

THE ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

Understanding the Salafi Doctrine of
Al-Wala' wal Bara'



Mohamed Bin Ali

Imperial College Press

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Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

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Understanding the Salafi Doctrine of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>About the Author</i>	xi
Introduction	1
Background	1
Significance of the Study	13
Objectives of the Study	22
Scope and Limitations of the Study	26
Sources of Research and Methodology	27
The Chapters	35
Chapter 1 Modern Salafism and the Islamic Concept of <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i>	41
Introduction	41
Part I: Introduction to Modern Salafism	42
Meaning of Salafism	42
History of Salafism	45
Modern Salafism	46
The Salafi–Wahhabi Connection	48
Modern Salafism: Realities and Complexities	50
Modern Salafism: Factions and Categories	53
Characteristics of Modern Salafism	60
The Modern Salafi Ideology	63
Components of Modern Salafism	66
Conclusion (for Part I)	70

Part II: Introduction to the Concept of WB	71
Definition of <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i>	71
Historical Emergence of WB in Modern Salafism	74
Significance of WB in Modern Salafism	76
Various Dimensions of WB in Modern Salafism	83
Conclusion (for Part II)	87
Chapter 2 Significance of <i>Surah Al-Mumtahanah</i> and <i>Millat Ibrahim</i> in Salafis' Conception of <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i>	89
Introduction	89
Introduction to <i>Surah Al-Mumtahanah</i>	91
The Story of Hatib Bin Abi Balta'ah	95
The Issue of <i>Wala'</i> and Salafis' Debate on It	97
Defining the "Enemies" of God and Muslims	102
<i>Wala'</i> and <i>Bara'</i> from the Examples of Prophet Abraham	107
Parts Four and Five of <i>Surah Al-Mumtahanah</i>	113
WB in Other Parts of the Quran	114
Conclusion	124
Chapter 3 <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i> in the Salafi–Wahhabi Ideology	125
Introduction	125
Wahhabism: Definition, History and Concepts	129
Wahhabism and the Concept of WB	135
WB in Early Days of Wahhabism	138
WB in Twentieth-Century Wahhabism	145
Political Dimension of WB in Twentieth-Century Wahhabism	149
WB in the Saudi Educational System	164
The Exportation of WB Outside Saudi Borders	169
Criticism of Saudi Educational System and Its Concept of WB	170
Conclusion	172

Chapter 4 Analyzing the Spectrum of <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i> in Modern Salafism	175
Introduction	175
WB: What Do All Salafis Agree and Disagree on?	178
Issue 1 — <i>Kufr</i> and <i>Kuffar</i> : To Hate or Not to Hate?	179
Issue 2 — Ruling with Other Than What God Has Revealed and Relations with Non-Muslim Countries	189
Issue 3 — Aiding Non-Muslims Against Muslims	195
Issue 4 — Accepting Gifts from <i>Kuffar</i> and Congratulating Them on Their Festivals	206
Conclusion	210
Chapter 5 Analyzing the Writings of Purists, Politicos and Jihadi Salafis on <i>Al-Wala' wal Bara'</i>	213
Introduction	213
Contemporary Salafi Factions: The Purists, Politicos and Jihadis	215
Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan	220
Ayman Al-Zawahiri	226
Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq	231
Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani	236
Observations and Analysis	243
Conclusion	254
Chapter 6 Conclusion	257
Appendix A	269
Appendix B	273
Appendix C	277
<i>Bibliography</i>	283

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Introduction

Background

One of the issues in contemporary Islamic thought which has attracted considerable attention amongst Muslim scholars and within the Muslim community is the valid and appropriate attitude of Muslims to relationships with non-Muslims. A major source of confusion and controversy with regards to this relationship comes from the allegation that Muslims must reserve their love and loyalty for fellow Muslims, and reject and declare war on the rest of humanity.

This idea and allegation can most acutely be seen through the Islamic concept of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* (WB) translated as “Loyalty and Disavowal”,¹ which appears as central in the ideology of modern Salafism. In this study, the term “modern Salafism” refers to a religious inclination or tendency towards a set of ideas and identity.²

¹ Due to the vastness and complexity of the Arabic language, it is difficult to provide a precise translation of the terms *wala'* and *bara'*. This is primarily because many Arabic words have multiple meanings which are used differently depending on contexts and situations. I have translated the term *wala'* and *bara'* as “Loyalty and Disavowal” as it suits the context and meaning in which I am dealing. Some may translate it as “Allegiance and Disassociation”. Others may translate it as “Love and Hatred”, which is literally inaccurate but is acceptable as elements of love and hatred form the basis of the concept.

² By identity, we mean a belief system (ideology), ideas, values and meanings that reflect moral, social and political interests and commitments of modern Salafis and that constitute their ideology of how the world and its system should work. This belief system is based on pure, undiluted teachings of the Quran, the *sunnah* (Prophetic traditions) and practices of the early Muslim generations (the *salaf*). See Chapter 1 for a detailed explanation on modern Salafism.

These ideas and identity are subscribed to by modern Salafis³ who advocate strict adherence to their understanding of Islamic practices as enjoined by Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), the final prophet of Islam, and subsequently practised by the early pious predecessors known as the *salaf al-salih*.⁴ Following the *salaf* is the reason for their self-designation as Salafis.

In its most fundamental definition, the concept of WB prescribes the relationship Muslims are enjoined to have with God and their fellow human beings. The term *wala'* refers to the undivided loyalty Muslims should portray to God, Islam and their Muslim co-religionists over all other things,⁵ while *bara'* refers to the disavowal of anything deemed un-Islamic by these modern Salafis. In modern Salafism, the concept of WB receives much

³In this research, modern Salafis are referred to as Muslims who subscribe to the ideas and identity mentioned earlier. They advocate a return to Islamic sources by emulating and following in the footsteps of early generation of Muslims. They tend to disregard the ways of Muslims who came after the third generation of Islam as they see that Islam during this period has been tainted with innovations and many Islamic practices are seen as heretical. In other words, it could be argued that modern Salafis fail to recognize many traditions of the Islamic intellectual heritage. Some may prefer to call them “neo-Salafis” as it distinguishes them from the *salaf al-salih*, i.e., the early generations of Muslims.

⁴The term *salaf al-salih* refers to the “early Muslims” who enjoy an elevated status among Muslims based on the Prophetic saying, “*The best century of my people is my century, then the following, then the following*” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book on Testimonies, no. 2652; Sahih Muslim, Book on Merits and Virtues, no. 2533; Sunan Al-Tirmizi, Book on Virtues of the Companions, no. 3859; Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Judgements, no. 2362). While this *hadith* does not actually use the actual Arabic term *salaf al-salih* (the pious predecessors), it is believed that the concept of the pious predecessors very likely originated from this *hadith*. This term and concept of *salaf al-salih* and its related term, Salafi, which refers to those who followed them, began to appear frequently in Islamic discourses in the late pre-modern period. In the early fourteenth century, the theologian Taqi al-Din Ibn Taimiyyah (d. 1328) commented that “*the Companions and the successors were better than us*” (Ibn Taimiyyah, *Majmu'a al-fatawa*, 5:111).

⁵Salafis' understanding that *wala'* is exclusively for God, the Messenger and Muslims is based on Quran 5:55.

emphasis.⁶ As modern Salafis seek to revive a practice of Islam that closely resembles the religion during the time of Prophet Muhammad and maintain the purity of the religion, this concept calls Muslims to portray their loyalty to Islam and to disavow anything that could possibly taint the sanctity of Islam or pose a threat to *tawhid* (monotheism or the belief in the Oneness of God).

The centrality of the concept can be seen when modern Salafis identify WB as one of the pillars of *tawhid*. According to their belief, Muslims must believe and apply the concept of WB in their daily lives. Opposition to the concept is a violation of an essential part of the *aqidah* (creed).⁷ This is to say that Muslims should direct their loyalty only to God, Islam and the Muslims, as loyalty to God is directly linked to the pivotal concept of *tawhid*.⁸ The concept is one of the factors that could nullify the proclamation of faith (*nawaqidh al-shahadatain*) if not practised by Muslims.⁹

In modern Salafism, professing *wala'* is to manifest a deep sense of loyalty to the Muslims by being attached to them, loving them, maintaining bonds of brotherhood with them, assisting them, and empathizing with them. Without this, there is no meaning to a Muslim community (*ummah*). Indeed, Salafis see the Muslim *ummah* existing only by virtue of the ties that bind the hearts of its individuals together in this sense of loyalty. On the

⁶The present research attempts to illustrate and prove this fact. As the research shows, the centrality of WB in modern Salafism can be seen through the actions of modern Salafis and in their statements, lectures and writings on WB which are studied and analyzed for the purpose of this research.

⁷Modern Salafis claim that since *aqidah* is the basis of Islamic belief, it is valid to assume that the concept of WB should be upheld as a tool in the process of refining the *aqidah* and protecting its sanctity.

⁸Although *tawhid* is the most important foundation in the Islamic belief system for all Muslims, modern Salafis tend to bypass history and claim to go to the basic principles by using the notion of *tawhid* to reject some of the traditional Islamic practices and accuse these practices as heresy; and derive new concepts such as WB and *hakimiyyah* (Islamic sovereignty).

⁹Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices From a New Generation*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 39.

other hand, *bara'* translates as total disassociation from all that displeases God. This includes *kufr* (disbelief), *shirk* (apostasy), *kuf-far* (plural of *kafir* which means non-Muslims or disbelievers), *bid'ah* (religious innovations), *ma'siyyah* (disobedience to God and His commands) and even un-Islamic political systems (*al-anzimah al-taghutiyyah*) such as democracy, secularism and nationalism according to some modern Salafis.¹⁰ In addition, modern Salafis seek to perform *bara'* from “infidels and infidel practices” by not befriending them (especially the Jews and Christians) and avoiding their cultures and traditions which they believe could tarnish the purity of the Islam they envision. This was justified by taking a literal understanding of the many Quranic verses such as: “*Do not take the Jews and Christians as your friends/protectors...*”¹¹

Fundamentally, the concept of WB in modern Salafism describes the posture Muslims should take in their relationship with non-Muslims, their cultures, systems and environments. Sometimes, modern Salafis consider cultures which one might normally view as Islamic to be “un-Islamic” since they have “deviated” from the practice of the Prophet and the *salaf al-salih*.¹² The concept is clarified to address some areas of concern, for example:

- How should Muslims perceive non-Muslims and how should this perception be formed on the basis of intent?
- What is the appropriate code of conduct Muslims should adopt in their interaction with non-Muslims and to live in a non-Islamic environment?
- Can Muslims live side by side with non-Muslims?

¹⁰Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action” in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, Hurst & Company, London, 2009, p. 39; Wiktorowicz, Quintan, *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafism, the Muslim Brotherhood and State Power in Jordan*, State University of New York Press, 2001, pp. 113–117.

¹¹Quran 5:51. See also Quran 60:4; 19:49–1; 11:54–6; 43:26–8; 10:41. See Chapter 2 for discussion on how Quranic verses play an important role in the formulation of the modern Salafi conception of WB.

¹²These practices include Sufism and mysticism which Salafis consider as “un-Islamic”.

In putting the concept of WB into practice, modern Salafis distinguish certain activities that amount to the wrong type of loyalty and develop a framework for Muslims to adhere to. Activities which Muslims should refrain from include:¹³

- (1) Imitating non-Muslims in their dressing, language, morality and culture. Such imitation invariably invests Muslims deeper into that culture and leads them down a deviant path.¹⁴
- (2) Living in the lands of non-Muslims (*dar al-harb*) and not immediately moving to the lands of Muslims (*dar al-Islam*). Some Salafis argue that *hijrah* (migration) to Muslim lands is an obligation upon every Muslim.¹⁵ Residence in the land of non-Muslims will invariably lead Muslims to befriend and show loyalty to them.¹⁶
- (3) Seeking aid, assistance and comfort from the non-Muslims. This is a form of mandatory disassociation according to some Salafis.¹⁷

¹³These examples are illustrative of the manifestation of WB by modern Salafis and are not exhaustive. It is important to note that not all Salafis or those who consider themselves as Salafis apply these practices. There are various types and groups of modern Salafis, and different groups may apply WB differently. Modern Salafis are divided on many religious, social and political issues. Their differences in viewing these issues may also affect their understanding and application of WB.

¹⁴Muhammad Saeed Salim Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' Wa Al-Bara' Fi Al-Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf* (Loyalty and Disavowal in Islam According to the Belief of the Salaf), Al-Maktabah Al-Taufiqiyah, Cairo, 2003, p. 186.

¹⁵For example, Al-Qahtani argues that living in a non-Muslim land is not permissible in Islam as Muslims will have to live under non-Islamic conditions. Thus, *hijrah* is necessary and obligatory. He also claims that Muslims who willingly accept the rule of non-Muslims, and live under any rule other than the *shariah* (Islamic law), are committing acts that will nullify their faith. This is so as loyalty and sovereignty can only be given to and by God, and Islam is the only way of life for Muslims. See Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' Wa Al-Bara' Fi Al-Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, p. 217.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 224, 234, 246–247, 272–290, 306–309, 321–342. See also Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, *Al-Walaa' wal-Baraa' (Allegiance and Association With the People of Islam and Iman and Disassociation and Enmity With the People of Falsehood and Disbelief in Islam)*, Calgary Islamic Homepage, 1997, available at www.calgaryislam.com/imembers/pdf/manhaj/16.pdf (accessed 23 March 2009).

¹⁷Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' Wa Al-Bara' Fi Al-Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, pp. 112–123.

- (4) Observing the holidays, festivals and celebrations of non-Muslims. This includes congratulating them during those seasons or attending their functions. Salafis consider these to be expressions of love and acknowledgment for the non-Muslims.¹⁸
- (5) Voting and taking part in democratic political elections. Some Salafis argue these activities form a part of un-Islamic judgement which is forbidden (*haram*) for Muslims to participate in.¹⁹

However, these activities, which are examples of the manifestations of WB in modern Salafism, are not necessarily agreed upon by all modern Salafis. Modern Salafis are not a homogenous group. They are divided into different groups and categorizations with dissimilar ideological trends and inclinations.²⁰ Similarly, the concept of WB in modern Salafism is understood and manifested quite differently by modern Salafis. Although all Salafis recognize the importance of WB, they differ in the understanding of the concept, and practically how it should be applied and manifested. As this research shows, the concept is fluid and flexible. Importantly, the differences in the understanding and application of the concept have led to debates and disputes among modern Salafis themselves.

As a religious concept, WB is based and rooted from the primary Islamic sources which are the Quran and the Prophetic traditions (*sunnah*). This study will also attempt to illustrate how Islamic religious texts, especially the Quran, play a vital role in formulating modern Salafis' conception of WB (Chapter 2). However, it could be

¹⁸Salih Al-Fawzan, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Fil Islam*, p. 14.

¹⁹There are many statements and *fatwas* (religious decrees) issued by modern Salafis on the impermissibility of taking part in elections and political activities. See, for example, the *fatwa* "Ruling on Democracy and Elections and Participating in That System" by Sheikh Muhammad Al-Munajjid at *Islam Questions and Answers*, available at <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/107166> (accessed 15 March 2010); *Voting is Haram, Democracy is Kufr and Shirk* by Sheikh Feiz, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfDthnL3WnA> (accessed 12 June 2012).

²⁰The different groups and categories of modern Salafis will be explained in detail in Chapter 1 of this book.

argued that the genealogy of the concept's historical emergence²¹ in modern Salafism could be traced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyyah whose teachings have significantly influenced modern Salafis and shaped the ideology of modern Salafism.²² It is believed that Ibn Taimiyyah developed the idea that the dissimilarity between the Muslims and non-Muslims must be total.²³ In his book entitled *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* (Following the Straight Path), he explained in detail all aspects of differences that should be drawn by Muslims in their encounters with non-Muslims.²⁴

In today's context, modern Salafism is usually associated with Wahhabism²⁵ (a term which refers to the teachings and traditions of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab²⁶ (d. 1792)). In many a times, the

²¹It should be emphasized here that historically, *wala'* and *bara'* as two separate concepts are not something new in Islam. In fact, as the research shows, both concepts of *wala'* and *bara'* have their origin in the Quran. In addition, the concept of loyalty (*wala'*) to a tribal leader and members existed in pre-Islamic Arabia and in the early centuries of Islam. Early Islamic groups such as the *Khawarij* or Kharijites were believed to have applied elements of *wala'* and *bara'* in their belief and actions. However, modern Salafis' understanding and conception of the concept could be traced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyyah. See Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi" in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, Hurst & Company, London, 2009, pp. 50–53.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

²³Michel, Thomas F., *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity: Ibn Taimiyyah's Al-Jawab al-Salih*, Caravan Book, New York, 1984, pp. 84–85.

²⁴Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim Mukhalafat Ashab al-Jahim* (Walking the Straight Path, Opposing the People of Hellfire), pp. 156–303, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?a=syed5680> (accessed 23 March 2010).

²⁵Known as *Wahhabiyyah* in Arabic and its adherents are labeled as Wahhabis. Historically, the Wahhabis call themselves *al-Muwahhidun* which literally means "the monotheists". The Wahhabis claim to call to the way of the *salaf al-salih*, the way of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. This is the reason why they are called Salafis, i.e., people who follow the way of the pious predecessors. See Chapter 3 for more explanation on Wahhabism.

²⁶Many Salafis today point to Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab as the first figure in the modern era to push for a return to the religious practices of the *salaf al-salih*. His evangelizing in eighteenth-century Saudi Arabia was a call to return to what were the practices of the early generations of Muslims.

term Salafism is interchangeably used with Wahhabism. As a rule, Salafism is broader than Wahhabism. While it is true that followers of Wahhabism call themselves Salafis, it is important to note that not all Salafis are Wahhabis (those who follow Wahhabism). However, it is imperative to look at Wahhabism in order to understand modern Salafism. In fact, the study of modern Salafism will not be complete without looking at Wahhabism, which considers itself to be the true Salafi movement.

Much of the ideas of modern Salafism, including the concept of WB, are developed as an outgrowth of the ideas derived from Ibn Abd al-Wahhab who was greatly influenced by the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah.²⁷ This study also illustrates how the concept of WB is understood, applied and developed in Wahhabism from the time of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab to the current period (Chapter 3). Although it is believed that books on WB have only been written by modern Salafis in recent decades, the idea of forbidding *wala'* to non-Muslims had already existed in the early days of Wahhabism. Early Wahhabi scholars authored books on the concept, albeit not exactly under the name of WB like modern Salafis do. For example, Sulayman Ibn Abdallah (d. 1818), the grandson of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who was one of the most influential and learned *ulema* (plural of *alim* meaning Muslim scholars) at that time, wrote a treatise entitled *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak* (Proofs of the Rule Regarding the Loyalty to the People of Polytheism); and Hamad Bin Atiq (d. 1883) wrote a famous document entitled *Sabil al-Najat wal Fikak min Muwalat al-Murtaddin wa Ahl al-Ishrak* (The Path of Salvation and Freedom Against Befriending the Apostates and Polytheists).²⁸

Due to the importance of practising WB, especially in the current period where Muslims are struggling to maintain Islam's

²⁷Based on the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Abdul Wahhab and subsequently the Wahhabis further developed and enhanced the concept. See Chapter 1 for discussion on the historical emergence of WB in modern Salafism.

²⁸These two books on WB written by early Wahhabi scholars will be discussed in Chapter 3.

authenticity and legitimacy amidst an onslaught of foreign values²⁹ and belief systems as a result of a series of conquests, colonializations and the current wave of globalization, modern Salafis have begun to propagate and author books on the subject of WB.³⁰ Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani (b. 1956), a prolific Salafi author from Saudi Arabia whose groundbreaking book on WB was published in 1980, is believed to be among the first, if not the first modern Salafi to write comprehensively on WB. Subsequently, more individuals from different Salafi currents began to write on the subject. Interestingly, as this study shows, different Salafis would present the concept in a different slant or manner (Chapters 4 and 5), with each Salafi subset emphasizing a different role of the concept. The different manners of presenting WB by modern Salafis reflect the concept in modern Salafism as being fluid, dynamic and multi-dimensional.

As mentioned, the dynamics of WB in modern Salafism are recognized when the research identifies the different roles or the

²⁹It is argued that the effects of Westernization and rapid modernization since the beginning of the twentieth century had resulted in an acute sense of alienation and dislocation, provoking feelings of rootlessness and an identity crisis in many Muslim individuals. Perhaps as a response to this, more Muslims are turning to their religion as an anchor to preserve their self-identities in the rapidly growing world. This has resulted in the growth of an Islamic identity or affiliation within the Muslim communities in the decades since the twentieth century. Hence, WB is seen as an important tool by modern Salafis to deal with these challenges.

³⁰In countering this onslaught, modern Salafis view WB as an important tool to keep Islam free from any impurities; to preserve Islamic identity; and to emulate the *salaf al-salih* as closely as possible, for they provide the best example of how Islam should be practiced throughout all times. This is the central Salafi doctrine which can be traced back to Abu Hanifah (d. 767), founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), who counselled: “*Follow the traditions and the way of the Salaf and be on your guard against innovations (bida’) for all that constitutes a departure from the norm.*” (See Al-Suyuti, *Sawn al-mantiq wa-l-kalam ‘an fann al-mantiq wa-l-kalam*, quoted in Afsarudin, Asma, “Demarcating Fault-lines within Islam: Muslim Modernists and Hardline Islamists Engage the Shari’a” in Jorgen S. Nielen and Lisbet Christoffersen (eds.), *Shari’a As Discourse: Legal Traditions and the Encounter with Europe*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, Surrey, England, 2010, p. 29.) Here the objective of following the *salaf* is clear: to preserve the integrity of the practices of the Prophet and to be on guard against undesirable innovation.

different dimensions (levels) of the concept. These roles are: (1) creedal (*aqidah*); (2) social; (3) political; and (4) *Jihadi* (literally means struggle or fighting). Generally, all Salafis agree on the concept of WB at the *aqidah* level. This means they claim that Muslims must believe and uphold the concept as it is connected to the faith. Also at the *aqidah* level, modern Salafis believe that WB is important to fight any religious innovations or *bid'ah* that have crept into the religion.³¹ However, they differ in the application of WB at the social and political level. At the social level, WB is characterized by a portrayal of non-Muslims as potential enemies, and un-Islamic practices as dangerous acts that could threaten the purity of Islam and *tawhid*. Examples of the social dimension of WB include giving and accepting gifts from the non-Muslims, joining them in their religious festivals, listening to music,³² especially non-Islamic music, or even celebrating Mother's Day and using the non-*hijri* calendar which according to the Salafis constitutes *al-tashabbuh bil kuffar* (imitation of the non-Muslims).³³ For instance, the former mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah Ibn Baz (d. 1999), said that it is impermissible for a Muslim to participate in the celebrations and feasts of non-Muslims.³⁴ Another Saudi scholar, Salih Ibn Fawzan al-Fawzan (b. 1935), argued that Muslims in non-Muslim countries should perform the *hijrah*³⁵ to the Islamic world because settling in the countries of non-Muslims will lead to forming loyalty to them.³⁶ It is believed that Ibn Baz and Al-Fawzan belong to the category of modern Salafis known

³¹Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", p. 55.

³²See Students' Question and Answer Session at Al-Faraby Middle School, Riyadh, with His Eminence Shaykh Ibn Baz, available at <http://alifta.com/Fatawa/fatawaDetails.aspx?BookID=14&View=Page&PageNo=1&PageID=507> (accessed 12 April 2012).

³³See Chapter 4 for discussion on some of the social dimensions of WB in modern Salafism.

³⁴See *fatwa* by Ibn Baz, "Muslims Dealing with non-Muslims", vol. 27, *Book on Da'wah*, available at <http://alifta.com/Fatawa/fatawaDetails.aspx?BookID=14&View=Page&PageNo=1&PageID=5268> (accessed 12 April 2012).

³⁵The obligation of *hijrah* as claimed by Salafis is based on Quran 4:99-100.

³⁶Al-Fawzan, Salih, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fi al-Islam*, p. 10.

as “purists” who emphasize the social aspect of WB while avoiding its political dimension.

The political dimension of WB, however, refers to the use of the concept by modern Salafis who actively incorporate elements of politics and political systems into their belief. For example, Salafis assert that Muslims must give their loyalty only to Muslim rulers who rule according to Islamic system or the *shariah* (Islamic law or jurisprudence). Muslim rulers who rule not with the *shariah* must be disavowed, and Muslims must abandon any un-Islamic political system such as democracy, nationalism and secularism, just like the way they are required to perform *bara'* of the *kuffar*. In its political form, WB is linked to the concept of *tawhid al-hakimiyyah* (the unity of governance), relating to the judgement that a Muslim leader who does not rule by the entirety of the *shariah* is an infidel who should be overthrown, by violent means if necessary.

The political dimension of WB is also believed to produce another dimension known as the *Jihadi* dimension of WB.³⁷ Salafis who apply this role of WB usually incorporate the practice of *takfir* (excommunication of Muslims), especially to Muslim rulers who do not implement *shariah* or who apply any non-Islamic political systems which are seen by the Salafis as against Islamic teachings. These Salafis are known and labeled as Jihadi Salafis. It is believed that the act of *takfir* will eventually lead to the concept of *jihad* which is commonly manifested in the form of overthrowing and attacking them.

Saudi Arabia is home to Wahhabism and is sometimes known as the so-called “birthplace of modern Salafism”.³⁸ However, Salafis and Salafism are not only restricted to Saudi Arabia. Modern

³⁷The Jihadi dimension of WB is in many ways closely related to the political dimension. Hence the Jihadi role of WB could also be termed as the “politico-jihadi” dimension. The Jihadi dimension of WB is exclusively applied by the Jihadi Salafis who assert that the use of violence understood in the form of *jihad* is legitimized and sometimes obligatory on those Muslims who have negated the “true” manifestation of WB.

³⁸It is observed that Saudi Salafis (the Wahhabis) form the majority of modern Salafis. One could also notice that much of the ideas and traditions of modern Salafism are found in Wahhabism such as rejecting of religious practices deemed as *bid'ah* (by the Wahhabis) and applying a strict and literal understanding of religious sources.

Salafism is a globalized and de-territorialized phenomenon.³⁹ Salafi ideas such as WB can also be found in other countries and in other Islamist currents and ideology. For example, in Egypt, the premises of the WB concept can be found as early as the 1960s through the work of Sayyid Qutub (d. 1966), a leading member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950s and 1960s, who advocated separation (*mufasalalah*) of the Muslim vanguard⁴⁰ — which had to return to Prophet Muhammad’s way of life — from the rest of the world.⁴¹ This is necessary in order to restore Islam’s greatness through what he terms as *hakimiyyah* since Qutub believed that Muslims today are living in a state of *jahiliyyah* (period of ignorance),⁴² that is, the modern world of ignorance and unbelief. Qutub asserted that the nature of Muslim and non-Muslim relationship is always in conflict due to the fundamental differences between the two groups.⁴³ He claimed that the former is based on submission to the only One God, while the latter submits to false gods and human beings.⁴⁴

³⁹By “globalized” and “de-territorialized” I mean modern Salafis are not exclusively found in a particular area such as the Middle East or country like Saudi Arabia, but exist everywhere in all parts of the world. For example, in recent years the world saw an increasing influence of Salafism in Europe. See Barrett, Darcy M., *Concepts of Identity and the Islamitization of Europe: The Components of Growth and Radicalization of the Global Salafi Islamic Movement in Europe and Its Implications for the West*, Regent University, 2008, p. 117.

⁴⁰See Kepel, Gilles, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and The West*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004, p. 136.

⁴¹It is believed that Sayyid Qutub did not mention *wala’* and *bara’* in his ideas and writings. Some scholars even argue that Qutub was not even a Salafi. However, many of his ideas, especially the concept of *hakimiyyah* which he propagated in his writings, are similar to the Salafi ideology. According to Qutub, Muslims in contemporary times resemble the people during the period before the coming of Islam. They have ignored the *shariah* and practised many aspects of *jahiliyyah*.

⁴²The term *jahiliyyah* in the Arabic language means ignorance. In Islamic context, the term refers to the period before the birth of Prophet Muhammad when the Arabs were believed to be in total ignorance by associating partners with God and worshipping idols.

⁴³Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, p. 48.

⁴⁴Qutub, Sayyid, *Fi Zilal al-Quran* (In the Shades of the Holy Quran), Dar al-Shuruq, Beirut, 1985, Vol. 3, pp. 1586–1587.

Due to the different roles of WB found within the intellectual system of modern Salafis, it could be viewed that WB is not only used as a call for personal piety and separation from non-Muslims, but can also be employed to accuse Muslim rulers of *kufr* and thus serve as a legitimization to fight them. As the research shows, the breadth of the concept highlights that WB does not exist in a religious vacuum but is shaped by local and global political circumstances.

Significance of the Study

Why is there a need to study WB in modern Salafism? I would like to begin answering this question by relating a personal experience which is believed to have highly inspired and subsequently led me to embark on this study. About a decade ago, several months after the incident of September 11, 2001, the Singapore government uncovered the plan of an Al-Qaeda-linked Islamist terrorist organization, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI),⁴⁵ to bomb several targets in Singapore.⁴⁶ Subsequently, JI members who were behind the plot were arrested and detained under Singapore's Internal Security Act (ISA). In line with Singapore's unique approach to incorporate community participation in its fight against terrorism, I was among the local Muslim individuals who were consulted by the security authorities to interview several of the JI detainees, and provide an assessment of their ideological

⁴⁵Jemaah Islamiyah is a Southeast Asian militant Islamist organization which was responsible for many terrorist attacks in Indonesia from 2001 to 2009, including the Bali incident on October 12, 2002 (described as the worst terrorist attack after September 11) which killed more than 200 people including 88 Australians. (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002_Bali_bombings, accessed 8 August 2012.) JI is dedicated to the establishment of a *Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara* (regional Islamic state) in Southeast Asia incorporating Indonesia, Malaysia, the southern Philippines, Singapore and Brunei.

⁴⁶See Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs White Paper, *The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and The Threat of Terrorism*, 7 January 2003, available at www.mha.gov.sg/get_blob.aspx?file_id=252_complete.pdf (accessed 10 March 2012).

thinking and inclination.⁴⁷ It was during my interaction with these JI members that I was exposed to the concept of WB. Many of the JI members whom I talked to disclosed that WB is the foundation of the group's ideology. They also claim that JI's teachings are based on *manhaj* (methodology) of the *salaf*.⁴⁸ To provide religious justification and legitimacy for their actions, JI ascribes to an interpretation of WB in which they decidedly divide the world into two groups: friends who ascribe to their worldview, and enemies who are opposed to them.⁴⁹ Books on WB by Salafi thinkers were also translated into the Malay and Indonesian language and taught to JI members.⁵⁰ A former JI member whom I interviewed clarifies:

JI leaders always emphasize the importance of the doctrine of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* to all its members during the religious classes conducted by the *amir* (leader) or any appointed leader. Members

⁴⁷Subsequently, these Muslim individuals formed the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) in April 2003 (see www.rrg.sg, accessed 15 June 2011). The RRG comprises of Singaporean Muslim scholars who voluntarily provide religious guidance through counselling to the JI detainees who have been detained under Singapore's Internal Security Act (ISA) for terrorism-related activities. I am one of RRG's secretariat members and counsellors who has the opportunity to meet and talk to the JI detainees in Singapore.

⁴⁸In JI's ideological and organizational manual known as the PUPJI or *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah* (General Guidelines for the Struggle of Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyah), it is mentioned that the *aqidah* of JI is that of *ahl al-sunnah wal jamaah* (literally, People of the Prophetic Tradition and Group) and it follows the *manhaj* (methodology) of the *salaf al-salih*.

⁴⁹Mohamed Bin Ali, "Identifying Key Concerns of Jemaah Islamiyah: The Singapore Context" in Norman Vasu (ed.), *Social Resilience in Singapore: Reflections from the London Bombings*, Select Books, Singapore, 2007. The article is also available at <http://www.pvtr.org/pdf/Ideology%20Response/Identifying%20key%20concerns%20of%20JI.pdf> (accessed 12 March 2010).

⁵⁰See International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Publishing Industry*, Asia Report No. 147, 28 February 2008, also available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/147-indonesia-jemaah-islamiyahs-publishing-industry.aspx> (accessed 23 March 2010) and www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/47c6c9912.pdf (accessed 23 March 2010).

are taught to defend God, the Messenger and all believers by showing hatred and rejection of others. We are not allowed to align and associate ourselves with the non-Muslims. Muslims who work with the secular government are working with the *kafir*. This is forbidden in Islam and they have to leave their jobs. This is because those who reject *tawhid* should be disavowed and rejected.⁵¹

Such a statement eventually surprised me who was exposed to the concept of WB for the very first time. The claim made by JI members that WB, as an Islamic doctrine, requires Muslims to hate and disassociate from the *kuffar* is highly questionable, and could be argued as being in contradiction of the merciful and tolerant nature of Islam. Subsequently, after interviewing the JI members and conducting a research on JI's ideology, it is clear that JI's worldview is significantly influenced by Salafi ideas and that WB is an important pillar and foundation in the JI's ideology.⁵²

The centrality of the WB concept in JI's ideology can be clearly seen in Figure 1.⁵³ The pyramid illustrates that WB forms the basis of JI's ideology. Several Islamic concepts can be found in JI's pyramid-ideology. From here, one could notice that WB is the foundational concept which is used to explain other concepts further up the pyramid. If the foundation is destroyed, there is a big chance the other concepts will also collapse. According to JI's

⁵¹Interview with former JI member in Singapore, April 2004. For confidentiality reasons and in accordance with the regulations laid out by the Internal Security Department, Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore, names of JI interviewees will not be mentioned in this book.

⁵²See RRG's website www.rrg.sg (accessed 15 January 2011) for more on JI's ideology. See also the blog of Muhammad Haniff Hassan at http://counterideology.multiply.com/?&show_interstitial=1&u= (accessed 15 January 2011) for articles on JI's ideology and counter-extremism related materials.

⁵³This pyramid which illustrates the key concepts in JI's ideology is the result of RRG's findings and analysis from their interactions with the JI members. RRG discovered that WB is the foundation of JI's ideology and is always emphasized in the organization. From their interactions and discussions with the detainees, it was discovered that the Salafi understanding of WB is deeply entrenched in their belief system.

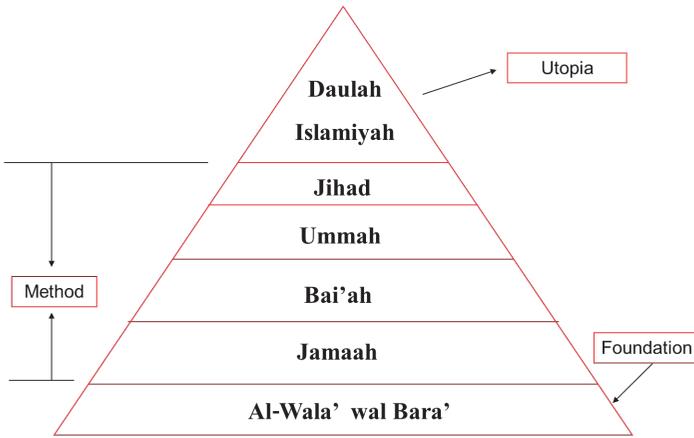


Figure 1. Jemaah Islamiyah's Pyramid-Ideology

understanding of WB, Muslims must befriend and care for Muslims only. One who loves non-Muslims is equal to loving what is immoral. They believe that in the long run, non-Muslims have to be subjugated. Using WB as the foundation, JI members have to go through an array of methods or processes before their objective is met. To achieve their desired goal, which is the Islamization of the region, JI creates a *jamaah* (group) which is a community of believers that act as a vanguard. They stress the need for individual Muslims to be in the *jamaah*. This, according to them, is a necessary precursor to the establishment of *Daulah Islamiyah* (Islamic State). Each of the JI members needs to take the *bai'ah* (pledge or oath of allegiance) from JI leaders as a way to portray their loyalty to the leader, group and its doctrines. With this pledge, JI members become obligated to listen and obey to the best of their ability in matters which do not constitute a sin to God, to the *amir* as the leader of the group and other appointed leaders. When these conditions are not satisfied, the person concerned becomes disqualified from being a member and is seen as having committed a sin by dishonoring his *bai'ah*.

The organization then aims towards targeting the Muslim *ummah* (community), to seek support and garner sympathizers to its cause. The milestones towards the establishment of the Islamic state will not be completed without *jihad* (struggle in the way of God), the final stage which Prophet Muhammad was reported to have gone through in calling people to the fold of Islam. JI members believe that *jihad musallah* (armed jihad)⁵⁴ is inevitable and the only means to reach their objective, thus promoting an ideology of violence.⁵⁵ Through these methods, JI aims to establish the *Daulah Islamiyah*, a utopian state where Islamic laws are being implemented.⁵⁶

⁵⁴The term *jihad musallah* or armed jihad is exclusively coined by JI to refer to armed aggression against the infidels or enemies of Islam. This term is only found in the PUPJI.

⁵⁵For more on JI's understanding and reasoning of Jihad, see Hassan, Muhammad Haniff, *Unlicensed to Kill: Countering Imam Samudera's Justification for the Bali Bombing*, Nature Media Pte Ltd, Singapore, 2006. The book is also available at <http://counterideology.multiply.com/video/item/131/My-book-Unlicensed-to-Kill-free-online-version-in-pdf-format> (accessed 12 March 2011).

⁵⁶Interview with former JI members in Singapore (2004) and Indonesia (2006). See also http://www.rrg.sg/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=4&Itemid=7 (accessed 12 August 2012). For more on JI in Singapore, see Mohamed Bin Ali, "Identifying Key Concerns of Jemaah Islamiyah: The Singapore Context"; Muhammad Haniff Hassan and Kenneth George Pereire, "An Ideological Response to Combating Terrorism — The Singapore Perspective", *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 2006, pp. 458–477; Mohamed Bin Ali, *Coping With the Threat of Jemaah Islamiyah: The Singapore Experience*, available at http://www.pvtr.org/ICPVTR/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=278&Itemid=217 (accessed 12 March 2011). For more on JI's ideology, see Rohan Gunaratna and Mohamed Bin Ali, *Countering the Ideology of Jemaah Islamiyah — A Point-by-Point Approach*, ICAFI University Press, Hyderabad, April 2007; Rohan Gunaratna, "The Ideology of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah" in *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Hudson Institute, 2005, Vol. 1, pp. 68–81; Rohan Gunaratna, *Ideology in Terrorism and Counter Terrorism: Lessons from Combating Al-Qaeda and Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah in Southeast Asia*, CSRC Discussion Paper 05/42, September 2005.

As a non-Salafi Muslim⁵⁷ and given the fact that WB is not exclusively taught in the Islamic institutions which I attended,⁵⁸ this concept seems relatively new to me and to most members of the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) who counsel the JI detainees. In reality, the concept of WB is relatively unknown outside the Salafi world. It is also believed that the concept is not a component of the subject of *tawhid* taught in many Islamic schools and institutions around the world with the exception of Salafi-oriented schools. It can be argued that Muslims like JI members and other modern Salafis who understand WB in a distinct and exclusive manner pose a great challenge to the prospect of Muslim and non-Muslim relationship and interaction. In addition, it can also be argued that accepting the modern Salafi meaning and position of WB could have profound implications in today's socio-political reality. This is so, especially as the world continues to witness a unidirectional move of Muslims from Muslim-majority countries to countries where Muslims form a minority for political or economic reasons. In these realities, practicing WB as described in modern Salafism would be inconvenient for the Muslims to say the very least. At the very worst, it becomes the basis for Islamist movements such as

⁵⁷I do not consider myself a “Salafi” in the context of subscribing to the exclusive ideological trend of modern Salafis — particularly the strict adherence to their understanding of Islamic practices as enjoined by the Prophet and his companions. It can be seen that this particular inclination of modern Salafis differentiates them somewhat from the “non-Salafi” Muslims. In the modern context, the terms “Salafi” and “Salafism” are very ambiguous and complex. It is not clear among many scholars, individuals and even Salafis themselves as to who is a “Salafi” or who is eligible to be one. The ambiguous and complex nature of the term “Salafi” can be seen when non-Salafi Muslims also claim to be Salafis in the sense that they also follow the teachings and footsteps of the *salaf al-salih*. See Chapter 1 (Part I) for more discussion on this issue and a detailed explanation on the meaning and modern usage of the terms “Salafi” and “Salafism”.

⁵⁸I attended *Madrasah Aljunied Al-Islamiah* (Aljunied Islamic School), founded in 1927 and considered the most prestigious Islamic institution in Singapore, as a full-time student (1990–1995), and obtained my Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Jurisprudence (*Shariah Islamiah*) from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt in 2001.

Al-Qaeda⁵⁹ and JI, as seen from its ideology earlier, to incite hatred and legitimize violence against the disbelieving majority.

From the religious perspective, WB is important as it regulates the desired Muslim and non-Muslim relationship. It is a sacred, divine code of conduct which Islam has enjoined its followers to adhere to. The concept, in its original conception, requires a deep and insightful contextual knowledge as a basis for understanding its meaning and illusion. There has been very little analysis of the modern-day interpretation of WB even within the Muslim community. This is a critical topic that encompasses issues of religious and political alliances, providing support to one's allies and enemies, innocence from accountability for the actions of others, and association and disassociation with specific peoples and deeds.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that comprehending modern Salafis' conception of WB, its realities and complexities has become an urgent priority in the lives of Muslims today. As mentioned earlier, this understanding becomes critical as Muslims increasingly live as minority communities across the globe. As a divine code of conduct that prescribes the desired relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, the consequences of applying the modern Salafi concept of WB are serious — WB generally promotes a way of life that is insular and hostile towards non-Muslims and this, it might be argued, is at variance with the more tolerant, inclusive nature of Islam.

⁵⁹WB is an important doctrine in Al-Qaeda and many contemporary Jihadi Salafi movements. As this research shows, the concept is the basis for Jihadi Salafis to incite hatred and kill their adversaries. See Quiggin, Tom, "Understanding Al-Qaeda's Ideology for Counter Narrative Work", *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2009, available at <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/67/html> (accessed 24 April 2011); Kepel, Gilles and Milelli, Jean-Pierre (eds.), *Al-Qaeda in Its Own Words*, Harvard University Press, 2008. See also *Interview with Mamoun Fandy* at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/interviews/fandy.html> (accessed 24 April 2011); Brachman, Jarret, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 47; Aslan, Reza, *How to Win a Cosmic War: Confronting Radical Religions*, Arrow Books, London, 2010, p. 106.

It is necessary to mention that Islamic rulings and issues concerning the Muslim and non-Muslim relationship as embedded in the modern Salafi concept of WB is not something new. Muslim jurists and scholars in the past have dealt with it extensively. However, there are still many questions that need urgent answers. Many Muslims today are living in new environments where the proper application of WB is of utmost importance. Increasingly, Muslims are living as minority communities in non-Muslim countries or communities. Muslim countries and governments also face new challenges and problems in a new international environment which were non-existent in the Islamic golden period. The world today interacts through a web of international regulations and organizations, leaving little room for isolation. The current world we are living in sees the urgent need to secure peace and uphold justice for all individuals regardless of faith and language. All these factors and others impose a need for a clear and broader understanding of Islamic law concerning Muslim and non-Muslim relationship and, in particular, the concept of WB.

As mentioned earlier, it could be argued that WB as portrayed in modern Salafism is at odds with the Islamic values of maintaining peace, respecting humanity and developing a tolerant and harmonious society. The claim made by modern Salafis that WB is a requirement of *tawhid* and that abandonment of the concept by Muslims would nullify their faith is a serious one and highly questionable. Arguably, if this is the case, how do modern Salafis explain the fact that non-Salafi Muslims and the majority of Muslims do not know about the concept and they are not taught about it in their *tawhid* lessons?⁶⁰

Today, the concept of WB is seen as the driving force behind the separation of Salafi proponents and non-Salafis into two non-interacting, antagonistic spheres. If we look up Google Search on the internet, this is the represented meaning in almost all the hits. In

⁶⁰In the traditional Islamic teaching, the subject of *tawhid* encompasses three major areas, namely *Ilahiyat* (issues related to God and His Attributes), *Nubuwwat* (issues related to Prophethood) and *Sam'iyat* or *Ghaybiyyat* (matters related to the unseen). These areas are the traditional tripartite in the subject of *Ilm al-Tawhid* (the study of monotheism), also known as *Ilm al-Kalam* (literally, the study of words or speeches). The topic of WB does not come under any of these three areas.

one website, it says: “*The reason why Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ is so important in Islam is because, if it is taken into practice, it can remove all the characteristics of jahiliyyah (state of ignorance) from the Muslim ummah, it guarantees the preservation of the Ummah, and it distinguishes the believer from the disbeliever.*”⁶¹ Such a statement is believed to attract Muslims to learn and accept Salafis’ conception of WB.

The modern Salafi concept of WB has gained popularity in contemporary times due to several reasons. First, in a very simplistic manner, the concept appears to provide solutions to the dilemmas of Muslims living in what is often perceived as hostile environments to the practice and progress of their religion. Second, an aggressive promotion of the concept on the internet means that an increasing number of Muslims are beginning to be aware of the concept — albeit a single meaning of the term. Third, the number of Muslims who understand Arabic, the language of the Quran and Quranic exegesis, is small, leaving them vulnerable to the understanding and interpretation of the few. Those who are particularly taken in by the concept appear to be the internet-savvy Muslim youths, who proved to be the most vulnerable, given their shallow understanding of Islamic teachings and an overzealous drive to become instant better Muslims.

In this globalized world, many Muslims feel that their key beliefs are being challenged and their identity threatened. As a result, Muslims are searching for signposts and guidelines to practice Islam in a world seemingly at odds with Islamic principles. Modern Salafis claim that WB offers solutions to dilemmas faced by Muslims today by providing a simplistic demarcation of the realm of belief and disbelief. They assert that by adhering strictly to the believers and rejecting everything of the disbelievers, Muslim individuals can lead a pure, Islamic way of life. Salafis do not form the majority of today’s Muslim world community, but is their ideology, particularly WB, gaining ground and popularity among the laypersons? If so, what are the reasons for this?

Due to the factors mentioned above, there is a need to study and critically analyze not only the concept in modern Salafism, but more

⁶¹ *Al-Wala wal Bara (Love and Hate for the Sake of Allah)* at <http://quranicverse99.tripod.com/islamicways/id15.html> (accessed 12 March 2010).

importantly the diverse interpretation and understanding of it within the various modern Salafi currents. Are they all isolationist and rejectionist in nature? This study on WB in modern Salafism proves that within the Salafi ranks, there is no standardized adherence to a predictable, consistent set of beliefs. Though similar in their admiration of the pious predecessors and agreement that the adherence to their way of life and practice will revive back the “authentic” form of Islam, the various currents of modern Salafism differ in their treatment of the sources of Islamic knowledge and their responses to the conditions that are unique to their time.⁶² Similarly, this is also true of the concept of WB. Though all Salafis acknowledge the importance of WB, they might differ in the methods and degree of applying the concept in their day-to-day life depending on how they interpret religious texts and view social and political issues.

Objectives of the Study

This study generally attempts to establish the position of the WB concept in modern Salafism. It proposes that WB plays a central role in the daily lives of modern Salafis in the religious, social and political spheres. The rationale of engaging in this study lies upon the need to track the emergence, understanding and complexities of the concept in modern Salafism. Studying the concept of WB is important in the efforts to understand the social, religious and political dynamics of modern Salafism.

The central concern and focus throughout this research project is to investigate the dynamics and complexities of the concept of WB within modern Salafism. Importantly, the research aims to understand the diverse interpretation of the concept in modern Salafism; and how modern Salafis understand and apply the concept in contemporary religious, social and political settings. Although the main concern

⁶²For various strands of Salafism in the modern period, see Abdel Haleem, Tariq, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of the Counterfeit Salafis from the Methodology of Ahlul Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah*, Dar al-Arqam Publishers, November 2004, available at http://www.tariqabdelhaleem.com/pdf/9Salafis_Nov22.pdf (accessed 12 March 2010); Wiktorowicz, Quintan, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 29, No. 3, May 2006, pp. 207–239.

of modern Salafi discourse is *aqidah* rather than law (*fiqh*),⁶³ this research discovers that the complexities, diversities and disputes surrounding the concept in modern Salafism often revolve around issues of social, political and current realities. This can be seen in the way the different Salafi currents perceive and provide rulings on issues such as political obedience to Muslim rulers, ruling with other than the *shariah*, and assisting non-Muslims against Muslims in times of war and conflict, and how these issues are related to the concept of WB.

