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SHMUEL BACHAR, SHMUEL BAR, RACHEL MACHTIGER, AND YAIR MINZILI

HUDSON INSTITUTE

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CENTER ON ISLAM, DEMOCRACY, AND THE FUTURE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

DR. SHMUEL BAR is Director of Studies at the Institute for Policy and Strategy, at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya. He holds a Ph.D. in History of the Middle East from Tel Aviv University. Dr. Bar served in the Israeli intelligence community for thirty years where he held senior analytical, planning, and diplomatic positions, specializing in regional security, Islamic radicalism, and terrorism in the Middle East and East Asia. Dr. Bar has published a number of books and articles in the areas of radical Islam, Iranian defense doctrine, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians.

MR. SHMUEL BACHAR is a research fellow at the Institute for Policy and Strategy at the IDC Herzliya. Mr. Bachar holds a M.A. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is currently working on his PhD dissertation on Egyptian social history. In addition, he researches radical Islam, globalization and culture, Syrian and Iranian affairs and other issues relating to the contemporary Middle East.

MS. RACHEL MACHTIGER is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Policy and Strategy at the IDC Herzliya. Ms. Machtiger holds a B.A. in Middle Eastern studies from Tel Aviv University and an M.A. in National Security studies from Haifa University. Ms. Machtiger has held senior research and analysis positions in Israeli government, and has written on Middle Eastern and Islamic issues, and East Asian affairs.

MR. YAIR MINZILI is a Senior Researcher on Middle Eastern affairs. Mr. Minzili holds a B.A. and M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies and Economics of Developing Countries, both from Tel Aviv University. Mr. Minzili has published a variety of studies on political, economic and Islamic issues. He has held senior research and analysis positions in the Israeli government.

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Religion and politics have been intertwined since the dawn of Islamic history, in accordance with the dictum that Islam is in its essence both "religion and state" (*Din wa-Dawla*). The Prophet Muhammad was not only a religious figure but also a political leader, a judge, an administrator, and a military leader. A clear distinction between religion and politics began with the Abbasid caliphate (750 CE). The religious sphere became dominated by the *ulama*,[1] while the rulers presided over the political sphere. But this was not an absolute separation. The two types of leadership were interdependent: the Abbasid rulers, who came to power as a result of a revolt against the Umayyads, needed not only political but religious legitimacy. It is the latter that the ulama could provide them as the authoritative interpreters of divine law. By prohibiting rebellion against a Muslim ruler on two counts, as a violation of the Quranic duty to "obey Allah and his Prophet and those in authority" and secondly as a precursor to civil war (*fitna*), the ulama held the key to acceptance of the new caliphate. In return,

the ulama received the physical protection of the regime, social, political, and economic status, and the stable social order needed for Islam to flourish.

The caliph—Umayyad, Abbasid, Fatimid, or Ottoman—was first and foremost an Islamic ruler who perceived the legitimacy of his rule as deriving from Islam. Although this is not the case for most Muslim states today, the rise of the secular Muslim state did not cut the tie between the state and the ulama. In most Muslim states, except for Turkey and Indonesia, religion and state remained intertwined; the ulama remained part of the fabric of the state, influencing it from inside. Despite the secular character of the modern regimes, most of them saw the need—like the early caliphs before them—to bring the ulama under the state's control and limit their autonomy. Modern Sunni[2] Muslim states enacted reforms in the religious establishment, turning the ulama into state employees and part of their bureaucracies. Despite their ostensible subordination to the state, however, the ulama wielded religious and social authority that could challenge that

of the state by means of their control over religious and social institutions such as the school and the mosque.

However, the very co-option of the ulama resulted in the decline of their religious prestige and consequently in their erstwhile willingness to give a seal of approval to the state's "non-Islamic" policies (e.g., al-Azhar's approval of Anwar Sadat's peace accords with Israel in 1978-79, or the Saudi establishment ulama's consent to the deployment of foreign coalition troops during the first Gulf War in 1991). The weakening of the religious establishment also led to the emergence of non-establishment ulama who called for a radical political, religious, and socioeconomic agenda. This originally inward-looking agenda became externalized as the non-establishment ulama found in the conflict with the West a *cause célèbre* and a rallying cry.

Thus both the regimes and the establishment ulama found themselves challenged. The establishment ulama were between Scylla and Charybdis; support of the regimes became more and more untenable as the Islamic legitimacy of those regimes came into question, while joining the non-establishment ulama in their populist attacks on the regimes' policies would result in the loss of their privileged status. The upshot of this dilemma has been in many Muslim countries a radicalization of the religious establishments with regard to the West, Israel, and jurisprudence about jihad, while a conservative stance toward the regimes themselves is still maintained.

The relationship between a regime and its religious establishment has important implications for the ability of the regime to impose its policy on the ulama. An understanding of these relationships can help test the argument of many regimes that their levers of influence over the ulama, who openly rule that a state of jihad exists between Islam and the West (or specifically between Islam and the U.S. and its allies), are limited. This paper will address the triangular relationship of regime, establishment ulama, and radical Islamic ulama. What is the role of the establishment ulama in encouraging radicalism in society? What influence do the establishment ulama have on the rulers' attitude and policy toward the

U.S. and the West? How important is the degree of independence of the establishment ulama from the rulers?

This study explores three models of relations between the state and the religious establishment, and the ways in which these relations influence the handling of domestic, regional, and international challenges. By examining statements and fatwas issued by the ulama regarding contemporary case studies, we will investigate how each model affects the ulama's position vis-à-vis the regime and look at the consequences for the regime's policy toward the West in general, and the U.S. particularly. The three case studies that are dealt with here are:

THE EGYPTIAN MODEL. This model can be characterized as a relationship of subordination and cooperation between the religious establishment and the regime. The former recognizes the regime's primacy, supports its stability, and legitimizes its policies (especially in controversial issues) through the status of al-Azhar as the preeminent religious authority in the Sunni Muslim world. In return, the regime acknowledges the religious authority of the establishment ulama and allows the religious scholars latitude in issues that are not vital for the regime's survival. The Egyptian regime however, is basically secular; it does not see the religious establishment as a source of authority for itself, but primarily as a potential political asset or domestic constraint.

THE SAUDI-ARABIAN MODEL. This model reflects a more equal alliance between the political rulers and the religious establishment, forged by the founders of the Wahhabi movement and the al-Sa'ud dynasty. In this model, the legitimacy of the Saudi regime derives from the religious authority of the ulama, but at the same time, the regime is the quintessential manifestation of the Wahhabi ideology. The dividing lines between the regime and the religious establishment here are fuzzy; for the orthodox Wahhabi Saudi regime, the ulama do represent a genuine spiritual authority and a constraint on their political policy. The Saudi regime allows the ulama wide latitude in religious, social and cultural

matters, and in return the ulama provide the rulers with religious legitimization.

THE JORDANIAN MODEL. This model is one in which the religious establishment is totally subordinate, religiously and institutionally, to the Hashemite throne, which created it and prevented it from acquiring its own sources of power. Unlike the Egyptian and Saudi cases, the Jordanian ulama are merely technocrats who carry out the guidelines dictated by the king. The Jordanian regime does not seek the advice of the ulama in political matters, nor does it seek constant legitimization from them for its actions. The Hashemite origin of the royal family has been the main source of Islamic legitimacy for the regime. The king is the supreme religious authority as a descendent of the Prophet, and thus does not need the religious establishment's legitimization.

EGYPT

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Egypt is arguably one of the most complex and dynamic cases of relations between the state and the religious establishment. Egypt has been a center of Islamic scholarship and jurisprudence since the early days of Islam and has the only uninterrupted history of predominance in this field due to its status as the home of the most important religious institution of the Sunni Muslim world, al-Azhar. Since the nineteenth century, and increasingly since the 1952 Free Officers' Revolution, Egypt's rulers have been struggling to control al-Azhar, realizing the importance of this body as a source of religious legitimacy to state policies.

The relations between the Egyptian regime and the religious establishment can be described as a "marriage of convenience," with both sides reaping benefits from the alliance; the former uses the Islamic establishment to legitimize its rule and its policies, the latter gains access to the centers of political power and to generous state resources. However, these relations are not without a price for both sides: for al-Azhar, support of the regime, especially in controversial issues, damages its Islamic credentials and its credibility as an autonomous institution of Islamic jurisprudence; for the regime, the price is the surrender of vast parts of the social space to the religious establishment and the strengthening of the religious constraints over its domestic policies and international relations.

The Egyptian regime and its Islamic establishment have a wide range of mutual interests. These include:

- **Preservation of the current regime and the stability of the country.** For the regime, this interest is self-evident. For al-Azhar the aversion to civil war is deeply imbedded in Islamic political thought. On the practical side, the clerics are government employees, and any upheaval would harm their individual interests.

- **The domestic and pan-Islamic prestige of al-Azhar.** Both sides have an interest in downplaying the subordination of al-Azhar to the regime, as such an image would damage the former's credibility and prestige, and hence its influence in religious matters.

- **The struggle against radical Islamist movements.** Both the regime and the establishment have an interest in reducing the influence of the radical movements that pose a threat to stability and to the theological hegemony of the establishment. To this interest, we must add al-Azhar's interest in stemming the influence of the "new preachers."

• **Preservation of close relations with the West**. Both the regime and al-Azhar have an interest in not alienating Egypt's Western friends through anti-Western or radical pronouncements by establishment scholars. In addition, both sides benefit from projecting a positive image of Islam as a tolerant religion and of al-Azhar as a worthy partner for ecumenical dialogue with non-Muslim institutions and establishments.[3]

However, the regime and al-Azhar also have some conflicting interests:

• **Al-Azhar has an institutional interest in maintaining a high degree of autonomy** not only in the religious and social spheres, but in political issues as well. The regime, on the other hand, seeks to keep the institute as a tool that legitimizes its policy, whatever it may be, in order to gain the public's confidence. However, from the regime's point of view, al-Azhar must remain completely subordinate to it, though projecting an autonomous image. The clerics' desire to express more independent opinions often causes internal dissent in the clerical establishment, leading to its further degradation and undermining its ability to speak in one voice and exert its religious authority.

• **Al-Azhar has a basic ideological interest in the Islamization of Egypt** and increasing the implementation of sharia. This interest is in clear conflict with the secular nature of the regime.

In 1961 the regime of Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser implemented a comprehensive reform in the structure and function of al-Azhar, with the goal of reinforcing the regime's control over the religious sphere and harnessing it to lend legitimacy to the regime. The reform included: introduction of modern secular studies into the curriculum; reorganization of the administration and subordinating it to the state (including the appointment of the grand Imam Shaykh al-Azhar and the chief mufti by the president of the Republic); and creation of new functions such as the Islamic Research Academy (see below) to replace the "Committee of the Great Ulama." Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), was even more in need of Islamic legitimacy for his controversial domestic, economic, and foreign policies and actively increased the integration of the ulama in the public political and social discourse. However, at the same time, because al-Azhar found itself competing with radical Islamic forces with an agenda like its own, Islamization of society and implementation of sharia, it radicalized its own agenda accordingly.[4] Al-Azhar's political involvement has grown during the long era of Sadat's successor, Husni Mubarak (1981-), who needed al-Azhar to legitimize both his domestic campaign against militant Islam and his foreign policy, such as participation in the war against Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War, relations with Israel, and his stance on U.S. intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq in the wake of 9/11. Al-Azhar supported the regime against radical Islam and was "compensated" by the regime by being granted almost total control over public space.[5]

The Egyptian Islamic Establishment

The present structure of the Egyptian religious establishment is based on the 1961 law. The religious establishment in Egypt is diversified. It includes thousands of employees engaged in areas including law courts primary through academic level education, and preaching. The Egyptian Islamic establishment has always been ideologically heterogeneous. The plurality of opinions inside al-Azhar is manifested through the multiplicity of bodies that deal with the issuing of fatwas. This pluralism is in the tradition of Islamic *fiqh* that tolerates differences of opinion on matters of interpretation and is said to testify to the flexibility of the sharia. The following bodies are part of the religious establishment:

• **The Islamic Research Academy**, which deals with the more complicated issues (matters of government and policy for which there exists a special committee inside the academy). Since 1985,[6] the academy has also been charged with censorship of literature and arts with a bearing on Islam, a role that grew in the mid 1990s.[7] According to the 1961 law, the academy is headed by Shaykh al-Azhar, and the maximum number of members in the academy is fifty, with the possibility of including up to twenty non-Egyptian members. Currently there are no foreign members, and the academy consists of twenty-six scholars, all Egyptians. The academy also consists of non-Azharite lecturers, experts in economics and law. All decisions are made openly and must be approved by an absolute majority. The members of the academy include both conservatives and radicals, and the differences of opinion, including those with Shaykh al-Azhar, are frequently aired in the open.

• **The Fatwa Committee** was established in 1936. This committee is composed of twenty members, who are replaced every three months by the secretary-general of the committee, on the recommendation of the heads of the preaching departments in Egypt's districts. Each week, five different members of the committee assemble to discuss a large number of fatwas sent to them by the public, mostly on matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other familial conflicts. All nominees to the Fatwa Committee must be religious scholars or experts in Islamic jurisprudence with al-Azhar certificates. Regional Fatwa Committees are scattered all around Egypt's districts, and ulama from the regional committees are summoned to serve on the Azharite Fatwa Committee periodically.

• **The *Dar al-Ifta'*,** for more than a century one of Egypt's most important religious bodies, headed by Egypt's grand mufti, and under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. The *Dar al-Ifta'* is not under the jurisdiction of al-Azhar, though both bodies usually work in harmony with each other.[8] *Dar al-Ifta'* directs its fatwas to the Islamic nation as a whole, thus representing Egypt in the transmission of religious and scientific knowledge.

The Egyptian religious establishment also includes an extensive educational system and various organizations that oversee preaching:

• **Education**. There are approximately 6000 institutions (*ma'ahid*) around Egypt at all levels from elementary schools through high-schools, along with the University of al-Azhar, with faculties scattered around the country and more than 300,000 students.

• **Preaching**. Al-Azhar maintains a Higher Committee for *Da'wah*, headed by Shaykh al-Azhar, which collaborates with the Religious Endowments Ministry (*Wizarat al-Awqaf*).[9] The Ministry is in charge of more than 90,000 mosques throughout Egypt; it gives its licenses to the mosques' preachers (imams) and supervises the content of the da'wah. Al-Azhar also has a Directorate of Da'wah and Islamic Publication that deals in da'wah in the schools, in the army, and abroad.[10] Al-Azhar also dispatches more than 5,000 ulama to teach and preach abroad—mainly in the West and the U.S.—through the Department of Islamic Missions.[11]

The Non-Establishment Ulama

The non-establishment ulama are even more diversified politically than al-Azhar. These ulama usually belong to Islamic associations that specialize in da'wah; many sympathize with the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood,

while others (such as the *Gam'iya al-Shari'ah* and the *Gami'yat Ansar al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya*) refrain from political intervention. They can be found at various levels of integration within the establishment—from salaried officials who do not accept the authority of the al-Azhar leadership to complete "outsiders" who preach in the unregulated mosques, in the streets, and through the mass media. Hence they have diverse and wide audiences among the ulama and Azharite students, as well as among the common people.

