

prof. Dragan Simeunovic
Akademia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego w Belgradzie
dragan.simeun@gmail.com

CONTEMPORARY JIHADISM AS IDEOLOGY USED BY TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS

WSPÓŁCZESNY DŻIHADYZM JAKO IDEOLOGIA UŻYWANA PRZEZ ORGANIZACJE TERRORYSTYCZNE

Summary: This age is marked by Islamic fundamentalism that has elements of political ideology. Militancy of this kind of fundamentalism produced a lot of political violence including terrorism. The most dangerous Islamic terrorist groups today, such as "Islamic State" and "Boko Haram" use the Jihadism as ideology.

Keywords: Jihadism, Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic State, Boko Haram, political ideology.

Streszczenie: To stulecie jest naznaczone przez fundamentalizm islamski będący elementem politycznej ideologii. Bojowość tego rodzaju fundamentalizmu przyczyniła się do stosowania na dużą skalę politycznej przemocy, w tym terroryzmu. Najniebezpieczniejsze obecnie grupy terrorystyczne, to Państwo Islamskie i Boko Haram posługujące się ideologią dżihadyzmu.

Słowa kluczowe: dżihadyzm, fundamentalizm islamski, Państwo Islamskie, Boko Haram, ideologia polityczna.

This is the age of occurrence and duration of the "ever-sharper fundamentalists" (Jerotic, 2000, s. 181), particularly in the Islamic religion. One often narrows down the definition of religious fundamentalism to ideology. However, although the number of religious fundamentalisms that have elements of political ideology and ambition is not small, not every form of religious fundamentalism means ideology immediately, especially if it is not based on political intention, if it is not offensive, and if it does not possess adequate ideological mobilization potential. In order to assess an interpretation of some religious teachings as religious fundamentalism, several conditions must be met.

One can talk/discuss about religious fundamentalism if there is a new interpretation of the fundamental principles and values (fundamentals) of religion with the aim of their intensive and widespread use in society, where this new interpretation of a sacred text has to be done with the aim of exceptional prosperity (rebuilding, progress or salvation) of the community; secondly, it must be presented to the public by an indisputable moral authority who may or may not be a religious leader, but must be a sturdy fighter for religion; thirdly, since one of the basic functions of every fundamentalism are mobilization

functions, that authority must have charisma so that the new religion interpretation will be followed by the mass; fourthly, the goal of the mobilization of the masses must be their support for radical political action and, fifthly, each fundamentalism is characterized by a willingness to fight and self-sacrifice in order to set an example.

Every religious fundamentalism always implies a subjective approach to religion and the free selection of sacred texts. But, there must not be any new creations of the sacred text, and all the creativity of its creators is exhausted in the selection and interpretation of thoughts and principles that are already contained the sacred text. Religious fundamentalism is distinctly characterized by the intent to use religion for political purposes, thereby converting religious into political. If the selection of texts is primarily intended to achieve some political objectives and particularly if their interpretation was made exclusively for this purpose, then this kind of fundamentalism, in fact, represents a particular kind of ideology, and not a religious interpretation. What makes it political ideology is its political so called sacred character.

Islamic fundamentalism tends to comprehensively restructure the community on selected basic religious principles, trying to realize the wishes of the marginalized majority in society. Strong action towards the realization of the set goals is drawn from the frustration of marginalized masses. That is why every religious fundamentalism try to represent restoration of social justice on religious principles. Only in this way it can mobilize the faithful to accept the political as a religious renewal. In addition, it refreshes and strengthens the shaken religious, as well as the ethnic identity of the group. Therefore, as noted by Vladeta Jerotić “fundamentalist movements in history, with their charismatic leaders, most often appear during **critical** periods of the history of the nation” (underlined by D.S.) (Jerotić a,2000, s.179)·

Fundamentalism is an ideology that imposes itself to the religious collective by presenting itself as the last salvation of a community that collapses due to moving away from the real and forgotten values.

Religious fundamentalism is often and justifiably seen as a distinctly militant phenomenon.

