

THE MOSLEM WORLD: THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

IGOR DOBAYEV. ISLAMIST "TAQFIR": DEFINITION OF
"ENEMIES OF ISLAM"* // *The article was written for the bulletin
"Russia and the Moslem World". Published in abridged form.*

DOI: 10.31249/rmw/2019.02.05

*Keywords: jihad, Islam, Islamism,
Koran, radicalism, taqfir.*

Igor Dobayev,

DSc(Philosophy), Professor,
Expert of Russian Academy of Sciences,
Director of Center of Regional Studies,
Institute of Sociology and Religion,
Southern Federal University, Rostov-on-Don

Abstract. The article examines the emergence and development of the term "taqfir" (accusation of "kufr," that is, impiety). This phenomenon is presented as it existed in early Islam, and also its changes in later years. The article also examines the views of representatives of orthodox Islam to and ideologists of radical Islamism. The point is that theorists of radical Islamism interpret the sacral sources of Islam and the Koran quite literally, augmenting the circle of the "enemies of Islam" and accusing them of "taqfir." The ideologists of radical Islam demand that their

* The article was performed within the internal grant of SFU
№ БНГр-07/2017-22 "Transconflict Regions as a Phenomenon of the
Geopolitical Competition: Social Risks and Resources of Adaptation to
Humanitarian Challenges."

views be taken into account and followed, and that the offensive jihad be carried on against the "enemies." In this connection the adepts of radical Islamism are justly called "taqfirite-Jihadists."

Islam as a quite tolerant world religion comes out as one of peace, mercy and tolerance, which lie at the basis of the Koran and Sunna. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the inner factors, which radicalize Islam can be found in the texts of the sacred sources of Islam – the Koran and Sunna, as well as works by certain Islamic scholars, from Ahmad ibn-Hanbal (783–855) and Ibn-Taimiya (1263–1328), right up to the modern fundamentalist ideologists Al-Maududi (Pakistan), Sayyid Qutb and Aiman az-Zawahiri (Egypt), and others.

Analyzing the basic political and philosophical premises of the main doctrines in Islam one could single out certain common specificities lying at the basis of its radical component.

Among them is the "youth" of Islam, inasmuch as Muslim religion is the world's youngest, it came into being much later than other world monotheistic systems, and has not exhausted its opportunities as yet. At its "young age" Christianity, for example also demonstrated its radicalism, having organized a whole series of "crusades" against Muslims. Today Islam is at its prime, playing a very active role in the modern world.

Another specific feature of Islam is its totality, which means its broad sweeping of all spheres of activity of believers. This includes not only faith, but also the economic and social order, state management, the family, and everyday life. The Sharia determines both legal and ethical relations. In a sum total it leads to Islam coming out as a way of life fully determining the world outlook and behavior of people. The ideologist of the fundamentalist organization "Muslim Brothers" S. Qutb notes in this connection that "Islam is the last complete message to mankind heralding prudence and including all-embracing understanding of human life leading people from ignorance to

divinity, real life, to the Sharia of Allah, their conscience and the fear of God."

A characteristic feature of Islam as a system is its indissoluble link with politics. The Iranian author M. Sanai emphasizes that as compared to other religions Islam has the closest and broadest ties with politics and power as the most import means of the realization of its principles. This is why Muslims preserve a great interest in politics supported directly by Islamic teaching.

Another specificity is the idea of "completion of prophecy," which means, in the interpretation of Muslim theologians, that Prophet Mohammed was the last envoy of God on this Earth of ours, "the seal of prophets," and he brought the ultimate truth to mankind.

"The Islamic Appeal made by Prophet Mohammed is the last link in the long chain of appeals to Islam made by a whole range of noble envoys..." This testifies to the exclusive character of the Muslims as the chosen community and the special position of Islam as compared to other religions. "Islam has declared that people are disunited not by the color of their skin, their sex, origin, or territory but by faith, which is the connecting link between them and God and between themselves." In other words, Muslims of all countries are similar, irrespective of ethnic, race or any other distinctions. These people formed by Islam comprise the uniform community - "ummah." This is why Muslims, irrespective of the country they live in or come from are drawing to one another as brethren in faith. This explain the emergence of all and sundry pan-Islamic concepts propagating unity of all Muslims of the world in a single state.

In the perception of a radical Muslim the religious community of co-believers Muslims comes out as the main world value. S. Qutb writes that "the Muslim ummah of the people chosen and sanctified by God is the world's best." The fundamentalist current in Sunna Islam is also distinguished by idealization and mythologization of the state-political system, which existed in the Muslim world in the period of the rule of

Prophet Mohammed and the first four “righteous’ caliphs (Abu-Bakr, Omar, Osman, Ali) as well as the striving to its rebirth.

The intellectual and political movement aimed at the return to the foundations of the religion of Islam was called “Salaphism (or fundamentalism in western science). Supporters of Salaphism demand that Muslims should in all their actions, beliefs, standards and rules follow everything what existed in the period of initial Islam.

