

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326402983>

# The anti-islamist discourse: The case of al-Buti

Article in *Al-Shajarah* · January 2018

CITATION

1

READS

2,146

2 authors, including:



**Bachar Bakour**

International Islamic University Malaysia

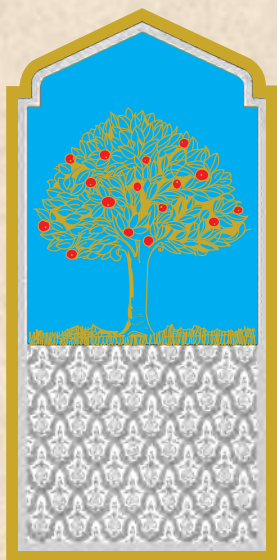
26 PUBLICATIONS 3 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Ulu al-Absar: A Novel Framework for Developing Creative Thinking & Problem-Solving Skills through Qur'anic and Prophetic Literature [View project](#)



# AL-SHAJARAH

JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND CIVILIZATION  
OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM)

2018 Volume 23 Number 1

# AL-SHAJARAH

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ABDELAZIZ BERGHOUT, IIUM, Malaysia

MANAGING EDITOR

NOR FARIDAH ABDUL MANAF, IIUM, Malaysia

EDITORIAL BOARD

AWANG SARIYAN, IIUM, Malaysia

THAMEEM USHAMA, IIUM, Malaysia

MOHAMED ASLAM MOHAMED HANEEF, IIUM, Malaysia

HAZIZAN MD NOON, IIUM, Malaysia

HAFIZ ZAKARIYA, IIUM, Malaysia

DANIAL MOHD YUSOF, IIUM, Malaysia

COPY EDITOR

SUZANA SUHAILAWATY MD. SIDEK, IIUM, Malaysia

ADVISORY BOARD

HASSAN AHMED IBRAHIM, IIUM, Malaysia

KHALIQ AHMAD MOHD. ISRAIL, IIUM, Malaysia

HUNUD ABIA KADOUF, IIUM, Malaysia

MOHD ZAMBRI ZAINUDDIN, UM, Malaysia

HAMID AMINUDDIN BARRA, Mindanao State University, Philippines

ALPARSLAN ACIKGENC, Yildiz Technical University, Turkey

AMER AL-ROUBAIE, College of Business and Finance, Kingdom of Bahrain

MALIK B. BADRI, IIUM, Malaysia

OSMAN BAKAR, SOASCIS, University of Brunei, Brunei

ABDEL WAHAB EL-AFFENDI, University of Westminster, UK

KHALID MASUD, The Council of Islamic Ideology, Pakistan

HASSAN KO NAKATA, Doshisha University, Japan

SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR, The George Washington University, USA

SUN ZHENYU, Ningxia University, China

*Al-Shajarah* is a refereed international journal that publishes original scholarly articles in the area of Islamic thought, Islamic civilization, and Islamic science. The journal is especially interested in studies that elaborate scientific and epistemological problems encountered by Muslims in the present age, scholarly works that provide fresh and insightful Islamic responses to the intellectual and cultural challenges of the modern world. *Al-Shajarah* will also consider articles written on various religions, schools of thought and ideology and subjects that can contribute towards the formulation of an Islamic philosophy of science. Critical studies of translations of major works of major writers of the past and present and original works on the subjects of Islamic architecture and art are welcomed. Book reviews and notes are also published.

The journal is published twice a year, June-July and November-December. Manuscripts and all correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Shajarah*, F4 Building, IIUM Journal Publication, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), No. 24, Persiaran Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, Taman Duta, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. All enquiries on publications may also be e-mailed to [alshajarah@iium.edu.my](mailto:alshajarah@iium.edu.my). For subscriptions, please address all queries to the postal or email address above.

Contributions: Submissions must be at least 5,500 words long. All submissions must be in English or Malay and be original work which has not been published anywhere else in any form (abridged or otherwise). In matters of style, *Al-Shajarah* uses the *University of Chicago Manual of Style* and follows the transliteration system shown on the inside back cover of the journal. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts to the author for stylistic changes. Manuscripts must be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief in Microsoft Word. The font must be Times New Roman and its size 12. IIUM retains copyright to all published materials, but contributors may republish their articles elsewhere with due acknowledgement to *Al-Shajarah*.

## THE ANTI-ISLAMIST DISCOURSE: THE CASE OF AL-BŪṬĪ<sup>1</sup>

Bachar Bakour  
Abdelaziz Berghout

### Abstract

*This paper explores al-Būṭī's critical view on contemporary Islamists who, according to al-Būṭī, have misapplied the Islamic law and sacrificed da'wah in favour of political gains. Among their dogmatic beliefs is the ruthless and hasty call for the establishment of the Islamic state, the takfīr of rulers, arbitrary application of the question of tatarrus, etc. Having presented and evaluated al-Būṭī's views pertaining to Islamists' position on the above issues, the paper further attempts to examine whether they are applicable to contemporary movements or not. This was done through consulting the literature of the most eminent Islamist movements (Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr, the Muslim Brotherhood, jihadists, the AKP, and Ḥizb al-Nahḍa). The paper followed textual analysis aspiring towards providing a more comprehensive approach to the study of al-Būṭī's views. Accordingly, seven important issues were selected and used to assess the position of movements according to al-Būṭī's approach. It concludes, that al-Būṭī's anti-Islamist discourse deserves to be taken as a yardstick against which a clear distinction is made between extreme and moderate Islamist movements. The paper also suggested several measures to further enhance research in this important area of study.*

**Keywords:** Islamist, discourse, *Takfīr*, *da'wah*, moderate, extreme, *tatarrus*

---

<sup>1</sup> Article received: September 2017; Article accepted: March 2018.

## Introduction

After the abolition of the Islamic caliphate in 1924, many Islamic movements emerged with the aim of reviving the Muslim *ummah*<sup>2</sup> and restoring Muslim societies to their heydays.<sup>3</sup> Islam, to these movements, should guide personal, social, as well as political life. Ever since, 'Political Islam' or 'Islamism'<sup>4</sup> has gained popularity and become a reference point for a wide range of political groups and movements that endeavor to restore the Islamic state as a vehicle that will implement the rules of Sharī'a in the society.

Muhammad Sa'īd Ramadan al-Būṭī is a celebrated Syrian scholar, who was critical of three Islamist movements/parties: *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr*, and the Muslim Brotherhood, and jihadists. According to him, they are on the wrong track for intermingling *da'wah* with politics and thus sacrificing the former for the sake of the latter. On various occasions, al-Būṭī discussed the rhetoric of those Islamists and attempted to prove wrong their short-sighted ideologies and irresponsible actions.

The objective of this paper is to explore al-Būṭī's criticism and evaluate whether the issues he raises against Islamists are religiously valid and thus can be taken as a criterion to differentiate between extreme and moderate Islamist movements/parties of today. Contextual research is adopted through defining key terms and concepts; identifying al-Būṭī's discourse and how he evaluates his argument within the framework of primary Sharī'a sources, (the Qur'ān, Sunna), as well as the legal opinions of the leading classical authorities. Then, the paper tests al-Būṭī's hypothesis via the probable application of the seven issues on his targeted Islamists:

---

<sup>2</sup> For a seminal work on the civilizational development of the *ummah* at the age of globalization see Abdelaziz Berghout, *Al-Shuhūd al-ḥaḍārī li al-ummah al-wasat fi aṣr al-'awlamah*, (Kuwait: Rawāfid, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive bibliography on the subject see Yvonne Y. Haddad, John o. Voll, and John L. Esposito, *The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> About various analysis of the definition see Mozaffari, M. "What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 8:1, (2007), 17-33; Martin, R.C. & Barzegar, A. 2010. *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on political Islam*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press).



