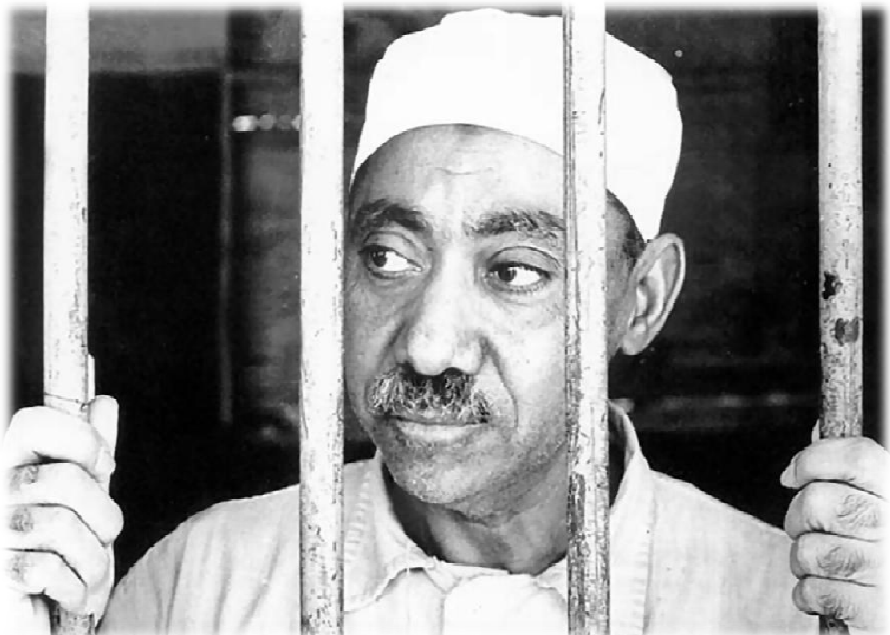


# Sunni fundamentalism, Salafism, and the Muslim Brotherhood

Islamic Political Thought (BSS474)



Josef Kraus

# [ History of Salafism ]

- Historical tensions between rationalists and traditionalists (*ahl al-hadith*)
  - Mainly Hanbali school, refusing of reason and speculation, emphasis of Quran and Sunnah
  - Faith is obedience, not knowledge, no space for reasoning
- Taqī ad-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymiyyah (1263 – 1328)
  - Moved with family to Damascus
  - Important representative of traditionalism
  - „Founder“ of salafism



# [ Ibn Taymiyyah ]

- *As-salaf as-salih* (salaf)- the righteous ancestors
  - Generation of Prophet Muhammad and his companions
- The effort to make Mamluk sultan to rule according to Sharia law
  - Ordering the good, forbidding the bad
  - Benefits (*maslaha*) overbalance negatives (revolt = chaos)
- Ibn Taymiyyah era
  - four *madhhabs* of Islam,
  - all independent on each other
  - Domination of *taqlid* method of legislature (gate of *ijtihad* closed)

# [ Ibn Taymiyyah ]

- Ibn Taymiyyah criticized a division of Islamic law
- Ijtihad should be active
  - Different levels – performed by *mujtahid al-mutlaq*
  - Important knowledge of ancestors (salaf) verdict, because *ijma* is above ijtihad
- Ibn Taymiyyah effort to rehabilitate (reform) Islam
  - No un-Islamic innovation, no heresy
  - Law based on references to Quran and Sunnah
  - No respect to common law or rules not based on Sources
  - The emphasis on literal interpretation of the Sources

# [ Ibn Taymiyyah ]

- Ibn Taymiyyah affected by *sufism*, but rejected its folk traditions
  
- Criticism of Shi'a
  - Similar to Christianity and Judaism
  - No *jihad* until Antichrist or Mahdi comes
  - Worshipping of God's messengers
  - Conception of Imamate
    - Political claims of Ali's descendants
    - Imams' tradition as a source of law
    - Law from the God, not from ordinary people



# [ Salafism after Ibn Taymiyyah ]

- Thought carried by Sufi orders until 18th century
  - Sufi problems with folk practicing of Islam
  - Exception of wahhabism, based in rural region with Beduine pressure against any Islamic orthodoxy – wahhabism independent to sufism
- Salafism created during Ottoman rule in Damascus and Baghdad
  - Rediscovery of Ibn Taymiyyah thoughts
  - Spread by Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, Muhammad ash-Shawkani

# Salafism after Ibn Taymiyyah

- Expansion to Egypt – the creation of *enlighten salafism*
  - Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridah
  - Harmony between reason and revelation
  - The effort of Muslim renaissance
  - Goal in *salaf*, but modernist attitude
  - Against superstitions and backwardness – open to Western science
  - *Ijtihad* only for elites, *taqlid* for masses
  
- Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi (+1969)
  - First salafi organization - Ansar Al-Sunnah
  - Expansion to Sudan
  - Close to wahhabi interpretation
  - Created two years before Muslim Brotherhood

# [ Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



- The Society of the Muslim Brothers (Jamā'at al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn)
- Founded in 1928, spread to whole Middle-East, North Africa, South Asia...
- Founding father – Hassan al-Banna
  - Born to religious family
  - Affected by Hasafiyyah – a Sufi order
  - Against British administration and Christian missions
  - Taught Arabic in the city of Isma'iliya, Egypt
- Main ideas
  - Restauration of true Islam
  - Denouncement of the Western decadence
  - Against domination of materialism and secularism





# Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



- Al-Banna's followers created an organization
  - Social projects – schools, hospitals, orphanages, mosques building, electrification etc.
  - Generation of grass-root support of Brotherhood – new members recruiting
- 40s – political activities of the MB
  - The effort to minimize governmental pressure towards MB
  - Suppression of prostitution, alcohol etc.
  - Own newspapers – propaganda, lecturing
  - 1945 – Al-Banna failure in election
- State repression towards the MB
  - Going underground – covert operation, violent resistance
  - 1948 – forbidden
  - Assassination of prime minister Nuqrashi Pasha by member of the MB
  - In reaction Al-Banna assassinated in 1949 and became a martyr

# [ Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



- Main goals
  - Liberation of nation (ummah), get freedom, independence, sovereignty
  - Then state and society reconstruction to reach the ideal state by Islamic values
  
- Recommendation to ruler
  - End the rivalry of political parties
  - Law reformation – Islamic legislation
  - Strengthening of armed forces
  - Strengthening of connection among Arab and Muslim countries
  - State services and society based on Islamic principles
  
- In society – ordering the good, forbidding the bad
- In economy – *zakat* collection by a state authority, forbidding of usury

# [ Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt



- After Al-Banna death his legacy has continued
  - Corrupted West destroys Islamic *ummah*
  - Armed struggle against unbelievers
  - Disappointment from religious establishment
  - Contempt of intellectualism
  - Radicalism of Al-Banna attitude by Sayyid Qutb and others
  
- Sayyid Qutb (1906 – 1966)
  - Originally teacher, then school inspector
  - 1948 travel to USA – criticism of the West
  - Entered the MB
  - Antigovernment activity
  - 1966 executed



# [ Sayyid Qutb thought and impact



- Current world is in the stat of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance of divine guidance)
  - Moral degradation cause by usurpation of God's authority
  - Political regimes with sovereignty of people are in *jahiliyyah*
  - Started by the West, corrupted Muslim regimes
  - Secular Islamic state = *jahiliyyah*
    - legislative authority only for God

# [ Sayyid Qutb thought and impact



- The cure for *jahiliyyah* is the implementation of sovereignty of God, establishment of Islamic law and rule
  - Refusing of secularism – religion isn't personal issue, but social one
  - The true Islam is not perverted by corrupted *ulama* or intellectuals
  - The demand for access of masses to holy sources X elite interpretation
  - Tyrannical governments force to worship someone else than the God
  - It is necessary to overthrow them

# [ Sayyid Qutb thought and impact



- The principal of humanity
  - The era of the West is over
  - Materialism suppressed values – Islam is the solution
  - Islam is not against scientific progress or materialism, but has to be above it
  - People don't believe in abstract theories – implementation of Islam
- *Armed jihad*
  - Not only defensive
  - Defense in meaning of positive movement for liberation of men
  - Defense against oppression, tyranny
  - The enforcement of God's authority and sovereignty
  - Elimination of Kingdom, replacement by God's rule