The most formidable challenge of these ulama both to the regime and to the religious establishment are the popular shaykhs whose scholarship cannot be denied (most of them are graduates and even current or former staff of al-Azhar[12]), but who are not part of the establishment and do not accept its authority. They challenge the establishment through their use of Islamic jurisprudence to justify or even to impose as a duty acts of terrorism against the regime and against Western interests. While many of the establishment ulama may agree with much of the religious logic in these fatwas, they cannot accept the loss of their monopoly over legal rulings in affairs of state (or *siyar*, the branch of Islamic jurisprudence dealing with political affairs). Their ability to refute the arguments of these popular shaykhs, however, is limited because both groups share a community of basic axioms and because the establishment cannot claim that these other shaykhs are unlearned.

It is hard to estimate the number of these ulama, since many still act within the system, but they have shown their political strength on several occasions since the mid-1980s and throughout the 1990s. These ulama have been involved in public debates and have shown their affinities with moderate Islamists, and sometimes even with the more radical ones. While most of them rejected the Islamic militants' violence, they also pronounced their objection to the violent repression of the *Gama'at* by the regime. Some of them even tried to mediate between the militants and the government, while promoting social peace and stability. Those of the non-establish-ment ulama, who are formally affiliated with al-Azhar but publicly disagree with the center, are often "exiled" to provincial faculties or abroad as visiting professors in order to prevent them from forming permanent factions within the establishment.[13]

Alongside these "semi-establishment" ulama, the phenomenon of non-establishment "street" ulama, who distance themselves from both the coffers and the official voice of al-Azhar, has grown since the 1970s. These shaykhs influence the public and challenge the establishment through the practice of da'wah (the call to religion, mainly by preaching). This process was intensified in the 1980s with the growing popularity of street shaykhs such as Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid Kishk, Salah Abu Isma'il, and Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, who were educated at al-Azhar but did not hold positions in the civil service, but rather specialized in preaching and were popular among the masses.[14] Therefore, the 1980s marked the end of the monopolistic status that al-Azhar had enjoyed in the Nasser and Sadat eras. Al Azhar, finding itself in competition with other religious authorities that were "morally uncompromised" in the public eye and not tainted by affiliation with the regime, was forced to adapt and to adopt a more pluralistic character.[15]

Another category of non-establishment ulama is represented in a new genre of Islamic "service provider" that has developed since the early 1990s, known as the "new preachers" (*al-du'at al-gudud*). These "new preachers" have had an enormous effect upon the religious discourse in Egypt and have succeeded in filling the gap between the unpopular al-Azhar and the politically dangerous Muslim Brothers. Most of the new preachers are young, successful, middle- or upper-middle-class men whose preaching methods resemble the ones used by the American televangelists.[16] While this genre seems to correspond to the goal of al-Azhar of bringing middle-class Egyptians back to Islam, it is in fact a challenge to the establishment both in its popularity and in its non-orthodox, Sufi-like content. While these preachers challenge the al-Azhar establishment, most of them do not pose a threat to the regime or preach violence.

The Struggle for Islamic Primacy in Egypt

Al-Azhar's desire to maintain its predominance in the Egyptian Islamic world has motivated its leaders to compete with their rivals on their own playing fields—social critique; demands for stronger religious coercion and Islamization; and Islamic solidarity in foreign affairs. This trend was particularly manifested during the term of Shaykh Gad al-Haqq as Shaykh al-Azhar (1989–1996), who from 1989 on hardened al-Azhar's positions on social issues and issued a number of anti-liberal fatwas that embarrassed the regime vis-à-vis the West. In 1992, Gad al-Haqq himself reestablished the al-Azhar Scholars' Front (*Gabhat Ulama al-Azhar*), a group that was active in the 1940s, in order to fight secularism in Egyptian society. The Front's membership grew from 500 in 1993 to more than 3,000 in 1997 and was composed mainly of non-establishment ulama and non-Azharite Islamist intellectuals, who were determined to fight secular tendencies and thinkers within Egyptian society. During that period, the Islamic Research Academy began to wage a total war against all secular and liberal trends in Egyptian society, encouraging ulama to attack secular intellectuals such as Farag Foda and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd. In the case of Foda, his murderers claimed that they had but implemented the verdict issued by al-Azhar ulama that had branded Foda an apostate. In exchange perhaps for permitting the murderers to be so outspoken, Gad al-Haqq remained unrelenting in his condemnation of the violence of the militants inside Egypt.

Until his death in 1996, common interests and beliefs drew Shaykh al-Azhar and the non-establishment ulama closer on the grounds of promoting Islamization of society, while rejecting *fitna* between the regime and the Islamic militants. His death unraveled this symbiosis. The regime appointed as his successor the pro-regime Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, who has since then proven his loyalty to the regime by issuing fatwas in line with official policy, thus alienating more radical clerics.[17] Concomitantly, the Al-Azhar Scholars' Front, led by its secretary-general Dr. Yahya Isma'il, started to embrace more radical and oppositionist positions, joining the more radical ulama in attacking regime loyalists within the religious establishment, including Shaykh Tantawi,[18] the Minister of Waqf Dr. Hamdi Zaqzuq, and secular intellectuals.[19] In July 2000, after Isma'il publicly denounced Tantawi's support for divorce initiated by the woman (*khal'*), Tantawi dissolved the Front altogether[20] and in December 2001 dismissed Isma'il from his academic post.

While al-Azhar has attempted to co-opt those non-establishment ulama who had some affinity with the institution by virtue of their having studied in it or being on its faculty, it has taken a firmer stand—supported by the Muslim Brotherhood—against the "new preachers." The phenomenon is disparaged as *da'wah diet* ("diet" preaching). The preachers are accused of being affiliated with the Gama'at, of being superficial, and of lacking satisfactory education.[21] Special committees, headed by Azharite functionaries, were set up to censor religious programs in order to prevent "disqualified" people from distorting the "proper" image of Islam. At the same time, in an expression of "if you can't beat them, join them," the religious establishment itself has embraced the current trend. The Ministry of Religious Endowments launched reform projects that focused on the social role of the mosque and on self-sufficiency. Al-Azhar held a seminar that discussed the rethinking of Islamic preaching, using American-style marketing methods. Moreover, al-Azhar clerics host TV shows, where they answer people's questions, sometimes to the dismay of the religious establishment itself.[22] All these steps, however, have not succeeded in blocking the popularity of such TV shows as al-Qaradawi's *al-Sharia wal-Hayat* ("Sharia and Life") in *al-Jazeera*, or 'Amr Khalid's show.[23] Al-Qaradawi also tried to undermine al-Azhar's monopoly over the field of da'wah by claiming that da'wah is not the sole mandate of the shaykhs and the imams of al-Azhar, but is rather the duty of each and every Muslim according to his abilities.[24]

The gravest challenge that the non-establishment shaykhs pose to al-Azhar, though, is not so much their preaching but their presumption in issuing fatwas on

a variety of issues, from personal matters to jihad. Addressing this challenge to its own monopoly, al-Azhar warns the public against fatwas issued by unauthorized individuals. By this it refers both to the young, self-educated, laymen students from the radical movement—who, according to al-Azhar, have only superficial knowledge of religious jurisprudence and have not been trained at al-Azhar—and to the television shaykhs.[25] By linking together both phenomena, al-Azhar fights two battles: against the radicals who disrupt the stability of the country and challenge the authority both of the regime and of al-Azhar; and against the more innocuous television shaykhs who threaten the monopoly of al-Azhar on religion.[26]

Another area in which the establishment attempts to regain its religious monopoly is in the control of the country's mosques. Since the second half of the 1990s, a project has been underway for nationalization of all of Egypt's mosques (6,000 mosques were to be nationalized annually, with an ultimate goal of nationalizing all 90,000 mosques in Egypt). This is done through both "sticks" and "carrots." The regime did not hide the fact that the goal of this action was, first and foremost, to use the regulation of Islamic preaching to prevent the radical Gama'at from penetrating into the mosques. The regime claims that the project was very successful, and that even private mosques that were run by radical elements succumbed to the regime's will after they had received financial propositions from the government.[27]

Relations among the regime, the establishment ulama, and the non-establishment ulama can be demonstrated through analysis of three pivotal events: the attacks of 9/11 and their aftermath; the war in Iraq; and the al-Qaeda attacks in Muslim countries— Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

The 9/11 Attacks

Immediately after the 9/11 attacks, the Egyptian religious establishment was mobilized to deal with two concerns: the damage to the image of Islam and the Arabs; and the criticism of its own failures in the light of the fact that a considerable number of the members of al–Qaeda were Egyptians, including Muhammad Atta, the infamous leader of 9/11 terrorists. This was done by portraying Islam (mainly to the West) as monolithic, free of internal dissent, and preaching peace and love between all peoples. Ecumenical dialogues with Christian and Jewish representatives were initiated. Soon after the outbreak of the war in Afghanistan, however, al-Azhar's clerics and lecturers began to issue harsh anti-American declarations that did not correspond with Tantawi's more restrained line. While Tantawi and the senior ulama merely warned the U.S. against "punishing innocent civilians," many Azharite ulama called for the Afghan people—and later the Iraqis—to wage jihad in order to repel the American attack, calling for divine retribution against the U.S., which they compared with Sodom and Gomorrah.[28] The war in Afghanistan and later the occupation of Iraq by U.S. forces, was viewed in the context of the precept of *al-walaa wal-bara'a,* the duty to show loyalty to Muslims in any conflict with infidels.[29]

The War in Iraq

In the aftermath of 9/11, the tone of al-Azhar was relatively moderate during the Afghanistan campaign. As war in Iraq loomed closer, it became more and more difficult for al-Azhar to maneuver between the interests of the regime and the public opinion of its Islamic constituency. As a result, the al-Azhar establishment became more radical and aggressive toward the U.S., backing down only when its more vociferous declarations conflicted with the regime's vital interests.

The foremost issue in the Islamic discourse in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Iraq was whether or not the situation had made it an "individual duty" (*fard 'ayn*) for all Muslims to join the jihad. A short time before the outbreak of the war in Iraq, the popular radical Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi had called for jihad against the Americans in the event of their

invasion to Iraq. He forbade any cooperation with the coalition forces, including the use of Arab airports and harbors, and ruled that jihad would become an individual duty in the case of an American invasion.[30] This call was echoed by the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood and spilled into the streets. To satisfy the anti-American sentiment of the street, Tantawi began to open his Friday sermons with curses against the Americans and calls for jihad against them, even before the customary curses against Israel and the Jews. The regime took no special measures to prevent such verbal attacks.[31]

More than any other issue, this debate created a dilemma for the al-Azhar establishment. On one hand, the pressure to rule in favor of jihad had both ideological and institutional logic; the argument that such a state of jihad was in effect had validity from the point of view of Islamic jurisprudence, and the issue was being exploited by the radical Muslim Brotherhood to improve its status vis-à-vis al-Azhar in the streets. On the other hand such a ruling would have grave consequences for the vital interests of the regime. The behavior of the al-Azhar establishment reflected this dilemma.

In March 2003, the Chairman of al-Azhar's Fatwa Committee, Shaykh 'Ali Abu al-Hasan, issued a fatwa stating the following: the West has put together a coalition against Islam; hence it has become a duty for all Muslims to unite in a "jihad for the sake of Allah" until martyrdom or victory; under these circumstances "entering into an alliance with the Americans against Afghanistan constitutes *riddah* (i.e. apostasy, for which the punishment is death).[32] The fatwa was not unusual for Shaykh Abu al-Hasan. He had issued previous controversial fatwas, including one forbidding Muslims living in a country that is hostile to Islam to carry its citizenship (December 2002). The reasoning was that such citizenship might cause Muslim citizens of the U.S. to fight against their Muslim brethren in case of a war between the U.S. and a Muslim country. In another controversial fatwa Shaykh Abu al-Hasan called on Muslims to acquire "all kinds of weapons," including nuclear weapons, in order to strike back at the enemies and oppressors of Islam

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(January 2003). Following Western protests, Tantawi dismissed him on the pretext that he had reached the age of retirement.[33]

A few days after the issuance of Abu al-Hasan's March 2003 fatwa, the al-Azhar Islamic Research Academy (headed by Tantawi himself) issued a fatwa that described the war as a "new Crusader invasion" with the goal of "destroying the sacred places, the lands, and the wealth of the Muslims" and "undermining Islamic honor and faith" and as a prelude to a total invasion to the Arab and Muslim nation in order to pursue American and Israeli interests. The fatwa therefore ruled that jihad has become an individual duty (*fard 'ayn*) for every Muslim.[34] The fatwa—and particularly the reference to a "Crusader War"—not only did not satisfy the more radical Islamists,[35] but it generated negative domestic and foreign "fallout" from Egyptian Copts and from the West. Here al-Azhar's commitment to the foreign relations and domestic interests of the regime came into play. In a revised statement, which was published a few days later, the academy retracted the use of the term "Crusader War" and stressed that there is no war between Islam and Christianity, since all "celestial religions" spread peace and security among human beings.[36] Later on, it was claimed that the fatwa had been issued by a member of the academy at the request of Tantawi without the consent— or even knowledge—of the rest of the members of the academy and was had been signed (unusually, perhaps in order to provide an exit strategy in case of severe repercussions) not by Tantawi but by the secretary-general of the academy.

The inevitable conclusion from the definition of the jihad in Iraq as *fard 'ayn* was that Egyptians would see themselves as obliged to join that jihad. However, such a regime-sanctioned recruitment of volunteers for the insurgency in Iraq would clearly be a crossing of red lines. Therefore, after issuing fatwas that jihad had become *fard 'ayn*, the establishment had to provide a religious justification to prevent Egyptians from physically joining the jihad in Iraq. The grand mufti, Dr. Ahmad al-Tayyib, warned that such a move would meet with a harsh response by "the aggressors" and hence might lead to a *fitna* among Muslims.[37] After the war broke out, Tantawi himself clearly defined the borders of the "individual duty." He called upon all *Iraqis* (i.e. not others) to defend their *homeland* in any way, including "martyrdom operations." Relying on the principle of *maslaha* (overriding public interest), he stressed that it was forbidden to destroy Egypt (by irresponsible acts of support of Iraq) in response to the destruction of another nation by the Americans and made it clear that the conduct of jihad was a *state responsibility* (f*ard kifayya*), not an individual one, and the sole responsibility of the ruler (*wali al-amr*).[38]

In August 2003, Azharite Shaykh Nabawi Muhammad al-Esh issued a fatwa stating that the new Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) was "imposed upon the Iraqi people by the occupation forces to act as an ally to God's enemy," and as such any Arab or Muslim country that either supported it or even merely dealt with it should be boycotted. Again, after a meeting between Tantawi and U.S. Ambassador David Welch, Tantawi suspended al-Esh from his post as member in the Fatwa Committee and denounced the fatwa as an act of stupidity and arrogance and an attempt to "circumvent Iraqi scholars and deliver fatwas on matters that concern only them." In doing so, Tantawi "demoted" al-Azhar from its status as an authority for the whole Muslim world in order to relieve international pressure on itself and on the regime. These statements aroused strong opposition, causing Tantawi to abstain from delivering that Friday's sermon at the al-Azhar Mosque in order to avoid demonstrators.[39] Al-Esh himself later retracted his statement and explained that he had not declared *takfir* (calling a Muslim an apostate) on the IGC, and that if the Iraqi people were satisfied with the council, then that was their own business.[40] Later, members of the Fatwa Committee published clarifications that they were merely civil servants, whose task was to solve personal status matters, and that political issues were the domain of the academy and Shaykh al-Azhar.[41]

The Suicide Attacks in Riyadh and Casablanca (May 2003)