*Ḥizb al-Tahrīr*, Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi-jihadists,<sup>5</sup> as well as two selected Islamist parties: the AKP, and *Ḥizb al-Nahḍa*.

Before going into theoretical framework, it is useful to give a summary of al-Būṭī's life. Al-Būṭī was born in Turkey in 1929. He immigrated with his family to Syria in 1933, where he lived primarily ever since.<sup>6</sup> In 1954 al-Būṭī travelled to Cairo to continue his studies at al-Azhar University, Sharī'a College. A year later, he returned to Syria and taught in secondary schools.<sup>7</sup> Also he was appointed to the faculty of Sharī'a Department, Damascus University. Then he returned to al-Azhar to pursue his Ph.D. project in Islamic jurisprudence, which he attained with honors in 1965.<sup>8</sup> His academic position at the Damascus University flourished as he was appointed the dean of Sharī'a Department in 1977 then the Chair of Theology Department.<sup>9</sup>

Al-Būṭī contributed substantially to the Muslim scholarship. His books, essays, and treatises, ranging from theology and philosophy, to jurisprudence and mysticism, and from Qur'ānic and Ḥadīth studies, to literary themes, as well as a host of contemporary religious, social, and intellectual issues, have gained currency both at home and abroad.

With the outbreak of the Syrian revolution in 2011, al-Būṭī upheld a position that seemed to be beyond comprehension. Many of his long-lasting admirers and far-flung students became shocked at what has been held as a pro-regime stance, urging demonstrators not to follow "calls of unknown sources that want to exploit mosques to

---

<sup>5</sup> Al-Būṭī does not refer to any particular group or movement of the third category. However, the study has selected al-Qaeda, and two Egyptian Islamist groups *al-Takfīr wa al-Hijrah* and *Jamā'at al-Jihad*, together with AIS and GIA from Algeria.

<sup>6</sup> About al-Būṭī's life and thought see Andreas Christmann, "Islamic Scholar and Religious Leader: A Portrait of Shaykh Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Būṭī," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 9, no. 2 (1998): 149-169; al-Būṭī, *Hādha wālidī*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 29; "Nubdha 'an ḥayāt al-'allāmah al-imām al-shahīd Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Būṭī," (This biography was read and approved by al-Būṭī himself) .naseemalsham. Retrieved July 24, 2015. >[http://www.naseemalsham.com/ar/Pages.php?page=mufthy&pg\\_id=1992](http://www.naseemalsham.com/ar/Pages.php?page=mufthy&pg_id=1992)<.

<sup>7</sup> "Nubdha 'an ḥayāt al-'allāmah...

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

incite seditions and chaos in Syria."<sup>10</sup> Al-Būṭī was assassinated in a bomb attack while delivering a regular religious lecture in *al-Imān* Mosque (Damascus), with reportedly more than 42 casualties, in March 21, 2013.

### Theoretical framework

It is crucial to identify the key concepts used in this study. First, al-Būṭī defines politics lexically as to run affairs in a wise way, and technically to deploy socio-economic and cultural relations to reach power. He observes that *William James's Pragmatism, which allows the adoption of any approach or belief as long as the success of its practical application is ensured, has been a dominant feature of politics.*<sup>11</sup>

Further, identifying Islam-politics relation, al-Būṭī distinguishes between two concepts: 'the Islamic politics' or 'the political systems of Islam', defined as to run the state affairs according to the rules of Sharī'a, and the 'political Islam' signifying that Islam, with the totality of its principles and norms, is made subjugated to various visions of politics. While the former concept is and has been the normative expression of the political aspect of Islam, the latter grants politics a dominant position over it. And of course this domination is flatly rejected.<sup>12</sup>

'Islamists',<sup>13</sup> a term frequently used by al-Būṭī, or, at times, 'Islamist groups',<sup>14</sup> refers to those who tend to intermingle *da'wah* with politics, and, when reaching power, impose rules of Sharī'a

<sup>10</sup> "Sheikh al-Bouti, the Syrian Sunni cleric who stood by Assad." (2013) alarabiya.net. Retrieved September 14, 2014.

><http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2013/03/22/-Sheikh-al-Bouti-the-Syrian-Sunni-cleric-who-stood-by-Assad.html><

<sup>11</sup> *Ma'al-Būṭī fī qadāyā al-sā'a*. interview with al-Būṭī. (2013). Nour al-Sham TV. No. 7

Retrieved July 29, 2015.

>[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aa85yz7VRhw&list=PL01kYZIehH-pJIR03iFhveTFll6Ba\\_er6&index=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aa85yz7VRhw&list=PL01kYZIehH-pJIR03iFhveTFll6Ba_er6&index=7)<

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*. (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), 172 ; and his book *Wa hādhihī mushkilātunā*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 48, 58.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Wa hādhihī mushkilātunā*, 45, 49.

from on high,<sup>15</sup> in addition to adopting extreme views leading to doing violent acts. In this context, al-Būṭī names the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt<sup>16</sup> and Syria,<sup>17</sup> and *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr*.<sup>18</sup> Elsewhere, he depicted as 'Islamists' *Jamā'at al-Tablīgh*, which, commended by him, propagates *da'wah* in the Prophet's footsteps, with no focus on political activism.<sup>19</sup>

So, al-Būṭī basically means by the word 'Islamists,' the first category and like-minded ones, without, however, differentiating between 'movement' (MB) and 'party' (*Ḥizb al-Tahrīr*). It is extremely hard, one has to admit, to define the two terms with all their socio-religious and political ramifications. 'Islamist movements' (or groups) have multiple forms and faces, ranging from civil society organizations providing health services, to extreme terrorist networks, as well as apolitical missionary activists. What they all have in common is the claim that Islam is the source of their identity and behavior.<sup>20</sup> On the basis of their thought, and behavior, 'Islamist parties' are political formations that have accepted to play according to the rules of political game and thus participated in the electoral system.<sup>21</sup> They also advocate social justice, pluralism, democratic and liberal reforms, as well as human rights.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike Islamist movements, some Islamist parties, like the AKP, might not claim affinity with Islam "but could pursue 'Islamic politics' by acting in conformity with the religious demands and concerns of the people."<sup>23</sup> Driven by internal factors, some Islamist

<sup>15</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Wa hādhihī mushkilātunā*, 45-47.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*, 171.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*, 172.

<sup>18</sup> Hishām 'Ilwān and Fādī al-Ghūsh. *Al- Būṭī, wa al-jihad wa al-Islam al-siyāsī*. (Beirut: Markaz al-Ḥadārah li Tanmiyat al-Fikr al-Islamī, 2012), 131-132.

<sup>19</sup> Al- Būṭī, *Wa hādhihī mushkilātunā*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> Esen Kirdiş, "Between Movement and Party: Islamic Political Party Formation in Morocco, Turkey and Jordan" (Unpublished PhD dissertation, the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 2011), 13-14.

