

UDC 101

## PHENOMENON OF TRADITIONAL ISLAM PURIFICATION FROM INNOVATIONS AND BORROWINGS AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS ACHIEVING ISLAMIST'S GOAL OF RETURNING GLORIOUS PAST

*E. Dobrina*

*post-graduate student*

*Southern federal university. Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation*

[science-almanac@mail.ru](mailto:science-almanac@mail.ru)

Prolonged political, economic and cultural crises along with the modern global world challenges brought out the necessity to search the future way of state and social development for the Middle East countries. «*Al hal al islami*» (Arabic) - "Islamic solution" was offered by Islamist's ideologists as an authentic truly Islamic way to go out of contemporary crisis. Being fundamental ideology, Islamism offered to change the reality by returning back to the glories past of Muslim community. According to Islamist's ideology, following the prophet Muhammad's way of fighting with un-Islamic enemies, contemporary Muslim community will return back glorious history. Namely it is necessary to start with spreading information about religious dogma and "truly" Islam. That Islam (called «traditional Islam») which exists now all around the world was changed by implementing borrowings and innovations and is not that pure Islam needed to realize the goal. Islamist's ideology strongly reject traditional Islam considering it to be one of the first enemy and calling of it purification. The conflict between Islamist's ideology and traditional Islam and the process of traditional Islam purification from borrowings and innovations are investigated in the article on the cultural examples, such as women clothing, personal names and holidays.

Key words: the ideology of Islamism, traditional Islam, "pure Islam", "Islamic solution", Sayyid Kutb.

The beginning of 21st century revival the results of colonial period taken place on the Middle East during the last 6 centuries. It brought out a long list of economical, political, cultural and religious problems along with the strong necessity of searching the further way of state and social development. Authentic answer on contemporary challenges was offered by Islamism ideologists and can be seen as the idea of revival «pure» Islam. The only way of recovery the glories past of Muslim community was seen in appeal to the basis of the Muslim civilization, namely to religious and cultural heritage of the prophet Muhammad and his first successors. It further reconstruction in the contemporary Muslim state and society is the main condition of return of the glory.

The Islamists ideology sets a global goal of mankind salvation from the sin and unbelief by establishing worldwide Islamic dominance by means of *shariatization* of state and society [12, p. 44]. The core of Islamic ideology is based on the ideas of Muslim medieval theologian and jurist Ibn Hanbal (780-855) who taught to reject assimilation any others experience and applying borrowed ideas to the Muslim state or society [4, p. 51]. Theoretical form of ideology was formulated by Egyptians Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949) and Sayyid Kutb (1906-1966). The latter created the concept of «Islamic solution» (Arabic *al-hal al-islami*): specific understanding of Islam as combination of religion and politic with the final goal of creation such political organisation as Islamic state based on the Islamic law *sharia*. The theory of Islamic state was formulated by the founder of moderate trends

in the ideology of Islamism Abu Ala al-Maududi (1903-1979) [9, p. 187] and is based on the idea of religious self-determination of its population as the only one factor of creation of unity [10, p. 106]. Contemporary Islamists practitioners such as Usama ben Laden, Aiman al-Zawahiri or Usuf al-Karadavi are setting their actions on the theory of first ideologists but the reality of global world made it correction. In particular, being the ideology of fundamentalism, Islamism includes idea of return of the traditions of the devout ancestors (arabic *salafiyya*), but aims to apply it globally on the Muslim community around the world [7, p. 34]. The main question of investigation of Islamism phenomenon is whether revived by Islamists' traditions are Islamic. The main question is followed: does Islamism Islam? Scholars present polar opinions, from the acceptance of Islamism to be the part of Muslim civilisation development [2, p. 125] to calling it to be the cancer tumor on the body of Islam [6] and its accusation in invention of tradition which are staying very far from being really Islamic [12, p. 23].