The suicide attacks in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) and Casablanca (Morocco) in mid-May 2003 exemplify the way the religious establishment and its leaders tried to hold the stick at both ends.[42] Shaykh Tantawi and the Islamic Research Center of al-Azhar condemned the attacks on the basis that while jihad was warranted by the "foreign attack against the Arab and Muslim lands," this should be an authorized jihad and not "frivolous attacks" against innocent civilians.[43] Establishment scholars took pains to emphasize the distinction between indiscriminate murder of innocent Muslims and protected non-Muslims by suicide, which is prohibited by the Quran,[44] and jihad in Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya and Iraq—all considered Islamic lands occupied by foreign forces.[45] A more creative tactic was to disown the attacks altogether and attribute them to the enemies of Islam. Dr. Nasr Farid Wasil, former grand mufti of Egypt, denounced the attacks in Riyadh and Casablanca and said that their perpetrators were corrupting Islam and could not be considered martyrs, but murderers. But, according to Wasil, it was a conspiracy plotted by the Americans, their allies and world Zionism to legitimize al-Qaeda and bin-Laden.[46]

Implications of the Egyptian Model

To summarize, the logic of the policy of the Egyptian regime vis-à-vis al-Azhar can be articulated as follows: the foremost enemy is the radical Islamic movement; this movement can be fought effectively only through religious means; however, al-Azhar has lost its predominance as a result of its moderate pro-regime positions; in order for al-Azhar to regain its preeminent status in the religious space in Egyptian society and to enable it to wrest authority back from the non-establishment ulama, it must show its independence from the regime and its loyalty to the tenets of orthodox Islam, in spite of its relationship with the secular regime. With historic hindsight, it seems that the regime's policies toward the religious establishment have had additional—often counter-productive—long-range effects:

- **Enhancing the political and social influence of the ulama.** The nationalization of al-Azhar was resented by most of the ulama, but in return for their submission to the regime's will, they received powerful levers for political influence. In retrospect, not only did the reform not succeed in subjugating the ulama to the regime, but rather increased their ability to influence the regime's domestic and foreign agendas.[47]

- **Weakening al-Azhar vis-à-vis competing non-establishment religious forces.** Ironically, the steps that were intended to harness the authority of al-Azhar to the goals of the regime reduced the very authority of that institution. Once the religious institution became part of the bureaucracy of a declared secular state, it lost its credibility in the eyes of the masses of believing Muslims, creating a vacuum and a crisis of authority. This vacuum was filled by various Islamic forces that drew their credibility from the same source that deprived the establishment ulama of its own, namely, their attitude toward the regime. The popular, non-establishment ulama, who distanced themselves from the mainstream of al-Azhar, increased their authority in the Egyptian street.

- **Obfuscating the boundaries between the establishment and the radicals.** The reform of al-Azhar and its modernization also contributed to the blurring of the distinction

between the old Azharite ulama and the Islamic radicals who were fomenting discontent in the secular universities of Egypt. Whereas in the past, al-Azhar drew mainly on rural youth, who migrated to Cairo and studied under one roof and under close supervision, the reform made al-Azhar into a widespread educational institution with its institutes and faculties spread throughout the country, recruiting thousands of new students each year to its elementary, secondary, and academic institutions.

• **Opening the doors for a Wahhabi "hostile takeover."** Al-Azhar had historically been opposed to the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. However, the need for independence

from the regime encouraged it to accept support from the Wahhabi Saudi state. Gradually, by way of economic perks accorded to the ulama of al-Azhar, scholarships for students and funding of chairs and faculties by the Islamic World League (*Rabitat al-'Alam al-Islami*) and other Saudi institutions, al-Azhar increasingly adopted elements of the Wahhabi doctrine.[48] By the end of the 1970s, both the Azharite ulama and the Islamic radicals had become intellectuals using the same modernist vocabulary.[49] By the late 1990s, almost the entire Azharite elite had benefited from Saudi largesse and most were keen to curry favor with the Saudis out of expectation of even more benefits. Those who did not accept the Wahhabi line have largely been purged.[50]

SAUDI ARABIA

The Saudi case holds particular significance. It is the Saudi Islamic establishment—and not al-Azhar—who stand actively in the forefront of spreading the radical Wahhabi message throughout the Muslim world. The Islamic World League (*Rabitat al-'Alam al-Islami*), the World Association of Muslim Youth, and the World Association of Mosques are notorious for their support of radical and terrorist organizations throughout the world and for spreading texts that indoctrinate Muslims to intolerance of non-Muslims.

Saudi Arabia was born as an alliance between two symbiotic establishments—a political and a religious. The regime provided the religious establishment with positions and funding and enforced domination of the conservative religious and social values represented by the ulama over the Saudi state. In return, the ulama provided the regime with the religious legitimization needed for it to rule.[51] For most of the history of the kingdom, these two parts of the body of the regime acted in relative harmony.

Unlike the old and respected al-Azhar establish-

ment, the Wahhabi ulama were not there before the state. Mecca had not been a center of Islamic learning since the ninth century. The Wahhabi Islamic establishment was cultivated by the Saudi state and gradually took root in the colleges and mosques of Mecca, particularly after the 1973-4 oil boom. Like Egypt, the Saudi regime needed the clerics' support in times of turmoil, for instance when Islamic dissidents attacked the Grand Mosque in Mecca (1979), or when the regime needed to legitimize the deployment of foreign coalition troops in the first Gulf War. These events accorded the religious establishment political power. At the same time, as non-establishment Islamic forces began to express a growing assertiveness, establishment clerics began to challenge the balance of political power in the state and to demand a deeper Islamization of society and foreign policy. As in the Egyptian case, the religious establishment does not speak in one voice, and quite often its junior clerics express more radical opinions in these crucial matters.

It is extremely difficult to separate the vested

interests of the Saudi Islamic establishment from those of the royal family. Unlike the Egyptian model, both parties in Saudi Arabia are aware that they either "hang together or hang separately." Also unlike the Egyptian regime, the Saudi royal family does not purport to have a worldview that is separate from that of the ulama. The Islamic establishment does not have the predisposition to become the core of a revolutionary Islamic government, and it realizes that its material wellbeing is contingent on the survival of the existing regime. The royal family also knows that an Arabia without the religious legitimacy of the Wahhabi clerics will not be a *Saudi* Arabia; it would probably pass on to a theocracy (or hierocracy) of the non-establishment clerics (with some "fellow travelers" from the existing establishment). This awareness on both sides keeps the symbiosis intact.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The relationship between the political rulers and the religious establishment in Saudi Arabia is based on the alliance formed in 1745 between Shaykh Muhammad Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi movement, and Muhammad Ibn Saʾud, the ancestor of the Saudi dynasty. Ibn Saʾud became the political leader (*wali al-amr*), and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab became the supreme religious authority and spiritual leader (grand mufti, supreme judge, and official administrator of religious affairs).[52] After the death of Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhab in 1792, the ruler of al-Saʾud assumed the title of imam. Thus, the Saudi leaders were recognized not only as shaykhs or leaders, but also as Wahhabi imams, political, and religious figures, and their rule gained an element of religious authority.[53] After ʿAbd al-ʾAziz conquered the Hijaz in 1924 and became the ruler of Mecca and Medina, he assumed the title of *Khadim al-Haramayn* (the servant of the two shrines) and thus assumed an important status in the wider Muslim world.[54]

But relations between the ulama and al-Saʾud were not based solely on this alliance. Historically,

the al-Saʾud family had close ties with the ulama, especially with the Al al-Shaykh family.[55] Thus, Al al-Shaykh's reputation derived not only from their religious status but also from their position as part of the ruling elite. Traditionally, certain key positions in the governmental and private sectors, including the religious ministries and the post of the grand mufti, belong to the al-Shaykh family. There are some other families like al-Lahidan who hold key posts in the ulama establishment: Al-Shaykh Salih al-Lahidan is the chairman of the Higher Council of the *Qadi*s and a member of the Board of Senior Ulama (BSU); Shaykh ʿAbdallah bin Muhammad al-Lahidan is in charge of religious affairs, endowments, and daʾwah in the eastern region. Today, there are fewer high-level intermarriages between the members of the al-Saʾud house and senior ulama since the vast growth in numbers of the royal family, enabling intermarriages within the family itself. But it is possible that such intermarriages occur at the lower level.

The current structure of the religious establishment was built gradually. The development of the oil industry, which led to intense changes in the country that reached a peak in the 1970s, was a turning point in the ulama's position in relation to the government. A new administration and bureaucratic system were needed to respond to this situation, and an institutionalization process was launched to address these needs. The regime started spending huge sums of money to train new ulama, developing a Wahhabi-oriented teaching system and daʾwah apparatus. The boost that the Saudi national wealth brought to the ulama sector turned them into a more loyal element in the kingdom, with a vested interest in the survival of the Saudi regime. At the same time, the cultivation of Islamic scholarship in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina enabled them (and the Hijazi ulama) to regain their status—lost since the ninth century—as a recognized religious center in the Muslim world.

As early as 1973, the ulama began to flex their muscles by putting pressure on the regime to enforce an oil embargo. An important milestone in the ulama's relationship with the regime was the occupation

of the Mecca Mosque in 1979 by a descendant of the original fundamentalist *ikhwan* movement. This event, along with the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the open rebellion of the Shiite communities in the oil-rich eastern province of the kingdom, set in motion a fundamentally changed Saudi Arabian religio-political order. It was the first time the ulama had been asked to support the regime in political issues. More than a decade later, the regime turned to them for a fatwa to legitimize the deployment of coalition troops on Saudi soil during the first Gulf War in 1991.[56] Feeling threatened, the regime decided to re-empower and co-opt domestic critics and promote religiosity.[57] The establishment ulama became actors within the power structure.[58] All these steps marked the politicization of the ulama and their transformation from loyal challengers within society into a more serious force of opposition.

During the early history of Saudi Arabia as a state, the regime had allowed the ulama wide scope for expanding their autonomy and authority and had not attempted to place them under a rigid governmental structure.[59] In the 1980s, however, and particularly following the first Gulf War, with the rise of the *Sahwa* ulama, the regime made efforts toward centralization, with the corollary of enhanced co-optation. The first step was to introduce institutions that gave the impression that the regime was willing to allow the ulama a more active role in the decision-making process. This was done, inter alia, by the establishment of the *Shura* Council in 1990; personnel changes in the BSU; the nomination of a grand mufti; structural changes in religious ministries; and the establishment of two new bodies in October 1994, the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (*al-Majlis al-A'la lil-Shu'un al-Islamiyya*) and the Council for Islamic Mission and Guidance (*al-Majlis lil-Da'wah wal-Irshad*).

The newfound status of the ulama galvanized them to take more positions in domestic and foreign affairs.

- **Domestic affairs**: Shaykh bin Baz and Shaykh Muhammad al-'Uthaymeen and other establishment ulama supported a petition by non-establishment ulama and Islamists, calling on the regime to undertake far-reaching reforms and criticizing the dependence of the state on the West. Typically, their position was expressed through secret letters to the king, in which they supported the petition and suggested in a form of *nasiha* (advice) that the BSU be convened to discuss the implementation of the reform.[60]

- **Foreign policy:** The ulama pressured King Faysal to impose the oil embargo on the West in 1973.[61] Later, the regime-controlled Muslim World League (*Rabita*) called on Muslims to "actively participate" in the 1994 UN Conference on Population and Development and to express their objections. The BSU called the conference "an insult to Islam" and directed the Saudi government to boycott it. This caused the regime to cancel its participation.

These expressions of self-assertion by the establishment ulama occasionally ignited conflicts between them and the regime. Signs of this conflict include the following events:

- In the wake of the Gulf crisis of 1990-91, a five-member committee, headed by bin Baz, was established. Its aim was to examine the functioning of the preachers (*du'at*). Following the findings of this committee, hundreds of preachers were sacked.[62]

- In January 1992 the regime dismissed the preacher of King Sa'ud University Mosque because he refused to endorse the Madrid peace process that was supported by Saudi Arabia. Later on, the authorities arrested several preachers and imams who criticized Saudi support for direct negotiations between Israel and the Arabs.[63]

- In July 1992 the BSU was asked by King Fahd to condemn a memorandum of grievances of the non-establishment ulama that opposed the

monopoly on religion granted to the establishment ulama. The BSU responded in September 1992 in a statement signed by Shaykh bin Baz and other BSU members, but it seems that some BSU members shared many concerns with the radical fundamentalist ulama. The Saudis denied reports on disagreements with the senior ulama, but in November 1992, the king nominated ten new ulama to the BSU and later removed seven others.[64] In recent years, and particularly after 9/11, the religious establishment usually obey the rulers and tend to adopt their policy.

Since the early 1990s, there has been a greater sense of harmony between the regime and the religious establishment. It may be that the earlier conflicts derived from the still-fresh trauma of the Iraqi invasion and the sense that the kingdom was in danger. As this sense declined, the regime retired to its old formula of appeasement of the ulama, backing down whenever a possible conflict loomed. The absence of conflict therefore does not indicate accommodation of the ulama to the interests of the regime, but rather vice versa; the regime has resigned itself to the predominance of the ulama in domestic and major foreign matters.

The Saudi-Arabian Islamic Establishment

Presently, the senior religious establishment in Saudi Arabia consists of the following groups:

• **The Board of Senior Ulama** (BSU)- *Hay'at Kibar al-ulama*. This body issues fatwas on major public issues. The BSU, which was established in 1971 and is headed by the grand mufti, stands at the top of the Saudi religious pyramid, providing the ultimate decrees on sharia.[65]

• **The Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Legal Opinion** (CRLO)—*al-*

Lajna al-Da'ima lil-Buhuth al-Ilmiyya wal-Ifta'. This committee is responsible for conducting research, administering private *ifta'*, and providing bureaucratic support for the BSU.[66]

• **The office of the Grand Mufti**. He is the chairman of both the BSU and the CRLO.

• **The Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs** (*al-Majlis al-A'la lil-Shu'un al-Islamiyya*) **and the Council for Islamic Mission and Guidance** (*al-Majlis lil-Da'wah wal-Irshad*), both created in October 1994. The defense minister and the minister for Islamic Affairs, Religious Guidance, and Endowments were respectively nominated as the heads of these two councils. They became responsible for guidance over Saudis abroad, moral behavior and proper conduct of mosque functionaries, and mosque activity at home. This was an attempt to regulate the mosques and thus to bypass the ulama authority.[67]

The dozens of ulama who are members of these agencies are the most influential figures of the religious sector. Besides them, there are thousands of less senior ulama, who hold various posts in various governmental agencies. They are active in:

• **The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, [Religious] Instruction, and Preaching,** which deals also with both *da'wah* and *irshad* (propagating Islam and [religious] guidance).[68]

• **The Committee of Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong**—*Hay'at al-Amr bil Ma'ruf wal-Nahi 'an al-Munkar* (known also as *mutawwi'ah)*, which enforces Wahhabi fatwas and punishes those who do not fulfill their religious obligations.[69]

• **The Moslem World League,** a government body for spreading Wahhabi doctrines among Muslims in the world;

- **The Higher Council of *Qadi*s.**

- **The muftis of the Grand Mosques** in Mecca and Medina.

- **The *Shari* (religious) courts** (judges, lawyers);

- **Imams and *Khatib*s** in the mosques.

- **The Islamic Universities,** which are officially subordinate to the Education Ministry and have to follow the grand mufti's instructions. However, ulama who are members in the education board might have influence on the curriculum.

- **The Education Ministry.** In this case as well, local schoolmasters and teachers might have unofficial influence.

As a sector, the ulama and their families include an estimated 7,000 to 10,000 people, though only thirty to forty of them have substantial political influence. Since the establishment of the Saudi modern state, the ulama who originate in Najd have gradually replaced the Hijazi ulama in key posts.