<sup>21</sup> For examples see Mohammed Ayoob, "Political Islam: Image and Reality," *Political Islam*, Ed. Barry Rubin. 3 vol. Routledge. 1: 51 1: 50.

<sup>22</sup> As will be shown, *Ḥizb al-Tahrīr*, although an Islamist party, never subscribes to any of these values.

<sup>23</sup> Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 8.



movements tend to form parties, while others do not.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, to draw a line between the Islamic political 'moderation' and 'extremism' is both arduous and controversial. Nevertheless, to some Western writers, Islamists may become moderate or more moderate as a result of their inclusion in pluralist political processes, advocacy of freedom and human rights, as well as non-violent and rational stance to promote Islam.<sup>25</sup> Another way of evaluating a particular Islamist movement or party as moderate or extreme, one may, as this paper argues, consult al-Būṭī's seven issues with Islamists.

*Da'wah* is a key issue in al-Būṭī's treatment of Islamist activism. Lexically, the word *da'wah* and the verb *da'ā* refer to concepts of invitation, summoning, calling on, appealing to, invocation, prayer (for and against something or someone), propaganda, and missionary activity.<sup>26</sup> *Da'wah* has been agreeably defined as "a religious outreach or mission to exhort people to embrace Islam."<sup>27</sup>

In the Qur'ān (16: 125), the Prophet is asked to continue his efforts, calling on people to follow the path of his Lord, utilizing wisdom and goodly exhortation, and delivering his argument in a kindly manner. Part of the required wisdom is to establish an

---

<sup>24</sup> Kirdiş, vii argues that movement with a vanguard mobilization strategy, in which a small group of leaders frame the cause and mobilize masses around an Islamic identity, tend to establish parties. In contrast, movements with a grassroots mobilization strategy in which the aim is to construct mass consciousness through grassroots activities tend to remain outside of formal politics, eschewing party formation.

<sup>25</sup> For discussions on Islamist moderation see Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jillian Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates? Rethinking the Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis," *World Politics*, vol. 63, no.2 (April, 2011): 347-376; Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's Wasat Party," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 36, no. 2, (January, 2004): 205-228.

<sup>26</sup> Paul E. Walker, Reinhard Schulze and Muhammad Khalid Masud. "Da'wah." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*. Retrieved September 23, 2015. <<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0182>>.

<sup>27</sup> *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York, 1987), vol. 4, 244.

institutionalized *da'wah* that in al-Būṭī's words "relates to many activities we do in our life, like establishing universities, as well as educational foundations; writing *da'wah* books; founding publishing houses and presses; making use of the mass media; preparing the climate for discussion and dialogue."<sup>28</sup>

According to al-Būṭī, the feasibility of the Islamic state project is closely connected with *da'wah* rather than with politics. *Da'wah* in essence, he argues, is a kind of worship by which a believer draws near to Almighty God, a practice of the best kind of servitude to the Lord. Filled with hope, *dā'iyah* tries to win over the heart and the mind, and then waits for the fruits of his *da'wah*, i.e. to see good morals and acceptable behaviour prevalent among the individuals at all levels.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast, al-Būṭī observes, the bulk of the activities of contemporary Islamist movements is mainly related to the following: discussion of new arising issues of Muslims and the problems are facing; analysis and evaluation of their local governments as well as those of the Muslim World; thinking, and planning of a variety of tactics by which they could reach the seat of power.<sup>30</sup> Al-Būṭī asks whether such activities fall into the Qur'ānic concept of *da'wah*, "Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and fine admonition, and argue with them with the most courteous manner." (Qur'ān, *al-Naḥl*: 125).<sup>31</sup>

It is lamentable that nowadays a huge gap exists between those politically-oriented Islamists who keep themselves busy with their 'Islamic state' project and those poor people who have gone astray or fallen prey to different modern atheistic-secular ideologies.<sup>32</sup>

### Major issues in the rhetoric of Islamists

Al-Būṭī is critical of what he sees as revolutionary tactics and the manipulation of religion by Islamists who usually seek the ascendancy of Islam via political means. It is true that both al-Būṭī

<sup>28</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Wa hādhihi mushkilātunā*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 30.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*, 64.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 44.

and Islamist movements are in agreement about social reform being an ultimate target, yet they are at variance with the adopted approach.<sup>33</sup>

Instead of following the demanding and long journey of *da'wah* with its various paths and forms, many Islamists prefer to take a short cut by seizing state power, and consequently imposing Islam from on high.<sup>34</sup> According to al-Būṭī, this move from *da'wah* to politics, which attracts most of the Islamists today, is the blight of the Islamist project. This project will ultimately obscure the bright reality of Islam through creating in people's minds a dreadful image about it.<sup>35</sup>

Al-Būṭī further notes that the majorities of those who are involved in Islamist activities and who primarily focus on the social system and applied economic rules of Islam endeavor to remove rulers by every possible means, and to fight, at times by resorting to violence, the Communism and other leftist ideologies.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, leftist groups as well as non-Muslims came to see Islam, championed by Islamists, as a mere collection of laws and rules that have to do with establishing *ḥudūd*,<sup>37</sup> abolishing usury, closing nightclubs and so on, going under the common name of Sharī'a.<sup>38</sup> When these superior rules, he goes on, replace the secular-atheist ones in a given society, this society will become Islamic and its individuals good Muslims!<sup>39</sup> Those Islamists, al-Būṭī argues, are not concerned whether or not Islam should have, in the first place, a solid foundation on the people's mind and soul, which is actually the essence of Islam.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Wa ḥādhihī mushkilātunā*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 45-47.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>36</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Islam wa al-'aṣr: taḥaddiyāt wa āfāq*, Edited by 'Abd al-Wāḥid 'Ulwānī. (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1998). 20.

<sup>37</sup> Fixed penalties for certain crimes.

<sup>38</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Islam wa al-'aṣr* ..., 20. See Hishām 'Ilwān and Fādī al-Ghūsh. *Al-Būṭī, wa al-jihad wa al-Islam al-siāsi*. (Beirut: Markaz al-Ḥadārah li Tanmiyat al-Fikr al-Islamī, 2012), 124-125.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Islam wa al-'aṣr* ..., 21.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Rather than rushing for the Islamic state, al-Būṭī contends that we should presently think of how to rectify our bad soul and be true servants of God. This is the Muslim obligation today.<sup>41</sup> “Currently, we cannot plan for establishing an Islamist society, because Muslims have divided themselves among various groups and adopted different doctrines and ideologies.”<sup>42</sup> Al-Būṭī says. Further, non-Muslim people feel suspicious of anything that has to do with Islam. How can we think of establishing an Islamic state in a society that is yet to be described as really Islamic? Is it possible to think of creating the ‘lid’ before the ‘container’?<sup>43</sup>

On the other hand, al-Būṭī maintains that it was the ‘educational’ Islam, rather than the ‘political’, which conquered the early Muslims’ heart and remolded their soul by way of gradual and constant process of self-purification that never happened overnight. Thereupon, all various challenges and obstacles were removed by the force of Muslims’ firm intellectual belief coupled with feelings filled with love, glorification and faith in Islam.<sup>44</sup>

In his *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*, al-Būṭī explores and discusses three ideological concepts, championed by some Islamists, with a view to giving a religious rationale for the armed struggle with rulers and governments, the greatest stumbling block in the way of the Islamic state.

