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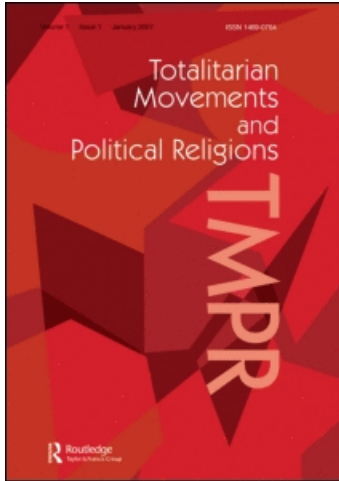
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Islamism and Modernity: The Political Thought of Sayyid Qutb

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ABSTRACT *Sayyid Qutb was one of the most influential Islamic thinkers of the twentieth century. However, for much of his life he was a member of Egypt's liberal intelligentsia, and he published a number of works ranging from literary criticism to romantic fiction. It was his disillusionment with the corrupt parliamentary democracy of pre-Revolution Egypt that led him to turn to Islam as the solution to all problems. Qutb became the main ideologue of the Muslim Brothers' Society in the early 1950s. Imprisoned in 1954, he wrote the bulk of his Islamist works in jail, where his thought became increasingly radical.*

Sayyid Qutb was born in 1906 in the village of Musha, in Upper Egypt, the eldest child of a formerly well-to-do rural family that had fallen on hard times. His father was a member of Mustafa Kamil's al-Hizb al-Watani (National Party), and the family home served as a meeting place for the political elite of the region. His mother trusted that Sayyid would restore the family's fortunes, and it seems that this burden was among the factors behind his never marrying. When he was 15, Sayyid was sent to Cairo to complete his education at the Dar al-'Ulum teacher training college. He stayed with an uncle, who introduced him to the intellectual circles of the capital and to the Wafd Party.¹ Sayyid became a member of the latter and a disciple of writer and philosopher 'Abbas al-'Aqqad. Over the next twenty years, he published articles, essays, book reviews, poetry, two autobiographies, even a romantic novel. On the other hand, he found his teaching career unrewarding, and in the late 1930s he sought to resign. However, Taha Husayn, who worked at the Ministry of Education at the time, persuaded him to withdraw his resignation.

In the mid-1940s Qutb's writings acquired clear political overtones. He attacked the Egyptian elites that, instead of fighting the British occupation, only cared for their own interests. At around the same time he abandoned the Sa'adist Party, a breakaway faction of the Wafd named after party founder and former Prime Minister Sa'ad Zaghlul, and started criticising the multiparty system. He was also concerned by what he saw as the moral decay of the country. Nevertheless, his writings only became unequivocally Islamist in 1948, when he wrote *al-'Adala al-ijtima'iyya fi-l-Islam (Social Justice in Islam)*. In this work, Qutb argued that Islam was the only system that guarantees justice because it is based on equality and social solidarity. Moreover, he considered capitalism and communism to be similar in that they both rest on a materialistic philosophy, and prophesied that

the real battle would be between those doctrines and Islam. Such ideas were close to those of the Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin (the Muslim Brothers' Society, better known as the Muslim Brotherhood). Furthermore, in a clear allusion to the Society, Qutb dedicated the book to 'the vanguard of Muslims who have devoted their lives to Islam'.

The next year Qutb was sent to the United States, ostensibly to study modern pedagogical methods, although his superiors probably hoped that his stay in the richest country on earth would put an end to his Islamist drift. In fact, the exact opposite happened. Qutb concentrated on what he viewed as the most negative features of American society: materialism, sexual permissiveness and racism. He would later recall that, whereas other Muslims living the United States tended to adopt an apologetic attitude regarding their faith, he took the offensive and unashamedly attacked not only his host country but, by extension, the West as a whole:

Its shaky religious convictions. Its harmful social, economic and ethical condition. Its notions of the Trinity, sin and sacrifice, which do not convince the mind nor the conscience. Its capitalism, with its monopolies, its usury and its ugly sombreness. Its selfish individualism, which lacks solidarity except when forced by law. Its materialist, trifling and dry conception of life. Its beastly freedom, which they call 'the mingling of the sexes.' Its white slavery, which they refer to as 'the emancipation of women.' Its stupid, clumsy, aberrant and unrealistic marriage and divorce laws. Its harsh and evil racial segregation.²

Qutb was in the United States when the founder and leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna, was assassinated, and he would later describe the joy of the American people at the news – although one might wonder how many Americans had even heard of him.

Upon finishing his Master's degree, Qutb decided to return to Egypt instead of completing a doctorate. On his arrival, he was given a hero's welcome by the Muslim Brotherhood's youth wing. He was appointed as an advisor to the Ministry of Education, a prestigious office in which he had been preceded by Taha Husayn, but he soon handed in his resignation. He had finally found his mission in life: to work for the triumph of Islam. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood and was put in charge of its propaganda section. He became the Society's main ideologue, and made regular contributions to the Brotherhood's weekly, *al-Da'wa*, and related publications. He also wrote a number of books with titles like *Ma'rakat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya* (*The Battle between Islam and Capitalism*) and *Al-Islam wa'l-salam al-'alami* (*Islam and World Peace*), both of which appeared in 1951. The next year saw the publication of the first of eight volumes of his Qur'anic commentary, *Fizilal al-Qur'an* (*In the Shade of the Qur'an*).

