The rejection of democracy and human rights as infidel concepts incompatible with Islam, albeit without providing compelling evidence. They lack a coherent political alternative beyond general rhetoric. Presently, Iraq operates under a democratic parliamentary system; internally, they regard this system as violating Sharī'ah law. This stance contradicts the general Salafī position and their own claim regarding obedience to the de facto victorious ruler, revealing a clear inconsistency. They perceive secularism as a grave threat to Muslim identity, as it excludes religion from public life. In this regard, they align with other Salafī groups, though they do not define secularism or its variants.
3. According to the Madkhalīs, the application of Salafī principles is not entirely accurate; rather, only their interpretation is correct. They assert that their intellectual methodology represents the soundest approach to da'wah. Consequently, they deem other Islamic movements—such as

the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwān), Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr, and Jihādī and Scholarly Salafisms—as entirely erroneous and heretic (mubtadi‘ah). This perspective initiates the criminalization of these groups and the issuance of fatwās permitting their killing post-empowerment, achieved through deceiving authorities.

4. They advocate avoiding political action and partisanship to prevent fragmentation of the Ummah, emphasizing the preservation of creed (‘aqīdah). They cite al-Albānī’s advice to Palestinians to emigrate from the West Bank and Gaza to safeguard their creed. This position embodies a severe contradiction and fallacy: condemning political movements constitutes a political stance; obedience to the ruler (sultān) is political; and opposition to Sufis, Mu‘tazilah, Shī‘ah, Ashā‘irah, Māturīdīyah, and moderate Sunnīs involves politically, religiously, and socially charged positions.

5. They maintain that the ruler in Islamic territories must be Sunnī and is not accountable if he attains power through domination, force, or a coup. Accountability is also negated if the ruler is dissolute (fāsiq), unjust, or espouses unacceptable creedal views, as Muslims are commanded to obey the ruler (walī al-amr) unconditionally. Rebellion, protest, and public criticism of the ruler are forbidden.

This absolutist stance enables the empowerment of oppressors and usurpers, potentially endangering the Ummah’s future. A more acceptable position would limit obedience to legitimate governments established through peaceful consultation (shūrā); the problem lies in the absolutist definition of the obeyed ruler.

6. They vehemently oppose the Muslim Brotherhood, urging Saudi authorities to punish and ban the group, labeling them saboteurs and heretics, despite professing a policy of political non-involvement.

7. They criticize Sufi groups, branding them heretics, misguided, and “grave-worshippers” (qubūrīyūn), accusing them of beliefs and rituals contrary to Sharī‘ah, thereby engaging in behaviors that threaten social peace.

8. They regard the Shī‘ah, in all their forms, as a sect (madhhab) characterized by polytheism (shirk) and apostasy (murūq), asserting that they must repent and that none should govern any Muslim country; however, this is not publicly declared.

9. Their method of engagement involves debates (munāzarāt) with dissenters, employing deception, fallacies, and obfuscation, which has misled many impressionable youths. Numerous recorded disputations on platforms like YouTube illustrate

this confusion in social and religious thought.

10. By nature, they are part of the broader Salafī movement, encompassing scholarly, Da'wah, Surūrī, and Jihādī forms. Nonetheless, they claim exclusive correctness, maintaining partial disagreements with other Salafī factions, which pose dangers in the contemporary context.

11. To gain favor in Saudi Arabia, they aligned with authorities besieged by religious establishments opposing reliance on American assistance. They justified this through the doctrine of "absolute obedience to the ruler." al-Madkhalī authored *Ṣadd 'Udwān al-Mulḥidīn wa-Ḥukm al-Isti'ānah bi-Ghayr al-Muslimīn* (Repelling the Aggression of Atheists and the Ruling on Seeking Help from Non-Muslims) in 1991, permitting such assistance. Consequently, the Saudi royal family supported them as a counterbalance to the Ṣaḥwah (Awakening) movement and the Muslim Brotherhood. They sought to apply political non-involvement to religious groups to alleviate pressure from fatwās opposing governmental policies. This support enabled them to consolidate control over the Islamic University in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah. Notably, their alliances include backing Khalifa Haftar in Libya and support South Yemen and other regions as part of an

empowerment strategy. The Madkhalī movement also expanded in Egypt, led by Dr. Muḥammad Sa'īd Raslān, who opposed the Muslim Brotherhood and Morsi, supported Sisi, and issued a fatwā permitting the killing of opponents.