The objectives of this study can be summarized as follows:

- (1) To develop a greater understanding of the importance and validity of WB in modern Salafism. This includes looking at the definition of the concept in modern Salafism, identifying its emergence, development and its various dimensions.
- (2) To explore the realities, complexities and various interpretations of the concept among the various Salafi currents.
- (3) To identify the main proponents and writers of the concept among modern Salafis and assess the main literature on the subject. By identifying the main works written on WB, the extent of influence of the concept in modern Salafism and diverse methods of presenting the concept would subsequently be determined.
- (4) To develop a framework that would assist in understanding the phenomenon of modern Salafism. The study departs from the premise that understanding the concept of WB in modern Salafism is one of the feasible ways to comprehend the dynamics and complexities of modern Salafism. The framework that this research develops uses the categorization of modern Salafis into *purists*, *politicos* and *Jihadis*;⁶⁴ and the dimensions of WB (*aqidah*, social, political and *Jihadi*) to understand the diversity

⁶³Lacroix, Stephane, "Between Revolution and Apoliticism: Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani and His Impact on the Shaping of Contemporary Salafism" in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, pp. 59–61.

⁶⁴This particular categorization of modern Salafis is taken from Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", pp. 207–239. The categorization of modern Salafis into three distinct groups as mentioned by Wiktorowicz is also observed by other scholars and observers. See Chapter 1 (Part I) for more discussion on groups and categorizations of modern Salafis.

in modern Salafis' understanding of the concept. Such a framework is believed to be useful in analyzing other religious doctrines that exist in modern Salafism.

- (5) To make a novel contribution in the field of the study of modern Salafism. This book aims to fill the gap and absence of intellectual analysis of the concept in modern Salafism. It is hoped to improve the understanding of modern Salafism and benefit students, academicians, scholars, governments and security agents dealing with modern Salafi beliefs and ideas.

With regard to research contribution, it is hoped that this study will intellectually improve our understanding of WB in modern Salafism and benefit those interested in the study of modern Salafism.⁶⁵ Uniquely, in this research I was investigating a practically new area of social research concerning the beliefs, values and attitudes of the different strands of modern Salafis in the current Muslim society in relation to religion, society and politics. It is my belief that the findings of this research may widen the scope of understanding and offer new or alternative interpretations especially to the community of academicians, researchers and even to the government and security agencies dealing with the ideology of modern Salafism.

As a person who enjoys a background of Arabic and religious education, and is trained in the field of Islamist and extremist ideology research,⁶⁶ it gives me the advantage of knowing and understanding the ideology, language and context of modern Salafism very well. In addition, the opportunity and "hands-on" experience to meet, interview and counsel the detained JI members in Singapore and to conduct field research in Indonesia,⁶⁷

⁶⁵More on the implications and contributions of this study will be explained in the Conclusion (Chapter 6) of this book.

⁶⁶Since November 2004, I have been an Associate Research Fellow at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) of the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. My research interests include contemporary religious extremism and de-radicalization of Islamist militants.

⁶⁷Between 2005–2006, I travelled extensively to Indonesia (Jakarta, Pekanbaru and Dumai in Sumatera, Makassar, Poso and Tentena in Sulawesi, Bali and other parts of the country) to interview former JI members and Salafi-oriented Islamists.

Saudi Arabia,⁶⁸ Egypt,⁶⁹ Yemen,⁷⁰ Pakistan⁷¹ and Iraq,⁷² among others; and also the opportunity to meet and discuss with religious

⁶⁸I have travelled to Saudi Arabia numerous times for research, visit and pilgrimage. In February 2010, on the invitation of the Ministry of Interior of Saudi Arabia, I visited Mohammed Ibn Naif Centre for Counselling and Care (which is the Saudi rehabilitation centre for violent extremists), Naif Arab University of Security Sciences and Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University. During the visit, I had discussions with several *ulema* (Muslim religious scholars) and government officials on issues of Salafism and religious extremism. For a report on the visit, see www.pvtr.org/pdf/Report/RSIS_SaudiReport_2010.pdf (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁶⁹As stated earlier, I studied at Al-Azhar University, Cairo from 1997–2001. In 2007 and 2008, I visited Cairo for field research. In Cairo, I interviewed several Salafis and Islamists including Montasser Al-Zayat (who is said to have links with the Islamist groups responsible for the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981), academicians and religious scholars including the late Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Dr Sayyid Muhammad Tantawi.

⁷⁰In July 2010, I visited Yemen on the invitation of Yemen's Ministry of Endowment and Guidance to conduct a research on radicalization, de-radicalization and Salafism. In Yemen, I interviewed the Minister of Endowment and Guidance, Judge Hammoud Al-Hittar, several Salafi clerics and government officials. For a report of this visit, see www.pvtr.org/pdf/Report/RSIS_ICPVTR_Yemen_2011.pdf (accessed 29 March 2012).

⁷¹In January 2005, I conducted a field research in Pakistan to study Salafi-oriented religious schools (*madaris*). I visited eight schools in total: Jamia Muntazir, Jamia Naeemia and Jamia Ashrafia in Lahore; Jamia Darul Khair, Al-Jamia As-Sattariah Al-Islamiah and Jamiat Al-Uloom Al-Islamiyyah in Karachi; Jamiat Muhammadiyah in Islamabad; and Jamia Darul Uloom Haqqania in Peshawar. The full report of this visit is in my possession and is also available at ICPVTR.

⁷²In November 2006, on the invitation of the United States Military Command Multi-National Force Iraq — Detainee Task Force 134, I travelled to Baghdad, Iraq with Professor Rohan Gunaratna as advisors to the Iraqi and U.S. authorities for their detainees' ideological rehabilitation programme. In Baghdad, we interviewed detained extremists who are mainly followers and admirers of the well-known Jihadi Salafis Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi (d. 2006) and Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqdisi (b. 1959) in Camp Cropper. See Angel, Ami and Rohan Gunaratna, *Terrorist Rehabilitation: The U.S. Experience in Iraq*, CRC Press Taylor and Francis Group, 2012. See also Simon Montlake, "U.S. Tries Rehab for Religious Extremists", *The Christian Science Monitor*, 9 October 2007, available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1009/p01s04-woap.html> (accessed 28 March 2012); and Susan Mohammad, "To Deprogram a Jihadist: Rehab Didn't Work for Al-Qaeda's Deputy in Yemen. Can It Work for Any Terrorist?", *Maclean's*, 2 February 2009, available at <http://www2.macleans.ca/2009/02/02/to-deprogram-a-jihadist/> (accessed 29 March 2012).

clerics, scholars, academics and security personnel, have helped me significantly to understand the world of modern Salafism and to conduct this research. My particular background has granted me easy access to the primary sources as well as an understanding of these sources in their original languages.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

Modern Salafism can be seen as a complex and heterogeneous religious phenomenon in contemporary Islamic thought. As the title of the book suggests, this research is about exploring WB in the ideology of modern Salafism. Hence, it focuses on the concept exclusively, although there are other religious concepts such as *hijrah*, *takfir*, *jihad* and *tahkim bi al-shariah* (ruling according to Islamic law) which are connected to and have a significant relevance to WB in modern Salafism. These concepts, which could probably be a research topic by themselves, are not discussed in great depth here apart from their relevance to the modern Salafi concept of WB.

Similarly, the concept of WB in modern Salafism is a vast, dynamic and complex one. This research does not attempt to cover all issues surrounding the concept in modern Salafism. As stated earlier, the general focus of this research is to explore the centrality, breadth and complexities of the concept. In terms of the research central argument, it argues that WB in modern Salafism is not static but dynamic, and modern Salafis from different backgrounds or “schools” would present the concept differently. Specific examples of the religious, social, political and Jihadi roles of WB are selected and discussed as proof to show the validity of the research argument. Importantly, the research argues that WB in modern Salafism does not exist in a religious vacuum, but is shaped by the current social, local and political circumstances.

It also needs to be mentioned here that this research does not study all the books on WB written by modern Salafi thinkers. I have identified more than 40 books on WB written by modern Salafis (see Appendix A). Due to the focus and the central argument that this research attempts to put forth, only selected books

on WB by modern Salafi thinkers are studied and analyzed. These books are selected due to their importance and significance, which will be explained in the next section of this chapter. When analyzing the books on WB by modern Salafi thinkers (Chapter 5), it needs to be emphasized that the conclusion made (i.e., a particular Salafi orientation has an effect on the style of writing and presentation of the concept by modern Salafis) is not absolute.⁷³ This is primarily due to the analysis which is conducted based on selected books and also the complex nature of the concept in modern Salafism itself. As for Internet references, there are many websites (in both English and Arabic) that discuss and deal with the Salafi concept of WB. This research only refers to selected Salafi websites⁷⁴ to grasp the meaning and different roles of WB presented by modern Salafis.

Sources of Research and Methodology

The sources for this research are mainly divided into two categories: primary and secondary. The primary sources mainly comprise books written by modern Salafi thinkers on the subject of WB. It also includes articles, interviews and statements, and audio and video lectures on WB by modern Salafis which are mostly obtained from the internet. Obviously, these primary sources are vital to understand modern Salafis' concept and comprehension of WB. Hence, uncovering and analyzing the works of modern Salafis allows us to appreciate a deeper understanding of the realities and complexities of WB in modern Salafism. In addition, studying and analyzing these works allows us to realize that the concept is not only being passionately discussed within modern Salafis, but has also resulted in extensive debate and dispute amongst them.

As stated earlier, this research mainly looks at the books written on the subject of WB by prominent modern Salafi figures as its primary sources. These Salafi thinkers come from different orientations

⁷³See end of Chapter 5 for more explanation on this notion.

⁷⁴See Appendix B for some of these websites.

and Salafi backgrounds. The books written by these Salafi thinkers which serve as primary sources for this research are listed as follows:

- (1) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil al-Islam min Mafaahim Aqidah al-Salaf* (Loyalty and Disavowal in Islam According to the Belief of the Pious Predecessors) by Muhammad Saeed Bin Salim Al-Qahtani.⁷⁵ Al-Qahtani's book on WB is considered the most famous book written on the subject. The book is widely available and has been translated into many languages. As stated earlier, Al-Qahtani is also believed to be one of the first, if not the first modern Salafi scholar to write on the topic of WB. The reasons this book is chosen for this research are twofold: (1) it is a well-known book on the subject; (2) it is the most comprehensive book ever written by a modern Salafi scholar on the subject of WB.
- (2) *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud* (Loyalty and Disavowal: An Inherited Doctrine and a Lost Reality) by Ayman Mohammed Rabie' Al-Zawahiri (b. 1951).⁷⁶ Al-Zawahiri wrote this book in 2002, several months after the incident of September 11, 2001. As the second-in-command in the Al-Qaeda organization during that period, Al-Zawahiri asserts a great influence within the Jihadi Salafi community. This book written by Al-Zawahiri could be seen as providing legitimacy for his violent attacks against the West, especially the United States, which resulted from his deep sense of hatred and enmity towards them. Al-Zawahiri's book is chosen for this research due to the uniqueness of Al-Zawahiri presenting the concept in a more *jihadi* and violence-oriented slant.

⁷⁵Al-Qahtani, Muhammad Saeed, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Fil Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, Al-Maktabah al-Taufiqiyah, Cairo, 2003. The English version of the book is available at <http://kalamullah.com/manhaj.html> (accessed 8 March 2012).

⁷⁶Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud* published by the Arabic-language London daily *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* in 2002. The Arabic version of this book is available at <http://www.e-prism.org/pages/5/> (accessed 10 March 2012). The English translation of the book is available in Raymond Ibrahim (ed. and trans.), *The Al-Qaeda Reader*, Doubleday Books, 2007, pp. 66–115.

transformed WB from a piety Islamic doctrine to one that necessitates Muslims to overthrow the Muslim rulers and regimes. His political interpretation and radical understanding of the concept has influenced many Jihadi Salafis and like-minded individuals, especially through his online library and personal website. It is also interesting to note that apart from his book *Millat Ibrahim*, most of Al-Maqdisi's books and writings revolve around the same concept of WB.⁸⁰

- (6) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahinah* (Loyalty and Disavowal in the Chapter of *Al-Mumtahinah*) by Wasim Fathullah (b. unknown).⁸¹ Unlike the books on WB mentioned above, this book by Wasim Fathullah is very unique in the sense that it provides a comprehensive discussion on the importance of the sixtieth chapter of the Quran, *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, and the historical events of its verses which have an impact on the way modern Salafis understand and treat the concept of WB.

Due to the significance of the concept in modern Salafism and for the benefit of non-Arabic readers, all the books mentioned above have been translated to the English language with the exception of Abdul Rahman's which I personally have not come across. Some like Al-Qahtani's book have been translated to English, Indonesian,⁸²

⁸⁰See, for example, Al-Maqdisi's books, *Dimuqratiyyah Diimun* (Democracy is Religion) and *Al-Kawashif Al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr Al-Dawlah Al-Sa'udiyah* (Clear Evidence on the Apostasy of the Saudi State). Both books along with all other books written by Al-Maqdisi are published online and are available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/t> (accessed 1 August 2012).

⁸¹See this link <http://www.saaid.net/book/open.php?cat=1&book=1313> (accessed 25 February 2012) to download the book *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahinah* (Loyalty and Disavowal in the Chapter of *Al-Mumtahinah*) by Wasim Fathullah. The English translation of the book is available at <http://kalamullah.com/manhaj.html> (accessed 31 July 2012).

⁸²See *Loyalitas dan Pengingkaran* (WB in the Indonesian language), available at <http://kajiantarbiyah.blogspot.co.uk/2007/06/al-wala-wal-bara.html> (accessed 25 January 2011).

Malay, Chinese and German.⁸³ In addition, all the books and their English translations are widely available on the internet and can be easily downloaded for free.

Apart from the writings on WB by modern Salafi scholars, this research also briefly looks at some of the books written on issues surrounding the concept of WB by Salafi scholars of the past. This is especially necessary when we need to reflect on how WB was manifested in the early days of Wahhabism (Chapter 3). As mentioned earlier, two books involving the issues of WB written by early Wahhabi scholars will be referred to in this research, namely *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak* by Sulayman Ibn Abdallah and *Sabil al-Najat wal Fikak min Muwalat al-Murtaddin wa Ahl al-Ishrak* by Hamad Ibn Atiq.

Obviously, modern Salafi scholars and thinkers who have written on the subject of WB are not only restricted to those mentioned above. Besides these Salafis, there are many others who have also authored on the subject in the form of books or at least in the form of articles and statements.⁸⁴ For example, Abu Muhammad Al-Mas'ari, a Saudi Salafi who gained asylum in the United Kingdom in 1994, wrote a 236-page book on WB entitled *Al-Muwaalah wa Al-Mu'aadah* (Loyalty and Enmity) which was published in 2004 (third edition) by *Tanzim At-Tajdid Al-Islami* (Islamic Reform Organization) based in the United Kingdom. Another Salafi scholar, Mahmas Bin Abdullah Al-Jal'ud, also wrote a book with the same title *Al-Muwaalah wa Al-Mu'aadah* which was published in 1987. The books on WB mentioned earlier have been specifically chosen for this research because they constitute the most famous books written on the subject. Apart from the comprehensiveness of some of these books like those written by Al-Qahtani and Al-Maqdisi, they also

⁸³See Al-Qahtani's book in German language at <http://i24.de.am/buch.html> (accessed 25 January 2011).

⁸⁴For a list of books and *fatwas* on WB written by modern Salafi thinkers, see Appendix A. For a full list of books in Arabic, see <http://www.ahlalhdeth.com/vb/showthread.php?t=130785> (accessed 17 April 2012) and <http://www.lahdah.org/vb/t40869.html> (accessed 27 August 2012).

represent the uniqueness of these writers and thinkers who are believed to have come from different modern Salafi backgrounds.

While the books by modern Salafi scholars are important for this research, the research also depends on interviews, statements and lectures by modern Salafis who have addressed the issue of WB, as its primary sources. In particular, the research observes how this concept is addressed by the purist, politico and Jihadi Salafis. As mentioned earlier, these statements and lectures which also appear in the form of videos are mostly obtained from the internet. For example, the research refers to Ibn Baz and Al-Maqdisi's official and personal websites at www.ibnbaz.org (accessed 15 April 2011) and www.tawhed.ws (accessed 23 May 2011), respectively, to grasp the purist and Jihadi Salafis' definition and understanding of WB. In addition, as one of its primary sources, the research looks at the writings and lectures of non-Arabic-speaking Salafis living in the West who have addressed the subject of WB. For example, the Jamaican Abdullah Faisal (b. 1963)⁸⁵ and Abu Waleed (b. 1980)⁸⁶ from the SalafiMedia organization,⁸⁷ both from the UK, are among those who are very vocal on the concept of WB.

Apart from writings and lectures on WB by modern Salafis, the research also briefly refers to the works of classical and medieval Muslim scholars, especially in the field of *tafsir* (Quranic interpretation or exegesis) and *hadith*. For example, the research refers to the exegesis by the famous Al-Qurtubi (d. 1273),⁸⁸

⁸⁵See Sheikh Abdullah Al-Faisal, "Al-Walaa and Al-Baraa — Loving and Hating for the Sake of Allah, Part 1", *Radical Review: Revolution Muslim*, January 2008, Vol. 1. Al-Faisal's speech on WB from The Islamic Awakening Conference is available at www.kalamullah.com/faisal.html (accessed 18 April 2009). Al-Faisal is a Muslim cleric who preached in the United Kingdom until he was convicted of stirring up racial hatred and urging his followers to murder Jews, Hindus, Christians, and Americans. See his biography at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdullah_el-Faisal (accessed 25 August 2012).

⁸⁶See Abu Waleed's biography at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Abu-Waleed/261649077182101?sk=info> (accessed 25 August 2012).

⁸⁷See <http://www.salafimedia.com/> (accessed 15 April 2012).

⁸⁸Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Quran* (A Compilation of the Rulings of the Quran), Dar Al-Kutub Al-Arabi li Al-Tiba'ah wa Al-Nashr, 1968.

Al-Tabari (d. 923)⁸⁹ and Ibn Kathir (d. 1373)⁹⁰ to understand the interpretation and historical context of the Quranic verses on WB which modern Salafis base on. As the so-called authority on the science of *tafsir*, their works will be consulted when we discuss modern Salafis' use of Quranic verses for the validity of WB in Chapter 2. The Quranic exegesis of Al-Qurtubi and Al-Tabari are chosen as they are among the most famous classical *tafsir*, whereas Ibn Kathir is chosen as he is one of the most popular and most cited exegetes among modern Salafis. Importantly, this research also refers to the works of Muslim scholars and thinkers such as Taqi Ad-Din Ibn Taimiyyah and Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab whose works have significantly shaped the ideology of modern Salafism.

As for the secondary sources, the research looks at the writings of scholars and academics who have produced works on modern Salafism and the concept of WB. There has been great interest in the research on Salafism in recent years, especially since the incident of September 11, 2001. As Roel Meijer argues in his book *Global Salafism*, "much of the research on Salafism has been through the prism of 'security studies' or books that play on the popular view that equates Salafism with violence".⁹¹ Not much research has been done on the ideology of modern Salafism, let alone the concept of WB. What seems to be the interest and focus of these writings is the ideology of Jihadi Salafism rather than the ideology of modern Salafism itself.

Likewise, not much has been studied on the concept of WB. With the exception of Joas Wagemakers who extensively studies the

⁸⁹ Muhammad Bin Jarir Al-Tabari, *Jami' Al-Bayan an Ta'wil Ayi Al-Quran* (A Compilation of Explanations of the Verses of Quran), Dar Al-Qalam, Dimashq, 1998.

⁹⁰ Ismail Bin Umar Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim* (The Exegesis of the Great Quran), Dar Taibah, 1999 and the English translation, *Tafsir Ibn Katsir* (Abridged), Darusslam Publishers and Distributors, 2000.

⁹¹ See "Introduction" chapter in Meijer, Roel (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd, 2009.

concept in the ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqisi,⁹² this concept can be seen as understudied. Most writers would briefly touch on and explain WB in their writings on the Salafi and Jihadi ideology.⁹³ A comprehensive and critical study of the concept has yet to be done and this research hopes to fill that vacuum. As stated earlier, this research hopes to make a novel contribution in the field of modern Islamic thought, especially in the subject of modern Salafi ideology.

As for the methodology, this study is a library-based research and the material studied here are mainly books, articles and materials obtained from the internet. I have also used some of the findings from interviews and field research.⁹⁴ In this research, I attempt to discover and analyze the meanings and understanding of WB as specifically stipulated in the books and writings of modern Salafi scholars who have written and lectured on the subject. For the opinions of

⁹²Joas Wagemakers completed his doctoral dissertation at Radboud University Nijmegen in 2010 on the ideology and influence of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqisi, a Jordanian Salafi ideologue who is widely considered one of the most important radical Islamic scholars alive. See Wagemakers, Joas, *A Quietist Jihadi: The Ideology and Influence of Abu Muhammad al-Maqqisi*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2012. See also book chapters and articles by the same author: “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqisi” in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd, 2009, pp. 81–106; “Defining the Enemy: Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqisi’s Radical Reading of Surat Al-Mumtahana”, *Brill Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 48, 2008, pp. 348–371; “A Purist-Jihadi Salafi: The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqqisi”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2, August 2009, pp. 281–297; “Abu Muhammad al-Maqqisi: A Counter-Terrorism Asset”, *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 1, No. 6, May 2008; “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala’ wal Bara’”, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 44, 2012, pp. 93–110.

⁹³For example, see Brachman, Jarret M., *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 47; Aslan, Reza, *How to Win a Cosmic War: Confronting Radical Religions*, Arrow Books, London, 2010, p. 106; and Ulph, Stephen, *Towards a Curriculum for the Teaching of Jihadist Ideology, Part 2: The Doctrinal Frame*, The Jamestown Foundation, 2010, p. 27.

⁹⁴These include my interviews with former JI members in Singapore and other Muslim extremists interviewed during field research in Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iraq.

each individual Salafi or group on the concept, I have mainly relied on original sources by observing and analyzing their writings, statements and also lectures.

As mentioned earlier, to analyze the writings on WB by modern Salafis (in Chapter 5), I have decided to use the framework developed by Quintan Wiktorowicz who divides modern Salafis into three distinct groups based on their different ideological trends and contextual interpretation, i.e., purists, politicians and Jihadis.⁹⁵ I feel that this particular categorization or framework is useful for this research especially in the attempt to comprehend the diversity and complexities of both modern Salafism and the concept of WB. This is so as this categorization is mainly based on Salafis' contextual interpretation, especially on the issue of contemporary politics which is believed to divide modern Salafis.

The Chapters

In this introduction, I have mapped the general and fundamental understanding of the concept of WB in modern Salafism. I have also attempted to highlight the significance and objectives of this research. Broadly speaking, the research is divided into two parts. Part One (Chapters 1 and 2) provides an introduction to modern Salafism and the concept of WB in modern Salafism. This introductory part is important as it sets the scene before we discuss the realities, practicalities and complexities of the concept in modern Salafism in Part Two (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) of the research. Part Two firstly looks at WB in Wahhabism. This is followed by observing the different positions modern Salafis have on WB, and finally analyzes the works of selected modern Salafis on the concept. Among the important questions that Part Two attempts to address are: How did the concept of WB originate in modern Salafism? How has it developed and transformed since the time of its inception? What are the different positions and opinions modern Salafis have on the concept? How do the different currents in modern Salafism

⁹⁵Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", pp. 207–239.

differ in their understanding of WB? Why do they differ? How do the different dimensions of WB affect modern Salafis' understanding of the concept? And what are the main issues related to WB that have become a point of debate and dispute among modern Salafis?

After the introduction, the study is divided into five chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. The first part provides an introduction to the world of Salafism, particularly the phenomenon of modern Salafism. It begins with a brief definition and overview of Salafism, its history, and its realities and complexities in the modern world. It will also look at the various factions and groups of modern Salafism as observed by many academics and commentators. In addition, the chapter briefly looks at the ideology, characteristics and components of modern Salafism. Such an introduction to Salafism is seen as important before we begin with the discussion on the Salafi concept of WB.

The second part of Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the concept of WB. It begins with its definition, significance and development in modern Salafism. In particular, it attempts to discover the main reasons why such a concept does not only exist, but constitutes a pillar in the Salafi ideology. This part of the chapter will reveal that the modern Salafi concept of WB has three main dimensions, namely the creedal, social, and political. In addition, the development and transformation of the concept in modern Salafism has also resulted in another dimension which is the Jihadi dimension. The introduction of the concept as laid out in this chapter will lead to the discussion on how modern Salafis derive the concept from religious texts, especially the Quran, which will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 aims to illustrate how the sixtieth chapter of the Quran known as *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* (She That Is To Be Examined) and the idea of *Millat Ibrahim* (The Religion of Abraham) play an important part in shaping the modern Salafi concept of WB. The chapter starts with the premise that understanding *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* and what it entails is important to understand WB in modern Salafism. In addition, the chapter attempts to look at how this *surah* (chapter) is connected to other Quranic verses of *wala'*

and *bara'* to form the typical Salafi brand of WB. Importantly, this chapter attempts to show how modern Salafis' reading of the *surah's* text and their interpretation of its context has transformed these particular Quranic injunctions — which seem to warn the early Muslims of the dangers of forming alliances with their hostile enemies — into the foundation of a radical ideology. It will also highlight how the Jihadi Salafis interpret verses from this *surah* politically and combine them with the concept of *takfir* against Muslim rulers. The chapter begins with an introduction and a general understanding of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*. In particular, it highlights the reason behind its revelations, historical context, common themes of the *surah*, and the idea of *Millat Ibrahim*, and how all these have shaped modern Salafis' understanding of the concept. The chapter then looks at other Quranic verses that have also contributed to the shaping of modern Salafis' concept of WB. The chapter concludes that understanding the theological aspects of WB and how it is formulated and conceptualized by modern Salafis is an important initial step towards a greater and enhanced understanding of the realities, complexities and diversities of the concept in modern Salafism.

Chapter 3 looks at the concept of WB in Wahhabism. It aims to show that modern Salafis' concept of WB has strong roots in Wahhabism. The chapter illustrates that both the religious and political aspects of the concept have long existed since the early days of Wahhabism. At the political dimension, the chapter highlights how the rivalry between the Saudis and Ottomans in the late eighteenth century and the Saudi civil war in the nineteenth century have impacted the development of WB in Wahhabi religious discourse. The chapter then proceeds to showcase the main factors that have contributed to the development of the concept in modern Wahhabism (twentieth century and beyond). Three developments of the concept in modern Saudi Arabia will be presented in Chapter 3:

- (1) From the start of the Wahhabi movement in the eighteenth century until today, WB has been used by the Wahhabis to fight *shirk* and *bid'ah* in the religion.

- (2) Official Saudi Wahhabi scholars⁹⁶ (those appointed by the regime and in accordance with the state ideology) in the twentieth century, while retaining the social aspect of *bara'* — which relates to personal relations between Muslims and non-Muslims represented by nourishing hatred and rejecting friendship — endorsed and legitimized political *wala'* to the so-called infidels, exemplified by their total silence over Saudi foreign policy, foreign military bases in the country and other manifestations of Saudi alliances with the West.⁹⁷
- (3) Saudi scholars who oppose the Saudi rulers and their establishment scholars, in particular their foreign policy and their actions of having *wala'* to the West, condemn the Saudi rulers under the pretext of WB.

Chapter 3 also highlights that Wahhabi scholars who oppose the Saudi rulers due to their political behavior have used the Wahhabi teachings and heritage and further developed and radicalized some of its concepts which include WB. Using the same Wahhabi teachings and tradition that the state and its establishment scholars hold dear, these Salafis condemn their rulers while some of them even go to the extent of excommunicating the leaders and thereby legitimizing attacks against them. The last part of the chapter illustrates the influence and spread of the concept, especially its penetration in the curriculum of Saudi schools and its exportation beyond Saudi borders. It also briefly describes how the Saudi educational system, particularly the concept of WB and the teaching of “hatred to the others”, has been internationally criticized post-September 11. The chapter concludes that the concept, which started in early Wahhabism as a tool to fight apostasy and innovations in Islam, has developed into an important element used by both the Saudi establishment scholars and those who oppose the kingdom to support their religious inclination and political agenda.

⁹⁶They are also known as the establishment *ulema*, or *ulema al-sultah* (regime’s scholars).

⁹⁷Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices From a New Generation*, p. 37.

Chapter 4 aims to explore some of the salient debates within the modern Salafi fraternity (groups and individuals) on the concept of WB and/or issues that derive under the umbrella of this concept. It attempts to show that WB in modern Salafism resides on a wide spectrum which can range from what might be termed “very soft” to its most “extreme or uncompromising” form of the concept. For the purpose of this chapter, we attempt to look at four issues closely related to WB which are often debated by modern Salafis:

- (1) The issue of whether WB necessitates Muslims to hate the *kuffar* and *kufr*, or whether they are only required to hate the *kufr* but not the *kuffar*.
- (2) The permissibility of ruling with other than what God has revealed or the *shariah*, and Muslim rulers’ relations with non-Muslim countries.
- (3) The issue of aiding non-Muslims against the Muslims.
- (4) The act of accepting and giving gifts to the *kuffar* and celebrating their religious festivals.

Chapter 4 concludes with the observation and argument that there is no single understanding of WB in modern Salafism. Different Salafi groups and individuals provide different legal frameworks when dealing with the concept. The main reason for such division and dispute surrounding the concept is believed to be the various Salafi backgrounds from which they emerge and their different ideological trends. It is argued that these different orientations of Salafism play a critical role in understanding the reasons behind their disputes and disagreements, as will be shown in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 attempts to analyze the writings on WB by selected modern Salafi thinkers who belong to the purist, politico and Jihadi categories of modern Salafis. They are the purist Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, the politico Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, and the Jihadi Ayman Al-Zawahiri. This chapter argues that the different Salafi orientations and backgrounds from which these Salafis emerge have an effect on the way they present the concept. For example, purist Salafis would present WB in a more traditional, socially-oriented

form, while the Jihadis would present the concept as one that is very hostile to the non-Muslims and that requires Muslims to kill the non-Muslims. The chapter also analyzes the book of a fourth Salafi figure, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, whose writings on WB have all the elements of *aqidah*, social, political and *Jihadi*. Through this analysis, it is concluded that a particular Salafi orientation has an effect on the style of writing and presentation of the concept by modern Salafis. This reflects the position of WB in modern Salafism as being fluid and multi-dimensional.

Chapter 6 (the Conclusion) first summarizes and draws together the research findings gained throughout the book, and then highlights the contributions that this research would be able to make. It then describes the implications and consequences of understanding and applying the modern Salafis' version of WB. The chapter will then highlight the views of the so-called mainstream Muslim scholars or non-Salafi Muslims on WB. Finally, it provides some recommendations for future projections of research.

Chapter 1

Modern Salafism and the Islamic Concept of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*

Introduction

This chapter aims to examine: (1) the realities and dynamics of modern Salafism by observing its meaning, history, ideological themes, development and divisions; (2) the definition, centrality, validity and dimensions of WB in modern Salafism. Modern Salafis have always tried to anchor their message and claim of WB in Islamic tradition, especially in that of the early Muslims and *salaf al-salih*. As the term suggests, the methodology of modern Salafis is based on Salafism, an Islamic ideology which is grounded on the tradition of Prophet Muhammad and early Muslims. It is not the purpose of this research to study the notion of Salafism, its tenets and ideology. However, in order to understand WB in modern Salafism, it is imperative for us to discuss briefly Salafism (especially modern Salafism) in this chapter, as WB and its sources of legitimacy are anchored firmly in this ideology.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides an introduction to the world of Salafism, particularly the phenomenon of modern Salafism. It begins with a brief definition and overview of Salafism, its history, and its realities and complexities in the modern world. It also observes the various groups and categories of modern Salafis as observed by several academics and commentators. A specific framework will be developed to understand and

analyze the concept of WB based on this categorization of modern Salafis. In addition, the chapter briefly looks at the ideology, characteristics and components of modern Salafism. This introduction to modern Salafism serves as a starting point before we begin with the discussion on the Salafi concept of WB.

The second part of the chapter introduces the concept of WB. It begins with its definition, significance and development in modern Salafism. In particular, it attempts to discover the main reasons why WB not only exists, but forms a pillar in the Salafi ideology. This part of the chapter also highlights that the modern Salafi concept of WB has several roles or dimensions, i.e., *aqidah*, social, political, and *jihadi*. The introduction of the concept as laid out in this chapter will lead to the discussion on how modern Salafis derive the concept from religious texts, especially the Quran, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO MODERN SALAFISM

Meaning of Salafism

Salafism (Arabic: *Salafiyah*) derives from the Arabic term *salaf*. Essentially, the linguistic meaning of *salaf* is “that which has passed” (*salafa*). In the Arabic language, those who preceded us from our forefathers are considered our *salaf* (plural: *aslaf*). The Quran also uses the word *salaf* in this sense. It says:

And We made them a people of the past (*salafan*) and an example to later ages.¹

In the Islamic context, the term *salaf* refers to early Muslims who were companions of Prophet Muhammad, those who followed them and the scholars of the first three generations of Muslims. These early Muslims known as *salaf al-salih* enjoyed a special status among Muslims based on the Prophet’s saying, “*The best century of my people is*

¹Quran 43:56.

my century, then the following, then the following.”² Logically, their close proximity to the period of the Prophet means that they were closer to the original teachings and were therefore less corrupt.³ The Prophet’s companions received direct teaching from the Prophet and witnessed both the revelation and the context, while the subsequent two generations received the teachings of Islam according to the interpretation of the Companions.

However, several definitions exist for the definition of the generation of *salaf al-salih*. Some have restricted it to the generation of the Companions (*al-sahabah*), while others have included the two generations of the Companions and their Successors (*al-Tabi'in*). Some have broadened the definition to include the third generation called the “successors of the successors” (*atba' al-tabi'in*). But as widely accepted, *salaf al-salih* includes the third generation as they are believed to have greatly influenced and impacted the subsequent development of Islamic thought and practice in the modern era. This includes the period from the early life of Muhammad to the death of the last successor of the successors, roughly between 570–855CE.

Salafiyyah is known to be the *manhaj* or way of the Salafis. A Salafi is a practitioner of *salafiyyah*. Linguistically, the term *salafi* is an ascription to the *salaf*. A Salafi is one who ascribes himself/herself to the way and teachings of the *salaf*. From the linguistic standpoint, if someone says, for example, “*ana Britani*” (I am British), it means

²Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book on Testimonies, no. 2652; Sahih Muslim, Book on Merits and Virtues, no. 2533; Sunan Al-Tirmizi, Book on Virtues of the Companions, no. 3859; Sunan Ibn Majah, Book on Judgements, no. 2362.

³In his commentary of this *hadith*, Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani (d. 850) in his famous *Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari* stated that the first generation is that of the Prophet’s companions. He added that the last of the third generation of Muslims, whose narration was accepted live circa 120AH/738CE, was the period where innovations in the religion spread far and wide. See Al-Asqalani, Ibn Hajar, *Fath Al-Bari Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari: Tahqiq Muhammad Fouad Ab Al-Baqi*, Dar Al-Marifah, undated, vol. 7, p. 7; or see Ziyad Abu Raja’I, *Al-Khairiyyah fi Ashab al-Nabi* (Attributes of the Companions of the Prophet), available at <http://www.almenhaj.net/dispF.php?linkid=7387> (accessed 8 August 2012).

he comes from Britain or ascribes himself to Britain. The letter “i” at the end of the word (e.g., *Britani*, *Salafi*) shows that the person saying the word is associating himself to the word. In the Arabic grammatical methodology, the letter “i” is the Arabic letter “ya”, and this letter “ya” is specifically known as “*ya al-nisbah*” or “*ya al-munasabah*” (it means “ya” of attribution or ascription) when used to ascribe someone to something else. Hence, when a person says “I am a Salafi”, he is saying that he ascribes himself to the *salaf* or the way/teachings of the *salaf*.

It is also worth noting that the term “Salafi” is both a label and a self-designated term. This is unlike the term “Wahhabi”, which is being rejected by its adherents who prefer to be called Salafis or *ahl sunnah wal jamaah*.⁴ The importance of labeling oneself a Salafi is explained in the words of the prominent Saudi scholar Salih Al-Fawzan, who says:

Ascribing oneself to the *Salaf* is an ascription which is necessary and required so that a differentiation can be made between the true Salafi and the one who hides behind them. Also so that the affair does not become confusing to those who want to guide themselves by them (the *Salaf*). So, when the heretical groups and astray partisanship that lead astray have increased, then the People of Truth announce and declare their ascription to the *Salaf* with a view to free themselves from those who oppose them.⁵

As a community who subscribe themselves to the *salaf*, the Salafis consider the period of the Prophet and subsequently his Companions to be the “golden age of Islam”.⁶ In the Salafis’ definition,

⁴See Chapter 3 of this book for an explanation of the meaning and usage of the term “Wahhabi”.

⁵See Salih Al-Fawzan, *Calling Oneself Salafi*, available at <http://www.spubs.com/sps/sp.cfm?subsecID=MNJ02&articleID=MNJ020002&articlePages=1> (accessed 25 April 2011).

⁶See Sadik H. Kassim, “Wahhabism and the Illusion of a Golden Age”, *Islam Daily Observing Media*, 14 October 2004, available at <http://www.islamdaily.org/en/wahabism/1898.wahhabism-and-the-illusion-of-a-golden-age.htm/> (accessed 23 June 2012); Maryam El-Shall, *Salafi Utopia: The Making of the Islamic State*, available at <http://clogic.eserver.org/2006/el-shall.html> (accessed 23 June 2012); and Abou El Fadl, Khaled, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, Harper Collins, 2005, p. 95.

this “golden age of Islam” consisted of the time when the Prophet ruled Medina and subsequently the period ruled by the four close companions of the Prophet who were known as the *khulafa' al-rashidun* (Rightly-Guided Caliphs). They were Abu Bakar (d. 634), Umar (d. 644), Uthman (d. 656), and Ali (d. 661). Some consider Umar Bin Abd al-Aziz (d. 720), the Umayyad Caliph, as the fifth Rightly-Guided Caliph although he was not a Companion of the Prophet.⁷ Salafis highly idealize these periods of time and believe that Islam during those times was perfect and fully realized. Consequently, they assert that Muslims should reclaim the golden age of Islam by following and closely imitating the Islamic practices and codes of conduct that existed during that time.

In the modern context, the term “Salafi” is widely used to describe individuals and groups sharing their views. These include, among others, the *Ahl al-hadith* (literally: People of the Prophetic tradition),⁸ the Saudi-based Wahhabis, and the India-based Deobandi school and the related schools in various parts of the Muslim world. More often, it is the Saudi-based school of thought that is referred to as Salafis, as they seek to purify Islam from the impurities of *shirk* and *bid'ah*. Although the objective of emulating the *salaf al-salih* remains a central theme, their approach is very much characterized by Muslim thinkers and reformers such as Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Abdul Wahhab. To some, the term “neo-Salafis” is more appropriate in order to distinguish them from the early generations of Muslims (the *salaf al-salih*).

History of Salafism

It is difficult to place the origin of the use of the term *salafiyah* or Salafism. What is clear is that, from a historical point of view, the

⁷See Umar Bin Abdel Aziz, *The Fifth Rightly Guided Caliph*, available at http://www.usislam.org/islamicyouth/greatmuslims/umar_bin_abdelaziz.htm (accessed 20 August 2012).

⁸The *Ahl al-hadith* term is used to denote the conservative traditionalists, especially at the time of the Mu'tazilite or Ash'arite conflict during the Abbasid era. The term is also used to refer to many Islamic movements (both historical and modern) that emphasize the use of *hadith* in Islam. See Roy, Olivier, *The Failure of Political Islam*, translated by Carol Volk, Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 118–119.

term *salafiyyah* has always been associated with the general attitude of Muslims who emphasize the importance of adhering to the first-century Islamic religious and political authorities. Obviously, they were those who were believed to have consistently practiced the original messages of Islam as instructed by the Quran and best exemplified by the sayings and practices of the Prophet. In the *nahj al-salafiyyah* (methodology of Salafism), the practice of Islam and understanding of its tenets and principles by the first three generations of Muslims is considered orthodoxy, i.e., one that is pure and unadulterated.

Many contemporary scholars and researchers have traced the historical emergence of Salafism to the thoughts of Ibn Taimiyyah.⁹ However, we believe that Salafism and Salafi ideas have existed long before the period of Ibn Taimiyyah. For example, in the eighth century, Salafi ideas could be seen in the theological and juridical school of the so-called *Ahl al-hadith*. Adherents of this school emphasize the use of *hadith*. They are not bound by the tradition of *taqlid* (imitation) and consider themselves free to obtain guidance directly from authentic *hadith* of the Prophet alongside the Quran.¹⁰ In contrast, their methodology differs from that of *Ahl al-Ray'u* (People of Opinion) who are open to any human opinions and interpretations. While we believe that Salafism is not a new phenomenon in Islam, we consider, however, that the historical emergence of “modern Salafism” could be traced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyyah.

Modern Salafism

“Modern Salafism” is here generally used to denote post-Ibn Taimiyyah Salafism. Although this signals that the term refers to the ideas and thinking of the Salafis since the thirteenth century, this research focuses primarily on modern Salafi ideas, particularly

⁹ Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, pp. 33–57.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38; Wagemakers, Joas, *A Quietist Jihadi: The Ideology and Influence of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi*, p. 5.

the concept of WB in twentieth and twenty-first century Salafism. Adherents of Salafism throughout this period are hence referred to in this research as “Modern Salafis”. They are seen as individuals who strive for the revival of the historical legacy of Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and the early Muslim generations through materializing the authentic past in the current times and future. In matters of religious legitimacy and understanding, these Salafis always revert to Ahmad Bin Hanbal (d. 855), a prominent Sunni theologian who was also the founder of the Hanbali school of *fiqh* (jurisprudence). He is known among the Salafis as *imam ahl al-sunnah* (Leader of the People of Prophetic Tradition). Besides Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taimiyyah, his famous student Ibn al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah (d. 751) and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab were among the most important figures that have shaped the *manhaj* of modern Salafism.

It is worth noting here that the contemporary use of the term “Salafism” by academicians and observers refers to two dissimilar definitions or types. The first denotes the ideas or the school of thought that surfaced in the late nineteenth century in Egypt and Damascus as a reaction to the prevailing spread of European ideas, and sought to expose the roots of modernity within Muslim civilization. This type of Salafism is closely identified with modernist reformers such as Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905). Living in mid-nineteenth-century Egypt, Abduh witnessed a period when Western encroachments upon the Middle East were becoming more prevalent. He believed that this impacted the Muslim societies whose blind imitation of the Western ways resulted in moral decay and stagnation across many Muslim communities.¹¹ Together with other reformers in his time, namely Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1354), Muhammad Rashid Rida (d. 1354), Muhammad al-Shawkani (d. 1250) and Jalal al-San’ani (d. 1225), they suggested that the solution lies in reviewing the original sources of the

¹¹ Commins, David, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1990, p. 31; Abou El-Fadl, Khaled, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, p. 95.

religion.¹² This includes, besides the Quran and Sunnah, adherence to the practices of the *salaf al-salih*. These early reformers, however, did not advocate that the Muslims cut themselves off completely from the Western world. In fact, they favored the reformation of Islam via a reinterpretation of the early Islamic sources *vis-à-vis* modern methodologies, resources and way of life.

The second type of Salafism — quite different from the modernist form of Muhammad Abduh — is one that is dominantly associated with Saudi Arabia and believed to have been established by Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. This type of Salafism is widely known as Wahhabism.¹³ It is a more traditional type of Salafism and adherents of this particular form of Salafism follow a rather literal, straightforward and sometimes an uncompromising form of Islam. These Salafis look to Ibn Taimiyyah, not the nineteenth-century figures of Muhammad Abduh, Al-Afghani and Rashid Rida.¹⁴ The present research of WB in modern Salafism refers to this particular type of Salafism and not the one associated with modern reformists such as Abduh.

The Salafi–Wahhabi Connection

The study of modern Salafism will not be complete without looking into Wahhabism (a reference given to the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab) and its relation with Salafism.¹⁵ In current academic discourse, the terms “Salafi” and “Wahhabi” are sometimes

¹² *Ibid.* For more on the ideology of Abduh, Al-Afghani and Rida, see Hourani, Albert, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 103 and 222.

¹³ See Chapter 3 for more discussion on Wahhabism.

¹⁴ It is necessary to explain here that the possible reason modernist Salafis such as Abduh, Afghani and Rida are called Salafis is due to their reform activities or their claim of returning to the *salaf* and the original teachings of Islam.

¹⁵ According to Khaled Abou El-Fadl, the term “Salafism” did not become associated with the Wahhabi creed until the 1970s. He argued that it was in the early twentieth century that the Wahhabis referred to themselves as Salafis. See Abou El-Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, p. 75.

used interchangeably. Wahhabi is a label given to those who follow the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. The Wahhabis are always referred to as Salafis, and in fact they prefer to be called as such.¹⁶ As a rule, all Wahhabis are Salafis but not all Salafis are Wahhabis. Historically, the Wahhabis called themselves *al-muwahhidun* (the monotheists), referring to those who follow the *tawhid*. This is so as *tawhid* became the central ideology of Wahhabism. The Salafis, including the Wahhabis, sometimes call themselves *ahl al-sunnah wal jamaah*, which literally means “the adherents to the Prophetic tradition and the assembly”,¹⁷ though historically this name was used by other Muslims like Ash’aris and the Sufis.

Ideologically, Salafism is wider than Wahhabism. Salafi thought has existed for hundreds of years and has spread throughout the Muslim world and beyond. Wahhabism only existed from the mid-eighteenth century. While it is true that Wahhabism is Salafism, it is only one of Salafism’s many orientations. Salafi and Wahhabi are not two sides of the same coin.¹⁸ There are Salafis who are not Wahhabis. There are Wahhabis who are not Saudis. Because of their inclination towards social activism and political reform, many social analysts and political observers group them under the label of “fundamentalist”

¹⁶ Followers of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab reject the label Wahhabis upon themselves because the term “Wahhabi” denotes following the teachings of a human being (which is in this case Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab) rather than the teachings of God or Islam. More importantly, they reject the label Wahhabis as they see it as being associated with God. This is because al-Wahhab (the Bestower) is one of the ninety-nine names and attributes of God. To them, and in fact in Islam, associating anything to God is *shirk*.

¹⁷ The name *Ahl Sunnah wal Jamaah* is a reference to those Muslims who follow the way of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions. These adherents are called the *jamaah* (the assembly or group) because they have assembled together and have not become divided among themselves. They are the largest denomination of Islam. The word *Sunni* is derived from the word *Sunnah* which represents the Prophet Muhammad’s manner of conduct. Some argue that *Sunni* refers to those who follow “the middle path”, a more neutral position than the perceivedly more extreme viewpoints of the Shiites and the Kharijites.

¹⁸ See brief introduction on “Wahhabis”, in *The 1911 Encyclopedia Edition*, available at <http://3.191encyclopedia.org/W/WA/WAHHABIS.htm> (accessed 23 July 2010).

and “political Islamist”, but the differences between both groups are marked enough to prove that not all Salafis are Wahhabis, and that the Wahhabis and other Islamist groups such as the *Ikhwan Al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood) in Egypt are different and distinct movements. One may disagree with their religious-political aspirations; however, it is inappropriate to treat them in the same manner or classify them under a single category.

Modern Salafism: Realities and Complexities

It needs to be mentioned here that the use of the term “Salafism” in modern times is ambiguous and in many ways confusing. This ambiguity can be realized when many Salafis themselves are not entirely clear as to what Salafism entails, assuming that it is simply to follow the Quran and Sunnah — a problematic definition since it implies that others do not. Furthermore, due to the ambiguity of the term, Salafism in an actual broader sense is claimed by all Muslims, in that the universal Islamic ideal is to imitate the Prophet and the early Muslim community. This is because the very term “Salafism” connotes authenticity and legitimacy. In other words, every Muslim is a Salafi as they are obliged to follow the Prophet and his Companions in practising Islam. This is fundamentally the reason why non-Salafi Muslims today reject Salafis’ exclusive claim on the term, arguing that other Muslims may also claim using the term or to be called as such since they are also followers of the *salaf al-salih*.

While Salafis themselves have failed to provide a universally-accepted meaning of the term “Salafism”, scholars and observers have also struggled with its definition. In fact, the pivotal question of who or what group qualifies as Salafi remains in dispute. In recent years and especially after the incident of 9/11, the study on Salafism has attracted much attention.¹⁹ Many individuals began to

¹⁹Meijer, Roel (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, p. 2. For writings that link Salafism to violence, see for example Wiktorowicz, Quintan, “The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad”, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 8, No. 4, December 2001, pp. 13–38; Wiktorowicz, Quintan and John Kaltner, “Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda’s Justification for September 11”, *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2003, pp. 76–92.

conduct research and write on modern Salafism. Some Western writers and even the media have failed to provide an accurate description and analysis of Salafism, and some writings on Salafism have been based on assumptions. It needs to be emphasized here that Salafism is not alien to Islam. It is not a deviation of the religion. Salafism is but one of the many manifestations of Islam like Sufism and Shi'ism.

