

# THE ISLAM REVOLUTION

Four analytic studies on radical political Islam

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## ENGLISH SUMMARY

### **THE ISLAM REVOLUTION — The rise and impacts of the radical political Islam**

The political Islam came to life in course of several international and regional political, social economic and cultural factors, but the very concrete reasons of its rise is an object of intensive scientific discussion. According the one point of view the recent Islamism shows continuity with the historical Islam, but the representatives of the opposite view point deny it. The latter analysts hold the modernization failure of the political elites of the Muslim world responsible for the rise of extreme political Islam. The majority of Muslim countries are poor, their economies are unbalanced and exposed, their military capabilities are weak. Their armies were unable to act efficiently in international conflicts, so they fulfill much more repressive police functions in support of dictatorial political systems. Regarding modernization and development policy, the Arab elites show everywhere, even in the rich countries, a deficitary balance. In such a trap situation the appearance of – even religion-based - extreme ideologies and movements is no wonder, much more essential. Islam considers itself to be not only a religion, but first of all a civilization, in which the individual is an ephemeral phenomenon having a meaningful existence within its community, only. The combatant fundamentalist Islam is very attractive and efficient in the circle of the Moslem youth living in the West, too. The force of attraction of the fundamentalist Islam surrenders from similar factors as in the case of other totalitarian ideologies: this world of ideas based on a virtually religious, universal world explanation offers didactically exact reference points and identity, mission and action directions for individuals suffering in the traps of modernity or post-modernity.

The world-political changes devalued the importance of the Islamic world, while a new ideology of confrontation, the theory of the

“clash of civilizations” stepped onto the place of the former Cold War. This ideology created for the West an academically specified theoretical construction which equated the Moslem world as a whole with the international terrorism and primitive and aggressive dictatorships and spread this propagandistic picture by the media. However, fighting Islam responded very soon, Osama bin Laden and other leaders

Due to the acceleration of the processes of globalization, particularly to the explosion of the electronic communication from the 80s the possibilities to organize and finance the militant Moslem and to deliver them with weapons increased very fast. By the middle of the 90s the Moslem renewal movements already established such a dense network that a charismatic leader appeared necessarily. With 9/11 a new kind of terrorism appeared and began the till today lasting asymmetric war.

Though the USA became a hyperpower without which nothing can happen in the world one can be sure that the open confrontation with the Moslem world shall lead to the further radicalization of the Islam revivalism. It is to be feared that a war is approaching in which neither a victory, nor a defeat, but also no peace closing is possible.

## **ROOTS AND IDEAS OF THE RADICAL POLITICAL ISLAM**

Political Islam was and is an alternative ideology of freeing and modernizing Islamic societies, however, it looks back to a long prehistory. The first significant organization of political Islam, the Moslem's Brotherhood, was founded in 1928, but its leading ideas rooted in the world of ideas of earlier generations of Islamic thinkers, f.e. Jamal's al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. But searching after their spiritual precursors one could look back at even older times. The earliest layers of modern political Islam are to be found in the reform movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The best known reformer of that time was Mohamed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabism, who gained for himself and his ideas a long-lasting deep influence by his political alliance with the dynasty of Saudi. However, with the search of the forefathers of the fundamentalism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century one could dig even deeper, because in Islam, similarly to Christianity, since the beginnings neo-traditionalist reform currents appeared to fulfill the true intention of the Prophet. The states and societies of the Middle East searched after

the decline of the Ottoman Empire the ways of climbing using models of Western modernization. Under the pressure and negative effects of this modernism and as a result of the secularization, the Islam opposed these principles of modernization as non-Islamic life models and exposed the modernization as a creeping imperialism. Political Islam and its fight groups lead a complete war against the West and its agents after their understanding, but pursued an intensive activity in the social area as well, and infiltrated the legal political administrative organs and interests protection organs. The history and spectrum of ideas of the political Islam is presented in this study.