Throughout its history Muslim community is representing the process of formation and co-existence of different cultural and religious traditions and practices inside of it. Contemporary Muslim community includes citizens of 120 countries and population of 35% of them is a Muslim majority. Religious Muslim community is represented by Sunni and Shia Muslims, followers of various Sufistic schools and institutions. This coexistence of different religious and cultural traditions in the frame of one religion can be called «unity in diversity» where diversity of various religious and cultural practices (called traditional Islam) are united under the name of Islam.

It is necessary to divide two used terms: traditional Islam and «pure» Muslim tradition on the Islamist's point of view. Traditional Islam is the form of Islam which is used on the variety of concrete territories. It adopted different traditions and practices which exist on this territory only. Thus it is possible to talk about various unique types of traditional «Islams» formed «unity in diversity» inside of Islam itself. «Pure» Muslim tradition according to Islamist's ideology is that pure divine revelation in the moment of its origination. It is truly Islam which is untouched by any corrections, additions or borrowings. But by the time this «pure» Islam became distorted and transformed in the form of traditional Islam.

On Islamists' point of view, contemporary traditional Islam is not that «pure» Islam which is needed to return back Muslims' glory. According to their ideology, the only divine authority for Muslims are Quran and Sunna and reference to any tradition deprives Islam from its authenticity and pureness. Formula «Truly Islam is in the Quran but not in Muslim traditions or culture» [13] precisely describes Islamists' core belief. Accusation in innovations (Arabic *bid'a*) is the main Islamist's accusation towards traditional Islam. It contains the idea of adding un-Islamic elements in original «pure» Islamic doctrine what led to separation between Muslims, made them to be polytheists and brought them in the condition of ignorance of divine guidance. It is necessary to return back to «pure» Islam by cancelling all innovations, un-Islamic cultural traditions and European borrowings which are widely used by contemporary Muslim community. In particular, it is necessary to eliminate adopted tradition of following authoritative opinion in the Muslim law area, along with abolishing all differences in religious doctrine which lead to divide Muslim community, such as four juristic schools (Arabic *mazhab*).

According to Islamists ideology, the first step to be taken on the way of «pure» Islam global dominance is fighting with ignorance and polytheism inside of Muslim community itself [10, p. 6]. Being the embodiment of ignorance and polytheism, contemporary traditional Islam is considered to be Islamist's «inner enemy». Islamist's ideologist S. Kutb saw the parallels between present situation and the fight that first generation of Muslims had with pre-Islamic society, its religious beliefs and cultural traditions, in the early 7th century. S. Kutb was the first one who started to use Arabic term *jahiliyaah* toward contemporary society. In classical Muslim tradition this term refers to the pre-Islamic period and the condition of ignorance of divine guidance and paganism as the worst forms of world view. He was sure that the today's fight with *jahiliyyah* must be done with the same way as prophet Muhammad and his first adherents fought with their enemies in the beginning of Islamic era of 7th century. This exact way led Muslims to the glorious era of flourishing Muslim civilization and its precise replication in the present will bring the same result. Holy Quran is God will and guide for Muslims in all times and its following will bring glory to the community of believers. S. Kutb referred to the place, time and historical conditions of divine revelations expressed in Quranic verses. Namely, if first revealed Quranic verses of Meccan period (610-622) are mostly contain information about Islamic dogma and predated versus of Medinean period (622-632) which contains information about political and law issues, it means that contemporary fight with *jahiliyyah* must be started with spreading information about dogma, namely about truly «pure» Islam, and with fighting with «inner enemy». It will lead creation the community of believers which share common religious beliefs. After the creation of Islamic state can be follow.

The main component of Islamist's ideology is the concept of authenticity which is used to legitimize Islamist's ideology. The process of legitimization is realised by reference to Quran and Sunna what made renewed traditions to be proved by divine authority and thus claimed it to be «pure» and truly Islamic. The concept of authenticity is used to purify traditional Islam from non-Islamic innovations and borrowings [12, p. 182].