Salafism, as some have claimed, is not a movement or an organization with a structural hierarchy, and does not operate under the leadership of a particular figure in a highly structured organization. Neither is Salafism a school of thought like Hanbalism, Hanafism, Shafi'ism and Malikism in the Sunni schools of *fiqh*. Contrary to those who claim that Salafis reject the four Sunni "schools of *fiqh*" (*mazhab*),²⁰ many Salafis actually believe in the authority of all the imams of the *mazhab*, although some of them are not keen and do not encourage others to follow the teachings of a particular *mazhab*. In fact, most Salafis, especially the Saudi Salafis (Wahhabis), are followers of the Hanbali *mazhab*.²¹ One could also find that Salafis on many occasions quote and mention

²⁰As Salafism is a methodology and not a *mazhab*, Salafis can emerge from the Maliki, the Shafi'i, the Hanbali, or the Hanafi schools of jurisprudence. Many Salafis accept the teachings of all the four *mazhabs* if their rulings are supported by clear and authenticated evidences from the Quran and Sunnah. They are not divided on the question of adherence to the four established *mazhabs*. For example, Ibn Taimiyyah followed the Hanbali school. Some of his students (such as Ibn Kathir (d. 1373) and al-Dzahabi (d. 1348)) followed the Shafie school. Other students (such as Ibn Abi al-Izz (d. 1390)) followed the Hanafi school. Some Salafis assert that Muslims do not need to follow a specific *mazhab* but they are allowed to. By saying "do not need to", Salafis mean that they (those who follow the *mazhab*) would not be committing a sin any way. However, if a Muslim is knowledgeable in Islamic law, he is at liberty to follow any *mazhab* and select the opinion that suits him best, but if he is not well-versed in Islamic law, nor aware of the opinions of the scholars, then he should seek proper guidance from the learned scholar. [Interview with a Salafi *imam* (anonymous), Cairo, Egypt, April 2007 and Shaikh Hassan Al-Shaikh, Sanaa, Yemen, July 2010.]

²¹The Hanbali school of thought is known to be the strictest and most conservative school in Islamic jurisprudence. The school is notable for its literalist, constructionist and inflexible approaches. This explains why the Saudis are very strict in their approaches and practices of Islam.

the imams of the *mazhabs* such as Imam Al-Shafie (d. 820) and Imam Malik (d. 795) in their writings. Salafis recognize these imams as the *salaf*. For example, scholars such as Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim, whose works are always referred to by modern Salafis, and who are widely accepted as having been major proponents of Salafism, often quoted and endorsed many views of Abu Hanifah (d. 767).

In this research, I denote “modern Salafism” as a religious inclination or tendency towards a set of ideas and identity. By identity, I mean a belief system (ideology), thoughts, values and meanings that reflect moral, social and political interests and commitments of the Salafis, and that constitute their ideology of how the world and its system should work. This belief system is based on a pure, undiluted teaching of the Quran, the *sunnah* of the Prophet, and practices of the *salaf al-salih*. Indeed, it is not a new doctrinal phenomenon, but one that has its origins in theological and legal debates that far preceded our time. Its basic proposition is that legitimacy, whether in the religious, social, or political realms, must be explicitly derived from religious sources and early Islamic precedents.

As a belief system that is based on original sources of the religion, it could be seen that Salafism in reality should be embraced by all Muslims. What then is the fundamental difference between a Salafi Muslim and a non-Salafi Muslim? This is not a simple question with a straightforward explanation, due to the ambiguity of the term “Salafism” and the complex nature of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, this section of the research hopes to provide a general, fundamental and widely-accepted definition of Salafism, what it actually entails and who are the modern Salafis referred to in this research.²² In a general sense, the significant difference between a

²²The study of Salafism and Modern Salafism is a subject on its own. In this research, we will not elaborate and lengthen the discussion on Salafism, as the focus of the research is the concept of WB in modern Salafism and not Salafism *per se*. This section only aims to provide readers with an introduction to the world of modern Salafism, and to highlight the Salafis who are referred to in this research.

Salafi and a non-Salafi is not about mere adherence to the Quran, Sunnah and the Salaf which form the fundamental and most important ideals about the Salafi ideology — but how these objectives are to be defined and how the program is to be carried out. In other words, the difference between the Salafis and non-Salafis is not about belief and following the Quran and Sunnah. It is about interpretations, understandings of religious texts, methodology and approach. As Wagemakers observes, “it is the strictness and methodology with which Salafis try to live up to the standard set by the *salaf* and their willingness to gear their teachings and beliefs towards that goal...that distinguishes them from other Sunni Muslims”.²³ In addition, what makes it more difficult to define Salafism and determine who the Salafis are is the fact that they are not a single entity. There is no one Salafi, just as there is no single orientation of Salafism. Modern Salafism comes in various shapes and colors.

Modern Salafism: Factions and Categories

Modern Salafism is not homogenous. It consists of various sub-cultures and orientations — from moderate to extreme and from quietist to political activist to jihadis.²⁴ There are various types of modern Salafi groups. While most Salafis are unanimous in matters of *aqidah*, they are divided mainly on issues of jurisprudence and politics. Some scholars have identified several schools of modern Salafism, while others have determined their categories.

²³Wagemakers, Joas, *A Quietist Jihadi: The Ideology and Influence of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi*, p. 5.

²⁴See “Salafi” in *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salafi> (accessed 9 December 2011); International Crisis Group, *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix?*, available at http://www.icg.org//library/documents/asia/indonesia/83_indonesia_backgrounder_why_salafism_and_terrorism_don_t_mix_web.pdf (accessed 8 December 2011).

For example, Tariq Abdel Haleem outlines eight groups of modern Salafis:²⁵

- (1) *Establishment Salafis* — They are the official scholars of Saudi Arabia appointed by the Saudi government to serve as official *ulema*, *mufti* (a Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious issues) and religious guides. In Saudi Arabia, these Salafis usually sit on the Board of Senior Ulama (*Hay'at kibar al-Ulama*) and on the Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions (*al-Lajna al-Da'ima lil Buhuth al-Ilmiyya wa al-Ifta'*).
- (2) *Madkhali* or *Jami Salafis* — Salafis who follow the religious teachings of the Yemeni Sheikh Rabi Al-Madkhali (b. 1931) and the Ethiopian Sheikh Muhammad Aman Ibn Ali Jami (b. 1930). These Salafis are similar to the Establishment Salafis in terms of ideological inclination and their subservience to the government and endorsement of secular and democratic forms of government of the Arab regimes.
- (3) *Albani Salafis* — Followers of the Albanian scholar from Syria, Muhammad Nasir al-Din Al-Albani (d. 1999), who emerged as the prominent scholar of *hadith* in Saudi Arabia. Like the Establishment and Madkhali Salafis, Albani Salafis adopt the purist and non-political method of Salafism that prefers to focus on purification of the faith and education.
- (4) *Scientific* or *Academic Salafis* — These Salafis earn their name from the highly rational methods they employ to discuss and implement their version of Salafism. Very politicized in their approach, these Salafis include the famous Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq (b. 1939) from Kuwait, Abdul Razak Al-Shaygi (b. 1967), Dr Sajid Al-Mutairi (b. 1964) and Dr Hamid Bin Abdallah al-Ali (b. 1960).

²⁵ See Abdel Haleem, Tariq, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of the Counterfeit Salafis from the Methodology of Ahlul Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah*, pp. 16–39 for more on these Salafi groups.

- (5) *Ikhwan Salafis* (Muslim Brotherhood) — As the name suggests, this Salafi group is heavily influenced by the teachings and political methods of the Muslim Brotherhood organization (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) which originated from Egypt. The prominent figure from this group of Salafis is Muhammad Qutub (b. 1919), the brother of Sayyid Qutub (d. 1966).²⁶
- (6) *Sururis* — Sururi Salafis are named after their clerical inspiration, Muhammad Surur Bin Nayif Zain al-Abidin (b. 1938).²⁷ Sururi Salafism is a hybridization of the political ideas of Sayyid Qutub and the religious views of the Wahhabis.
- (7) *Qutubis* — Qutubi Salafis are closely related to the Sururis. They follow the teachings of Sayyid Qutub. Followers of this group of Salafis may follow a Salafi methodology, but many other Salafis see little common ground between the Qutubis and themselves, often linking them to the thinking of Egyptian Ikhwans.
- (8) *Global Jihadis* — This group of Salafis propagate rebellion and violence against their adversaries. The well-known Al-Qaeda organization is a fine example of this Salafi group.

²⁶It is important to note that while many observers do not regard the Ikhwans as Salafis, they are known as Salafis, however, due to the hybridization of Wahhabi/Salafi ideas. Ikhwan Salafism emerged as a result of the hybridization of the political ideals of the Muslim Brotherhood and Saudi Wahhabism. For example, Muhammad Qutub (b. 1919) and many other Egyptian Ikhwans fled to Saudi Arabia in the late 1960s after the death of Sayyid Qutub. This generation of Ikhwans would resettle in the kingdom and influence many conservative Saudi Salafis. Many of them fill the ranks of lecturers and educators in Saudi universities and schools. As a result, these individuals in many ways hybridize with the Saudi Wahhabis, leaving behind a mixed-up ideology known by some as “Salafism”.

²⁷In the Saudi Islamist scene of the late 1960s, the followers of Muhammad Surur called themselves *Al-Salafiyyun* (the Salafis), while their opponents, especially those from the Muslim Brotherhood and the Albani-inspired neo *ahl hadith*, referred to them as *Sururiyyun* (the Sururis). See Lacroix, Stephane, “Biographies of Salafi Thinkers and Leaders, Muhammad Surur Zayn al-‘Abidin” in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism*, p. 435.

Quintan Wiktorowicz writes that Salafis are broadly divided into three groups: the *purists*, the *politicos*, and the *Jihadis*.²⁸ The purists, he argues, focus on purification of the faith through education and propagation, while the *politicos* emphasize application of the Salafi creed to the political arena. The *Jihadis* take a more militant approach and argue that the current context calls for violence and revolution.²⁹ Similar to the categories laid down by Wiktorowicz, Omayma Abdel Latiff also believes that there are three main currents of Salafism today, namely: (1) *al-salafiyyah al-ilmiyyah*, or scholarly Salafism, which is concerned with the study of the holy text and Islamic jurisprudence; (2) *al-salafiyyah al-harakiyyah*, or activist Salafism, which describes both politically active Salafist groups and those groups that are not politically active but occupy a place in the public sphere through their charity work and networks of social support and religious education institutes. This current, according to Abdel Latiff, also includes *al-salafiyyah al-islahiyyah*, or reformist Salafism; and finally (3) *al-salafiyyah al-jihadiyyah*,³⁰ which concerns itself with implementing *jihad*.³¹

²⁸ See Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", pp. 207–239.

²⁹ Wiktorowicz argues that all three factions share a common creed but offer different explanations of the contemporary world and its concomitant problems and thus propose different solutions. The splits are about contextual analysis, not belief.

³⁰ *Al-Salafiyyah al-jihadiyyah* is a term used in current political Islamic discourse referring to the ideology of Salafis who advocate violence against their adversaries in the name of Jihad. It is a term that has grown in popularity in recent years, but as Hegghammer says, its precise origins remain unclear. *Al-Salafiyyah Al-Jihadiyyah* is also known as "Global Jihad" or "Global Salafi Jihad". See Hegghammer, Thomas, "Jihad-Salafis or Revolutionaries?: On Religion and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism", p. 251, and Al-Rasheed, Madawi, "The Local and Global in Saudi Salafi-Jihadi Discourse", p. 301, both articles in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*.

³¹ Abdel Latiff, Omayma, "Trends in Salafism" in Michael Emerson, Kristina Kausch and Richard Youngs (eds.), *Islamist Radicalisation: The Challenge for Euro-Mediterranean Relations*, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, 2009, pp. 69–86.

Similarly, Samir Amghar observes that Salafism in Europe is also divided into three streams. The first is “revolutionary Salafism”; it places *jihad* at the heart of religious beliefs. The second is “predicative Salafism”, which bases its actions on preaching and religious teachings. The last is “political Salafism”, which organizes its activities around a political logic. Each one of these currents, Amghar argues, entertains a specific relationship with European societies, with Muslim societies, and with the means — including *jihad* — of hastening the eventuality of the Islamic state.³² Bernard Haykel identifies three groups of Salafis in terms of their political engagement: (1) “Salafi Jihadis” like those in the Al-Qaeda organization who call for violent action against its adversaries and the existing political leaders; (2) “Salafi Harakis” who advocate non-violent political activism;³³ and (3) “Scholastic Salafis” (*al-salafiyyah al-ilmiyyah*)³⁴ who adopt a quietist approach and a more traditional outlook, arguing that all forms of overt political organization and action, let alone violence, are forbidden.³⁵

It is important to note that these groups and categories of modern Salafis are by no means scientific. Moreover, the modern Salafi groups and factions are not limited to these only, and could probably be more or less than those mentioned. In addition, interestingly, someone could also be a Salafi and adopt the Salafi methodology without being affiliated or ascribed to any of these groups. There are also those who adopt the Salafi way in certain

³² Amghar, Samir, “Salafism and Radicalisation of Young European Muslims” in Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur and Michael Emerson (eds.), *European Islam: Challenges for Public Policy and Society*, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, 2007, pp. 38–51.

³³ In Saudi Arabia these Salafis are known as the *Sahwis* (The Awakening Ones) and Sururis, but their presence is also felt in Yemen and Kuwait.

³⁴ According to Haykel, this group of Salafis include the official recognized scholars of Saudi Arabia, the Jamis and Madkhalis, and are also identified with the teachings of Nasir al-Din al-Albani.

³⁵ See Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, pp. 48–50.

matters but not in others.³⁶ In other words, they are Salafi at certain times and non-Salafi at other times. While we accept these categories and recognize its usefulness in the present research, it is undoubtedly not a comprehensive breakdown. Due to the complexities of modern Salafism, these categories and groups are at times overlapping. Furthermore, many of the groups or labels mentioned above are considered derisive by those who fall into those categories, and therefore, are dismissed out of hand. The categories are, at best, fluid, dynamic and only rough approximations of the personalities and issues that divide modern Salafis. However, they are significantly more nuanced than the categories currently used by Western policy makers, analysts and law enforcement agencies to discuss the Establishment Salafis, Jihadis, and those in between.

These Salafi groups always refer to different religious scholars and texts for legitimacy and intellectual guidance. Their different religious interpretations have profound implications for the political, social and economic behavior of their followers. Disagreement and disputes within these groups are apparent. Can a “good” Muslim listen to music? Should a “good” Muslim refrain from buying

³⁶For example, while many may see Sa’id Hawwa (d. 1989), the famous Muslim writer and preacher from Syria, as a Salafi, others do not consider him as one although he draws on some ideas prevalent in the Salafi ideology. See Weismann, Itzhak, “Sa’id Hawwa: The Making of a Radical Muslim Thinker in Modern Syria”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 29, October 1993, pp. 601–623. Another example is Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (b. 1926). While many do not consider Al-Qaradawi as a Salafi, some observers categorize him as a “Salafi reformist” (see Nafi, Basheer, “Fatwa and War: On the Allegiance of the American Muslim Soldiers in the Aftermath of September 11”, *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, pp. 78 and 97). At times, Al-Qaradawi adopts the Salafi position on certain matters. For example, Al-Qaradawi believes that the acceptance of secularism by Muslims means abandonment of *shariah*. The call for secularism among Muslims, according to Al-Qaradawi, is atheism and a rejection of Islam. He concludes that its acceptance as a basis for rule in place of *shariah* is clear apostasy. This is believed to be a typical Salafi position. See March, Andrew F., “Are Secularism and Neutrality Attractive to Religious Minorities? Islamic Discussions of Western Secularism in the ‘Jurisprudence of Muslim Minorities’ (*Fiqh Al-Aqalliyat*)”, *Cardozo Law Review*, Vol. 30, No. 6, 2009, pp. 2821–2854.

Israeli goods and products? Is it acceptable for a “good” Muslim to fight to overthrow a Muslim government that fails to implement the *shariah* completely? Each Salafi subset provides its adherents with different answers and religious justifications to these and a variety of other questions. But the categorization provides nothing more than a rough topography of the Salafis’ terrain in order to help observers speak in more nuanced terms about the ideological trends of modern Salafis.

In my opinion and for the specific purpose of this research, the categorization of modern Salafis into the three distinct groups of purists, politicians and Jihadis as suggested by Wiktorowicz is more convincing and viable than the categorization into eight groups as suggested by Tariq Abdel Haleem. This is so as the eight categories of Salafis are seen as not contributing much in explaining the diversity of WB in modern Salafism, which is the focus of this research. The division (suggested by Tariq Abdel Haleem), although useful, is primarily based and characterized on individuals rather than ideological distinctions. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, there are inevitably elements of overlapping between those groups (such as the Ikhwan Salafis, Sururis and Qutubis in Abdel Haleem’s categorization, which can be seen as one group or having similar ideological leanings). In contrast, the categorization of modern Salafis into three factions (as suggested by Wiktorowicz), which is based on their distinct ideological trends, seems to be a useful tool to analyze the concept of WB in modern Salafism. This is so as one of the main reasons for this division is the Salafis’ perception and attitude towards political matters. I believe that the categorization of modern Salafis into the three distinct groups helps to explain the diversity and differences among modern Salafis better. As such, this specific categorization will be used as a framework to understand the dynamics of WB in modern Salafism, especially when we attempt to analyze the writings on WB by Salafi thinkers from different backgrounds in Chapter 5. In Chapter 5, the usefulness of this framework or categorization is tested to see how the different Salafi groups present the roles of WB differently.

Characteristics of Modern Salafism

As noted earlier, as Salafis are Muslims, therefore in many ways, their ideological beliefs in matters of creed and jurisprudential rulings are similar to those of the majority Muslims or the non-Salafi Muslims. The difference between the approach of the Salafis and the others is the fact that Salafis have taken a certain number of beliefs and rulings, and based on these, have created a new Islamic school of thought which claims to represent the true *salaf*. Consequently, those who subscribe to a different opinion from the Salafis have “deviated” from the way of the *salaf* and have become innovators in the religion.³⁷ There are several characteristics in the modern Salafi ideology that distinguish its adherents from the rest of the Muslim community. These characteristics include:

- (1) Literalist and puritanical³⁸ approaches to Islamic theology and law. Salafis base their teachings on a literal understanding of the Quran and the Prophetic traditions.

³⁷ See Al-Buti, Muhammad Said Ramadan, *Al-Salafiyah: Marhalatun Zamaniyyatun Mubarakatun Laa Mazba Islami* (Salafism: A Blessed Era Rather Than An Islamic School), Dar Al-Fikr, Dimashq, 1988. (This book is available at <http://www.wahabiya.net/showbook-379.html> (accessed 31 July 2012).) This book is one of the famous books written on the *manhaj* of the *salaf* in the contemporary period. I would say that the book can be potentially used to tackle the issues of the modern Salafism and bring about agreement and reconciliation between Muslims, especially between the Salafis and the non-Salafis. In his book, Al-Buti attempts to show what is meant by the way of the *salaf*. He deconstructs the modern Salafis’ claim that the way of the *salaf* is to follow the opinions of the original *salaf* in matters of belief and jurisprudence. According to Al-Buti, in reality there was a great divergence among the most famous and most pious of the *salaf* on all these issues. So how could the Salafis in modern times come and choose some of these opinions and hold that they represent the opinions of the *salaf*, when the *salaf* themselves differed on these opinions?

³⁸ Khaled Abou El Fadl described the Salafis, including the Wahhabis, as puritans. (See Abou El Fadl, Khaled, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, p. 45.) He claims that the Salafi methodology “drifted into stifling apologetics” by the mid-twentieth century, a reaction against “anxiety” to “render Islam compatible with modernity” by its leaders earlier in the century.

- (2) As the name suggests, Salafism's basic proposition is that legitimacy, whether in the religious, social or political realms, must be explicitly derived from early Islamic precedents. Salafis maintain that Muslims ought to return to the original textual sources of the Quran, Sunnah of the Prophet, and traditions of the authentic *salaf* on all issues. This is done through interpreting the original sources of Islam in light of modern needs without being bound to the interpretive precedents of the earlier Muslim generation.³⁹ In other words, other than the Quran, Sunnah and traditions of the *salaf*, Salafis ignore and are not interested in the rest of Islamic history. In their fervor to return to a "pure" interpretation of the religion, Salafis tend to reject "any kind of rationalist orientation in a wide variety of Islamic intellectual teachings".⁴⁰ This somewhat distinguishes the Salafis from the rest of the Muslim community who generally regard the Islamic intellectual heritage as an important reference in pursuing Islamic scholarship and guidance.⁴¹
- (3) Salafis believe that religious texts such as the Quran and *hadith* are intended to regulate most aspects of Muslim life. They approach the process of applying religious texts to contemporary matters as though it is a scientific enterprise governed by the laws of divinity.⁴²
- (4) Treatment of the Quran and *hadith* as self-explanatory. Here, one could notice that in many instances, Salafis minimize and at times oppose the use of human intellect and logic to interpret religious texts. According to them, not only do religious texts regulate most aspects of human life, but their meanings have also been determined by God. In other words, in engaging a religious

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Crow, Karim Douglas, "Kalashnikov Islam and the Deformist Mentality", Paper presented at the *International Conference on Dialogue of Civilisations and the Construction of Peace*, Centre for Civilisational Dialogue (University Malaya, Malaysia) and Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, 26–27 March 2005. See also Abou El-Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, p. 100.

⁴¹ Abou El-Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, pp. 75–95.

⁴² *Ibid.*

text, Salafis claim that one does not need to apply human systems of logic, but to simply understand and implement it, as if the meaning of the text is always clear and indisputable.⁴³

- (5) Selective in providing evidence as a proof of legitimacy. Salafis selectively pick certain scholars from the Hanbali school such as Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah and treat their opinions as immutable and beyond questioning.⁴⁴ Moreover, Salafis read these scholars in an abusively selective manner in the sense that they adopt anything they find in the writings of these scholars that conform to their thinking and worldview, while ignoring the rest.

These characteristics are not exhaustive but they are some of the key ones that distinguish Salafis from the rest of the Muslim community. One may notice that the characteristics that generally distinguish the Salafis from the rest mostly revolve around matters of jurisprudence and legal reasoning. In many ways, the disputes and disagreement between Salafis and non-Salafis and between the various Salafi factions are always in matters of *fiqh* and increasingly in political issues, especially since the last few decades.⁴⁵ The Salafi ideology, among others, intends to regulate the legitimacy of Muslim practices in daily lives, hence *fiqh* has become an important tool for the Salafis to draw the line between what is permitted or Islamically

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ See, for example, Sayyid Muhammad Al-Kuthairi, *Al-Salafiyyah Baina ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Imamiyya* (Salafis between People of the Prophetic Tradition and Shiite), Al-Ghadir li Al-Tiba'ah, Beirut, 1997, pp. 252–254, 473–501.

⁴⁵ For a long time, Salafism was relatively homogeneous and traditionally most Salafis were quietist and apolitical. Their main concern was apolitical and local — they sought to uproot deviant religious practices and to protect the *tawhid* and purity of Islam. Salafis started to become political due to several factors. One of the factors, as mentioned earlier, was the arrival of members of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) from Egypt in Saudi Arabia after fleeing from Gamal Abdel Nasser's crackdown in Egypt in the 1960s. The members of MB brought with them a more politically-oriented agenda and awareness to the predominantly purist Salafi-Saudi context. They had a long history of political engagement and enjoyed a sophisticated understanding of political events, international affairs and the world outside Saudi Arabia.

acceptable and what is forbidden. That is the reason why one could notice that Salafis are very obsessed with the issues of what is *halal* (permissible) and *haram* (forbidden); and what is *sunnah* and *bid'ah*.

Salafis are not only distinguished by their characteristics and approaches in matters of theology and Islamic jurisprudence. Their eminent characteristics could also be recognizable to others through their physical appearance, social interaction, style and content of speaking, and obviously religious practices. For example, many male Salafis could be recognizable through their unique robe dress and a round cap, albeit there are those who prefer to be dressed in jeans and t-shirts. Many of them also prefer to grow long beards and a shaved moustache. Unsurprisingly, Salafis are known for forbidding or at least refraining from practices which are deemed by many non-Salafis as religiously permissible. These practices include listening to music, celebrating one's birthday (including the Prophet's), clapping hands in applause, wearing shirts with animal or human images on it, standing up in honor of someone, and watching movies. To the Salafis, for every human action there are rules that must be observed. In many a times, Salafis would always refer to the Quran and *hadith* to showcase that a particular act is religiously sanctioned in many aspects of life including in non-religious matters. This is because Salafis always connect life to religion.

The Modern Salafi Ideology

As stated earlier, the Salafi ideology as a religious tendency is obviously based on the Quran and Sunnah and emphasizes the importance of following in the footsteps of the *salaf*. Theologically, it does not differ much from the beliefs of the non-Salafi Sunni Muslims. As the scholars from The Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions (in Saudi Arabia) put it:

Salafiyyah is derived from the *salaf*, who were the Companions of the Prophet, and from the *imams* (leaders) of the first three centuries, mentioned in the *hadith*: "The best of the people are those who belong to my century, then those who follow them [the

second century], then those who follow them [the third century].” Salafis are those who follow in the footsteps of the *salaf* who, in turn, follow the Book [Quran] and the Sunnah and act according to them.⁴⁶

Similar to the description of Salafism by the official Saudi scholars, the Society for the Revival of the Prophetic Method (*Jam'iyyah Ihya' Minhaj al-Sunnah*) — the organization that was instrumental in spreading Salafism in the United Kingdom — describes the Salafi way as follows:

The Salafi *da'wah* (call or missionary) is that of the Quran and the Sunnah. It is the religion of Islam — pure and free from any additions, deletions or alterations. It is to adhere to the path of the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam* (peace be upon him) and of the true believers (*salaf al-salih*). *Al-Salaf* is a collective term referring to the pious pioneers in Islam and all those who follow in their footsteps in belief, actions and morals.⁴⁷

As stated earlier, Salafi ideology is built upon a clear and narrowly defined religious text and methodologically, Salafis are literalist and scripturalist. Their ideology revolves around a set of binary dichotomies: (1) *tawhid* as opposed to *shirk*; (2) adherence to the *sunnah* of the Prophet in all matters of *aqidah* and religious practices (*amaliyah*) as opposed to *bid'ah*;⁴⁸ (3) respect and adherence to

⁴⁶Fatwa N. 1361 in al-Dawish, *Fatwa al-Lajna al-Da'ima*, Vol. 2, p. 165, quoted in Muhammad Al-Atawneh, “Wahhabi Self-Examination Post 9/11: Rethinking the ‘Other’, Otherness and Tolerance”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2, March 2011, pp. 255–271.

⁴⁷See *A Brief Introduction to the Salafi Da'wah*, Ipswich, Suffolk: Jamiyyah Ihya' Minhaj al-Sunnah, 1993, p. 1. The text is available at <http://www.qss.org/articles/salafi/text.html> (accessed 16 May 2011).

⁴⁸Salafis strongly reject what they call *bid'ah*, any belief and practices that are not enjoined by the Quran and the Prophet. For example, Salafis claim that Sufi practices such as *tawassul* (intercession between man and God) which had accrued over the centuries since the pristine period of Islam threaten *tawhid*. They believe that *bid'ah* resulted from the adoption of local cultures by Islamic missionaries in their attempts to attract new converts. This blend of Islam and customs significantly helped the conversion process to Islam by making Islam accessible to wider audiences.

the traditions of the early Muslim generations (the *salaf*) as opposed to the rejection of the subsequent Muslim intellectual heritage.⁴⁹ Apart from these, fundamentally, the ideology of modern Salafism stresses the importance of the concept of WB. As this research shows, the concept of WB is one of the central tenets in the ideology of modern Salafism.

It is also important to note that broadly the ideology of modern Salafism consists of two main areas, namely *aqidah* and *manhaj*. While *aqidah* refers to the beliefs that Salafis hold dear, the *manhaj* refers to the methods of how these beliefs are applied. Muhammad Nasir al-Din Al-Albani, when asked about the importance and difference between these two components, replied that “*aqidah* is more specific than the *manhaj*”.⁵⁰ He also emphasized that both *aqidah* and *manhaj* are inseparable in order for someone to be a Salafi, and that one cannot be a Salafi in *aqidah* while applying *manhaj* of the Ikhwani Salafi.⁵¹ As for *manhaj*, it is the component in the ideology of modern Salafism that witnesses differences and diversity of opinions. Some also believe that the Salafi *manhaj* could also be viewed in different forms. For example, Salih Al-Fawzan says that *manhaj* means “the methodology of implementing the beliefs and laws of Islam” and comes in three different forms, i.e., the methods of dealing with religious sources (texts of the Quran,

⁴⁹This is the irony of contemporary Salafism. Its claims of a “return to Islamic ideals” can be better described as selective rephrasements of certain scholastic formulations from the Islamic heritage as normative rules for absolute implementation. While modern Salafis tend to ignore the Islamic intellectual history, they have taken on certain other scholars who were beyond the time of the pious predecessors such as Ibn Taimiyyah and Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab.

⁵⁰See *Shaykh al-Albani on Differentiating Between Aqidah and Manhaj*, Qawa'id al-Manhaj al-Salafi, available at <http://www.manhaj.com/manhaj/articles/lvzvm-shaykh-al-albaanee-on-differentiating-between-aqidah-and-manhaj.cfm> (accessed 25 June 2012).

⁵¹See *Salafi-Ikhwaani, Ikhwaani-Salafi? Salafi Aqidah, Ikhwaani Manhaj?* by Shaykh Albani, available at <http://shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com/2012/04/26/salafi-ikhwaani-ikhwaani-salafi-salafi-aqidah-ikhwaani-manhaj/> (accessed 25 June 2012).

Sunnah, and well-known sayings of the *ulema*), methods of *ibadah* (worship), and methods of dealing with the community or *ummah*.⁵²

Components of Modern Salafism

While the ideology of modern Salafism mainly comprises of its *aqidah* and *manhaj*, the components of modern Salafism can be broadly divided into three main areas: (1) the *aqidah*; (2) the approach in dealing with issues of rulings and *shariah*; and (3) issues of political activism.⁵³ In applying these three areas, Salafis seem to revisit the notion and legality of these areas, which sometimes causes disagreement and sparks controversial issues within the Salafi fraternity and the wider Muslim community. The first area of the *aqidah* usually remains uncontroversial and seems to be unanimous among many Salafi groups, but the second and third areas at times provoke dispute and controversy.

Aqidah

Regarding *aqidah*, Salafis emphasize a particular understanding of *tawhid*. *Tawhid* literally means “oneness”. In Islam, it means “belief in the Oneness of God”. The meaning of *tawhid* is encapsulated in the proclamation of the *shahadah* where one believes that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger. The importance of *tawhid* for all Muslims can be seen as it forms the first pillar of faith (*arkan al-iman*).

Undeniably, while all Muslims believe in *tawhid*, Salafis emphasize a particular understanding of *tawhid*. This particular understanding

⁵²See *What is the Importance of Manhaj?* by Salih Al-Fawzan, available at <http://www.allaahuakbar.net/aqeedah/manhaj/index.htm> (accessed 25 June 2012) and <http://www.turntoislam.com/forum/showthread.php?t=25431> (accessed 25 June 2012).

⁵³Ulph, Stephen, *Towards a Curriculum for the Teaching of Jihadist Ideology, Part Two: The Doctrinal Frame*, Jamestown Foundation, 2010, pp. 9–11, available at http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36999 (accessed 12 May 2012).

of *tawhid* is explicitly manifested in Salafis' categorization of *tawhid* into three categories of belief and action, namely:⁵⁴ (1) *Tawhid al-Rububiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship) — that is to denote God's exclusive sovereignty in the universe as the sole Creator and Sustainer, and to attribute any of these powers other than to Him constitutes *kufr*; (2) *Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah* (Oneness of Godship) — that is to denote God's right to be the exclusive object of worship, failing which the person is *kafir*, and there should be no intermediaries between Him and man; (3) *Tawhid al-Asma' wa al-Sifat* (Oneness of the Names and Attributes) — that is to denote God's uniqueness with the way He is depicted in the Quran and Hadith without any debate as to their meaning, i.e., without *tahrif* (distortion), *ta'til* (denial), and without any attempt to explain how they are (*takyif*) or employing likeness or any metaphorical interpretation (*tamthil*).

Approach to Islamic Law

Another important arena in the constituents of modern Salafism is its approach to Islamic law, and in particular, the position Salafis adopt *vis-à-vis* the four established schools of *fiqh*. Unlike their unity on issues of the *aqidah* and matters related to it, Salafis here are divided among themselves. The main difference pertains to the degree to which they follow or reject the teachings of one of the four *mazhabs*. In other words, Salafis are divided in how important they view the practice of independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) to be in religious legal spheres.⁵⁵ For example, the majority of the Saudi Salafis

⁵⁴ See Salih Bin Fawzan Bin Abdullah Al-Fawzan, *The Aqidah of Tawhid: A Clarification of that which Opposes and Harms it, from Major and Minor Shirk, Ta'til and Bid'ah*, translated by Abu Naasir Abid Bin Basheer, available at www.spubs.com/sps/downloads/pdf/TAW010013.pdf (accessed 12 March 2011); *The Three Categories of Tawhid* by Shaykh Abdullah Ibn Baz, available at <http://www.salafitalk.net/st/viewmessages.cfm?Forum=17&Topic=8369> (accessed 12 March 2011).

⁵⁵ Haykel, Bernard, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action", p. 42; Wiktorowicz, Quintan, *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafism, the Muslim Brotherhood and State Power in Jordan*, State University of New York Press, 2001, pp. 119–120.

or the Wahhabis tend to be adherents of the Hanbali *mazhab*, whereas other Salafis are not keen in adherence or imitation to any *mazhab*, but instead prefer to interface directly with the sources of revelation (*al-amal bi al-dalil*) whenever they want to obtain an Islamic judgment. Salafis also argue that religious texts and the messages in them are explicit enough as they stand when revealed, and that it is not necessary for one to submit to the traditional methods as stipulated in the classical training. The main characteristics underpinning the Salafis' approach to Islamic legitimacy or law may be summarized as follows:⁵⁶

- (1) Limit religious legitimacy to the Quran, authentic (strong) *hadith*, and consensus of the Companions of the Prophet, as constituting the only foundation for Islamic law and for how Muslims should live.
- (2) Avoid the practice of *taqlid* to the *mazhabs* since sources of Islamic texts are clear enough as they stand, and are sufficient for the authority of a legal opinion without the need for interpretation by scholars.
- (3) Re-opening doors of *ijtihad* based on one's own reading, rather than following strictly to opinions of the *mazhab*.
- (4) Enhance the study and use of Arabic language for a correct and, of course, literal understanding of Islamic texts.

However, the foundation of *ijtihad* and *taqlid* is not as thoroughly maintained in the Salafi methodology. In the history of Salafism, these concepts (*ijtihad* and *taqlid*) have undergone some development, and the absence of a conclusive position on these concepts reflects uncertainties in the founding scholars themselves. For example, although Ibn Taimiyyah's major concern was the *aqidah* and he increasingly issued *fatwas* without resorting to any interpretative precedent, he still considered himself a follower of the Hanbali school. This paradox was later adopted by Wahhabism,

⁵⁶Ulph, Stephen, *Towards a Curriculum for the Teaching of Jihadist Ideology, Part Two: The Doctrinal Frame*, p. 10.

which officially permits individual *ijtihad*, but at the same time indicates its subservience to the Hanbali school, with *ijtihad* not being a noticeable feature in their actions.

Political Activism

The arena of political engagement provokes the greatest controversy and mutual polemic among modern Salafis. They are far from united as to where to place politics and engagement in it among their priorities. In matters of political activism, Salafis are broadly divided into two dominating groups. The first group holds an apolitical stance, opposing any political engagement and criticizing those who embrace politics or resort to violence. This group includes the purist Salafis, official scholars of Saudi Arabia, and the Jami and Madkhali Salafis. They argue that political engagement always comes at a heavy price. The famous Saudi scholar, Muhammad Nasir al-Din Al-Albani, believed that politics and political engagement should be shunned altogether. He said that “the best politics is to leave politics” (*min al-siyasah tarku al-siyasah*).⁵⁷ These Salafis claim that rather than focusing on political participation, Muslims should bring change to the *ummah* through educating them to the correct faith and filtering religion from innovations. These Salafis adopt the *tarbiyah* (education) and *da'wah* (missionary) approach.

In contrast, the second group of Salafis (the politicians) argues that *tarbiyah* and *da'wah* alone without political participation will not change the *ummah*. As Wiktorowicz observes, unlike the purist Salafis, these politico Salafis argue that they have “a better understanding of contemporary issues and are therefore better situated to apply the Salafi creed to modern context”.⁵⁸ Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq argues that politics is at the heart of religion and political engagement includes more than just governance. He supports

⁵⁷ See Albani's statement on *Min al-Siyasah Tarku al-Siyasah*, available at <http://www.kulalsalafiyen.com/vb/showthread.php?t=25259> (accessed 8 August 2012).

⁵⁸ Wiktorowicz, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement”, p. 221.

democracy and calls Muslims to it because he believes the alternative to democracy is “a tyrannical system”. He holds that “Muslims forming political parties should be supported”. Abdul Rahman also supports participation in parliament, as it helps to ensure that legislation which is contradictory to Islamic law will not be passed.⁵⁹

In conclusion, it is possible to understand modern Salafism by observing the three essential elements. The first one is the theological element which is encapsulated by Salafis’ unique understanding of *tawhid*. In general, most Salafis are unanimous on the creedal doctrines that define Salafism. Second, is their approach to Islamic law which is concentrated on the legality of *ijtihad* and the need for Muslims to adhere to the tradition of any particular established schools of law. On the issue of law, most Salafis view that *ijtihad* is important and that *taqlid* should be avoided by Muslims. Third, is the political element which causes the most prominent disputes and disagreement among many Salafis.

Conclusion (for Part I)

Although the subject of Salafism is very vast in the study of modern Islamic thought, this section of the chapter has attempted to capture the widely-accepted meaning of Salafism and explore some of its important features and ideological trends. Importantly, we have explained the meaning of modern Salafism as is relevant to this research. As stated earlier, due to the complexities and the ambiguous nature of modern Salafism, it is nearly impossible to produce a definitive, clear and distinct definition of Salafism. Furthermore, modern Salafism is not static as it continues to evolve and even revise its ideology in an ever-changing socio-political context. Nevertheless, this discussion on Salafism is essential before we discuss the concept of WB in modern Salafism. We now turn to the subject of WB in modern Salafism in the following section of the chapter.

⁵⁹ Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, *Al-Muslimun wa Al-'Amal Al-Siyasi* (Muslims and Political Action), Al-Dar Al-Salafiyah, place not cited, 1985, p. 5.

PART II: INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT OF WB

Definition of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*

The Arabic word *wala'* derives from its root letters of *waw*, *lam* and *yaa*. These three letters form the root word *wala'*, which is also a past tense verb (*wa-li-ya*) which means “to protect”. Hence, the noun of *wa-li-ya* is *wala'* or *wilayah* (protection). One who protects is called a *wali* (plural: *awliya'*) or *mawla*. Both the terms *wali* and *mawla* can be used for the person who provides protection (the protector) or the person who receives it.⁶⁰ However, “protection” is just one of the many translations for the word *wala'*. Due to the vastness and complexity of the Arabic language, it is difficult to provide a precise translation for the word *wala'*. This is primarily because many Arabic words have multiple meanings which are used differently depending on contexts and situations. The other meanings of *wala'* include loyalty, support, guardianship and friendship.⁶¹

Ibn Faris in his famous Arabic dictionary *Mu'jam Maqayis Al-Lughah* said that the term *wala'* indicates closeness.⁶² It signifies love, loyalty, allegiance and guardianship. This definition of *wala'* is one that can better explain the meaning and context of *wala'* that we are dealing with in this research. In addition, the term *wala'* can also be understood as ownership. *Mawla* in the traditional Arabic custom is the slave who is owned by someone, and it means the one who loves and follows someone else. Deriving from the same root word as *wala'* are *tawalli* and *muwaalah*, both of which show the act of taking someone as a *wali* (protector or guardian).⁶³

⁶⁰ Ibn Manzur, Muhammad Ibn Mukarram, *Lisnul Arab*, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1996, Vol. 3, pp. 985–986. See also Firuzabadi, Muhammad Ibn Ya'qub, *Al-Qamus Al-Muhit*, Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut, 1994, Vol. 4, p. 29.

⁶¹ I have chosen to translate the term *wala'* as Loyalty and *bara'* as Disavowal as it suits the context and meaning in which I am dealing. Some may also translate it as “Allegiance and Disassociation”, while others may translate it as “Love and Hatred”.

⁶² Ibn Faris Al-Qazwini, Ahmad Ibn Zakaria, *Mu'jam Maqayis Al-Lughah*, Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut, 1979, p. 141.

⁶³ Firuzabadi, Muhammad Ibn Ya'qub, *Al-Qamus Al-Muhit*, pp. 29–31.

The word *bara'* comes from the past tense verb of *ba-ra-a* which means "to be free from something". Like *wala'*, the derivations of the word *bara'* in the Arabic language carry various meanings such as severance, creation, freedom, to overcome, and clear of debits or faults. The essence of all these meanings is to cut off the relationship with something or someone.⁶⁴

These are the linguistic meanings of WB. However, in the Islamic context and specifically in modern Salafism, WB refers to the Muslims' belief, actions and words that revolve around loving and supporting God, His Messenger and the believers (Muslims), i.e., *wala'*; while, on the other hand, distancing from those who oppose God, His Messenger and the Muslims, i.e., *bara'*. The basis of this definition of *wala'* emanates from the Quran 5:55: "*Your Wali are (no less than) Allah, His Messenger, and the Believers, those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship).*" On the other hand, the basis for distancing from and pronouncing *bara'* of the enemies of God is in the Quran 60:4: "*There is an excellent example for you in Abraham and those who followed him. They said to their people: 'We are free (bura-a-u) of you and whatever you worship besides Allah. Renounce you we do; enmity and hatred will reign between us until you believe in Allah only.'*"

It is worth noting that the entire *ummah* (Muslim nation or community) exists by virtue of the ties that bind all of them together in a common sense of *wala'*. This kind of bonding enables the *ummah* to feel attached, loved, and always maintaining bonds of brotherhood with each other, assisting and empathizing with one another. The Quran has laid foundations for such a bonding to exist in the Muslim *ummah*. It says: "*The believers are but brothers*"⁶⁵ and "*This, your community, is a single community and I am your Lord, so worship me!*"⁶⁶ This notion of loyalty, love and brotherhood can also be seen in the *hadith*

⁶⁴ Ibn Manzur, Muhammad Ibn Mukarram, *Lisanul Arab*, pp. 354–356. For the various meanings of all the derivations of the term *bara-a*, see Quran 57:22; 2:54; 59:24; 3:49; 5:110; 33:69; 2:166–167. See also Quran 8:48; 9:114; 28:63; 59:16; 60:4; 4:112; 6:19; 11:35; 24:26; 26:216.

⁶⁵ Quran 49:10.

⁶⁶ Quran 21:92.

of Prophet Muhammad: “The believers in their mutual love and compassion are like a single body, if one part of the body aches, the rest suffers in insomnia and fever.”⁶⁷ Another *hadith* mentions: “The believer to another believer are like bricks [in a building], each part supporting the other.”⁶⁸

On the flip side, *bara'* is seen as the opposite of *wala'*. In the Quranic context, *bara'* in Islam is to declare oneself free or innocent of *shirk*, i.e., the taking of others with God in the worship of Him; of disbelief (*kufri*); and of tyranny, wrongdoing and injustices. Muslims are warned of worshipping anyone or anything other than Allah. The Quran explicitly states:

Say: “O disbelievers! I do not worship what you worship. Nor do you worship what I worship. I shall never worship what you worship, and nor will you ever worship what I worship. To you be your religion, and to me, mine.”⁶⁹

Modern Salafis' conception of *bara'*, however, is not only restricted to declaring freedom from *shirk* or avoiding the worship of other besides the One and Only God, but it also includes the rejection or shunning of all that displeases God, or of anything that contradicts the *shariah*. Moreover, as mentioned before, it refers to the disavowal of anything that is seen as un-Islamic or that has the potential of posing a threat to the sanctity of the religion. *Bara'*, according to modern Salafis, refers not simply to what types of behavior ought to be considered Islamic or un-Islamic, but to which human beings it is religiously acceptable to know or have *wala'*, or friends. In short, those who reject the *shahadah* must be disavowed entirely, purged from any daily interaction with God-fearing Muslims.

It is also important to note that modern Salafis do not treat both concepts of *wala'* and *bara'* as a separate entity, even though the Quran mentions both terms separately. In other words, WB in

⁶⁷ Al-Bukhari, no. 6011; Muslim, no. 2586.

⁶⁸ Al-Bukhari, no. 481; Muslim, no. 2585.

⁶⁹ Quran 109:1–6.

modern Salafism is a combined/fused or “2 in 1” concept — one cannot exist without the other.⁷⁰

Historical Emergence of WB in Modern Salafism

The concept of WB has its theological and historical⁷¹ roots in the primary Islamic sources of the Quran and *Sunnah*. However, as mentioned before, modern Salafis’ understanding of the concept could be traced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyyah, whose work has become the theological reference for many modern Salafis. In fact, Ibn Taimiyyah never actually used the terms *wala’* and *bara’*, but it is clear from his writings that he was familiar with the idea behind it.⁷²

As stated in the Introduction, Ibn Taimiyyah developed the idea that the dissimilarity between the Muslims and non-Muslims must be total.⁷³ In his book entitled *Iqtida’ al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, he explained in detail all aspects of differences that should be drawn by Muslims in their encounters with non-Muslims. He was especially concerned about the influence of Jewish and Christian religious festivals and stressed that Muslims must avoid these if they want to remain true to Islam. Otherwise, Muslims might start showing *wala’* and *marwaddah* (affection) to them, leading themselves away from the straight path.

⁷⁰As stated earlier, although WB as a fused concept could be traced to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyyah and later developed in Wahhabism, it is believed that Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, whose work on WB is referred to in this research, was the first modern Salafi scholar to write of WB as a fused or combined concept.

⁷¹Historically, the concept of WB is not something new in Islam. The concept of loyalty to a tribal leader and members existed in pre-Islamic Arabia and in the early centuries of Islam. Early Islamic groups like the Khawarij or Kharijites were believed to have applied elements of *wala’* and *bara’* in their belief and actions. See Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of A Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 52.

⁷²*Ibid.*

⁷³Michel, Thomas F., *A Muslim Theologian’s Response to Christianity: Ibn Taimiyyah’s Al-Jawab al-salih*, Caravan Book, New York, 1984, pp. 84–85. Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida’ al-Sirat al-Mustaqim Mukhalafat Ashab al-Jahim* (Walking the Straight Path, Opposing the People of Hellfire), pp. 156–303, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?a=syed5680> (accessed 23 March 2010).

Although Ibn Taimiyyah quotes extensively from the Quran and Sunnah, one verse more or less sums up his argument, namely *surah* 5:51, which states:

O believers, take not Jews and Christians as friends (*awliya'*); they are friends of each other. Whoso of you makes them his friends is one of them. God guides not the people of the evildoers.

From the seventeenth century onwards, the practice of WB is clearly manifested in the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of Wahhabism, who was strongly influenced by the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah.⁷⁴ Under the precept of WB and based on the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab argued that it was imperative for Muslims not to befriend, ally themselves with, or imitate non-Muslims or heretical Muslims. Furthermore, this enmity and hostility towards non-Muslims had to be visible and unequivocal.⁷⁵ For example, Muslims are not allowed to be the first to greet non-Muslims, nor imitate them in their dressing, language, morality and culture. Similarly, Muslims are forbidden to take part in celebrations and festivals or any other social event originally invented by non-Muslims as this would be sufficient to make them an infidel.⁷⁶

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab strengthened the concept of WB as suggested by Ibn Taimiyyah and Ahmad Bin Hanbal to serve as a pillar of the *aqidah*. This is very clear in his writings including his most famous one, *Kitab al-Tawhid* (The Book of Monotheism), which deals with the oneness of God; and *Kitab Kashf al-Shubhat fi al-Aqidah* (The Book of Clarification of Uncertainties in Faith), which deals with heretical acts according to Wahhabism such as the intercession of prophets and saints. All of his writings revolve around the

⁷⁴The concept of WB in Wahhabism will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this book.

⁷⁵Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Muallafat al-Shaykh al-Imam Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab*, al-Maktabah al-Sa'udiyyah, Riyadh, undated, vol. 1, pp. 312–329.

⁷⁶Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, “Awthaq al-'Ura Al'Iman, al-Risalah al-Sadisah” in *Majmu'at al-Tawhid*, p. 171, available at <http://majdah.maktoob.com/vb/majdah237151/> (accessed 1 August 2012).

subject of *tawhid*. Hence, in the Wahhabi tradition, the doctrine of WB takes on an exclusive and ultimately religious approach. It designated primarily all those who do not adhere to Sunni orthodoxy, especially the Shiites.⁷⁷ Ibn Abd al-Wahhab branded all Shiites as unbelievers and *rafidah* (rejectionists).⁷⁸ In the Wahhabi tradition, WB thus became a test of true faith, to show loyalty to God alone as an indispensable part of the Islamic religion.