Moderate establishment ulama are few and far between. On June 20, 2004, in a rare and unprecedented statement on Saudi television, Dr. Muhammad bin Suleiman Al-Mani'i stated during a talk show on Saudi TV-1 that "Islamic law prohibits raising a weapon against any lover of peace (*dhimmi*, "protected person," Jewish or Christian) a merchant, or anyone who enters (the country) on a work contract. Islamic law permits raising a weapon only against whoever aims a weapon at a Muslim in order to fight him." He went on to explain that if non-Muslims were treated well by Muslims, they would eventually convert to Islam.[70] Another cleric, Saudi Shaykh Saleh al-Sidlan, stated in his weekly religious ruling show on Saudi TV-1 that the terrorists distorted the religion of Islam by killing both infidels and the Muslims who were near them. He blasted those responsible for the terror attacks in Saudi Arabia in mid-2004.[71] Another unusually moderate comment was that of Shaykh 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Ubaikan, a member of the *Shura* Council, who stated in a meeting with young Saudis that he is against the call to join the jihad in Iraq because it might cause *futun* (the plural of *fitna*—strife, civil war). Furthermore, the call to jihad deviated from the basic precept that jihad was a decision that had to be made by the ruler (*wali al-amr*) himself.[72]

The Role of the Saudi Islamic Establishment in Education

The field of education is one of the main fields where the Wahhabi ideology of the Islamic establishment is felt. Thirty to forty percent of the curriculum focuses on religious doctrine.[73] More than seventy percent of the curriculum in the four "secular" universities involves religious studies and Arab and Islamic history. Thus, religious studies hold a central place even in educational programs for science, geography and the like.[74] In this field there is a process of radicalization, mainly in the attitude toward non-Muslims. Saudi Prince Khaled al-Faysal, the governor of the 'Asir region, admitted in an interview on Al-Arabiya TV on July 14, 2004, that ideological extremism controls Saudi Arabia's educational system.[75] Leitmotifs of the Saudi curriculum include negative portrayals of Christians and Jews; intolerance of non-Wahhabis;[76] support for jihad against the enemies of Islam; the need for military self-sufficiency for this jihad;[77] *takfir* of Shiites;[78] and denouncement of democracy, both because it arrogates lawmaking to man instead of to Allah, and because it maintains that "government and religion should be separate."[79]

Following external pressure to change its hostility toward the West and the jihadi curricula in the educational system, Saudi Arabia launched an

educational reform in 2003 that included more centralization. However, within the Saudi religious establishment there is opposition to this reform. The regime finds it difficult to dismiss the ulama, but it has been trying to purge some of them and to reduce the influence of the religious establishment on political, social and educational issues. And indeed, following 9/11 the government dismissed about 2,000 preachers in order to reduce their influence in education.[80] This, however did, not alter the basic picture.

The Non-Establishment Ulama

The non-establishment ulama can be categorized geographically, ideologically, or sociologically. Geographically, since the 1990s, Hijazi "neo-Salafi" groups, which were oriented to strict interpretation of the sharia, began to chafe at the Najdi predominance and to reject the rulings of the Najdi ulama. Today the Hijazi ulama do represent a large proportion of the radical shaykhs. However, the list of outlawed ulama consists of ulama from diverse regional and tribal origins and from rich and poor families. This indicates that the geographical categorization is losing its relevance as "globalization of the jihad" increasingly prevails.

On the ideological level three main trends of non-establishment ulama can be cited:

- *Al-Sahwa al-Islamiyya,* or **"Islamic Awakening Shaykhs."** The *Sahwa* ulama emerged in the 1980s. They did not occupy official positions of power. They did, however, benefit from the regime's policy of supporting the religious institutions during that period, and they strengthened their own positions. During the first Gulf War (1990-1991) they criticized the regime for inviting foreign troops to defend the kingdom. Of particular interest among this group of ulama are two of the Sahwa's most prominent and remarkable

More than seventy percent of the curriculum in the four "secular" universities involves religious studies and Arab and Islamic history. Thus, religious studies hold a central place even in educational programs for science, geography and the like.

members, Salman al-'Awdah and Safar al-Hawali, both of whom are considered hard-line supporters of al-Qaeda.[81] They were jailed in September 1994, together with 1,300 of their supporters, and spent two years in prison. Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Baz, the charismatic Saudi grand mufti at the time, issued a fatwa that justified their arrest, but many of the ulama were hesitant to denounce the Sahwa, probably because they identified with their preaching.

• **The Wasatiyun**, a group of modernist Islamic intellectuals who sometimes refer to themselves as *tanwiriyyun* (enlighteners), *islahiyun* (reformers), or *'aqlaniyun* (rationalists). These include former Sahwa shaykhs such as 'Abd al-Aziz al-Qasim,[82] Abdallah al-Hamid,[83] Hasan al-Maliki,[84] and others. The common denominator among them is their call for a rationalist review of Wahhabi doctrines.[85]

• **The *Takfiri* ulama**, militant, jihadi-centric ulama, who have declared *takfir* (calling a Muslim an apostate) against the regime and its supporters. The *takfiri* shaykhs included Shaykh Shu'aybi, Nasr al-Fahd, 'Ali al-Khudayr, and Ahmad al-Khalidi. The latter three were arrested in 2003. Members and supporters of this group carried out the terrorist attacks in residential compounds in Saudi Arabia in recent years. As a result of a military campaign against them, most of them were killed in clashes with the Saudi security forces, and the rest were declared "wanted" by the regime.

Along with the above ideological trends, there is a large group of popular preachers that can be called "street ulama." The growth of the Islamic schools produced a large number of graduates, but a relatively small number found suitable jobs in the Saudi establishment. Many others became frustrated with this situation and began utilizing their limited religious knowledge to gain public and political status, especially among the embittered population.

As their platform is the street, they do succeed in gaining popularity, or at least in planting oppositionist ideas in the areas where they are active.

The Struggle for Islamic Primacy in Saudi Arabia

During the 1980s, and especially since the beginning of the 1990s, the status of the establishment ulama has steadily declined. Shaykh bin Baz had enjoyed the respect of the Saudi King and of the rank and file of the ulama (including the more radical ulama). Thus he lent his own credibility to that of the *ifta'* institution that he headed.[86]

Following Shakh bin Baz's death in 1999 and the death of his successor 'Uthaymeen, the religious establishment lost part of its weight and credibility.[87] Their support of the regime's controversial policies (from an Islamic point of view) weakened their status in the eyes of the populace and presented them as "collaborators" of the regime. At the same time, they encountered formidable competition in the form of the non-establishment ulama, particularly the Sahwa ulama, who come from the same social and cultural milieu as their establishment colleagues, have absorbed their concepts from the same sources,[88] and ultimately see eye to eye on many areas, such as their hostility toward Western values.

The erosion in the establishment ulama's position and influence in Saudi Arabia in the last decade has been accelerated by the employment of modern media by the non-establishment ulama, in particular the Sahwa and the ultra-radical ulama. This includes the Internet, radio and television, written newspapers and magazines, and audio and video cassettes and CDs. As in Egypt, however, the real challenge to the establishment is not in pluralism of preaching, but in the "privatization" of the fatwa institution, which had been exclusively in the hands of the establishment ulama. The growing number of the ulama and the fact that not all of them were able to find a proper job, as mentioned above, made the

unemployed ulama more frustrated and more critical of the regime. They have found modern media, and particularly the Internet, a convenient tool with which to express their views and garner influence. The establishment has lost its ability to control the number and the contents of the speeches and the fatwas given by the ulama.

The growing public demand of large sectors in Saudi society for more participation has motivated the government over the last four years to take minor steps toward liberalization.[89] In this framework, the regime allowed the Sahwa ulama more freedom of speech in order to articulate their grievances toward the regime, and at the same time to commit them to acting within the boundaries of what the regime permits.[90] From the Sahwa point of view, it is also in *their* interest that the kingdom survive and that the radicals be weakened. Moreover, the regime rewards them for their support by giving them publicity and influence through the Saudi official media. Paradoxically, the regime's policy has led to a decline in the status of the establishment ulama, while at the same time upgrading that of their rivals, the non-establishment ulama. The post-Sahwa clerics, building on the credibility and legitimacy they gathered in the 1990s as critics of the regime, have in the eyes of many Saudis supplanted the official religious establishment with regard to religious authority.

While the establishment ulama accept the Sahwa ulama as genuine scholars with whom they disagree on the nature of the Saudi state, they deny the legitimacy of both the *Wasatiyyun* and the *Takfiri* streams in harsh terms. The former have been declared by Sahwa shaykhs slanderers of the forefathers (the "*salaf*") and defenders of the school of *irja*'[91] and of the Shia. The latter though are perceived as a considerably more imminent threat. In the wake of the Riyadh attacks in May 2003, Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan likened them to three religiously reprehensible categories from Islamic history:

• The *Khawarij*, who justified violence against other Muslims. They were behind the murders of early caliphs.

• The *Munafiqun* (hypocrites), referring to those who "lurk in the midst" and want evil for Islam. This is the term applied to those who pretended to join the early Muslims and betrayed them; their punishment is the lowest level of hell. The justification for applying this term to the *Takfiri*s is that they falsified the will of God in claiming that the terrorist attacks were carried out on the basis of the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, and that they ignore the duty of "doing good and forbidding evil"(*al-amr bil-ma'ruf wa-al-nahi 'an al-munkar*), and "jihad for the sake of Allah," which is the "summit" of Islam.

• Those who flee from the Muslim lands and seek the protection of the *Mushrikun* (polytheists) in their lands. This is an allusion to Shaykhs Mas'aree and Sa'ad al-Faqeeh, who had fled to the UK and opposed the regime from there.[92]

The co-opting of the Sahwa ulama, however, remained restricted to the domestic sphere. The regime did not attempt to compel them to change their positions regarding the question of jihad in general and jihad acts in Palestine and Iraq in particular. The Sahwa ulama took full advantage of the regime's latitude in this regard. Safar al-Hawali justified the attacks of 9/11 as a response to Clinton's missile aggression against al-Qaeda following the bombing of the American Embassy in Kenya and Tanzania (in 1998).[93] The Sahwa ulama still differ with the regime on the issue of jihad in Iraq: on the eve of the war in Iraq, al-'Awdah, al-Hawali, and others called for jihad against the U.S. and its allies, lambasted the regime for offering assistance and military aid to the allies in their war against Iraq, and accused them of heresy and apostasy (*riddah*).[94] Later, in November 2004, on the eve of the siege of the Iraqi city of Falluja, al-'Awda and al-Hawali were among twenty-six Saudi ulama who signed an "open letter to the Iraqi people," calling them to join a defensive jihad against the U.S. military

The Saudi establishment ulama differentiated between jihad inside Saudi Arabia and jihad against non-Muslims outside the state. While they condemned the terrorist attacks inside Saudi Arabia, they continued to call for jihad against "Jews and Crusaders" outside of the kingdom.

occupation.[95] Safar al-Hawali, Salman al-'Awda, and 'A'idh al-Qarni were among twenty-six ulama who on November 6, 2004, posted on the Internet an open letter to the Iraqi people stressing that armed attacks launched by Iraqi groups on U.S. troops and their allies in Iraq were legitimate resistance. They also issued a fatwa prohibiting Iraqis from offering any support for military operations carried out by U.S. forces against anti-U.S. fighting strongholds.[96] In February 2005, on the eve of an international conference on counter-terrorism hosted in Saudi Arabia, al-Qarni preached hatred toward Jews and Christians: "The Jews and Christians are Allah's enemies;" "The terrorists are these Jews and Christians;" "We ask Allah to strengthen … the jihad fighters in Iraq … against their enemies the Jews and the Christians."[97]

Three examples shed light on the position of the Saudi establishment ulama regarding radical anti-Western and jihadi tendencies. At times the establishment ulama seem willing to take a more moderate tone, especially with regard to terrorist acts within Saudi Arabia, but at other times their rhetoric and actions project a more radical posture.

• **The reaction to 9/11**. After the attacks of 9/11, the regime put pressure on the establishment ulama to temper provocative and anti-Western rhetoric and to present Islam as a moderate religion.[98] The senior ulama found themselves in a quandary; acquiescence to the demands of the regime would only exacerbate the decline in their status vis-à-vis the non-establishment ulama, while at the same time they were well aware that their interests as an establishment were irrevocably tied with those of the Saudi state—and these required the preservation of good relations with the U.S. Consequently, immediately after the attacks, senior Saudi ulama echoed the regime's condemnations and published statements denying any Islamic justification for the attacks.[99] It seems that on this issue, the religious establishment adopted the political establishment's line since it understood that Saudi Arabia's position

as a state, and of the Muslims as a whole, might be compromised if they did not unequivocally condemn terrorist attacks that were carried out by Muslims, most of whom could be linked to the kingdom both ideologically (as Wahhabis) and nationally (as Saudis).

• **The terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia.** Following the terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia in recent years, the establishment ulama were again mobilized to defend the regime and condemn the attacks and their perpetrators. Their statements and fatwas determined that these acts were in contradiction with sharia since they damaged the interests of the Islamic nation; were directed against "protected" non-Muslims, both *dhimmi*s (non-Muslims living in a Muslim country) and *musta'min* (those who enter the country with assurances of safety). Thus in May 2003 Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan defined the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks as *Khawarij*,[100] and Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sudais, the imam of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, called for the perpetrators to be nipped in the bud "in order to preserve the nation against trials and strife (*fitna*)."[101]

• **Jihad against the U.S. and Israel.** Here the establishment ulama tend to be less cooperative with the regime's desire to be conciliatory toward the U.S. In the beginning of the war in Iraq, the establishment ulama were cautious: in a fatwa dated March 22, 2003, Shaykh Sulayman al-Ruhaylee called upon Muslims to ask Allah to protect them and to ward off evil from them, adding, "It is not permissible to aid the *Kuffar* (infidels) in this matter…." He also advised consulting the ulama and obeying them.[102] The BSU published on March 28, 2003, a clarification regarding the incidents in Iraq, the message of which was to lean on Allah, to stop the war, and refrain from division and gather around the leaders.[103] These statements were seemingly a response to the calls noted above by the Sahwa ulama for jihad against the

U.S. Another call for an immediate halt to the war on Iraq was made on March 28, 2003, by Dr. Salih Ibn 'Abdallah Humaid, the imam of the Mecca Mosque and the Chairman of the *Shura* Council, who also warned that the continuation of the war would affect Saudi-U.S. relations.[104] However, gradually the language became more heated. On April 10, Humaid lambasted the U.S. and its allies in Iraq, claiming that while they claimed to be advocates of reform and freedom, they were in fact the forces of destruction and devastation. The Saudi establishment ulama differentiated between jihad inside Saudi Arabia and jihad against non-Muslims outside the state. While they condemned the terrorist attacks inside Saudi Arabia, they continued to call for jihad against "Jews and Crusaders" outside of the kingdom.[105]

Exporting Hatred toward Non-Muslims

Saudi establishment ulama continue to stand behind the export of hatred toward non-Muslims. Books distributed by the Saudi establishment among Muslims in the West justify hostility toward non-Muslims.[106] According to Saudi publications disseminated in the U.S., Muslims in *Dar al-Harb* should see themselves as if they were on "a mission behind the enemy's lines" in order to acquire new knowledge, make money that later will be used in jihad against the infidels, or proselytize the infidels and convert them to Islam.[107] At the same time, Saudis block American and Western cultural influence in Saudi Arabia: Shaykh Ibrahim al-Khudayri, a cleric and judge in Riyadh, ruled that Muslims were religiously forbidden to watch the *Al-Hurra* station, participate in it, or support it. While his fatwa was not endorsed by the Commission of Senior Clerics, two other clerics slammed *Al-Hurra* and prohibited Muslims from working at the station, watching broadcasts, or supporting it financially by advertising in it.[108]

JORDAN

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The politicization of Islam is not new to Jordan. Since the foundation of the Emirate of Transjordan by Abdallah, Islam has served as one of the building blocks of regime legitimacy and nation-building. The genealogy of the Hashemite family as scions of the Prophet's tribe was an important source of legitimacy for its rule in Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, as it had been in the Hijaz. The ideology of the Great Arab Revolt was no less Islamic than it was Arab, and the control of Jerusalem after 1948 was interpreted by the regime as an Islamic responsibility and not only an Arab one. King Abdallah and his grandson Hussein took care to present themselves as believing Muslims, appearing at rituals and prayers, performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, and embellishing their speeches with Islamic motifs.