It should be noted that the very logic of returning to the primary source material in order to correct shortcomings has emerged along with time, and human imperfection is quite legitimate from the point of view of religious consciousness. Moreover, for Muslim civilization such logic seems to be a basic model ensuring the preservation and development of the spiritual tradition and social and religious self-consciousness. Throughout the entire history of Islam the turning to the sources and foundation of tradition has been a means of overcoming a crisis and degradation during the transition epoch. However, as the author of the article “Wahhabism: History of the Problem” Idris Abdullah emphasizes, “the real overcoming of this crisis could be achieved only along with the fully adequate understanding of the spirit and letter of Islamic teaching.”

Modern Salaphite literature is full of loading the period of the “golden age” of Islam. For example, the Pakistani author Al Maududi, the founder of the modern fundamentalist organization “Jamaat-i-Islami,” idealizes the state of early Islam and writes: “Modern Muslim believer is dreaming of the ideal society founded by Prophet Mohammed. Each Muslim regards that stage as a blessed period and wishes it to return.” S. Qutb repeats his thoughts by saying that “there were never so many good people as during the first year of the emergence of Islam.”

Another specific feature of radical Islam is its fatalism, Muslim enthusiasm, bellicose character, and striving for world domination.

One of the first problems in monotheistic Islam was the predestination and compatibility of the existence of autocratic God with evil present in this world of ours. Supporters of the theory of absolute predestination were named "Jabarites" (from the word "jabar" - "coercion," "violence"). Ideas about dependence of all human actions, just as of everything taking place in the world. On divine will were explained by Jabarites in the Koran.

The main aim of the dogma of divine predestination is the absolute fulfillment of the will of God, and in real life its Prophet and Caliph on earth. The theory of Jabarites about predestination of human behavior and deeds through divine will had a great practical significance inasmuch as on its basis the rights of any persons or groups, who have gained political power, were asserted. The dogma of predestination proved an important spiritual instrument in the period of aggressive wars, for from it followed that no matter what danger threatened a Muslim's life, he will not perish, if he has not been predestined to die, and that is why it led to fanaticism and fearlessness.

Muslim enthusiasm is in direct connection with fatalism. It also stems from the ideological essence of Islam and its system. Religious enthusiasm in Islam is expressed very emotionally, especially in relation to co-believers. Islam demands that all its adepts should strictly adhere to the Koran and its ideas and premises in all practical deeds.

The development of religious fanaticism in Islam was also due to such premises as belief in after-life and Dies Irae, paradise and hell, and also belief that the "shahid will get to paradise..."

The outstanding Muslim legal expert Abu-Yusuf (733-798) and Supreme Judge at the time of Harun ar-Rashid, telling about Islamic fanaticism in the conditions of Muslim expansion, said that it played an important role as one of the ideological factors. The conquest of alien territories was taking place under the slogans of Islam, all the more so because the Koran fixes the ideas of the need to seize the entire world by the Muslims as the executors of the

mission of Allah. Islam in this case fulfilled the ideological function of justifying Muslim wars of conquest.

Modern radical Islamic thinkers do not abandon the ideas of world domination, claiming that the future of mankind belongs precisely to Islam. For one, S. Qutb in his work "Future Belongs to Islam" writes that "Islam in compasses all mutually connected and mutually dependent elements regulating all spheres of human life." He is seconded by theologian al-Maududi, saying: "...Islam is not a substance of the past or the future. It is the immortal, eternal truth evident and indisputed already millions of years ago, and it will remain such until the heaven and earth exist."

Islam as a religion is characterized by intolerance, which is expressed in that the orthodox believers feel their superiority over the infidels, and it has existed since a long time ago at the state level: the Muslim pays lighter taxes and is exempt from capitation. The infidel has always been regarded in a Muslim state as unequal person. One of the most characteristic features of Islam is superiority and intolerance toward the adepts of other religions. The feeling of a better way of life combined with totality and all-roundness of Islam has always been the earnest of extreme conservatism and conformism of Muslims. Naturally, all this could not but be reflected in the standards of behavior and value orientations of all members of the Muslim ummah, but ultimately on the mind of people, or to be more precise, on their social psychology.

Hence, the aim of radical Muslims to fight the enemy ("kafir," "infidel"), that is, people born Muslims, who do not use their abilities and intellect for recognizing their God and Creator. Moreover, they use wrongly the freedom of choice, choosing the rejection of God. Such people become unbelieving, who are called "KAFIR" in the language of Islam.

In a broad sense of the word, under "infidels" the radicals mean the non-Muslim society, as a whole, including communist society, as well as societies of India, Japan and Africa, which adhere to deification of anyone else but Allah. These include

Christian and Jewish societies. Similar views of radical Islamic fundamentalism are shared by the well-known adept of Islamic fundamentalism E. Khatib from Jordan. Indeed, Islam contains numerous calls for fighting the infidels. It is permeated with enmity toward the apostates of Islam and all those who do not recognize Allah as the only God.