The culture of WB from the time of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab has prevailed for centuries until the modern period. Today, WB in modern Salafism is not only an essential religious doctrine, but is also seen by Salafis as an important shield for Muslims against any un-Islamic cultures and influences that could destroy the faith and *tawhid*. In addition, it has become a tool by certain Salafi groups to denounce the religious legitimacy of Muslim scholars and to reject the political leadership of Muslim rulers who are deemed by them as apostates.

Significance of WB in Modern Salafism

First of all, the significance of WB in modern Salafism lies in the claim that WB is (1) a fundamental issue in the religion; and (2) tied or closely linked to the *aqidah* or *iman* (faith). As mentioned before, the concept is one of the factors that could nullify the *shahadah* if not practiced by Muslims. Salafis claim that since *aqidah* is the basis of Islamic belief, it is valid to assume that WB should be upheld as a tool in the process of refining and protecting the sanctity of the *aqidah*. The supremacy of the concept is clear. *Wala'* is a source of inspiration in understanding the uniqueness of love; while *bara'* on the other hand explains the justifications for hatred, enmity and rejection. The two are jointly linked to the affirmation of faith, and they lay emphasis on verses of the Quran (such as 5:55 mentioned earlier) as a validation for the Salafi belief.

⁷⁷ Kepel, Gilles and Jean-Pierre Milelli (eds.), *Al-Qaeda in Its Own Words*, p. 168.

⁷⁸ Muhammad Bin Abdul Wahhab, *Risalah fi Al-Radd 'al Al-Rafidah*, pp. 6–33, available at <http://saaid.net/book/open.php?cat=89&book=647> (accessed 15 August 2012). See also Lacy, Robert, *The Kingdom: Arabia and the House of Sa'ud*, Avon Books, 1983, p. 59.

For example, the centrality of WB and its close relation to the Islamic faith is explained by Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani in his book on WB.⁷⁹ In his introduction, Al-Qahtani claims that the concept of WB is the “real image for the actual practice of the faith. It has a tremendous significance in the minds of Muslims, as much as the greatness and significance of the faith”.⁸⁰ Therefore, according to Al-Qahtani, *tawhid* or *aqidah* will not be achieved on earth until Muslims apply the concept of WB.⁸¹ Al-Qahtani debunks the claim that the concept is a matter of ordinary importance and asserts the opposite. To him, WB is a matter of belief and disbelief, and this is based on the Quranic verses 9:23–24 and 5:51. Another contemporary Salafi author states:

Loyalty (*al-muwalat*) and enmity (*al-mu'adat*) have a strong connection with the creed of the Muslim (*aqidah al-Muslim*) and have the effect of not being ignorant (*la yankaru*) of his behavior because the Islamic peoples represent one community (*ummah*), the community of Islam. There is a commitment for every individual Muslim who is a brick (*labina min labinat*) of this community that he does not separate from or leave the community of the Muslims (*jamaah al-Muslim*) and that his loyalty and devotion (*wala-u-hu wa ikhlasuhu*) are to God the Exalted, his messenger and his Muslim community (*li jama'atihi al-muslimah*).⁸²

Second, modern Salafis assert that WB has become more important in the current period because Muslims are no longer aware of the qualities which distinguish the Muslims from the non-Muslims. The faith of Muslims has become so weak that they have adopted

⁷⁹See Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, p. 17.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²Al-Jawhara bt. Abdullah, *Waqfa hawla al-Wala' wal Bara' fi al-Islam*, Dar Al-Sami' lil Nasr wa Al-Tawzi', Riyadh, 1991, p. 11. This quote is taken from Wagemakers, Joas, *A Quietist Jihadi: The Ideology and Influence of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi*, p. 153. This book is a printed version of the author's PhD dissertation at Radboud University Nijmegen, 2010 which I obtained from him personally.

patterns of behavior that are absolutely repugnant to a sincere believer and have taken the disbelievers as their friends. Salafis argue that unlike the generations of early Muslims like the *salaf al-salih*, Muslims today have adopted the ways, systems and style of living of the non-Muslims. Muslims' thought has been confused as they have mixed up Islamic principles with heresies and human beings and the philosophies of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance). In addition, they have become engrossed in luxuries and comfort that leads them far away from the religion. It is due to these factors that the need to "revive" the concept of WB becomes pressing.⁸³

According to modern Salafis, the subject of WB did not attract much of the attention of classical scholars, despite the important position it holds and the clarity with which it has been explained in the Islamic sources. This is due to two main reasons. First, the generations of early Muslims enjoyed a very high level of awareness and understanding of Islam, and because of this, the practice of WB flowed naturally from their actions and words. Second, early Muslim society who followed in the footsteps of the *salaf al-salih* did not experience the challenges of religious innovations. Today, WB is essential to address innovations of religious doctrines which are seen by the Salafis as a threat to the purity of Islam.⁸⁴

Modern Salafis argue that the belief in the concept of WB occupies a meritorious rank in Islam not only because of its connection with the *aqidah* but also due to several other reasons which are summarized as follows:⁸⁵

- (1) It is the strongest bond of faith. This is according to the *hadith*:
*"The strongest bond of faith is the love for Allah's sake and the hatred for Allah's sake."*⁸⁶

⁸³ Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, pp. 7–11.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, pp. 17–22; Khalid Gharib, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* revealed in Surah Al-'Imran, available at http://salafiyah-jadeedah.tripod.com/wala_wal_bara/Alee_Imran.htm (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁸⁶ *Hadith* reported by Ahmad and narrated by Al-Barra' Bin Azib in Sunan Abu Dawud 40:4582, and Al-Suyuti, *Al-Jami' Al-Saghir*, 1/69.

- (2) It is one of the factors that enables the heart to experience the beauty of faith and absolute assurance. This is based on a *hadith*: “Whoever possesses the following three (qualities) will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: The one to whom Allah and His Messenger become dearer than anything else, who loves a person and he loves him only for Allah’s sake, and who hates to revert to atheism (disbelief) as he hates to be thrown into the fire.”⁸⁷
- (3) It is the foundation by which all relationships and dealings in a Muslim community are built upon as described by the Prophet: “None of you will have faith till he likes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself.”⁸⁸
- (4) It is a sign of those who love for the sake of God. This is reported in a *hadith* which says: “There will be seven categories of people who deserve God’s protection in the hereafter. One of those categories is ‘Two men who loved each other for Allah’s sake. They congregated for His Sake, and they separated for His Sake’.”⁸⁹
- (5) It is the most powerful tie that links between people. The Quran says: “Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the people who are *Fasiqun* (the rebellious and disobedient to Allah).”⁹⁰
- (6) It is by the means of WB that God grants His protection (*Wilayah*). This is based on Ibn Jarir’s report of the saying of Ibn Abbas: “He who loves for Allah’s sake and hates for Allah’s sake, he who gives *Muwalat* (support and help) for Allah’s sake and exhibits enmity for Allah’s sake, will attain Allah’s *Wilayah*.”
- (7) The relationship of WB will be the one to remain on the Day of Judgment based on the Quranic verse: “When those who were followed, disown (declare themselves innocent of) those who followed

⁸⁷ Narrated by Anas in Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 1, no. 15.

⁸⁸ Narrated by Anas in Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 1, Book 2, no. 12.

⁸⁹ *Hadith* reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari, no. 1423, vol. 1, p. 440; and Sahih Muslim, no. 1031, vol. 2, p. 715.

⁹⁰ Quran 9:24.

(them), and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off from them."⁹¹

- (8) WB separates belief from disbelief. And those who love other than God are disbelievers. The Quran says: "*And if any amongst you takes them (Jews and Christians) as Awliya', then surely he is one of them.*"⁹²
- (9) WB is an integral part of *iman* and is necessary for its perfection. The Prophet says: "*A servant's faith in Allah will never become complete until he possesses five traits: complete reliance (al-Tawakkul) in Allah, complete dependence (al-Tafwid) on Allah (what He has decreed), complete submission (al-Taslim) to all of the commandments of Allah, complete contentment (al-Rida) upon what Allah has decreed, and complete patience (al-Sabr) for the calamities that Allah brings forth; because verily that person who loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah and gives (to others) for the (sake of) Allah and holds back (giving to others) for the (sake of) Allah is one whose faith is complete.*"⁹³

From these evidences and reasonings, one can notice that modern Salafis relate the concept of WB to the question of whom should Muslims love and whom should they hate. WB is hence known in Salafism as the "love and hate concept". Salafis also portray the concept as one that, when it is not practiced, will result in receiving the wrath of God. When addressing the issue of WB in their books, writings or lectures, Salafi scholars always incorporate the notion of love and hate.⁹⁴ This could be explained by the fact that Salafis see the concept as such and claim that love (*al-mahabbah*)

⁹¹ Quran 2:166.

⁹² Quran 5:51.

⁹³ *Hadith* narrated from Nafi' by Ibn Umar and mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 177.

⁹⁴ There are many examples to illustrate this fact. Nearly all Salafi writings and lectures on WB include the importance of loving and hating for the sake of Allah. See, for example, lecture on WB by Abu Abdullah Al-Britani, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgnXwdkrDZg> (accessed 11 October 2011). See also Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam*, Part 1, p. 33 (Love and Hate and the Declaration of Faith).

is one of the seven conditions of *tawhid*.⁹⁵ Salih Al-Fawzan categorizes people who deserve WB or those whom Muslims should love and hate into three categories:⁹⁶

- (1) Those whom Muslims should love purely with no intention of being an enemy to them. These are obviously Muslims who believe in the Oneness of God, accept the *tawhid*, and submit to Him.
- (2) Those whom Muslims should hate and take as enemies with no love or support and respect for them. This group refers to all the disbelievers including the Pagans, the Hypocrites and the Apostates.
- (3) Those whom Muslims should love particularly for their good deeds, and hate for their other evil deeds. This category of people are those who are loved for their belief of Islam, but hated for the sins they have committed. Thus, as a sign of loving them, Muslims should find ways to advise and warn them against doing any evil acts. The people under this category could also be punished for their evil doings for the benefit of the wider Muslim community.

Another Salafi preacher, the Jamaican-born Sheikh Abdullah Faisal from the UK, defines WB as the “Islamic concept of love”.⁹⁷ He states that Islam has laid the foundations and made it explicit as to who Muslims should love and hate. Faisal counsels:

The implication of *al-wala'* is that a person loves for the sake of Allah. The implication of *al-bara'* is that one hates for the sake of Allah. It is the seventh and last condition of the *shahadah*. *Al-Wala'* means to recognize who your friends are, to love, appreciate and

⁹⁵The other six conditions of *tawhid* are *Al-Ilm* (Knowledge), *Al-Yaqin* (Certainty), *Al-Qabul* (Acceptance), *Al-Inqiyad* (Submission), *As-Sidiq* (Truthfulness) and *Al-Ikhlas* (Sincerity).

⁹⁶See Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, p. 27.

⁹⁷Abdullah Faisal (b. 1963) is a famous radical Salafi preacher in the United Kingdom. His ten-part video recording on WB is widely available on the internet. See “*Al-Wala' wal Bara'* by Syeikh Faisal Part 1”, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PURY4GgT6i4> (accessed 1 August 2012).

support them in their endeavor to establish the *din* (religion). *Al-Bara'* means to recognize who your enemies are and to hate them and exterminate them in their endeavor to get rid of your *din*, *al-Islam*.⁹⁸

Salafis claim that one needs to understand the principle known as *at-talaazum* in order to understand WB.⁹⁹ *Talaazum* (moulding) is to mould two or more things together which cannot be separated. For example, the *talaazum* of *iman* (belief) is explained as “the belief in the heart, manifested by the tongue and actions by the limbs” (*al-iman qaulun wa f'ilun wa 'itiqaadun*). To separate these three elements from each other is to dismantle the whole matter. Likewise, there is *talaazum* in WB. For *wala'*, the *talaazum* is *muwaalat* (alliance), and for *bara'* it is *mu'aadat* (enmity). In fact, the term *Al-Muwaalat wal Mu'aadat* (Alliance and Enmity) is synonymous to *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, Salafis argue that it is insufficient for Muslims to profess having *wala'* to fellow Muslims; they must also ally with them. Similarly, as *mu'aadat* is the *talaazum* for *bara'*, a Muslim must not only disavow but also profess his enmity and hatred towards the non-Muslims.

⁹⁸ Abdullah Faisal, “Al-Walaa and Al-Baraa — Loving and Hating for the Sake of Allah, Part 1”, *Radical Review*, January 2008/Muharram 1429, Vol. 1, available at www.revolutionmuslim.com/uploads/rr1.pdf (accessed 19 August 2011).

⁹⁹ Taken from the lecture of a famous radical Salafi from London known as Abu Waleed. Abu Waleed is famous for his *da'wah* on inciting hatred towards the non-Muslims and his call for an Islamic state and system. The importance of the principle of *talaazum* in the concept of WB is taken from his one-hour lecture on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* which is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNNkR4umBO4> (accessed 17 November 2011).

¹⁰⁰ A Salafi scholar, Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Mas'ari, wrote a book entitled *Al-Muwaalat wal Mu'aadat* (Alliance and Enmity). This book was published in 2004 (third edition) by *Tanzim At-Tajdeed Al-Islami* (Islamic Reformation Organization), a Salafi organization based in London. The book discusses many issues related to the Salafi concept of WB. The book is available at <http://www.tajdeed.org.uk/ar/posts/list/22.page> (accessed 18 November 2011).

According to the Salafis, there are five meanings or elements in both concepts of *wala'* and *bara'*.¹⁰¹ These elements are deemed important and should be manifested when WB is applied. A Muslim is not considered to have professed *wala'* unless he applies all these elements. The five meanings of *wala'* are: (1) *Al-Hubb* (love) — to love God, His Messenger and the Muslims; (2) *Al-Nusrah* — to support all Muslims physically against their enemies; (3) *Al-Ikram* — to honor Muslims and always elevate them. This is so as *karamah* (dignity) is only for the Muslims; (4) *Al-Himayah* — to protect; and (5) to respect Muslim brothers and never backbite or slander them. On the other hand, *bara'* also has five meanings which are exactly the opposite of the meanings of *wala'* mentioned above. The five meanings of *bara'* are: (1) *Al-Bughud* (hatred); (2) *Al-Khuzlan* — to never support the *kuffar*; (3) *Al-Izlal* — to dishonor the *kuffar*; (4) *Al-Tazlim* — to give up the *kuffar* or to give up their ideology; and (5) to humiliate the non-Muslims and never look up to them.

Various Dimensions of WB in Modern Salafism

In my observation, the concept of WB in modern Salafism is not static and fixed, but could be seen as having different roles or dimensions. These dimensions highlight the dynamism and complexity of WB. In addition, the multi-dimensional nature of WB is seen as important and useful for this research as it helps us understand the realities and dynamics of the concept in modern Salafism. Importantly, as mentioned before, it assists in the process of analyzing the writings on WB by modern Salafis. The different roles or dimensions of WB in modern Salafism are:

Aqidah Dimension

This is the fundamental and most important dimension of WB. All Salafis are unanimous on this dimension of the concept. As stated

¹⁰¹ Abu Waleed's lecture on WB, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNNkR4umBO4> (accessed 17 November 2011).

earlier, at the *aqidah* (creedal) level of the concept, all Salafis believe that WB is part of the faith and a true manifestation of the *shahadah*. They believe that the main objective behind WB is to cleanse Islam from any impurities and innovations. By having total loyalty only to Islam and disavowing all un-Islamic elements can *tawhid* then be preserved.

Social Dimension

The social dimension of WB is characterized by a portrayal of non-Muslims as potential enemies of the purity of Islamic rituals and customs. The very contact with these “enemies of God” is portrayed as being harmful to the Muslims’ religion, which is why Muslims should avoid all loyalty to them. It can be said that the social dimension of WB is the most emphasized.

The social aspect of the concept is seen by the Salafis as one that forbids Muslims to befriend the non-Muslims, especially the Jews and Christians; and this is based on the Quranic verse of 5:51 mentioned earlier. Also, Muslims are obliged to avoid any activity deemed by the Salafis as un-Islamic and posing a threat to the religion. Some of these activities include imitating non-Muslims in their language, dressing, names and culture, as well as observing holidays and festivals of the non-Muslims and seeking assistance from non-Muslims. Some Salafis advocate the idea of *hijrah* to Muslim lands, or from *dar al-harb* (abode of war) to *dar al-Islam* (abode of Islam), as they believe it is the most viable solution for the dilemma faced by the Muslims. The idea of *hijrah* has, however, been given its exclusive interpretation and dimension by the Salafis. Basically, Salafis use the concept of *hijrah* in favor of the isolation of minority Muslims from the larger non-Muslim community.

Political Dimension

The political dimension of WB refers to the use of WB by Salafis who actively incorporate elements of politics and political systems, rulers, and diplomatic ties with other countries into their belief.

At the political level, Salafis assert that Muslims must give their *wala'* only to Muslim rulers who rule according to the Islamic system. Muslim rulers who rule not with the *shariah* must be disavowed, and Muslims must abandon any un-Islamic political system such as democracy, nationalism and secularism, just like the way they are required to perform *bara'* of the *kuffar*. In other words, these Salafis are convinced that the concept of WB should be applied not only at the creedal and social level, but also to politics and diplomacy. Since diplomatic relations and friendly ties between Muslim countries and non-Muslim states are quite common, they are often highly critical of governments in the Muslim world. In its political form, WB is linked to the concept of *tawhid al-hakimiyyah* (the unity of governance),¹⁰² relating to the judgement that a Muslim leader who does not rule by the entirety of the *shariah* is an infidel who should be overthrown, by violent means if necessary.

Jihadi Dimension

The Jihadi dimension of WB is in many ways closely connected to the political dimension. Hence, the Jihadi aspect of WB could also be termed the “politico-Jihadi” dimension. This particular dimension of WB is only added and applied by the category of Salafis known as Jihadi Salafis.

Under the pretext of WB, Jihadi Salafis assert that the use of violence understood in the form of *jihad* is legitimized and sometimes obligatory on those Muslims who have negated the true manifestation of WB. At the political level of WB, these Salafis accuse incumbent Muslim political leaders of being apostates for a

¹⁰²It is important to note that the notion of *tawhid al-hakimiyyah* is rejected by some Salafis, especially the purists. According to Salih Al-Fawzan, the addition of a fourth category of *tawhid* (i.e., *tawhid al-hakimiyyah*) is a misguidance. This is so as there are elements of politics in this particular category of *tawhid*, which are always avoided by purist Salafis. For example, see *Shaykh Salih Al-Fawzan on Tawhid Al-Hakimiyyah*, available at <http://www.spubs.com/sps/sp.cfm?subsecID=MNJ07&articleID=MNJ070005&articlePages=1> (accessed 12 March 2011).

variety of reasons: (1) they ally themselves to the non-Muslims who Salafis view as the enemies of Islam;¹⁰³ (2) they ally themselves with the non-Muslims against Muslims;¹⁰⁴ (3) they fail to fully implement the *shariah* law as the main constitution of the state; and (4) they agree with and apply non-Islamic political systems such as democracy, secularism and nationalism.¹⁰⁵ Due to these acts, Jihadi Salafis accuse Muslim leaders of violating the very concept of WB, which is seen as violating the *aqidah*. This implies apostasy and as a result, they should be attacked and their regime overthrown via what Salafis understand as an act of *jihad* for the cause of the religion.¹⁰⁶

As mentioned earlier, these four dimensions of WB in modern Salafism are significant as they highlight two things: (1) the diversity of opinions with regards to the concept among Salafis; (2) it is one of the reasons for the diversity or the different orientations of modern Salafism. This research attempts to show the significance of WB in the ideology of modern Salafism, and more importantly, the different angles and spectrum of the concept; and how the various Salafi groups treat the concept in a variety of ways. This framework will be used to analyze the writings on WB by modern Salafi thinkers (Chapter 5). The analysis is conducted by mainly observing the role

¹⁰³ See Ayman Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁴ The issue of forbiddance of alliance with non-Muslims against Muslims is dealt with extensively in the writings of several Jihadi Salafis such as Ayman Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*; Nasr Bin Hamad al-Fahad, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr Man A'ana al-Amrikan* (Clarification on the Apostasy of Those who Assist the Americans); Hamoud Bin Uqla Al-Shuaibi, *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtar fi Hukm al-Isti'ana bi al-Kuffar* (Chosen Words on the Rulings of Those who Seek the Assistance of the Infidels). These books will be discussed in the following chapters.

¹⁰⁵ For the works of Salafis on this issue, see Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Millat Ibrahim* (The Religion of Abraham) and *Dimuqratiyyah Diinun* (Democracy is Religion). Both books are available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/t> (accessed 8 August 2012).

¹⁰⁶ Jihadi Salafis practise an act known as *takfir* (excommunication) of Muslim rulers who fail to implement *shariah* or who apply non-Islamic political systems such as democracy, secularism and nationalism which are seen by the former as against Islamic teachings. This act of *takfir* will eventually lead to the concept of *jihad* which is manifested in the form of overthrowing and attacking their adversaries physically.

of WB (i.e., the dimensions of WB) within their intellectual systems. Through this analysis, it is concluded that a particular Salafi orientation has an effect on the style of writing and presentation of the concept by modern Salafis. This reflects the position of WB in modern Salafism as being fluid and multi-dimensional.

Conclusion (for Part II)

The second part of this chapter has briefly illustrated the centrality of WB in modern Salafism. The supremacy of the concept in modern Salafism is due to many factors, of which the most important and obvious is its close connection to the *aqidah* as claimed by modern Salafis. Uniquely, we could also observe that the concept is conceptualized in the forms of: (1) dialectic — as it develops a contradictory antithesis and synthesis; (2) polemic — that is, a form of controversial argument against a doctrine or belief, which is ultimately (3) adversarial — presented in the form of conflict, disagreement and hostility. Why is WB conceptualized in this way? It is primarily because the concept is not known outside the Salafi circles. Modern Salafis create an exclusive meaning of the concept, which means that practices they consider threatening to Islam may not be seen as such by other Muslims or the non-Salafis.

The unique and exclusive meaning of WB is one that is exclusively created, crafted and developed by modern Salafis. This creation is obviously based on the divine teachings of Islam, specifically derived from the Quran and Prophetic traditions. In order to have a comprehensive understanding of how WB is conceptualized and theologically legitimized, it is important that we look at its sources. This approach provides us with an understanding of the foundation of the concept before we move to discuss the current realities and complexities of it in modern Salafism. For this reason, we turn to the next chapter.

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Chapter 2

Significance of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* and *Millat Ibrahim* in Salafis' Conception of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*

Introduction

In Chapter 1, we have mentioned the significance of WB in modern Salafism. We have also briefly seen how the Quran and Prophetic traditions play an important part in lending authenticity and legitimacy to the concept. Generally, verses prohibiting Muslims to form *wala'* with the non-Muslims are mentioned separately in the Quran from those discussing issues of *bara'*. There is only one chapter (*surah*) in the Quran that discusses both issues of *wala'* and *bara'* together in the same chapter. It is the sixtieth chapter known as *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* (literally: Chapter of “The Woman Who is Examined”). It could be said that this particular chapter plays an important role in the theological formulation of modern Salafis' conception of WB.

It is our belief that a comprehensive understanding of this *surah* is vital to comprehend how WB in modern Salafism is theologically legitimized and formulated. This *surah* forms the basis of Salafis' understanding of the concept, while other verses on *wala'* and *bara'* serve to support the foundation of WB rooted in this *surah*. In particular, the *surah* exposes the characteristics of the “enemies of God and Muslims” whose alliance with them is forbidden. In addition, it is also from this *surah* that the concept of *Millat Ibrahim* (The Religion

of Abraham)¹ is believed to be taken by modern Salafis to illustrate the importance of showing *bara'* to non-Muslims. Modern Salafis refer to *Millat Ibrahim* to show the urgency of following in the footsteps of Prophet Abraham in disavowing non-Muslims.²

This chapter aims to illustrate how *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* and the idea of *Millat Ibrahim* contribute significantly to the formulation of modern Salafis' concept of WB. In addition, the chapter looks at how this *surah* is connected to other Quranic verses of *wala'* and *bara'* to form the typical Salafi brand of WB. Importantly, this chapter attempts to show how modern Salafis' reading of the *surah's* text and their interpretation of its context has transformed these particular Quranic injunctions — which seem to warn the early Muslims of the dangers of forming alliances with their hostile enemies — into the foundation of a radical ideology. In particular, it highlights how the Jihadi Salafis interpret verses from this *surah* in light of the current political issues and developments, and combine it with the concept of *takfir* against Muslim rulers.

In what follows, the chapter begins with an introduction and a general understanding of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*. In particular, it will

¹ *Millat* in Arabic means a way or path, but its use is mostly taken to mean “religion”. In the Quran, Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) is a central figure and is described as a leader of humankind (Quran 2:124), a prophet and a friend of God (Quran 4:125). The Quran refers to the faith of Abraham as *Millat Ibrahim* due to the significance of Abraham's journey and experiences in searching for the truth — from considering the star, moon and sun as gods but later rejecting them as mere creatures, to the point where he finally believed in God and totally disavowed those who worship other than the One God. *Millat Ibrahim* is also known as *Al-Hanifiyyah* (Quran 10:104). In Islamic context, the one who follows the *Millat Ibrahim* is known as *hanif* (plural: *hunafa'*). A *hanif* is also known as *muwahhid* (one who believes in *tawhid*). See Quran 16:120 and 123. In the Quran, the word *millat* is used in 15 different verses. Ten of them (2:120, 2:130, 2:135, 3:95, 4:125, 6:161, 12:37, 12:38, 16:123, 22:78) refer, either directly or indirectly, to Abraham.

² Modern Salafis have taken the concept of *Millat Ibrahim* as an important model and example of how Muslims should emulate Abraham by disavowing non-Muslims and developing a sense of hatred and enmity towards them. For more on Salafis' perception of *Millat Ibrahim*, see Sulayman Ibn Abdallah, *Al-Dala'il fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl Al-Ishrak* (The Evidences for the Rulings Regarding Alliance with the Infidels and Matters Related to It), Al-Tibyan Publications, undated, p. 38.

highlight the reason behind its revelation, historical context, and common themes of the *surah*. It then proceeds to explain the concept of *Millat Ibrahim* and other Quranic verses on WB, and how all these have shaped modern Salafis' understanding of the concept. The chapter concludes that understanding the theological aspects of WB and how it is formulated and conceptualized by modern Salafis is important before we discuss the realities, complexities and diversities of the concept in modern Salafism.

Introduction to *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*

Surah Al-Mumtahanah is the sixtieth chapter of the 114 chapters of the Quran. It is from the type of *surahs* revealed entirely in Medina³ (in modern-day Saudi Arabia), the place of Prophet Muhammad's migration and where he died. The meaning of *Al-Mumtahanah* is "the woman who is examined", and this meaning is somewhat mostly accepted. Some pronounce it as *Al-Mumtahninah* which means "the examiner". Hence, the first pronunciation would make the title a reference to the woman regarding whom the *surah* was revealed, and the second would make it a reference to the nature of the *surah* itself in that it is meant to test the people.⁴ This is similar to the title of the ninth chapter, *Surah Bara'ah*, which is also known as *Al-Fadiahah* (The Exposer). In any case, the classical Muslim exegete Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani clarified that the stronger pronunciation is the first.⁵

Surah Al-Mumtahanah was revealed upon Prophet Muhammad after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah⁶ and before the conquest of Mecca.

³Due to its revelation in Medina, this *surah* is called *surah madaniyyah* (*surah* that is revealed in Medina after the migration of the Prophet).

⁴Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Quran*, vol. 18, p. 46.

⁵Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari bi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi, 1981, vol. 9, p. 263.

⁶The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was an important event that took place during the formation of Islam. It was a pivotal treaty between Prophet Muhammad, representing the state of Medina, and the Quraish tribe of Mecca in March 628CE. It helped to decrease tension between the two cities, affirmed a ten-year peace, and authorized Muhammad's followers to return the following year in a peaceful pilgrimage, The First Pilgrimage.

Like many other Medinan chapters, this *surah* serves to organize and structure the Muslim state and society by laying down the foundations that establish the religion, state and society.⁷ These foundations include matters of state development, governance, socialization, and conduct of warfare. The *surah* encompasses a number of significant issues such as guidelines for dealing with others outside the realm of Islam, preserving the secrets of the Muslim society and characteristics of Muslims who give their allegiance to God and Islam, and limiting their relationship with enemies of Islam. Uniquely, one who reflects over the verses of this *surah* will discover that the common theme connecting each of its individual parts revolves around the concept of WB; and that the *surah* adopts a unique style in clarifying these themes and principles.

As the *surah* is from the chapters that followed the movement of Islamic society in its most crucial moments, i.e., fighting the symbols of unbelief, modern Salafis believe that Muslims today are in dire need of reflecting over the *surah*, since history repeats itself.⁸ They see the *surah* as one which relates to the current situation of Muslims who are living amidst the infidels and disbelief. They see the circumstances behind the revelation of the *surah* and the message it brings as not differing much from the nature of conflict that Muslims are facing today.

The *surah* consists of 13 verses and can be divided into five parts. The first part (verses 1–3) warns of taking the enemies of God (referring to the hostile Meccans at the time of Prophet Muhammad) and loving them. It also reminds us that family ties shall not profit the Muslims on the Day of Judgement. The second part (verses 4–6) instructs the Medinan Muslims on how they should behave towards the pagan Meccans by following the exemplary behavior of Prophet Abraham who disavowed the idol worshippers. This is known among the modern Salafis as *Millat Ibrahim*. The third part (verses 7–9)

⁷ Al-Zarqani, Muhammad Abd Al-Azim, *Manahil al-Irfan fi Ulum Al-Quran*, Dar Ihya' Al-Kutub Al-Arabiyyah: Isa al-Babi Al-Halabi, Cairo, 1953, vol. 1, p. 191.

⁸ Fathullah, Wasim, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahinah: A Thematic Analysis of the Sixtieth Chapter of the Quran*, p. 6.

describes that God might bring love (*mawaddah*) between the warring parties, and that He allows friendly relations with those Meccans who did not fight the Muslims and chase them out of their homes. The fourth part of the *surah* instructs Muslims to examine Muslim women who fled to Medina after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, since it was agreed in the treaty that Meccans joining the Muslims should be sent back. The *surah* commands that if a tested woman is indeed a true Muslim, then she should be accepted into the community and not be sent back to Mecca. This part of the *surah* also commands Muslims that they should sever the relation with their unbelieving women and that the latter are free to flee from Medina to Mecca. Finally, the fifth part of the *surah* (verse 13) points out again that Muslims should not take certain groups of people as their friends.

A critical observation of all these parts of the *surah* reveals a common theme, which is the theme of WB. Indeed, the *surah* is from the *surahs* that are most uniform in terms of their subject matter, and this is because of the common theme that is present throughout the *surah*. What makes this *surah* unique is the way WB is affirmed from different angles such that its different parts and verses all revolve around the same concept. The points in the *surah* that highlight the concept of WB as stipulated in all the five parts could be summarized as follows:⁹

- (1) The *surah* begins and ends with the same issue, i.e., prohibiting *wala'* to the non-Muslims.
- (2) The *surah* points to the importance of having *wala'* to God, Islam and the Muslims such that it negates all other forms of *wala'* such as the family members who will not benefit Muslims on the Day of Judgement.
- (3) The *surah* attaches great significance to the fine example of the practicality of WB that is evident in Prophet Abraham who openly denounced *bara'* of his own people who refused to believe in *tawhid*.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- (4) The *surah* provides guidelines for Muslims as to which group of non-Muslims should be disavowed. The fact that the *surah* places an exception to the prohibition of *wala'* to non-hostile *kuffar* highlights the Quranic principle that regulates Muslim and non-Muslim relationship.
- (5) The *surah* confirms that Muslims will always be tested, and the purpose of this test is to ascertain their faith to God and Islam. It also points to the fact that the manifestations of WB involve not only the belief, but also one's character which includes deeds and words. These manifestations are stipulated in the conditions of the act of *bai'ah* (pledge of allegiance) which is described in the *surah*.

Our reading of the books by several prominent modern Salafi thinkers who have written on the subject of WB, reveals that all of them have quoted verses from this *surah*, among others, to highlight the importance and validity of WB. In addition, the writings, statements and lectures of many Salafi scholars and thinkers who are consulted for the purpose of this research are found to contain verses from this particular *surah*. For example, the former mufti of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Baz, used verses 1–4 of this *surah* in his letter to the former mufti of Egypt, Jad al-Haq Ali Jad al-Haq (d. 1996), refuting the latter's stance on WB which he expressed in an article entitled "Islam and Its Relation to Other Religions".¹⁰ As will be seen, the famous Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi discusses the concept of *Millat Ibrahim* from this *surah* in most of his books. Prominent modern Salafi figures such as Salih Al-Fawzan, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani and Ayman Al-Zawahiri, whose writings on WB will be analyzed in Chapter 5 of this book, are found to have used verses of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* extensively.

The *surah* begins by confirming the issue that forms the basis of WB in modern Salafism, i.e., the division of people into two groups:

¹⁰See *Sheikh Bin Baz Corrects Sheikh of Al-Azhar on Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, available at <http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f15/sheikh-bin-baz-corrects-sheikh-al-azhar-46261/> (accessed 15 March 2012).

one that believes in *tawhid*, and another that disbelieves. The issue of *wala'* in this *surah* is addressed as early as in the very first verse (*ayah*) of this *surah*, which forbids Muslims to love and have allegiance with the non-Muslims. It also reveals who the “enemies of God and Muslims” are. To understand how this verse has formulated Salafis’ conception of *wala'*, we need to return to the historical context in which the first verse of this *surah* was revealed, which revolves around the story of Hatib Bin Abi Balta’ah.

The Story of Hatib Bin Abi Balta’ah

It was reported in many Quranic exegesis that the story of Hatib Bin Abi Balta’ah (d. 650), a companion of Prophet Muhammad, was the reason for the revelation of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*.¹¹ Hatib, a Muslim convert, was among those who migrated with Prophet Muhammad to Medina from Mecca in 622 as a result of the persecution by the Meccans that the Muslims faced. He had also participated in the Battle of Badr, the first battle of Prophet Muhammad and Islam against the Meccans in 624. Hatib, who did not belong to the

¹¹ The story of Hatib, which is the *sabab al-nuzul* (reason for revelation) for verse 1 of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, can be found in many traditional and modern *tafsir* (exegesis). See, for example, Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Quran*, pp. 50–51; Muhammad Bin Jarir Al-Tabari, *Jami' Al-Bayan an Ta'wil Ayi Al-Quran*, pp. 285–287; Ahmad Ibn Shu'aib Ibn Ali Al-Nasa'i, *Tafsir al-Nasa'i*, Muassasah Al-Kutub Al-Thaqafiyah, 1990, vol. 2, pp. 414–416; Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Ibn Mahmud Al-Nasafi, *Tafsir Al-Nasafi: Madarik Al-Tanzil wa Haqiqat Al-Ta'wil* (The Exegesis of Al-Nasafi: The Path of Revelation and the Realities of Interpretations), Dar Ibn Kathir, 1999, vol. 3, pp. 465–466; Sayyid Qutub, *Fi Zilal Al-Quran* (In the Shades of the Quran), The Islamic Foundation and Islamonline.net, vol. XVI, pp. 452–453; Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Ibn Katsir* (Abridged), Darussalam Publishers and Distributors, 2000, vol. 9, pp. 583–585. The story of Hatib can also be found in nearly all the authentic collections of *hadith*. See Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 52, *Kitab Al-Jihad*; Sahih Muslim, Book 44, *Kitab Fada-il As-Sahabah* (The Book of Attributes of the Companions); Abu Dawud, vol. 3, no. 47, *Kitab Al-Jihad wa Al-Jasus* (Book of Fighting and Spying); and Al-Tirmizi, vol. 5, no. 409. It is also mentioned by Ibn Al-Athir in *Jami' Al-Usul*, vol. 8, p. 385; Al-Wahidi in *Al-Asbab*, p. 447; and Al-Suyuti in *Al-Durr Al-Manthur*, vol. 6, p. 203.

Quraish¹² tribe of Mecca, fled to Medina and left behind his family and relatives in Mecca.

In 628, a treaty was drawn up between the Muslims in Medina under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad and the pagan Meccans. Known as the “Treaty of Hudaibiyah”, it came after several years of hostile relations between the two parties. However, the Quraish Meccans nullified their pact with the Prophet by joining forces against his allies in Khuza’ah.¹³ This breach of treaty, which was supposed to cease the attacks between the Muslims and the Meccans, subsequently led to the Prophet’s decision to conquer Mecca in 630. It is at this point of the Islamic history that the story of Hatib begins.

Hatib, who was concerned about the safety of his family and relatives in Mecca, had secretly written to the Quraish Meccans informing them of the Prophet’s plan to conquer the city. This action of Hatib’s (which could obviously be seen as a betrayal of the Muslims) was intended to gain the trust of the Meccans, whom Hatib hoped would protect his family and relatives in return. However, the Prophet got wind of this and instructed his companions — Ali (d. 661), Al-Zubair (d. 656) and Al-Miqdad (d. unknown) — to retrieve the letter from a woman at Rawdah Khakh. The woman, who initially denied having the letter, finally handed it over after being persuaded by the Prophet’s companions. The letter was then brought back to the Prophet, who subsequently asked Hatib for an explanation.

Hatib begged the Prophet for understanding, explaining that, unlike the Prophet’s kinsmen in Mecca, he could not protect his family as he did not belong to the Quraish tribe. He explained further that he had not done so out of disbelief, nor to choose disbelief after Islam. He had only intended to do a favor for the Quraish so that they would protect his family and relatives. Upon hearing the

¹²The term “Quraish” refers to a powerful merchant tribe that controlled Mecca in Arabia and the *Ka’bah* (the house which is the direction of prayers for the Muslims) during the days before the birth of Prophet Muhammad and the coming of Islam. Prophet Muhammad was born into the Banu Hashim clan of the Quraish tribe.

¹³Khuza’ah is a name of a place and also refers to a tribe (Banu Khuza’a) from Azd from Southern Arabia.

clarification from Hatib, the Prophet told his companions that Hatib had told the truth. Umar, another companion of the Prophet, asked the Prophet's permission to chop off Hatib's head as a punishment for his hypocrisy and betrayal of the Muslims. However, the Prophet stopped him and said that Hatib had participated in the Battle of Badr, and that perhaps God had granted forgiveness to those who fought at Badr, no matter what their actions.

The Issue of *Wala'* and Salafis' Debate on It

First, it is important to note that the *surah's* first verse is the basis for modern Salafis' claim that Muslims are prohibited to give *wala'* to the non-Muslims. The story of Hatib, who would have had his head chopped off if not for his participation in the Battle of Badr, clearly signifies the grave consequences of forming an alliance with non-Muslims, even if it is not a conviction in one's heart. This story of Hatib has led to debates among modern Salafis with regards to what constitutes *kufir*.¹⁴ Can someone be declared a *kafir* due to his actions without considering what is actually in the heart? Why was Hatib not declared a *kafir* even though his actions clearly show *kufir*?¹⁵

¹⁴For more on Salafis' debate on what constitutes *kufir*, see Wagemakers, Joas, "Defining the Enemy: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's Radical Reading of Surat al-Mumtahanah", *Brill Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 48, 2008, pp. 348–371.

¹⁵First, it is important to note here that modern Salafis' debate on *kufir* encompasses various issues and is not only limited to the issue of forming alliance with non-Muslims. In modern Salafism, particularly in Jihadi Salafism, the *takfir* ideology is closely connected to the concept of WB. In the Jihadi Salafi line of thinking, Hatib's action is considered *kufir* because the Jihadis view the act of assisting non-Muslims and supporting them against Muslims as one that negates the Muslim faith. Apart from the issue of forming alliance with non-Muslims, Salafis' debate on *kufir* could also be seen in other matters such as ruling with other than what God has revealed (*hukm bi ghair ma anzala Allah*). Salafis' debate on this particular issue and its relation to *kufir* and WB will be illustrated briefly in Chapter 4 of this book. Second, it has to be mentioned that Salafis' debate on *kufir* of those who form *wala'* with the non-Muslims as discussed here is explained in brevity, and that the debate could be more complex than this. Their debate on *kufir* regarding the issue of *wala'* mainly revolves around the question of relations between the internal belief (*iman*) and the outer actions of a Muslim.

In the case of Hatib, his action of betraying the Muslims by revealing their secret to the enemy clearly indicates *kufr* due to his alliance with the enemies of the Muslims. However, he was spared from being punished for a specific reason that cannot be repeated for anyone else. Here, some modern Salafis use this part of Hatib's story to prove that external manifestation (*'amal bil jawarih*) is sufficient to declare one's infidelity, regardless of what one believes in the heart (*tasdiq bil qalb*).¹⁶ They argue that Hatib's apostasy is explicit from the statement of the Prophet to his Companions who wanted to execute Hatib that "perhaps God looked at those who witnessed Badr and forgave their sins". On the other hand, other Salafis argue that *kufr* can only be determined if someone clearly declares and pronounces it.¹⁷ Using the same story of Hatib, they argue that the fact that Hatib clarified to the Prophet that he did not commit the act out of disbelief or apostasy, but to secure the safety of his family, and the subsequent confirmation by the Prophet that Hatib had told the truth, clearly shows that conviction of the heart is a condition before *kufr* can be determined. This claim is rejected by Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi who rebuts that the Prophet's statement ("as regards to Hatib, he has told the truth") serves as an affirmation of truthfulness of Hatib's claim but not an approval of Hatib's claim.¹⁸ Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, who was born as Isam Mohammad Tahir al-Barqawi, is an Islamist from Jordan and is widely known as the mentor of the former leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. Born in Nablus, Palestine in 1959,¹⁹ Al-Maqdisi is regarded as one of the most prominent thinkers on the current evolution of jihadi ideology, which has been widely adopted

¹⁶ As will be seen, this position is predominantly taken by the Jihadi Salafis.

¹⁷ This stance is especially taken by the purist Salafis and many Salafis in general.

¹⁸ See Abu Muhammad Asim Al-Maqdisi, *Millat Ibrahim wa da'wah al-Anbiya' wa al-Mursalin wa asa'ib al-Tughah fi tamyi'iha wa sarfi al-du'aati anha*, p. 223. See also Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Mas'ari, *Al-Muwaalah wal Mu'aadah*, Tanzim At-Tajdid Al-Islami, third edition, London, 2004, p. 74.

¹⁹ See Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Global Jihad, The 21st Century Phenomenon* at http://www.globaljihad.net/view_page.asp?id=269 (accessed 12 June 2010) for a brief profile of Al-Maqdisi.

by many contemporary militant Islamist groups.²⁰ According to Al-Maqdisi, Hatib told the truth in compliance of his statement to that of his conviction, not by its compliance with the present situation and reality.²¹

Salafis who believe that Hatib's action constitutes *kufir* cite three reasons:²²

- (1) The statement of Umar who said, “*Let me strike the neck of this hypocrite* [referring to Hatib].” This statement of Umar is clear evidence that assisting and supporting (*muzaharah*) the *kuffar* is *kufir*, and one who commits it has performed an act of apostasy (*riddah*). Umar's statement was based on what he witnessed (and the punishment for apostasy in Islam is death) and not on the intention of Hatib.
- (2) The fact that no one had criticized Umar's judgment and *takfir* implies that Hatib had really committed an act of *kufir*. This is also supported by the fact that the Prophet seemed to approve Umar's statement. Had Umar not been correct in his judgment, he would have been silenced or corrected. In addition, the

²⁰Norman T. Lihou, *Influential Thinker on Radical Islamist Ideology*, available at <http://www.zimbio.com/Religion/articles/285/Influential+Thinker+Radical+Islamist+Ideology> (accessed 9 June 2011).

²¹Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Mas'ari, *Al-Muwaalah wal Mu'adah*, Tanzim At-Tajdid Al-Islami, p. 74.

²²See *Aiding the Kuffar and the Incident of Hatib* posted at the website of Salafimedia.com, available at <http://salafimedia.com/aqeedah/al-walaa-wal-baraa/item/1618-aiding-the-kuffar-and-the-incident-of-hatib-ra.html> (accessed 11 March 2012). This position on Hatib's *kufir* is believed to be widely held by the Jihadi Salafis. This is so, as one who observes this website and reflects upon its contents and postings would find that it has a strong Jihadi Salafi orientation. The website glorifies Salafi figures such as Osama Bin Laden (d. 2011), Hamoud Bin Abdullah Bin Uqla Al-Shuaiibi (d. 2001), Abu Qatada Al-Filistini (b. 1960), Abu Hamza Al-Masri (b. 1958), Omar Bakri Muhammad (b. 1958) and many others who are all of Jihadi orientation. It also criticizes followers of Madkhali Salafism, which it accuses as having deviated from the “true” *Salafiyah*. In addition, the website has posted 13 articles on the subject of WB.

statement from the Prophet that Hatib had an acceptable excuse for his action further confirms Hatib's apostasy.

- (3) The manner in which Hatib defended himself by saying "I had not done so out of disbelief nor to choose disbelief after Islam" clearly shows that Hatib did understand that the action of assisting the non-Muslims against Muslims is an act of *kufur*, and that he made sure to mention the reality of his action before any judgment could be passed on him. In another version of *hadith*, Hatib said, "I did not take this action to fool the Messenger of God or due to *nifaq* (hypocrisy). Furthermore, I had the belief that God will make His messenger victorious and complete his divine radiance."²³ In another narration Hatib said, "O Messenger of God, by Allah the *iman* in my heart never changed." These narrations, the Salafis claim, show that Hatib carried the belief that assisting and supporting the *kuffar* against Muslims is *kufur* and clear apostasy, and that this action would mean showing consent to the act of *kufur* and would be *nifaq* (hypocrisy) and deceit to the Prophet. For these reasons, Hatib wanted to clarify his belief and intention to the Prophet.²⁴

Nasr Bin Hamad Al-Fahad, a well-known Jihadi Salafi from Saudi Arabia, is among those who believe that the act of *muzaharah al-kuffar* (supporting the non-Muslims) against the Muslims, like what Hatib did, constitutes *kufur*. Al-Fahad was born in Riyadh in 1968. He had a distinguished academic career, graduating from the Imam University and the University of Sharia in Riyadh. In 1991 Al-Fahad earned his doctorate and was appointed dean at the Faculty of Principles of the Religion (*Usul al-Din*) in the Department of Creed and Modern Ideologies. He grew increasingly radical in his preaching and was arrested in September 1994 for his subversive teachings. When he was released in 1997, he no longer had his faculty position, so he began focusing his time and energy on highlighting two major

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

points: the apostasy of Arab regimes, and the need for Muslims to wage warfare against Jews and Christians.²⁵

In his book *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr man A'aana Al-Amrikan* (The Exposition Regarding the Disbelief of One who Assists the Americans), Al-Fahad says that “*muzaharah al-kuffar* against the Muslims is from that which opposes the two *shahadahs*.”²⁶ He continues: “... it is from the fundamentals of *tawhid* and it is the greatest of the fundamentals of *bara'* and *kufr* in the *taghut* and from the greatest fundamentals of *Millat Ibrahim* which is hatred and enmity towards the *kuffar*.”²⁷

It is important to note here that while the issue of *kufr* arising from the story of Hatib has become a point of debate among the Salafis, generally most Salafis agree that this verse forms the basis and evidence for the prohibition of assisting non-Muslims against the Muslims. The point of debate that Salafis have with regards to the story of Hatib is only about the issue of whether *kufr* should be determined and justified from conviction or action. However, modern Salafis in general use this verse to prove that non-Muslims should not be given *wala'* and love (*mawaddah*) as they are described as “enemies of God”. What these “enemies of God” deserve, according to the Salafis, is complete *bara'* from the Muslims.

The importance of showing *bara'* to the “enemies of God” or the *kuffar*, according to the Salafis, becomes more urgent since the second verse of the *surah* says that “the *kuffar* desire that Muslims should disbelieve in God (*wa wadduu lau takfurun*)”. When Hatib gave the excuse that his action was not due to his unbelief, but rather, to keep his family and relatives safe, God revealed verse 4 which says: “*Neither your relatives nor your children will benefit you on the Day of Resurrection. He will judge between you, and Allah sees what you do.*” Using this basis, Salafis emphasize that *wala'* to God and Islam is

²⁵ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, pp. 141–149.

²⁶ The two *shahadahs* refer to the proclamation that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger.

²⁷ See Nasr Al-Fahad, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr man A'aana Al-Amrikan*, Al-Tibyan Publications, undated, pp. 31–32.

above all others, including family members. They argue that the story of Hatib clearly shows that families and relatives, for whose sake God is disobeyed, will not benefit the Muslims, and worse, could return as a source of loss and distress for them.