From the foregoing analysis, it is evident that Salafī thought, in its general form, represents a rigid, textually literalist ideology that is anchored in a past-oriented framework and is incongruent with contemporary social developments and civilizational progress. Consequently, the propagation and organizational activities associated with Salafī thought pose significant threats to social security and contribute to religious and sectarian tensions. It is therefore incumbent upon security agencies to maintain vigilant surveillance over all manifestations of Salafī orientations. Regarding Madkhalism, a subset within Salafism, its reconciliation with the Saudi ruling establishment has ushered in a phase of consolidation and empowerment. This has been achieved through a strategic alliance that supports ruling authorities, thereby facilitating its safe expansion and dissemination. As a result, Madkhalism has garnered governmental and religious endorsement, paving the way for its ascendancy and appeal among youth demographics. This

empowerment, bolstered intellectually, demographically, and financially—particularly through foreign support—positions Madkhalism as a locus of considerable risk. This risk is underscored by its overt antagonism toward Iraqi Sunnī institutions such as al-Ribāṭ al-Muḥammadī, the Sunnī Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn), and moderate factions. Furthermore, it engenders potential conflict with the al-Kasnazānīyah Sufi order and other Sufi movements. It is imperative to anticipate and address these emerging challenges.

For instance, the proliferation of hardline Salafī groups in Iraq during the 1990s functioned as an incubatory environment for their development. By 2003, these groups had reached a zenith of influence, precipitating a security breach that resulted in the loss of hundreds of young lives. Continuous monitoring of infiltration within the Sunni Endowment Office and other Sunnī institutions is essential. Such infiltration may precipitate threats comparable in severity to those witnessed in 2014, considering that Dā'ish (ISIL) originated from al-Tawḥīd wa-al-Jihād, which itself emerged from al-Qā'idah, and al-Qā'idah, in turn, originated from the broader Salafī movement.

8.1. Madkhalism and the Current Situation in Iraq

The Jāmī movement emerged in Saudi Arabia in 1991 and established its presence in Iraq following the 2003 political and security vacuum. The movement subsequently infiltrated the Sunni Endowment Office, with its Iraqi leader, Shaykh Muḥammad Khuḍayyir—also known as Abū Manār al-'alamī (tracing his lineage to the town of al-'Alam in Ṣalāḥ-al-Dīn Governorate)—assuming administrative control in the Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn region. Shaykh Khuḍayyir authored *Daḥr al-Muthallib 'alá Jawāz Tawliyat al-Muslim 'alá al-Muslim min Kāfir Mutaghallib* (Refuting the Slanderer Regarding the Permissibility of Appointing a Muslim over a Muslim by a Victorious Infidel), with an introduction by 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Ubaykān. Initially, the movement issued fatwās encouraging members of the Ahl al-Sunnah to join the security forces, even under American administration, based on the theological position that authority vested by an infidel occupier is legitimate and obedience to such authority is obligatory. This stance remains a subject of significant scholarly debate.

Madkhalism opposed the 2012 protests within Sunni regions, categorizing them as rebellion against the walī al-amr (ruler). Consequently, the movement garnered support from official institutions, facilitating

its expansion within mosques across the Baghdad Belt, al-Anbār, Kirkūk, and other areas. This expansion strategy reflects the institutional empowerment of Iraqi Madkhalism.

9. Researcher's Opinion

In the late twentieth century, religiosity evolved into an ideological framework. Within these ideological manifestations of religiosity, political tendencies emerged, resulting in significant events across the Arab world. The Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwān) represents a regional axis encompassing Qatar and Turkey, Salafism forms an axis including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and Iran constitutes the Shī'ī axis linking Iran and Lebanon. The multiplicity of these axes and the ensuing conflicts over influence enable a nuanced understanding and potential benefit from the Salafī experience in Iraq. Religious thought has thus become a catalyst for social power, whether through genuine religiosity or the instrumentalization of religion for political ends. Iraq became ensnared in the Salafī movement beginning with the so-called "Faith Campaign" (*al-Ḥamlah al-Īmānīyah*) initiated by Ṣaddām. Under this campaign's auspices, groups advocating for jihād and the implementation of divine law emerged, intensifying fanaticism and hostility toward opponents of Salafism,

including moderate Sunnīs, Ashā'irah, Sufis, and Shī'ah. This situation poses a threat to social peace, state security, and the nation's future, rendering it susceptible to violent upheaval, as evidenced by the conflict with Dā'ish (ISIL) from 2014 to 2017. Consequently, it is imperative to derive lessons from this experience.