### 1. *Takfīr of Rulers*

*Takfīr*, meaning ‘the act of excommunicating Muslims or branding them as infidels and apostates,’ is a religio-political concept, which was first introduced by the Kharijites in the seventh century,<sup>45</sup> then

<sup>41</sup> Al-Būṭī’s lecture on establishing an Islamic state. (November 29, 2010) at Masjid Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, Shah Alam, Malaysia. Retrieved October 10, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY0pAiu5jm>

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Islam wa al-‘aṣr...*, 25-28; Hishām ‘Ilwān and Fādī al-Ghūsh, *al-Būṭī, al-da‘wah wa al-jihad wa al-Islam al-siyāsī*, (Beirut: Markaz al-Ḥadārah li Tanmiyat al-Fikr al-Islamī, 2012). 126.

<sup>45</sup> John Alden Williams, “Khawārij.” In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, edited by John Esposito. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 2: 418-420.

gained currency in modern Islamist-militant groups. In addition, *taḳfīr* of rulers who have corrupted the moral fibre of society is deemed a significant step that serves as a religious and an ethical ground for further moves, i.e. revolting against them, deposing them, and, if necessary, assassinating them.

This matter, with its social and religious ramifications, is of paramount importance driving al-Būṭī to devote a rather lengthy study for it in *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*.<sup>46</sup> First, he defines the ruler as the Muslim ruler who has never shown any signs of clear and definite disbelief.<sup>47</sup> Then he identifies three legal ways for a person to come to power: election; nomination by a previous ruler if people accept this nominee; or to take control by force if the present ruler is dead. But if the ruler is still alive and legally legitimate, then the opposer is considered as rebellious and has to be fought.<sup>48</sup>

According to the majority of jurists, if someone assumes power or sovereignty through one of these three ways, he is a legitimate ruler who cannot be deposed or removed even if he commits acts of oppression and injustice.<sup>49</sup> To support this juristic point of view, al-Būṭī quotes several leading medieval scholars of theology and law, like, al-Nasafī, al-Bājūrī, ibn Nujaym, and al-Nawawī.<sup>50</sup> The reason for this rule, which is derived from numerous authentic ḥadīths,<sup>51</sup> is that the removal of the ruler is most likely to cause widespread bloodshed and upheaval. In other words, the evil and harm of removing him will be far greater than what occurs if he remains.<sup>52</sup>

In contrast, the opposite viewpoint, held by some Islamists, depends on the following assumption: Those rulers have plunged into

<sup>46</sup> Al-Būṭī, *al-Jihad fī al-Islam: kayfa naḥḥamuhu wa-kayfa numārisuh*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1993). 147-175.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>48</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*..., 148.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 148-149.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 149-150.

<sup>51</sup> See these reports in Al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Cairo: al-Matba'ah al-Miṣriyyah, 1930), 12: 222; Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic Law*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 112-118. Al-Būṭī cites a few reports in *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*..., 151.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*..., 149.



a state of disbelief because they do not follow God's rules (orders and prohibitions), which is in agreement with the Qur'ānic verse, "Those who do not judge in accordance with what God has revealed are indeed *unbelievers*." (Qur'ān, *al-Mā'idah*: 44). Thereupon, it is juristically allowed to stage an uprising against them and remove them.<sup>53</sup>

To investigate this position, al-Būṭī sets the parameter of what accounts for disbelief, as recorded in the classical books of *fiqh*. Every Muslim who declares a denial of one of the basic tenets of Islam, (for example the articles of faith, the five pillars of Islam and so forth) or does what obviously goes against the basic Islamic teachings, e.g. to bow before an idol, is unanimously considered as *kāfir* (disbeliever).<sup>54</sup>

According to this commonly recognised category, the ruler's non-observance of God's commands and prohibitions does not necessarily lead to a state of disbelief. In other words, the ruler's ulterior motive for not following a particular divine rule is obscure. Probably the ruler is overcome by carnal desires and personal interests that prevent him from being committed; lacks stimulus to do this and that; or denies and rejects. So, unless one of these reasons is unequivocally identified, all are possible.<sup>55</sup>

Then al-Būṭī goes on saying that *takfir* should not be applied without basis or else great numbers of Muslims (parents, empowered officials and employers) will be rendered disbelievers because they at times do not follow God's rules themselves, or prevent those who work under them from obeying God.<sup>56</sup> We have never heard that those who pronounce *takfir* to rulers do the same to a father who orders his daughter to remove her head-scarf, or asks his son to work in an interest-based bank, or to a trader who orders his partner to cheat or make an illegal contract. *Takfir* is only directed to rulers!<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 154, 156.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 156-157.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 158.

## 2. Targeting the oppressors' helpers

After he scrutinizes the *takfīr*-dogma of some jihadist-Islamist groups, al-Būṭī goes further to discuss another associated point, known as *qatl a'wān al-ẓalamah* (killing of the oppressors' helpers). They argue that since our rulers have been declared as disbelievers or apostates, everyone who helps them or works under their guidance (e.g. soldiers, policemen, government officials, and workers) will deserve to be killed.<sup>58</sup> According to al-Būṭī, this fatwa from a legal point of view is baseless, for such group of people is not allowed to be chased, harmed, or killed just because they work in government departments or institutions of such and such ruler, even if he deserves to be a 'disbeliever.'<sup>59</sup> In addition, the appellation of Islam or *iman* cannot be taken away from them for the above reason.

To support his opinion, al-Būṭī cites the story of the Companion, Ḥāṭib ibn Abu Balta'ah, who wrote a letter informing the Quraysh about the Muslim move to attack them. Having listened to Balta'ah's argument, the Prophet asked him to repent.<sup>60</sup> If this is the judgment about Ḥāṭib, then, a fortiori, to be applied to this kind of people who on every occasion display their commitment to Islam.<sup>61</sup>

## 3. The question of *tatarrus*

To establish legal proofs of their use of *tatarrus*, Salafī-Jihadist groups claim a reliance on a juridical precedent assuming that if an enemy uses innocent Muslims as a human shield, it is permissible for the Muslim army to fire on the enemy and thereby kill the innocent human shields. Similarly, if removing those rulers can only happen if a group of innocent people are killed here and there, then let it be done, on the basis of the legal rule *mā lā yatim al-wājib illā bihi*

<sup>58</sup> For example, al-Būṭī denounced the Syrian Muslim Brotherhoods' rebellious move against Hafez al-Asad in 1970s, with assassinations of prominent 'Alawi leaders and attacks on government and Ba'th Party offices, police stations, as well as army units. Christmann, "Islamic Scholar...", 152. Also, he condemned acts of violence in Egypt against tourists and the government officers. *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam...*, 171.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam...*, 159.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 160. This story is narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 160- 161.