Defining the “Enemies” of God and Muslims

The first verse of this *surah*, which was revealed on the occasion of Hatib as mentioned above, states:

O you who believe! Do not take my enemies (*'aduwwi*) and your enemies (*'aduwwakum*) as friends, showing affection towards them while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth, and have driven out the Messenger and yourselves because you believe in Allah, your Lord, if you have come forth to strive in my Path and to seek my good pleasure. You show love to them in secret while I am aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. And whosoever of you does that, he has indeed gone astray from the straight path.²⁸

In revealing this verse, the Quran uses the term *'aduw* (enemy) to refer to the disbelieving hostile Meccans. In fact, the use of the term “enemy” is mentioned four times in this *surah*: twice in verse 1, i.e., *'aduwwi* (my enemy) and *'aduwwakum* (your enemy); once in verse 2, i.e., *'adaa* (enemies); and in verse 4 it is mentioned as *'adaawah* (enmity). The use of these words, which are stressed and repeated, is significant as it sends a strong message to the Salafis that those who do not believe in *tawhid* are the real enemies of God, Islam and the Muslims, and should be disavowed.

As described earlier, this verse was revealed due to the context of Hatib Bin Abi Balta'ah who betrayed the Prophet and the Muslims in Medina by secretly planning to inform the hostile Meccans of the Prophet's intention to attack them. From the story of Hatib, it is obvious that the “enemy” (*'aduw*) here refers to the hostile pagan Meccans. These enemies are described as “people

²⁸ Quran 60:1.

who have disbelieved” (*wa qad kafaruu*), “have fought the Muslims because of their religion” (*qaataluukum fid din*) and “have driven the Prophet and Muslims out of their homes” (*yukhrijuukum min diyaarikum*) as stipulated in verse 9. The historical context of this verse shows that the enemies are no ordinary non-Muslims but those who are hostile to the Muslims. These characteristics of the “enemies” seem to suggest that the other non-Muslims who, although they do not believe in Islam and *tawhid*, do not fight the Muslims because of their religion and chase them out of their homes, should not be regarded as enemies. This is subsequently confirmed in verse 8:

God does not forbid you regarding those who have not fought you on account of the Religion, and have not expelled you from your homes, that you should be virtuous to them and be equitable with them; surely God loves the equitable. God forbids you only regarding those who have fought you on account of Religion, and have expelled you from your homes, and have given support in your expulsion, that you should take them for friends; and whoso takes them for friends, those are the wrong-doers.²⁹

It is reported in the Prophetic tradition³⁰ that this verse was revealed on the occasion of Asma’ binte Abu Bakar (d. 695) — daughter of the first caliph of Islam and sister of the Prophet’s wife, Aishah (d. 678) — who, during the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, consulted the Prophet on whether she should accept a gift from her disbelieving mother, Qutaylah (d. unknown). The Prophet advised that she should be kind to her mother and subsequently God revealed this particular verse. This verse meticulously confirms that Muslims can develop the notion of kindness, fairness and justice towards non-Muslims as long as they are not hostile and aggressive.³¹

²⁹ Quran 60:8–9.

³⁰ See Sahih Al-Bukhari, *hadith* 4274.

³¹ Salafis differentiate between the notion of befriending non-Muslims and being kind to them. This verse, according to some Salafis (particularly the Jihadis), while it does not forbid Muslims to be kind and just to the non-Muslims, does not necessarily allow friendship with them. See Ayman Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’: Aqidah*

However, modern Salafis contend that the objective of this verse (which does not forbid Muslims from being kind and just to non-Muslims) is to provide opportunities for Muslims to portray Islam to this group of people for whom guidance is hoped due to their not fighting the Muslims, while maintaining the religious enmity that is mandated due to their disbelief.³² It is hoped that the disbelieving relatives of Muslims will accept Islam when they are exposed to the treatment of kindness and justice that is meant to bring their hearts close to Islam. Some Salafis even believe that this particular verse is abrogated by the verse of the sword (Quran 9:5) which says: “*When the sacred months are over, slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful.*”³³ However, Salafis who reject this claim of abrogation believe that the claim that this verse is abrogated by the

Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud, p. 13. Friendship according to Zawahiri is still forbidden because of the many verses from other *surahs* of the Quran that forbid Muslims from befriending the non-Muslims. However, Salafis' opponents understand this verse as one that shows the permissibility of friendship with the non-Muslims as long as the relationship is not based upon the *aqidah* — that is to say that Muslims must not embrace their religious beliefs.

³² Wasim Fathullah, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahinah*, p. 35.

³³ The claim that verses in Chapter 9 of the Quran (*Surah Bara'ah*) abrogated this verse (Quran 60:8–9) and also other Quranic verses that talk about *jihad* as self-defence, patience and tolerance towards non-Muslims forms the basis for the idea of perpetual war between Muslims and non-Muslims as comprised in the ideology of Jihadi Salafism. This claim, however, is rejected by most Muslim scholars and other Salafi groups as there is no evidence to support it. With regards to Quran 9:5, there is no mention about it abrogating earlier verses on defensive *jihad*, according to Al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir. In fact, Al-Qurtubi reported that some scholars, among them Al-Dahhak and Atha', were of the view that Quran 9:5 was abrogated by other verses in the Quran (47:4). See Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Quran*, Vol. 4, part 8, p. 47; Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Ibn Katsir*, Dar Al-Fikr, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 338; Muhammad Bin Jarir Al-Tabari, *Jami' Al-Bayan 'An Takwil Ayi Al-Quran*, Vol. 6, part 10, pp. 80–81; Abu Ishaq Asy-Syatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat Fi Usul Al-Fiqh*, Vol. 3, pp. 97–98; Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Al-Mustasfa Min Ilm Al-Usul*, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi, Vol. 2, p. 50; Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-Aqidah wa Al-Shariah wa Al-Manhaj*, Dar Al-Fikr, Damascus, 1991, Vol. 10, pp. 110

verse of the sword is weak, especially since the verse does not contradict other verses that have been claimed to abrogate it. The claim of abrogation is also not supported by a majority of the scholars of *tafsir*.³⁴

Nevertheless, Salafis generally believe that the enmity that is being referred to in this particular verse is not merely limited to the type of enmity which involves fighting and military confrontations. Rather, it refers to complete enmity that originates from one's heart and religious convictions at all times.³⁵ They assert that it is important to note that the descriptions of "...my enemy and your enemy..." and "...showing love towards them..." should not be taken as the only aspects of prohibition, since the verse constitutes a clear prohibition from taking the non-Muslims as friends. This is based on Quran 20:117 where God describes the *Iblis* to be the enemy of Adam and his wife. The Quran reveals on the story of Adam:

And when We said to the Angels: "Prostrate to Adam". So, they prostrated except *Iblis*. He was one of the *Jin*, and he disobeyed the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me while they are enemies to you? What an evil exchange for the wrongdoers!³⁶

Based on these two verses, Salafis claim that the term "enmity" in the Quran is far more general than military confrontations. Therefore, it is not only limited to the non-Muslims who are at war with the Muslims. This is also the case with the verse "... showing

and 175–178. See also David Bukay, "Peace or Jihad? Abrogation in Islam", *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2007, pp. 3–11, available at <http://www.meforum.org/1754/peace-or-jihad-abrogation-in-islam> (accessed 12 March 2011); and Louay Safi, *Peace and the Limits of War: Transcending Classical Conception of Jihad*, chapter 4 — *War of Domination*, available at <http://lsinsight.org/articles/2001/peace-war/index.htm> (accessed 12 March 2011).

³⁴ Wasim Fathullah, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, pp. 35–36. The claim by Salafis that this verse is abrogated by Quran 9:5 is based on several *tafsir* that mention this abrogation, including Ibn Al-Arabi, Al-Jassas and Al-Tabari.

³⁵ Wasim Fathullah, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, p. 19.

³⁶ Quran 20:116–7.

love towards them ...” as the prohibition is not limited to what is described in the verse. Rather, Salafis assert that it is simply an example of how *wala'* is generally manifested, and the point of mentioning it is to confirm the censure of those Muslims who show *tawalli* (the act of taking as friends) of the non-Muslims. It is as if the verse is saying: “How can you take these enemies as *awliya'*, and how can you show them your love?”³⁷ Modern Salafis who hold this position use the opinion of Ibn Kathir, who Salafis always refer to on this verse. Unlike the majority of classical *mufassirin* who view the enemies in this verse as those polytheists who are hostile to the Muslims, Ibn Kathir generalizes the meaning and category of enemies to include not only those who are hostile to Muslims, but all non-Muslims in general, especially the Jews and Christians. This is so as he equates this verse with Quran 5:51 which deals with the Jews and Christians in similar words. This implies that Ibn Kathir defines enemies as including all non-Muslims, regardless of whether they are hostile or not.³⁸

It is believed that the reason why most modern Salafis use this first verse of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* to show that all non-Muslims should be regarded as enemies, and not specifically the hostile non-Muslims, is due to the influence of scholars like Ibn Kathir. Modern Salafis, especially the Saudi Salafis (Wahhabis), are heavily influenced by the writings of medieval scholars such as Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah and Ibn Kathir, among others. As will be seen in the next chapter, Saudi Salafis use the concept of WB as an important tool to ward off *kufri*, *shirk*, and any religious innovations in their attempt to maintain the purity of Islam. The effort to maintain this purity, according to them, also includes disavowing not only *kufri*, but also people of *kufri* who are the non-Muslims. As such, these Salafis are more inclined to the opinions of scholars such as Ibn Kathir whose religious views seem to be in line and compatible with their understanding of WB.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ See Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Al-Quran Al-'Azim*, vol. 4, Dar al-Ma'rifah, Beirut, 1991, p. 371.

Wala' and Bara' from the Examples of Prophet Abraham

After revealing the story of Hatib in the first part of the *surah*, the Quran moves to speak about another story, which, like the story of Hatib, has become the basis for modern Salafis' conception of WB. This story could be seen as one that provides the cure for the "disease" of forming alliances and loving the non-Muslims as stipulated in the story of Hatib. It is from this particular story that modern Salafis' notion of *bara'* of the *kuffar* is conceptualized. It is no less than the story of Prophet Abraham who disavowed his own idol-worshipping community, including his father who refused to believe in *tawhid*. It is from this particular verse of the *surah* that the Salafi claim "open disavowal of the non-Muslims is a necessity of *tawhid*" emerges. The verses that describe the story of Abraham are as follows:

Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Abraham and those with him when they said to their people: "Verily we are free (*bura-a-u*) from you and whatever you worship besides Allah. We have rejected you, and there has started between us and you enmity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone", except the saying of Ibrahim to his father: "Verily I will ask for forgiveness for you, but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah."³⁹

The concept of *Millat Ibrahim* as contained in this verse refers to the sincerity and loyalty of Prophet Abraham who submits himself devotedly to the worship of Allah alone, the only One God. His sincerity towards *tawhid* is further shown by his destruction of the idols which are worshipped by his community and his disavowal of them as illustrated in this verse. The verse portrays Prophet Abraham's disavowal of those who worship idols, including his own father. Abraham and his followers uttered the word "*bura-a-u*" (free from or disavow) which shows that they were free from what was being worshipped other than God.⁴⁰ If the story of Hatib is the basis for

³⁹ Quran 60:4.

⁴⁰ The story of Abraham disavowing the idols worshipped by his father and his people is also mentioned in Quran 43:26 which says: "And when Abraham said to his

wala', this verse, however, becomes the basis for Salafis' conception of *bara'*.⁴¹ Modern Salafis use this verse to point out three important elements that are comprised in the concept of WB:

- (1) The obligation of announcing one's disavowal of *kufur* and *kuffar*. The fact that Abraham said to his people that "he is free from them" (*bura-a-u minkum*) "and from what they worship besides Allah" (*wa mimma ta'buduuna min duni Allah*) signifies the obligation that a Muslim should show his *bara'* from both the *kuffar* and their act of disbelief (*kufur*). This stand is generally accepted by many Salafis. However, they differ on how *bara'* from the *kuffar* should be manifested.
- (2) This verse shows that the basis of relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims must remain on enmity (*'adawah*) and hatred (*baghda'*); and that non-Muslims must be rejected and disavowed until they submit to Islam and *tawhid* (*hatta tu'minuu billahi wahdah*).⁴²
- (3) The verse shows that *tawhid*, *mahabbah* (love) and *wala'* are not merely activities of the heart (internal), but should also be manifested by words and the outer limbs (external action). This

father and his people 'Indeed I am free from that which you worship, except for He that created me and indeed He will guide me'. And he made it a word remaining among his descendants so that perhaps they might return to it.'

⁴¹It is important to note here that while this verse becomes the basis for Salafis' conception of *bara'*, there are other Quranic verses that are used to support the modern Salafis' conception and claim of *bara'*, such as Quran 9:1 which says: "*Freedom (bara-ah) from all obligations is declared from Allah and His Messenger to those of the Musyrikin with whom you made a treaty.*"

⁴²Salafis' opponents reject Salafis' line of reasoning regarding the issue of *bara'* by stating that while it is true Abraham said that "enmity and hatred have appeared between us", his enmity towards the idol worshippers was mutual. Abraham did not declare enmity when he first encountered the idol worshippers. Rather, he called them to Islam and the worship of One God with utmost sincerity and kind words. However, when the idol worshippers rejected him and showed their hatred and enmity towards him, it was natural for him to respond in kind. This was necessary for him to safeguard his belief and ensure his security.

is based on the story of Abraham who openly declared *bara'* and physically destroyed all the idols worshipped by his own people. This explains why Jihadi Salafis call for the killing and elimination of the *kuffar* since they do not worship Allah.

We have seen earlier how different Salafis use verse 1 of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* to prove the validity and importance of not showing *wala'* to non-Muslims. Similarly, they use this verse 4 of the *surah* to highlight the obligation of *bara'* to the non-Muslims, although the verse explicitly refers to a specific group of people that Prophet Abraham disavowed, i.e., the idol worshippers. The reason for Abraham's disavowal of the idol worshippers and his expression of enmity and hatred was merely due to their rejection of *tawhid*. To provide the validity and substance to their project of WB, modern Salafis see this verse as one that requires all Muslims to disavow, hate and develop a sense of enmity to all non-Muslims in general, and this is mainly due to the latter's rejection of *tawhid*. For example, Ibn Baz in his definition of WB uses this verse to show that Muslims must show their enmity and hatred to non-Muslims.⁴³ Similarly, prominent modern Salafi authors on WB such as Salih Al-Fawzan, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and many others have all used this verse as an important evidence for the obligation of *bara'*. Significantly, Nasr Al-Fahad, when asked whether Muslims who reside amongst the non-Muslims should call the latter to Islam, responded by saying:⁴⁴

Da'wah of Islam is a tremendous virtue and it is the work of the Prophets and people of rectification. If you perform it then you have followed Islam, and if you didn't, then you must at least manifest the *din*. Manifesting the *din* is not merely in you praying and

⁴³ See Abdul Aziz Ibn Baz, *Fatwa* on WB, available at <http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/1764> (accessed 5 December 2012).

⁴⁴ See *Living in the West with Al-Wala' wal Bara'* by Sheikh Nasr Hamad Al-Fahad, available at www.hoor-al-ayn.com/articles/.../Living%20in%20the%20West.pdf (accessed 12 March 2012). See also Nasr Hamad Al-Fahad, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr man A'aana Al-Amrikan*, p. 15.

fasting in front of them. On the contrary, you are to manifest the *bara'* towards them and their *din* by hating them and their *din*.⁴⁵

Al-Fahad then continues to quote this verse (Quran 60:4) and says:

Look here at his words: “[...] from you all and that you worship [...]”. Hence he began with *bara'* from them before their objects of worship. That is because there are some who declare their disavowal from their objects of worship while not declaring their disavowal from them. Look at his words: “We have disbelieved in you [...]” and not only disbelieve in their objects of worship. And [look] at his words: “And there has appeared [...]” — meaning manifested towards them — and [look] at his words: “[...] enmity and hatred [...]”. So, he proceeded with enmity over hatred (mentioning it first). That is because there are some who hate them but they do not oppose them with enmity. Therefore whoever is mixing with them (the non-Muslims), then he must actualize this *Millat Ibrahim*. Otherwise, he is not allowed to reside amongst them.⁴⁶

Al-Fahad claims that it is obligatory for Muslims who reside in non-Muslim countries to actualize the *Millat Ibrahim* by way of declaring *bara'* from the *kuffar* and their religion, and to openly show them hatred and enmity.⁴⁷ As seen from the response of Al-Fahad above, modern Salafis, especially the Jihadis, use this particular verse to highlight that Muslims should hate and disavow both the *kuffar* and the *kufr* in them, as the verse says: “...from you all and that you worship...”. The issue of whether one should hate the *kufr* and not the *kuffar*, or hate both the *kufr* and the *kuffar*, has resulted in a debate between the modern Salafi groups, especially between the purists and the Jihadi Salafis. This debate will be discussed briefly in Chapter 4 of this book.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Jihadi Salafis, besides having the same stance of taking all non-Muslims as enemies that should be disavowed, add another angle of interpretation to this particular verse. They view that the idol worshippers as referred to in the story of Prophet Abraham also include Muslim rulers and governors who do not rule by God's legislations and who accept foreign and "un-Islamic" political systems such as democracy and secularism. These systems, according to Jihadi Salafis, are "idols" that should be disavowed. For example, Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi quotes from this particular verse to show his understanding of *bara'* and his disavowal of Muslim rulers whom he equates as "idol worshippers" (*tawaghit*)⁴⁸ for their adherence to man-made law instead of the *shariah*.⁴⁹ In the opening of his famous book *Millat Ibrahim*, Al-Maqdisi declares:

To the transgressing rulers (*tawaghit*) of every time and place...To the transgressing rulers (*tawaghit*); the governors and the leaders and the Caesars and the *Kisrahs* (Persian Emperors) and the Pharaohs and the Kings...to their servants and their misguiding scholars (*'ulama*)... to their supporters and their armies and their police and their intelligence services...and their guardians...to all of them collectively, we say: "Verily we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah." Free from your retched laws, methodologies, constitutions and values... free from your repugnant governments, courts, distinguishing characteristics and media... "We have rejected you, and there has become apparent between us and you, enmity and hatred forever, until you believe in Allah alone."⁵⁰

⁴⁸See Chapter on *Taghut* in Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Tauhfah Al-Muwahhidin fi ahhami Masa-il usul al-Din*, published by the Shariah Committee of Jama'ah Al-Tauhid wal Jihad, Syawal 1430.

⁴⁹For more on Al-Maqdisi's interpretation of "enemies", see Joas Wagemakers, "Defining the Enemy: Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's Radical Reading of Surat al-Mumtahanah", pp. 348–371.

⁵⁰Abu Muhammad Asim Al-Maqdisi, *Millat Ibrahim wa da'wah al-Anbiya' wa al-Mursalin wa Asaalib al-Tughah fi Tamyi'iha wa Sarfi al-Du'aati Anha*, p. 9.

This declaration of disavowal by Al-Maqdisi is unique in the sense that the words uttered by Prophet Abraham and his people as stipulated in the Quranic verse 60:4 are nicely positioned within the words of Al-Maqdisi. Al-Maqdisi is famous for his radical treatment of the concept of WB. He has taken WB from Saudi Salafi scholars⁵¹ and turned it into a political tool that forces Muslim rulers to submit fully to the legislations of God.⁵² In other words, Al-Maqdisi calls for the concept to be applied in a political context; and the fact that he believes Muslim rulers should be attacked and killed due to their adherence to an un-Islamic system shows that his understanding of the concept has a strong Jihadi element.⁵³ Most of his books and writings such as *Millat Ibrahim*, *Dimuqratiyyah Diinun*, *Al-Kawashif Al-Jaliyyah fi kufr al-Dawlah Al-Sa'udiyyah* and *Tuhfah Al-Muwahhidin* revolve around the concept of WB. He believes that adherence to man-made laws is a form of misplaced *wala'*, and he accuses Muslim leaders, politicians and government officials as *kuffar* for their adherence to these laws which he equates as "idols". Thus Muslims, according to him, must emulate Prophet Abraham by disavowing and attacking these rulers through *jihad*, which he and almost all Jihadi Salafis believe is the highest form of showing *bara'* to the enemies of God.

The official website of Salafimedia.com — whose central theme is "Upon the Religion of Abraham" — posted a "Declaration of *Bara'*" which seems similar to the declaration by Al-Maqdisi in his

⁵¹ Al-Maqdisi is believed to have spent several years studying in Saudi Arabia under many prominent Saudi Salafi scholars before he moved to Pakistan and Afghanistan. It was from here that he was exposed to the Wahhabi teachings and writings of Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim.

⁵² See Joas Wagemakers, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *al-Wala' wal Bara'* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", pp. 49–74. See also from the same author, "A Purist-Jihadi Salafi: The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", pp. 281–297.

⁵³ For more on how Jihadi Salafis apply WB at the political context, see Joas Wagemakers, *Framing the "Threat to Islam": Al-Wala' wa Al-Bara' in Salafi Discourse*, available at <http://www.thefreeibrary.com/Framing+the+%22threat+to+Islam%22:+al-wala'+wa+al-bara'+in+Salafi...-a0197801513> (accessed 14 February 2009).

opening of *Millat Ibrahim*, even paraphrasing the actual words of verse 4 of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*. The declaration reads:

To the Pharaohs of this era, and to their regimes, and their agents... To the ministers, bishops, and rabbis of the *tawaghit*... To all of them we say: "We do not worship that which you worship, to you is your religion, and to us is our *din*." We disbelieve in you and in your gods, legislations, and your constitutions and we have rejected your parliaments which you worship along with Allah, and there has emerged between us and you hostility and hatred forever — until you return to *tawhid*, and apply His legislation alone and accept it with full submission.⁵⁴

Parts Four and Five of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*

Part four of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* (verses 10–12) speaks about the command for Muslims in Medina to test the belief of migrating women to Medina from Mecca who fled from their disbelieving husbands. Verses from this part of the *surah* do not directly address the issue of WB, and hence are not always used by modern Salafis when addressing the subject of WB. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, all five parts of this *surah* revolve around the common theme of WB. The fact that God commands the Muslims to test the migrating women, and forbids the Muslims to return these women to their husbands if they are proved to be believers, shows the importance of *wala'* to Islam and the Muslims. The command to separate believing women from their disbelieving husbands clearly shows the urgency to separate *kufir* from *iman*. These verses, due to their indirect connection with WB, will not be dealt with extensively in this chapter.

The final part of the *surah*, which is also the last verse of the *surah*, could be seen as summarizing all that has been said in the entire *surah*. It also seems to tie the beginning of the *surah* with its end. The *surah* ends with the verse saying:

⁵⁴ See *Our Declaration of Bara'* at Salafimedia.com, available at <http://salafimedia.com/aqeedah/al-walaa-wal-baraa/item/1673-our-declaration-of-bara.html> (accessed 11 March 2012).

O you who believe! Do not ally (*la tatawallau*) with the people who have incurred the wrath of Allah. Surely, they have been in despair to receive any good in the Hereafter just as the disbelievers have been in despair about those in graves.⁵⁵

If the *surah* begins with addressing the issue of WB in regards to a specific group of non-Muslims, this last verse of the *surah* seems to emphasize WB with regards to non-Muslims in general. Ibn Kathir, interpreting this verse, said in his famous *tafsir* that God forbids Muslims from having *wala'* to the non-Muslims at the end of the *surah*, just as He did in the first verse.⁵⁶ The non-Muslims, according to Ibn Kathir, include the Jews and Christians (as in Quran 5:51) and all the disbelieving people who have earned God's wrath and curse.⁵⁷

Such a comprehensive chapter on WB has provided modern Salafis with the legitimizing tool that they need when addressing the subject of WB. However, as mentioned earlier, although verses from *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* contain many important lessons with regards to WB, they are not the only verses from the Quran that have shaped Salafis' formulation of the concept. There are many important verses scattered throughout the other chapters of the Quran which have also contributed to the formulation of Salafis' concept of WB. These other verses complement the verses of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, and together they form the modern Salafis' conception of WB. To the Salafis, these other verses are important as they not only emphasize the urgency of the concept further, but more importantly lend legitimacy to it.

WB in Other Parts of the Quran

Apart from *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, the modern Salafis' conception of WB is based mostly on: (1) verses that prohibit Muslims to take non-Muslims (especially the Jews and Christians) as friends or protectors;

⁵⁵ Quran 60:13.

⁵⁶ Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Al-Quran Al-'Azim*, vol. 8, p. 131.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

(2) verses that say God is the only *wali*, and that *wala'* can only be given to Him, His messenger and the believing Muslims; (3) verses stating that all Muslims are brothers to one another, and that *wala'* can only be given to those who possess the *iman*. There are many such verses,⁵⁸ but we will only present some of the significant ones. Examples of these verses are:

- (1) Allah is the Protector (*wali*) of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into Light.⁵⁹
- (2) That is because Allah is the Protector (*mawla*) of those who believe, but those who reject Allah have no protector (*mawla*).⁶⁰
- (3) Your friend (*wali*) can be only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe, who establish the prayer, pay the zakât, and bow down [in prayer]. And whoever takes Allah and His Messenger and those who believe for friends, know with certainty, the party of Allah, they will be victorious.⁶¹
- (4) O you who believe! Do not take Jews and Christians as your friends and protectors (*wali*). They are friends and protectors of their own people. He among you who will turn to them for patronage is one of them. Verily Allah guides not a people unjust.⁶²
- (5) Let not believers take disbelievers as allies (*awliya'*) rather than believers. And whoever of you does that has nothing with Allah, except when taking precaution against them in prudence. And Allah warns you of Himself, and to Allah is the final destination.⁶³

In all these verses, the words *wali*, *mawla* and *awliya'* (plural of *wali*) are used. The meaning of these words, according to many

⁵⁸ See Quran 18:26; 42:9; 2:165; 5:55; 9:23; 58:22; 3:31–32; 3:28; 4:138–145; 5:54.

⁵⁹ Quran 2:257.

⁶⁰ Quran 47:11.

⁶¹ Quran 5:56.

⁶² Quran 5:51.

⁶³ Quran 3:28.

classical *tafsir*, signifies “protector” (*al-nasir*).⁶⁴ Linguistically, the term *wali* can also mean “friend”. The general use of the term *wali* refers to a person with whom one has a very intimate relationship. This also connotes helping, assisting and being in solidarity with such a person. For example, one’s parents are also known as *wali* because they are the ones who are close to their children and protect them. In *fiqh*, one of the conditions for the validity of marriage solemnization is the presence of a *wali*, i.e., the father or guardian of the bride. Modern Salafis, while not rejecting the meaning of *wali* as protector, also take the term to be the synonym of “friend”. However, one who studies the Quran carefully would find that in the Quranic context, the word *wali* means more than just a “friend”. Imam Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 923), an expert in the Arabic language and a prominent Quranic commentator, explains a verse in the Quran which ordains “let not the believers take for friends or helpers the unbelievers rather than believers” (Quran 3:28) as follows:

In this verse, God has forbidden the true believers from taking the disbelievers as their helpers [...] That is to say, they are forbidden from considering them as their supporters, assisting them in their [non-Muslims’] religion, supporting them against the Muslims and the true believers, and sharing the secrets of the Muslims with them.⁶⁵

Commenting on the use of a derivative of the term *wali* in the Quran, al-Tabari adds, “In the Arabic language, the general meaning of the word *wali* is helper and supporter.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jami’ li Ahkam Al-Quran*, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Arabi li Al-Tiba’ah wa Al-Nashr, 1968, vol. 3, pp. 282–283; Muhammad Bin Jarir Al-Tabari, *Jami’ Al-Bayan an Ta’wil Ayi Al-Quran*, Dar Al-Qalam, Dimashq, 1998, Vol. 2, p. 122; Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Ibn Mahmud Al-Nasafi, *Tafsir Al-Nasafi: Madarik Al-Tanzil wa Haqiq Al-Ta’wil*, Dar Ibn Kathir, Dimashq, 1999, Vol. 1, p. 212.

⁶⁵Muhammad Bin Jarir Al-Tabari, *Jami’ Al-Bayan an Ta’wil Ayi Al-Quran*, Dar Al-Qalam, Dimashq, 1998, Vol. 2, p. 245.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

One of the many verses that Salafis use to support their claims of WB is Quran 5:51 mentioned earlier. In this verse, God prohibits believers from taking Jews and Christians as friends.⁶⁷ According to al-Tabari, it was not long after the Prophet's migration to Medina that this verse was revealed. Al-Tabari says that this verse came down around the time of the Battle of Badr (2AH/624CE) or perhaps after the Battle of Uhud (3AH/625CE).⁶⁸ During these early days the Muslim community constituted no more than a few hundred people and had already left the city of Mecca; yet the Meccans continued to attempt to confront them militarily, and these two battles, as well as others, were crucial events in the history of the early Islamic community. Militarily the Meccans were a far more powerful force than the Muslims, and they had allies throughout Arabia. Given the small numbers of the Muslims, the Prophet and the pledging Muslim community faced the real possibility of sheer extermination should they lose any of these early conflicts.

Al-Tabari informs us that within this highly charged environment, some members of the Muslim community wanted to make individual alliances with other non-Muslim tribes in the region. Within Medina, there were Jewish tribes who constituted a powerful presence in the town and who were on good terms with the Meccans, and to the north of the city there were also Christian Arab tribes. Some Muslims saw the possibility of making alliances with one or more of these groups as a way of guaranteeing their own survival should the Meccan armies ultimately triumph. For example, a Muslim from Medina said, "*I am going to live with the Jews so I shall be safe in case another attack comes on Medina.*" And another person said,

⁶⁷The difficulties in understanding this verse begin with the translation of the Arabic word *awliya*' which is commonly translated as "friends". In the context of this verse, the word *awliya*' does not ultimately indicate "friends", as we normally utilize the term in English, and we learn this fact from examining the circumstances for its revelation. While it is true that *awliya*' can mean "friends", it has added meanings such as "guardians" and "protectors". When we consult the traditional commentaries on the Quran, we are informed that this verse was revealed at a particularly delicate moment in the life of the early Muslim community.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 372–373.

“I am going to live with the Christians so I shall be safe in case another attack comes on Medina.” This was the stark reality of Arabia at that time — it was only through the protection of one’s tribe or alliances with other tribes or clans that one’s individual security was ensured. As such, the Quran revealed this verse, reminding the believers that they should not seek protection from others, but should protect each other.⁶⁹

As noted earlier, modern Salafis understand WB as a concept that necessitates Muslims to sever their relationship with non-Muslims, especially the Jews and Christians. This is because the Jews and Christians are frequently mentioned in the Quran. The Quran constantly reminds Muslims that the Jews and Christians will never be pleased unless all Muslims abandon their religion and follow the non-Muslims’ way of life (Quran 2:109; 120; 4:89). They share a common hate towards Islam and will never cease conspiring against or trying to subjugate and fight it when there is an opportunity (Quran 2:9; 105; 217; 9:8; 5:82; 63:7–8; 3:69). They will commit treachery and all possible means to fulfill their common hate towards Islam (Quran 3:118–120; 2:75–77). However, Salafis’ disavowal of non-Muslims is not limited to Jews and Christians only, but to all who disbelieve in *tawhid*. This includes people of other faiths like Buddhists, Hindus, Zoroastrians and others, although they are not mentioned in the Quran.

In giving his commentary on this verse (Quran 5:51), Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1996) says there are three distinct categories of Jews and Christians who Muslims are instructed not to take as protectors:⁷⁰

- (1) The first category comprises those who are so extreme in their opposition to the *shariah* that they will accept any other system in its place, no matter how alien to their beliefs. Although they know that Islam guarantees them full religious freedom, they

⁶⁹ See Ibn Kathir, *Al-Tafsir Al-'Azim*, vol. 2, p. 68.

⁷⁰ Al-Ghazali, Sheikh Muhammad, *A Thematic Commentary of the Quran*, The Islamic Book Trust, Malaysia, 2000, pp. 104–105.

continue to harbor a fear of Islam and hatred towards the Muslims. This group is so blinded by hatred and jealousy, that there is no longer any hope in persuading them to see any sense or in winning their friendship.

- (2) The second category comprises those who live among the Muslims but whose hearts are with the enemies of Islam. It is of course vital for Muslims to ensure that their ranks are not infiltrated or weakened by people who may let them down at the crucial moment, were they to engage in a defensive war with an outside enemy. This did happen in the past (Quran 5:52). In the early days of Islam, religious minorities were to be found all over Muslim lands. However, when Muslims had to fight against outside enemies, such as the Byzantines, non-Muslims were never recruited into the fighting force in order not to strain their consciences nor create any religious or moral dilemma for them. The Muslim authorities were happy to receive financial support from them, hoping that the least they could do was not side with the enemy or betray the Muslims.
- (3) The third group of Jews and Christians that the Muslims are instructed not to take as protectors are those who ridicule and belittle Islam and its teachings and practices, such as prayer or the call to prayer (the *adhan*). The Quran refers to this group in the Quranic verse 5:57–58.

Modern Salafis also use verses on *wala'* from the Quran to show that the nature of the Muslim and non-Muslim relationship is always in conflict due to the creedal differences between both parties; the former is based on full submission (*ubudiyah*) to God only, whereas the latter is based on submission (*ubudiyah*) to fellow humans or false gods.⁷¹ This fact is supported by many historical events, including the conspiracy between the pagan Arabs and the Jews against the Prophet. Other examples include the War of the Crusades and the colonization of Muslim lands. More contemporary examples would

⁷¹ Sayyid Qutub, *Fi Zilal Al-Quran*, vol. 3, pp. 1586–1587. See also Sayyid Qutub's commentary on offensive *jihād* in the same book at pp. 1431–1452.

point towards the cases of cooperation between communists, polytheists and Christians against Muslims in Russia, China, Yugoslavia, Albania, India and Kashmir in the same light.⁷²

If Quran 5:51 specifically mentions Jews and Christians, Quran 3:28 commands that Muslims should not take the disbelievers (*al-kafirun*) as *awliya*. This verse reads:

Let not believers take disbelievers as allies (*awliya*) rather than believers. And whoever of you does that has nothing with Allah, except when taking precaution against them in prudence. And Allah warns you of Himself, and to Allah is the final destination.⁷³

Based on historical context, this verse was referring to the Jews, although it does not specifically mention the Jews. This is another verse commonly quoted by modern Salafis to show the forbidding of taking non-Muslims in general as “friends”. This verse was revealed concerning a group of Muslims who had Jewish friends. They were told by some companions of the Prophet to stay away from their Jewish friends, as the latter could impart their religious beliefs to the Muslims. However, the Muslims ignored the advice of the companions and remained loyal to their Jewish friends. Al-Qurtubi also reported in his *tafsir* that this verse was revealed with respect to a companion, ‘Ubadah Bin Al-Samit Al-Ansari, who led a coalition of Jews. On the day of Al-Ahzab, ‘Ubadah said to the Prophet: “O Prophet of God, I have a fellow of five hundred Jews and I see that they should come with me for support against the enemy.” Due to this incident of ‘Ubadah, God revealed the verse.

Using verses such as this, modern Salafis claim that giving *wala*’ to the non-Muslims and taking them as friends is forbidden. Salafis claim that the combination of love for God and alliance with His enemies is not possible as there is no association between *iman* and

⁷²Muhammad Haniff Hassan, *Interpreting Islam on Plural Society*, Working Paper No. 159, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, 14 May 2008, p. 4, available at <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/workingpapers.asp?selYear=2008> (accessed 2 August 2012).

⁷³Quran 3:28.

kufri; except in the situation where one needs to avoid or protect himself from harm or injury inflicted upon by the non-Muslims. In this case, a Muslim may present an outer appearance that belies what he conceals inside. Known as *taqiyyah*, it is only permitted under such circumstances. This act of *taqiyyah* is permissible based on the same verse where God says "...except when taking precaution against them in prudence..."⁷⁴

Modern Salafis' use of Quranic verses is not limited to those which prohibit alliance and friendship with Jews, Christians and non-Muslims in general. Some Salafis use Quran 9:23–24 to show that alliance is not allowed even with one's parents and relatives who disbelieve and do not submit to Islam, though there are verses which enjoin Muslims to be kind and just to these kinds of people such as Quran 60:8. Quran 9:23–24 says:

O you who believe! Do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies (*awliya'*) if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you — then it is those who are the wrongdoers. Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."⁷⁵

Ayman Al-Zawahiri quotes this verse in his book on WB to support his claim that infidels and any disbelievers should not be taken as friends, regardless of who they are.⁷⁶ Unsurprisingly, Al-Zawahiri picks the exegesis of Ibn Kathir (as do most of the modern Salafis), who seems to be in line with what he desires the interpretation of

⁷⁴See Khalid Gharib, *Al-Wala'u wa Al-Bara' Revealed in Al-Imran (1/2)*, available at http://salafiyyah-jadeedah.tripod.com/wala_wal_bara/Alee_Imran.htm (accessed 12 March 2012). See also Ayman Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, p. 6.

⁷⁵Quran 9:23–24.

⁷⁶See Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, p. 6.

the verses to be. In explaining this verse, Ibn Kathir said that Al-Bayhaqi narrated a *hadith* that was conveyed by Abdullah Bin Shawzab. The *hadith* mentions that the father of Abu Ubayda Bin Al-Jarrah was praising idols to him on the day of the Battle of Badr. So, Abu Ubayda began avoiding him. But when Al-Jarrah's persistence grew, his son, Abu Ubayda, attacked and slew him. It is believed that this occasion led to the revelation of this verse. Ibn Kathir further mentions that it has been firmly established in the *hadith* of Al-Bukhari⁷⁷ that Prophet Muhammad said: "By him who holds my soul in his hand, none of you believes unless I am dearer to him than his father, his son, and all of mankind."⁷⁸

The above are some examples of the Quranic verses used by modern Salafis to lend validity to their conception of WB. There are many such verses in the Quran, but it is simply not feasible for us to show all of them in this chapter. As stated earlier, while *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* forms the basis and foundation of Salafis' concept of WB, these other Quranic verses serve to complement and support the foundation of WB which has been built by *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*.

However, it can be argued that modern Salafis' approach and treatment of these Quranic verses — especially the meaning of the verse "do not take the Jews and Christians", which has become the basis for the prohibition of showing *wala'* — seems to generalize to include all Jews, Christians and even non-Muslims in general. As explained in the previous chapter, this is not surprising as literal interpretation and generalization are some of the unique characteristics of modern Salafis when dealing with the Quran. One who consults classical Quranic exegesis will discover that verses which call upon Muslims to distance themselves from the non-Muslims, be hostile or even wage unconditional *jihad* against them, refer to specific groups of people, usually the Arab pagans during the time of the Prophet, or Jews and Christians who were hostile to the

⁷⁷ Sahih Al-Bukhari (Book of Belief), Vol. 1, Book 2, No. 13.

⁷⁸ Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Ibn Katsir* (Abridged), Darusslam Publishers and Distributors, 2000, vol. 4, p. 396.

Muslims.⁷⁹ Some scholars are more specific by saying that the verses were revealed with respect to the people of Mecca or the Quraish tribe who had been in a prolonged state of war against Muslims through unprovoked aggression and violence. The hostilities remained even after Muslims migrated to Medina in search of peace. Despite entering into various treaties with the Muslims in Medina, the Quraish and other pagan Arab tribes continued to attack them. It became clear, near the end of the Prophet's mission, that peaceful relations with those tribes were impossible, hence the instruction to denounce the treaties and wage war by Muslims.⁸⁰

⁷⁹From several *tafsir* referred to for the purpose of this study, it is clear that every passage in the Quran that prohibits the Muslims from forming alliance with the non-Muslims is intended to refer to those non-Muslims who are actively hostile towards the Muslims. It is believed that the Quran forbids taking as allies and friends those who are engaged in active hostilities towards the Muslims, and prohibits offering any secrets of war to them. What is forbidden is the relationship of *wilayah* with non-Muslims (who knowingly reject Islam). But, even in that case there are exceptions. The Prophet sought protection from different Quraish leaders when re-entering Mecca from his trip to Taif. He finally received the protection from Mut'im, the chief of the Nawfal tribe. Abu Bakr Siddiq also returned to Mecca, aborting his migration to Habasha when Ibn ad-Dughunnah, a non-Muslim Bedouin chief, offered him his protection to stay in Mecca and became his *Wali*. But when Abu Bakr's crying while reading the Quran outside his home became a *da'wah* attraction, Ibn ad-Dughunnah told Abu Bakr, "I did not give you protection to let you change the heart of my people." Thus, Abu Bakr let him revoke his protection, without compromising his own right of *da'wah*. The Prophet had kind relationships with non-Muslims all the time in weakness as well as in strength. Therefore, the principle is that wisdom of time and space will determine whose help or protection a Muslim may seek or not seek.

⁸⁰Muhammad Haniff Hassan, *Interpreting Islam on Plural Society*, Working Paper No. 159, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, 14 May 2008, p. 11. See also Jamal Badawi, *Muslims and Non-Muslims Relations: Reflections on Some Quranic Texts*, available at <http://www.islamawareness.net/MusChristRelations/reflections.html> (accessed 2 August 2012). See also from the same author, *Muslims and Non-Muslims Relations*, available at http://jamalbadawi.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=205:29-prophethood-muslim-a-non-muslim-relations&catid=12:2-prophethood&Itemid=12 (accessed 2 August 2012).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, we can summarize that the importance of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* to modern Salafis is due to the uniqueness and the manner in which WB is presented and conceived in the *surah*. It presents the concept of WB from how it should be implemented, followed by an example of the application of the concept, followed by further warnings to those who do not follow and apply it. The chapter begins by forbidding *wala'* to the non-Muslims in a very specific situation which can be grasped from the historical incident of Hatib Bin Abi Balta'ah. This is instantly followed by the story of Abraham which serves as an example of how WB should be applied. The *surah* then proceeds to show the infeasibility of mixing *iman* and *kufir* through the command for Muslims to test the *iman* of the migrating women. Finally, it ends by emphasizing again the issue of *wala'*.

The basis of Salafis' concept of WB is further supported by other Quranic verses which prohibit alliance with non-Muslims. Together with the verses from *Surah Al-Mumtahanah*, these verses have provided a strong divine validation to the Salafis' concept of WB. Modern Salafis attempt to show that the matter of WB is one that is deeply-rooted in the Quran, and that violation of the concept or negligence from practicing it constitutes a grave disobedience to God and even apostasy. After observing how this concept is theologically founded, we shall turn our attention to the manifestation or practical aspect of the concept in modern Salafism. This will allow us to appreciate the realities and complexities that can be found in the modern Salafi concept of WB. We will begin by looking at the concept in the ideology of the Wahhabis who form the majority of modern Salafis; and whose beliefs and teachings have significantly shaped the ideology of modern Salafism. For this, we turn to the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Al-Wala' wal Bara' in the Salafi–Wahhabi Ideology

Introduction

This chapter examines the concept of WB in Salafi–Wahhabi ideology or Wahhabism (Arabic: *Wahhabiyyah*) as it is commonly called. As described earlier in Chapter 1, modern Salafism is not monolithic and has various strands. The Saudi-based Wahhabism represents one of these strands. It considers itself to be the true Salafi movement; others view it as simply Salafism of Saudi Arabia.¹ In fact, Wahhabism is believed to be the dominant strand in modern Salafism. The majority of the Salafis referred to in this study are Wahhabis or are at least highly influenced by Wahhabi teachings. Wahhabism here refers to the teachings and traditions of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the Muslim theologian and reformist who called for a purification of Islamic faith and practices in eighteenth-century Arabia. Theologically and methodologically, a Wahhabi (one who subscribes to Wahhabism) is a Salafi,² because

¹ Moussalli, Ahmad, *Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who is the Enemy?*, A Conflicts Forum Monograph, January 2009, p. 3. This article is available at <http://www.conflictsforum.org/2009/wahhabism-salafism-and-islamism/> (accessed 8 August 2012).

² While it is true that a Wahhabi is a Salafi, it is but one of Salafism's many orientations. Salafi and Wahhabi are not two sides of the same coin. There are Salafis who are not Wahhabis. There are Wahhabis who are not Saudis. There are also Saudis who are neither Wahhabi nor Salafi.

Wahhabis believe that the *salaf al-salih* are the model that Muslims should emulate.³

Historically, the understanding of the modern Salafi concept of WB has its roots in Wahhabism. Whilst this research focuses on the concept of WB in modern Salafism, it is important that we look at how the concept was originally perceived and manifested in early Wahhabism in the eighteenth century and later developed through the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The ideological roots of modern Salafi understandings of WB can be traced back to the traditions of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab who was deeply influenced by the writings of Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim, among others.⁴

As Salafis, Wahhabis believe that WB is indeed central to being a Muslim. As the concept forms part of the Islamic faith, Wahhabis claim that any Muslim who does not show sufficient levels of *wala'* to "true Muslims" (which, according to them, are Muslims who conform to the Wahhabi traditions) and adequate levels of *bara'* of non-Muslims (or more precisely non-Wahhabi Muslims) is at risk of committing apostasy and becoming a non-Muslim. One Wahhabi scholar, for instance, described the concept of WB as being "one of Islam's foundations" and "of paramount importance", and he described as "repugnant" those Muslims who have taken non-Muslims as friends

³Ibn Rainy Dahlan, Ahmad, *Fitnah Al-Wahhabiyyah* (The Wahhabi Fitnah), Madbouli Bookstore, Cairo, p. 7; Ibn Ghannam, Al-Hussain, *Rawdat al-Afkar wa al-Afham li-Murtad Hal al-Imam* (Garden of Thought and Explanation on the Condition of Apostasy of the Leader), also known as *Tarikh Al-Najd* (The History of Najd), Dar Al-Shuruq, 1994, p. 284; Qamar, Zubair, *Wahhabism: Understanding the Roots and Role Models of Islamic Extremism*, available at <http://www.sunnah.org/articles/Wahhabiarticleedit.htm> (accessed 2 August 2012); Ibn Abdul Wahab, Suleiman, *Fasl al-Khitab Fil Radd Ala Muhammad in Abd al-Wahhab* (The Final Word on the Refutation of Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab), Dar al-Saqi, Beirut, n.d., p. 5.

⁴See Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafat Ahab Al-Jahim* (Following the Straight Path Against the People of Hellfire), Dar al-Ishbiliyyah li al-Nashr wa al-Ta'uzi', Riyadh, 1998; Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", p. 54.

while portraying enmity towards many Muslims.⁵ Hence, WB in the eyes of Wahhabi scholars becomes the guiding principle of Muslims' relations with the *kuffar* and “infidels”.

This chapter has several objectives. First, it aims to show that the modern Salafi concept of WB has its roots in Wahhabism. As the chapter illustrates, both the religious and political roles of the concept have existed since the early days of Wahhabism. The Wahhabi tradition of WB continued to be inherited by generations that came after Ibn Abd al-Wahhab until the modern period. At the political level, this chapter highlights how the rivalry between the Saudis and Ottomans in the late eighteenth century and the Saudi civil war in the nineteenth century have impacted on the development of WB in Wahhabi religious discourse. During the rivalry and civil war, WB played an important role in the debate among Wahhabi scholars on the issue of *wala'* to the political authorities and *bara'* of the “infidels”.

Second, the chapter attempts to showcase the main factors that have contributed to the development of the concept in the Wahhabi ideology in the modern period (twentieth century and beyond). Three developments of the concept in modern Saudi Arabia will be presented in this chapter:

- (1) From the start of the Wahhabi movement in the eighteenth century until today, WB has been used by the Wahhabis to fight *shirk* and *bid'ah* and any practices deemed un-Islamic by the Wahhabis.
- (2) Official Saudi Wahhabi scholars⁶ in the twentieth century, while retaining the social aspect of *bara'* — which relates to personal relations between Muslims and non-Muslims represented by nourishing hatred and rejecting friendship — endorsed and

⁵ He is Abdul Razzaq al-Afifi, vice-chairman of Saudi Arabia's Permanent Committee of Research and Fatwa. See his Foreword to the book *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Islam According to the Way of the Salaf* by Muhammad Saeed Bin Salim Al-Qahtani, which is also available at <http://www.islamicemirate.com/E-Books/alWalaawalBaraa1.pdf> (accessed 25 June 2010).

⁶ They are also known as the establishment *ulema*, or *ulema al-sultah* (regime's scholars).

legitimized political *wala'* to so-called infidels, exemplified by their total silence over Saudi foreign policy, foreign military bases in the country and other manifestations of Saudi alliances with the West.⁷

- (3) Saudi scholars who oppose the Saudi rulers and the establishment scholars, in particular their foreign policy and their actions which are seen as having *wala'* to the West, condemn the Saudi rulers under the pretext of WB.

In the discussion of WB in modern-day Wahhabism, the chapter highlights that Wahhabi scholars who oppose the Saudi rulers on account of their political behavior have used the Wahhabi teachings and heritage, and further developed and radicalized some of its concepts including WB. Using the same Wahhabi teachings and tradition that the state and its establishment scholars hold dear, these Salafis (who are mostly represented by the Jihadi faction of modern Salafis) condemn their rulers, while some of them even go to the extent of excommunicating the leaders and thereby legitimizing attacks against them. Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi is among those, and is believed to be the first to use the Wahhabi heritage in order to excommunicate the rulers of Saudi Arabia who have always been identified as the main protector and propagator of the Wahhabi tradition.

