

## Part 4: Ideological root of extremism

### Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)

Before examining the ideological root of extremism it is important to highlight the foundational belief and concept of 'Tawheed' – Islamic monotheism. In fact, the importance of elucidating upon ideology at this juncture cannot be understated. The ideological declaration/testimony of faith known as the '*Shahada*', upon which an individual either affirms or reaffirms his/her belief and adherence to Islam, is amongst the most significant foundations of the religion. This ideological affirmation<sup>1</sup> is the demarcation between '*Eeman*' (the true belief in the One True God – Allah) and '*Kufr*' (disbelief).<sup>2</sup> The monotheistic concept of worshipping God alone in Islam is commonly known as '*Tawheed*'. A misunderstanding of this concept of can and has led to many deviated groups emerging over the centuries shortly after the advent of Islam.<sup>3</sup> The Qur'an illustrates such misguidance by stating:

**"Many of them claim to believe in Allah but they really commit shirk (associating partners with Allah/polytheism)."** <sup>4</sup>

The literal meaning of *Tawheed* is unification or 'asserting oneness' of something. It derives from the Arabic verb '*wahhada*' which itself means to unite, unify or consolidate.<sup>5</sup> Philips expounds upon its meaning when referring to Islam by highlighting:

***"When the term Tawheed is used in reference to Allah, (i.e. Tawheedullah) it means the realizing and maintaining Allaah's unity in all of man's actions which directly or indirectly relate to Him. It is the belief that Allaah is One, without partner in His dominion and His actions (Ruboobeeyah), One without similitude in His essence and attributes (Asma wa Sifaat), and One without rival in His divinity and in worship (Ulooheeyah/'Ebaddah)."*** <sup>6</sup>

He goes on to explain that the term *Tawheed* is not actually mentioned specifically in the Qur'an or ahadeeth of the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), however, reference is made in one particular narration to Yuwahhidoo Allah (the Oneness of Allah).<sup>7</sup> In this particular narration the Prophet used the present tense of the

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<sup>1</sup> "I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Prophet Muhammad is His slave and Messenger."

<sup>2</sup> Philips, A A B: 'The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)' International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, p.iv.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p.vi.

<sup>4</sup> The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) Yusuf (12 verse 106)

<sup>5</sup> Cowan, J M: 'The Hans Weir Dictionary of Modern Arabic' Spoken Language Services Inc. New York, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1976 p.1055.

<sup>6</sup> Philips, A A B: 'The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)' International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, p.1

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.1,2 citing hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbas when the Prophet sent one of his Companions, Mu'aadh ibn Jabal as a governor to Yemen in 9 AH (After the Hijrah), al-Bukhari, (Khan, M M); 'Sahih al-Bukhari' (Arabic-English)

verb, from where the verbal noun Tawheed is derived.<sup>8</sup> Remaining with Philips' discourse on Tawheed, it also becomes necessary to note that *Tawheed* became categorised, shortly after the Prophet's era into three categories, already alluded to above;

a. **Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah** (Maintaining the Unity of Lordship)

This category, in summary, encapsulates the fundamental concept that Allah alone is the cause and Originator of everything that exists. He sustains and maintains His creation without any dependency or subservience to it; He is the sole Lord of the entire universe and its inhabitants without any challenge to His sovereignty.<sup>9</sup> Al Mutairi asserts that submission to Allah and acceptance of His Law is an essential component of the testimony of faith (Shahada). Under this category falls the pivotal and authoritative status of rulership, or Haakimiyah as it is known Islamically:<sup>10</sup>

**"The Command is for none but Allah: He has commanded that you worship none but Him."**<sup>11</sup>

This category of *Tawheed* will shortly be discussed in more detail as it is from here that the nature of extremism, which is part of the focus of this research, emanated.

b. **Tawheed al-Asmaa was-Sifaat** (Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Names and Attributes)

Philips' further categorises this aspect of Tawheed into five subdivisions explaining the ideological nature of them. For example, he elucidates on the point of not likening Allah's Attributes to His creation, i.e. anthropomorphism, (linguistically known as 'Tamtheel' according to Islamic terminology<sup>12</sup>). In support of this particular aspect, the following Qur'anic verse is cited:

**"There is nothing like unto Him and He is the All-Hearing and All-Seeing."**<sup>13</sup>

He further explains that, whilst the attributes and names may possess the same meaning their applicability and functionality are different in that the human application is

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vol.9 pp. 348-9 no. 469 and Muslim (Siddiq, A H): 'Sahih al-Muslim' (English translation), Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, 1987, vol.1, pp.14-15, no.27

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>9</sup> Philips, A A B: 'The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)' International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, pp. 5-10

<sup>10</sup> Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, pp.104-105

<sup>11</sup> The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) Yusuf (12 verse, 40)

<sup>12</sup> Taimiyyah, I: 'Sharh Al-Aqeedat-il-Wasitiyah: Text on the Fundamental Beliefs of Islam and Rejection of False Concepts of its Opponents,' Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Dar-us-Salaam Publications, 1996, pp.32-33

<sup>13</sup> The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) Ash-Shoora (42 verse, 11)

restrictive and finite whereas the same is the opposite when referring to Allah in that they are non-restrictive and infinite in meaning and application. To support this assertion, Philips' refers to the Christian and Jewish beliefs, cited in the Bible and Torah, where Allah (God in the biblical translation) is portrayed as a repentant deity for purportedly possessing fallible thoughts in the same way as humans do when realising they have erred.<sup>14</sup> This, in fact, constitutes blasphemy according to this particular tenet as it points directly to anthropomorphism. The remaining subcategories described by Philips' deal with the avoidance of the following aspects:

- i. Altering or distorting the meaning of Allah's names and attributes, known as '*Tahreef*'<sup>15</sup>
  - ii. Negating the attributes of Allah in order to provide alternative explanations, referred to as '*Ta'teel*'
  - iii. Questioning the applicability of these attributes so far as they relate to Allah's omnipotence, i.e. asking how Allah does something, such as descending to the lowest heavens in the last part of every night etc. and finally;
  - iv. Ascribing names and attributes, that are solely attributable to Allah, to the creation, i.e. naming someone/something '*Ar-Raheem*' – The Most Merciful or '*Ar-Ra'oof*' – The One Most Full of Pity'. These attributes are absolute insofar as their ascription to Allah is concerned. The definite article that precedes this ascription signifies this absolute. Philips' does, however, highlight the permissibility of using divine attributes on the proviso that the definite article is removed and prefixed with '*Abd*', i.e. 'slave of' whatever attribute or name follows. For example, names like *Abdul-Raheem* and *Abdul- Ra'oof* are considered permissible.<sup>16</sup>
- c. **Tawheed Uloohiyah / Ibaadah** (Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Worship)<sup>17</sup>

This aspect of *tawheed* is what actually demarcates belief in Islam from disbelief; the first two categories, in themselves, are not sufficient to fulfill the requirements of *tawheed*.<sup>18</sup> Evidence in support of this assertion can be seen by

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<sup>14</sup> Philips, A A B: 'The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)' International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, p.12. Here, Philips cites as proof, Exodus Chapter 32, verse 14 which states: "*And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do to his people.*" Holy Bible Revised Standard Version.

<sup>15</sup> An example of Tahreef can be seen in one of the earlier groups, considered deviant – the Mu'tazillah, changing one of the verses in the Qur'an where Allah says; "***And to Musa, Allah spoke directly, i.e. "Kalaama Allahu Musa takleeman."***"\* Surah (Chapter) An-Nisaa (4, verse 164). In rejection of the fact that Allah spoke to one of His creation, the Mu'tazillah changed the diacritical mark on the last letter of the first word, rendering the meaning to "Musa spoke directly to Allah"! ***\*Important note: the transliteration has been provided for ease of reference for the non-Arabic reader. Ordinarily, it is not the practice to transliterate Qur'anic verses for fear of mispronunciation and, therefore, misunderstanding of the meaning.***

<sup>16</sup> Philips, A A B: 'The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)' International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, pp.13-15.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p.2