*fahuwa wājib* (The essential act for completing an obligatory becomes an obligation in itself).<sup>62</sup>

Al-Būṭī of course takes issue with the understanding and application of this jurisprudential principle, as it is used as a pretext for the shedding of much innocent blood. Al-Ghazālī (d. 505 AH/ 1111), al-Būṭī argues, is presumably the first to discuss this concept as he was elaborating the idea of public interest (*al-Maṣlaḥa al-mursalah*) as an accepted legal source when Qur'ānic and prophetic texts are silent in case this *al-Maṣlaḥa* reaches the degree of absolute necessity (*ḍarūrah*).<sup>63</sup>

Then providing the question of *tatarrus* as an example, al-Ghazālī argues that suppose a Muslim army faces the infidels who use Muslim captives as a human shield. If the Muslim army does not fire on the enemy (and this of course entails the killing of the human shield as well), then the enemy will defeat the army and exterminate the entire Muslim community, including Muslim captives. According to al-Ghazālī, the Muslim soldiers may in this particular instance fire on the enemy, and thereby kill the innocent human shield, as the entire Muslim community is faced with the threat of annihilation.<sup>64</sup>

According to this very special case, al-Būṭī, in the footsteps of al-Ghazālī, contends that it is permissible to kill the Muslim human shield if *al-Maṣlaḥa* of doing this act is characterized by three essential co-existing preconditions: *ḍarūriyyah*, i.e. the absolute necessity of saving the whole Muslim community by averting the harm of the enemy; *qat'īyyah*, i.e. The Muslim army is absolutely certain that the killing of the Muslim human shield will allow the destruction of the enemy; *kulliyyah*. i.e. The entirety of Muslim nation will be wiped out if the enemy shielded by Muslim captives is not attacked. If one precondition, however, is not there, the killing of the human shield is prohibited.<sup>65</sup>

Although being *mafsadah* (harm) in itself, the killing of those

<sup>62</sup> Al-Būṭī *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam...*, 162.

<sup>63</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam...*, 163. See al-Ghazālī, *Al-mustaṣfā min i'lm al-uṣūl*, (al-Madinah al-Munawwarah: al-Jām'iah al-Islamiyyah, 1413 AH), 2: 487-490.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam...*, 163.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 164.

innocent Muslims became allowable in order to avoid a much greater *mafsadah*, which is the annihilation of the whole Muslim community. This is attested by two legal maxims: the consideration of the lesser of the two evils and private sacrifice or loss may be inflicted to save a public sacrifice.

Al-Būṭī carries on arguing that the above limitations of this juristic instance, which are adopted by all various later scholars of law, are absent when applied by some Islamist groups. In other words, the enemy in the cited case is meant to be the infidels or disbelievers not Muslim rulers; and, alternatively, the resulting harm, if the human shield is not fired, should befall all Muslims rather than a certain Muslim group.<sup>66</sup> So, the question of *tatarrus* has been misunderstood and misapplied by those jihadists.<sup>67</sup>

Based on the foregoing discussion, the seven issues with Islamists, according to al-Būṭī, are the following:

1. ruthless and hasty pursuit of the Islamic state
2. *takfir* of rulers
3. armed struggle against the regimes
4. targeting the oppressors' helpers
5. arbitrary application of the question of *tatarrus*
6. imposing rules of Shari'a from top-down
7. the political domain of Islam takes priority over other aspects (educational and propagational)

### Applicability of the seven issues

As mentioned earlier, five Islamist movements and parties are selected, including al-Būṭī's attacked groups: (*Hizb al-Tahrir*, the Muslim Brotherhood, jihadists, the AKP, and *Hizb al-Nahda*). These selected samples, from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Tunisia, and Turkey, represent the opposite ends of the Islamic political spectrum. *Hizb al-Tahrir* was founded by Taqī al-Dīn al-Nabhānī in Jerusalem

<sup>66</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fi al-Islam...*, 165.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

in 1953.<sup>68</sup> This party appears to have the lion's share of al-Būṭī's condemnation, due to the party's deep immersion in political action, deviant dogmatic attitudes, and dubious relations with foreign colonialism.<sup>69</sup>

Based on its books and publications, the party's top priority is to restore the Islamic Caliphate after removing the disbelieving rulers.<sup>70</sup> If the Caliphate is not re-instituted, all Muslim countries, including Makkah and Madīnah, will remain to be deemed the abode of *kufṛ* (disbelief).<sup>71</sup> Strangely enough, and unlike the majority of Islamist groups, *Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr* never pays any attention to Islamic moral and spiritual education.<sup>72</sup> *Da 'wah*, to the party, is exclusively practiced through the prism of Politics.<sup>73</sup>

The Muslim Brotherhood, the largest and most influential Islamist organization, reflects a myriad of differing outlooks, opposing doctrines, in addition to various groups, moderate and extremist. For example, two key Egyptian extreme 'jihadist' groups, *al-Takfīr wa al-Hijrah* and *Jamā'at al-Jihad*<sup>74</sup> emerged out of the

<sup>68</sup> ><http://hizb-ut-tahrir.org/index.php/AR/def><. Retrieved May 16, 2016. See 'Abd al-Raḥmān Dimashqiyyah, *Ḥizb al-taḥrīr*, (Istanbul: Maktabat al-Ghurabā', 1997), 10-15.

<sup>69</sup> 'Ilwān and al-Ghūsh, *al-Būṭī, wa al-jihad...*, 131-132.

<sup>70</sup> See the party's publications *Manhaj Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr fī al-taghyyīr*, (Beirut: Dār al-Ummah, 1989) and *Nidā' ḥār ilā al-Muslimīn*, (Khartoum: 1965). Cf. 'Abdullah al-Nafīsī, *Al-Fikr al-ḥarakī li al-tayyārāt al-Islamiyyah*, (Al-Kuwait, Al-Rabī'ān, 1995), 21.

<sup>71</sup> *Manhaj Ḥizb al-taḥrīr...*, 4-8; Dimashqiyyah, *Ḥizb al-taḥrīr*, 46-47. For refutation of this weak opinion see Rā'id Abū Ūdah, "Fikr Ḥizb al-Taḥrīr," (Unpublished MA thesis. Al-Jāmi'ah al-Islamiyyah, Gaza, 2009), 15-18.

<sup>72</sup> *Manhaj Ḥizb al-taḥrīr...*, 28; al-Nafīsī, *Al-Fikr al-Ḥarakī...*, 20-21; Dimashqiyyah, *Ḥizb al-taḥrīr*, 13-14, 37.

<sup>73</sup> Rā'id Abū Ūdah, 28.

<sup>74</sup> On these two groups see David Zeidan, "Radical Islam in Egypt: A comparison of two groups," *Political Islam*. Ed. Barry Rubin. 3 vol. Routledge, 2007. 2: 33-44. The article is originally published in *MERIA Journal*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1999): 1-10; 'Alī al-Wasīfī, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn bayna al-ibtidā' al-dīnī wa al-iftlās al-siyāsī*, (Dār al-Mashāriq, 2010), 259-261; 'Abd al-Salām Faraj, *Al-Jihad: al farīdah al-ghā'ibah*, (Amman, 1982). English translation in Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East*, (Macmillan Pub Co, 1986). In this pamphlet, Faraj, a former Muslim Brotherhood and the founder of *Jamā'at al-Jihad*, calls for the establishment of the



Muslim Brotherhood adopting the thought of its main ideologue, Sayyid Qutb.<sup>75</sup>

Influenced by his radical reinterpretation of several Islamic concepts, *al-Takfīr* and *al-Jihad*, while seeking to establish the Islamic state with immediate implementation of sharī'a, view the regime, its employees, as well as the rest of the society as infidels.<sup>76</sup> Similar to al-Qaeda, they gravely misinterpreted and misused the question of *tatarrus*.<sup>77</sup>

Al-Qaeda, the quintessence of contemporary Salafi-jihadist movements<sup>78</sup> holds most of the above issues. For example, the rhetoric of al-Qaeda draws inspiration from *takfīr* of rulers, removing them,<sup>79</sup> targeting those who give assistance to the enemy,<sup>80</sup> and the question of *tatarrus*, as elaborated in *Human Shields and Modern Jihad* by al-Qaeda leader Abū Yahyā al-Lībī, who uses *tatarrus* for

---

Islamic state and urges Muslims to carry out a militant jihad against Muslim rulers who do not implement Sharī'a.