Regrettably, operational strategies to curb the spread of hardline religious ideologies have not been adequately developed. Due to insufficient awareness, Salafī appeals gained traction among Sunni populations, particularly amid evolving political dynamics in Iraq. Efforts to broaden the base of moderate, centrist Muslims were insufficient.

Madkhalī Salafism advanced under the protection of the ruler's immunity (al-ḥākim) and the principle of obedience to him. This principle distinguishes the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* (People of Ḥadīth) from other groups, whereas Jihādī Salafism limits obedience to what it deems a legitimate ruler and actively rebels against all forms of governance in the Islamic world.

Madkhalism expanded with political assurances minimizing its threat, grounded in the belief in immunity through the ruler's protection, sanctity of the *walī al-amr*, and obligatory obedience regardless of his character. However, scrutiny of

Madkhalī ideology and its political activities reveals staunch opposition to Sunni moderation in Iraq, thereby destabilizing social consensus. Their antagonism toward the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwān), Sunni politicians, and Sufi groups such as *al-Ribāṭ* and *al-Kasnazānīyah* constitutes a conflict against centrism and moderation, perpetuating sectarian tensions. This may be preparatory for further conflict, given the intellectual foundation rooted in Salafī orientations. Considering the Syrian context, the potential for escalating danger remains significant.

If the principle of “absolute obedience to the ruler” were comprehensive, encompassing acceptance and understanding of others, Madkhalism could advocate for national reconciliation, tolerance, dialogue, and cooperative coexistence. However, observation of Madkhalī positions indicates hostility toward centrism, moderation, and reconciliation. This doctrinal contradiction raises questions: How do extremists reconcile absolute obedience to the ruler and avoidance of political action with the inherently political nature of such obedience?!

A detailed examination of the contentious relationship between al-Madkhalī in Saudi Arabia and al-‘alamī in Iraq, who is regarded as one

of the “people of sedition” (ahl al-fitān), further complicates this inquiry. Although Madkhalism currently poses less immediate danger than Jihādī movements, it represents a future challenge to moderate Sunni religious thought and, by extension, a threat to political and sectarian stability.

Thus, the overall and conclusive evaluation of the Madkhalī movement is that it represents a faction within hardline Salafī ideology. Its character remains unchanged despite its assertion of absolute obedience to the ruler, primarily because such absolute obedience contradicts widely accepted religious constants and secondly because there is concern that the concept of absolute obedience is a trap for governments, intended to allow the movement to spread and achieve empowerment (tamkīn), only to subsequently alter its fatwā. Moreover, while the avoidance of political engagement is theoretically posited, in practice, the movement operates within a framework of phased political strategy. It is suspected that this movement is associated with the Saudi/Emirati axis, and its ideological foundations are considered perilous due to their derivation from the broader Salafī thought. These foundations include:

a. The movement perceives itself as the possessor of absolute truth,

thereby invalidating all other perspectives.

b. It holds a religious imperative to reform individuals' creed according to its interpretation and to eliminate what it deems heresies (*bida'*) and polytheism (*shirk*), which fuels religious conflicts.

c. It advocates for social transformation aligned with its vision, which explicitly rejects centrism and moderation, posing a threat to national security.

d. Considering regional developments in Lebanon and Syria, Madkhalism does not regard Israeli aggression as necessitating deterrence. Based on the principle of absolute obedience, if Israel were to occupy any territory, obedience to the ruler would become obligatory. It is my view that Madkhalī ideology contributes to aspects of normalization.

e. The inherent threat in the current phase of empowerment (*tamkīn*) lies in the movement's concealment behind "absolute obedience to the ruler" to avoid confrontation with authorities, thereby facilitating unimpeded growth and expansion. Consequently, comprehending the nature of this movement and devising a regulatory strategy is imperative.

f. I lack access to the data presented to the National Security Advisory that led to its classification of

Madkhalism as dangerous, as well as the criteria underpinning the decision to repudiate the Advisory's stance. Therefore, I consider the Advisory's statement to contain significant information.

g. Finally, political intervention to prevent the Advisory from pursuing and enforcing the ban poses no risk, provided that a precise and academic strategy is formulated, the broad contours of which I outline as follows:

Our Arab and Islamic world is rife with religious activism (Political, Sectarian, Salafī, *Ikhwānī*). Individuals often self-appoint as *Muftī* and group leaders, disseminating ideas that can be highly dangerous, exemplified by Usāmah ibn Lādin; Therefore, I propose the establishment of an "Islamic Research and Thought Council" (*Majlis al-Abḥāth wa-al-Fikr al-Islāmī*) in Iraq, affiliated with the Prime Ministry. This council should comprise senior, moderate Islamic scholars. Any individual, entity, assembly, or party would be required to submit its ideas, concepts, and evidence to this council. Upon authorization, the entity may operate under the council's directives and would not be deemed unlicensed. This model parallels the Islamic Research Academy (*Majma' al-Buḥūth al-Islāmīyah*) in Cairo, which provides its perspective on various claims. Conversely, allowing the current

situation to persist—wherein any actor can mobilize, recruit impressionable youths, and shape their cognitive and religious orientation—risks the emergence of multiple “Madkhalisms” and associated dangers.

Footnotes:

1- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī al-Marwazī was born in 164 AH (circa 780 CE). He pursued knowledge in 179 AH (circa 795 CE) in Baghdād under Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf and studied ḥadīth in al-Kūfah, al-Baṣrah, Makkah, al-Madīnah, al-Yaman, and al-Shām from scholars such as Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah, Yaḥyá al-Qaṭṭān, Wakī’, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Maḥdī. He was a student of al-Shāfi‘ī and was directed toward ḥadīth narration by Haytham ibn Bashīr. He rejected the doctrine of the Qur’ān’s createdness, for which he was imprisoned by the Caliph but later released. He died in 241 AH (ca. 855 CE) and authored several works, most notably *al-Musnad*, a collection of ḥadīth. See Ibn Abī Ya‘lá (1378 AH, Vol. 1, p. 4).

2- For details on the text (‘matn’) and chain of narration (‘sanad’) of this ḥadīth, see Zahid (2011).

3- One of the senior Sufis. In 457 AH (ca. 1065 CE), he wrote his famous epistle to the Sufi community, titled *al-Risālah al-Qushayrīyah*.

4- Ibn Taymīyah is Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn ‘Abd al-Salām al-Ḥarrānī. He was born in Ḥarrān in 661 AH (ca. 1263 CE) and died in Damascus in 728 AH (ca. 1328 CE). He was famous for his oratory and knowledge of narration (‘riwāyah’). He authored several works, such as: *Min-*

hāj al-Sunnah, al-Siyāsah al-shar'īyah, and Majmū' al-Fatāwá (al-Dhahabī, 1957, Vol. 4, p. 1496; al-Şafadī, 1410 AH, Vol. 7, p. 15; Ibn al-'Imād, Vol. 6, p. 80; Ibn Kathīr, n.d., Vol. 14, p. 142).

5- For details on the refutations of Wahhābī thought, see Muḥammad-'Alī (1409 AH) (for a bibliography of works authored by Islamic scholars in refutation of Wahhābism. See also al-Kathīrī (2008, pp. 357–380).

6- Traditional Salafism is known to prohibit rebellion against the ruling authority. Consequently, this fatwā has been employed to justify the development of the Jihādī thesis within Salafism, which is further supported by the argument that the 'Salaf' refrained from rebellion solely because their rulers were Muslims who implemented Allah's Sharī'ah. This perspective is evident in Ibn Taymīyah's Majmū' al-Fatāwá (Vol. 28, p. 241), where he was queried regarding the status of the town of Mārdīn, which was governed by Islamic law before being overtaken by individuals who established a regime of 'kufr' (disbelief). The question posed was whether the town should be considered 'Dār Ḥarb' (Abode of War) or 'Dār Silm' (Abode of Peace). Ibn Taymīyah responded that the situation was "composite" ('murakkabah'), indicating that Muslims should be treated according to their conduct, while those

deviating from Islamic Sharī'ah should be confronted accordingly. Notably, Ibn Taymīyah does not declare 'takfīr' (excommunication) upon the inhabitants of the abode but rather targets the rulers and the general populace. In contrast, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Faraj, in his work al-Farīdah al-Ghā'ibah, draws inspiration from this text and applies it to the contemporary Egyptian context (Faraj, n.d., p. 5).

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البحوث
باللغة الإنكليزية



