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IGOR DOBAYEV. ON THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON FACILITIES IN THE UNITED STATES: THE IDEOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE TAKFIRI JIHADISTS // *Article was written for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

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Abstract. Twenty years ago, a number of significant objects in the United States underwent terrorist attacks. As a result, several thousand people were killed, and members of the radical Islamist group Al-Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden were declared terrorists, although there are other opinions about the organizers and customers of these terrorist

attacks. In this article, the author examines the ideological prerequisites that have been accumulated for centuries in some trends in Islam, which could become the driving motive for committing acts of terrorism by adherents of radical Islamism.

September 11, 2021 marks twenty years since the day when terrorist attacks were carried out on a number of objects in the United States. Despite the fact that the organizers and customers of these crimes have not yet been reliably identified, the Americans immediately accused radical Islamists from al-Qaeda and their leader, Osama bin Laden. This development of events allowed the American leadership to unleash a war in Afghanistan, two years later - in Iraq, and already in 2010 to launch the process of the so-called Arab Spring, which seriously reformatted the geopolitical situation in the Middle East and North Africa. As you know, the Americans are well-known inspirators of all kinds of provocations. Nevertheless, without excluding the version of Islamist attacks, let's consider the ideological prerequisites that could prompt them.

As you know, Islamist terrorism is a complex and multidimensional socio-political phenomenon, which is based on the ideological doctrine of modern Takfiri jihadists. Its foundations were developed in the Middle Ages by Salafi authors, including Ibn Hanbal (780-855), Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328), their students and followers, who consistently and steadily developed this teaching. The main thing in the attitudes of the Salafists was a return to the so-called "golden age" of Islam, the time when the Prophet Muhammad received divine revelations and the rule of the first four "righteous" caliphs - Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali (610-661). The Salafists strongly opposed the introduction of any innovations into Islam, demanded the purification of the religion from the innovations that followed the end of the "golden age". In the following centuries, such Salafists as Muhammad Abn abd al-Wahhab from the Arabian Nejd (1703-1799) up to the authoritative authors of modern Salafi

teaching, among whom we will single out al-Maududi (Pakistan), as well as Egyptians-Hassan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Faraj, Ayman al-Zawahiri and some others became well-known ideologists of the “purification” of Islam. Let's take a closer look at the contribution of these individuals to the development of the ideological doctrine of modern Islamism.

The Baghdad theologian and jurist Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is known primarily as the founder of one of the four currently operating Sunni madhhabs (madhhabs – religious and legal schools in Islam – I. D.) – the Hanbali. Unlike other madhhabs in Sunni Islam (Sunni, Shafi'i, Malik), Hanbali originated as a religious and political movement and later took shape in a religious and legal school. This movement expressed the views of the most conservative supporters of traditionalism of that time (now this ideological trend in Islam is called fundamentalism or Salafism) and systematized the corresponding concept of the creed. The Hanbalites reject both literal and allegorical interpretation of the texts of the Quran and hadith, deny the possibility of any rationalistic interpretation of the dogmas of faith. Recognizing the unconditionality of divine predestination, however, they believe that iman (a person's faith) depends on the good deeds performed by him, which determines his social activity. They reject any innovations (bidaa) in the field of doctrine and law, which do not have a direct justification in the Quran and hadith, considering them “sinful”. At the same time, being distinguished by fanatical strictness in observing the ritual and legal norms of Sharia, they resolutely oppose any extremes both in the creed and in the life of the community. Those who assumed the role of carriers of the Orthodox Sunnis, during the Middle Ages repeatedly headed mass movements [1, p. 43-44]. Today, the Hanbali sense of Sunni Islam is accepted in a number of monarchies of the Persian Gulf, primarily in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

At the turn of the 13th-14th centuries in Damascus, the teachings of Ibn Hanbal were developed by the medieval

religious thinker Ahmad Taqi ad-Din Ibn Taymiyyah. A distinctive feature of his views was extreme radicalism, both in relation to representatives of other religions, and to those Moslems who did not share his views. The main ideological constructs of this theologian are: "pure Islam" (the demand for the purification of Islam, a return to the "golden age"), the accusation of disbelief (takfir) of some categories of Moslems, the conduct of armed jihad. The attitude to the state, in general, and to the judiciary, in particular, was borrowed by him from various Kharijite sects (Kharijism, along with Sunnism and Shiism, is one of the trends in Islam – I. D.). Of course, the appearance of such a person as Ibn Taymiyyah and the popularity of his ideas was due to the fall of the Arab caliphate and the Mongols' conquest of many states of the Near and Middle East, which gave rise to another deep crisis in Moslem societies of that period. However, the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah proved to be in demand in the following centuries, including in the formation of the latest ideological doctrines of modern Takfiris-jihadists.