<sup>75</sup> On Qutb and his extreme views see Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Waqfah ma' Sayyid Qutb*, (Alexandria: Dār al-Wafā', 2000); Mu'taz al-Khaṭīb. Ed. *Sayyid Qutb wa al-takfīr*, (Cairo: Madbūlī, 2009); al-Wasīfī, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn...*, 269-288; John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism*, (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2010); James Toth, *Sayyid Qutb: The Life and Legacy of a Radical Islamic Intellectual*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Yvonne Y. Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival," in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, edited by John Esposito. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 67-99; Thameen Ushama, "Sayyid Qutb: Life, Mission and Political Thought," in *Contemporary Islamic Political Thought*, edited by Zeenath Kausar. (Kuala Lumpur, IIUM, 2005), 229-266.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Sayyid Imam al-Sharīf, a leading ideologue of *Al-Jihad*, made important revisions of militant rhetoric in *The Document for the Guidance of Jihadi Action in Egypt and the World*, serialized in al-Sharq al-Awsat in Arabic, November 2007. One of al-Sharīf's major criticisms to these radical groups is the misapplication of *tatarrus* principle.

<sup>78</sup> On their ideology and thought see Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East policy*, Vol. 8, no.4 (December, 2001): 18-38.

<sup>79</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz and John Kaltner, "Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda's Justification for September 11," *Political Islam*. Ed. Barry Rubin. 3 vol. Routledge, 2007. 1: 370. The article is originally published in *Middle East Policy*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2003): 76-92.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 1: 380-381.

the permissibility of killing Muslim civilians.<sup>81</sup>

In Algeria, two principal armed Islamist groups were, in varying degrees, involved in the horrific violence Algeria witnessed in the 1990s, after a military intervention put an end to an electoral process in 1992, which was to bring FIS<sup>82</sup> to power: *Groupe Islamique Armé* (Armed Islamic Group, GIA) and *Armée Islamique du Salut* (Islamic Salvation Army, AIS).<sup>83</sup> In contrast to the AIS, which excommunicated a certain group, the GIA considered the whole institutions of the Algerian state (agencies, ministries, legislative and parliamentary assemblies, police, and army) to be renegades.<sup>84</sup> Any person who, one way or another, gave support to the regime made himself a target. Refusing to distinguish between active enemies and neutral observers, the GIA, in particular, is believed to be the principal perpetrator of the indiscriminate massacres of civilians.<sup>85</sup> In areas where the GIA held sway, sharī'a rules were imposed.<sup>86</sup>

One may include that most of the above seven issues proved to be a common denominator among extreme Islamist movements that are hell-bent on making a drastic social and religious reform and enforcing *da'wah* via political activism.

---

<sup>81</sup> An English translation of this book can be found at the following link.

Retrieved September 27, 2015. [thesis.haverford.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10066/.../AYL20080410.p](https://thesis.haverford.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10066/.../AYL20080410.p)

See also Jack Barclay, "Al-Tatarrus: al-Qaeda's Justification for Killing Muslim Civilians", *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 8, no. 34 (September 2010): 6-9; Wiktorowicz and Kaltner, 1: 383.

<sup>82</sup> *Front Islamique du Salut* (Islamic Salvation Front).

<sup>83</sup> Mohammed Hafez, "Armed Islamist Movements and Political Violence in Algeria," *Political Islam*. Ed. Barry Rubin. 3 vol. Routledge, 2007. 2: 357-381. The article is originally published in *Middle East Journal*, vol. 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 572-591. The two groups of course were aspiring for an Islamic state. 2: 364; and for the GIA see Mohammed Hafez, "From Marginalization to Massacres: A Political Process Explanation of GIA Violence in Algeria," in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, edited by Quintan Wiktorowicz. (Indiana: Indiana University Press), 37-60.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 365.

<sup>85</sup> See tables showing the targets and methods of Islamists during the insurgency from 1992 to 1998 in *Ibid.*, 2: 367-370.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 370.

Table 1  
The seven issues  
Extreme movements/parties

The issue	The group / movement						
	<i>Hizb al-Tahrir</i>	MB (particularly applicable to Qutb's thought and the Brotherhood's Secret Apparatus)	Al-Qaeda	<i>al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah</i> (offshoot of the Brotherhood)	<i>Jamā'at al-Jihad</i> (offshoot of the Brotherhood)	The GIA	The AIS
Ruthless and hasty pursuit of the Islamic state	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<i>takfir</i> of rulers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Armed struggle against the regime	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
targeting the oppressors' helpers	?	√	√	√	√	√	?
Arbitrary application of the question of <i>tatarrus</i>	?	?	√	?	√	?	?
imposing rules of Sharī'a from top-down	√	√	√	√	√	√	?
Main focus on the political domain of Islam	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

In sharp contrast, these views, which indicate a rigid and narrow interpretation of Islam, are absent from the agenda of other moderate Islamist formations. For example, Justice and Development Party (AKP), founded in 2001 by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the current president of Turkey, makes no reference to any of the above ideas. Despite a genealogy that dates back to the tradition of Turkey's Islamist political trend, the party does not prefer to describe itself as an 'Islamist.' Instead, the AKP adopts a policy to accelerate Turkey's EU membership, promote co-existence, democratic and liberal

reforms, and to integrate Turkey into the global economy and overall alignment with the West.<sup>87</sup>

*Hizb al-Nahḍa* (Renaissance Party), founded in 1981 by Rāshid al-Ghannūshī, advocates freedom, social justice, pluralism, democracy, human rights and rebuilding the Tunisian character culturally and intellectually.<sup>88</sup> A gradualist approach in advocating social and political change is adopted too.<sup>89</sup> “We accept the notion of citizenship as the basis of rights, so all citizens are equal whether they are Islamist or not Islamist”<sup>90</sup> Al-Ghannūshī declares.

Wasat Party, founded in 1996 as a moderate offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, emphasizes the civilizational and cultural aspects of Islam prevalent in the Egyptian society and supports liberal democracy, free and fair elections, freedom of thought and expression. Among the Party’s founding members are three Christians, including the prominent Protestant intellectual, Rafiq Habīb.<sup>91</sup>

From the 1970s onwards, The Muslim Brotherhood, working within the Egyptian system, fielded candidates for parliamentary elections either as independents or under the banner of other parties. For instance, in 1984, the Muslim Brothers made alliance with the

<sup>87</sup> Deborah Sontag, “The Erdogan Experiment,” *The New York Times*, May 11, 2003. Retrieved March 4, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/magazine/the-erdogan-experiment.html?pagewanted=all>. Thomas Carroll, “Justice and Development Party: A Model for Democratic Islam?” (2004). Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. Retrieved March 4, 2016. [https://www.meforum.org/meib/articles/0407\\_t1.ht](https://www.meforum.org/meib/articles/0407_t1.ht). For analyses of the AKP and its victory in 2002 elections see Soli Özel, “After the Tsunami,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 14 (April 2003), 80-94; and Ziya Önis and E.Fual Keyman, “A New Path Emerges,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 14 (April 2003), 95-107.