The reasons for fundamentalism militancy are the following:

- 1) the new is always controversial, at least for the old,
- 2) the new must be considered as militant at least against the one it is created for,
- 3) one who cannot defend what he says and preaches cannot lead others (leader complex),
- 4) exclusivity is the characteristic of each selection,
- 5) the “embryo” of the conflict is already contained in the decision of selecting something as “finally real”
- 6) God is on “their” side, but they have to fight to prove it,
- 7) by creating new, fundamentalism still creates “another” because it always comes after, when something already exists. Every overcoming always implies the possibility of fighting,
- 8) The new identity can only be strengthened and accelerated through combat. That is why fundamentalism requires combat,

9) fundamentalism is created as a negation of something and as an offer of better defense than the existing ones against danger. It often proclaims itself as a movement of salvation from an evil against which there was either no defense or the defense was inadequate.

Fundamentalism is wrongly attributed to absolute modernism. Hunter even explicitly defines it as “orthodoxy in the confrontation with modernity” (Hunter, 1990, s. 57). In reality, fundamentalism is based on an ongoing selection of everything from religious principles to people, even technical achievements. For example the Iranian religious fundamentalism of the *Shiite* does not reject nuclear weapons despite its ultra modernity nor do Osama Bin Laden and his followers in “Islamic State” (ISIL) reject Internet, but, on the contrary, with its use, they achieve astonishing results.

It is also wrongly to attribute fundamentalism to absolute orientation to the past and tradition. Religious fundamentalism refers to the past, but also looks into the future. As far as tradition is concerned, it also selects values just like the selection of religious principles. In both cases, the selection criteria are essential – possible usefulness for mobilization purposes.

Religious fundamentalism can also be used for purposes of ethnic mobilization, such as Sikhs in India, Bosnjaks in BiH (Tanaskovic, 2000) or Jewish right-wing in Israel.

The main ideologists of Islamic fundamentalism in earlier times were Takie Din Ahmad Ibn Tajmijahiz Damascus, who was the first in the 13th century to call for jihad as “holy war” against non-Muslims, and whose studies in the 18th century, in the form of interpretation called Wahhabism, were developed by Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in Arabia, which will adopt his teachings for official religion. In the 20th century, Hassan al-Bana, founder of the militant organization “Muslim brothers” in 1928 in Egypt: all the major Arab terrorist organizations grew out of it, Sayyid Qutb, who aspired to the Islamic state, which would have nothing in common with Western values and was therefore executed by the Egyptian government, then Sayyid Abu l-A’la Maududi who asked for all Muslims exclusively the application of Sharia Islamic law as an exclusive Islamic law, and at the end, the Iranian religious leader Khomeini, Ayatollah who renewed the religious state in Iran after the religious revolution in 1979.

Although there are no small theoretical differences among them (Brasher, 2001), all of them were Shiite or Sunni, no matter which ethnic group they belonged to, they all agree on the need to establish “God’s country” by all means, including force.

Jihadism, one of the ideological options of Islamic fundamentalism, seeks to realize its political and religious objectives of social rebirth through jihad, understood as a holy war (mainly against the United States, Western countries, Israel and Christians), but Jihad in Islam has a much broader meaning of general religious endeavor. Under jihadism one should not entail a consistent ideology, but more variants of the same ideology that is based on militant interpretations of the Koran. Like other ideologies, jihadism also has its own directions.

Today, the leading ideological jihadism option is the one that promotes the terrorist organization "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL)¹ led by self-proclaimed caliph² Abu Bekr Al Baghdadi. Its basis is "Al-Qaedaism" (Simeunović, 2009, s. 205), ideological jihadism option after the recently leading terrorist organization led by Osama bin Laden. The so-called "Islamic state" is definitely the most successful among numerous jihadi terrorist organizations having originated on the soil of a seething Iraq after the second intervention of the USA and its allies in 2003 and today situated in Syria as well. It consists exclusively of Sunnis. At the beginning, it was under the influence of "Al Qaeda", but in time it became completely independent, especially regarding the leadership.

Jihadism of the so-called "Islamic State" is currently the most militant form of religious fundamentalism which has turned into ideology. The Al-Qaedaism formula is simple-fighting through suicide attacks and all other means until the final extinction of all enemies of Islam, where not only Jews and Christians ("crusaders") are considered but also Muslims who are bad believers and traitors, which also applies to all Shiites.