In addition, Qutb was very involved in the political life of the country and had frequent contact with the Free Officers, both before and after their 1952 coup. He was even dubbed 'the Mirabeau of the Egyptian Revolution' for his role in raising awareness against the pre-revolutionary elites.³ The actual degree of involvement of the Muslim Brothers in the coup is still contested, but it has been alleged that several of the Free Officers, possibly including Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir himself, were members of the Society's secret paramilitary force.⁴ The

same sources indicate that the plotters visited Hasan al-Hudaybi, who succeeded al-Banna as the Society's General Guide, to ask for his support, and that the Brothers played an active role in the coup itself by guarding strategic positions and cutting the main roads.⁵ After the revolution, the Society was initially exempted from the ban of all political organisations, and Sayyid Qutb was the only civilian to sit on the revolutionary council, serving as cultural advisor.

However, it was not long before the Muslim Brothers realised that the new regime had no intention of implementing their Islamic programme, and they became increasingly critical of the Free Officers. Nasir, for his part, resented their interference and, having failed to turn them into a key grassroots component of his regime, he came to see them as dangerous rivals. Things came to a head in October 1954, when a young Brother tried to assassinate Nasir during a speech in Alexandria. As a result, the Society was banned and tens of thousands of its members and sympathisers were arrested.⁶ They were subjected to atrocious torture and, after a sham trial, hundreds were sentenced to long spells in prison with hard labour and seven were condemned to death – including General Guide al-Hudaybi, although his sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Qutb was condemned to 15 years with hard labour, although due to his fragile health he spent much of his time in the prison's infirmary.

It was in jail that Qutb wrote most of his Islamist works. He finished *In the Shade of the Qur'an* and started to revise it almost straight away. He also revised *Social Justice in Islam*, which underwent five re-editions between 1950 and 1964.⁷ He devoted two of his works to the Islamist youths whose suffering at the hands of the Nasirist regime had not only undermined their commitment to the cause, but even their faith: *Hadha al-din (This Religion)* and *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din (The Future Belongs to this Religion)*. Next he wrote *Al-Islam wa mushkilat al-hadara (Islam and the Problems of Civilisation)* and a two-part philosophical work, *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami wa muqawwimatuh (Characteristics and Components of the Islamic Conception)*. In 1962 he began working on *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq (Signposts Along the Road)*, which was circulated amongst a group of young Brothers who gathered around Muslim Sister Zaynab al-Ghazali. In these and other works, Qutb openly criticised the materialism of the West, prophesied its imminent collapse, and proposed Islam as the only system capable of guaranteeing a fair society and world peace.

In December 1964, Qutb was freed after the intercession of Iraqi president 'Abd al-Salam 'Azif, and he became the spiritual guide of Zaynab al-Ghazali's study group. Its members were determined to avoid a repeat of the events of 1954 and had decided that, in case of new arrests, they would assassinate a number of celebrities to create a commotion that would allow them to escape. However, they could do nothing when there was another security clampdown the next year. After only eight months of freedom, Qutb was re-arrested, together with thousands of other Brothers, including his three siblings. The charges against them included planning an armed revolt, conspiring to kill public figures, and plotting to blow up the Aswan Dam. The police found a copy of *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq* in virtually every house they searched, and the book thereafter became the main exhibit of the prosecution.⁸ Qutb was sentenced to death and was executed in August 1966. The regime killed a man but inadvertently created a martyr. The next year, many saw the Arab defeat in the Six Days War as a divine punishment for Nasir's persecution of pious Muslims.

'Qutbian' Epistemology

Qutb's reading of Islam was, to a great extent, a product of modernity – or, rather, of its crisis. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the original Salafists, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh, had emphasised the rationality of Islam and defended an allegorical interpretation of the Qur'an when it was found to be in contradiction with modern science. Writing three decades later, Hasan al-Banna rejected this modernist interpretation because he was suspicious of reason and believed men to be in continuous need of God's guidance.⁹ Qutb followed al-Banna's lead and argued for a direct, personal and intuitive understanding of the Revelation. His Qur'anic commentary is exceptional in its subjectivism.¹⁰ He distrusted the capacity of reason to distinguish right from wrong or to comprehend certain aspects of reality – notably, the world of the invisible (*al-ghayb*).¹¹ In addition, he believed that the Qur'an should be the final arbiter on historical and scientific matters,¹² and was convinced that true knowledge only comes from God.¹³

Such a notion of knowledge coloured Qutb's assessment of what he called 'scientific ignorance'. He believed that men had become arrogant because of their alleged mastery over creation, despite the limitations of their knowledge and their incapacity to find answers to the most fundamental questions.¹⁴ Moreover, he added, Western science degrades human beings to the status of just another animal, or mere matter,¹⁵ and approaches nature as an adversary to be conquered.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Qutb insisted that Islam does not reject science; on the contrary, he even claimed that the scientific method originally appeared in the Muslim world and later arrived in the West via the universities of al-Andalus.¹⁷ Unfortunately, within Europe science had been separated from God due to the tyrannical and obscurantist Catholic Church.¹⁸ That is why Muslims should be careful when adopting knowledge from the West, and only take the 'pure sciences', which are supposedly 'cleaner' than the rest.¹⁹

Another central feature of Qutb's discourse, which can be linked to his distrust of reason, was activism. Already al-Banna had warned that 'looking into inconsequential matters that do not lead to action is prohibited in Islam'.²⁰ Qutb argued that religion is not a mere theory, but also a programme: 'Islam is a religion for reality; a religion for life; a religion for movement; a religion for action'.²¹ He explained that faith is a positive and dynamic reality that should be manifested in every aspect of existence;²² conversely, any action that is not inspired by faith has no value in the eyes of the Lord.²³ The most dramatic manifestation of Muslim activism is *jihad* against non-Muslims. According to Qutb, that fight is not a temporary phase but rather an eternal state, because 'truth and falsehood cannot co-exist on this Earth'. The Muslims' task will only end on Judgment Day, when Islam will be the only religion left.²⁴