<sup>88</sup> See Rāshid al-Ghannūshī, *Min tajribat al-ḥarakah al-Islamiyyah fī tūnus*, (Tunisia: Dār al-Mijtahid, 2011; Muhammad al-Hāmidī, *Ashwāq al-hurriyyah: qiṣṣat al-ḥarakah al-Islamiyyah fī tūnus*, (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 1992), 80.

<sup>89</sup> Emad Eldin Shahin, “Ghannūshī, Rāshid al-,” *In The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World. Oxford Islamic Studies Online*. Retrieved January 3, 2016. <<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0269>>.

<sup>90</sup> Aidan Lewis, “Profile: Tunisia’s Ennahda Party,” (October 25, 2011) BBC NEWS. Retrieved June 5, 2016. ><http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-15442859><.

<sup>91</sup> Ayoob, 1: 51. For details see Joshua A. Stacher, “Post-Islamist Rumblings in Egypt: The Emergence of the Wasat Party,” *Middle East Journal*, vol. 56 (Summer 2002), 415-432.

secular Wafd Party, where they won 15% of the vote with eight seats solely belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>92</sup> In 1987, an Islamic Alliance was reached with the Socialist Labor Party and the Liberal Party under the slogan *al-Islam huwā al-ḥall* (Islam is the Solution). They stressed on accommodation with gradual implementation of Shari‘a.<sup>93</sup>

A similar adopted moderate position on various societal and political matters is shared by Party for Justice and Development (PJD) in Morocco,<sup>94</sup> the Islamic Action Front (IAF) in Jordan,<sup>95</sup> and Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) in Egypt.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Erica Devine, “Is Islam the Solution? The Muslim Brotherhood and the Search for an Islamic Democracy in Egypt,” (Honors Thesis. Providence College, U.S, 2011), 31. Cf. Ayoob, 50-51.

<sup>93</sup> See Kristen Stilt, “Islam is the Solution?: Constitutional Visions of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.” *Texas International Law Journal*, vol. 46, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 73-108. Retrieved May 25, 2015. [www.tilj.org/content/journal/46/num1/Stilt73.pdf](http://www.tilj.org/content/journal/46/num1/Stilt73.pdf).

<sup>94</sup> Amr Hamzawy, “Party for Justice and Development in Morocco: Participation and Its Discontents,” Carnegie Endowment, no. 93 (July 2008). Retrieved May 27, 2016. >[http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cp93\\_hamzawy\\_pjd\\_final.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cp93_hamzawy_pjd_final.pdf)<

<sup>95</sup> Shadi Hamid, “The Islamic Action Front in Jordan,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics*, Edited by John L. Esposito and Emad El-Din Shahin. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 544-558; Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>96</sup> Said Shehata, “Profile: Egypt's Freedom and Justice Party,” BBC News. Retrieved May 27, 2016.. ><http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15899548>< Muslim democracy has taken shape in the political process providing a model for pragmatic change. On this issue see Vali Nasr, “The Rise of Muslim Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 16, no. 2 (April 2005), 13-27. See also David Philips, *From Bullets to Ballots: Violent Muslim Movements in Transition*, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2008). This book represents case studies of six Muslim organizations which abandoned violence to pursue their goals through a peaceful political process: the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Kurdistan Workers Party of Turkey, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, and the Free Aceh Movement of Indonesia.

For arguments in favour of the compatibility between Islam and Democracy see Khaled Abou El Fadl, Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman, eds. *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Abdulaziz Sachedina, *Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Malik Bennab's critical analysis of the



Table 2 The seven issues: Moderate movements/parties

The issue	The group / movement						
	The Egyptian MB (particularly applicable to the period of the 1970s onwards)	Wasat Party	The AKP	<i>Hizb al-Nahḍa</i>	The PJD	The IAF	The FJP
Ruthless and hasty pursuit of the Islamic state	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
<i>taḳfīr</i> of rulers	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Armed struggle against the regime	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
targeting the oppressors' helpers	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Arbitrary application of the question of <i>tatarrus</i>	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
imposing rules of Shari'a from top-down	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Main focus on the political domain of Islam	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

issue of Islam and democracy in Abdelaziz Berghout "Malik Bennab's Political Thought: Towards a Civilizational Analysis," in in *Contemporary Islamic Political Thought*, edited by Zeenath Kausar. (Kuala Lumpur, IIUM, 2005), 178-181.

## Critical assessment

From the foregoing pages, it is self-evident that al-Būṭī's views on Islamist's rhetoric is well grounded in the original Islamic sources, historical experiences of the *ummah* and realistic situations of today's Islamic world. His approach encompasses elements of objectivity and evidence based analysis. His stands were mostly backed by strong evidences from the Islamic sources and views of well-known moderate scholars in the field. We can claim that he was able to establish a comprehensive framework of analysis leaving no room to whims and discrepancies in assessing the Islamist's positions. However, the analysis also showed that there are few issues with al-Būṭī's discourse.

For example, in his usage of the term 'Islamist', al-Būṭī fell short of clearly defining it or setting parameters for it, with no distinction between movement and party. Probably al-Būṭī was particularly interested in discussing and refuting the Islamist's ideological underpinnings and did not pay much attention to the issue of definition and distinction. Hence, it is important for researchers dealing with serious issues like Islamist's discourse and its assessment to have the definition and concepts set exactly and clearly. This type of analysis will have very crucial implications not only on thoughts but also on lives and destinations of people and society.

Another example worth mentioning, is that throughout his argument against the Islamist's deviant thought and deficient knowledge of Islam, al-Būṭī skillfully manipulated materials from the primary texts of Sharī'a (the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*), as well as legal schools of thought. This appears clearly in discussing the issue of *takfīr* of rulers, targeting the oppressors' helpers, and the question of *tatarrus*. However, as regards the last issue, al-Būṭī lacked a little of accuracy when he claimed that the three conditions of *tatarrus*, formulated and elaborated by al-Ghazālī, are wholeheartedly echoed by all jurists. For instance, not all jurists hinge on the concept of *ḍarūrah* as regards the permissibility of the killing of the human shield. According to al-Thawrī, and the majority of Ḥanafī as well as Mālikī school jurists, it is permissible to kill the shield in cases where *ḍarūrah* is absent. E.g. when there is no declared state of war, or when

the enemy can be reached via means rather than by the killing of the shield.<sup>97</sup> At the opposing camp stand the majority of Shāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī 'ulama, with the Ḥanafī jurist, al-Ḥasan ibn Ziyād, who strictly prohibit to kill the shield in this case.<sup>98</sup>

On the other hand, it is critically important to point out that one of the scholars who left an unmistakable imprint on al-Būṭī's intellectual and spiritual life with special reference to his stance on political Islam was Badī' al-Zamān Sa'īd al-Nūrī (d. 1960), the Kurdish Islamic leader and thinker. Al-Nūrī participated himself in political action and came out with first-hand experience, recalled by al-Būṭī.<sup>99</sup> After over two decades of political engagement and activity, al-Nūrī in 1921 decided to desert politics altogether and dedicate the rest of his life to *da'wah* instead. Showing remorse for earlier involvement in politics, al-Nūrī said, 'I seek refuge in Allah from Satan and politics.'<sup>100</sup>

Evidently, this gloomy vision of politics tells to an extent why al-Būṭī, in spite of frequent offers,<sup>101</sup> remained resolutely opposed to creating his own political party based on 'moderate' Islam,

In addition, I believe that there is a need to undertake a thorough research based on this preliminary study. Every issue of the seven is worth a single research that, besides examining its religious foundation, relates it to the discourse and the current status quo of contemporary Islamist movements/ parties across the Islamic world.