Thanks to „Al-Qaedaism“, jihadism has ceased to be an ideology of fighting only on the ground where Muslims live mainly, because Al Qaeda was the first to boost global fighting against the "enemy", which means every enemy on the ground, and thus on the ground of The US and Western Europe in the form of imported or "homegrown" terrorism (Simeunović, 2009, s. 219).

Jihadism should be seen as part of a general expansion of Islam, as a religion which has the fastest progress today in the conquest of space and believers. The motives for jihadism are not exactly the same in the Middle East, for example, and in the continental parts of Africa, where Islam is a relatively new religion, even though both aim to create a "true Islamic state," the introduction of Sharia law and similar.

According to al-Baghdadi's interpretation of Sharia law, archeological sites, museums, artefacts, tombs, monuments, all non-islamic places of worship, as well as Shia temples – all objects of reverence, as well as libraries – are heterodox idolatry contrary to Islam, and therefore have to be destroyed.

Following his teaching religious extremists concentrated in organization so-called „Islamic state“ are especially prone to systematically destroy ancient artistic heritage and steal and re-sell valuable artefacts, in order to finance their terrorist activities. Terrorist organization „Islamic state“ is currently in control of a territory where 4.000 very valuable archeological sites are located. Following their political and religious principle "let's destroy everyone else's past in order to secure future only for true Islam", in Syria, their members had destroyed a number of precious, thousands of years old archeological monuments, demolished not only many churches but also mosques of their enemies, burned down numerous ancient documents, manuscripts and whole archives of priceless historical value. Thereby, smaller ceramic artifacts are usually stolen and resold, while the larger ones were destroyed.

¹ Acronym ISIL is especially used by the USA officials and press.

² Since June 29th 2014, when the caliphate was declared on the territories controlled by the organization "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant", and its leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi was named as caliph Ibrahim, regarding his decision only the title "Caliphate of Islamic State" has been used.

The anti Western attitude of former colonies in Africa has manifested itself in many ways, even in rejecting Christianity as a distinct religion of the colonizers, which has not only been imposed but has also lasted too short to enroot. Thus, the Western civilization errors have been unjustifiably equated with the “weaknesses and disadvantages of the Christian religion”(Jerotić, 2000, s.181). As the tribal religions were completely suppressed and invalidated during the colonial period, the people have rarely returned to them, and have generally accepted Islam and not just like new, given and offensive, but also in its radical form as a distinctly anti-Western religion.

As much as rejection of Christianity is sometimes a form of revenge to the colonizers in Africa, and evidence of “expediting liberation” of them, the acceptance of Islam is also sometimes understood as additional revenge. This is best evidenced by the fact that soon over half of the population of the “black continent” will be Muslim. Hence it is not surprising the presence of Islamist Jihadism as an ideology and terrorist practice in Africa.

The main representative of jihadism as ideology today in Africa is terrorist organization “Boko Haram” situated in Nigeria, and also active in Chad, Niger and Cameroon. This group started with a very strict practicing of Sharia law in the year 2002. and very fast developed into a most dangerous Salafist-jihadi group on the world. Regarding the ideology of “Boko Haram” the enemies of Islam are not only Christians and Jews but the some kind of muslims as well, primarilly the Sufi, the Shiite, and the Izala. As enemies all of them should be killed. Ideology of “Boko Haram” absolutely opposes the Westernization of Nigerian society. The strong anti Western and anti Christianity orientation of this organization resulted in 20.000 killed people and two and half million refugees. Main goal of “Boko Haram” is the establishment of an Islamic state in Nigeria. In March 2015 “Boko Haram” announced its loyalty to the “Caliphate Islamic State” and on the gained territory proclaimed “Islamic State West Africa Province” as part (Wilāyat) of al Baghdadis “caliphate”.

Despite all this facts attributing the status of Islam to the only major religion that gives rise to fundamentalism, extremism and violence is unfair. It is fair to say that fundamentalism and militancy are today mostly present among Islamic believers, but certainly not to say that they are the only fundamentalists. Although fundamentalism is justifiably most often mentioned in connection with Islam, there is no major religion, including very tolerant Buddhism, that is not marked by its fundamentalism and for many including extremism (Brasher, 2001, s. 235).

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