The status of Islam in the kingdom was also formalized in the Jordanian constitution (1952) by stipulating that Islam is the religion of the kingdom and that the king must be a Muslim and of Muslim parents. Sharia is defined in the constitution as one of the pillars of legislation in the kingdom, while family law is in the exclusive hands of the sharia courts. However, in contrast to other Muslim countries where Islam plays a pivotal role, the Jordanian regime steers a middle course. It never declared sharia as the sole source of legislation, nor did it ever consider the implementation of the *hudud* (the Islamic punishments such as stoning and amputation of limbs) as in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Sudan. The constitution also guaranteed civil rights and equality before the law for non-Muslims.

Political Islam has been an integral facet of the Jordanian regime and has traditionally played a prominent role as a social and political force, with widespread influence in the mosques and schools. The earliest and strongest representative of the Islamist trend in Jordan is the Muslim Brotherhood, which made its debut in Transjordan and Palestine in the late 1940s and has remained one of the most tenacious and deep-rooted political and social forces on both banks of the Jordan ever since. Beginning in the 1950s, the regime cultivated the movement and allowed it a wide range of religious, political, and economic freedom, in striking contrast to the ban on other political parties. The raison d'être behind this policy was the need to provide a counterweight to the clandestine political parties that denied the very legitimacy of the "Jordanian Entity": the Communist Party, various Nasserist groups, the pro-Syrian and pro-Iraqi Baath parties, and, later on, the Palestinian *fida'i* organizations. At the same time, during the 1950s and 1960s, the Muslim Brotherhood was vehemently anti-Egyptian. Giving the exiled Egyptian (and later Syrian) Brothers political asylum and a base for action in Jordan (fully integrated into and supported by the Jordanian Brotherhood) was Jordan's response, albeit low-profile, to incessant Egyptian subversion against the Hashemite regime. Under the protection of the regime, the Jordanian Muslim Brothers succeeded not only in developing their local infrastructure, but also in forging ties with their less fortunate counterparts in Egypt, Syria, and as far as Pakistan and Afghanistan. Being one of the few branches of the Brotherhood that was not suppressed enhanced the relative importance of the Jordanian group.[109]

The Jordanian Islamic Establishment

The king's predominance over the religious establishment derives also from the fact that it was created by the regime itself following the founding of the kingdom by King Abdallah.

Apart from the various groupings of the religious establishment, first and foremost the Ministry of Endowments and the guardianship of the holy places, the king established within the kingdom the Ahl al-Bayt Institute, headed by a prince (currently Hamza bin Hussein). In September 2000, Prince Hamzah established a board of trustees for this institute, headed by Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, the king's consultant for tribal affairs, and with the participation of the heads of the religious institutions and leading ulama. The letter of appointment for the board that was published by Prince Hamzah on October 12, 2000, dedicated the Ahl al-Bayt Institute "to serve as a platform for free culture, educational and social thinking…a catalyst for guidance in life coping with modern-age developments and requirements of civilization." It was also designed "to safeguard the roots and principles of Islam in its original character, providing enlightenment and the right answers to the queries of the new generation." The letter authorized the Ahl al-Bayt ulama to issue fatwas about current issues.[110] This institute is philosophic and spiritual in nature, providing guidelines to the religious establishment regarding Islamic issues and their application. The institute organized the International Islamic Conference, the Amman Conference, in early July 2005 (see below).

In general, the Jordanian religious establishment serve the regime in a number of ways:

• Consolidating the Islamic legitimacy of the regime. The Minister of Endowments, one of the pillars of the religious establishment, stated recently that the king is acting on the basis of a religious, historical and legal heritage;[111]

• Cultivating loyalty to the kingdom. This is done through mosques, teaching, ulama training, and religious rulings;

• Giving religious and moral backing to the regime's policy, in both domestic and external issues.

Besides using the religious establishment, the regime makes an effort to consolidate its own legitimacy by actions like assuming the responsibility for guarding the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem and allocating resources for this purpose; participation of the king and the ruling elite in religious sermons in mosques, with extensive media coverage; and the king's sponsorship of Arab and international Islamic conferences in Jordan that publicize the peaceful, moderate, and humane nature of Islam, while rejecting the "offensive on Islam."

Following 9/11, the religious establishment became even more important for the regime and had more demands placed on them. Under the sponsorship of the king himself they were asked to handle growing radicalization against the West, and particularly against the U.S., in the Jordanian street, in society, and in the opposition. This,radicalization poses a threat to strategic relations with the West.

The Jordanian Islamic establishment finds itself between a rock and a hard place. They are required to express total loyalty to the kingdom and to give it their complete support against its opponents. In this regard, they lean on Islamic sources in disproving the radicals' claims. Moreover, the Jordanian Islamic establishment are required to demonstrate solidarity with the harsh measures taken by the regime against the radicals when they have crossed the "red lines" drawn by the regime.

Since King Abdallah II came to the throne, the religious establishment have demonstrated their full loyalty to the regime, particularly in the second half of 2004 and early 2005, when the regime took steps against the Muslim Brothers. On the other hand, the religious establishment share similar concepts with the Islamic opposition camp, since both draw their world view from the same religious sources, grew up in the same Islamic teaching system, and believe in further encouragement of Islamic values in society. There are even cases in which the establishment ulama have crossed the lines and joined the opposition camp, while some from the opposition have become part of the leading establishment ulama.

The Non-Establishment Ulama

The Islamic opposition in Jordan consists of two main streams:

• A relatively moderate, wide opposition headed by the Muslim Brothers, and its political branch, the Islamic Action Front, which lives in coexistence with the regime and enjoys relative freedom.

• An ultra-radical Islamic stream, limited in numbers, whose ideology is based on the radical Salafi concepts of Sayyid Kutb and other later-generation Islamic philosophers like Abdallah Azam, Abu Katada, al-Maqdasi, and others. This stream regards society and the regime as infidels (*kuffar*) and therefore preaches for jihad, including against Muslims, as a tool to achieve its goals. This stream constitutes a fertile ground for the rise of terrorist organizations that intend to use violence against the Islamic establishment. These organizations are operationally led from the outside, and in particular by the organization of Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, who was killed in Iraq by American forces in June 2006.

Both of these streams have religious institutions and leaders that give legitimization to their actions, which include the use of fatwas. The common denominator of these two streams is the desire to establish an Islamic state based upon sharia. Therefore, an ideological and religious clash between these two streams and the Islamic establishment is inevitable. This is manifested mainly in their contradictory views regarding the Hashemite state. According to the Islamic establishment, the existence of the state is legal and Islamic, and its legal system codex is based on Islamic law, even though there is still room for extending the scope of religious legislation and for the application of sharia in society. In contrast, even the moderate stream of non-establishment ulama, headed by the Muslim Brothers, only partly recognizes the legal, religious, and moral basis of the state. They maintain that Islamic sharia is far from being applied. This stream has spearheaded propaganda attacks against the West. All their political and religious institutions are recruited for these attacks. Their leader Dr. Ibrahim al-Kilani announced on June 14, 2005, the establishment of an association of ulama aimed at warding off Western attacks on Islam.[112] The Salafi stream goes further: it does not recognize the Islamic basis of the regime and desires instead to destroy the existing system and build an Islamic state based on its radical concepts.

The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center posed a difficult challenge for the Jordanian regime, as in other Arab and Muslim countries. On the one hand, the Jordanian government strongly denounced the attacks and terror in general, but on the other hand, it had to face waves of local hatred for the U.S. and the West because of what was perceived as the West's indiscriminate accusation of Muslims as being responsible for the attacks. From the point of view of radical Islamic and other opposition elements, the U.S. was the main culprit in these attacks because of globalization and oppressive policies. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the subsequent occupation of Iraq by the U.S. and its allies have just added to the existing hatred for the U.S. and the West and have intensified the propaganda against them in the Muslim world in general, and the Arab world in particular.

The Jordanian regime had to respond in a manner that would preserve its positive image in the West, while not alienating the general population and moderate Islamic elements. At the same time, the regime had to face the increased stridency of the radical Islamic circles, who regarded the West as heretics (*takfir*) and called for launching jihad against it. The Muslim Brotherhood expressed its support for jihad in Iraq by issuing religious rulings identifying with jihad in Iraq and Palestine and demanding that Arab leaders raise the flag of jihad. These religious rulings assert that anyone providing assistance to the "occupying forces" is committing

an act of treachery and declaring war on Allah and his Prophet, which leads to heresy and abandonment of the community of believers (*khuruj min milat al-islam*). The fact that the Muslim Brotherhood also accused the Jordanian regime of supporting the U.S. in Iraq left their supporters to connect the dots in further radicalization of their attitude toward the regime.

The confrontation between the Jordanian regime and radical Islam has escalated since the end of 2005. On November 9, 2005, attacks were simultaneously launched against three hotels in Amman by a Qaedat al-Jihad cell from Iraq led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The bombings were viewed by the Jordanian establishment as a serious turning point in Islamic terror threats against the kingdom, its government, and its stability. The Jordanian regime used the bombings to launch an ideological campaign against the jihadi Salafi movement by both vilifying al-Zarqawi and exposing the jihadi movement as something that strayed from the original Islamic path, citing evidence from religious law to refute its basic premises.

Further escalation came in the wake of the Hamas victory in the Palestinian Authority elections. The Muslim Brotherhood expressed support for the Hamas government, demanded the return of Hamas representatives to Jordan after their being expelled in 1999, and even scornfully rejected the regime's accusations that Hamas had tried to smuggle weapons into Jordan with the goal of carrying out attacks within the kingdom. This stance by the Muslim Brotherhood placed it in direct ideological and political confrontation with the regime, which rejected any discussion with the Hamas government and, even more, accused it of plotting to carry out terror attacks in Jordan.

Immediately after the killing of al-Zarqawi by the American forces in Iraq on June 9, 2006, four members of parliament from the Muslim Brotherhood visited the al-Zarqawi family's house of mourning in the city of Zarqa and conveyed their condolences. The most prominent of them—Sheikh Mohammed Abu Fares, who is known for his adherence to the *takfir* idea—went as far as to

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the subsequent occupation of Iraq by the U.S. and its allies have just added to the existing hatred for the U.S. and the West and have intensified the propaganda against them in the Muslim world in general, and the Arab world in particular.

declare al-Zarqawi a "*shahid*," while he refused to consider *shahids* those who were killed in the November 2006 bombings in Amman. The condolence visit and declaration by Abu Fares, which was regarded by the establishment as a religious ruling, together with the refusal of the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership and its party to apologize for these moves, have increased the tension between them and the regime. The regime reacted by launching a vigorous campaign against the the Muslim Brotherhood: it exercised the law to its fullest extent against three of the four members of parliament by bringing them to trial at the State Security Court. Two of them—Mohammed Abu Fares and Ali Abu Sukar—received prison terms of a year and a half. They were charged with harming national unity and inciting fanaticism and racism.

In parallel, the court struck a blow at the movement's socio-economic stronghold—the Islamic Center Association, which incorporates many dozens of social welfare and medical assistance centers for the general public and serves as an important catalyst for the movement in mobilizing public sympathy and electoral support, especially during periods of elections for parliament and local government. The regime expropriated the Muslim Brotherhood's control over the Islamic Center Association, citing reasons of financial mismanagement and disorder, and transferred it to the management of a council operating on the regime's behalf. In early October 2006, King Abdullah awarded a pardon to Abu Fares and Abu Sukar, who were released from their incarceration. The king's action did not, however, cancel the indictments against them or return them to the parliament from which they had been expelled.

The Lebanon War added fuel to the fire of the confrontation between the Jordanian regime and the Islamic tendency in general, and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular. Upon the outbreak of the war, the Muslim Brotherhood disregarded the religious disparities between Sunni and Shia and declared complete solidarity with Hezbollah and the Lebanese people. This was manifested in a letter of congratulations to Nassrallah on "the victory against the American-Israeli attack" and a fatwa calling on Muslim leaders to stand alongside "the resistance and the jihad" and to support Hezbollah and Hamas through arms, money, and "soul."

The Jordanian regime tried to take the wind out of the sails of the Muslim Brotherhood's propaganda on this issue by declaring overall support for Lebanon and expediting air shipments of large amounts of relief supplies to meet vital humanitarian needs and even to rebuild what was destroyed in the war. When the war was over, the regime renewed its measures vis-à-vis the Muslim Brotherhood, when the timing was convenient for it, by passing legislation that restricts the Muslim Brotherhood's religious-political methods of operation.

The Struggle for Islamic Primacy in Jordan

The Jordanian regime has taken several steps to contain attacks on the West and the reemergence of terrorist jihadi organizations wishing to harm American, Western, and local interests in Jordan. These steps include the use of the security organizations and the religious establishment, along with legislation to limit the freedom of action of the religious opposition. The religious establishment, and in particular the Ministry of Waqf and Religious Affairs, was called upon to combat those preaching in favor of *takfir* and jihad and to foster the worldview of moderate Islam, which sanctifies life and peace. The new strategy defines Islam as a moderate religion, enlightened and peace-loving, and advocates a dialogue between cultures and religions (referring to the West in particular) to settle conflicts and differences. At the same time, it denounces terror and violence.

In the wake of the November 2005 bombings in particular, the regime took several steps to contain the attacks on the West:

1. Intensive measures by the security apparatus

against the terrorist organizations and the Muslim Brothers—a process that began in mid-2004

2. Convening Islamic conferences, with the participation of renowned ulama from both home and abroad, devoted to refuting extremist ideas, on the one hand, and adopting moderate Islam, on the other hand [113]

3. Initiating religious rulings (fatwas) against the *takfiri* streams, based on the recognition that a fatwa carries religious authority that mandates close adherence to it

4. Publishing religious legal documents that require Muslims to follow the path of moderate Islam

5. Providing religious training to holy men of various ranks and raising their level of education in order to enable them to explain moderate orthodox Islam, and to respond to and refute the claims of the *takfiri* streams

6. Issuing ordinances and taking measures to prevent the use of mosques, especially during Friday prayers, for disseminating extremist religious ideas and promoting political interests. [114]

7. Conducting a review of mosques, media, and educational institutions that serve as hothouses for fomenting and spreading the *takfir* idea.[115]

8. Using legislation against those who are spreading the *takfir* idea and providing moral and ideological support for terror. [116]

The promulgation of this strategy by the regime has been accomplished gradually. The first stage was the convening of the "Islamic Golden Mean Conference: Between theory and action" (*Wasattiyya*) in Amman in June 26, 2004. This, the first international Jordanian conference, was organized by the Golden Mean Club in Thinking and Culture. It was attended by ulama and thinkers from various Arab countries. The chairman of the conference was Marwan al-Fauri, the chairman of the Islamic Center Party and a former senior figure in the Muslim Brothers' leadership. The conference adopted a list of recommendations, including the following: condemnation of all forms of radicalism and terror, blaming the U.S. and Israeli policies in Iraq and Palestine as the main reason for feeding terror and violence; advocating for moderation; strengthening tolerance, love and freedom of worship, and cultivating inter-religious and cross-cultural dialogue; a call to the ulama to act against terrorism; and a call to Arab and Muslim countries to inaugurate political and democratic reform and to treat radicalism by the means of dialogue and not force.