Finally, the chapter attempts to show how the Wahhabi ideology, particularly the concept of WB, has dramatically influenced Saudi society and Muslims in general. In modern Saudi Arabia, education is perhaps one of the key strategies that Wahhabis use to propagate their version of Islam. At the local level, Wahhabi teachings which contain elements of WB are mainly taught at Saudi schools, at all levels from primary schools to higher institutions. Apart from education, media including television, radio and news stations, newspapers, journals, and in recent years the internet are actively used by the Wahhabis to spread, if not purely Saudi views, then views inherently

⁷ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 37.

sympathetic to their ideology. At the global level, the Wahhabis, especially since the mid-1970s, have executed, with the assistance of the petrodollar, a campaign of spreading their ideology in the form of educational religious study in both *madaris* (religious schools) and mosques throughout the Muslim world. The last part of the chapter illustrates the influence and spread of the concept of WB, especially its penetration into the curriculum of Saudi schools and exportation beyond Saudi borders. It also briefly describes how the Saudi educational system, particularly the concept of WB and its teaching of “hatred to the others”, has been internationally criticized post-September 11.

The chapter concludes that as part of the Salafi ideology, the concept of WB is essential to Wahhabism. The concept, which started in early Wahhabism as a tool to fight apostasy and innovations in Islam, has developed into an important element used by both the Saudi establishment scholars and those who oppose the kingdom to support their religious inclination and political agenda.

Wahhabism: Definition, History and Concepts⁸

Before embarking on the discussion on the concept of WB in Wahhabism, it is essential that we clarify the ambiguity and ambivalence surrounding its terminology. As mentioned in Chapter 1, followers and supporters of the Wahhabi ideology do not like the term *Wahhabiyyah* or Wahhabism. They would rather call themselves Muslims or *Salafīyyun* (the Salafis) in reference to the pious

⁸This section of the chapter provides a brief introduction to Wahhabism. Contemporary scholars have written widely on this subject. For more on Wahhabism, see Algar, Hamid, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, Islamic Publications International, 2002; Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, I.B. Tauris, 2006; Delong-Bas, Natana J., *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004; Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, Cambridge University Press, 2007; Niblock, Tim, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*, Routledge, 2006; Abou El-Fadl, Khaled, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, Harper, San Francisco, 2005.

ancestors (*salaf al-salih*).⁹ Unlike “Salafi” which is both a label and a self-designated term, the term “Wahhabi” is a label given to the followers of the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, from whose name the term “Wahhabi” originates. Wahhabism simply means the way of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, which also denotes his ideology. Hence, linguistically, a Wahhabi is one who subscribes to Wahhabism. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and his followers never accepted the label “Wahhabis”; rather, they considered themselves to be *ahl al-sunnah wal jamaah* (the people of [Prophetic] tradition and community) or *ahl al-tawhid* or *al-muwahhidun* (the people of monotheism).¹⁰

The main reason why Wahhabis have rejected the term “Wahhabism” is because it provides the impression that the teachings propagated by Ibn Abd al-Wahhab are a new doctrine or belief within the Islamic faith, whereas they believe that it is merely a reflection and an extension of the teachings of the Prophet, his companions, the *salaf al-salih* and those who followed their paths throughout Islamic history. They also believe that Wahhabism is a label that was first imposed on the revivalist Salafi movement by its enemies, and that for this reason people might gain the “wrong” impression of its principles and foundations, deride and ridicule its leaders and followers, and spread feelings of antipathy and antagonism towards it. Yet, this term is now the most prevalent used among Westerners and Muslims alike, including some of the movement’s own followers, especially in the scholarly circles. The main reason why the term “Wahhabism” is still in use despite its inaccuracy is that, although Wahhabism is a Salafi movement that calls for the return to the early traditions of the companions of the Prophet and the *salaf al-salih*, there are many other Salafi movements that have risen in different parts of the Islamic world.¹¹ The name “Wahhabism”

⁹ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, pp. 2–3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹¹ For more on the history of Salafism, see Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, pp. 33–57.

thus denotes the specific Saudi form of Salafism and the specific Saudi context.¹² As Al-Rasheed states, “My justification for retaining the name *Wahhabiyyah* [Wahhabism] is based on the assumption that there is a body of religious knowledge that has common intellectual ancestry, without assuming that this factor gives the discourse rigidity or coherence.”¹³ Moreover, there is a famous Arab saying that “a known error is better than an unknown correctness” (*khata' shai' ahsan min sawab majhul*).¹⁴ Therefore, despite the fact that the term “Wahhabism” is a historical as well as a linguistic error, since it refers to the father of the founder of the movement (Ibn Abd al-Wahhab) and not to Prophet Muhammad himself, this term will be retained throughout this research on the basis of the previously mentioned justifications.

Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was born in Najd in the year 1703 (1114 of the Hijri calendar) in Uyainah, in present-day Saudi Arabia. He came from the Banu Tamim tribe of that region and is said to have lived in poverty.¹⁵ His father was a local judge associated with the Hanbali school of *fiqh*, which is known for its conservativeness and strict interpretations of Islam.¹⁶ In the eighteenth century, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab grew up amidst an atmosphere of widespread perception of deterioration in the Muslim beliefs and practices. Many Muslims had fallen into the acts considered *shirk* and had returned to the days of *jahiliyyah*. Arabian politics was also chaotic and bloody; violence and conflict prevailed at the time. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was aware of these conditions and sought to unify the population and reform the Muslims under the banner

¹²See Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, pp. 2–3; Niblock, Tim, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*, pp. 10–11.

¹³Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 2.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge University Press, England, 2002, p. 16.

¹⁶Abu Khalil, As'ad, *The Battle for Saudi Arabia: Royalty, Fundamentalism, and Global Power*, Seven Stories Press, New York, 2004, p. 52.

of “true”¹⁷ Islam.¹⁸ This was in line with the many reforms and renewals by various revivalist movements that were taking place in the eighteenth century across the Islamic world.

Like Salafism, Wahhabism is not a *mazhab* of *fiqh* or any Islamic theological school of thought. It is but a form of Salafism, emerging as a social reform movement in Arabia. Its original objective was to cleanse Arabia of widespread deviationist and heretical practices, typified by the “blind following” (*taqlid*) of *imams* among Muslims in his period. Examples of such practices which were heretical to early Wahhabism include offering prayers at tombs, and glorifying “holy places” and “holy men”/“saints”. Such practices are classified as *shirk*, *kufri*, *riddah* (apostasy), and *bid’ah*.¹⁹ Ibn Abd al-Wahhab aggressively called people to adhere to a very strict and literal interpretation of *tawhid* and to fight *shirk*. He argued that the mere proclamation of *shahadah* is insufficient for someone to be a Muslim; it must be joined with “pure” Islamic behavior and practices. Thus, Wahhabism prohibits many practices common in the traditional Islamic heritage which have been practised by many Muslims, particularly Sufism.

As mentioned earlier, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s followers originally called themselves *al-muwahhidun* (proponents of *tawhid*), but over time they preferred the more generic term *salafiyyun* which signifies adherence to the faith and practices of the Prophet, his companions, and the early Muslim generations²⁰ as they believe that the *salaf al-salih* are the model that Muslims should emulate.²¹ Due to the importance of

¹⁷ Here, “true” Islam means Islamic practices which are devoid of *shirk* and *bid’ah* according to Wahhabi doctrine.

¹⁸ The religious and political conditions of pre-Wahhabi Arabia can be found in the first Wahhabi chronicle written by Ibn Ghannam in his work, *Tarikh al-Najd*, and in *Unwan al-Majd fi Tarikh Najd* (Noble Notes on The History of Najd) by Ibn Bishir.

¹⁹ For more on Wahhabi ideology, see Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, pp. 104–129.

²⁰ Renz, George, “The Wahhabis” in A.J. Arberry (ed.), *Religion in the Middle East*, Vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 270–285.

²¹ Ibn Rainy Dahlan, Ahmad, *Fitnah Al-Wahhabiyyah*, p. 7; Ibn Ghannam, Al-Hussain, *Rawdat al-Afkar wa al-Afham li-Murtad Hal al-Imam*, p. 284; Qamar, Zubair, *Wahhabism: Understanding the Roots and Role Models of Islamic Extremism*; Ibn Abdul Wahab, Suleiman, *Fasl al-Khitab Fil Radd Ala Muhammad in Abd al-Wahhab*, p. 5.

following in the footsteps of the *salaf*, Wahhabism has always been a form of Salafism. It subscribes to the methodology of the *salaf* in theology and *fiqh*.²² In fact, Wahhabism did not spread in the modern Muslim world under its own banner, but under the banner of Salafism.²³ As Khaled Abou El-Fadl observes, “the attachment of Wahhabism to Salafism was indeed needed as Salafism was a much more ‘credible paradigm in Islam’; making it an ideal medium for Wahhabism”.²⁴

As a Salafi movement in orientation, Wahhabism treats the Quran and *hadith* as fundamental texts understood by *salaf al-salih* and developed further by various commentaries, including Ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s. As mentioned earlier, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s book *Kitab al-Tawhid*, and the works of the earlier scholars Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Qayyim, are the major referential authority of Wahhabism.²⁵

It is essential to note here that Wahhabism cannot be separated from the Saudi state. This is due to the pact or oath of allegiance that was made between Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and Muhammad Ibn Saud, the *amir* of Dir’iyyah and the founder of the first Saudi state, in 1744 that created the Saudi kingdom.²⁶ Despite the fact that the

²² In matters of jurisprudence, Wahhabism actually subscribes to the Hanbali school of thought and jurisprudence. However, many Wahhabis claim that they do not subscribe to any particular *mazhab*. Instead, they claim to follow the stronger opinion among the Salaf based on the Quran and the *Sunnah*. But one who studies their views on jurisprudence will find their origins in the Hanbali school of *fiqh*. As mentioned earlier, even Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Qayyim, the two scholars most referred to by the Wahhabis and the contemporary Salafis, adopted the methodology of the Hanbali school.

²³ Abou El-Fadl, Khaled, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*, p. 74.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Ibn Abd al-Wahhab’s works on various Islamic subjects such as theology, exegesis, jurisprudence and the life of Prophet Muhammad were collected and published in twelve volumes by the Islamic University of Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud in Saudi Arabia. See Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Muhammad, *Muallafat al-Shaykh al-Imam Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab*, 5 vols., Jamiat al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud al-Islamiyah, Riyadh, 1398H.

²⁶ For a detailed history of Saudi Arabia, see Niblock, Tim, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*; Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *A History of Saudi Arabia*; Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*; Champion, Daryl, *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2003.

modern state of Saudi Arabia was only founded in 1932, the kingdom has its roots and sources of legitimacy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁷ The initial oath of allegiance between Ibn Saud and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, and the subsequent alliance and relationship between the royal family and the religious forces in Arabia, proved to be significant and central in the unification of Saudi Arabia in the eighteenth century, its re-emergence twice after its collapse in 1818 and 1891, and the maintenance of political order.²⁸ As Daryl Champion observes:

It was this original “religio-political movement”, “the effective union of political/military organization and religious ideology”, which first gave the House of Saud its special religious status... This status was to be inherited by subsequent generations of Saudis according to the Arabian customs of *nasab* and *Sunnah*, and thus has been a foundation stone of Saudi political legitimacy since Ibn Saud began conquering central Arabia in the first decade of the twentieth century.²⁹

It is not the purpose of this chapter to provide a detailed historical account of Saudi Arabia and its formation stages. However, in order to understand the realities and development of the concept of WB in Wahhabism, it is imperative that we briefly look at some of the events that occurred in the course of its early days that constitute the sources and foundations that the current state of Saudi Arabia was built upon.

The history of the creation of Saudi Arabia is divided into three stages. The first stage begins with the alliance between Ibn Saud and Ibn Abd al-Wahhab made in 1744, and ends with the occupation of Najd in central Arabia by the troops of Mohammed Ali of the Ottoman Empire in 1818. This period is known as the first Saudi

²⁷ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 1.

²⁸ Fandy, Mamoun, *Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent*, Palgrave, New York, 1999, p. 46.

²⁹ Champion, Daryl, *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform*, pp. 22–23.

state. The second stage, or second Saudi state, begins with the success of Imam Turki Bin Abdullah in capturing Riyadh and expelling the remnants of the Egyptian troops from Najd in 1824, and ends with the defeat of Imam Abdul Rahman Bin Faisal to the ruler of Ha'il, Muhammad Bin Rasheed, in 1891. The final stage, or the third Saudi state, begins with the capture of Riyadh by King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud in 1902 and continues until the present day.

As will be seen, the Salafi/Wahhabi tradition of WB in its religious and political form has existed since the period of the first Saudi state. This tradition of WB is among the concepts that form the entire Wahhabi heritage. As stated earlier, it is also important to understand that the kingdom's sources of legitimacy stem from the Wahhabi ideology that the Saudi state supported more than 260 years ago. Tim Niblock states, "the claim which a regime makes to legitimacy indicates how the regime seeks to relate to the population and which parts of the population it will turn to for support".³⁰ Niblock lists five possible bases of legitimacy that can apply to the Saudi case, each of which has its own strengths and limitations:³¹ ideological, traditional, personal, eudemonic, and democratic/structural bases. However, the most central and well-acknowledged one is the ideological or religious base of legitimacy.³²

Wahhabism and the Concept of WB

The Wahhabi ideology emphasizes the importance of *tawhid*. *Tawhid* in Wahhabism is more than merely believing in the oneness of God, as it is for all Muslims. The main and most fundamental demands of the Wahhabi mission were the purification of Arabia from unorthodox forms of religiosity and the enforcement of the *shariah* law throughout the Arabian society in order to establish a society based on *tawhid*.³³ This Wahhabi mission was supported in the political

³⁰ Niblock, Tim, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival*, p. 10.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9–13.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *History of Saudi Arabia*, pp. 18–19.

arena by Ibn Saud, and resulted in the unification of the entire Arabia supposedly “under the rule of the Quran and the Sunnah”.

In line with Wahhabism’s call to purify Islam and fight *kufr* through *tawhid*, its practice is manifested in the concept of WB. WB is imperative, according to Wahhabism, in order to establish the practices of Prophet Muhammad and to fight any forms of heresy and unbelief. Wahhabis are convinced that the concept will protect them from *bid’ah* and reinforce their unity in the face of non-Muslim enemies.³⁴ By practising WB in their own societies, they believe that this is the effective way to avoid any resemblance to infidels and to maintain the purity of Islam. For the same reason, Wahhabis reject much of what they consider to be part of “infidel culture” such as entertainment and listening to music.³⁵ Thus, they believe that WB is the guiding principle for Muslims’ relations with the *kuffar*, and they use it to make a strict distinction between Islam and other faiths.³⁶

Wahhabis emphasize that the roots of their concern with the community system lies in a willingness to withdraw from corrupting innovations and to live in accordance with the example of *salaf al-salih* and create a totally Islamic society. However, this quietist concept of WB has undergone several transformations within Wahhabism itself through time. The genealogy of the concept’s transformation can be traced to the writings of Ibn Taimiyyah who has exerted a strong influence on the doctrines of Wahhabism, including the concept of WB.

As explained before, Ibn Taimiyyah developed the idea that the distinction between the believers and non-believers must be

³⁴As Ibn Taimiyyah’s teachings exert a great influence on Wahhabi thought, the idea to fight *bid’ah* with WB is believed to have originated from the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah. See Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, pp. 69–70.

³⁵Moussalli, Ahmad, *Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who is the Enemy?*, p. 4.

³⁶Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*”, p. 94.

well-defined and strictly policed.³⁷ In his book entitled *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, he explained in detail that differences should be maintained between Muslims and non-Muslims in all their interactions. In particular, Ibn Taimiyyah was especially concerned about the influence of Jewish and Christian religious festivals, stressing that true Muslims must avoid these. The basis for this was the Quranic verse he quoted:

O believers, do not take the Jews and the Christians as your friends and protectors, they are friends of each other. And whoever makes them a friend then he is from amongst them. Verily God does not guide the unjust people.³⁸

As a result of his understanding of the verse, he forbade Muslims from having close contact with the Jews and Christians. He also viewed the imitation of the Jews and Christians in their dress as forms of worship, and as showing *wala'* to them. This refers particularly to popular religious rituals like visiting graves and turning burial sites into mosques.³⁹ Ibn Taimiyyah used elements of WB to counter these practices which he deemed heretical.⁴⁰

Under the precept of WB and based on the teachings of Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab argued that it was imperative for Muslims not to befriend, ally themselves with, or imitate non-Muslims or heretical Muslims. Furthermore, this enmity and hostility towards non-Muslims had to be visible and unequivocal.⁴¹ For example, Muslims are not allowed to be the first to greet non-Muslims,

³⁷ Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim Mukhalafat Ashab al-Jahim*, pp. 156–303, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?a=syed5680> (accessed 23 March 2010); Michel, Thomas F., *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity: Ibn Taimiyyah's Al-Jawab al-Salih*, pp. 84–85; Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 54.
³⁸ Quran 5:51.

³⁹ Moussalli, Ahmad, *Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who is the Enemy?*, pp. 4–5.

⁴⁰ See Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 54.

⁴¹ Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Muallafat al-Shaykh al-Imam Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab*, Al-Maktabah Al-Saudiyyah, undated, Vol. 1, pp. 312–329.

nor imitate them in their dress, language, morality and culture. Similarly, Muslims are forbidden from taking part in celebrations and festivals or any other social event originally invented by non-Muslims as these are signs of showing *wala'* to the *kuffar* and their traditions.⁴²

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab used the ideas suggested by Ibn Taimiyyah and Ahmad Bin Hanbal (that would later be called WB) to serve as a pillar of the *aqidah*. This is very clear in his writings including his most famous one, *Kitab al-Tawhid*, which deals with the oneness of God; and *Kitab Kashf al-Shubuhah* (Book of Clarification of Uncertainties), which deals with “heretical” acts according to Wahhabism such as the intercession of prophets and saints (*tawasul*). Both writings revolve around the subject of *tawhid*. Hence, in the Wahhabi tradition, the doctrine of WB takes on an exclusive and ultimately religious approach. It designated primarily all those who do not adhere to Sunni orthodoxy, especially the Shiites.⁴³ Ibn Abd al-Wahhab branded all Shiites as unbelievers and *rafidah* (rejectionists).⁴⁴ In the Wahhabi tradition, WB thus became a test of true faith, to show loyalty to God alone as an indispensable part of the Islamic religion.

WB in Early Days of Wahhabism

Wahhabism would not have spread in Arabia had it not been for the fact that in the late eighteenth century the Al-Saud family united

⁴²Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, “Awthaq al-Ura: al-Risalah al-Sadisah” in *Majmu'at al-Tawhid* (The Firmest of the Ties: The Sixth Letter in Compilations of Monotheism), Taba'ah Munaqqahah Musahhahah, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath, place not cited, undated, p. 171.

⁴³Kepel, Gilles and Jean-Pierre Milelli (eds.), *Al-Qaeda in Its Own Words*, p. 168.

⁴⁴See Muhammad Bin Abdul Wahhab, *Al-Risalah fi Al-Radd 'ala al-Rafidah* (Letter on the Refutation of the Rejectionists), available at <http://saaaid.net/book/open.php?cat=89&book=647> (accessed 15 August 2012); Lacy, Robert, *The Kingdom: Arabia and the House of Sa'ud*, p. 59. The rejection of Shiites with respect to WB can be clearly seen in the writing of Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Min Mafahim Aqidah al-Salaf*, Part 2, Chapter 8, p. 126 (English translation).

itself with the Wahhabi movement and rebelled against the Ottoman Empire in Arabia. As mentioned earlier, the first Saudi state ended with the Ottomans destroying the city of Dir'iyah, the first home of the Saudi kingdom.⁴⁵ During the Saudi–Ottoman rivalry, the concept of WB as a tool to fight *kufir* was implemented by Wahhabi scholars, among others, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's grandson, Sulayman Ibn Abdallah (d. 1818).

To understand how WB was manifested in early Wahhabism in both its social and political form, it is important to look at the work of Sulayman. An important factor that must always be recalled when examining the work of past Wahhabi scholars and jurists is the historical development of the movement. We must never lose sight of the fact that considerations of national interests, civil war, territorial occupation and power politics as well as the historical circumstances and the political reality of the period can influence the scholars' views. As Wagemakers puts it, "the concept of WB has developed in various ways in Wahhabi discourse since the nineteenth century. This can be partly ascribed to the civil war that caused the collapse of the second Saudi state (1824–1891)".⁴⁶ According to Wagemakers, "the concept of WB in Wahhabi discourse is contested and the events on the nineteenth-century Arabian Peninsula, particularly the Saudi civil war, have influenced these contestations over the meaning of the concept".⁴⁷

The second decade of the nineteenth century saw the collapse of the Wahhabi mission and the end of the Saudi state at the hands of the Ottomans. The Saudis withdrew from Hijaz in 1813 and, during the 1815 truce between the Ottomans and the Saudis, some towns and chiefs of Al-Qasim district in Najd abandoned the Saudi cause in the face of the Ottoman forces.⁴⁸ It was during the context of war and betrayal, then, that Sulayman composed his famous

⁴⁵ Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, p. 33.

⁴⁶ Wagemakers, Joas, "The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'", p. 104.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁴⁸ Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, p. 247.

treatise entitled *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak* (Proofs of the Rule Regarding the Loyalty to the People of Polytheism). It is asserted by Wagemakers that “historical events such as this produced Wahhabi writings that continue to resonate in the scholarly debate on WB today”.⁴⁹ Sulayman’s treatise revolves around issues of allegiance to infidels, befriending the idolaters, assisting them against Muslims and offering loyalty to them.⁵⁰ In the opening discussion of his treatise, he states that whoever “shows to the idolaters an agreement with their religion out of fear and a wish to placate them is an infidel just like them, even if he hates them and their religion and loves Islam and Muslims”.⁵¹ To Sulayman, “the Ottoman–Saudi military confrontation was not merely a struggle between belief and unbelief”.⁵² Therefore, he alluded in his treatise to those who were under the Saudi domain and then fell under the Ottomans and did not migrate or fight as “folk who once followed Islam”, and contended that they are “worse in their disbelief and more deserving of punishment in the Fire than those in the Prophet’s time who did not migrate from Mecca out of attachment to their homes and from fear of infidels”.⁵³

As the rulers of Arabia were struggling to liberate the Arabian peninsula from the Ottomans, followers of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab accused the Ottomans of corrupting Islam and hence labeled them as infidels. They declared that the Islam practiced by the Ottomans was not the true Islam, implying that the *sultan* was not the legitimate leader of the *ummah*. The Wahhabis held that the Arabs were worthier than the Ottomans with regard to *imamah* or leadership. Thus, the authority of the Ottoman rule was rejected and challenged.

⁴⁹Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala’ wal Bara’”, p. 94.

⁵⁰See Sulayman Ibn Abdallah, *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak*, Al-Tibyan Publications, undated. See also Abdul Aziz H. Al-Fahad, “From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism”, *New York University Law Review*, Vol. 79, No. 2, May 2004, pp. 485–519.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, p. 36.

⁵³Sulayman Ibn Abdallah, *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak*, p. 131.

The Wahhabis also described the Ottomans as the moral equivalent of the Mongols, who earlier had invaded Muslim territories and then converted to Islam. The Ottomans were regarded as primary enemies of Islam as they had corrupted the religion of Islam and were pretending to be sincere and true Muslims. The Wahhabis regarded the Ottomans as polytheists (due to their strong attachment to the traditions and practices of Sufism such as visiting tombs which Wahhabis condemned as *shirk*) and *kuffar*, along with all who supported them, and most others who claimed to be Muslims but did not live up to the Wahhabi expectations.⁵⁴ Hence, early Wahhabis regarded the Ottoman caliphate as *al-Dawlah al-Kufriyyah* (Infidel State), and they claimed that those who supported the Ottomans or allied themselves to them were infidels.⁵⁵

As stated earlier, during the occupation of the Ottomans, some Arabs began to switch their allegiance to them. This led the Wahhabi scholars at that time to address the issue of *wala'*. The Saudi rulers and their *ulama* viewed these calls for foreign invasion as grave acts of disloyalty and misplaced *wala'*. As a strong follower of Wahhabism, Sulayman was especially concerned with the proper relationship between true believers and those they regarded as *kuffar*, as well as the sensitive question of how to handle hypocrisy in their midst. He held that those who side with the “infidels” in their policy are themselves infidels. He wrote:

Know, may God bless you, that when a person shows approval of the polytheist's religion, for fear of, or in appeasement of flattery to them to avoid their evil, that he is an unbeliever like them, even if he dislikes their religion and hates them and loves Islam and Muslims, if that were the only [error] committed. However, if he is in a protected realm, and he invites them, obeys them and shows approval of their false religion and assists them with help and

⁵⁴ See Sirriyeh, Elizabeth, “Wahhabis, Unbelievers and the Problems of Exclusivism”, *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1989, pp. 123–132.

⁵⁵ Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, “Bayan al-Najah wa al-Fikak: al-Risalah al-Thaniya ‘Ashra’ in *Majmu'at al-Tawhid* (Explanation of Salvation and Freedom: The Twelfth Letter in the Compilation of Monotheism), pp. 358–368.

money, becomes loyal to them and terminates loyalty between himself and the Muslims, and becomes a soldier of polytheism, and tomb and their people ..., no Muslim should doubt he is an unbeliever.⁵⁶

Sulayman labelled such Muslims as polytheists under the pretext of WB.⁵⁷ He also wrote another epistle entitled *Awthaq 'Ura al-Iman* (Faith's Surest Bonds). This same title was later used by Juhayman Al-Utaibi⁵⁸ who stormed the Grand Mosque in Mecca in 1979. This particular epistle by Sulayman was dedicated to elucidating the rulings regarding proper *wala'* to Muslims and *bara'* of the non-Muslims.⁵⁹ Another writing of Sulayman involving the theme of WB is *Fi Hukum Safi ila bilad as-shirk* (On the Rule Governing Travel to the Land of Idolatry).⁶⁰

Before the conflict between the Saudis and the Ottomans, it is believed that the concept of WB had only encompassed the religious and social dimension, such as the obligation of *hijrah* from non-Muslim to Muslim lands and other regulations regarding Muslim and non-Muslim relationship. Sulayman's stand on loyalty to the polytheists and infidels, interpreted in the context of the Saudi struggle against the Ottomans, added a political dimension to the concept of WB. He argued that it is obviously a grave sin and a serious offence for Muslims to leave the community of believers and take the side of the unbelieving enemy. Such a Muslim, according to him, is an unbeliever and has to be treated as an apostate.⁶¹ This political dimension

⁵⁶ Sulayman Ibn Abdallah, *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl al-Ishrak*, p. 149.

⁵⁷ See Wagemakers, Joas, "The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'", pp. 93–110.

⁵⁸ It is believed that Juhayman's works and teachings significantly influenced and shaped the worldview of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi.

⁵⁹ See Abdul Aziz H. Al-Fahad, "From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism", pp. 485–519; Sirriyeh, Elizabeth, "Wahhabis, Unbelievers and the Problems of Exclusivism", pp. 123–132.

⁶⁰ See Sirriyeh, Elizabeth, "Wahhabis, Unbelievers and the Problems of Exclusivism", p. 124.

⁶¹ See Abdul Aziz H. Al-Fahad, "From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism", p. 496.

of the concept was later adopted by Juhayman Al-Utaibi and Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi in the twentieth century.⁶²

In the late nineteenth century, yet another prominent Saudi scholar advanced the concept of WB. Like Sulayman, Hamad Ibn Atiq (d. 1883) wrote a famous document entitled *Sabil al-Najat wal Fikak min Muwalat al-Murtaddin wa al-Atrak* (The Path of Salvation and Freedom Against Befriending the Apostates and Turks), where he pointed out that Muslims should not just refrain from giving their loyalty to non-Muslims but should also actively disavow them. Ibn Atiq's treatise was written in reaction to the civil war that broke out between Abdallah Bin Faisal Bin Turki (d. circa 1880) and his brother Saud Bin Faisal Bin Turki (d. 1875) during the second Saudi state.⁶³ When their father Faisal Bin Turki, who had been the ruler of the second Saudi state, died in 1865, Abdallah became the new ruler. However, his legitimacy as the ruler of Arabia was challenged militarily by his brother, Saud. To prevent Saud from claiming power and taking over as ruler, Abdallah decided to seek military assistance from the Ottomans from the neighboring country, Iraq. As the Wahhabis regarded the Ottomans as polytheists, seeking help from the latter "infidels" was considered an act of disloyalty. A Wahhabi judge by the name of Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Ajlan (d. unknown) was even excommunicated by Ibn Atiq due to his support for Abdallah's decision.⁶⁴ It was at this point of the Saudi history that Ibn Atiq wrote his treatise, which was partly built on the earlier work of Sulayman. Ibn Atiq wrote:

So his saying "...and there has become apparent..." In other words, it has become clear and apparent. And consider the preceding of "...enmity..." with "...hatred..." because the first is more important than the second. This is because the person may hate the polytheists (*mushrikin*), while not taking them as enemies.

⁶² See Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", p. 55.

⁶³ Wagemakers, Joas, "The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*", p. 96.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*; Commins, David, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia*, p. 64.

So (if this were the case, then) he would not have come with the obligation that was upon him, until he attains both the enmity and the hatred. And it is a must, as well, that the enmity and hatred are both open and apparent and clear. And known that even if the hatred is tied to the heart, then it does not benefit him until its effects are shown and its signs become clear. Then and at that point, the enmity and hatred will become apparent.⁶⁵

According to Ibn Atiq, Muslims who do not actively show enmity and disavowal to non-Muslims are *kuffar*.⁶⁶ As for hostility to the infidels and polytheists, Ibn Atiq argues that God has made it obligatory and made loyalty to them illegal, to the extent that in the *Book of God* there is no ruling whose proofs are as numerous and clear as this one, after the obligation of *tawhid*.⁶⁷

Ibn Atiq connects the concept of WB to the concept of *tawhid*, which, as illustrated earlier, is the main focus of the Wahhabi mission.⁶⁸ Moreover, as Wagemakers writes, Ibn Atiq's work "shows a move away from simply condemning misplaced *wala'*... towards the necessity of showing *bara'*".⁶⁹ According to Ibn Atiq, one should not live among the idolaters and unbelievers if one cannot declare his religion. However, for Ibn Atiq, being able to proclaim the faith and perform the prayer does not qualify as declaring religion. One has to "disavow the people of unbelief, amongst whom he is staying", and must declare "to them that they are unbelievers and that one is their enemy. If that does not happen, one has not declared the religion".⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Hamad Ibn Atiq, *Sabil al-Najat wal Fikak min Muwalat al-Murtaddin wa Ahl al-Ishrak*, taken from Basics on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* at <http://moderatesrefuted.blogspot.com/> (accessed 23 September 2010).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", p. 87.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Ibn Atiq, Hamad, *Sabil al-Najat wal Fikak min Muwalat al-Murtaddin wa Ahl al-Ishrak*; and from the same author, *At-Tah'thir min al-safar ila bilad al-mushrikun* (Warning Against Travel to the Countries of Idolaters), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=23ydotwi> (accessed 14 February 2010).

Here, it can be seen that WB is no longer confined to matters of condemning misplaced *wala'*, but to enforce the need to show *bara'* to the enemies of Islam. As such, it is at this juncture that WB as it is understood in the Wahhabi ideology became a fundamental part of the Islamic faith. Those who fail to practice WB are no longer just deviant or errant Muslims but are considered as fallouts from the Muslim community entirely. The act of seeking help from the infidels (*isti'ana bil kuffar*) as seen from the events of the Saudi–Ottoman rivalry and the Saudi civil war in the late nineteenth century was seen by the Wahhabi scholars as an expression of misplaced loyalty that violated the concept of WB. As we shall see, this political interpretation of WB continues to reverberate in the thoughts and intellectual system of Salafi scholars in the twentieth and twenty-first century.⁷¹

Thus far, we have observed the hallmarks of WB in Wahhabi ideology: the tying in of WB to the basis of Islam (*aqidah*), and the elevation of the importance of WB in Quranic verse 60:4 (*Millat Ibrahim*). As explained in Chapter 2, Quranic verse 60:4 is often used by Wahhabi scholars to highlight the importance and legitimacy of WB. They argue that *Millat Ibrahim* is of extreme importance because while many Muslims are familiar with the concept of having enmity towards the *kuffar* and their false deities within their hearts, there seems to be a pervasive lack of awareness regarding the outward enmity and what is required to be demonstrated in terms of aggression, hostility and warfare.

WB in Twentieth-Century Wahhabism

The context of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries differs a great deal from the context of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. What might have been usual and common in the context of the nineteenth century may prove to be increasingly problematic as the twenty-first century progresses. There have been both international developments as well as extensive educational, economic and social changes in Saudi society during the second half of the twentieth

⁷¹ Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'”, p. 94.

century. Although it can be argued that society “remains conservative” and that it has been little affected by nationalism and secularism, the impact of rapid social and economic changes cannot be ignored.⁷² However, this stringent and rigid form and interpretation of WB, especially with regards to dealing with the “other”, has survived and developed even further in the context of the twentieth century.

Before embarking on a discussion of the development of the political dimension of the concept in the twentieth-century Wahhabism, it is essential that we first mention the religious and social dimension of the concept in modern-day Wahhabism. In the twentieth century, the concept of WB continues to play an important role in the Wahhabi ideology. The Wahhabis use this concept not only as a tool to fight *shirk* and *bid'ah*, but also as the main guiding principle that regulates the Muslim and non-Muslim relationship. Wahhabi scholars in Saudi Arabia and also outside the country actively promote this concept in their sermons and writings.

For instance, the former mufti of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Baz, ordered Muslims to withhold their greetings to non-believers and to cultivate hatred for them on the basis of WB.⁷³ In fact, Ibn Baz was among the major religious powers spreading the Wahhabi doctrine. WB, according to him, is important for the purification of Islamic belief and to avoid anything that could tarnish the purity of the religion. Ibn Baz even went as far as ordering Muslims to nourish *baghda'* (hatred) rather than *mawaddah* (affection) in their hearts for infidels.⁷⁴ Ibn Baz labeled the non-Wahhabi Muslims as pagans, apostates, deviants and innovators, and attacked the *ulema* who were not in agreement with the Wahhabi teachings.⁷⁵ He also

⁷²Lapidus, Ira, *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 573.

⁷³See Abd al-Aziz Ibn Baz, *Fatwa* on WB, available at <http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/1764> (accessed 5 December 2012).

⁷⁴Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 36.

⁷⁵Moussalli, Ahmad, *Wahhabism, Salafism and Islamism: Who is the Enemy?*, p. 8.

outlawed advice to rulers and the liberalizing of political institutions.⁷⁶ As a former president of the Directorships of Scholarly Research, *Ifta'* (Religious Creed), *Da'wah* (Missionary) and *Irshad* (Guidance), Ibn Baz is on record for issuing a *fatwa* declaring the Palestinian people's uprising as un-Islamic.⁷⁷ In the late 1960s, he declared any and all forms of cooperation with the *kuffar* as prohibited.⁷⁸

Another Saudi scholar, Salih Al-Fawzan, argues that one of the ways for Muslims to practise WB is by performing *hijrah* to the Islamic world because settling in the countries of the non-believers will lead to forming loyalty to them.⁷⁹ *Hijrah*, according to Al-Fawzan, is required to flee oneself from *fitnah* or temptation and *shirk*.⁸⁰ By performing *hijrah*, Muslims can thus show their unwillingness to engage in relations with non-Muslims in any way. This is necessary for Muslims, since settling in the lands of unbelief leads to loyalty to the infidels (*muwalat al-kafirin*).

The fundamental rule, according to the Wahhabis, is that friendship and any contact with non-Muslims is *haram*. This includes, for example, giving a *kafir* gifts during Christmas which constitutes part of the social dimension of WB. One Wahhabi scholar writes: "It is not permissible to give a *kafir* a gift on the day of one of his festivals, because that is regarded as approving of or participating in celebration of the false festival. If the gift is something that will help in celebrating the festival, such as food, candles and the like, then it is even more *haram*, and some of the scholars are of the view that this is *kufri*."⁸¹ However, he maintains that it is permissible for a Muslim

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Sayyid Yusuf al-Rifa'i, *Nasiha li Ikhwanina 'Ulama' Najd* (Advice to Our Brothers the Scholars of Najd), available at http://sunnah.org/aqida/Sh_Rifai/Default.htm (accessed 13 January 2010).

⁷⁹ Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fi al-Islam*, p. 4.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid, *Qabul Hadiyyah al-Kafir fi Yaumi Eidi* (Accepting a Gift from a Kafir on the Day of His Festival), available at <http://www.islam-qa.com/en/cat/234/ref/islamqa/85108> (accessed 14 August 2010).

to accept gifts from a Christian neighbor on the day of his festival subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The gift should not be meat that has been slaughtered for the festival.
- (2) It should not be something that may be used to imitate them on the day of their festival, such as candles, eggs, palm leaves, etc.
- (3) One should explain to his/her children the belief in *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, lest a love of this festival or a fondness for the giver be instilled in their hearts.
- (4) The gift should be accepted with the aim of softening the *kafir's* heart and calling him to Islam, not with friendship and love.⁸²

The Wahhabi scholars present WB as a social concept through a thorough explanation of its roots in the Quran and the meaning of the concept. On the basis of numerous verses, such as Quran 5:51, 58:22, 60:1 and 60:4, the scholars conclude that *wala'* entails friendship, love and affection for Muslims and their religion. They conclude that Muslims should treat non-Muslims by showing them *bara'* instead, i.e., to disassociate and show hatred and enmity to them. Muslims are forbidden to participate in non-Islamic celebrations, to congratulate non-Muslims on the occasion of their religious holidays, and to greet them first when encountering them.⁸³ Imitating the non-Muslims in dress, behavior or names are also forms of showing loyalty to the non-Muslims.⁸⁴ Wahhabi scholars explain that all these rulings serve to keep Muslims away from anything that might stain the alleged purity of their beliefs and lead to loyalty — expressed as love, affection or friendship — for supposedly un-Islamic things.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ See *fatwa* by Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid on “Non-Muslim Celebrations”, available at <http://islamqa.info/en/cat/2021> (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*; Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, Part 3, Chapter 6, p. 44. More on this social role of WB will be explained in the next chapter.

Political Dimension of WB in Twentieth-Century Wahhabism

It is important to note that with the establishment of the modern Saudi state in the twentieth century, Wahhabism became a religious/ideological discourse promoted and protected by political authority. The religious and social sphere in Saudi Arabia is controlled by the official scholars who are appointed by the state. Official scholars of Saudi Arabia usually occupy the highest religious positions in the kingdom such as the Grand Mufti, and sit on the Board of Senior Ulema (*hai'at kibar al-ulama*) and the Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Legal Opinions (*Lajnah al-da'ima lil buhuth al'ilmiah wal ifta'*). Indeed, the state needs these scholars to control the social sphere in order to ensure compliance of the people.

Under state control, there are in fact several interpretations and even contradictions within the hegemonic Wahhabi discourse, including the concept of WB. For example, official Wahhabi scholars in the twentieth century, while retaining the social aspect of *bara'*—which relates to personal relations between Muslims and non-Muslims represented by nourishing hatred and rejecting friendship—endorsed and even legitimized political *wala'* to so-called infidels, exemplified by their total silence over Saudi foreign policy, foreign military bases in the country and other manifestations of Saudi alliances with the West.⁸⁵ The manner in which Wahhabi scholars apply the social and religious aspect of WB, encapsulated in issues like rulings of participation in non-Islamic festivals, clearly shows their abandonment of the political relevance of the concept recognized in the writings of early scholars mentioned previously.⁸⁶

Official Wahhabi scholars are aware that they need to remain subservient to the Saudi rulers because they realize that their ideas

⁸⁵ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 37.

⁸⁶ Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'”, p. 97.

could only be implemented under the protection of a ruler.⁸⁷ Although the diplomatic and trade relations that Saudi Arabia has with non-Muslim countries and the strong ties it enjoys with the United States seem to clash with the idea that Muslims should stay away from “infidels”, Wahhabi scholars dare not apply their ideas on WB to politics. If they do, it could lead to heavy criticism and cause chaos between them and the rulers. In fact, Wahhabi scholars issued an unequivocal *fatwa* legitimizing the solicitation of help from non-Muslim forces in defense of the Saudi state.⁸⁸

The event of the 1990 Gulf War is a good example that illustrates the political dimension of WB in Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia. In fact, the war has had a great impact on the religio-political discourse of internal Saudi Islamist currents. One could notice the mixed reactions of Saudi scholars over the manner in which the Saudi Kingdom dealt with intervention in the war, especially its decision to invite foreign Western forces. While official scholars supported the kingdom’s decision and *fatwa* to invite American troops to Saudi soil, this move triggered an escalation of criticism by scholars belonging to the *Sahwa Islamiyyah* (Islamic Awakening) which resulted in their detention.⁸⁹ This chapter looks at the response to the war by the establishment scholars only, while discussion on the reaction of the *Sahwa* scholars to the war will be dealt with in the

⁸⁷ It could be explained here that concerning state and religion, Ibn Taimiyyah believed that the *ulema* are responsible for the protection of the divine law, and that a government is regarded as Islamic by virtue of the support it gives to Islam and to the *ulema*. One can accept the rule of anyone who follows the *shariah*. This understanding had an important effect on the Wahhabi ideology that accepted Al-Saud’s dynasty as a legitimate and hereditary Islamic government after taking refuge in Dir’iyyah, a territory controlled by the Al-Saud family. See Talip Küçükcan, “Some Reflections on the Wahhabiyah Movement”, excerpted from *Hamdard Islamicus*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1995, available at <http://www.sunnah.org/audio/onwahhabis.htm> (accessed 30 July 2012).

⁸⁸ The statement by the Council of Senior Ulema supporting actions taken by the Saudi leader inviting qualified forces to respond to the aggression against Saudi Arabia was issued on August 14, 1990 and published in, among others, the official gazette, 3319 Umm Al-Qura 24, August 18, 1990.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 4 of this book for more on the *Sahwa* and their position on this issue.

following chapter when we discuss the spectrum of WB in modern Salafism.

The official statement by the Council of Senior Ulema of Saudi Arabia supporting the actions taken by the Saudi rulers is as follows:

The Council of Senior ‘Ulama, therefore, supports actions taken by the leader, may God lead him to success, of inviting qualified forces with equipment that bring fear and terror to those who wish to commit aggression against this country. This is his obligation dictated by necessity under the present circumstances and made inevitable by the painful facts and the rules and proofs of the *shariah* making it incumbent upon the leader of the Muslims to resort to the assistance of those with the ability and through whom the purpose is achieved. The Qur’an and Prophetic Sunnah show that it is necessary to be prepared and to take precautions before it is too late....⁹⁰

We can see that the excuse these scholars gave in legitimizing a ruling which runs contrary to the Wahhabi concept of WB is that of necessity (*dharurah* or a legal doctrine allowing the prohibited).⁹¹ This scenario of scholars/rulers alliance in Saudi Arabia is important in Saudi politics as the official Wahhabi religio-political discourse is dependent on its scholars. Thus, according to Madawi Al-Rasheed, “official Wahhabism in the twenty-first century is a discourse of consent as it propagates religious interpretations that require subservience to political authority”.⁹² Its scholars provided the state with intellectual input, especially the religious discourse which confirmed the servitude of religion to the state. Thus, official Wahhabi scholars established with clarity the position of official

⁹⁰ Translation of this statement is taken from Al-Fahad, Abdul Aziz, “From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism”, p. 518.

⁹¹ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, pp. 163–187.

⁹² Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 26.

Wahhabism, which is radical in its ruling of social matters but extremely accommodating of political decisions on the basis of convenience and necessity.

In fact, such a scenario is not something new in the modern history of Saudi Arabia. In the early formation of the kingdom, King Abdul Aziz had a relationship and even sought assistance from the British. Daryl Champion states that one of the paradoxes that accompanied the King's "rise to dominance" is that he "had no compunction about dealing with the British, even though the Muslim world had criticised the Hashimite–British alliance".⁹³ Moreover, Al-Rasheed writes that "the Al-Saud were more than happy to seek military and financial help from so-called infidels as early as 1915, and even to pursue a policy that was subservient to imperial powers".⁹⁴

While many scholars, especially those who are under the auspices of the Saudi rulers, stay away from the political aspect of WB, there are some Wahhabi scholars who are against the idea of allying with the "infidel" countries such as America. Using the concept of WB, these scholars argue that it is a grave sin to support or ally oneself to the infidels. Some of them have even gone to the extent of proclaiming the Saudi rulers as *kuffar*, and hence practice the act of *takfir* on the rulers.

This political aspect of WB adopted by such scholars can be seen in two significant scenarios in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century. One is the 1990 Gulf War, where Saudi rulers invited hundreds of thousands of American troops to Saudi Arabia to defend itself from being attacked by Iraq.⁹⁵ Second, is the war against Afghanistan and Iraq launched by the United States in 2001, where Saudi Arabia retained its strong relations with the United States. These scholars therefore took the political relevance of WB

⁹³ Champion, Daryl, *The Paradoxical Kingdom: Saudi Arabia and the Momentum of Reform*, p. 51.

⁹⁴ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 10.

⁹⁵ See Al-Fahad, Abdul Aziz H., "From Exclusivism to Accommodation: Doctrinal and Legal Evolution of Wahhabism", p. 514.

to a new level by criticizing Saudi Arabia for asking for help from the infidels and for strengthening ties with them. The notion of *isti'ana bil kuffar* was heavily debated in the political development of WB in the twentieth century.

Among these scholars who opposed the Saudi state was Hamoud Bin Uqla al-Shuaibi (d. 2001),⁹⁶ a well-known and influential Saudi scholar who was allegedly linked to the Al-Qaeda organization. His students included a number of important Saudi religious leaders, among them the current Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Al Al-Shaikh (b. 1940). Al-Shuaibi published religious edicts supporting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, including the destruction of the Buddhist statues, as part of *jihad* against the infidels. He religiously justified Al-Qaeda's attack on the United States in September 2001, and gave religious legitimacy to the suicide attacks against Israel carried out by Palestinians.⁹⁷

Al-Shuaibi wrote *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtar fī Hukm al-Isti'ana bi al-Kuffar* (Chosen Words on the Rulings of Those who Seek the Assistance of the Infidels). He deals extensively with the notion of *isti'ana bil kuffar*, as the title suggests, and was very apparent in his judgement. After first dealing with the concept of WB in general, he quickly goes on to interpret it in a political way and refers to states, concluding that asking non-Muslims for help in fighting other Muslims is forbidden. He even asserts that asking a state for help in fighting other Muslims is worse than asking individuals because states are more powerful and can thus do more damage to Islam.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ For a biography of Al-Shuaibi, see <http://www.tibyan.com/biography.php?id=185> (accessed 18 July 2010).

⁹⁷ Lt. Col. Jonathan D. Halevi, "What Drives Saudi Arabia to Persist in Terrorist Financing? *Al-Jihad bi-al-Mal* — Financial *Jihad* Against the Infidels", available at <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp531.htm> (accessed 9 May 2010).

⁹⁸ Hamoud Bin Uqla Al-Shuaibi, *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtar fī Hukm al-Isti'ana bi-al-Kuffar*, available at <http://www.saaid.net> (accessed 1 April 2010).

Al-Shuaibi's position on *isti'ana bil kuffar* can also be seen in his *fatwa*⁹⁹ expressing opposition to the *fatwa* issued by Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (b. 1926), a well-known Egyptian scholar, allowing American Muslim soldiers' participation in the US-led war in Afghanistan in 2001.¹⁰⁰ Using the concept of WB, Al-Shuaibi stated that it is imperative upon all Muslims to support the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and to oppose the American war against them. He asserted that any Muslim who takes the side of the unbelievers in their war against Muslims is himself an apostate and an unbeliever. He further stated that WB is one of the fundamentals of the religion and is the foundation of faith and belief. For Al-Shuaibi, *wala'* necessitates that Muslims always love and take the side of other Muslims, whereas *bara'* necessitates severing all ties with non-Muslims, holding no love for them and maintaining a safe distance from them. He refers to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's saying that aiding and supporting non-Muslims against Muslims is an act of apostasy (*kufri naqil 'an millah*).¹⁰¹

As a Salafi scholar, Al-Shuaibi understood the Quranic concept of WB as an absolute, and totally free from the human context of its application. Like other Salafis, Al-Shuaibi described WB as a foundation of the Islamic faith, thus placing it on the same level as *tawhid*. In fact, Al-Shuaibi understood WB not as two separate concepts but as one concept, according to which a Muslim's allegiance and loyalty to other Muslims is contingent upon, and tied to, his disassociation from the unbelievers. For Al-Shuaibi, moreover, any act or expression

⁹⁹ Al-Shuaibi's *fatwa* is entitled *Al-Wala' wal Bara' wa Wujub nusrah al-Taliban wa Hukum man Zahara al-Amrikan 'Alaiha* (Loyalty and Disavowal and the Obligation to Support the Taliban and the Rulings of Those who Supported the Americans), available at <http://aloqla.com/mag/sections.php?op=printpage-thartid=42> (accessed 12 March 2010).