Islam as a System

Qutb adopted from Hasan al-Banna the idea of Islam as an 'integral' or 'total' system that controls all aspects of life and responds to all human needs.²⁵ He believed that the *shari'a* is not limited to laws, but includes everything God has dictated to organise human life: creed, government, ethics, behaviour, knowledge.²⁶ However, Qutb gave al-Banna's thought a philosophical turn, writing that Islam offers an integrated conception (*tasawwur*) of divinity, the universe, life and

humanity, and that religious values and natural laws are but manifestations of the *sunan Allah* or *namus Allah*, i.e. the divine laws.²⁷ Furthermore, given that all facets of existence are said to be submitted to the authority of God, the word *din* does not only mean religion in the narrow sense of that term, but applies to a broader system (*nizam*) or programme (*manhaj*) for life.²⁸ Conversely, he wrote that ‘any programme [*manhaj*] for life is a religion [*din*].’²⁹ Shepard has explained the articulation of these concepts:

The three main elements, *tasawwur*, *manhaj* (in the more restricted sense) and *nizam* stand in a decreasing order of fixity. The *tasawwur* is absolutely fixed and subject to no historical development or evolution; rather, it provides a ‘fixed framework’ and a ‘fixed axis’ within and about which human development can take place. At the other extreme, *nizam* can vary considerably. [...] Of the principle of *shura*, for example, he says that ‘there is no particular system (*nizam*) defined for it, and its application is thus left to circumstances and needs’. *Manhaj* occupies an intermediate position, not quite as fixed as *tasawwur*, but much more so than *nizam*.³⁰

Thus Islam is a holistic and perfect system because it was created by God, in contrast to the imperfect systems created by man. Qutb criticised the gradualists who propose measures to correct the faults of the prevailing system, as if it only needed a few adjustments to become Islamic,³¹ or who link Islam to other ideologies in order to make it more attractive, e.g. by speaking of ‘Islamic socialism’ or ‘Islamic democracy’.³² Islam is unrelated to any other system, he insisted, and should be presented as such.³³ Any similarity is purely coincidental.³⁴ In addition, just as a few reforms would not suffice to turn a non-Islamic society into an Islamic one,³⁵ the introduction of foreign elements into the Islamic system could ruin it completely.³⁶

Of course, such purism is an illusion. Qutb adopted, consciously or unconsciously, many characteristics of the Western thought of his time. We have already alluded to the crisis of positivism. Another important influence was Marxism, which coloured his critique of capitalism and his interpretation of Islamic institutions such as the legal alms (*zakat*), as well as providing terms such as *tali’a* (vanguard) and *atmiyya* (inevitability). Qutb even adopted Marxist arguments, if only to turn them on their head, such as his claim that the social order emanates from a society’s ideology – a clear inversion of the Marxist binomial structure-superstructure.³⁷ In any case, Islam – like any other religion – has adopted far too many influences to make it possible to ‘purge’ it of all of them, and the fact that Qutb believed that such purge was not only feasible but also the ‘natural’ state of the Muslim religion is a good example of his utopianism.

‘Mawdudian’ Terminology

Sayyid Qutb often quoted Abu al-A’la Mawdudi, and had adopted the terms coined or reformulated by the influential Pakistani thinker in his *Al-mustalaāt al-arba fi-l-Qur’an* (*The Four Terms of the Qur’an*), first published in 1941.³⁸ Let us see how those terms are articulated in Qutb’s discourse:

- *‘Ubudiyya* vs *uluhiyya* – according to Qutb, the Muslim creed is based on a ‘momentous truth’: that there is only one divinity (*uluhiyya*), that of God; His

creation is characterised by its adoration (*'ubudiyya*) of that divinity.³⁹ Understanding that truth means 'a revolution against all earthly authority that usurps the main feature of the divinity, i.e. *uluhiyya*'.⁴⁰ God granted men the viceregency (*khilafa*) of Earth, thus every action must be an act of worship so as to earn His approval.⁴¹ When worship is not addressed solely to God, men create new gods, and adore money or fame.⁴² Only God can rule the life of men, permit and prohibit. Not submitting to His divinity in the slightest matter amounts to 'a complete exit from Islam'.⁴³

- *Hakimiyya* vs *taghut* – God governs the life of men in two ways: directly, through destiny; and indirectly, through Islam, which establishes the fundamental laws that should regulate human behaviour.⁴⁴ Acknowledging that *hākimiyya* (sovereignty) only belongs to God is the true meaning of the *shahada* (*la ilah illa Allah*, 'there is no god but God').⁴⁵ The alternative to God's sovereignty is human tyranny (*taghut*⁴⁶), which is any programme (*manhaj*) or conception (*tasawwur*) that does not derive from God.⁴⁷ When men arrogate for themselves the right to legislate, they are usurping that divine prerogative and setting themselves up as gods.⁴⁸ All man-made systems are thus characterised by idolatry (*shirk*) and impiety (*kufur*)⁴⁹ – and, Qutb added, whoever accepts to subject himself to such systems is equally guilty.⁵⁰
- *Jahiliyya* vs *Islam* – the term *jahiliyya* normally refers to the state of ignorance of God in pre-Islamic Arabia but, following al-Mawdudi, Qutb explained that '*jahiliyya* is not a period in time, but a state that repeats itself every time society deviates from the programme of Islam, be it in the past, in the present or in the future'.⁵¹ In Qutb's Manichean mind, there are only two types of society: Islam, or *jahiliyya*. Between them, there is no meeting point.⁵²

Either Islam or *jāhiliyya*. There is no intermediate state, half Islam and half *jahiliyya*, that Islam can accept. Islam clearly indicates that the truth is one, not multiple, that everything which is not truth is perdition, and that the two cannot be mixed. Either God's government or *jahiliyya* government. Either God's *shari'a* or human caprice [*hawa*].⁵³