# [ Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

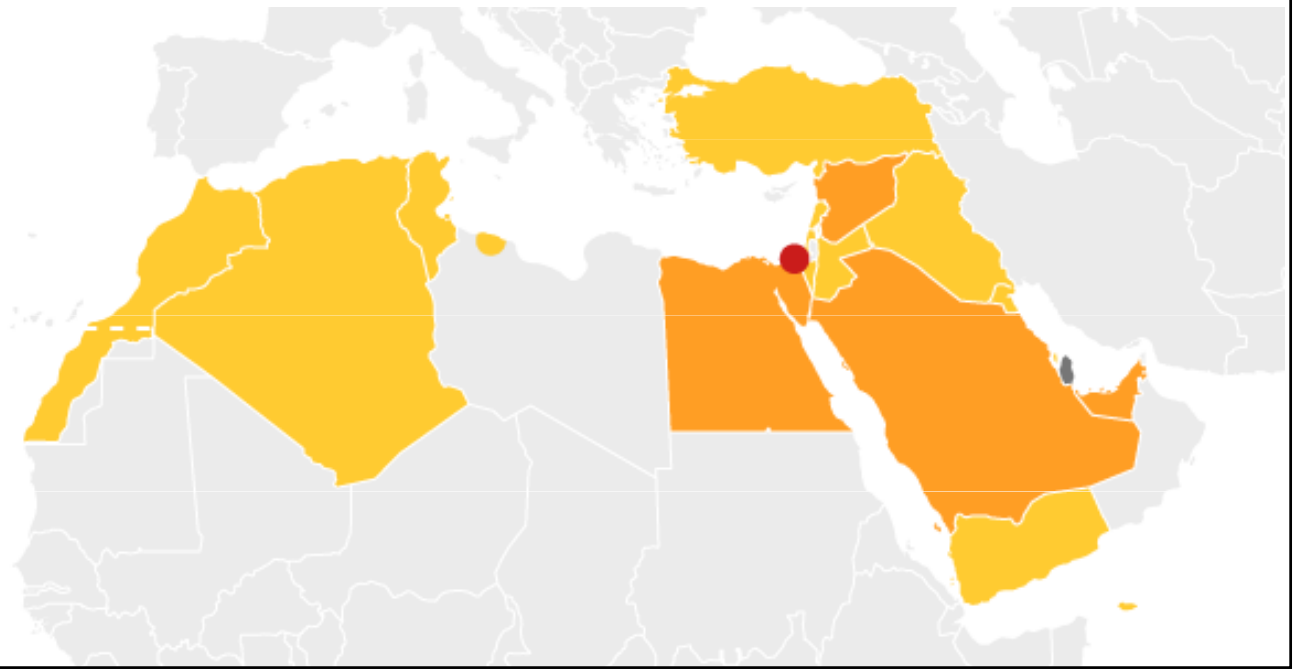


- Suppression in Egypt, expansion to different regions
  - Palestine ( Hamas), Sudan (National Islamic Front), Syria...
  - Saudi Arabia
    - Brought by Muhammad Qutb
    - Common points with wahhabism – *jahiliyyah*, excommunication (*takfir*), *jihād*
    - *Sahwa* (awakening) movement – also politics commentary
  
- The MB rule strongest in Egypt
  - Revolution in 2011, overthrowing of Hosni Mubarak
  - Mohamed Morsi won the 2012 presidential election
  - Massive protests – coup by armed forces
  - President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi
  - The MB forbidden by a law



# Muslim Brotherhood Worldwide

- Relevant in many places of Islamic world
  - Often underground
  - Rise during armed conflicts
- Historically influent in Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Yemen...





# Muslim Brotherhood in Syria

- Founded 1930s
- Historically strong opposition to secular Baas regime
  - Banned in 1963
  - Capital offense since 1980
  - But toleration of Hamas HQ in Damascus
- 1976 terror campaign started
  - Guerilla war
- 1982 – MB uprising
  - Hama massacre
  - 20 000 casualties
  - Exiled to Jordan, Iraq



# Muslim Brotherhood in Syria

- Dominant group within Syrian civil war from 2012 – 2013
  - Lost the influence soon, replaced by Wahhabi extremists
  - Da'esh, Al-Qaeda, Al-Nusra Front... influence of Saudi Arabia
- Never had a chance to develop a government



# Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine

- 80s Hamas foundation and evolution
  - Articulation of Islamic dimension of Israeli-Palestine conflict
- Co-founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin
- Armed resistance
- Intensive social work
  - Using *zakat*
  - Support of poor, establishing schools, hospitals, mosques
- 2007 take over of Gaza Strip
- Strong relationship with Morsi govrn.
- After 2013 weakening of Hamas position



# Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine

- Combination of Islam and politics -> islamism
- Never demanded global Islamic caliphate
  - Focusing on Palestinian issue – against secularism and nationalism
- Islamic law based on *ijtihad*, not just *taqlid*
  - Limited democracy accepted
  - Election participation, accepting Palestinian autonomy
- Government depending on EU, not fully developed Islamic governance
  - Technocratic way of rule
  - Political dynamics based on Palestinian-Israeli conflict

# Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan

- Since 1950s – spreading Islam over whole Sudanese territory
- National Islamic Front – Hassan al-Turabi
  - to Islamize the society "from above,,
  - Government infiltration
  - Islamic banking system implementation with help of Saudi Arabia
  - Legislation based on *ijtihad*
  - Effort to overcome the Sunni-Shia disputes
- 2015 interruption of relations with Iran, joining Saudi alliance



[ Thank you for your attention! ]



All people go to Allah after their death, but the happy person is the one who goes to Allah while still alive.

— Sayyid Qutb —

AZ QUOTES