In the second stage, the King himself led the promulgation of his strategy by publishing the "Amman message," which became an official document of the kingdom. The timing was deliberate. By choosing a publication date of November 27, 2004, or Laylat al-Kadar, the holiest day in the month of Ramadan, the day on which, according to Muslim tradition, the Quran was brought down to earth, the king aimed at giving the "Amman Message" legal authority, at least indirectly. This message became the Magna Charta of the Jordanian regime.

In general, the message presents the enlightened nature of Islam and its mission to the Muslims and all mankind, based on references from the Quran and the *Hadith*. According to the message, Jordan and the Hashemite leadership, which is said to stem from the dynasty of the Prophet, have taken it upon themselves to defend the image of Islam and to disseminate its mission.[117]

After citing the harsh situation in which Islam and Muslims find themselves, due to attacks from the West and actions of radical Muslims at home, the conference presented the mission of Islam to mankind, which included: unity of the human race, equal rights in obligations, peace, justice, realization of security and good neighborhood; creating a basis for inter-religious dialogue, avoiding aggression against peaceful citizens and their property, and

joining and contributing to human mankind and its prosperity. The message condemned all kinds of terror and radicalism, meaning particularly the jihadi organizations, though not openly referring to them. In parallel, the message condemned the attempts to distort and misinterpret Islam as a religion that encourages violence and terror, pointing to the anti-Islamic campaign in the West. According to the message, the ulama were asked to educate the young generation about the meaning of tolerance, moderation, and the golden mean.

Although the message is formulated as inter-religious, crossing cultures and peoples, it is in fact, a political document, deeply rooted in the difficult situation of Jordan and other Arab countries because of the terrorist actions perpetuated by al-Qaeda and other jihadi Islamic organizations. This document equally condemns the West for distortion of the image of Islam, and the radicals for offending the image of Islam and for the killings in which they are involved.

The "Amman Message" rejects two negative phenomena that endanger the Muslim nation: the danger of harming its Islamic identity, distorting its religion, and making Islam the enemy, on the one hand, and the danger of radical elements that carry out irresponsible actions while claiming to belong to the Muslim nation, on the other hand. Instead, the "Amman Message" introduces Islam as an ideal and a model for moderate and moral religious way of life. The "Amman Message" calls on the ulama to enlighten and to disseminate these moderate messages.

The "Amman Message" was the basis for two international conferences, one in November 2004 and the other in July 2005. The former, the "Preaching and Guidance" conference, was organized by the Ministry of Endowment and attended mostly by ulama. The conference was convened with the stated goal of adopting a modern Islamic message. It resulted in a message to the Friday preachers in mosques that they should avoid any use of personal interpretation, fatwas, or political factional ideas. It also called upon Jordanians to obey the ruler (*Ta'at Wali al-Amr*), which is one of the basics of Islam, and to guide him to the right way.

The more important conference was the International Islamic Conference, which was organized by Ahl Al-Bayt Institute, opened by the King himself, and held under his sponsorship on July 4-6, 2005. The subject of the conference was "the truthfulness of Islam and its role in modern society." It was attended by the heads of the religious establishment and many senior ulama from Muslim countries, both Sunni and Shiite. The final statement of the conference was recognized as a collective fatwa, which is unprecedented in the history of the Muslim world. This fatwa called for order, overhaul, recognition, equality, and reconciliation between the recognized schools in the Islamic world, in the face of what was described as the tragic circumstances in which the Islamic world currently exists. From the statement it can be understood that these circumstances are the spread of the radical ideology that accuses as apostates all those who do not respond to radical demands and expectations; the outbreak of a violent confrontation between the different schools (mainly between the Sunni and Shia); and the fact that unskillful and unauthorized elements have taken upon themselves the right to issue fatwas.[118] The statement explicitly argued that the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence—the Ja'fari, the Zaydi, the Ibadi and the Tahiri—are Muslim.

The final statement also set the rules authorizing a scholar to issue a fatwa, stating that only those who belong to these schools of jurisprudence are authorized to issue fatwas. Harking back to "Amman Letter," these rules were designed to pull the rug out from under those among the *takfir* and jihad organizations who issue unauthorized fatwas.

The final statement deals extensively with the relations of groups inside the Muslim world and addresses how to settle internal rivalries and create inner harmony. At the opening session of the conference, King Abdallah condemned the killing of Muslims by other Muslims, especially in Iraq and Pakistan, and accusations of Muslims as apostates (*takfir*) in the name of Islam. Abdallah went beyond the topic of the conference, explicitly mentioning the "Amman Letter" as he referred to the relationship between the Muslim world and the rest of the world. He condemned the distortion of the image of

Islam by foreigners, by which he meant the West, but admitted that there are severe errors and deviations from Islam that give legitimacy to non-Muslim attempts to interfere in Muslim affairs and to exploit them. He also urged respect for treaties and agreements between Muslims and other nations and people.[119] The Minister of Endowments and the conference's spokesman, Abadi, supported the king's speech, saying that the "Amman Letter" is the foremost source of power of the conference.[120] He also expressed his wish that the "Amman Letter" not stay as a mere Jordanian document, but that it might also become a pan-Islamic one.[121] In an interview on the eve of the conference, Abadi referred to the king's role in disseminating the Islamic message to the world.[122] In this interview he said that the conference emphasizes the leadership role of the Hashemites on behalf of Islam by interpreting the principles of Islam and recognizing both the need for openness toward the modern era, and the challenges that the Muslim nation is facing nowadays.

The strategy that was chosen by the conference recognizes the evils that have been done to Islam by accusations that it was responsible for the 9/11 attacks, but rejects the attempt to harm crucial relations with the West. The messages produced by the conference were aimed at addressing the West's expectations and reducing anti-Western propaganda. The strategy helped the regime to cement its image as the nation seeking to reduce Islamic radicalism and to preserve the West's interests and position in the Middle East. Secondly, the conference was designed to reduce the threat of the Islamic opposition against stability in Jordan.

The November 9, 2005, attacks in Amman provided additional impetus to the ideological struggle against the takfiri-jihadi stream. In this context, they gave a push to the enactment of legislation designed to restrict, through administrative methods, the dissemination of this ideology, and to limit the Muslim Brotherhood's use of mosques and religious means (with an emphasis on fatwas) for political causes. These laws were approved in the parliament and senate in September 2006 after a fierce, head-on confrontation with parliamentary Islamic opposition, which regarded this legislation as a violation of its freedom of action and preaching. The most significant law is the Anti-Terror Law, which is designed to fight terror and violence through preventive measures, early interception, and deterrence, thus putting a halt to preparations for terror in their early stages and preventing the development of an atmosphere that encourages terror.[123]

Another law, the Law of Fatwas, addresses the theme that was reiterated in all of the conferences, namely the need to de-legitimize fatwas from "unqualified people" by establishing a mechanism to prohibit the issuing of political fatwas by non-establishment muftis. Thus, the law states that "it is prohibited for any person or entity to issue sharia fatwas on public issues and to undermine and cast doubt on fatwas issued by the Fatwa Council (*majlis al-iftaa*) and general mufti with the goal of harming and invalidating them." The law mandates the formation of a council for issuing fatwas and Islamic research, headed by the general mufti. The members of the council are to be appointed by the government. A department for issuing fatwas is to be established and will be responsible, among other things, for overseeing fatwas on public matters, issuing fatwas that the public needs, and publishing Islamic research. At the same time, the law seeks to strengthen the religious establishment and grant it exclusive authority to issue fatwas of public import. An amendment to the Law of Preaching and Guidance (*kanun al-wa'az wal-irshad*), which was approved by the senate and parliament, states that the use of mosques for preaching, guidance, and teaching by clergy will only be permitted with advance approval from the Ministry of Waqf and Religious Affairs.[124]

CONCLUSION

In this study we have analyzed three different models of relations between state and religious establishment in the Arab world, those of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. The three cases differ in the timing of the origins of the regimes and their affiliated religious establishments and hence in the essence of the relationship between them. This can be expressed in the following matrix regarding these and other countries.

In this matrix, the location of the regime reflects the extent of the religious establishment's dependency on the regime on the one hand, and the extent of obligation that the regime feels toward the religious establishment on the other hand. Thus, for example, the Egyptian regime feels less obliged to al-Azhar's stance than the Saudi regime to the Saudi religious establishment.

	Secular regime Secular legitimacy	Islamic Regime Islamic legitimacy	"Secular" Regime Islamic legitimacy
Ancient establishment created prior to the regime	Egypt, Tunisia, Pakistan, Indonesia	Iran (financially independent establishment)	Kuwait, Bahrain
Modern establishment created with the regime	Syria	Saudi Arabia	
Modern establishment created by the regime	Iraq (the Sunni establishment in the Saddam era)		Iraq (the Sunni establishment in the Saddam era)

*Note: the concept of "secular regime" here relates to a regime that does not base its everyday policy on sharia and accepts foreign sources into its legal code. It is clear that the Western concept of secularism does not apply to any Muslim country (except perhaps Indonesia).

Other criteria that can shed light on the behavior of the Islamic establishments and of the regimes toward them are the current strength and authority of the regime and its need to bolster its domestic legitimacy; the prestige and image of the establishment ulama; the strength of the Islamic opposition against which the regime needs to enlist its own Islamic "forces;" and the strength of the indigenous secular forces and "civil society."

The Saudi and Egyptian models have the following common denominators:

• The two Islamic establishments maintain relative autonomy and a status in their own right, not merely as an extension of the regime. As such they both see themselves as committed to their own particular ideology or set of beliefs and serving their particular constituencies.

• Both regimes have co-opted the Islamic establishments as semi-equals or equals and not as a mere constituent of their own government mechanisms. The moment this was done, the regimes found themselves having to negotiate over and reward the Islamic establishments for their support.

• In both cases, the Islamic establishments are in competition with the more popular radical ulama; unable to compete with them in attacking the regimes, they take advantage of the only area left to them—radical positions vis-à-vis the United States and Israel.

EGYPT is a secular state with a regime that bases its legitimacy on a secular ideology, although one that is admittedly worn out. It has co-opted an Islamic establishment that predates it by centuries and that claims religious authority to determine correct and incorrect political behavior. Though the regime is relatively stable, its relationship with the Islamic establishment was developed over a period of severe instability and domestic Islamic terrorism (including the assassination of President Sadat) and reflects that period of uncertainty. At the same time, Egypt has a strong Islamic opposition and a strong secular force both within the regime and in civil society. This complex set of relationships between the regime and the Islamic establishment creates a certain dualism. While the Islamic establishment is formally subordinate to the regime, the regime depends on al-Azhar to block the influence of the radicals and to enhance the Islamic legitimacy of the regime. Al–Azhar is aware of this weakness and takes advantage of it to promote its own Islamic agenda. The end result is that the regime "pays" al-Azhar for its services by allowing it a free hand in the social and religious sphere.

Ironically, the Islamic agenda of al-Azhar, which the regime allows it to promote, does not differ fundamentally from that of the Muslim Brotherhood in the private sphere. Like the Muslim Brotherhood and other radicals, al-Azhar aspires to implement sharia in personal legal affairs. It differs from the other Islamic forces in that it leaves the public sphere and matters of state to the discretion of the ruler and does not attempt to impose on the regime a "sharia-motivated" foreign policy. Thus, in order to block the Islamists in the street, the Egyptian regime surrenders influence over social issues to the establishment Islamic forces.

Al-Azhar, for its part, acts under domestic and foreign pressures from different directions, which affect its leadership and clerics in various ways. The domestic considerations include pressure from the regime, public opinion, the Muslim Brotherhood, radical Islamic activity, and the need to respond to various domestic events that are taken advantage of by the Islamic movements. On the other hand there are also regional and international developments such as the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. campaigns against terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the perennial debate over jihad and suicide attacks. The stances of the al-Azhar leadership are, in the end, a mixture of all these pressures and considerations. In his attempt to be "all things to all people," it is not surprising that Shaykh Tantawi himself issues contradictory statements, compatible with the audiences listening to him, while the plurality of Islamic views within al-Azhar itself also find a way into the public realm.

The real challenge for al-Azhar is not the regime or secular civil society, but the radical Islamic movement—the Muslim Brotherhood and the various jihadi groups. It is with these groups that al-Azhar competes over the same constituency. In this competition, the radicals, not constrained by loyalty to the regime, have the upper hand; they can openly criticize the regime, albeit at risk of suppression by the *mokhabarat* (the intelligence services), where al-Azhar cannot. Thus, like the secular intellectuals in Egypt, who attack the regime through attacking Israel (and, by extension, the regime's policy of maintaining the relationship with Israel), the scholars of al-Azhar, who cannot criticize the regime too freely, try to curry favor with public opinion by taking radical positions on the issues of Israel, the U.S., and the West. From the regime's perspective, this familiar method of letting off the steam has many advantages: it strengthens al-Azhar vis-à-vis the radicals by proving that it too takes radical positions; it allows criticism of the outside world; it shows the rest of the world, and especially the U.S., that plurality of opinions does exist in Egypt; and it allows the regime to take advantage of this image of pressures within the religious establishment to block foreign pressures. Like the regime, al-Azhar takes

Both in Egypt and in Saudi Arabia there are voices of dissent from within the Islamic establishments themselves, especially the marginal clerics, who dare more freely to express radical opinions. So, while cursing the ruler and undermining the stability of the state is forbidden, cursing the Americans and their allies for waging an offensive against Muslim land is a permissable way of letting off steam.

advantage of the plurality of opinions within it to block outside pressures, pointing to the serious internal opposition it regularly has to overcome.

Al-Azhar's ambivalence regarding the correct reaction of the Muslims toward the U.S. war on terrorism only strengthens radical Islamic forces by inspiring people to look for leadership elsewhere. For many Egyptians, the mere impression that Shaykh al-Azhar consults with the American ambassador on his rulings has destroyed Tantawi's remaining credibility. Having said all that, despite the inner fragmentation of al-Azhar, and the open criticism from both secularists and Islamists, who question any Islamic authority submitting to the will of secular political authorities, al-Azhar's leadership still manages to demonstrate its capacity to survive by collaborating unreservedly with the regime and backing the regime with an Islamic discourse that legitimizes the regime's political authority when other forces contest it, not only in matters related to the domestic stability of the regime, but also in Egypt's international affairs, especially in its relations with the U.S.