The follower of the ideas of Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyyah was the religious teacher Muhammad Ibn Ad-al-Wahhab from the Arabian Nejd. His teaching turned out to be in demand on the Arabian Peninsula in the middle of the century due to the need to consolidate the Arab tribes living there in order to build their own state. By that time, there was a clear departure from the fundamental principles of this religion in the homeland of Islam. In this regard, in an effort to restore Islam to its purity, al-Wahhab began to preach the strictest observance of the principle of monotheism (tawhid), the rejection of the worship of Sufi saints (wali) and holy places (mazars and ziyarats), the need to purify Islam from late layers and innovations (bidaa) and return to its original purity. The main written work of the teacher was the treatise "Kitab at-Tawhid" ("The Book of Monotheism") [9]. Tawhid is the central principle of the Wahhabi doctrine, the essence of which is the strictest monotheism. The Sheikh categorically opposed mediation between God and believers. He

was also an implacable opponent of innovations that go beyond the Quran and the Sunnah. Showing a certain tolerance towards the “people of the Scripture” – Christians and Jews – the Wahhabi view of takfir (accusation of unbelief) he reduced his views to tightening the requirements for Moslems themselves. In this regard, the teacher filled the concept of apostasy from Islam and hypocrisy with a new content. Another system-forming position in the ideology of the Wahhabis is the concept of jihad (war for faith). Jihad is interpreted by al-Wahhab, first of all, as an armed struggle, which is the duty of every Moslem, and its object is not only kafirs (infidels), but also those Moslems who do not share the attitudes of adherents of “pure Islam” [4, p. 88].

Thus, it becomes obvious that since the first centuries of Islam, there has been a process of steady politicization of this religion. In the twentieth century, the concept of “political Islam” appeared, and after it – “radical Islam”, or “Islamism”, interpreted as extreme manifestations of “political Islam”. At the same time, two wings of “Islamism” are being comprehended – moderate and radical. The goal of all Islamists is the same – building an Islamic state and living according to Sharia, but the ways to achieve the desired are different. Moderates offer to go to the planned evolutionary, peaceful way, and their radical like-minded people are ready to achieve what they want by force. Of course, there were also authoritative ideologists of both directions of Islamism.

One of the most famous ideologists of the “moderates” is the founder and long-term leader of the Jamaat-i Islami (Islamic Society) party, the Pakistani al-Maududi (1903–1979), a recognized theorist of Islamic fundamentalism, the author of the theory of the “Islamic state”, popular in the Islamic world. The theoretical legacy of al-Maududi, numbering more than 120 books and thousands of articles, touches on a wide range of problems: from issues of state structure to the status of women in Islamic society. The ideas put forward by him within the framework of Islamic fundamentalism had a significant impact

on the state-building in Pakistan, which took place after granting the independence to British India in 1947 and the division of this space on religious grounds into two parts – India and Pakistan. It should be emphasized that during the creation and subsequent development of Pakistan, al-Maududi's views underwent significant changes. If initially he was a supporter of a dictatorial form of government in the spirit of the caliphate, by the early 70s he and his party recognized the need for general elections on a party basis, demanded the convocation of an elected assembly with limited lawmaking rights, and even began to allow non-Moslems and women to participate in the work of parliament. At the same time, Maududi consistently and resolutely opposed the construction of an Islamic state by force [3, p. 63–66]. Al-Maududi's associates include the Albanian Nasir al-Din al-Albani, the Syrian Muhammad Said Ramadan al-Buti, and others.

Hassan al-Banna (1906–1949), who founded the Moslem Brotherhood (BM) organization in Egypt in 1929 with his like-minded people can also be attributed to the “moderate”. In the first years of its existence, the ideological doctrine of the “brothers” was eclectic in nature, and the use of force to spread Islam, in their opinion, was permissible only when other means of persuasion did not achieve the goal [2, p. 19].

However, after the assassination of Hassan al-Banna in 1949 and the failure of hopes for cooperation with the government of “Free Officers” who came to power in Egypt in 1952, the “brothers” moved away from the positions of “moderates”, and Seyid Qutb, who developed the provisions of radical Islamism in his works in the 1950s and 1960s became their main ideologist.