¹⁰⁰ See Nafi, Basheer, "Fatwa and War: On the Allegiance of the American Muslim Soldiers in the Aftermath of September 11", *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, pp. 108–113.

¹⁰¹ Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Al-Risalah Al-Tasi'ah: Nawaqid al-Islam*, p. 386, available at <http://shaydzmi.wordpress.com/2011/02/28/nawaqid/> (accessed 3 August 2012).

that contravenes this understanding of WB is sufficient to violate the boundaries of Islam.

Another scholar who addressed the issue of *isti'ana bil kuffar* is Nasr Al-Fahad, who wrote *Al-Tibyan fi Kufri Man A'ana al-Amrikan* (Clarification on the Apostasy of Those who Assist the Americans).¹⁰² This book is endorsed by Al-Shuaibi and two other Saudis belonging to the “Al-Shuaibi” school of thought, i.e., Sulayman Al-Ulwan and Ali Al-Khudair. On the prohibition of assisting the infidels against other Muslims, Al-Fahad in his book pointed out that supporting America in its fight against Muslims is an act of *kufri*. He provided a long outline of what he believes is American debauchery and of the US “war on Islam”. Condemning the US in his book, Al-Fahad states that:

America is indeed the head of *kufri*, atheism and the central base of corruption and moral decay — it is the land of shame, crime, vile and evil. The *shaytan* (satan) has indeed nested upon it and placed his shrine in it.¹⁰³

Al-Fahad distinguishes two forms of *wala'* that Muslims can show to non-Muslims: *tawalli* and *muwalat*.¹⁰⁴ The former involves “love for the religion of the unbelievers” (*mahabbat din al-kuffar*) and “love for their victory” (*mahabbat intisarihim*). Helping the *kuffar* against Muslims is also a form of *tawalli*, according to Al-Fahad, and amounts to “unbelief and apostasy” (*kufri wa riddah*). Hence, *tawalli* removes a person from the domain of Islam as it includes love of one’s enemy

¹⁰²For an introduction to Al-Fahad’s book, see Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, pp. 141–149. For more on Jihadi Salafism in contemporary Saudi Arabia, see Hegghammer, Thomas, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2010.

¹⁰³Nasr Bin Hamad Al-Fahad, *The Exposition Regarding the Disbelief of One who Assists the Americans*, Al-Tibyan Publications, undated, p. 47.

¹⁰⁴Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 144. See also A Study Concerning the Difference Between *Tawalli* and *Muwalat*, available at <http://www.salafipublications.com> (accessed 12 January 2012).

and his religion and assisting him against Muslims. *Muwalat*, on the other hand, involves forms of *wala'* that are forbidden but do not reach the level of *kufr* and are therefore less grave sins. This category includes, among other things, its social manifestation such as initiating greetings upon non-Muslims.¹⁰⁵

Al-Fahad's argument on the dangers of *tawalli* is based on the writings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who claimed that the act of helping infidels against Muslims is a factor that removes a Muslim from the domain of Islam (*naqidh lil Islam*).¹⁰⁶ In the Wahhabi tradition, *nawaqidh al-Islam* (factors that remove a person from the domain of Islam) include polytheism, association with God, preferring another authority other than Islam, and assisting infidels against Muslims which comes under the concept of WB.¹⁰⁷

The development of WB was taken a step further by Muhammad Al-Mas'ari (b. 1948), who was very critical of Saudi Arabia's decision to permit un-Islamic forces on Arabian soil to fight Iraq during the Gulf War of 1990.¹⁰⁸ Al-Mas'ari, a Saudi who has lived in exile in London since 1994, runs the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights and is an adviser to the Islamic Human Rights Commission. Al-Mas'ari argues that WB should not be equated with issues like love and friendship or greeting non-Muslims first, but has to do with war and peace.¹⁰⁹ Like Al-Shuaibi and Al-Fahad, Al-Mas'ari also published a document criticizing the Saudi state entitled *Al-Adillat al-Qat'iyyah 'ala 'Adam Shar'iyyat al-Dawlah al-Saudiyyah* (Decisive Evidence for the

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 144.

¹⁰⁷ Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Al-Risalah Al-Tasi'ah: Nawaqid al-Islam*, p. 386.

¹⁰⁸ For more on Al-Mas'ari's critical view on Saudi Arabia, see "A Saudi Oppositionist's View: An Interview With Dr. Muhammad Al-Massari", *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 7, December 2003, available at http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=26182&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=178&no_cache=1 (accessed 30 July 2012).

¹⁰⁹ Wagemakers, Joas, "The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'", p. 103.

Illegitimacy of the Saudi State).¹¹⁰ In his book, Al-Mas'ari criticizes Ibn Abd al-Wahhab himself for entering into an alliance with the Al-Saud family which had, in his view, deprived the Wahhabi call of its allegedly universal purpose.¹¹¹

Al-Mas'ari also criticizes scholars like Salih Al-Fawzan for focusing more on the social aspects of WB. He states that Al-Fawzan and others have dealt with issues of allegedly misguided *wala'* in the personal sphere but did not see anything wrong in accepting hundreds of thousands of infidel American soldiers to fight Iraq in the 1990 Gulf War.¹¹² The mistake that Al-Fawzan and others have made, according to Al-Mas'ari, is to equate the prohibition of “resembling the infidels” (*tashabbuh al-kuffar*) with WB. He believes that these are actually two different issues, with the former being simply sinful behavior, whereas the second refers to grave acts of *kufir* in times of war and peace.¹¹³

Perhaps the most prominent and vocal scholar who opposes the Saudi state using the concept of WB is Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi.¹¹⁴ Al-Maqdisi is heavily influenced by the writings of Juhayman Al-Utaibi, the leader of al-Jama'a al-Salafiyya al-Muhtasiba (JSM) who stormed the Grand Mosque of Mecca in 1979. Juhayman used the concept of WB as a political tool against the Saudi rulers.¹¹⁵ However, unlike Al-Maqdisi, Juhayman did not base on it the *takfir* of the Saudi and Arab regimes — a step that would prove catastrophic

¹¹⁰ See Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Mas'ari, *Al-Adillat al-Qat'iyyah 'ala 'Adam Shar'iyyat al-Dawlah al-Saudiyyah*, Lajnah Al-Difa' 'an Al-Huquq Al-Shar'iyyah, Al-Taba'ah Al-Sadisah Mazidah wal Munaqqahah, 2002. This 504-page book is available at <http://www.tajdeed.org.uk/ar/posts/list/23.page> (accessed 20 August 2012).

¹¹¹ See Algar, Hamid, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, p. 64.

¹¹² Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'”, p. 103.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ See Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 59.

¹¹⁵ See Hegghammer, Thomas and Stephane Lacroix, “Rejectionist Islamism in Saudi Arabia: The Story of Juhayman al-'Utaybi Revisited”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2007, pp. 103–122; Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 90.

in the evolution of this concept in general and in the Jihadi trend in modern Salafism.¹¹⁶

Juhayman revived the concept of WB from the early Wahhabi scholars such as Sulayman Ibn Abdallah and Hamad Ibn Atiq. Using the concept of *Millat Ibrahim*, Juhayman called for the “true” Islamic community which has to be disassociated from all forms of impiety. He also introduced the concept of *Awthaq ‘Ura al-Iman* (the strongest bonds of faith),¹¹⁷ meaning the links that unite Muslims with each other and impose on them mutual solidarity. Both *Millat Ibrahim* and *Awthaq ‘Ura al-Iman* converged on the principle of WB, which Juhayman made the defining principle for correct Islamic behavior.¹¹⁸

However, unlike Juhayman, Al-Maqdisi connects the concept of WB not only to politics but also to *takfir*. This was made possible by his expansion of the meaning of the word “worship” to incorporate “forms of worship that have nothing to do with matters usually associated with that word, such as political obedience and willingness to abide by a country’s laws”. As Wagemakers writes:

This way, Al-Maqdisi not only radically changes *wala’* (loyalty), but by equating the application of and adherence to man-made laws with un-Islamic worship, he also accuses present-day Muslim politicians and leaders of *shirk* (association with God) and therefore of being *kuffar* (unbelievers).¹¹⁹

As Al-Maqdisi himself states, while explaining the main pillars of his Jihadi Salafi orientation or thought, “the main priority of this

¹¹⁶Juhayman Al-Utaibi, *Risalat al-Imara wa al-Bay’a wa at-Ta’a wa Hukum Talbia al-Hukkam ‘ala Talabat al-Ilm wa al-‘Amma* (The Letter of State, Allegiance and Obedience, and the Ruling on the Ruler’s Deceit of the Religious Students and Public), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=fcchouZR> (accessed 10 April 2010); Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, pp. 59–69.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹¹⁹Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in The Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, p. 91. See also Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad, *Millat Ibrahim wa Da’wah al-Anbiya’ wa al-Mursalain*, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r1?i=1394&x=iti4u3zp> (accessed 15 December 2011).

current is calling people to *tawhid*".¹²⁰ The second pillar, however, which according to him "distinguishes this current from others is *al-wala' wal bara'*, which is one of the most trustworthy ties of *tawhid*".¹²¹ Al-Maqdisi continues to explain:

The first duty upon *al-muwahhid* (the monotheist) is to disavow of and disbelieve in the scattered gods and the many names that are being worshipped other than God, which in the past took the form of stones and primitive idols, and in our time are the rulers and legislators and their man-made laws and legislations. While the *tawhid*, which we spoke of, entails *al-bara'* (the disavowal of) and disbelief in these man-made laws and scattered idols, one of its trustworthy ties is the subject of *al-wala' wal bara'*, which requires the disavowal of the authors of these laws and regulations and the people who are applying them.¹²²

The third and last pillar of the Jihadi Salafism, according to Al-Maqdisi, is *jihad*.¹²³ In many of his writings, Al-Maqdisi refers to *jihad* as the "highest rank" of showing *bara'* and enmity by "striving for the demise of *al-nuzum al-taghutiiyyah* (regimes that do not rule according to God's revelation) and fighting its servants until the religion is all to God".¹²⁴ In his book *Millat*

¹²⁰ Interview with Sheikh Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi in 1426H (2005) by Al-Asr electronic magazine, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=040309gb> (accessed 12 December 2012).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Al-Kawashif al-Jaliyya fi Kufr al-Dawla Al-Sa'udiyya*, second edition, 1421H, p. 130, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?a=2qrikosd> (accessed 12 December 2011); Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Millat Ibrahim*, available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r1?i=1394&x=iti4u3zp> (accessed 15 December 2011). See also Wagemakers, Joas, "Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi: A Counter-Terrorism Asset", *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 1, No. 6, May 2008, p. 7; Kazimi, Nibras, "A Virulent Ideology in Mutation: Zarqawi Upstages Maqdisi", *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 2, 2005, p. 59, available at <http://www.currenttrends.org/research/detail/a-virulent-ideology-in-mutation-zarqawi-upstages-maqdisi> (accessed 2 August 2012); Wagemakers, Joas, *Framing the "Threat to Islam": Al-Wala' wa Al-Bara' in Salafi Discourse*, available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Framing+the+%22threat+to+Islam%22:+al-wala'+wa+al-bara'+in+Salafi...-a0197801513> (accessed 14 February 2009).

Ibrahim, Al-Maqdisi condemns Muslim rulers for their political behavior, criticizes the Christian and Jewish faiths, and develops the theme of WB based on the *Millat Ibrahim* Quranic verse 60:4 as discussed in Chapter 2. This Quranic verse crystallizes the theme of contemporary militant Islamists who reject any form of nationalism or individualism if it does not submit to the laws of God. Thus, there will always be enmity and hatred between the believers and the unbelievers.

In *Al-Kawashif al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr al-Dawlah al-Sa'udiyyah*, Al-Maqdisi claims that Muslim governments and their leaders are in a state of *kufr*, hence the act of *takfir*.¹²⁵ He also calls Muslim youth to turn against their rulers, scholars and societies. Referring to the few Saudis who were influenced by the *takfiri* ideology that they encountered in Afghanistan during the Soviet–Afghan war in the 1980s, Al-Maqdisi writes in his *Al-Kawashif*:

Here are the waves of young Saudi people, who are trained in weapons and explosives, returning after they had benefited since they came out of the walls of the Arabian Peninsula and came into contact and mixed with their brethren preachers from around the globe.... The thought of *takfir* and fighting the government and all of those who have championed, supported and been loyal to it has spread among trained young people, who returned from Afghanistan like wildfire. And here are the waves of young people returning with dozens of books exposing the *tughat* (despotic rulers) of Al-Saud.¹²⁶

Al-Maqdisi accused the Saudi government of straying from the path of Islam. He rejects the legitimacy of the Saudi government under the doctrine of WB, claiming that it “has left the religion of Islam” (*qad kharajat min din al-Islam*) due to: (1) loyalty to un-Islamic

¹²⁵ As Hegghammer writes, “The Obvious Proofs represented the first socio-revolutionary treatise articulated in Wahhabi religious discourse and was thus particularly inflammable in the kingdom.” See Hegghammer, Thomas, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2010, p. 47.

¹²⁶ Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, *Al-Kawashif al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr al-Dawlah Al-Sa'udiyyah*, p. 222.

laws and its “loyalty to the infidel enemies of God” (*muwalat a ‘da’ Allah min al-kuffar*); (2) “strengthening of brotherly ties” (*tawthiq rawabit al-ikhwa*) and its “love, affection and friendship” (*al-marawadda wa-l-hubb wa-l-sadaqa*) with non-Muslims; and (3) in spite of its pious Wahhabi image, it is no different from “the other idolatrous Arab systems” (*al-anzima al-taghutiyya al-‘Arabiyya al-ukhra*).¹²⁷

It is worth mentioning here that although the vast majority of Muslim scholars, including the official and mainstream scholars of Saudi Arabia, agree on the fact that ruling according to God’s revelation is *wajib* (mandatory) upon Muslims, they disagree with Al-Maqdisi and his *jihadi* orientation’s logic and justification of *takfir* because, contrary to the Jihadi Salafi’s opinion, they view un-Islamic rule — if not accompanied by *juhud* (denial of the revelation) or *istihlal* (the belief that man-made laws are permissible in Islam) — as minor unbelief (*kufir asghar*) which does not expel one from Islam, rather than major unbelief (*kufir akbar*) which does expel one from Islam.¹²⁸ There are serious divisions among Salafis nowadays as to whether the concept of WB can form the basis for violent engagement with non-Muslims and *takfir* of Muslim rulers, as many of the Jihadi Salafis argue.¹²⁹ As Wagemakers writes, “this issue is possibly the main bone of contention with regard to *kufir* between apolitical Salafis and their militant counterparts of Salafism’s jihadi branch”.¹³⁰ Haykel correctly points out that the main problem and salient point about *takfir* is that:

It legitimises the use of violence against the person or entity that is deemed to be non-Muslim, and one consequence of this is that

¹²⁷ Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad, *Kashf al-Niqab ‘an Shari ‘at al-Ghab*, quoted in Wagemakers, Joas, *Framing the “Threat to Islam”: Al-Wala’ wa Al-Bara’ in Salafi Discourse*.

¹²⁸ See *fatwa* by Sheikh Ibn Baz on “Ruling on Who Rules According to Man-Made Laws” (*Hukum Man Hakam bi al-Qawanin al-Wad’iyyah*), available at <http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/4138> (accessed 10 January 2012). See also Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, pp. 99–101.

¹²⁹ Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, pp. 49–50.

¹³⁰ Wagemakers, Joas, “The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi”, pp. 99–100.

armed rebellion, often termed *jihad*, against a nominally Muslim-led state (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Egypt) is considered not only legitimate, but a religious duty incumbent upon the individual believer.¹³¹

Towards the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium, a group of young local Jihadi Salafi Saudi scholars, who would place themselves under the patronage of Al-Shuaibi, would emerge and play a pivotal role in the radicalization of some Saudi youths and their recruitment to militant Islamist groups such as Al-Qaeda.¹³² As evidenced by their writings, their views on the issues of *jihad*, WB and not ruling in accordance with God's revelation echo the views of Al-Maqdisi and his like-minded Jihadi Salafi scholars and ideologues.¹³³ As explained earlier, in the aftermath of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, these scholars, contrary to the official and mainstream scholars of Saudi Arabia, invoked and relied heavily on the concept of WB in order to urge Muslims to take sides in the conflict and declare any form

¹³¹ Haykel, Bernard, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action", p. 50.

¹³² Hegghammer, Thomas, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia*, pp. 83–98; Lacroix, Stephane, *Awakening Islam: The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia*, translated by George Holoch, Harvard University Press, 2011, pp. 249–255.

¹³³ See, for example, Al-Shuaibi, Hamoud, *Hukum al-Jihad fi Al-Shishan wa Wajib al-Muslimin Tijah Al-Mujahidin Hunak* (Ruling on Jihad in Chechnya and the Obligation on Muslims Towards the Mujahidin There), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=rfud8m6m> (accessed 12 January 2012); *Fatwa fi al-Hukum bi Ghayr ma Anza la Allah* (Fatwa on the Ruler who Does Not Rule with God's Revelation), available at <http://www.al-oglaa.com/?section+subject&subjectID=161> (accessed 12 January 2012); *Fatwa fi al-Tahakum ila al-Qawanin al-Wad'iyya* (Fatwa on Resorting to Man-Made Laws), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=rqvd4u6d> (accessed 12 January 2012); Al-Fahad, Nasr, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr Man A'aana al-Amrikan 1 & 2* (The Clarification on the Infidelity of Those who Assist the Americans 1&2), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/a?a=0m8rjbf8> (accessed 20 January 2012); *Tali'at At-Tankil* (The Forefront of Condemnation), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=utr56qdd> (accessed 20 January 2012); Al-Khudayr, Ali, *Ma Hukum al-Hakim bi Ghayr Ma Anzala Allah wa Ma al-Wajib Tijahah* (Ruling on the Ruler who Does Not Rule According to God's Revelation and the Duty Towards Him), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=ek5t5g60> (accessed 20 January 2012); and *Taqzim al-Jihad* (Dwarfing Jihad), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=8fz5ifzu> (accessed 31 January 2012).

of support for or association with non-Muslims as *kufir*.¹³⁴ Al-Maqdisi even wrote a letter to Al-Shuaibi, just a few months before the latter's death, in which he expressed his joy, pride and renewed hope as a result of Al-Shuaibi's latest *fatwas*, views and position, which came at a time when "the government's scholars distorted religion and humiliated it at the gates of the sultans".¹³⁵

What is essential for us to understand here is that, as Hegghammer writes, "what the Al-Shuaibi scholars did was to articulate a Wahhabi justification for global jihadi much the same way that Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi had articulated a Wahhabi socio-revolutionary discourse in the late 1980s".¹³⁶ Even though not exclusively, the aforementioned scholars and ideologues of Jihadi Salafism have used and relied on the contentious and most radical elements in the heritage of the Wahhabi mission in order to justify, foster and convince their Saudi audience of their views and ideologies. Al-Maqdisi, who turned the concept of WB into the core of his ideology, is an example of those who have used, relied on and transformed some of the most radical statements and *fatwas* of the early scholars and followers of the Wahhabi mission in order to deceive their youth targets through the literal power of the text, which hides behind it a lot of interpretations and purposes to which they chose not to give attention.¹³⁷ Jihadi Salafi scholars, ideologues and supporters have been trying consistently to legitimize their declarations and claims, rally new Saudi followers, and undermine the Saudi state and its official

¹³⁴ Al-Shuaibi, Hamoud, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' wa Wujub Nusrat Taliban wa Hukum Man Zahara al-Amrikan 'Alaiha* (Loyalty and Disavowal and the Obligation to Assist the Taliban and the Ruling on Whoever Assists the Americans Against Them), available at <http://www.al-oglaa.com/?section=subject&subjectID=163> (accessed 31 January 2012). See also Nasr Al-Fahad, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr Man A'aana al-Amrikan*.

¹³⁵ Al-Maqdisi, Abu Muhammad, *Risala ila al-Sheikh al-Shuaibi* (Letter to Sheikh Al-Shuaibi), available at <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i+6zipf6cz> (accessed 31 January 2012).

¹³⁶ Hegghammer, Thomas, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979*, p. 97.

¹³⁷ Interview with Abdul Rahman Al-Hadlaq, Director-General, Ideological Security Directorate of the Ministry of Interior of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, 6 February 2010; Wagemakers, Joas, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi", pp. 69–70.

scholars by tapping into the Kingdom's own source of legitimacy and religious heritage. By articulating their message in a Wahhabi religious discourse through the selective application of some of the early Wahhabi scholars without regard to their own specific temporal contexts, and by attacking the official religious scholars, they have ensured that their message would have a receptive audience in Saudi Arabia.

It is also important to notice that the social or religious as well as the political dimensions of WB in early Wahhabism — as seen in the rivalry between the Saudis and the Ottomans in the eighteenth century, and the civil war in the nineteenth century — have impacted and endured throughout the Wahhabi tradition for centuries. This can be seen in the writings of contemporary Wahhabi scholars such as Al-Shuaibi, Al-Fahad and Al-Maqdisi. As Wagemakers states, “the two trends (social and political dimensions of WB) are partly a result of the enduring legacy of the second Saudi state, which continues to resonate in scholarly writings on the subject of WB, and thus shows how one Wahhabi concept has changed over time and that Wahhabism is less uniform and inflexible than is popularly believed”.¹³⁸

Another important point to note here is that there is a presence of radical *takfiri* elements in the heritage of Wahhabi scholars. The fact of the matter is that while the Jihadi Salafi ideology and its ideologues have been “heavily influenced by the thought of Sayyid Qutub, who elaborated on the twin concepts of *hakimiyyah* and *jahiliyyah* to condemn the existing regimes in the Arab world and to sanction violent rebellion against them”,¹³⁹ they have never ceased to quote from the texts and passages of the scholastic Salafism.

WB in the Saudi Educational System

When discussing the concept of WB in modern-day Wahhabism, it is necessary to mention how the concept of WB is embedded and

¹³⁸Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala’ wal Bara’”, p. 94.

¹³⁹Haykel, Bernard, “On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action”, p. 48.

knitted into the fabric of the Saudi educational system. This is due to the fact that, as the concept is central in the Wahhabi ideology, the kingdom's educational system ensures that the Wahhabi doctrine (which includes WB) is taught to the Saudis at a very young age. In what follows, we attempt to briefly show how the concept of WB is knitted into the educational system, propagated in the kingdom and exported outside the kingdom. The last part of this chapter will also briefly highlight how the Saudi educational system, particularly its religious views towards the non-Muslims, has been criticized since the September 11 incident for allegedly inciting anti-Western sentiments.

Education is one of the most important avenues used by the Saudis to propagate Wahhabi teachings. The philosophy of education in Saudi Arabia is threefold: (1) highlighting the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab; (2) spreading Islam throughout the world; and (3) teaching the history of Islamic glories.¹⁴⁰ Religious education in Saudi Arabia is emphasized at all levels of education. The educational policy in Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of creating a sense of loyalty and obedience to the rulers and established *ulema*, and the duty to spread the message of Wahhabism. Education in Saudi Arabia promotes a spirit of loyalty to Islamic law by denouncing any system or theory that conflicts with it, revives the spirit of Islamic struggle, fulfills the mission of Islam and projects the unity of the Muslim nation.¹⁴¹

The concept of WB which is rooted in the Wahhabi doctrine is widely taught in the Saudi national schools. Saudi schools' religious textbooks contain many elements of WB, from loyalty to Islam and the Muslims to rejection of the *kuffar* and all that is deemed un-Islamic under the lenses of Wahhabism. Apart from these textbooks,

¹⁴⁰ Stalinsky, Steven, *Preliminary Overview — Saudi Arabia's Education System: Curriculum, Spreading Saudi Education to the World and the Official Saudi Position on Education Policy*, The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), December 20, 2002, available at <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sr&ID=SR01202> (accessed 14 August 2010).

¹⁴¹ See Prokop, Michaela, "Saudi Arabia: The Politics of Education", *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2003, pp. 77–89.

the concept is also propagated through many other means like *fatwas*, magazines, pamphlets, the internet¹⁴² (which includes blogs, chatrooms and forums) and also lectures by the *ulema*.

In May 2008, the Center for Religious Freedom, with the Institute for Gulf Affairs, released a groundbreaking report that analyzed excerpts from a dozen textbooks published by the Saudi Ministry of Education and used at that time in the Saudi public school curriculum.¹⁴³ The report revealed that the Saudi Ministry of Education textbooks disseminate teachings of hatred towards the non-believing community which includes Christians, Jews, people of other religions, as well as Shiites, Sufis and non-Wahhabi Muslims.¹⁴⁴ The report also referred to the literature being distributed from Saudi *madrasas* and mosques as amounting to nothing less than “hate ideology”.¹⁴⁵ “The system and its underlying ideology have been accused of contributing to anti-Western sentiments and of providing fertile ground for Islamic extremism.”¹⁴⁶ The Wahhabi educational

¹⁴²See, for example, *Love and Hate for Allah’s Sake* by Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, available at http://islamicweb.com/beliefs/creed/Wala_wal_Bara.htm (accessed 25 January 2011); *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ According to the Aqidah of the Salaf*, Part 2, available at <http://forums.islamicawakening.com/fl15/new-al-wala-wal-bara-according-aqeedah-salaf-part-2-a-8765/> (accessed 25 January 2011); *What is Al-Wala’ wal Bara’?*, available at <http://muslimvillage.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=23006> (accessed 25 January 2011); and *Would You Recommend Some Books Which Are Good to Strengthen My Iman?*, available at <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080912160952AA9Pihu> (accessed 13 March 2011).

¹⁴³See *2008 Update: Saudi Arabia’s Curriculum of Intolerance: With Excerpts from Saudi Ministry of Education Textbooks for Islamic Studies*, Center for Religious Freedom of the Hudson Institute with The Institute for Gulf Affairs. See also *Saudi Textbooks: Still Teaching Hatred*, available at <http://www.aina.org/news/20100629122949.htm> (accessed 23 July 2010).

¹⁴⁴Dr Sami Alrabaa, *Saudi School Textbooks Incite to Hatred and Violence*, available at <http://www.faithfreedom.org/one/saudi-school-textbooks-incite-to-hatred-and-violence/> (accessed 15 April 2011).

¹⁴⁵Blanchard, Christopher M., *The Islamic Traditions of Wahhabism and Salafīyyah*, p. 5. See also *Passing on Hatred to the Next Generation: A Study of Saudi Arabian Textbooks from the 2008 & 2009 Years*, prepared by the Office of Congressman Anthony D. Weiner, June 3, 2009.

¹⁴⁶Prokop, Michaela, “Saudi Arabia: The Politics of Education”, p. 77.

system was designed to create a sense of loyalty and obedience, and the duty of spreading and defending the Wahhabi message.¹⁴⁷

Saudi Arabia also disseminated these texts internationally, including to some nineteen academies founded by Saudi Arabia and chaired by the local Saudi ambassadors in or near major foreign cities, one of which is the Islamic Saudi Academy (ISA) outside Washington, DC. The report concluded:

The Saudi public school religious curriculum continues to propagate an ideology of hate toward the “unbeliever”, that is, Christians, Jews, Shiites, Sufis, Sunni Muslims who do not follow Wahhabi doctrine, Hindus, atheists and others. This ideology is introduced in a religion textbook in the first grade and reinforced and developed in following years of the public education system, culminating in the twelfth grade, where a text instructs students that it is a religious obligation to do “battle” against infidels in order to spread the faith.¹⁴⁸

In general, the main religious subjects taught in Saudi schools are *Quran*, *Hadith*, *Tawhid*, *Tajwid* (methods of Quranic recitation), *Tafsir* (Quranic exegesis), *Sirah* (history of Prophet Muhammad) and *Fiqh*. Most of these subjects continue to be taught at the university level. As for the subject of *tawhid*, the lessons introduce the life and scholarly work of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and his role in the founding of the Al-Saud political leadership. The subject focuses on enlightening the students on the dangers of polytheism which runs through all sorts of ritual acts like visiting tombs and the practice of *tawassul* (intercession).

For example, the topic of WB is explained in-depth in the last chapter of the tenth grade *tawhid* texts where broad boundaries of separation between Muslims and non-Muslims, issues of loyalty and enmity are emphasized.¹⁴⁹ Lessons on WB include prohibition for

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, *Tawhid*, Tenth Grade, General Presidency, p. 110, quoted in Doumato, Eleanor Abdella, “Manning the Barricades: Islam According to Saudi Arabia’s School Text Books”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 2, Spring 2003, pp. 230–247.

Muslims to attend the rituals and ceremonies of non-Muslims, to offer them congratulations or condolences, using Christian dates and many other examples of the social aspect of the concept, some of which have been mentioned earlier. WB in the school textbooks is portrayed as a fundamental component of the *tawhid*; Muslims should show loyalty only to the Muslim *ummah* and should break off ties and relations with others. As evidence of this, the texts cite Quranic verses such as 5:51 that refer to specific events during the Meccan wars, but without historical context, so as to prove that *bara'* between Muslims and non-Muslims is a universal and eternal condition set forth by God.¹⁵⁰

Under the premise of this concept, the lessons warn students of the impermissibility of a Muslim to stay among the *kuffar* as this will compromise his faith, and that God in the Quran requires Muslims to migrate from the land of *kufr* to the land of Islam.¹⁵¹ In essence, what the lessons are trying to get across is the message that Muslims should realize the importance of the concept of WB according to the understanding of the Wahhabi teachings, rise above themselves and feel superior with their Islamic creed. They must take account of the errors of those who are misled and the lies of those who would deceive them. They must turn at every crossing to the book of God and the *sunnah* of the Prophet, and know the boundaries that they should not go beyond.

It is also worth noting here that the role of WB in Saudi school textbooks is emphasized most at its social and religious level.¹⁵² For example, the books present the conditions under which one may travel to non-Muslim countries and how one should behave in those countries so as not to show loyalty to the non-Muslims; how to avoid being immersed in the cultures and practices of non-Muslims; and how to interact with them.¹⁵³ As Wagemakers states, “these rulings have two things in common: (1) they serve to keep Muslims away

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 236–241.

¹⁵³ Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala’ wal Bara’”, p. 98.

from anything that might stain the purity of their beliefs and lead to loyalty — expressed as love, affection or friendship; (2) they deal only with social issues and do not address anything political that might lead to criticism of the state.”¹⁵⁴

The Exportation of WB Outside Saudi Borders

The alliance of the Wahhabi movement with the Al-Saud family since the first Saudi state until the present time has enabled the Wahhabi ideology to spread not only in Saudi Arabia, but also to the rest of the Middle East and beyond. The discovery and exploitation of oil in the country, especially the sharp rise in oil prices since the 1970s, has enabled Saudi Arabia to aggressively invest in the promotion of Wahhabi thought around the Muslim world.

In particular, the propagation of the concept of WB has moved beyond its borders, especially in the era of the twentieth century. A study conducted by the Center for Religious Freedom in 2005 shows that there are five main means of dissemination of the Wahhabi doctrine internationally:¹⁵⁵ (1) through official publications of a government ministry; (2) through materials distributed by the Saudi embassy; (3) via religious pronouncements and commentaries by religious authorities appointed to state positions by the Saudi crown; (4) by representatives of the established Wahhabi ideology of Saudi Arabia; and (5) dissemination through mosques or centers supported by the Saudi crown.¹⁵⁶

Wahhabi publications on WB have also penetrated mosques and Islamic centers in the United States. For example, the Saudi-funded Islamic Center of Washington, DC is reported to distribute a document entitled *Loyalty and Disassociation in Islam*, which was compiled by the Ibn Taimiyyah Library in Riyadh. The document states:

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ See *Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Invade American Mosques*, by Center for Religious Freedom, Freedom House, 2005, available at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/special-reports/saudi-publications-hate-ideology-invade-american-mosques> (accessed 3 August 2012).

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

To be disassociated from the infidels is to hate them for their religion, to leave them, never to rely on them for support, not to admire them, to be on one's guard against them, never to imitate them, and to always oppose them in every way according to Islamic law [Document No. 45].¹⁵⁷

In Britain, literature on WB was also found to be distributed by mosques and Islamic centers across the country.¹⁵⁸ Most of these materials hail from Saudi Arabia. A book entitled *Al-Wala' wal 'Ada' fi 'Alaqa al-Muslim bi Ghayr al-Muslim* (Loyalty and Enmity Concerning Relations Between Muslims and Non-Muslims)¹⁵⁹ written by a Salafi preacher, Abdullah Al-Tarifi, was published in London in 1990. The book states:

It is mandatory to hate and dislike the unbelievers and polytheists, to never ask them for support against the Muslims, to never follow their example in anything, to never obey them in matters of religion, to never imitate them. Actually, it is mandatory to stay away from them and to separate from them, and to do what is necessary in terms of *jihad* and its likes against their fighters.¹⁶⁰

Criticism of Saudi Educational System and Its Concept of WB

Particularly in the aftermath of September 11, the Saudi government and its educational system became the target of widespread

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁵⁸ See Denis MacEoin, *The Hijacking of British Islam: How Extremist Literature is Subverting Mosques in the UK*, available at <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/307.pdf> (accessed 14 August 2010).

¹⁵⁹ See Abdullah Al-Tarifi, *Al-Wala' wal 'Ada' fi 'Alaqa al-Muslim bi Ghayr al-Muslim*, The Office of Da'wah in Britain (Darulifta Office), London, 1990.

¹⁶⁰ Abdullah Al-Tarifi, *Al-Wala' wal 'Ada' fi 'Alaqa al-Muslim bi Ghayr al-Muslim*, pp. 31–34. See also Denis MacEoin, *The Hijacking of British Islam: How Extremist Literature is Subverting Mosques in the UK*, p. 19.

criticism for allegedly inciting anti-Western sentiments.¹⁶¹ The system and its underlying ideology have been accused of contributing to and providing fertile ground for Islamic extremism.¹⁶² Many have also argued that the religious curriculum in Saudi Arabia fails to give students an adequate appreciation of the varieties of Islamic interpretation, and that the method of instruction does not serve the development of critical thinking skills.

While many Saudis have responded by defending their school system, it is important to note that the former Saudi Minister of Education, Abdullah Al-Ubayd, has come forward to acknowledge that the kingdom's curriculum is contributing in fostering terrorism. In particular, the minister blamed the Salafi doctrine of WB for being instrumental in the development of the Jihadi ideology that has contributed to terrorism.¹⁶³ Political Islam Online reported:

Following the arrest of more than 520 alleged terrorists in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi minister of education, Abdullah Al-Ubayd, acknowledged in an interview with Al-Jazeera that the Kingdom's curriculum is contributing to the fostering of terrorism. In particular, the minister blamed the Salafi doctrine of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* for being instrumental in the development of the Jihadi ideology that has contributed to terrorism. The minister's blunt criticism seems to be part of an orchestrated campaign by the Kingdom to combat extremism. The minister's statements came one day after a similar announcement by the Saudi Grand Mufti, Abdel Aziz

¹⁶¹ Doumato, Eleanor Abdella, "Manning the Barricades: Islam According to Saudi Arabia's School Text Books", pp. 230–247.

¹⁶² Al-Atawneh, Muhammad, "Wahhabi Self-Examination Post 9/11: Rethinking the 'Other', 'Otherness' and Tolerance", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2, March 2011, p. 255; International Crisis Group, *Can Saudi Arabia Reform Itself?*, Middle East Report No. 28, 14 July 2004; Alhussein, Eman Mohammad, "Reforming the Religious Discourse in Saudi Arabia (2001–2010)" in Shahram Akbarzadeh (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Political Islam*, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 2011, pp. 179–190.

¹⁶³ See http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=ArticleA_C&cid=1213871581788&pagename=Zone-Arabic-News/NWALayout (accessed 14 March 2010).

Al-Shaykh, warning Muslims not to harbour members of the straying sect [a reference to Al-Qaeda supporters]. In an extremely unusual move by a staunch defender of the faith, Al-Shaykh proclaimed that the mosques must also fulfil their duty to ward off sedition and should not remain silent or harbour transgressors.¹⁶⁴

The criticism of Wahhabi ideology as being associated with intolerance and violence, especially after the events of September 11, has motivated the Saudi regime to revise and reform the Wahhabi ideology, especially its doctrines of the “other”.¹⁶⁵ This includes reform in the national education system and syllabus. For example, on 21 May 2003, the Saudi government formed a committee as part of a campaign to promote “a moderate image of Islam and to uproot extremism from the country”. In addition, the government launched reforms in various public spheres, particularly regarding issues such as: (1) the monitoring of religious discourse; (2) the initiation of national and interfaith dialogues; and (3) the reassessment of the national education system.¹⁶⁶

Conclusion

In this chapter, the main factors which contributed to the development and transformation of the concept of WB in the Wahhabi ideology have been discussed. The flexible, fluid nature of the concept of WB points to the fact that there exists a spectrum of Wahhabi ideology. There is no single fixed Wahhabi and Salafi ideology; there are several. At one end there is the so-called official Wahhabism which is subservient to the authorities and adopts a more pragmatic approach, while at the other end there exists a revolutionary,

¹⁶⁴ See *The Saudi Minister of Education Declares Curriculum Has Contributed to the Hatching of Terrorists*, Political Islam Online, Briefings, 6 July 2008.

¹⁶⁵ See *Saudi Seeks to Purge Textbooks from Hatred*, available at <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=40208> (accessed 23 January 2012).

¹⁶⁶ *Kingdom to Foster Moderate Image of Islam, Says Abdullah*, Arab News, 22 May 2003, available at <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=1§ion=0&article=26483&d=22&m=5&y=2003> (accessed 23 December 2011).

uncompromising type which is often associated with the Jihadi Salafi groups. As Wagemakers observes, the spectrum or flexibility of WB in Wahhabi discourse could be clearly seen in the thoughts and writings of two distinct groups, i.e., the “quietists” who emphasize the social aspect of WB, and the “radicals” who apply WB at the political level.¹⁶⁷ In other words, the concept of WB specifically and the Wahhabi heritage in general can be used to both support and condemn the Saudi regime. The spectrum, however, is a continuum because the groups may not be distinctive from one another and may share certain tendencies and characteristics. For instance, with respect to the concept of WB, these groups are all socially conservative, but they differ in their political discourses and strategies in dealing with resistance, relations with the authorities and non-Muslims. As such, sweeping assumptions that Salafi–Wahhabi ideology is solely responsible for the rise of terrorism, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11, are erroneous.

The concept of WB first emerged in the Wahhabi ideology as a tool to fight *shirk* and *bid'ah* in Islam. For the most part, it is understood primarily in theological terms as the rejection of *kufur* and as loyalty to the correct belief (*aqidah*). It was manifested as a sectarian polemic against the Sunni majority, and as isolation from a non-believing wider society. This social reformation tool has since evolved in the political sphere to suit the needs of the players involved, whether to justify the actions of those in power or of those who oppose them. In essence, it shows that the concept is a fluid one: for whom should Muslims reserve their loyalty and love? Though Wahhabism utilizes the concept of WB with the intent to purify Muslims' loyalty and allegiance to God alone, it has also been used to demand the undivided loyalty to their Muslim rulers.

There are some important questions that surface through those who contest this Wahhabi and Salafi ideology. For example, should Muslims hate the *kuffar* or the act of disbelief in them? Are Muslims entitled to place the label of *takfir* to the Muslim rulers who are

¹⁶⁷Wagemakers, Joas, “The Enduring Legacy of the Second Saudi State: Quietist and Radical Wahhabi Contestations of Al-Wala' wal Bara'”, p. 104.

considered deviant to the Islamic teachings? On the definition of *bara'*, who deserves to be avoided or hated by Muslims? How should Muslims portray this animosity? These critical questions surrounding the concept of WB have led to a diversity of opinions and even disputes amongst the Wahhabis and the modern Salafis in general. The dynamic nature of the concept has led to raging debates around the concept. To facilitate a better understanding of some of these debates, the next chapter will look into the spectrum of WB in modern Salafism, which ranges from what might be termed the “very mild” to the “most extreme” of it.

Chapter 4

Analyzing the Spectrum of *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in Modern Salafism

Introduction

This chapter aims to explore some of the salient debates within the modern Salafi fraternity (groups and individuals) on the concept of WB and/or issues that derive under the umbrella of this concept. While many Salafis believe in the importance of WB and herald the concept as one of the manifestations of the Islamic *aqidah*, they do not necessarily agree on matters that are related to the concept. In other words, modern Salafis have different understandings and applications of WB. Salafis — albeit having some common ground, and the fact that an individual can belong to more than one Salafi group — are diverse in many details when it comes to the ruling and application of WB.

In order to understand the complexities of this concept, it is important that we comprehend the different positions modern Salafis have on WB. In this chapter, we attempt to show that there is no single understanding of WB in modern Salafism. Different Salafi groups and individuals provide different legal frameworks when dealing with the concept.

As mentioned before, modern Salafis in general share a similar creed or *aqidah* and use the same approach and procedures when forming religious legal rulings. Nevertheless, they do hold a spectrum of views on various issues concerning politics and current affairs. For instance, questions concerning sovereignty (*hakimiyyah*) in Islam and the legitimacy of ruling with other than the *shariah* have been a focal point in debates amongst modern Salafis. The cause for these

variations in opinions is not the approach or the text used; rather, it is mainly due to the manner in which a Salafi scholar envisages, interprets, and understands a particular case. It also depends on the background and orientation of Salafism that one adopts. For example, purist Salafi scholars who are under the so-called “control” of the government would support a decision made by the regime, although the decision would seem to be a violation of Islamic principles and WB in the eyes of other Salafis.

The diverse views amongst Salafis will inevitably result in different rulings. As with WB, the differences in opinions and rulings amongst the Salafis are, in many cases, a *fiqhi* (jurisprudential) difference and not one of *aqidah*. Nevertheless, there are certain situations where a Salafi believes that a wrong or misdirected *wala'* or a failure to show *bara'* could lead a Muslim out of the realm of Islam.

As Salafism develops in the twentieth and twenty-first century, one could notice that there is an increase in the propagation of modern Salafis' version of WB. More Salafi scholars have begun to write, publish and lecture exclusively on the subject of WB. Salafi scholars believe that efforts to propagate WB are crucial in a period where Muslims are no longer aware of the qualities that distinguish Muslims from the non-Muslims. Salafis assert that Muslims have adopted patterns of behavior that are absolutely repugnant to a “true” Muslim. This is because they have begun to embrace the culture and practices of the non-Muslims, taking them as friends and allies, and thus fail to distinguish between what is Islamic and non-Islamic. As Salafis view such acts of the Muslims as threatening to Islam, they believe that the importance of publishing books on WB and calling Muslims to the concept at the present time is therefore crucial.

While one might assume that all the arguments made by modern Salafi scholars in their writings and lectures on WB are similar, a critical look at these writings suggests that certain issues in relation to the concept have resulted in a point of disagreement and dispute among the Salafis. As mentioned earlier, this is due to the fact that different Salafi groups and individuals have different ways of visualizing a particular issue, and this will inevitably affect the ruling and

legitimacy of the issue. For the purpose of this chapter, I have identified four WB-related issues which are commonly debated among modern Salafis. They are:

- (1) The issue of whether WB necessitates Muslims to hate the *kuffar* and *kufir*, or whether they are only required to hate the *kufir* but not the *kuffar*.
- (2) The permissibility of ruling with other than what God has revealed or the *shariah*, and Muslim rulers' relations with non-Muslim countries.
- (3) The issue of aiding non-Muslims against the Muslims.
- (4) Accepting and giving gifts to the *kuffar* and congratulating them on their religious festivals.

In this chapter, I attempt to illustrate that modern Salafis have different views and produce diverse rulings on the above matters of WB. These issues are certainly not the only ones that are mostly debated among modern Salafis. Nevertheless, one could find that there is substantial debate on them, especially on the internet forums. Many Salafis have discussed, provided their views and even issued *fatwas* on these issues. The reasons why these specific issues have been chosen are twofold: (1) they are among the significant and most debated by modern Salafis, and some of them are related to the phenomena of current affairs; (2) it is my intention to show Salafis' disagreement in the three areas of WB, namely the *aqidah*, social and political. The matter of hating *kufir* and *kuffar* comes under the area of the *aqidah*; accepting gifts from the *kuffar*, which is a matter of *fiqh*, forms the social dimension of WB; and lastly, the notion of Islamic governance and of diplomatic ties with foreign countries can be categorized under the area of politics.

Before presenting how the various Salafi groups and individuals view these issues, the chapter will begin with a brief background on what all Salafis agree on with regards to WB. The chapter will then proceed to discuss the four issues mentioned above. The chapter concludes that the Salafi debates and their disagreements on WB show that WB in modern Salafism resides on a wide spectrum which

can range from what might be termed the “very soft” to its “most extreme” form.

WB: What Do All Salafis Agree and Disagree on?

As explained in Chapter 1, modern Salafism represents a diverse community.¹ Although united in their aspiration for a return to the original teachings of Islam, modern Salafis have different ideological inclinations and they view the current social and political context differently. However, there are common characteristics that bind them together as one community. As mentioned before, all Salafis share a puritanical approach to the religion intended to disregard religious innovation by strictly returning to the teachings of the Prophet and practices of the Salaf. They believe in the supremacy of *tawhid* and its role in providing the principles for applying religious beliefs to contemporary issues and problems.

Likewise, for the concept of WB, all Salafis believe in its importance and call Muslims to its practice. Many Salafis in their diverse orientations and schools agree that a Muslim’s faith will not be complete until it is demonstrated through the practice of WB. The areas in the concept of WB in which all Salafi thinkers agree on can be summarized as follows:

- (1) WB is part of the *shahadah* which is “*La ilaha illallah*” (There is no God but Allah). This means that every Muslim must be free and immune from all that is worshipped besides God.
- (2) As an integral part of *iman*, WB is necessary for its perfection.
- (3) WB is to love for the sake of God and to hate for the sake of God. This is the strongest bond of faith.
- (4) A Muslim needs to possess *wala’* for his Muslim brother, and declare his *bara’* from the non-Muslim (but the manifestation

¹See Chapter 1 for details of the different schools of modern Salafism; or Abdel Haleem, Tariq, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of the Counterfeit Salafis from the Methodology of Ahlul Sunnah Wal-Jama’a*, pp. 16–39.

and methods of declaring *bara'* of the *kuffar* is a point of dispute among Salafis).

- (5) A Muslim's *wala'* for his fellow Muslim brothers is demonstrated by loving and helping them regardless of who they are, the language they speak and where they come from. There are no bonds of blood, race nor heritage which are stronger than those of belief.
- (6) Muslims must hate the infidels and renounce their love for them (but again, Salafis have different methods as to how this hate towards the *kuffar* should be manifested).

Despite these foundational elements of WB which are fundamentally shared among all Salafis, divisions have emerged as a result of the inherently subjective nature of applying religious rulings to new issues and challenges. Salafi scholars with diverse backgrounds and orientations struggle to find religious principles and sources to apply to specific contexts and situations. This has forced them to have not only a deep knowledge of Islamic rulings, but an understanding of a particular problem or issue as well. For example, while all Salafis believe that WB is important and is an integral part of Islamic faith, not all of them view that ruling with other than the *shariah* is a form of *wala'* to an un-Islamic system or that it is an act that can lead a Muslim to be a *kafir*. Sharing the same approach to religious rulings does not mean that Salafis have the same interpretation of contemporary issues and politics.

Issue 1 — *Kufr* and *Kuffar*: To Hate or Not to Hate?

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the concept of WB in Salafism is also known as the “love and hate concept”. *Wala'* requires Muslims to love God and anything that pleases Him, whereas *bara'* necessitates Muslims to disassociate (which includes hating in many cases) from anything that is worshipped besides God and that contradicts Him. This includes *kufr* and *kuffar*. It is clear that every Muslim hates *kufr*, but the issue of whether *wala'* requires Muslims to hate

the *kuffar* has become a subject of debate and disagreement amongst many Salafis.

It is natural for many Salafis, or even Muslims in general, to believe that it is incumbent upon them to hate the *kuffar*. This is probably due to the fact that the Quran repeatedly describes the characters and attributes of the disbelievers and warns Muslims of the dangers of these attributes and to avoid them. God has commanded that Muslims reject or make *kufr* of the *taghut*, and the disbelievers are seen as the *tawaghit*.² Salafis stress that all Muslims need to disbelieve in all types of *taghut* because that is the precondition of Islam, which should be expressed by one's heart, tongue and limbs (i.e., actions). One could also find that Quranic verses even instruct Muslims to kill the polytheists (*mushrikin*),³ if these verses were understood literally and their interpretation was taken out of context. At certain places, the Quran says that the *kafir* may be deceived, plotted against, hated, enslaved, mocked, tortured and worse.