## Conclusion

The above seven issues disapproved by al-Būṭī appear to be shared

<sup>97</sup> *Al-mawsū'ah al-fiqhiyyah al-kuwaytiyyah*, "tatarrus." 45 vols. (Kuwait: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa al-Shu'ūn al-Islamiyyah), "tatarrus." 10: 137; Muhammad Khayr Haykal, *Al-Jihad wa al-qitāl fī al-siyāsah al-shar'īyyah*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 3 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Bayāriq, 1996), 2: 1335-6.

<sup>98</sup> *Al-mawsū'ah al-fiqhiyyah al-kuwaytiyyah*, "tatarrus." 10: 137; Haykal, 2: 1336.

<sup>99</sup> Al-Būṭī's speech on al-Nūrī, politics and Islamist movements. (February 3, 2008). At a symposium on al-Nūrī's *al-Khtubah al-Shamiyyah*, organized by al-Fatih Institute and the Ministry of Awqaf, Damascus. Retrieved 5 May 2014. ><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-FXyOxb7Os><

<sup>100</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Min al-fikr wa al-qalb*, New ed. (Damascus: Dār al-Fārābī, 1997), 332, 333.

<sup>101</sup> Al-Būṭī, *Al-Jihad fī al-Islam*..., 66.

by all extreme Islamist groups of today. To judge or evaluate an Islamist movement/ party as moderate or extreme, these doctrines are the best yardstick. Further, al-Būṭī, promotes the gradual Islamization of society through the preaching efforts of dedicated individuals and groups to transform society from ‘the bottom-up’ rather than imposing Islam from ‘the top-down’ stance.

When the society is transformed in the long run through *da‘wah* activity, only then would be possible to proclaim an Islamic state. More crucially, the full implementation of Sharī‘a, or immediate enforcement of specific rules of it, such as the punitive law, requires the prior establishment of a society whose members, like the early Muslims, have become deeply attached to the spirit of Islam.

‘Promote Islam through *da‘wah* rather than politics’ is the core of al-Būṭī’s argument. And this seems to be sustained, in addition to the above discussion, by Ḥasan al-Bannā, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, who remorsefully commented on Maḥmūd al-Naqrāshī’s assassination,<sup>102</sup> “I wish I had not let the Muslim Brotherhood get engaged in politics. If I were to go back in time, I would have confined myself to teaching people the Islamic morals and education.”<sup>103</sup>

<sup>102</sup> In December 8, 1948, al-Naqrāshī, the Prime Minister, issued a decree whereby dissolving the MB movement. After twenty days, he was assassinated by the Brotherhood's Secret Apparatus. See details about the incident in Aḥmad ‘Adil Kamāl, *al-Nuḡaṭ fawq al-ḥurūf*, (Cairo: Al-Zahrā’, 1989), 277-289; ‘Abd al-Raḥīm ‘Alī, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, (Cairo: Al-Hay’ah al-Miṣriyyah lil al-Kitāb, 2011), 431-471.

<sup>103</sup> TV Interview with Farīd ‘Abd al-Khālīq, al-Bannā’s associate and member of the constitute body of Muslim Brotherhood. “*Shāhid ‘alā al-‘aṣr*.” (March 3, 2004). Al-Jazeera. Retrieved October 30, 2015. ><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbo6RR2hhjU><

## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

### CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR
ء	‘	‘	‘	ز	z	z	z	گ	—	g	g
ب	b	b	b	ژ	—	—	ɾ	ل	l	l	l
پ	—	p	p	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n
ٹ	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ʃ	ه	h	h	h¹
ث	th	th	th	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ʃ	و	w	v/u	v
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḍ	ḍ	ḍ	ی	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	-a²
ح	h	h	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al³	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	<sup>1</sup> – when not final <sup>2</sup> – at in construct state <sup>3</sup> – (article) al - or l-			
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğ				
ڈ	—	—	ḍ	ف	f	f	f				
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k				
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	k			

### VOWELS

	Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iy (final form ī)	iy (final form ī)
	و	uww (final form ū)	uvv
		uvv (for Persian)	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au	ev
	ی	ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a or e
	و	u	u or ū
	ی	i	o or ō
	ی	i	ī

### URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. ج jh گ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.



*Contents*

ARTICLES IN VOL. 23 No. 1, 2018

THE PHENOMENON OF <i>IRHĀB</i> (TERRORISM): MEANING, HISTORY AND CAUSES <i>Thameem Ushama</i>	1
FORM AND CONTENT: A HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC ASSESSMENT A 17TH CENTURY ILLUSTRATED SHAHNAMEH FROM S. M. N A. LIBRARY, MALAYSIA <i>Amir H. Zekrgoo</i>	41
SEPARATION OF CONJOINED TWINS FROM THE COMMON LAW AND <i>SHARI'AH</i> PERSPECTIVES: THE LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONUNDRUM <i>Puteri Nemie Jahn Kassim</i> <i>Fadhlina Alias</i>	67
THE CRITICS ON THE HISTORY OF ARABIC GRAMMAR <i>Solehah Yaacob</i>	97
CAN THE EYE TRACKER REVEAL HOW THE QUR'AN CAN BE LEARNED BY HEART? <i>Khazriyati Salehuddin</i>	125
THE RELEVANCE OF <i>WAQF</i> TO THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF <i>MAQĀSID</i> <i>AL-SHARĪ'AH</i> (HIGHER OBJECTIVES OF <i>SHARĪ'AH</i> ) <i>Rawaa El Ayoubi Gebara</i>	149
THE QUR'ĀNIC CONCEPT OF <i>QIWĀMAH</i> : A REVIEW OF COMMENTARIES ON THE VERSE: 4:34 <i>Nadzrah Ahmad</i> <i>Muhammad Abdul Rasheed</i>	169
THE ANTI-ISLAMIST DISCOURSE: THE CASE OF AL-BŪTĪ <i>Bachar Bakour</i> <i>Abdelaziz Berghout</i>	183
THE ROLE OF SHAYKH ABD AL-RA'UF AL-FANSURI IN THE RECONCILIATION OF SUFISM AND <i>SHARĪ'AH</i> OF 17 <sup>TH</sup> CENTURY THE MALAY WORLD <i>Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri</i> <i>Ridwan Arif</i>	207
THE HISTORY OF ISLAM IN THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ABDULLAH BIN NUH'S WORKS <i>Mohammad Noviani Ardi</i> <i>Fatimah Abdullah</i>	247
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS	269