In his books, S. Qutb reinterpreted traditional Islamic concepts in order to adapt them for use in political activities, the main purpose of which was to justify the violent seizure of power in the state. He considered Islam as a purely political movement, a political system, and therefore rejected the traditional point of view of the Moslem Orthodox, who pushed armed jihad into the

background, using it in exceptional cases. The belief about the duty of conducting jihad by every Moslem (fard ain), as well as the ideas of the so-called "jahiliyyah" (pre-Islamic ignorance - I. D.) he borrowed from the works of Ibn Taymiyyah. This is evidenced, first of all, by his books "Maalim fi tariq" ("Milestones on the Way") [7], which was published in 1964, and "Fi zilal al-Quran" ("Under the shadow of the Quran") [8], in which the concepts of jihad and jahiliya are described in the most complete form from radical positions.

S. Qutb, following Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Maududi, developed the concept of absolute Monotheism (tawhid). Ibn Taymiyyah was convinced that the principle of Monotheism requires strict adherence to the laws of God, that is, compliance with Sharia. Therefore, the use of laws created by man is tantamount to obeying or worshipping someone other than God, and therefore apostasy. Al-Maududi, followed by S. Qutb, adopted this position and drew a sharp line between the "party of God" and the "party of Satan". The latter, in their opinion, included Moslems who adhered to the laws created by man. Qutb in his teaching combined al-Maududi's concept of "modern jahiliya" with Ibn Taymiyya's views that the unity of God requires Moslems to follow the divine law, creating a synthesis that would strengthen the sharp difference between the party of God and the party of Satan: all those who do not follow the Islamic legal system and do not obey the commands of God are part of modern jahiliya and have departed from Islam, that is, they are apostates.

In his book "Milestones on the Way", Qutb for the first time presented a clear definition of the enemy as a person belonging to the jahiliya system, and called for its destruction. The means to eliminate this system of power, in his opinion, is an armed, offensive jihad, which protects the Islamic faith. Therefore, these two points in his teaching are inextricably linked, since jihad is a tool for eliminating jahiliya. Jahiliya, in his opinion, means the domination (hakemiyya) of man over man, or rather, the

subordination of man to man, and not to Allah. It means rejecting the divinity of God and worshiping mortals. The concept of jahiliya, of course, is the basic one in his theoretical constructions. It should be noted that S. Qutb preached a radical break with the orders prevailing in the country and established in religion over the centuries, which attracted a certain part of young people, both educated and poor. S. Qutb sought to form a "new Quranic generation", whose main goal was to create a new Islamic community on the ruins of nationalism, just as the Prophet Muhammad and his companions built a state from a community of believers on the ruins of pagan teachings. S. Qutb advocated the creation of an Islamic state through armed jihad. At the same time, he opposed the established Islamic legal views that jihad is, first of all, a struggle for spiritual self-improvement (jihad al-nafs) or a defensive war to protect the Moslem community. He justified the armed, offensive jihad, including against the rulers of the Moslem world, who use non-Islamic legal codes, and therefore are part of modern jahiliya and, therefore, are not real Moslems. He believed that they should be fought as infidels and removed from power, because the main goal of Moslems is to establish the rule of God on earth (divine huqm). Such a jihad, according to S. Qutb is the most effective way to combat jahiliya, which acts as an obstacle to a fair and free society based on the principles of tawhid. Thus, following Ibn Taymiyyah, he denied the division of jihad into small (armed) and large. In addition, today adherents of radical interpretations of jihad, referring to the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and his followers – Ibn al-Qayyim, S. Qutb, etc., they consider it permissible to kill civilians during the Islamist jihad. Thus, Ibn Taymiyyah argued that when infidels kill peaceful Moslems, it becomes permissible to kill the enemy's civilian population. Modern jihadists have transformed Ibn Taymiyyah's argument in a favorable way and have adopted the principle that people who help the enemy army in battle, even if they are not military, are legitimate targets for destruction. Recall that initially such radical interpretations of the

methods of conducting jihad came from the teachings of various Kharijite sects. However, throughout Islamic history, there is a common understanding that civilians should not be targeted in war, but extremist groups have defined the term "civilian population" in such a way as to turn every person living in Western countries into a target for terrorist attacks.