There are, however, different versions of *jahiliyya*: the communist, characterised by atheism; the pagan (or polytheist), as in India, Japan, the Philippines (?) and Africa; the Judeo-Christian, based on a distorted (*muharraf*) version of divinity; and, finally, modern-day Muslim societies, in which '*ubūdiyya* is not exclusively directed to God, because His *hakimiyya* has been usurped'.⁵⁴ All those versions of *jahiliyya* are 'Satanic weeds'.⁵⁵

Believers rely on God, who protects and shields them. Unbelievers rely on Satan under his different banners, his different models, his different ways, his different values and his different versions. They are all Satan's allies.⁵⁶

A true Islamic society is ruled by the *shari'a*, whereas a *jahili* society is ruled by man-made laws, which Qutb characterises with the Qur'anic term *hawa* (whim, caprice). By definition, those laws are based on men's limited knowledge and on selfish personal, class or racial interests, and lead to the oppression of some men by others.⁵⁷ Only Islam frees men from the authority of other men, by submitting them all to that of God.⁵⁸

Islam and Other Systems

Qutb dismissed the ideological differences between the rival Cold War blocs. In his eyes, they were both based on a materialistic notion of existence that relegates men to the status of animals or machines. He was convinced that the real fight would be between Islam and all other systems.⁵⁹ In addition, he felt that neither the communist nor the capitalist system were able to provide the all-encompassing conceptions, values and spirituality that human beings need, and he predicted that such a failure would lead to 'the end of the white man's supremacy'.⁶⁰

According to Qutb, the roots of the capitalist system were to be found in the Muslim World: the crusaders saw that in the land of Islam the *shari'a* was applied to rich and poor alike, and that all citizens were free and equal. That led them to question feudalism, and out of that questioning capitalism was born.⁶¹ However, unlike Islam, capitalism is based on usury – that 'fundament of the Jewish economy' – and the consequent accumulation of wealth. That, in turn, leads to the exploitation of the poor and vulnerable and to the appearance of an idle class that wastes time and money on vices such as gambling, alcohol and prostitution.⁶² Qutb added that it is that idle class, and no other, that enjoys the benefits of democracy.⁶³ In a reference to the post-Second World War welfare state, he considered the fact that the West had started to 'copy' the socialist system as symptomatic of its decadence.⁶⁴ However, much of Qutb's criticism of the West was based on the thought of Western authors that were critical of modernity, whom he quoted at length: French surgeon – and Nazi sympathiser – Alexis Carrel, British biologist and author Julian Huxley, British philosopher Bertrand Russell, etc.⁶⁵

As for Marxism, it was a popular ideology in the mid-twentieth century, particularly in the newly decolonised countries of Asia and Africa, and Qutb devoted great attention to undermining its arguments. He wrote that communism concentrates on the satisfaction of the basest needs, those that men share with animals, and ignores their spirituality.⁶⁶ He argued that in its attempt to go beyond racial or patriotic chauvinism, communism relies on another reprehensible feeling: class resentment.⁶⁷ Furthermore, it only transfers submission from the rich class that benefit from capitalism to the state and the party.⁶⁸ He asserted that, due to its incompatibility with human nature (*fitra*), communist systems had to resort to tyranny and violence to survive.⁶⁹ Finally, he mocked the communists' naïve idealism, whereby 'just by destroying the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, people become angels'⁷⁰ – a rather curious argument, given Qutb's own messianism.⁷¹

Another of Qutb's *bêtes noires* was nationalism – unsurprisingly, considering the political climate of triumphant Nasirism. He believed that all tribal, racial or territorial chauvinisms belonged in the state of *jahiliyya* and had been superseded by Islam.⁷² He painted a very negative picture of pre-Islamic Arabia by stressing that only Islam had succeeded in rescuing the Arabs from their barbarism and giving them significance in the history of humankind.⁷³ He argued that the prophet carefully avoided turning Islam into a call to Arab proto-nationalism, even though that would have rendered his task easier, and that the civilisation he launched was Islamic, not Arab.⁷⁴ He regarded fatherland and race as 'idols', and denounced nationalism as a Jewish conspiracy that had succeeded in destroying Europe's Christian unity and was out to destroy Islam as well.⁷⁵ He also

proclaimed that a Muslim's country is wherever the *shari'a* is being implemented, that his only nationality should be his creed, and that the only land he should defend is the Abode of Islam (*Dar al-Islam*).⁷⁶

Islam is the alternative to all of those flawed, man-made systems. The Islamic programme is the only one that is adapted to men's *fitra*, which is both spiritual and material, and therefore it alone can guarantee happiness in this life and the next.⁷⁷ Its system views all men as equal and guarantees the welfare of the individual, the group and future generations.⁷⁸ It has also granted men a dignity that no Magna Carta or Universal Declaration of Human Rights can compare with: that of being God's vicegerent on Earth.⁷⁹ In addition, Islam successfully deals with social blights such as poverty and crime because it prohibits usury, guarantees the redistribution of wealth through its inheritance laws and legal alms (*zakat*) and prescribes harsh, dissuasive laws (*hudud*, e.g. lapidation, amputation and flogging).⁸⁰ Finally, Qutb sought to redefine the terms 'advanced civilization' and 'backwards civilisation' by categorising the former as revolving around humanity as its supreme value – like in Islam.⁸¹

The Islamic Political System

Like all Islamist authors before and after him, Qutb's utopia was the state established by Muhammad and continued by his immediate followers, the 'Rightly-Guided Caliphs', in seventh-century Medina. He offered an extremely idealised picture of that first Islamic state, supposedly created by God to save men from their misfortunes and their corruption and show them the model to follow.⁸² Qutb considered the prophet's Companions to be a unique generation in history because they completely abandoned the *jahiliyya* and drank from a single source, the Qur'an.⁸³ They did not seek worldly power but hankered after paradise, and it was only because their hearts were free of the chauvinisms of lineage, nation and tribe that God entrusted them with the establishment of His sovereignty on Earth.⁸⁴ The countries they took over were 'conquered for freedom, light and joy',⁸⁵ and for a thousand years Muslims basked in the blessings of that first period.⁸⁶