The establishment ulama in **SAUDI ARABIA** have become over the last third of the twentieth century more and more independent, with the ability to act as a pressure group. The peak of this process was the ulama's behavior on the issue of deploying foreign troops on Saudi soil in the first Gulf War. Since then, there has been a gradual decline in their status. This decline has not led to the ulama becoming more docile and compliant toward the foreign political interests of the regime. As in the Egyptian case, the Saudi ulama are party to the regime's definition of its vital domestic interests: the stability and integrity of the kingdom. But like the Egyptians, the latitude that they allow themselves to disagree with the regime is in the area of the regime's attitude toward the West. Thus, the Islamic establishment condemned the terrorist attacks inside the country and supported the regime's efforts to arrest and punish the perpetrators. Regarding relations with the U.S., however, the establishment was more ambivalent. After it issued a general condemnation

of the 9/11 attacks, it refrained from taking a position that would estrange its constituency and drive it into the arms of the radicals. The formal position of the senior ulama is generally cautious, but the junior ulama feel that they can dare to call for jihad against the U.S. in Iraq.

Most of the ulama in Saudi Arabia, both establishment ulama and non-establishment ulama, are Wahhabis in their education and hold anti-American/anti-Western worldviews. The ulama's initial position concerning the 9/11 attacks indicates that the regime has the power and the ability to influence and even dictate to the ulama what should be the guidelines for their position. Conversely, the regime's silence concerning the issue of jihad against the U.S. in Iraq is interpreted as a green light to continue with this line. From the regime's point of view, it seems that it is ready to tolerate the calls for jihad against the U.S. in Iraq in order to let off steam instead of allowing them to present all their grievances against the regime. This is the price the regime is ready to pay in return for the establishment ulama's support in its struggle against radical non-establishment ulama. This compromise, though, is one of choice and not due to an absence of alternatives; the regime has shown over the last years that although it is willing to take into account the establishment ulama's position, it makes the strategic decisions and, when necessary, has recourse to ways to enlist the support of the ulama and to shape Islamic public opinion within the kingdom. It has also been shown that external pressure can influence the nature and tone of the fatwas and announcements of the establishment ulama. The tension between the pro-Western foreign policy of the kingdom and the blatant anti-Westernism of the religious establishment, however, will not decrease; the radical Wahhabi curriculum in the schools of the establishment will continue nourishing intolerance toward non-Muslims and hatred toward non-Muslim and Western values.

As in Egypt, one of the issues in which the Saudi establishment ulama can prove their independence vis-à-vis the regime and not lag behind the post-Sahwa ulama or the more radical ones is that of the U.S. war in Iraq and the legitimacy of jihad against Western troops. Although there are voices inside the Saudi religious establishment that do not support jihad wholeheartedly, they are usually silent or very restrained. They allow themselves to take this position because the regime has indicated that this is not one of the vital strategic issues with regard to which it demands that the ulama accommodate to the regime's foreign policy. The very intervention of the ulama in political matters is a divergence from the traditional position of the ulama in the kingdom, as "political jurisprudence" (*fiqh siyasi* or *siyar*) has commonly been considered the prerogative of the ruler—the *wali al-amr*.

In both the Egyptian and the Saudi cases, the regimes have not delivered a clear-cut message to the establishment ulama asking them to refrain from talking about the legitimacy of jihad. In the Egyptian case, the government even admitted that it had no intention of forbidding the imams from cursing and blaspheming the Americans publicly in the mosques' pulpits. In the Saudi case, one cannot ignore the role of the post-Sahwa clerics, who do not hold official posts in the establishment, but have proven in recent years their support for the regime, for example by mediating between the government and the Islamic militants. These non-establishment ulama actually obfuscate the boundary lines between themselves and the establishment, pro-government ulama.

Both in Egypt and in Saudi Arabia there are voices of dissent from within the Islamic establishments themselves, especially the marginal clerics, who dare more freely to express radical opinions. More often than not, these voices are tolerated as long as there is no violation of the clear rules and no one transgresses the limits drawn by the regime. So, while cursing the ruler and undermining the stability of the state is forbidden, cursing the Americans and their allies for waging an offensive against Muslim land is a permissable way of letting off steam. Whereas the regime and the religious leaders do not allow preaching for jihad against the Americans on American soil, they shut their eyes and ears when clerics call for jihad against the Americans in Afghanistan, in Iraq, or in any other

Muslim country. Sometimes, as in the case of Tantawi, the religious leaders themselves call for jihad and legitimize it.

The **JORDANIAN** model is radically different from the Egyptian or the Saudi cases in two cardinal areas: while the regime itself is secular and Westernized, the king holds a certain religious authority as a descendent of the Prophet's family; the religious establishment is totally the creation of the kingdom and an integral part of the regime, and its aim is to serve the regime, strengthening the pre-existing legitimacy of the king, nurturing public loyalty, and giving moral and religious backing to state policies. As in the Egyptian and the Saudi cases, the religious establishment organizes conferences (especially on an interfaith level) trying to show a more moderate face of Islam, mainly after 9/11, with the aim of improving Islam's image in the West. But unlike the two other models, the Jordanian religious establishment does not have an autonomous position from which it can negotiate with the regime over the extent of its support of the regime's policies or its reward for its support.

The fact that the Jordanian Islamic establishment draws its legitimacy from the regime and lacks inherent authority of its own is both an advantage and a drawback for the regime. It facilitates subordination of the Islamic establishment to the regime and harnessing of its actions to the interests of the regime. At the same time, however, the Jordanian religious establishment is considerably less effective against the radicals than the religious establishments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES the religious establishments are facing stiff competition with radical Islamic forces, forcing them quite often to radicalize their rhetoric to win the hearts and minds of their constituencies. The paradox is that the closer the affinity between the religious establishments and the regimes, the less they can influence the Islamic street, resulting in a decrease of their value for the regimes as a lever of influence over the Islamist realm.

When necessary, the Arab regimes discussed above have proven their ability to coerce their religious establishments and to force them to play by their rules. The seeming independence of those establishments does not derive from the inability of the regimes to impose their will, but it is due rather to the latitude that the regimes accord the Islamic forces. The Egyptian and Saudi regimes in particular have spelled out to their Islamic establishments that the "red line" is incitement against the regime itself, or calling for terrorism within the country. On the other hand, general calls for jihad against the West or Israel do not constitute a threat to the vital interests of the regimes and hence are permissible. Were these regimes to draw the red line at incitement for attacks against the West in general or legitimization of terrorism under the guise of jihad, their establishments—or large parts of them—would most probably toe the line. ∎

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Endnotes

1. The exact meaning of the term *ulama* is "the learned," or "the ones who possess knowledge (*'ilm*)," but it is used to refer to a wide range of establishment and non-establishment Islamic religious scholars. The religious establishment in Muslim states usually include religious teachers and professors of the Muslim community, the theologians (*mutakallimun*), canon lawyers (*muftis*), judges (*qadis*), and senior state religious officials. The non-establishment ulama sector includes scholars who do not fill official posts or receive their salaries from the state. The term ulama may also include the leaders of the Sufi "orders" and preachers or missionaries (*da'i*—those who engage in *da'wah*—calling to Islam) in movements such as *Da'wah wa-Tabligh, Jam'iyat al-Ulama, Jamaat Ansar, al-Sunna al-Muhammadia*, etc.

2. Unlike the Sunni ulama, the Shiite ulama have developed their own economic base through the mandatory payment of a tithe (*khoms*) by Shiites all over the world to their chosen religious institutions. Thus, the *hawzah* (Shiite religious school) of the holy city of Najaf in Iraq receives khoms from Shiites as far away as Afghanistan and Pakistan. This has allowed the Shiite ulama to maintain their independence from the regimes under which they lived. This paper will refer therefore only to the Sunni model of state-ulama relations.

3. *Rose al-Yusuf*, January 12-18, 2002; Katherine Zoepf, "An Ancient Islamic University Has a New Role: Explaining Its Faith," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 12, 2005.

4. MalikaZeghal, "Religion and Politics in Egypt: The Ulema of al-Azhar, Radical Islam and the State (1952-94)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31, no. 3 (August 1999): 372, 381-85.

5. This control encompassed censorship of books and movies, intervention in legal processes, enforcing Islamic laws regarding sexual conduct, etc. Ibid., 383-84.

6. Law 102 of 1985.

7. In February 1994, in response to a request from Shaykh al-Azhar Gad Al Haq to clarify al-Azhar's role regarding artistic works of religious nature, the Administrative Court issued an opinion that al-Azhar is the sole authority to which the Ministry of Culture must refer concerning Islamic matters with the sole power to issue licenses for films, book and tapes that discuss religion; the Islamic Research Center has the right "to track and examine publications and arts that deal with Islam." This ruling has been used to justify banning books that are viewed by the academy as offensive to Islam, since the very fact that they are deemed offensive classifies them as books with religious content that are illegal if they are printed without the permission of the academy.

8. E ras of tension have occurred, however, between Shaykh al-Azhar and the mufti, for example in the days of Gad al-Haqq 'Ali Gad al-Haqq as Shaykh al-Azhar and Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi as grand mufti.

9. The tasks of the committee are: (1) To coordinate work of all da'wah organizations; (2) To propose and draft the laws, regulations, and decrees organizing da'wah; (3) To study the problems facing the propagation of the call and propose relevant solutions; (4) To take part in planning to enhance and intensify the religious values indoctrinated by the mass media; (5) To take part in formulating the religious indoctrination program among pilgrims and in organizing the hajj and umrah; (6) To study the condition of Muslim minorities in foreign countries and to aid them materially and morally. http://www.alazhar.org/english/about/highcommittee.htm.

10. http://www.alazhar.org/english/about/da3wa-religious.htm.

11. http://www.alazhar.org/english/about/deptIslamMssion.htm.

12. Such as Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, whose televised preaching and Internet fatwas enjoy a high rating in Egypt.

13. Zeghal, "Religion and Politics," 386-88.

14. Ibid., 372, 386.

15. Ibid., 372, 385-386.

16. An example is thirty-eight-year-old 'Amr Khalid, who has become the most popular preacher in Egypt and the Arab world in recent years. By keeping himself away from the conflict between political Islam and official Islam, Khalid has managed to create a sort of Western-style "New Age" product that fits the modern expectations of the urban middle class. He speaks about inner peace and spiritual well being and rejects the religious rigidity of traditional Islam. He wears modern suits and speaks the Egyptian colloquial dialect instead of using the classic preaching style. He holds chat shows on Egyptian TV and Arab satellite channels. This is how all the new preachers (such as Khalid al-Gindi, al-Habib 'Ali, and Safwat Higazi) deliver their message about the need to adapt religion to the pleasures of life, combining materialism with spiritualism. Husam Tammam and Patrick Haenni, "Egypt's Air-Conditioned Islam," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (September 2003) http://mondediplo.com/2003/09/03egyptislam (accessed September 12, 2005).

17. Zeghal, "Religion and Politics," 388-89; Tamir Moustafa, "Conflict and Cooperation between the State and Religious Institutions in Contemporary Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32 (2000): 3-22; Meir Hatina, "Egypt's al-Azhar: Fortress of Orthodoxy and the Challenge of Modernity," *Zmanim (Israel)* 74 (2001): 43-55 (Published in Hebrew).

18. Ismai'l criticized many of Tantawi's moves, among them the latter's meeting with Israel's Chief Rabbi Lau in 1997. See *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, December 27, 2001.

19. The Front did not, however, always speak in one voice; when Ismai'l published a statement against philosophy professor and thinker Hasan Hanafi in 1997, some of the Front's members denounced it and claimed it was not published on their behalf. Zeghal, "Religion and Politics," 390-91; "Egypt's Apostasy Debate Rears Its Ugly Head Once Again," *Mideast Mirror* 11 no. 91 (May 13, 1997).

20. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, July 24, 2000.

21. *Rose al-Yusuf*, March 15-21, 2003; *Al-Musawwar*, October 24, 2003; *Al-Liwa' Al-Islami*, October 17, 2003.

22. Ibid; *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 18, 2003.

23. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 8, 2003.

24. *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, September 11, 2003.

25. *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, May 15, 2003.

26. For example, Egypt's grand mufti, Dr. 'Ali Gum'a, tried to make a clear distinction between the Azharite clerics and muftis and those "who issue fatwas without even studying." Although he refrains from calling them apostates, Gum'a criticizes the radicals with harsh words, claiming they are criminals in the name of Islam, and saying that there is a big difference between knowledge and ignorance, just like the difference between a compassionate merciful Islam and blind radicalism. *Al-Musawwar*, October 3, 2003.

27. This is according to the Minister of Religious Endowments, Dr. Zaqzuq. *Al-Musawwar*, October 24, 2003.

28. A not uncommon position was voiced by Hasan Huwayni, a philosophy professor at al-Azhar (considered moderate and pro–regime) in an interview in the *Washington Post*. According to Huwayni America is "an arrogant country" (arrogance, *takabbur*, against God being a cardinal sin in Islam), immoral and materialistic, and strives only for power and personal satisfaction; all natural disasters befall the Americans because they break the rules of God with their abnormal behavior; it is a modern "Sodom and Gomorrah" ('*Ad* and *Thamud* in the Quran) and will be destroyed like '*Ad* and *Thamud*. Philip Kennicott, "Kneeling in Judgment," *Washington Post*, July 17, 2004, www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A56355-2004Jul16?language=printer (accessed September 13, 2005).

29. According to Ibn Taymiyyah—*Wilayah* (closeness, love, intimacy) is the opposite of '*Adawah* (enmity, distance). "It is obligatory to show allegiance to a believer, even if he wrongs you, whereas it is obligatory to show enmity to the unbeliever, even if he shows kindness." www.islammessage.com/bb/index.php?showtopic=1108&mode=linearplus

30. *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, March 8-9, 2003, March 17, 2003.

31. *Al-Musawwar*, April 4, 2003.

32. "Terror in America (22): Egypt's Al-Azhar Clerics: We Declare War on America," *MEMRI Special Dispatch*, No. 296, November 2, 2001, http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP29601 (accessed February 7, 2005).

33. According to Deputy Head of al-Azhar Shaykh Mahmud 'Ashur, al-Hasan reached the age of retirement and was not dismissed for any fatwa issued on his behalf. Furthermore, 'Ashur pointed out, there was no pressure exerted upon al-Azhar by the Americans or any foreign element, since all decisions regarding fatwas are made by Shaykh al-Azhar and the ulama. Abu al-Hasan himself said that he was promised a year's extension of his service, but in light of complaints by the American and British embassies, a decision was made not to grant it. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 15, 2003. Tantawi later denied having fired al-Hasan following the fatwa that encouraged the killing of coalition forces. *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, March 7, 2003; Steven Stalinsky, "The Egyptian Jihad on America," *National Review Online*, http://nationalreview.com/comment/stalinsky200404120847.asp (accessed March 20, 2005); Andrew McGregor, "Al-Azhar, Egyptian Islam and the War in Iraq," *Terrorism Monitor* (of the Jamestown Foundation) 2, issue 12, June 17, 2004.

34. Nagi al-Shihabi, leader of the Democratic Age party (al-Gil al-Dimuqrati), said that the entire Muslim world was waiting for al-Azhar to give such a statement, and that after its publication no Arab leader would be able to prevent his people from going to Baghdad to defend Islam. Another member of this party, Dr. Muhammad Hana'i 'Abd al-Hadi, said it was a magnificent fatwa that was finally calling upon all Muslims to take up arms and go to Iraq. He defined the academy's statement as "the mother of all fatwas." In contrast with this praise, Gamal Badawi, a member in the oppositional Wafd party, said the academy's statement was actually useless, since it was impossible to translate the jihad call into practical measures. He claimed that it was merely an attempt to mobilize the youth spiritually, and nothing further. *Al- Quds al-'Arabi*, March 20, 2003.