The Koran forbids friendly relations of Muslims with non-Muslims. It fosters intransigence and enmity toward them. Quite a few premises of the Koran even call for physical punishment of unorthodox people. Moreover, in some ayats there is a call on Muslims to kill the obstinate unorthodox people.

No wonder that radical Islamists are quite hostile to people of Scripture. In the view of Islamic radicals, the Koran also outlines "the ultimate aims of Judaists and Christians with regard to Muslims. We should emphasize that in theories of practically all radical Islamist groupings and organizations there are two systemic premises inherent in fundamental Islam – one on Taqfir and one on jihad. The main object of taqfir is, above all, those Muslims who do not agree with the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam and therefore are proclaimed unbelieving by Salafites.

Radical fundamentalists concluded that there are only two varieties of human societies: Islamic society and jihadist society. Islamic religious convictions and Islamic ethical standards are realized in the former, but Islam is not realized in jihadist society.

Islamists, in contrast to representatives of orthodox Islam, broaden at will the circle of objects of taqfir, absolutizing the concept of "unbelief" ("kufr") and "polytheism" ("shirk").

Proclaiming strict monotheism, Islamists and their followers brand "infidels" and "polytheists" all those, who, in their view, are not "monotheist". According to them, the category of the "enemies of Islam" includes: Judaists and Christians.

However, it is not only works of Islamist ideologists, but also the Scripture of Islam, as we have already noted, that contains calls to fight the infidels. It is permeated with enmity and hatred for

apostates of Islam and those who do not recognize Allah as the only one God.

Muslims-apostates (murtadd) retreat from the principle of monotheism. These retreats include glorification of the righteous, warship of idols, astrology, forecasts of various type, glorification of any person, and other things and actions. In the view of ideologists of radical Salaphism, such people do great harm to Islam, inasmuch as they are capable to deceive, lie, envy, etc., as a result of which "non-believers may think that Islam allows all these crimes.

According to a traditionalist approach, accusation of taqfir is a Sharia decision which should be taken on the basis of the Koran and Sunna. In dubitable cases the punishment prescribed by the Sharia law is not applied.

Following a warning of the Prophet and Muslim tradition no Muslim can call another Muslim non-believer until the moment when he himself publicly admits it. This premise has specially been stipulated and considered very important, because apostasy was considered one of the gravest sins and punished by death.

In order to pass a Sharia decision on non-belief it was necessary to have several reasons and conditions and also the absence of certain obstacles.

Radical Islamists have a different approach to "taqfir." For instance, the chief ideologist of the Egyptian "Muslim Brothers" Sayyid Qutb directly says that there are only two parties on this Earth of ours: the party of Allah and the party of shaitan. The party of Allah exists and acts under the Banner of Allah. And the party of shaitan includes all the rest who are not shaded by the banner of Allah.

Adherence to atheist currents like Communist, secular, democratic, capitalist, or the like is regarded apostasy by the religion of Islam. This list also contains "antireligious secularism, oppressive capitalism, Marxist socialism, and atheist masonry. As to Judaism and world Zionism, they stand behind each of these

destructive doctrines undermining morals and spiritual values and rejecting the Sharia law.

2019.02.016. OLGA CHIKRIZOVA. "ECUMENISM" IN ISLAM: HISTORICAL MILESTONES IN OVERCOMING OF SUNNI-SHI'A ANTAGONISM // *Ekonomicheskie, socialno-politicheskie, etnokonfessionalnye problemy afro-aziatskih stran. Pamyati L.I. Rejsnera. Yearbook 2018, Institute of Oriental Studies, RAS. Moscow: IOW RAS, 2018. – 228 p.*

Keywords: Sunni-Shi'a antagonism, "ecumenism" in Islam, Najaf conference (1743), pan-Islamism, Jamā'at al-taqwā, R.M. Khomeini.

Olga Chikrizova,

PhD(History), Senior Lecturer,

Department of Theory and History of International Relations,
The Peoples' Friendship University of Russia

This article is devoted to the problem of overcoming Sunni-Shi'a antagonism in the history of Islam. The author dwells on two major Islamic trends and proves that they are initiated "from above" and caused by political rather than religious motives.

The author examines the problem of overcoming Sunni-Shi'a antagonism in the history of Islam, and analyzes attempts to draw these two Islamic trends closer. The urgency of the subject is prompted by the more frequent confrontations of these trends accompanied by frequent bloodshed.

At the beginning of the article the author points to the fact that the problem of the confrontation of the two trends – Sunna and Shi'a – in Islam becomes very urgent again today. After the intrusion of the U.S. troops in Iraq in 2003 and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, after the "Arab spring" events, the situation in Islam has considerably aggravated. Sunni-Shi'a conflicts are ripening in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. Struggle for