### **HASSAN AL BANNA, SAYYID QUTB AND THE MOVEMENT OF THE MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD**

The ideology of the political Islam is determined mainly by the work of two Islamic thinkers, Hassan Al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb. Their ideas and political activities represent the fundament for the political Islam until today. The philosophy standing behind the political Islam is very effective, dichotomic and simple, it can be used easily in instrumental ways. It offers orientation for Islam soldiers, terrorists and suicide bombers in the interpretation of their own role. Al-Banna was a tactic-oriented thinker able to organize a social movement, but Qutb was much more a prophet with unbroken ideals. Their ideals of totalitarian character show several similarities with fascist and communist ideals. In Hassan al-Banna's world of ideas the Islam represents a religion, a social and political order, a national economy and a moral and spiritual system at the same time which strives for the goal as for its main task to turn back the tendencies of secularization affecting the Moslem societies, to bring the old traditional Islam values to validity again and to restore the Caliphate. Al-Banna, standing on the boarder between tradition and modernity, tried to scoop from both in order to win back the advantages of the traditional collectivistic values and mindset by making use of the instruments of modernity. Also Sayyid Qutb was a determinative personality of the Moslem Brotherhood. His radicalization began in 1945. His negative experiences gained in the USA on his study trip drove him back to the Islam traditions. Qutb's dualistic political and social world view crystallized out during his prison years. His central terms are the stage of the dark pre-Islam

un-knowledge, in which the Western societies remain and the human world ruled by Good. He believes that the reconstruction of the latter needs the rejection and destroying of the cultures outside of Islam by the holy war jihad leaded by a vanguard all over the world. Al-Banna's and Sayyid Qutb's ideas became an effective social influential factor through the movement of the Moslem Brotherhood which started to expand beyond Egypt in the entire Moslem world in the 1930s. This movement became by today a worldwide network working and fighting under different names in the Middle- and Near East mainly but it is also present in North-Africa, the USA and in Europe, as well.

### **MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS AND STRATEGIES OF THE RADICAL POLITICAL ISLAM: HAMAS AND HISBOLLAH**

The Hamas and its military units are known in the public primarily through their military and terroristic actions, especially suicide bombings against Israeli civil and army targets. The mass usage of the latter method really distinguishes the Hamas from other Arabic terror organizations. But the Hamas is also extraordinary active on social and charity field particularly in the Palestinian autonomous region in Gaza Beach, where is became the leading political force since 2006 gaining in the elections the absolute majority of the parliament mandates before its rival, the Fatah movement. The conflicts of the both Palestinian combatant organizations result from the fact that Fatah is a secularist nationalist movement but Hamas is a fundamentalist religious movement setting universal aims and goals in ideology and politics. Consequently, Hamas is a totalitarian movement aimed to create an Islam state regime based on principles of the holy Islam Law Sharia.

The development of Hamas had four periods. In the period 1967–1976 the social network of the Moslem Brotherhood was established in the Gaza Beach, between 1976 and 1981 its most important social, educative, health care and charity institutions came to life, the period of 1981–1987 was the phase of gaining political influence and preparing for military operations in the frame of the permanent holy war called Jihad for Palestina's liberation which started after 1987. The Hamas Charter is the most important strategic document of the fundamentalist Islam fighter's movements in the Middle East which summarizes their political philosophy, goals, instruments and meth-

ods. The entire text of the Hamas Charter is published now as the first Hungarian source publication.

By the appearance of Hisbollah, i.e. God's Party, the hot spot in the Near East became from a series of isolated military conflicts to the field of the clash of civilizations, and in the meantime battle got an islamized character. Hisbollah came to life in 1982 as a Shiia guerilla organization fighting against the Israeli army in Lebanon but by and by has been becoming a well organized, disciplined political party and organization of wide range social services like Hamas. After drawing back Israeli military forces from Lebanon in 2000, Hisbollah got the southern region of Lebanon under its power and started a series of limited actions onto the northern border region of the Jewish state as well as significant terror acts abroad. Despite Hisbollah's activity got more and more sophisticated political frames in sense of classic parliamentary politics and diplomacy. Hisbollah passed through a period of 'lebanonization' that means it left its world revolutionary character behind and became a quasi normal political participant of the local politics with significant military reserves. The war in 2006 between Israel and Hisbollah's guerilla army was an example of the asymmetric warfare which brought military disappointment for Israel but considerable successes and a growing prestige for Hisbollah. Hisbollah has no detailed program document like Hamas' Charter. The brochure containing the foundation for the Hesbollah policy is published now in this study as the first Hungarian source publication.