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.16

Qur'anic reference to the fact that the disbelieving pagans during Prophet Muhammad's era actually possessed belief in Allah's Lordship (Ruboobeeyah) and some of His names and attributes, (Asmaa wa-Sifaat).<sup>19</sup> This particular category of *tawheed* focuses exclusively on the unity of Allah's worship, singling Him out first and foremost for virtually every matter relating to mankind's sustenance and well being. Muslims are obligated to adhere to this fundamental ideological tenet which is considered complementary to the first two categories discussed above.<sup>20</sup> Proof of the importance of this aspect of *tawheed* is witnessed on a daily basis where Muslims regularly acknowledge their dependency on Allah at least seventeen times a day in the obligatory prayers.<sup>21</sup>

There are numerous Qur'anic verses, prophetic narrations and indeed, discourses attesting to the above mentioned categories defining Tawheed and its categories and to elaborate on these in further detail would prove exhaustive within the context of this research paper. That said, it is necessary to provide the context given so as to illustrate the differences that emerged between that of mainstream Islam and the violent extremist ideology.

Philips' elaborates upon why it became necessary to categorise *tawheed* after the Prophet's and many of his older companions' deaths. Whilst the foundations of the components of *tawheed* are all implied in throughout the Qur'an and prophetic narrations and analytical approach became necessary after Islam had spread across various regions such as Persia, Byzantium and India. Islam absorbed the prevalent cultures of those regions as well as the remnants of its new converts' former beliefs, such as philosophical concepts that were contrary to the unitarian concept of *tawheed*.<sup>22</sup> In addition to this, those unhappy with Islam's spread into new regions conspired to distort the tenets of the religion in order to repel its increasing number of adherents.<sup>23</sup> Philips makes reference to Muslim historians' accounts when concepts of free will first emerged in the Muslim world. This philosophical concept diametrically opposes one of the fundamental ideological tenets relating to the Articles of Faith; namely, Divine Decree.<sup>24</sup> The belief was further propagated by an Iraqi convert to Islam, called Sausan who had previously been a Christian. He later reverted to Christianity after influencing one of his students at that time, named Ma'bad ibn Khaalid al-Juhanee. This individual continued to propagate what was considered to be an alien concept until he was

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, pp.16-17 citing the following verses of the Qur'an: "**Say, 'Who is it that gives you all sustenance from the sky and earth, governs sight and hearing, brings forth life from the dead (matter) and death from the living?' They will say: 'Allaah'**" [Surah (Chapter) Yunus, 10, verse 31,] also, "**If you asked them who created them, they will surely say, 'Allaah'**" [Surah (Chapter) Az-Zukruf 43, verse 87.] There are many verses attesting to this observation.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p.20

<sup>21</sup> The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) Al-Fatihah 1, verse 4, translates into the meaning; "*You alone do we worship and from You alone do we seek help.*"

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pps2-5

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p.3

<sup>24</sup> (Refer to page 8 of Chapter 3: British Muslims and Religious Conversion for a description on the fundamental beliefs of Islam.)

arrested and charged with heresy, resulting in his execution.<sup>25</sup> It is interesting to note that some of the younger companions of the Prophet were alive during this period and advised the general populace against mixing with protagonists of free will.<sup>26</sup>