Unfortunately, Qutb explained, foreign elements – notably Greek philosophy, Persian mythology, Jewish tales and Christian theology – soon started to mix with Islam, gradually 'contaminating' it.⁸⁷ Moreover, the enemies of Islam, 'who only come together to combat this religion', have incessantly plotted against it. Qutb believed that the most destructive of their attacks was that of 'Crusader imperialism', which combined the fanaticism of the Crusades with the conviction that the Islamic spirit was an obstacle to imperialism and to its ally, 'international Zionism'.⁸⁸ He lamented that as a result of those conspiracies, Islam had effectively ceased to exist, 'although there are still mosques and muezzins, prayers and rituals, to appease those who retain a vague emotional attachment to this religion'.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Qutb was certain that Muslims have a 'gift' for humanity, and confidently stated that the hour of Islam was near.⁹⁰

However, Qutb refused to propose concrete policies for the future Muslim state, alleging that such legislation would rise 'organically' once the Islamic society was in place.⁹¹ He offered as examples insurance and birth control: who could say that they would be necessary in a compassionate society committed to never-ending *jihad*? Nevertheless, he did identify the guiding principles of an Islamic government: justice on the part of the ruler, obedience on the part of the

ruled and consultation (*shura*) between the ruler and the ruled.⁹² Qutb maintained that, in Islam, *shura* is as compulsory as prayer (*salat*) or legal alms (*zakat*)⁹³ – although the actual method of consultation was left to the Muslims of every period to decide.⁹⁴ As for the ruler of an Islamic state, he – and it is always a ‘he’ – derives his legitimacy from his being elected by the community and from his submission to God. He has no privileges over other Muslims, and is only obeyed as long as he himself adheres to the *shari‘a*.⁹⁵

A Programme for Change

Although Qutb was convinced that God’s law would eventually rule the world, he admitted that the path would not be easy and that it would require enormous sacrifices.⁹⁶ The process would be similar to the creation of the first Islamic state: first, a vanguard (*tali‘a*) of young men would have to free their conscience of *jahiliyya* and direct their worship only to God.⁹⁷ Once firmly established, that vanguard would invite the rest of humanity to follow their example by submitting solely to God.⁹⁸ The members of this vanguard would have to be kind and compassionate, but also ‘extremely frank’ and willing to tell the people the truth:

That *jahiliyya* you are plunged in makes you impure, and God wants to purify you. That state you are in is despicable, and God wants to better you. That life you lead is lowly, and God wants to elevate you. You are mired in conflict, gloom and vileness, and God wants to offer you respite, mercy and happiness.⁹⁹

Qutb trusted that by presenting Islam in a complete and accurate fashion, the people’s *fitra* would answer the call (*da‘wa*) and they would be ready to embrace Islam.¹⁰⁰

However, preaching alone would not be enough to establish an Islamic state, because the usurpers of God’s divinity will not give up power voluntarily.¹⁰¹ The answer was *jihad*, which Qutb saw as a tool to protect the believers, eliminate obstacles in the way of the *da‘wa* and erect an Islamic system that would free men from all authority except that of God.¹⁰² He criticised ‘the descendants [*sic*] of the Muslims’ and ‘the defeatists in the face of the current situation and of the Orientalists’ cunning attack’, for pretending that *jihad* is merely a defensive war – that is, unless the term is understood very broadly, as the defence of humankind against everything that prevents its liberation.¹⁰³ On the other hand, Qutb convincingly argued that considering *jihad* as merely defensive eliminated the justification for the early Arabo-Muslim conquests.¹⁰⁴ Islam wants peace, he added, but not the ‘cheap’ peace of being limited to a small piece of territory, because it is concerned with and ultimately meant to encompass the whole of humanity.¹⁰⁵

Following medieval author Ibn al-Qayyim¹⁰⁶, Qutb divided men into three groups: Muslims; ‘protected minorities’ (*ahl al-dhimma*); and inhabitants of *Dar al-Harb* (the Abode of War), who must be subjugated.¹⁰⁷ After that happens, the latter are free to convert to Islam or not.¹⁰⁸ If they resist conversion, they must pay a ‘protection’ tax known as *jizya*, which symbolises their submission to the Islamic state their willingness to open their doors to the Islamic *da‘wa*.¹⁰⁹ Non-Muslims cannot fight in Muslim armies, but benefit from their protection and enjoy the same rights as Muslims regarding social security, etc.¹¹⁰ However, Qutb’s

proclaimed tolerance towards non-Muslims seems at odds with his extremely negative image of the *ahl al-kitab* ('people of the book', i.e. Christians and Jews), an image he derives from the Qur'an:

The people of the Book were hostile to Muslims at the time of the prophet – Peace be Upon Him – and are hostile to the vanguard of Islamic renaissance now simply because they are Muslims who believe in God¹¹¹ [and] in what was revealed to them in the Qur'an. [...] They oppose the Muslims simply for being Muslims,¹¹² and [also] because they are depraved and have falsified [the books] that God revealed to them.¹¹³

In any event, Qutb insisted that in the future Islamic state non-Muslims would not be free to 'deify their caprices' (*hawa-hum*) or choose to be the servants of [other] servants',¹¹⁴ i.e. they would not be allowed to legislate for themselves or choose representatives to do it for them. Obeying the social, moral, economic and international norms of the Islamist state would be non-negotiable.¹¹⁵