35. The Muslim Brotherhood's general guide, Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, praised the statement, though others, such as Gamal al-Banna, brother of Hasan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, criticized it as powerless and ineffective at the

international level. Al-Banna called on al-Azhar to prove its intention by opening its charity associations for donations to the jihad in Iraq and demanded that Muslim countries use their weapons against the Americans and contribute money and other supplies to the Iraqi people. *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, March 4, 2003, March 19-20, 2003; March 21, 2003.

36. *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, March 17, 2003; *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 20, 2003; *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, March 20, 2003; *Al-Musawwar*, March 28, 2003; McGregor, "Al-Azhar, Egyptian Islam and the War in Iraq."

37. Same sources as in previous footnote.

38. McGregor, "Al-Azhar;" *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, March 20, 27, 2003; *Al-Musawwar*, March 28, 2003.

39. Mona el-Nahhas, "A Confusing *Fatwa*," *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, no. 654, September 4-10, 2003, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2003/654/eg6.htm; *Al-Musawwar*, September 12, 2003.

40. Indeed, in the pro-government religious publication *'Aqidati* of March 9, 2003, Shaykh Nabawi al-Esh was mentioned as a member in the Fatwa Committee, long after the affair had been publicized in the media.

41. Ibid.

42. On May 12, 2003, twenty-five people (including eight Americans) were killed in a suicide attack in Riyadh. Four days later, thirty-one people were killed in a series of suicide attacks in Casablanca, the targets of which were Jewish religious and communal institutions, a hotel, and a Belgian Consulate. CNN report, May 19, 2003, http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/africa/05/18/morocco.arrests/ (accessed June 26, 2005).

43. *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, May 29, 2003.

44. Dr. Nabil Ghanaim, a sharia lecturer at Cairo University, quotes several Quranic verses that forbid indiscriminate murder, among which is a famous verse from *Surat al-Isra'* (the Night Journey): "And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right" (Chapter 17, Verse 33). *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, May 29, 2003.

45. *Al-Liwa' al-Islami*, May 29, 2003.

46. Ibid.

47. Zeghal, "Religion and Politics," 372-73, 377-78.

48. According to Khaled abu al–Fadl, "In six months on sabbatical (in the Gulf), they (the Azhari ulama) would earn twenty years' salary." He notes the example of his teacher, Muhammad Jalal Kishk, who had mocked the ignorance of Wahhabi Islam. But in 1981, after Kishk received the $200,000 King Faisal Award and the $850,000 King Fahd Award from the Saudi government, he published a pro-Wahhabi tome called *The Saudis and the Islamic Solution*. Franklin Foer, "Moral Hazard: The Life of a Liberal Muslim," *The New Republic*, November 18, 2002. In 2000, al-Azhar received the "King Faisal Award for Service to Islam" in recognition of its "significant role in preserving the Arab and Islamic heritage, co
fronting trends of Westernization, and propagating Islam and the Arabic language."
http://www.saudiembassy.net/2000News/News/EduDetail.asp?cIndex=2209

49. Zeghal, "Religion and Politics," 378-380.

50. Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali published in 1989 a book called *The Sunna of the Prophet: Between the Legists and Traditionalists*, accusing the Wahhabi of fanaticism and defiling Islam's reputation. Within two years, the Saudis subsidized the publication of seven books against al-Ghazali, and rebuttal of his arguments became staple items at *Rabita* conferences. Foer, "Moral Hazard."

51. Joshua Teitelbaum, *Holier than Thou—Saudi Arabia's Opposition* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), 10.

52. Muhammad al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta in Saudi Arabia: A Study of Islamic Legal Thought, 1971-2000," PhD diss., Ben Gurion University of the Negev (Beer-Sheva, February 2004), 15.

53. http://www.mongabay.com.

54. Ibid.

55. This family included several hundred direct male descendants of 'Abd al-Wahhab. Muhammad Ibn Sa'ud, the al-Sa'ud dynasty founder, had married a daughter of 'Abd al- Wahhab, and the subsequent intermarriage between the two families reinforced their political alliance. The mother of King Faisal, for example, was the daughter of an Al al-Shaykh *qadi* (judge) who was a direct descendant of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab.

56. Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 55.

57. Toby Craig Jones, "The Clerics, the Sahwa and the Saudi State," *Strategic Insights* 4, issue 3 (March 2005), Center for Contemporary Conflict, http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Mar/jonesMar05.pdf.

58. Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 51-54.

59. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 153-154.

60. Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 155; Teitelbaum, *Holier than Thou*, 33; Larbi Sadiki, "Saudi Arabia:

Re-reading Politics and Religion in the Wake of September 11," in *Islam and Political Legitimacy*, ed. Shahram Akbarzadeh and Abdullah Saeed (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 37, 88.

61. Nawaf Obeid, "The Power of Saudi Arabia's Islamic Leaders," *Middle East Quarterly* 6, no. 2, 53-54.

62. Minbar al-Tawheed wal-Jihad. http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=1377&PHPSESSID=7b78e15030b4c75c0764cb3da41e560e.

63. Teitelbaum, *Holier than Thou*, 37-38.

64. Ibid., 38-40.

65. Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 30.

66. Ibid., 3

67. *Al-Hayat*, October 5, 1994, *Sharq al-Awsat*, October 9, 1994, from Teitelbaum's chapter in MECS 1994.

68. Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 35-36.

69. Ibid.,17.

70. www.fatwaonline.com.

71. Saudi TV channel 1, June 23, 2004, http://memritv.org/Search.asp?ACT=S9&P1=131.

72. Al-Watan, June 16, 2005, www.alwatan.com.sa.

73. "The Muslim World after 9/11," RAND project AIR FORCE, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2004/RAND_MG246.pdf.

74. Mordechai Abir, "Saudi Arabia, Stability, and International Islamic Terror," *Jerusalem Letter/Viewpoints*, July 1, 2002, no. 481, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp481.htm.

75. Ibid; http://memritv.org/Search.asp?ACT=S9&P1=153.

76. RAND, "The Muslim World After 9/11"

77. *Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Invade American Mosques* (Washington: Center for Religious Freedom, Freedom House, 2005), 15, www.freedomhouse.org/religion.

78. Isaac Hason, "New-Wahhabism" (unpublished paper).

79. Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 43.

80. Majalat al-'Asr, June 4, 2003, www.alasr.ws/index.cfm?method=home.con&contentID=4123.

81. Jones, "The Clerics, the Sahwa and the Saudi State."

82. Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Qasim was one of the fifty-two ulama who presented the 1991 "letter of demands" to King Fahd and was prominent in the oppositionist Committee for the Defense of Legal Rights (CDLR). He was arrested and freed in 1997. Since then he has become an advocate of *ijtihad*, democratization and Saudi nationalism. On the other hand, his liberal thought does not extend to women's rights, and he considers jihad to be a fundamental pillar of Islam and not the sole prerogative of the ruler.

83. A former Sahwa shaykh from Bureida. Al-Hamid also proposed a return to *ijtihad* and "innovative *salafiyya*," claiming that the true *salafiyya* was imaginative and innovative and was able to bridge the gap between the text and the real world.

84. A former Salafi from near the Yemeni border (where Bin Laden also came from), al-Maliki is a critic of Saudi historiography and educational curriculum and was dismissed from his government post for his iconoclastic views.

85. See Stephane Lacroix, "Between Islamist and Liberals: Saudi Arabia's New 'Islamo-Liberal' Reformists," *MEJ* 58, no. 3 (Summer 2004), 345–365.

86.Al-Atawneh, "Fatwas and Ifta," 78.

87. An interview with Joshua Teitelbaum, May 19, 2005.

88. Thus, for example, Safar al-Hawali was a lecturer and later the head of the religious department in the Islamic University in Medina; Salman al-'Awda learned   natural sciences and law, and later became a lecturer for religious studies in Imam Muhammad University in Bureida. He has a brother in the security forces.

89. Examples of these steps are the "National Dialogue", an initiative established in 2003 by then Crown Prince Abdallah, aiming to achieve consensus on political, religious, and economic reforms through dialogue with the participation of all the sectors of the society.

90. Thus, for example, Salman al-'Awda was allowed to express his views freely in the newspaper *al-Jazeera*. This contributed to the erosion in the establishment ulama's position. This tactic succeeded in moderating the Sahwa ulama, who came out after 9/11 in defense of the kingdom and clearly condemned the al-Qaeda attacks in Riyadh (May 2003 and December 2004). Safar al-Hawali played a major role in the regime's efforts to combat the radicals. Following Crown Prince Abdallah's call for amnesty for al-Qaeda members, he mediated between the regime and outlawed al-Qaeda members, and in mid-2004 one out of the twenty-six members in the most-wanted list of dissidents handed himself over at al-Hawali's Jedda home. http://www.aljazeera.net, July 22, 2004. Following his steps, several dozens of top hard-line pro-militant ulama met with Prince Abdallah and agreed to denounce openly terrorist activities in Saudi Arabia. Al-Hawali also rejected a call of Sa'ad al-

Faqih (the head of the anti-regime, London-based "Movement for Islamic Reform") for demonstrations in Saudi Arabia, saying reforms in Saudi Arabia are required, but should be according to Islamic sharia. http://www.arabicnews.com, December 14, 2004.

91. A school of Islam that can be described as "anti-*Takfir*" since it claimed that punishment in the hereafter is not permanent (i.e. sins are purged), and therefore in this world a Muslim should withhold judgment and condemnation and refrain from political involvement. This school was, in essence, a reaction to the *Khawarij* who saw jihad as the prime pillar of Islam and used *takfir* against their adversaries.

92. Salafipublications.com/sps/downloads/pdf/CAF020017.pdf.

93. http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP33302.

94. Yoni Fighel and Moshe Marzouk, "Saudi Cleric Issues Fatwah on the Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction," July 5, 2003, www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=491.

95. Jones, "The Clerics, the Sahwa and the Saudi State."

96. http://www.aljazeera.net, November 6, 2004.

97. MEMRI Special Dispatch Series, No. 859, February 8, 2005, http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=subjects&Area=Jihad&ID=SP85905 (accessed July 6, 2005).

98. Gregory Gause, "Be Careful What You Wish For: The Future of U.S.-Saudi Relations," *World Policy Journal* (Spring 2002), 44-45, http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/articles/wpj02-1/Gause.pdf.

99. These declarations included a statement by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judiciary Council and member of the Council of Senior Scholars, Shaykh Saalih al-Lehaydaan, (September 14, 2001) that the attacks were "unjustified evils." www.csis.org. Apparently this condemnation was found by the regime unsatisfactory, and on September 18, 2001, the shaykh stated that "Islam forbids such attacks and aggression upon the innocent." www.fatwaonline.com. The mufti of Saudi Arabia and the head of the Council of Senior Scholars and the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Fatwa said on September 15, 2001, and September 17, 2001, that the attacks "constitute a form of injustice that is not tolerated by Islam" and called on scholars of the Muslim nation to spread the true nature of Islam. www.csis.org. Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Abdallah al-Sabil, member of the Saudi Council of Senior ulama and imam at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, also decried the suicide attacks, saying Muslims must safeguard the lives, honor, and property of Christians and Jews, and that attacking them contradicts sharia. Haim Malka, "Must Innocents Die? The Islamic Debate over Suicide Attacks," *Middle East Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (Spring 2005). Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen stated (September 14, 2001) that the suicide attacks against the World Trade Center were *haram* and regarded their perpetrators as people who had killed themselves, and therefore deserve punishment in hell. 'Uthaymeen's explanation of his opinion was that the action would not benefit Islam since it would make the enemy more determined and lead to retaliation as in the case of Israel and the Palestinians. http://www.meforum.org/meq/issues www.salafipublications.com.

100. An allusion to the early Islamic sect that declared jihad against other Muslims and precipitated civil war between them. Salafipublications.com/sps/downloads/pdf/CAF020017.pdf.

101. www.fatwaonline.com.

102. www.fatwaonline.com.

103. www.fatwaonline.com.

104. www.fatwaonline.com.

105. The Saudi preacher Shaykh Sa'id al-Qahtani stated in a March 17 broadcast on Iqraa TV that there is no choice besides defense, self-sacrifice, and defensive jihad. "We attacked their country, and this caused them to wake the dormant enmity in their hearts....Especially since there is global Zionism, the enemy of Islam, and Judaism, and fundamentalist Crusaders...they interpret this whole incident as only the beginning and thus there is no choice but a preemptive strike." Shaykh Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Latif, professor at Um Al-Qura University said on May 24, 2004, that since the Jews and Christians were oppressors, cursing the oppressing Jews and plundering Christian were permissible acts, as was the prayer that Allah would annihilate them. Shaykh Muhammad al-Munajid, a disciple of bin Baz, stated on April 15, 2003, that defeating the infidels required the mobilization of the nation, and that the stupid acts of the Jews and Crusaders mobilized the nation. On May 10, 2003, Dr. Yassin al-Khatib, a professor of Islamic Law at Um Al-Qura University, declared that jihad has become an individual duty that applies to each and every Muslim. He also stated, "As the Soviets were destroyed in Afghanistan, so will this [the U.S.] collapse." Steven Stalinski, "Incitement to Jihad on Saudi Government-Controlled TV," MEMRI *Special Report*, no. 29, June 24, 2004, http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sr&ID=SR2904.

106. Examples of such hostility include never greeting a Christian or a Jew first; never congratulating the infidel on his holiday; never befriending an infidel unless it is to convert him; and maintaining a "wall of resentment" between Muslims and non-Muslims in order to enable jihad. Many of the texts that have been found in mosques in the U.S. stress that jihad's

purpose is converting infidels to Islam. *Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Invade American Mosques*, 11, 83.

107. Ibid., 13.

108. *Jordan Times*, March 7, 2004, www.aljazeera.info; http://www.greatestgeneration.com/archieves/001722.php.

109. Shmuel Bar, *The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan*, Data and Analysis, Dayan Center, June 1998, 5-6.

110. www.kingabdullah.jo/homepage.php.

111. *Jordanian News Agency*, April 3, 2005.

112. *Al-Sabil*, June 14, 2005.

113. The minister of waqf and religious affairs, Abd al-Fatah Salah, said that his ministry prepared a program for preventing the distortion of Islam and presenting it as moderate and as a force that honors agreements. He warned that his ministry would indict anyone who employs the method of *takfir*. *Al-Hiyat*, December 25, 2005.

114. The regime initiating a reformulation of the Law on Preaching and Guidance (*qanun al-wath wal-arshad*) in an effort to dictate in advance the content of sermons in the mosques so that they would not spill over into political issues that mainly serve the Islamic opposition. *Al-Arab Al-Yaum*, September 1, 2006.

115. The government began to chart a comprehensive program to eliminate nests of the *takfir* doctrine after the bombings in Amman. *Al-Hiyat*, December 25, 2005.

116. In late August 2006 the parliament approved an anti-terrorist law initiated after the Amman bombings of November 9, 2005. The law was aimed at preempting terrorism, including deterring the dissemination of extremist ideas and interpretations in mosques and the media that incite and justify acts of terror. Mahmoud al-Rimawi, *Al-Rai*, September 2, 2006.

117. www.kingabdullah.jo/homepage.php.

118. *Jordan Times*, July 6-8, 2005; *Al-Quds al-'Arabi*, July 7, 2005.

119. *Al-Dustour*, *Jordan Times*, July 5, 2005.

120. *Al-Ghad*, July 2, 2005.

121. *Jordan Times*, July 6, 2005.

122. *Al-Ghad*, July 2, 2005.

123. *Al-Ghad*, August 29, 2005

124. *Al-Rai*, *Al-Ghad*, September 13, 2006, September 26, 2006; *Al-Rai*, September 8, 2006.

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