**Ideological root of extremism part A: ‘Al-Haakimiyyah’ – (Judgement is solely for Allah’); and its misapplication.**

The emergence of this aspect of Tawheed, and it being distinguished from the other categories, was discussed when referring to the dissent of the Khawaarij. Its original categorisation under Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah (unity of Allah’s Lordship) was also discussed. Discussion will now ensue around the reasons leading to its distinction from the other categories of Tawheed. Al Mutairi, after highlighting the verses that refer to Al-Haakimiyyah as a legislative source, points to cultural and colonial invasions of the Muslim world, particularly during the period of the Ottoman Empire, as a contributory factor that led to distinguishing it as a separate category.<sup>27</sup> His conclusions in this regard are not dissimilar to Philips’ observations, (illustrated above) as to the reasons for categorising Tawheed in the first place, after the spread of Islam to various regions and cultures throughout the world. Al Mutairi describes the adverse effects of colonialism upon the Muslim world and opines that this contributed to the state of spiritual as well as economic decline of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>28</sup> This resulted in a number of scholars and activists, concerned by the continuing decay, to revive Muslim religiosity and propagate returning to the rule of law; Allah’s Law in this instance. Their focus was, therefore, upon Allah’s Law as a distinction between newly introduced man-made laws. This, according to Al Mutairi led to the newly invented term, Al-Haakimiyyah.<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note al-Mutairi’s observation here, as during the time of the Khawaarij, reference was made to ruling by Allah’s Laws without it being categorised separately. This is, perhaps, due to Philips’ earlier observation that such categorisations were unnecessary immediately after the Prophet Muhammad’s death in view of the preponderance of his companions alive at the time of the Khawaarij’s emergence and, therefore, the memory and preservation of his (the Prophet’s message). Significantly, this new terminology and indeed, its distinction as a fourth separate category, began in the mid twentieth arguably in response to the devastating effects upon the Muslim world resulting from the demise and subsequent dismantling of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1920s. These effects included the colonialisation and secularisation of a significant part of the Muslim and Arab world. Advocates of Al-Haakimiyyah included Abul ‘Alaa Maudoodi, who defined it to mean:

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<sup>25</sup> Philips, A A B: ‘The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)’ International Islamic Publishing House, 1997, p.3 citing Hajar, I: ‘Tahdheeb at-Tahdheeb’ Hyderabad, 1325-7, vol.10, p.225

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, (Those companions were Abdullah ibn Umar, son of the second caliph Umar ibn Al Khattab, and Abdullah ibn Abee Awfaa).

<sup>27</sup> Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, p.106

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, pp.106-7

*“The supreme and absolute authority, as referred to in the terminology of today’s political science.”*<sup>30</sup>

Sayyid Qutb, whose teachings shall be examined in more detail, also supported this terminology by stating:

*“The haakimiyyah is for Allah and the right to have humans worship Him. The right to lay down these laws for them also belongs to Him.”*<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, one of the leading protagonists to this understanding of haakimiyyah today is none other than Al-Qaeda’s current leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri. He was influenced by Qutb’s vision of this concept, stating:

*“Qutb’s call for faith in Allah’s Oneness, for submission to His sole authority and sovereignty (hakimiyya), was the spark that enflamed the Islamic revolution against Islam’s enemies throughout the world.”*<sup>32</sup>

Al Mutairi confirms the terminology of Al-Haakimiyyah as a new one when mentioning *‘it as a newly coined term, as a result of translating some Western terms into Arabic.’*<sup>33</sup> However, despite this new introduction, he confirms that it is not in contradiction to the tenets of Tawheed and does in fact fall under the category of Tawheed Uloohiyah (Unity of Allah’s Worship) as opposed to Tawheed ar-Ruboobeeyah (Unity of Allah’s Lordship).<sup>34</sup> In fact, there is no contradiction or inconsistency with Al-Haakimiyyah being placed under either of these existing categories of *tawheed*. Conflict arises when distinguishing it as a fourth and separate category altogether in an effort to politicise it as a distinct ideological component. Maududi introduced the notion of Al-Haakimiyyah when discussing Lordship (‘Rabb’, literally meaning ‘Lord’). According to Kepel, Maududi provided a twofold meaning to lordship; both religious and political.<sup>35</sup> The political implications of Al-Haakimiyyah are, arguably, the cause of existing problems faced when combating violent extremist ideology today. In fact, it is worth noting Biddle’s observation of ideology as the *‘centre of gravity’* and a tool for rallying support.<sup>36</sup> Al Mutairi, whilst acknowledging Al-Haakimiyyah as the major cause of

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<sup>30</sup> Maudoodi, A: ‘Tadween al-Dustoor’, from ‘Majmooah Nadhariyyah al-Islam wa Hadyihi’, p.251 cited in Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.107.