We would like to emphasize that S. Qutb's radical development of the concepts of Jahiliya and jihad became a clear departure from the traditional point of view of Islamic theologians, and even from the position of the founders of the Moslem Brotherhood party. It is believed that he did not bring the development of these postulates to the final logical end only because in August 1966 he was hanged in a Cairo prison for his anti-state activities. However, his followers, especially the Egyptians A. Faraj and A. Zawahiri, further radicalized these concepts and directed them not only to change the government, but also to fight against the whole society. In their opinion, the entire Egyptian society is not Moslem. It seems that this position is a Kharijite point of view, and most Ulema have not adhered to it for centuries, since following it leads to discord within the Moslem community. It is precisely such concepts that have prepared the ground for the development of various forms of modern terrorism. Various interpretations of the teachings of S. Qutb have spread beyond the borders of Egypt. Today, many scientists reasonably claim that S. Qutb is the main ideologist of modern Islamist terrorism.

The ideological heirs of S. Qutb were Egyptians - Muhammad Abdussalam Faraj (1954-1982) and his associates, who founded the Islamic Jihad group in 1979. It was the militants of this organization who killed President Anwar Sadat (1918-1981) during a parade in Cairo. As a result, Faraj and two of his accomplices were executed in Cairo Bab al-Khalq prison. Some researchers consider A. Faraj one of the leading Islamist theorists, while others question the level of his religious education, pointing out that he did not receive a humanitarian education,

studied as an electrical engineer and worked in his specialty at Cairo University. This gave him an additional opportunity to recruit supporters among young people. But, one way or another, it was he who, following S. Qutb, made a significant contribution to increasing the role of armed jihad in the activities of radical organizations in the late 1970s – early 1980s, preaching his ideas in the mosques of Egypt and actively recruiting supporters.

The main tactic of “Jihad Islami” was the conduct of armed attacks against high-ranking government officials, most often with the help of car bombs, as well as terrorist actions against the Coptic population. It is believed that it was A. Faraj who translated the concept of “jihad” from the theoretical to the practical plane in the twentieth century. A. Faraj outlined his vision of the concept of jihad in the brochure “Jihad – a forgotten duty” [11], where he reminded his followers of the need to conduct jihad, which he proclaimed the sixth pillar of faith. This work is considered one of the most consistent manifestos of modern jihadist ideology. It is mainly based on the interpretation of the work of Ibn Taymiyyah “Kitab al-Jihad” (“The Book of Jihad”). Following the position of Ibn Taymiyyah, Faraj attributed jihad to the category of “fard-ain” and considered it an individual duty of every Moslem. If Ibn Taymiyyah considered jihad possible in the event of an enemy attack on Moslem lands, then Faraj considered it mandatory in principle. At the same time, like S. Qutb, he rejected the concept of “big jihad” as a struggle with ones passions. It should be noted that in this book, A. Faraj constantly reproaches Islamic theologians for neglecting and even denying the obligation of jihad. He is followed in this issue by other Islamic ideologists of jihadism, who believe that the conduct of jihad today remains mandatory for every Moslem, until the last piece of land that was in the hands of Moslems, but was occupied by infidels, is liberated.

A. Faraj believed that it is impossible to build a truly Islamic society in a peaceful way, and this is real only with the help of jihad. He was sure that jihad would allow Moslems to

rule the world and restore the caliphate. At the beginning of the 21st century, Faraj's ideas could be implemented by Al-Baghdadi, who founded a new group on the basis of Al-Qaeda in Iraq: the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, or ISIS)).

Following Ibn Taymiyyah, his follower Faraj took a rather radical position on the issue of punishing "apostates" (in Egypt, by apostates he meant, first of all, representatives of state authorities – I. D.), and, referring to the works of Ibn Taymiyyah, argued that they deserve more severe punishment than representatives of other religions. In his work, A. Faraj, in particular, writes that according to the Sunnah, it was established that an apostate from the Moslem faith should be punished much more seriously than a representative of another religion. According to one of the types of punishment, the apostate must be killed: the *jizya* (poll tax – Etc.) is not accepted from him, as from the people of the Scripture, and it is forbidden to conclude any contracts with him. It is believed that an apostate should be killed, even if he is not able to defend himself, unlike representatives of other religions who do not fight with Moslems.