Thus, the first step on the way of global Islamist's domination is purification of traditional Islam from non-Islamic innovations and borrowings. In the result the creation of Islamist's global Muslim community is implied. The following examples can be given to demonstrate the process of tradition Islam purification:

1. Women clothing. The tradition of visible separation between Muslims and other religion believers exists in Muslim world from the very beginning and did not lose its actuality till nowadays. Clothing is the way to reach this goal. It creates collective identity which divide one group of people from another [11]. Being Muslim from the one hand, this clothing absorbs local traditions of wearing and thus throughout the history it forms different types of religious traditional clothing. Contemporary Muslim world presents different examples of it which changes from one territory to another. For example, Muslim women clothing in Mauritania and South Morocco looks like a cut of monochrome fabric of bright yellow, red or blue colours. Sometimes geometric ornament is used. Women wrap it skilfully over another cloths covering their hair and sometimes face. Women clothing of North Africa includes barbarian elements of decoration. These clothes can be bright colours along with different types of geometric ornament. Tattoo and accessories are used for decoration and tell people information about the women, mostly about the tribe she

belongs to. Women of the Chechen Republic (the Russian Federation) are using clothes which emphasise harmony and slimness of women body. Head scarf is used not only as a religious sign but as a way to protect from the scorching sun. Thus, this traditional women clothing demonstrates coexistence of Muslim traditions with local one. In the result clothing is getting its unique style by combining local clothing traditions with Islamic rules. This goes beyond the Islamist's ideology which has a precise understanding of how women should wear: firstly, women clothing must vary from man one and secondly it must be dim, do not fit women's shapes and hide her beauty, and, as the main idea, it must be done by following Islamic rules only, without any additions from local traditions [1]. The most radical Islamists insist that women must cover all her body parts, including hands and ankles, and her face with only eye split left.

2. Personal names. Name is one of the religious marker, and if in some parts of the world it lost this function, in the Middle East world it still exist. More over, name is not only contains information about religious believe itself, but can give information about concrete religious tradition person belongs to and the region he is living in. For example, the following names are spread in the Republic of Dagestan (the Russian Federation): Patimat, Patusha, Ahmet or Ahmat (pronounced with the accent on the last syllable), Aishat or Eishat, Magamet, Maga, Muha, Muhamedik or Mamed, Mamedik and others. These names belong to Arabic-Muslim tradition and formed from arabic originals, such as Fatima and Ahmed, pronounced with the accent on the first syllable, Aisha and Muhammad. Being formed from Arabic originals, these names transformed under influence of local traditions what gives Islamists opportunity indicate them as un-Islamic and claim that truly Muslims can not be called by these names. Thus, Islamists strongly appeal for its replacement with original one. As the result of this propaganda, names Muhammad, Fatima and Ahmed, never existed on this territory in these variants, can be heard in children's playground in nowadays.

3. Holidays. There are the list of pre-Islamic holidays in the Middle East. Among them are Egyptian Holiday flooding of the Nile and Holiday beginning of spring. The first one has more than 7000 years of history and symbolizes Egyptian's gratitude to the river which made it possible for their civilization to reach that incredible heights. It takes place in November and has two weeks of celebration. The Holiday beginning of spring has less old history. Its date is close to the holiday of Easter, what made it to be associated with Christian tradition. It is a national holiday and celebrated by Egyptians regardless their religious believes. This holiday is especially loved by kids. During this day all the families gathered together on the open area, eat special cooked fish and colour eggs. Islamist's ideology claims these holidays to be connected with *jahiliyyah* period thus their celebration must be stopped. In this context it is interesting to notice, that there is no united opinion about celebration Muslim holidays. In particular, a lot of debates are taken around celebration the date of prophet Muhammad birthday (Arabic *al-maylid al-nabi*).

According to the investigation, the following features of the process of purification of traditional Islam from innovations and borrowings can be noticed:

– The spread of truly knowledge about Islam and traditional Islam purification occur both in countries with dominant Muslim Arabic speaking population and in countries where Muslims or Arabic speaking population are in minority.

– Religious, social, cultural and other traditions and norms accepted in tradition Islam are claimed by local population to be proper Muslim traditions and norms. Local population is surprised to see it violation and it replacement is not going unnoticed.