<sup>31</sup> Qutb, S: ‘Muqawwimaat al-Tasawur’ p.177 and ‘Muallim fi al-Tareeq’ p.118 Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.107.

<sup>32</sup> al-Zawahiri, A; ‘Knights under the Prophet’s Banner’, December 2001, cited in Keppel, G; ‘The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West’, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004, p.79

<sup>33</sup> Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.108.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Kepel, G: ‘The Roots Of Radical Islam’ SAQI, 2005, p.49

<sup>36</sup> Biddle, S: ‘War Aims and War Termination’, in Defeating Terrorism: Strategic Issue Analyses, Colonel John R. Martin, ed. (Strategic Studies Insititute, U.S. Army War College, January 2002, ) pp.7-8, cited in Hassan M H B; ‘Key Considerations in Counterideological Work against Terrorist Ideology’ Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 29:531-558, 2006, p.532, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

extremism in contemporary times, suggests that the initial revival or ‘philosophizing’ about this aspect of *tahweed* was simply as a result of the crisis the Muslim world found itself facing due to various governments’ adoption and implementation of colonial and, therefore, man-made, alien laws.<sup>37</sup> He states:

*“This haakimiyyah issue is the major ideological root for extremism in contemporary times. Indeed, ruling by other than what Allah revealed was the major grievance of the Islamic fronts and of those among them that went to extremes.”*<sup>38</sup>

He goes on to explain that grievances were also associated with an incorrect understanding of the concept of haakimiyyah itself.<sup>39</sup> In support of this assertion, he refers to a debate held between Saalim al-Bahnasawi, considered to be one of the first witnesses to the evolution of contemporary extremist thought, and a prisoner inclined to Takfeer (excommunication of Muslims from Islam due to their committing sins). Al Mutairi illustrates the prisoner’s response to the question of allegiance to Muslim rulers, highlighting that:

*“They did not give allegiance to their rulers by saying that they differed with [them – the rulers] because [they] had become partners with Allah, making people submit to worshipping them rather than Allah.”*<sup>40</sup>

This also accords to the view of young Muslim Brotherhood members, incarcerated in 1965 during president Nasser’s ‘reign’. The tortures they suffered nurtured the idea of takfeer:

*“In their eyes, neither their torturers nor their rulers who gave them their orders could be considered Muslims, nor could people who failed to revolt against these unjust rulers.”*<sup>41</sup>

One such prisoner, incarcerated at that time was Syed Qutb. He was to observe in his influential book, ‘Signposts’, considered the ‘theoretical tool’ of analysis for combating the state of Egypt at that time:<sup>42</sup>

*“Nowadays, the entire world lives in a state of jahiliyya<sup>43</sup> as far as the source from which it draws the rules of its mode of existence is concerned, a jahiliyya that is not*

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<sup>37</sup> Al-Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.108

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Al-Hukm wa Qadhayah al-Takfeer cited in Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.108

<sup>41</sup> al-Bahnasawi, S: ‘al-Hukm wa Qudiyat Takfir al-Muslim (Power and the Problem of the Excommunication of the Muslim)’, Cairo 1977

<sup>42</sup> Kepel, G: ‘The Roots Of Radical Islam’ SAQI, 2005, p.32

*changed one whit by material comfort and scientific inventions, no matter how remarkable. The principle on which it is based is opposition to God's rule over earth and to the major characteristic of the Divinity, namely, sovereignty (al-haakimiyya): instead it invests men with this, and makes some of them gods for the others."*<sup>44</sup>

In fact, Qutb's position so far as Muslim societies were concerned was explicit:

*"Any society that is not Muslim is jahilliyya...as is any society in which something other than God alone is worshipped... Thus, we must include in this category all the societies that now exist on earth!"*<sup>45</sup>

To further emphasise his pronouncement of global takfeer on all Muslim societies, he declares:

*"The societies that proclaim themselves to be Muslim must also be placed in the category of jahiliyya...because in the course of their existence, they do not practice the worship ('ubudiyya) of God alone – although they have faith in Him – but bestow characteristics that belong exclusively to the Divinity upon other than His. From this they derive their organizations, laws, values, judgments, habits and traditions."*<sup>46</sup>