Sayyid Qutb's Legacy

There have long been conflicting interpretations of Sayyid Qutb's works, even within the Islamist movement. The Muslim Brothers soon realised that his uncompromising discourse was a liability, and gradually distanced themselves from his writings. In 1969 al-Banna's successor as General Guide, Hasan al-Hudaybi, wrote in his prison cell *Du 'ah, la qudah* (*Preachers, Not Judges*), in which he discussed a series of concepts introduced into Islamic thought by Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi, together with the 'kharijite' practise of condemning other Muslims as unbelievers (*takfir*).¹¹⁶ Although the book criticised the Pakistani author, in reality it was a less-than-veiled denunciation of Qutb who, as we have seen, had adopted Mawdudi's terminology. In early 1982, the criticism became explicit: Third General Guide 'Umar al-Tilimsani unequivocally declared that 'Sayyid Qutb only represented himself, and not the Muslim Brethren'.¹¹⁷

However, another school of thought rejects the idea that Qutb deviated significantly from al-Banna's path. According to Muslim Sister Zaynab al-Ghazali, al-Hudaybi sanctioned Qutb's most radical work, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, and was reported to have said that it 'vindicated all the hopes he had placed in Sayyid'.¹¹⁸ Similarly, Islamist author Muhammad al-Danāwī has written that 'the principles set by the martyred *imam* Hasan al-Banna were clarified by the "signposts" drawn by Sayyid Qutb'.¹¹⁹ A variation on this view put forward by, amongst others, Qutb's brother Muhammad is the assertion that the radical groups that pretended to have adopted Qutb's ideology had in fact misread him.¹²⁰ In any case, it is difficult to believe that Qutb's ideas would have been accepted by the Muslim Brothers had they substantially differed from those of the venerated founder of the Society.

In fact, al-Banna laid the groundwork for the main arguments of radical Islamism. He spoke of *jihad* (holy war) as a duty as important as prayer or fasting, and even included it amongst the pillars of Islam. He came dangerously close to declaring other Muslims apostates, stating that those who did not believe in the Society's programme did not have any 'share' of Islam, and should 'look for something else to believe in'.¹²¹ He categorised people according to their attitudes toward the Muslim Brothers, and instructed his followers to relate to them

accordingly.¹²² He warned those who stood in the way of the Society that the choice was between loyalty and enmity, and that they would not hesitate to wage war on anybody 'who d[id] not work for the victory of Islam'.¹²³ He threatened that if the authorities refused to implement Islam, the Brothers would be forced to take over power for themselves.¹²⁴ Furthermore, he described death as the most beautiful of arts,¹²⁵ and promised his disciples victory or God's reward in paradise.¹²⁶

The truth is that, since its inception, Islamism was a totalitarian and intolerant ideology that claimed to have the answer to all questions and the solution to all problems facing humanity. It marginalised and sought to delegitimise alternative interpretations of Islam; Muslims who did not agree with its politicised interpretation of their religion were condemned as ignorant, or even as 'traitors'. Eventually, entire Muslim societies were declared 'apostate' due to their failure to support the Islamic radicals, and thenceforth became the targets of Islamist violence. However, the resort to force was an option from the very beginning, as demonstrated by the assassinations of public figures perpetrated by the Brotherhood in the 1940s. That is not to minimise the differences between al-Banna and Qutb, most notably the latter's adoption of al-Mawdudi's terminology and the concept of modern-day *jahiliyya*, which seemed to describe so well the oppressive regimes that persecuted the Muslim Brothers. Ironically, imprisonment granted Qutb the leisure to systematise al-Banna's thought and build upon it. Nevertheless, no assessment of contemporary radical Islam should overlook the ideological influence of the revered founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna himself¹²⁷.

Notes

1. The Wafd Party was a nationalist movement created by Sa'ad Zaghlul after the First World War which led the Egyptian fight for independence.
2. Sayyid Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq* (Damascus: Dar Dimashq, 1964), pp.215–6. For a study of Qutb's stay in the US and how it influenced his thought, see John Calvert, "'The World is an Undutiful Boy': Sayyid Qutb's American Experience", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 11/1 (2000), pp.87–103.
3. Sayyid Bashshir Ahmad Kashmiri, '*Abqari al-Islam Sayyid Qutb: Al-adib al-'imlaq wa'l-mujaddid al-mulhim fi daw' athari-hi wa-injazati-hi al-adabiyya* (Cairo: Dar al-Fa'ila, 1994), pp.164–5.
4. Sa'ud Mawla, *Min Hasan al-Banna ila Hizb al-Wasat. Al-harakat al-islamiyya wa-qadaya al-irhab wa'l-ta'ifiyya* (Beirut: Al-'Ula, 2000), p.34; Mahmud Jami', *Wa-'arafna al-Ikhwan* (Cairo: Dar al-Tawzi' wa'l-Nashr al-Islamiyya, 2004), p.26.
5. Mawla, *Min Hasan al-Banna ila Hizb al-Wasat* (note 4), pp.45–7; Jami', *Wa-'arafna al-Ikhwan* (note 4), pp.89ff.
6. Nasir also exploited the assassination attempt to get rid of President Muhammad Najib, who had been the Revolution's figurehead, for his alleged collusion with the Muslim Brothers. He would spend the next 18 years under house arrest.
7. For the evolution of Qutb's thought as reflected in his writings, see William E. Shepard, *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism. A Translation and Critical Analysis of Social Justice in Islam* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
8. *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq* had been republished five times in six months and, according to Kashmiri, 'it pushed millions of youths to join the Brotherhood in order to work for an Islamic revolution'. See his '*Abqari al-Islam Sayyid Qutb* (note 3), p.443.
9. See, for instance, "Da'watu-na fi tawr jadid", in *Majmu'at rasa'il al-imam al-shahid Hasan al-Banna* (Alexandria: Dar al-Da'wa, 1998), pp.120–1, "Al-'aqa'id" (ibid., 393–431), p.398. Ahmad S. Moussalli distinguishes 'modernists' such as al-Afghani and 'Abduh from 'fundamentalists' like al-Banna and Qutb based on their different approaches to reason. See his *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992), pp.126ff.