– Using references to Quran and Sunna to legitimize their actions, Islamists preachers are breaking Muslim tradition of quoting the sources of information. In particular, quoting Quran verses or *hadith* (reports about prophet Muhammad deeds and thoughts) Islamist preacher does not give number of verses or the chain of *hadith* transmitters through which the report was proved. As the result this gross violation of the tradition does not allow reader to check reliability of the offered information. For example, it can be seen on the site «Mail to Islam. The path to paradise» which, among other sites, spreads information about truly way of Muslim women clothing and her proper way of behaviour [1].

According to the investigation, the following conclusions can be made:

– The great diversity of religious and cultural traditions are presented in the contemporary Muslim world. Being local, these traditions implement the process of territorialization of Islam and form historical, cultural and religious connections between different generations of local Muslim population. Questioning its Islamic origin, Islamists not only make Muslims doubt about correct following of their religion, but also undermine religious and cultural continuity of contemporary Muslims with their ancestors.

– Denying traditional Islam right to exist, destroying its local traditions and customs and replacing it with the specific understanding of Islam, Islamists launch the process of abolishing the rich cultural heritage of Muslim civilization.

– Islamist's ideologies see the Muslim world as a global monolithic religious community with shared one religious dogma, one culture and one glorious historical past [5, p. 336]. Breaking the connections between believers and local traditions and customs, Islamists launch the process of deterritorisation of Islam thus tear Islam off from its geographical and historical territory of dissemination and forming supranational community of believers. The only one identical factor for its population is a specific understanding of Islamic dogma which goals are creation of an Islamic state and global domination of «pure» Islamism.

– This supranational community of believers rejects opportunity to belong to another national state, except one built on the *sharia* law Islamic state, along with it, it rejects any religious or cultural diversity not only inside its own religious community, but outside of it. All that threatens unity and stability of multi national states.

– The process of deterritorisation of Islam forms synthetic community of believers which does not belong to any concrete territory or any concrete nation and mostly exist in the Islamists imagination and preaches only. However, the appearance of people, who in their way of behaviour and clothing follow Islamists instructions make this synthetic community visible and report to the world about its physical existence and force.

– Destruction of current diversity inside traditional Islamic community demonstrates Islamists ambition to the global domination of their view on the Islamic dogma. By that Islamists endanger not only cooperation inside Muslims community itself but its coexisting inside of multinational state.

– The concept of authenticity used to legitimize revived traditions of «pure» Islam denies believers possibility to reject it because it looks like rejection of the sacred for all



Muslims scriptures. This concept is working well either with Arabic native Muslims who can read and understand holy scriptures without translation, or with not Arabic speaking believers.

– Gradual but progressive rejection of local Muslim traditions by means of Quran and Sunna argumentation can be seen as the process of «creeping» Islamization. This process is difficult to grab what makes it much more dangerous than uncovered armed struggle.

Thus, according to Islamist's ideology Muslim world is a global religious unity but following different un-Islamic traditions and borrowings transformed Islamic dogma, made it representatives separated and brought them back to *jahiliyyah* condition. Retreat from truly Islam caused the contemporary social, political and economic crisis of Muslim civilization and, hence, its resurrection is the main Islamist's goal. The practical goal of establishing global domination of «pure» Islam supposes, firstly, purification of traditional Islam from innovations and borrowings and, secondly, reconstruction of truly Islamic traditions. References to Quran and Sunna are used to legitimize this process and deny the believers possibility to do not follow it. The theoretical part of ideology supposes creation of community of truly Islam believers which, being the precise copy of community of first Muslim generation, will cause the return of the Muslim civilisation glory [12, p. 46].

Traditional Islam can be seen as an alive organism which adapted its life and development to the concrete conditions on the exact territory. It demonstrates a long history of co-existing with the external world. Thus, it can be called real in its existence and productive in its actions. Traditional Islam along with ideology of Islamism claims to have one common sacred origin but in the same time one is the first enemy to another. Thus contemporary situation within Islamic civilization shows that it is having a “war with itself” [12, p. 201]. Destroying traditional Islam - the part of its own body, and imposing dominance to the external world, will Islamism demonstrate the possibility to stop the process of destruction and start the process of creation?

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