Al-Mahmood concurs with Al Mutairi's view of the effects of haakimiyyah upon the Muslim world today and highlights that a correct understanding of it as a concept as well as its application are essential if the current dilemma is to be averted. Notably, both he and al-Mutairi make reference to what the researcher has termed, 'liberal extremism' in what they describe as the attempts of academics and scholars, at the other end of the violent extremist spectrum, to dispel haakimiyyah in its entirety, labeling it as an intrinsic component of extremism.<sup>47</sup> It is important to reiterate al-haakimiyyah is indeed an essential component that falls under established categories of *tawheed*; to deny this is considered tantamount to major disbelief in Islam, excommunicating an individual from the religion itself. The ambit of discussion around this issue relates to the misapplication and misunderstanding of this particular concept/component that has

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<sup>43</sup> *"The term jahiliyya can be translated into English only through approximations and paraphrases. As it is used in 'Signposts', it is one of the axes of Syed Qutb's view of the world. Derived from the Arabic root meaning to be 'ignorant', this word is used by Muslims to designate the pre-Islamic society of the Arabian Peninsula. This society 'was ignorant' of God until Muhammad's mission. As the orientalist Goldziher has remarked, the concept of jahiliyya plays a part in Islamic tradition much akin to that of 'barbarism' in the Western tradition. 'Islamism or barbarism' would thus be the alternative posited by Qutb."* Kepel, G: 'The Roots Of Radical Islam' SAQI, 2005, footnote, p.43

<sup>44</sup> Qutb, S: 'Ma'alim fi'l-Tariq (Signposts)' Dar al-Shourouk, Beirut-Cairo, 1980; edition of the World Islamic Union of Students, p.10

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p.98

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, pp.98-101

<sup>47</sup> Al-Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.111 and al-Mahmood, Dr. A R S: 'Man-Made Laws vs. Shari'ah: Ruling by Laws other than what Allah Revealed – Conditions and Rulings', International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh, 2003, p.355



contributed, ideologically, to the manifestations of violent extremism among Muslims. Al Mutairi illustrates the importance of haakimiyyah upon Muslim lives when he states:

*“The statement that the haakimiyyah or rule is only for Allah does not mean that a special group of humans is to rule as if they were the shadow (vicegerent) of Allah upon earth. Nor does it mean that any group has earned a special right for divine rule. Instead, it is an obligation upon all Muslims...to rule by the law and authority of Allah and to make the divine law...supreme.”*<sup>48</sup>

Al-Mahmood, in support of this observation, refers to Quranic injunctions and prophetic texts pointing to the obligation of judging by Allah’s Laws. He also expounds upon the meaning of Quranic verses; namely, Surah (Chapter) al-Ma’idah [5:44, 45 and 47]<sup>49</sup>, their meanings and context, so far as adherence to the Shari’ah is concerned as, indeed, these are other texts cited in support of the extremist perspective.<sup>50</sup> Before concluding on this section of the discourse, it is necessary to examine the causes behind misunderstanding, misapplication or, as the case may be, distorting fundamental tenets of Islamic ideology.

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<sup>48</sup> Al-Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.109

<sup>49</sup> al-Mahmood, Dr. A R S: ‘Man-Made Laws vs. Shari’ah: Ruling by Laws other than what Allah Revealed – Conditions and Rulings’, International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh, 2003, pp.119-220.

<sup>50</sup> Dr. al-Mahmood’s entire book (‘Man-Made Laws vs. Shari’ah: Ruling by Laws other than what Allah Revealed – Conditions and Rulings’, International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh, 2003,) is dedicated to this topic, which would be too exhaustive to reproduce in this research paper. Reference should, therefore, be made to his book which highlights other texts that are sighted in support of ruling by Allah’s Law and the consequences of contravening them. He also highlights the specious arguments and claims of those using such texts to justify either of the two extremes discussed in this particular research, i.e. both liberal and violent extremist extremes.