- For more on al-Banna, see the author's "Hasan al-Banna or the Politisation of Islam", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 9/1 (March 2008), pp.21–42.
10. Even before he became a fundamentalist, Qutb had written two books on the literary merits of the Qur'an: *Al-taswir al-fanni fi'l-Qur'an* (*Artistic Imagery in the Qur'an*) and *Mashahid al-qiyama fi'l-Qur'an* (*Scenes of the Day of Resurrection in the Qur'an*).
 11. Sayyid Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an* (Beirut & Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1982), pp.1760–1; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.135; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara* (Cairo: Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1962), pp.162, 177.
 12. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.2290, 3110.
 13. Sayyid Qutb, *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami* (Beirut & Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1986), pp.44–6.
 14. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.69; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, p.5; and *passim*.
 15. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.68–9.
 16. Sayyid Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam* (Beirut & Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1975), pp.22–3.
 17. Qutb, *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.172–3; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din* (S.l.: s.n., 197–), pp.111–2; *Maalim fi al-ariq*, p.174; *Hadha al-din*. Shabakat al-Da'wa. available at: <http://www.daawa-info.net/books1.php?author=الشيخ%20سعيد%20قوتب> (last accessed 23 February 2008), p.28.
 18. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.174–5, 180–1; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1944; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*; Shabakat al-Da'wa, available at: <http://www.daawa-info.net/books1.php?author=الشيخ%20سعيد%20قوتب> (last accessed 23 February 2008), pp.5–6.
 19. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.168–70, 180–1. Bassam Tibi has aptly described that aspiration to adopt the material achievements of the West whilst rejecting its cultural basis as 'the Islamic dream of semi-modernity'. See his *Islam between Culture and Politics* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), *passim*.
 20. Hasan al-Banna, "Risalat al-ta'alim", in *Majmu'at rasa'il al-imam al-shahid Hasan al-Banna*, p.373.
 21. Qutb, *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.102; see also *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.42–3, 78–9; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.932–3, 1016–7, 1734–5, 1948.
 22. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.3966–7; *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.366.
 23. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.3966; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.40.
 24. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.93, 158–9; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1442, 2008, 2010.
 25. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.28, 292; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.3–5, 25, 175.
 26. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.266ff; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.165–6.
 27. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.16–7, 56, 1133; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.20, 26; *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.44; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.1; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.11–2.
 28. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.87, 111; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.15, 25; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.98–9.
 29. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.15–7.
 30. William E. Shepard, "Islam as a 'system' in the later writing of Sayyid Qutb", *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/1 (1989), p.36.
 31. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1010, 1216, 2009–10; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.183ff; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.207–8.
 32. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.208, 211–8; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1083; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.93–4, 97.
 33. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.208; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.263
 34. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.199, 203–4; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.94, 100–101; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.611.
 35. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.882, 1010–11, 2010–11.
 36. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.20, 97, 264; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.611.
 37. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.13–7; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.11.
 38. See Abu'l-A'la al-Mawdudi, *Al-mustalaahat al-arba'a fi'l-Qur'an: al-ilah, al-rabb, al-'ibada, al-din* (Cairo?: Dar al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1975?). Whist admitting that Qutb contributed to the popularisation of some of Mawdudi's central concepts, Fathi Osman argues that this was 'at the expense of its [sic] profundity and accuracy'; see his "Mawdudi's Contribution to the Development of Modern Islamic Thinking in the Arabic-Speaking World", *The Muslim World* 93 (2003), p.481.
 39. Qutb, *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.81–2; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.2765.
 40. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.28; see also *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.294–5, 1005, 1433; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.9–10; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.113.
 41. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.5; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.16, 932–3, 3386–7; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.175–6; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.40–1.
 42. Qutb, *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.118–9; *Hadha al-din*, p.10; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, p.87.

43. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1017–8; see also *ibid.*, p.1946, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.85.
44. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.100, 244; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami wa-muqawwimatihi*, p.72.
45. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.28, 31; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1011; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.113.
46. Qur'anic term that is traduced as 'evil' or 'the evil one', i.e. the devil.
47. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.292; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.183.
48. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.9, 110; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.610, 1433; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, 185.
49. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.100; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1110, 1944–5.
50. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.110; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1443.
51. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.224; see also *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.45.
52. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.120, 198; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.708–9, 1945; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.45.
53. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.201.
54. *Ibid.*, pp.120–4; Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1945.
55. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, p.61.
56. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.709; see also *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.183.
57. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.9–10, 144; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1091.
58. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.294–5; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.83.
59. Qutb, *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.3, 5, 174–5; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.255, 290–2; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.2144–5; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.31.
60. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.60, 72–4; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.4.
61. Qutb, *Hadha al-din*, pp.27ff.
62. *Ibid.*, p.24; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.96–7; *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya* (Beirut & Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1974), pp.12–13; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.117–18; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.322.
63. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1754, 1942–3; *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, p.76; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, p.97.
64. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.3.
65. Qutb quotes at length Carrel's *L'homme, cet inconnu* in *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*. See also *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.47ff; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.258–9; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1888, note; *Hadha al-din*, pp.27ff; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, p.59.
66. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, p.63; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.72, 121; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1563, 1890, 2144.
67. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.71–2; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1563; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1890
68. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1754–5, 1943, 2144.
69. Qutb, *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.63–6; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.86.
70. Qutb, *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.374–5; Qutb *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.63–4.
71. Elsewhere, Qutb declared (or admitted?) that government in Islam is based more on conscience than on legislation. *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.108, 265; see also *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1009–10; *Hadha al-din*, p.7.
72. Qutb, *Hadha al-din*, p.31.
73. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.511–2, 1005–9, 2370, 3980–1; *Hadha al-din*, p.22
74. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.29–31, 70; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1005–6, 1562, 1889–90.
75. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1891; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.197.
76. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.183ff, 31; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.12, 708–9; *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.375.
77. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.129, 138–9; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.15, 932–3, 1012, 2145; *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.363–4; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.12–3.
78. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.2401; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.27, 182–3.
79. Qutb, *Muqawwimat al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.375–6; see also *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.56–7.
80. Qutb, *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, pp.82–3; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.882–6.
81. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.147.
82. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.15–6; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.246; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.86; *Hadha al-din*, pp.18, 26.
83. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.13–20; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.673; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.1–2.
84. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1008–9; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.38–9.
85. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.673.
86. Qutb, *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.46; *Hadha al-din*, p.26.
87. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.16–7; *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, pp.3–5.

88. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.249–56; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1648ff, 1891; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.248–9; *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, pp.96ff; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, p.181; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.5–7, 122.
89. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.2013; see also *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.6; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.244, 246, 292–3. During his trial, Qutb refuted the accusation that he had denied the existence of Muslims; see Kashmiri, '*Abqari al-Islam Sayyid Qutb* (note 3), p.173. However, in his writings he often stated just that, e.g. 'Whoever submits to the laws created by other men leave Islam, whatever they say' (*Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.85); 'Today Muslims do not practice *jihad* because today Muslims do not exist' (*Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1634).
90. Qutb, *Khasa'is al-tasawwur al-islami*, p.113; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.5; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.4–5; *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, p.122; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.256.
91. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.46–7; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1010, 1735; 2009–12; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.183ff.
92. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.101–105.
93. Qutb, *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, p.74, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.202–203.
94. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.104–105.
95. *Ibid.*, pp.102–6; *Ma'rikat al-Islam wa'l-ra'smaliyya*, p.74.
96. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, pp.256–7; *Al-Islam wa-mushkilat al-hadara*, pp.181–2; *Al-mustaqbal li-hadha al-din*, pp.125–7. Qutb devotes the last chapter of *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq* to a famous Qur'anic episode: The martyrdom of believers at the hands of 'the people of the pit' (*ashab al-ukhdud*) – a possible allusion to the treatment of the Muslim Brothers by the Nasserist regime; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.231ff.
97. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.118–9; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.266.
98. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.23–4; 65–8; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1945–6.
99. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.206.
100. *Ibid.*, p.212.
101. *Ibid.*, p.83; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1091–2, 1434.
102. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.294–5; *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.83.
103. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.78–9, 88–9, 110–1; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1435–6.
104. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.89–90; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1436, 1442.
105. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.90–1, 106; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1436, 1441.
106. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350) was a disciple of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328). Both have become references to present-day Islamist radicals.
107. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.75–7, 91; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.1436; see also *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.184–5; *Hadha al-din*, p.35.
108. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.87, 105, 111; *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.99; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.295, 1432, 1440ff.
109. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, p.107; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.1433, 1442.
110. Qutb, *Al-'adala al-ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam*, p.99; *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, pp.295, 1633–4.
111. Reference to the Qur'anic verse: 'Say: O, People of the Scripture! Do ye blame us for aught else than that we believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed aforetime, and because most of you are evil-livers?' (5:59).
112. Reference to the Qur'anic verse: 'And the Jews will not be pleased with thee, nor will the Christians, till thou follow their creed' (2:120).
113. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.924. Muslims explain the contradictions between the Qur'an and the Bible by saying that the Jews and the Christians deliberately distorted God's message to hide references to the advent of prophet Muhammad.
114. Qutb, *Ma'alim fi'l-tariq*, pp.87, 101–2.
115. Qutb, *Fi zilal al-Qur'an*, p.295
116. The Kharijites were a radical Muslim sect that condemned all other Muslims as 'infidels'. At present only its relatively moderate Ibadi branch survives, in Oman and areas of Tunisia, Algeria and Libya.
117. Quoted in Gilles Kepel, *Le prophète et pharaon: Aux sources des mouvements islamistes* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1993), p.68.
118. *Ibid.*, p.65
119. Quoted in Kashmiri, '*Abqari al-Islam Sayyid Qutb* (note 3), p.449.
120. See Kepel, *Le prophète et pharaon* (note 117), pp.68–9.
121. Hasan al-Banna, "Ila al-shabab wa-ila al-talaba khassatan", in *Majmu'at rasa'il al-imam al-shahid Hasan al-Banna*, pp.96–7; "Nizam al-hukm", in *ibid.*, p.227; see also "Ila al-tullab", *ibid.*, p.297.
122. "Da'watu-na", in *Majmuat rasail*, pp.14–5; "Risalat al-ta'alim", *ibid.*, p.379.

123. "Iftitah", *al-Nadhir* I (reproduced in *Mudhakkarat*, pp.145–7), pp.147, 146.
124. Al-Banna, "Risalat al-mu'tamar al-khamis", *Majmuat al-rasa'il* p.187.
125. Hasan al-Banna, "Fann al-mawt", in Muhammad 'Abd al-Hakim Khayal (ed.), *Minbar al-jum'a li-l-imam al-shahid Hasan al-Banna*, vol. I (Alexandria: Dar al-Da'wa, 1978?), pp.152–6.
126. "Ila al-shabab wa-ila al-talaba khassatan" (note 121), p.91; "Risalat al-ta'alim" (note 20), p.379.
127. For a comparison of al-Banna and Qutb, see the author's "Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb: Continuity or Rupture?", *The Muslim World*, 99/2 (April 2009, pp.294–311).