Following Ibn Taymiyyah, he referred to apostates the Moslems who, for some reason, do not observe all the laws of Sharia, and even if they recite Islamic testimonies. In this regard, he believed that Moslems who do not observe any norms of the Sharia are in a worse position than those who have never been Moslems at all. As a result, he considered it necessary to fight with every group of Moslems who committed the smallest deviation from the norms of Sharia. Here we can clearly see the borrowing of this postulate by Ibn Taymiyyah and Faraj from the views of various Kharijite sects. Also, since the time of the Kharijites, it has been believed among various extremist groups that the exercise of power is the prerogative of God, not people.

Faraj was particularly irreconcilable with the leadership of Egypt and other Moslem countries, considering them apostates. Following S. Qutb, he called the rulers of Islamic countries "near enemies", and not Islamic countries – "distant enemies".

It should also be noted that A. Faraj, unlike representatives of other radical groups, did not approve of the activities of Islamic charitable organizations, since their activities are under the control of the state. He said that their work does not contribute to the creation of an Islamic state, which he considered the meaning of his whole life.

The ideas contained in the brochure "Jihad-a forgotten duty" became a banner for Egyptian Islamist groups throughout the 1980s and 1990s. It is known that the current leader of Al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, was his friend and closest associate, and used his ideological legacy in relation to the Al-Qaeda and ISIS groups.

For many centuries, Moslem scholars have been debating about the attitude of Moslems to those people who are not Moslems. As a result, a concept called "Friendship and non-involvement in Islam" appeared. Its provisions are reflected in a small brochure with the same name, written by Saleh bin Fauzan al-Fauzan [10]. In it, the author demands that Moslems reject friendship with "infidels", and the manifestations of this "friendship", as al-Fauzan emphasizes, are: likening them in clothes, words, and so on; living in the countries of the infidels and refusing to move to any of the countries of Islam for the sake of preserving their religion; making trips to the countries of the infidels for entertainment and pleasure; providing them with help and assistance against the Moslems, as well as praising and protecting them; appealing to them for help, giving them confidence, appointing them to those posts where staying will allow them to learn the secrets of the Moslems, and electing them as henchmen and advisers; using their chronology, especially if it is about their rituals and holidays, like Christmas; participation in the celebration of their holidays, helping them in their organization and congratulating them on this; praising them for the achievements of their culture and civilization and expressing admiration for their morals and skills, without taking into account the depravity of their views and the falsity of their

religion; using their names; asking for forgiveness for them and turning to Allah with prayers for sending them mercy.

The further development of the ideological doctrine of the Takfiri jihadists is associated with Ayman al-Zawahiri, who was the main theorist of Al-Qaeda, and after the destruction of Osama bin Laden by the Americans, he became the leader of Al-Qaeda. On the basis of works of his predecessors and like-minded people, he adapted their doctrines and concepts, including "Friendship and non-participation in Islam", to the state and goals of the radical Islamist movement. The radical pseudoscientific concept of "Likes and dislikes" developed by him (Al-walaa wa-l-baraa) [6, p. 14] divides all people on the planet into three groups:

1. those who should only be loved without feeling any hostility towards them;
2. those who should only be hated. Without feeling any love or friendly feelings for them;
3. those who, on the one hand, deserve love, and hatred on the other.

Naturally, like-minded people fall into the first group, and all non-Moslems fall into the second one. As for the third group, we are talking about those Moslems who did not take the path of radical Islamism. Such people must be convinced by carrying out the so-called "Islamic call", up to inclusion in their ranks. If these measures do not lead to the desired result, then the "disobedient" should be accused of "unbelief", "polytheism", "apostasy" or "hypocrisy", with all the consequences that follow from this.

The doctrine developed by Ayman al-Zawahiri is by far the most radical. Although this does not mean that there will not be a new theorist who will further "improve" the achievements of his predecessors.

Based on the analysis of the content of ideological doctrines from Ibn Hanbal to Ayman al-Zawahiri, it can be concluded that their doctrinal interpretations are based on the demand for the purification of Islam, up to the achievement of the state of "pure

Islam" [5, pp. 202–216], through the definition of the so-called "enemies of Islam" (infidels, polytheists, apostates, hypocrites) and waging an armed jihad against them. Regardless of the fact, whether these "enemies" are military or civilian. The concept of "distant enemies" and "close enemies", the emphasis in the last two decades has been made on "distant enemies" allows, in principle, to talk about the possibility of terrorist attacks by radical Islamists on objects in the United States (9/11). Doubts about this still remain.

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