These are some of the reasons why Salafis generally hate the *kuffar*, although the word *kafir* in the Quran refers to specific categories of people like polytheists, idolaters, People of the Book (Jews and Christians), pagans and even Muslims who are not grateful to God. On the notion of hating the *kuffar*, Salafis are divided into three categories. First, those who believe that all *kuffar* should be hated, killed and eliminated from the face of the earth. This position is seen as the most extreme position among the Salafis. This group of Salafis do not distinguish between *kafir harbi* (*kafir* who should be fought), *kafir dzimmi* (*kafir* living under Muslim rule) who should be protected according to Islamic law, and a general *kafir*. The second category of Salafis views that while all the *kuffar* should be hated (and this hate is usually manifested in the heart), they should be treated justly and with kindness as long as they do not fight the Muslims. The last category believes that Muslims should not hate the *kuffar*, but they should only hate the *kufr* or their rejection of Islam.

²See Quran 2:256.

³See Quran 9:5.

Salafis who claim that all *kuffar* should be hated and killed are seen as very extreme in their approach and methodology. They are hostile towards the non-Muslims, possess an anti-*kafir* attitude and are usually militant. They mostly come from the Jihadi Salafi current. They assert that Muslims should not love the entire *kuffar* and ought to declare their enmity towards them. For example, Ayman Al-Zawahiri says Muslims should hate the infidels and renounce their love because God has forbidden the Muslims to show their affection to those who oppose God and His Messenger.⁴

The feelings of hatred, enmity and hostility towards the *kuffar* are made clear by Al-Zawahiri in his book, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*. He claimed that all infidels, especially the Jews and Christians as well as Muslims who do not participate in *jihad* and who associate themselves with the infidels, must be killed. He also discouraged Muslims from befriending or engaging in peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims. To him, any expression of friendship with the disbelievers indicates a lack of faith and insufficient love for God as it is impossible to befriend someone who opposes God.⁵ Al-Zawahiri explains:

The Lord Almighty has commanded us to hate the infidels and reject their love. For they hate us and begrudge us our religion, wishing that we abandon it... There is a firm bond between loving the Lord, befriending the believers, and waging *jihad* in the path of Allah. Kindness and fair dealing with those infidels who are not hostile toward us is not the same thing as friendship, which is forbidden.⁶

According to Al-Zawahiri, the ultimate way to manifest hatred to the *kuffar* is through *jihad*. He believes that Muslims must establish their superiority over non-Muslims to engender the necessary hostility to effectively wage *jihad*. In the chapter entitled "The

⁴Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, pp. 7–10.

⁵Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, "Al-Wala' wal Bara'" in Raymond Ibrahim (ed. and trans.), *The Al-Qaeda Reader*, p. 75.

⁶*Ibid.*

Commandment to Wage Jihad Against Them, Expose Their Falsehood, Have No Love for Them, and Keep Away From Them” in his book, Al-Zawahiri states that:

Not only did the Almighty and Exalted be He forbid us from befriending the infidels, but He also ordered us to wage *jihad* against the original infidels (those who never submitted to Islam), the apostates (Muslims who have strayed from the faith), and the hypocrites.⁷

As Gilles Kepel says, “Al-Zawahiri legitimizes any ‘collateral damage’ by *jihad* using the doctrine of WB. The measure of Al-Zawahiri’s influence is offered by the more radical generation of those Muslim fighters operating in Iraq: they have no problems justifying the killing of fellow Muslims and innocent Iraqi civilians, because for them these people are ‘associating with unbelievers.’” In 2003, when the US invaded Iraq, Al-Zawahiri made it clear that any Muslim ally of the US was by definition an apostate: “Jihad against Americans, Jews and their allies among the hypocrites and apostates is mandatory on all Muslims.”⁸

Another Salafi preacher who shares a similar thinking and understanding of WB with Al-Zawahiri and believes that all *kuffar* must be hated is Abu Waleed,⁹ a British Salafi who is a strong proponent of WB in Britain. Abu Waleed claims that it is not possible for Muslims to hate *kufir* but love the *kuffar*. He is critical of those Muslims who befriend the disbelievers and even criticizes Muslims who support and work for the government. He calls Muslims to humiliate the *kafir* and never to elevate him. In his lecture on WB, Abu Waleed reminds us that:

Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ is the backbone of *tawhid*. You cannot be a Muslim and believe in Allah until you hate the *taghut*. How can

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁸Kepel, Gilles, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*, p. 134.

⁹Abu Waleed gave a one-hour lecture on WB, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNNkR4umBO4> (accessed 17 November 2011).

you love Allah and *shaitan* (satan) at the same time? How can you say that “I have respect towards any of those *tawaghit*” or “I work for the *tawaghit* and I am also somebody who believes in Allah and am a good servant of His” (*'abid*). It does not work that way.¹⁰

Abu Waleed equates the *kuffar* with the *taghut* which God has commanded the Muslims to pronounce their *kufr* of them in the Quran. Abu Waleed then continues to explain that one of the five meanings of *bara'* is *al-bughud* (hatred). He continues:

Al-bughud is to have hatred. You cannot say I have *bara'* of the *kafir* but I love him. Love and hate is for the sake of Allah and is nothing personal. Hatred of the *kafir* is nothing personal not because he is black or because he is white but for the sake of Allah.¹¹

In his exclusive lecture on WB, Abu Waleed explains that one needs to understand the principle known as *at-talaazum* (moulding) in order to understand WB.¹² As explained in Chapter 1, *talaazum* is to mould two or more things together which cannot be separated. For example, the *talaazum* of *iman* (belief) is “the belief in the heart, manifested by the tongue and actions by the limbs” (*al-iman qaulun wa 'filun wa 'itiqaadun*). To separate these three elements from each other is to dismantle the whole matter. Likewise, there is *talaazum* in WB. For *wala'*, the *talaazum* is *muwaalat* (alliance), and for *bara'* it is *mu'aadat* (enmity).

On the other hand, other Salafis have distinguished between *kufr* and *kafir*. Unlike those Salafis who call for the rejection and elimination of the *kuffar*, these Salafis believe that what should be hated in the name of WB is the act of *kufr* or the disbelief and rejection of *tawhid* in the hearts of the *kuffar*, and not the *kuffar* as human beings themselves. A famous Salafi preacher, Sheikh

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

Khalid Yasin¹³ from the United States, said during one of his lectures on WB:

And we have *bara'* against all the *kuffar*. Now, we do not hate every *kafir*. We do not want to fight every *kafir*. We do not want to kill every *kafir*. That is not our belief. But we have *bara'*, which means *bara'* against their values, *bara'* against their beliefs, rejection of their belief, rejection of their values, rejection of their *kufi*, rejection of their corruption, rejection of their rebellion, rejection of their rejection of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger (peace be upon him).¹⁴

From this statement, we can notice that Khalid Yasin distinguishes between hating the *kafir* and hating *kufi*, between the acts of disassociating and hating, and between hating and then acting in a *jihad*. Importantly, all these subtle differences are debated by modern Salafis, as this chapter highlights. This clearly shows that there is a significant difference between belief and action in this matter. One can hate the *kuffar*, but that does not mean engaging in *jihad* (physical action) against them; and as for what constitutes a legitimate action against the *kuffar*, that is a matter of *fiqh*.

Another Salafi preacher who somewhat agrees with Khalid Yasin is Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal Nadvi.¹⁵ As someone who holds

¹³Khalid Yasin is a Muslim convert of Salafi background. He is the Executive Director of the Islamic Teaching Institute (ITI), a premier organization dedicated to the work of Islamic missionary. He studied the Arabic language in Medina, Saudi Arabia and Cairo, Egypt and has had many mentors and teachers who tutored him in *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, *Fiqh al-Sirah*, Islamic History and the memorization and recitation of the Quran. Khalid Yasin constantly tours the world delivering lectures aimed at removing distortions about Islam and Muslims, conducting *Da'wah* Training Courses, and providing new Muslims with a specially designed Islamic Training Program.

¹⁴See lecture on WB by Khalid Yasin, available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOKI_FEa-4Q&feature=related (accessed 27 December 2011).

¹⁵Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal Nadvi in 2009 was the *imam* of the mosque in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He delivers lectures at local institutions, including at Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

a doctorate in Islamic Law with a specialization in Islamic Jurisprudence from Umm al-Qura University and has worked as an Assistant Professor at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Nadvi is very much entrenched in the ideas of Salafism. He believes that the idea of Muslims' hatred of non-Muslims is nothing but a great misunderstanding of religion. He believes that the *kuffar* as human beings should not be hated. What should be hated is the act of disbelief in them. When asked about the issue of hatred of non-Muslims, Nadvi responded:

As for your second question, I think that what you said about Muslims' hatred of non-Muslims is nothing but a great misunderstanding of the spirit of Islam and who Muslims are. As a basic principle of Islam, we, Muslims, do not hate anyone on account of their cultural, religious, or ethnic backgrounds. Islam teaches us to interact with all people and wish good for the whole mankind. However, Muslims hate *kufr*, or disbelief in Allah, the Almighty. Since we love all people, we hate their disobedience of Allah, the Most High. So, even when people deny the existence of Allah we do not hate them personally; however, we hate their disbelief and disobedience of Allah, Exalted be He.¹⁶

Another position taken by modern Salafis regarding this issue is that Muslims should hate the *kuffar* but are obliged to be kind and compassionate with them. This position is seen to be the one taken by most Salafis, especially in Saudi Arabia. In Salafism, WB is a requirement of the *tawhid*. The proclamation of the *shahadah* means denial and hatred of anything that is worshipped besides God. However, this group of Salafis, which include the Establishment Salafis or the official scholars of Saudi Arabia, stress that such hatred towards the *kuffar* does not forbid Muslims from having a good and mutual relationship with them. According to them, Muslims are obliged to hate the *kuffar* and the act of *kufr* in them, but at the same

¹⁶See Muhammad Iqbal Nadvi's *fatwa* on "Do Muslims Hate Non-Muslims" at http://www.e-infad.my/FMS_en/index.php?option=com_fatwa&task=viewlink&link_id=286&Itemid=59 (accessed 26 December 2011).

time befriend them. In a *fatwa* on WB, the former Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Baz, clarifies:

Al-Wala' wal Bara' means to love the believers and be loyal to them, and to hate the disbelievers and having enmity to them, i.e., to be free from them and from their religion (*wa al-bara'a minhum wa min dinihim*). This is *al-Wala' wal Bara'*. But to hate and declare enmity to them does not imply that you should fight them unless they initiate the fight first. It means that you should hate them and show your enmity in your hearts. They should not be your friends but you must not hurt and do injustice to them. If they accept the peace (*salam*), then reply back the *salam* to them. Advise them and show them the path of goodness.¹⁷

Another individual who agrees with Ibn Baz is the English-educated Salafi scholar from Saudi Arabia, Dr Abdullah Al-Farsi,¹⁸ who clarifies in his lecture on WB:

When you deny (worship other than Allah), that should imply that you hate anyone who worships other than Allah the Almighty. This is a requirement of *Tawhid*. But when we say hate, we do not mean that this hate involves killing people unjustly or doing harm to people unjustly. You hate them and you love guidance for them. You hate them and be just to them. You hate them and be gentle and good with them. Just like Allah says in the Quran, which means

¹⁷ *Fatwa* by Ibn Baz on WB at <http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/1764> (accessed 5 December 2012).

¹⁸ Dr Abdullah al-Farsi is a Saudi Salafi scholar and a member of the Standing Committee for Scholarly Research and Issuing Edicts in Saudi Arabia (*al-Lajnah al-Da'imah lil Buhuth al-'Ilmiyyah wa al-Ifta'*). Professionally, Dr al-Farsi has a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Cleveland State University, USA and hence is well-versed in English. Dr al-Farsi has been active in the field of Islamic missionary since 1980, mostly in America and Europe, and has taught many books on *Aqidah* in Kuwait. He has done extensive personal research on books of *Tafsir*, explanations of *hadith*, and the writings of Ibn Taimiyyah. As a famous scholar, Dr al-Farsi was known to Ibn Baz, and he has an honorary *tazkiyah* (recommendation) from Shaikh Badiuddin Shah Sindhi. See Dr al-Farsi's brief biodata at <http://qsep.com/EemanDVD/AboutShaikhAlFarsi.htm> (accessed 13 March 2012).

(You will not find a group of people who have faith in Allah and the Day of Judgement and at the same time have love for those who oppose Allah and the Messenger). Then Allah says after that, by telling you that you should not love them is not forbidding you from being just to them and from being good to them. This is the balance of the Quran. . . . The middle course is that you hate them by your heart, and by your limbs you treat them as they deserve.¹⁹

It could be noticed that Ibn Baz and Abdullah Al-Farsi have taken the so-called “soft” or “moderate” position on issues related to WB. This aspect of moderation in applying WB is rarely seen in the writings of many contemporary Salafi scholars. Unlike many Salafis, Dr Hatim Bin Arif Bin Nasir Al-Sharif, a professor at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia, calls for a moderate understanding of WB. In his treatise entitled *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Baina al-Ghulu wa al-Jafa' fi Dhaw-I al-Kitab wa as-Sunnah* (Loyalty and Disavowal Between Extremism and Estrangement in Light of the Quran and Sunnah),²⁰ he repeatedly stresses the importance of incorporating three significant Islamic values in the practice of WB, namely moderation (*wasatiyyah*), tolerance (*samahah*) and kindness (*rahmah*). Dr Hatim is of the view that the *kuffar* should only be hated for their disbelief, and that Muslims have the right (*haq*) to uphold goodness (*birr*), compassion (*ihsan*) and justice (*adl*) in dealing with the non-Muslims as long as the latter do not fight the Muslims or support killing the Muslims. According to him, “to uphold justice is an obligation (*fardh*) upon Muslims, even to those whom we have the right to hate and those *kuffar* who fight and kill us”. In his writing on WB, Dr Hatim has laid out some examples of moderation in practicing WB. For example, he says that “no *kafir* should be forced to embrace Islam” (*la yujbar ahadun min al-kuffar al-asliyyin ala al-dukhul fil Islam*) and reminds us that “the difference of religion does not nullify the

¹⁹“Understanding *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* in Light of *Laa Ilaha Ilallah* (There is No God but Allah)” by Dr Abdullah Al-Farsi, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDRoeQZG6-g&feature=relmfu> (accessed 11 November 2011).

²⁰For an electronic copy of Dr Hatim’s book, see <http://ar.islamway.com/book/4419> (accessed 13 December 2012).

rights towards family members” (*anna ikhtilaf al-din la yulgha haqqa dzawi al-qurba*).²¹

It is worth noting here that similar to the position taken by the Establishment Salafis and the likes mentioned above, there are also those who distinguish between loving the *kuffar* inwardly (in their hearts) and outwardly. Muhammad Ibn Adam — the Mufti of Dar al-Iftaa in Leicester, United Kingdom — in his *fatwa* on Muslims’ interaction with non-Muslims explains that Muslims are allowed to express friendship and love outwardly without having love for the non-Muslims’ religious beliefs.²² This outward love for the non-Muslims, which is known as *Mudarat*, is manifested through expressing good manners and being kind to the non-Muslims.²³

Finally, on the issue of whom Muslims should love and hate, Salih Al-Fawzan has dealt with it in his book, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*. In his book, Al-Fawzan categorizes people who deserve WB or those whom Muslims should love and hate into three categories:²⁴

- (1) Those whom Muslims should love purely with no intention of being an enemy to them. These are obviously Muslims who believe in the Oneness of God, accept the *tawhid*, and submit to Him.
- (2) Those whom Muslims should hate and take as enemies with no love or support and respect for them. This group refers to all the disbelievers including the Pagans, the Hypocrites and the Apostates.
- (3) Those whom Muslims should love particularly for their good deeds, and hate for their other evil deeds. This category of

²¹Hatim Bin Arif Bin Nasir Al-Sharif, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ Baina al-Ghulu wa al-Jafa’ fi Dhau-I al-Kitab wa as-Sunnah*, undated, p. 15. This book is published online by <http://www.al-islam.com> (accessed 8 August 2012) and is available at www.ipc.org.kw/library/download.php?x=2 (accessed 8 August 2012).

²²See Muhammad Ibn Adam, “The Fiqh of Muslim Non-Muslim Interaction: A Detailed Explanation”, available at <http://www.central-mosque.com/fiqh/fn-muslim1.htm> (accessed 2 January 2012).

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, *Al-Walaa’ wal Baraa’*, p. 15.

people are those who are loved for their belief of Islam, but hated for the sins they have committed. Thus, as a sign of loving them, Muslims should find ways to advise and warn them against doing any evil acts. The people under this category could also be punished for their evil doings for the benefit of the wider Muslim community.

Al-Fawzan, whose book on WB will be analyzed in the next chapter, belongs to the category of Establishment Salafis or the official governmental scholars of Saudi Arabia. This group of Salafis believes that Muslims should hate the non-Muslims, but must treat them with kindness and justice as long as the latter do not physically attack the Muslims. As explained in Chapter 2, this position is based on Quran 60:8–9.

Issue 2 — Ruling with Other Than What God Has Revealed and Relations with Non-Muslim Countries

As stated before, in the Salafi doctrine of WB, *wala'* obliges Muslims to be loyal to God and Islam whilst performing *bara'* to the enemies of God. Apart from physical enemies, Muslims ought to reject anything that contradicts or is deemed incompatible with Islam. This includes any system of governance that is not based on the legislation of God or *shariah*.

The notion of ruling with other than the *shariah* or with other than what God has revealed (*hukm bi ghair ma anzal Allah*) is one of the major issues debated by modern Salafis. Although the issue of *shariah* versus man-made law is not something new in Islam, it has become the crux of Salafi debate in modern times.²⁵ This is probably due to the realities of the Muslim community which is confronted

²⁵Salafis have dealt with the issue of “Ruling with other than what God has revealed” in many of their writings. For example, see *Man-made Laws vs Shari'ah: Ruling by Laws Other Than What Allah Has Revealed* by Dr Abdul Rahman Ibn Salih al-Mahmood, translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, International Islamic Publishing House, undated.

with the challenges and problems of governing with Islamic principles at the political level. As part of the *ummah* and in accordance with the Islamic principle of *al-amr bil ma'ruf wa an-nahyu an al-munkar* (enjoying good and forbidding evil), Salafis believe that it is their duty to correct any act that contradicts Islamic principles. They claim that those who do not rule with the *shariah* do not abide by the commands of God and become *kafir*, as stipulated in the Quran.²⁶ Salafis spend a substantial amount of their time discussing, debating and even refuting others on this issue. Some of them even go to the extent of performing *takfir* upon those who fail to govern with the *shariah*.

Obviously, the debate on ruling with other than the *shariah* in modern Salafism is a long and complex one. It is beyond my intention to provide a detailed and lengthy discussion of modern Salafis' debate on the issue in this chapter. What will be the focus here is to highlight two main Salafi camps on this particular issue. The first camp views that it is unlawful to rule with other than the *shariah* and that those who rule with other than the *shariah* are *kafir*. These Salafis view that Muslims should perform *bara'* of all un-Islamic systems and influences. The other camp believes that the act of ruling with other than the *shariah* does not lead someone to be a *kafir*, albeit he/she could be a sinner. They view that those who rule with other than the *shariah* is not a *kafir*, except in the case when he denies and rejects the *shariah*.

Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi

Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi is an example of a modern Salafi who applies *takfir* to those who do not implement *shariah* law as a political system of governance. Using the concept of *Millat Ibrahim* as the basis for his treatment of WB, Al-Maqdisi equates the act of governing with man-made laws with the act of worshipping God, and thus accuses present-day Muslim politicians and leaders of *shirk* and therefore of being *kuffar*. He blatantly rejects the idea of democracy, nation-states and secularism which, according to him,

²⁶This claim made by Salafis is based on Quranic verses 5:44; 5:45 and 5:47.

are incompatible with Islam. Most importantly, he argues that adherents to these man-made systems are taking other than God as their lords and legislators.²⁷

On the basis of WB, Al-Maqdisi rejects the rulers of Muslim countries who do not implement the *shariah* and claims that those who follow their rules are misdirecting their *wala'* which should only be given to God and Islam. They are thus seen as *tawaghit* in the eyes of Al-Maqdisi. In his book *Al-Kawashif al-Jaliyyah fi Kufr al-Dawla al-Sa'udiyyah*, Al-Maqdisi accuses the Saudi government of straying from the path of Islam and rejects the legitimacy of the Saudi government under the doctrine of WB.

Obviously Al-Maqdisi is not the only individual who calls for the disavowal of the Saudi government and performs *takfir* on them. In a joint statement that was released in 2003, a group of ten scholars including Nasr Al-Fahad and Ali Bin Khudayr al-Khudayr²⁸ declared *takfir* of the Saudi government and accused the regime of committing a major *kufr* which expels one out of the religion. These scholars based their *takfir* of the regime on quotations taken from scholars idolized by all Salafis such as Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and even the former mufti of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim, who had criticized those who apply some elements of the *shariah* on some people but not others. As mentioned in Chapter 3, these scholars attacked the Saudi regime using the same Wahhabi heritage which the regime holds dear. In their joint statement, the following words from Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim are used:

Verily from the greater and clear *kufr* is giving the accursed man-made laws the position of that which the faithful spirit descended

²⁷ See Al-Maqdisi's works on these issues such as *Dimuqratiyyah Diinun*, *Millat Ibrahim*, *Al-Kawashif Al-Jaliyyah* and *Kashf Al-Niqab*, all available at his website at <http://www.tawhed.ws/t> (accessed 15 August 2012).

²⁸ Other scholars in this group included Muhammad Bin Fahd al-Ali al-Rashudi, Hamad Bin Rais al-Rais, Muhammad Bin Sulaiman as-Suq'ubi, Abdullah Bin Abdul Rahman aal-Saad, Hamad Bin Abdullah al-Humaydi, Ahmad Bin Saleh as-Sinaani and Ahmad Bin Hamoud al-Khaldi.

upon the heart of Muhammad, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa salam* (peace be upon him), so that he may be from the warners in the clear Arabic tongue, and judging between the nations, and referring back to it, is in contradiction of, and an obstinate rejection of, Allah The Almighty saying: "(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa salam*, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination."²⁹

To support their evidence on the legitimacy of pronouncing *takfir*, the scholars attempted to point out how Ibn Ibrahim had warned against such that runs contrary to the Salafi principle of WB twenty years ago. Hence, in their joint statement against the Saudi regime, these scholars conclude:

So the obligation upon the scholars, judges, callers and people of good is to repel this great evil, and to seek reward by facing it and doing *Jihad* against it, for it is related to *tawhid*, and *iman* and *kufir*, and abstaining from ruling by the *shariah* and going to the man-made laws is disbelief in Allah the Great, and an expulsion from the religion, *walaa hawla wa la quwata illa billah* (there is no change or power except through Allah).³⁰

Madkhali and Jami Salafis

On the other hand, followers of Madkhali and Jami Salafism³¹ do not view the act of ruling with secular laws by Muslim rulers as a form

²⁹ *Group of Scholars Release Joint Statement Declaring Takfir of Saudi Government*, available at http://salafiyah-jadeedah.tripod.com/Governments/Scholars_Statement.htm (accessed 28 December 2011).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ They are Salafis who follow the religious teachings of the Yemeni Sheikh Rabi al-Madkhali (b. 1931) and the Ethiopian Sheikh Muhammad Aman Ibn Ali Jami (d. 1995). Both Al-Madkhali and Jami were educated in Saudi Arabia. The Madkhalis are also followers of Ibn Baz, Ibn Uthaymin and other Salafi scholars such as Ubaid al-Jabiri (b. 1938), Yahya an-Najmi (b. 1927) and Abdul Muhsin Al-Ubaykan (b. 1952). The ideological inclination of this group of Salafis is quite

of *wala'* to an un-Islamic system. To them, the act of governing with other than the *shariah* is not only permissible, but the existing ruling system which has been put in place by Muslim rulers must be obeyed because they are the legitimate *walis* (protectors) of the people. These Salafis assert that being in power itself is the source or proof of legitimacy. Theologically, Madkhali Salafis consider *iman* as only the *aqidah* of the heart, and action as a complementary condition to *iman* (*shart kamal al-iman*) rather than the validity of it (*sihhat al-iman*).³²

The position of Madkhali and Jami Salafis regarding this issue is similar to the position taken by the official scholars of Saudi Arabia as explained in Chapter 3. Scholars of this category view that ruling with other than the *shariah* and having relations with the non-Muslim countries do not violate the principle of WB. According to them, those people who rule with other than the *shariah* could be sinners, but there is no grounds for performing *takfir* on them.³³

However, there are other Salafis who disagree with the ideas of the Madkhalis and accuse them of straying from the ways of the Salaf and even call them a fake Salafi movement. In his book *Exposing the Fake Salafi Movement*, Abu Osama Al-Danimarki criticizes the Madkhalis:

They look outwardly like real Salafis, however within their hearts is a dangerous and treacherous disease. They have betrayed our

similar to that of the Establishment Salafis. According to Tariq Abdel Haleem, the Madkhalis are represented in Canada by the Quran and Sunnah Society. See *Al-Salafiyyoon: Salafis and the Salafi Da'wah* by Tariq Abdel Haleem, available at <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?59610-Al-Salafiyyoon-Salafis-and-the-Salafi-Dawa> (accessed 8 August 2012).

³²Abdel Haleem, Tariq, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of the Counterfeit Salafis from the Methodology of Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamaah*, p. 25; Brachman, Jarret, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*, pp. 29–31.

³³This position is also taken by the so-called Scientific or Academic Salafis such as Sheikh Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, Abdul Raziq Al-Shaygi and Hamid Al'Ali. This group of Salafis are mostly based in Egypt. They accept the democratic system in a secular government not because they see it as compatible with the *shariah* but because, given the current state of affairs, they believe it is the most rational way to achieve what is in the public interest. Thus, they argue that democratic mechanism is a tool for governance, but they reject it on a theological basis.

Muslim *Ummah* and made lies against Allah and His Messenger. Their corrupted scholars make excuses for the wicked leaders and their evil. Those who currently make covenant with the transgressing *kuffar* in our Muslim lands. They allow their non-Muslim allies' military forces, planes, tanks, etc., to take off and kill our Muslim brothers and sisters in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Palestine, etc., *Allahu' Musta'an* (Allah The Helper). These Fake Salafis accuse those who fight the evil non-Islamic military forces of being a Kharijite (from Khawarij, i.e., a dog of Hellfire) or a Takfiri, due to him breaking this so-called "covenant" with the evil non-Islamic military forces.³⁴

As stated earlier, Salafis are divided on the issue of having relationship with the non-Muslim countries or non-Muslim international organizations. Those who oppose such a relation forbid it as a wrong *wala'*. Al-Maqdisi in *Al-Kawashif* lists the infractions to the principle of "hostility and hate forever". He gave an example of Saudi relations with the international community such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the Red Cross and International Freemasonry.³⁵

The official scholars of Saudi Arabia and those who agree with their views do not resort to performing *takfir*. Unlike Al-Fahad and Al-Maqdisi, these scholars avoid performing *takfir* of those Muslims who rule not with the *shariah* or who engage in diplomatic relations with non-Muslim countries. For example, Dr Abdullah Al-Farsi in his lecture "The Danger of Calling a Muslim a *Kafir*" clarifies that such a mutual and diplomatic relationship with the *kuffar* and the non-Muslim countries does not violate the Islamic principle of WB. He criticizes those who prohibit this relationship with the *kuffar* in the name of WB. Al-Farsi clarifies:

There are many narrations in the Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim which show the danger of calling someone a *mushrik* or a *kafir*. You

³⁴ Abu Osama Al-Danimarki, *Exposing the Fake Salafi Movement: A Refutation of Some of Their Claims and Principles*, Salafi Media Publications, Second Edition, 2010, p. 11.

³⁵ Ulph, Stephen, *Towards a Curriculum for the Teaching of Jihadist Ideology, Part 2: The Doctrinal Frame*, p. 28.

cannot declare a Muslim a *kafir* because he is sinning or because he disagrees with you...Nowadays it is very easy to call someone a *kafir*. If someone rules a country and his country is under the United Nations, then he is a *kafir*. Why? Because he is dealing with the United Nations which is a *kafir*. They want the Muslims to be secluded from everything. No, this is not *wala'* and *bara'*...You are in a time when you have to be part of the United Nations. Otherwise the nations will attack you and you have no protection because you are under no pact. And it is easy to declare anyone a *kafir* now because they think you have *wala'* for the *kafirs* so you are a *kafir*...And when you ask them what kind of *wala'* do I have? They'll tell you something which has nothing to do with *wala'*... nothing to do with *wala'*...accepting a gift from someone who is a *kafir* is considered a *wala'* to them. This is not *wala'*. Having relations with a *kafir* country is a *wala'* to them...this is not *wala'*. The Prophet (peace be upon him) had relations with Jews, with Christians and with everyone. So what? Unfortunately it is not only *takfir* that is misused nowadays but also *tabdi'* (to declare someone an innovator). This is also not easy although some people think that it is like drinking juice. They think it is *jihad* to call someone an innovator. So it is very easy for them to declare you an innovator.³⁶

Issue 3 — Aiding Non-Muslims Against Muslims

One of the current political issues that has been extensively debated within the Salafi community in recent times is the issue of aiding non-Muslims against the Muslims. Many Salafis are of the opinion that Muslims who assist the disbelievers against the Muslims are misdirecting their *wala'* and thus have apostatized, the reason being that WB is the foundation of the faith and those who go against the doctrine are regarded as *murtads* (apostates). Modern Salafis are divided into two groups with regards to the permissibility of Muslims aiding non-Muslims against the Muslims. The first group supports

³⁶From the lecture by Dr Abdullah al-Farsi entitled "The Danger of Calling a Muslim a *Kafir*", available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOWJn_U4PU0&feature=related (accessed 28 December 2011).

the issue while the other opposes it. These two groups of Salafis are briefly described below:

- First Group: Those Who Support the Permissibility of Muslims Aiding Non-Muslims Against Muslims
 - (1) Purists or Establishment Salafis of Saudi Arabia such as the Mufti of the Kingdom.
 - (2) Madkhali Salafis.
 - (3) Sahwa Salafis (after ideological revision).
 - (4) Reformist Salafis such as Sheikh Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi.

- Second Group: Those Who Oppose the Permissibility of Muslims Aiding Non-Muslims Against Muslims
 - (1) Rejectionist Salafis such as Juhayman Al-Utaibi, Hamoud Uqla Al-Shuaibi, Nasr Al-Fahad and Ali Bin Khudayr Al-Khudayr.
 - (2) Jihadi Salafis such as Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Ayman Al-Zawahiri.
 - (3) Sahwa Salafis (before ideological revision).
 - (4) Scientific or Academic Salafis such as Sheikh Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq.
 - (5) Independent Salafis and other Salafis who do not belong to the above categories such as Sheikh Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani.

I will start firstly by describing the various Salafi groups which view that it is permissible for Muslims to help the non-Muslims against the Muslims. The first group is the purists or Establishment Salafis comprising the Mufti and other official scholars of Saudi Arabia. As described in Chapter 3, official Wahhabi scholars in Saudi Arabia, while retaining the social aspect of *bara'* — which relates to personal relations between Muslims and non-Muslims represented by nourishing hatred and rejecting friendship — endorsed and even legitimized political *wala'* in the name of necessity (*dharurah*) to so-called infidels, exemplified by their total silence over Saudi foreign policy, foreign military bases in the

country and other manifestations of Saudi alliances with the West.³⁷ As evident in the Gulf War of 1990, this group of scholars approved the decision made by the Saudi kingdom to seek assistance and ally with the Americans against Iraq. Similarly, the war against Afghanistan and Iraq launched by the United States in 2001 saw the silence of these Salafi scholars when Saudi Arabia retained its strong relations with the United States.

The second group of Salafis who view the action of Muslim rulers aiding the non-Muslims against the Muslims as legitimate is the Madkhali Salafis. They view that it is permissible and even obligatory (*wajib*) to help and aid the *kuffar* against the *mujahidin* in Iraq and elsewhere. They deny the claim made by their opponents that the so-called *wala'* Muslim rulers have for the non-Muslim states against the Mujahidin is *kufur akbar*.³⁸ They claim that the war in Iraq and other places is not considered as *jihād* but instead as *fitnah*.³⁹

The third group who supports the Muslim rulers' decision on any political activism is the Sahwa movement in Saudi Arabia.⁴⁰ Followers of this movement (who were very active in the 1990s) are known as the Sahwis.⁴¹ This stance taken by the Sahwis came only

³⁷Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 37.

³⁸The Madkhalis and Jamis believe that those who rule not with what God has revealed are sinners but not *kuffar*. According to them, it is considered a minor *kufur* as it is an action, not a belief. They believe that *kufur* does not occur mostly by an action, but it occurs if one fails to believe. See Tariq Abdel Haleem, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of The Counterfeit Salafis from The Methodology of Ahlul Sunnah Wal Jama'ah*, p. 46.

³⁹Abu Osama Al-Danimarki, *Exposing the Fake Salafi Movement: A Refutation of Some of Their Claims and Principles*, p. 11.

⁴⁰For more on the Sahwa, see Lacroix, Stephane, *Awakening Islam: The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia*, translated by George Holoch.

⁴¹According to the definition provided by Al-Rasheed, the Sahwis are “[a] loose and fluid sub-group within the community of the faithful who from the 1970s strove to establish a distinct identity for themselves. The mentors of the first generation of Sahwis were in fact the traditional Wahhabi *ulama*, assisted by a group of Arab religious scholars and educators, mainly from Egypt and Syria, who migrated — voluntarily or involuntarily — to Saudi Arabia in the 1960s. Two Arab *ulama* are

after the key leaders of the movement revised their religio-political ideology upon their release from the Saudi prisons. Sahwa Salafism is represented by a hybridization of two ideological strains, i.e., the conservative Salafi–Wahhabi ideology and the progressive political ideology of the *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* movement which originated from Egypt.

Key Sahwa figures include Muhammad Qutub (b. 1919), the brother of Sayyid Qutub (d. 1966), Sheikh Safar Al-Hawali (b. 1950), Salman al-Awdah (b. 1955), and Aid Al-Qarni (b. 1960). In the 1990s, the Sahwis were very active in uniting the Muslims under the banner of Salafism. They believe that this unity is critical as the West’s marginalization of Islamic global concerns will persist until there is no longer Islam. To achieve the unity of the *ummah*, Al-Hawali believes that “it is incumbent that [Muslims] spread knowledge of the *aqidah* throughout the *ummah*, and the correct creed at all levels, in particular the *aqidah* of *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*.”⁴²

Under the pretext of WB, the Sahwa movement opposed the Saudi rulers’ decision to invite the US forces into the kingdom in 1990. Led by Al-Hawali, the Sahwis attacked the *fatwa* issued by the senior scholars of Saudi Arabia led by Ibn Baz, which gave religio-legal sanction to the presence of non-Muslim troops on Islam’s holy land during the war.⁴³ In their pursuit of *da’wah*, the Sahwis always emphasized the need to increase the understanding of the Quranic injunctions and Prophetic statements pertaining to the plots of the Jews against Muslims. Thus, the Sahwis believed that the move made by the Saudi government would only allow the Jews to occupy the Muslim lands. It was not until 1994 that the Saudi

often cited as influencing Sahwa: an Egyptian, Muhammad Qutub, the brother of Sayyid Qutub; and a Syrian, Sheikh Muhammad Surur Zayn al-Abidin. Both taught in Saudi educational institutions in the 1960s.” See Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 66.

⁴²Safar Al-Hawali, *The True Promise, The Bogus Promise*, Ibn Taimiya Institute for Contemporary Studies, undated. See also Brachman, Jarret, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*, pp. 54–55.

⁴³Dekmejian, R. Hrair, “The Rise of Political Islamism in Saudi Arabia”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 4, Autumn 1994, pp. 627–643.

authorities managed to rein in the key leaders and many of their followers and send them to prison.

After several years, the Saudi authorities released the key leaders of the Sahwa movement. Surprisingly, Al-Hawali, Al-Awdah, Al-Qarni and others emerged substantially different from what they were before they were arrested. They decided to revise their ideology and appeared less aggressive especially against their government. No longer did they support religious activism against the government. They even had official dialogues with the Saudi government and prohibited Muslims from conducting any acts of violence against the regime.

There has been much speculation as to what were the actual reasons and objectives that prompted the key Sahwa leaders to change and moderate their views and discourse upon their release from prison and to take up a new stand, which became more obvious and apparent especially after September 11, when “the most critical voices came from former Sahwis, who ‘revised’ their views and began to distance themselves from radicalism”.⁴⁴ Al-Awdah and Al-Hawali endorsed the content of the declaration called *How We Can Coexist*, which was issued in response to an earlier American declaration called *What We Are Fighting For*. This declaration focused on spreading the culture of tolerance and called for dialogue and exchange.⁴⁵

This ideological revision (*taraju'at*) of the Sahwis also led them to revise their understanding of the concept of WB towards a more moderate version. For example, Al-Awdah wrote a treatise in 2007 entitled *Between Natural and Religious Loyalties*. In this treatise, Al-Awdah describes the two types of *wala'* that exist in Muslims, namely the religious and the natural *wala'*. Al-Awdah states that while Muslims have the religious *wala'* towards God and Islam, they also have the natural *wala'* — i.e., the love one has for his family or

⁴⁴ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 78.

⁴⁵ See the declaration “How We Can Coexist”, available at http://www.americanvalues.org/html/saudi_statement.html (accessed 7 May 2012).

friend, or even for one's country and nation. According to Al-Awdah, this "in no way goes against the religious *wala'*." Al-Awdah clarifies:

The love one feels for a relative, spouse, friend, or even for one's country or people, forms part of the innate or natural *wala'* — loyalty, love and closeness — a person has in general; and this in no way goes against the religious *wala'*. Muslims from the earliest of times would interact with others in ways that were natural or inbred and with complete liberality. This is a far cry from the behavior of some later people who act on a mixture of misconceptions and harsh understandings, and so are led either to negligence or into extremism.⁴⁶

In his conclusion of the treatise, Al-Awdah advises:

The natural, tolerant character which Islam advocates is there to complete and to consolidate relationships with others. Muslims are asked to harmonize between their natural sense of *wala'*, or loyalty, towards their fellow citizens, their country, etc.; and their religious sense of *wala'* to their creed and their call. In fact, the latter type of *wala'* complements and completes the former type. The Prophet, peace be upon him, insisted: "I have only been sent to complete noble character."⁴⁷

The last group of Salafis who view that it is permissible to aid the non-Muslims against Muslims consist of the prominent scholar Dr Yusuf Al-Qaradawi and his team of scholars and intellectuals, who collectively issued a *fatwa* allowing American Muslim soldiers to participate in America's war against Afghanistan in retaliation for the September 11 attacks. This *fatwa* by Al-Qaradawi was later opposed by the conservative Saudi preacher Al-Shuaibi in the name of WB.

⁴⁶Salman Al-Awdah, *Between Natural and Religious Loyalties*, available at <http://en.islamtoday.net/artshow-240-512.htm> (accessed 20 August 2012).

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

Firstly, it needs to be clarified here that while many people do not consider Al-Qaradawi as a Salafi,⁴⁸ there are also those who categorize him as a scholar from a “Salafi reformist background”. For example, Basheer Nafi in his article entitled “Fatwa and War: On the Allegiance of the American Muslim Soldiers in the Aftermath of September 11” says that the *fatwa* “was issued by a group of Muslim *ulama* and intellectuals with a Salafi-reformist background” (referring to the *fatwa* issued by Al-Qaradawi and his group of scholars).⁴⁹ Nafi in his article describes and analyzes the contents of Al-Qaradawi’s *fatwa* and the counter-*fatwa* by Al-Shuaibi. According to him, since both the *fatwas* “were issued by Muslim scholars and figures influenced by the Salafi school of thought, he aims to showcase that the revival of Salafism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has led to the evolution of two major trends among Salafi-oriented *ulama* and intellectuals: one is reformist, more sensitive to historical change and undeterred from confronting such change with their independent, and sometimes novel, opinions (i.e., practising *ijtihād*); the other is highly conservative and unprepared to consider the conditions of the time in which they live or to depart from inherited legal doctrines.”⁵⁰

The *fatwa* by Al-Qaradawi was issued in response to a query by an American Muslim soldier, Captain Muhammad Abdur Rashid, on whether it is permissible for the Muslim soldiers in the American army to participate in the US war operations and its related efforts

⁴⁸ Al-Qaradawi is probably considered as one of the most controversial living Islamic scholars. One could probably categorize Al-Qaradawi as a Salafi from his views on a particular religious issue. While many of his statements could reflect his position as a non-Salafi scholar, his views on secularism and Islam could render him to be seen as a Salafi. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, Al-Qaradawi believes that the acceptance of secularism by Muslims means abandonment of *shariah*. The call for secularism among Muslims, according to Al-Qaradawi, is atheism and a rejection of Islam. He concludes that its acceptance as a basis for rule in place of *shariah* is clear apostasy. This is typically a Salafi position.

⁴⁹ See Nafi, Basheer, “Fatwa and War: On the Allegiance of the American Muslim Soldiers in the Aftermath of September 11”, pp. 78–116.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Muslim countries.⁵¹ For Abdur Rashid and the Muslims in general, such a query is important and a *fatwa* on the matter is needed as it relates to the question of *wala'*. In Salafism, the seriousness of this matter can be realized as it is an issue of *aqidah*. In the American Muslim history, this issue of whether a Muslim's *wala'* can be given to the country is not something new. Khaled Abou El Fadl in his book *And God Knows The Soldiers: The Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse*, recounted the story of Abdul Rauf, an American Muslim national basketball player who in 1996 refused to stand up for the American national anthem — the reason being that doing so would mean showing *wala'* to America which is a *kafir* country.⁵² In his book, Abou El Fadl analyzes a statement issued by the Society for Adherence to the Sunnah (SAS) which supported the action of Abdul Rauf.⁵³ SAS argues that *wala'* cannot be owed to non-believers, and standing up in respect to anyone or anything is an act of *wala'*, and hence it is not allowable except to God, let alone non-believers.⁵⁴ Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid, a scholar from Saudi Arabia who runs an extensive online *fatwa* portal (www.islamqa.info),⁵⁵ says “playing or listening to national anthems is *haram* [...] It makes no difference whether what is played is songs or the national anthem or anything else”.⁵⁶

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² See Abou El Fadl, Khaled, *And God Knows The Soldiers: The Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse*, University Press of America, 2001, p. 43.

⁵³ See the *fatwa* by SAS “The Ruling on Standing for the Anthem”, available at www.hoor-al-ayn.com/articles/.../Standing%20for%20anthem.pdf (accessed 12 March 2011).

⁵⁴ Abou El Fadl, Khaled, *And God Knows The Soldiers: The Authoritative and Authoritarian in Islamic Discourse*, p. 46.

⁵⁵ Sheikh Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid runs a *fatwa* website known as *Islam Questions and Answers*. His *fatwa* on various issues of *fiqh* can be found at www.islamqa.info (accessed 12 December 2011). This website provides *fatwas* on a variety of religious issues in 12 different languages.

⁵⁶ See *fatwa* by Sheikh Salih Al-Munajjid “Respect for the National Anthem or Flag”, available at <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/111877> (accessed 15 March 2011).

The *fatwa* issued by Al-Qaradawi and his team of intellectuals does not mention anything about *wala'*. In legitimizing the act of Muslim soldiers fighting in America's war against Afghanistan, the *fatwa* uses some of the popular and recognized legal principles of *usul al-fiqh* (Islamic legal theory). The first is the principle of *aqall al-dararayn* (the choosing of the less harmful of two harms). The *fatwa* argues that even if the Muslim soldier's involvement in a war is likely to cause harm to other Muslims, his refusal to participate may result in the dismissal of a large number of Muslims from the American army and the branding of Muslim soldiers as unpatriotic and disloyal.⁵⁷ This would have a negative effect on the position of the American Muslim community as a whole, which is seen as a greater harm. Secondly, the *fatwa* states that in a situation in which the Muslim has no choice but to commit a harmful act, the preferential differentiation between two harms — a standard rule — is predicated on the Prophetic *hadith* "*la darar wa la dirar*" (no harm and no repayment of one harm by another).⁵⁸ The third legal principle that the *fatwa* uses is intent (*niyyah*). The *fatwa* uses the principle of *niyyah* to classify an act that the *shariah* does not classify as being permissible, and that does not fall within the domain of religious rites, transactions or criminal law. Hence, this suggests that it is the intention, and not the nature or consequences of the act, that plays the main role in determining the status of the act.⁵⁹

The *fatwa* issued by Al-Qaradawi and his team caught the attention of several scholars in Saudi Arabia such as Al-Shuaibi, who clearly opposed the position of Al-Qaradawi in a counter-*fatwa*. Using the concept of WB, Al-Shuaibi stated that it is imperative upon all Muslims to support the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and to oppose the American war against them. He asserted that any Muslim who takes the side of the unbelievers in their war against

⁵⁷Nafi, Basheer, "Fatwa and War: On the Allegiance of the American Muslim Soldiers in the Aftermath of September 11", p. 94.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 96.

Muslims is himself an apostate and an unbeliever. He further stated that WB is one of the fundamentals of the religion and is the foundation of faith and belief. For Al-Shuaibi, *wala*' necessitates that Muslims always love and take the side of other Muslims, whereas *bara*' necessitates severing all ties with non-Muslims, holding no love for them and maintaining a safe distance from them. He refers to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's saying that aiding and supporting non-Muslims against Muslims is an act of apostasy (*kufr naqil 'an milla*).⁶⁰

As a Salafi scholar, Al-Shuaibi understood the Quranic concept of WB as an absolute, and totally free from the human context of its application. Like other Salafis, Al-Shuaibi described WB as a foundation of the Islamic faith, thus placing it on the same level as *tawhid*. In fact, Al-Shuaibi understood WB not as two separate concepts but as one concept, according to which a Muslim's allegiance and loyalty to other Muslims is contingent upon, and tied to, his disassociation from the unbelievers. For Al-Shuaibi, moreover, any act or expression that contravenes this understanding of WB is sufficient to violate the boundaries of Islam. Al-Shuaibi belongs to the group or category of Salafis known by some as "Rejectionist". As mentioned in Chapter 3, this group of Salafis rejects the Saudi government and believes that the Saudi royal family and other Arab regimes are the main problem. Other individuals in this Salafi category include Nasr Al-Fahad⁶¹ and Ali Al-Khudayr.

Another Salafi figure who criticizes those who aid the non-Muslims against Muslims is Ayman Al-Zawahiri. In his treatise *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, Al-Zawahiri quotes the Quranic verse which prohibits Muslims from taking the Jews and Christians as allies: "O you who have believed! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors. They are but

⁶⁰Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Al-Risalah Al-Tasi'ah: Nawaqid al-Islam*, p. 386, available at <http://shaydzmi.wordpress.com/2011/02/28/nawaqid/> (accessed 3 August 2012).

⁶¹See Chapter 3 for details of Al-Fahad's book on assisting non-Muslims against Muslims.

friends and protectors to each other. And he among you that turns to them (for friendship or protection) is of them.” Al-Zawahiri says:

And if the righteous forefathers called those who opposed the alms tax apostates, even though they fasted and prayed and did not fight the Muslim majority; what then when they side with the enemies of Allah and His messenger, killing believers?⁶²

Criticizing the Arab rulers who allowed the American troops to set foot on Arabian soil as well as the Muslims who sided with the Americans in their war against Afghanistan after September 11, Al-Zawahiri states:

So, what would al-Tabari, Ibn Hazam, and Ibn Taimiyyah say if they were made witness to the American planes, troops, and their allies launching off from the Arabian Gulf to strike Muslims in Iraq? And what would they say if they were witness to American planes taking off from Pakistan in order to kill Muslims in Afghanistan? And what would they say if they witnessed American and Western ships and planes stocking up on fuel, provisions, and ammunitions from the Gulf States, Yemen, and Egypt, on their way to lay siege to Iraq, occupy the Arabian peninsula, and safeguard Israel's security?⁶³

Another Salafi who shares similar views on this issue with the scholars mentioned above is Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq from Kuwait. In his book *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, he says:

Whosoever allies with the *kafir*, aids him and supports him against the Muslims becomes apostate (*kafir*) and is thrown out of the religion of Islam. This also includes those who spy for the *kuffar* and inform them about the secrets of the Muslims.⁶⁴

⁶²Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, “*Al-Wala' wal Bara'*” in Raymond Ibrahim (ed. and trans.), *The Al-Qaeda Reader*, p. 75.

⁶³*Ibid.*, pp. 92–93.

⁶⁴Abdul Khaliq, Abdul Rahman, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, p. 22. Abdul Rahman's book on WB will be discussed in the next chapter.

Finally, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani in his book *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fi al-Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah al-Salaf* listed the act of allying with the disbelievers against Muslims as one of the twenty types of *wala'* that is forbidden in Islam. According to Al-Qahtani, some of these types of *wala'* include:

- (1) It is forbidden for Muslims to rely upon the non-believers generally for help, assistance or protection.
- (2) It is forbidden for Muslims to collude with the non-believers, to help them in their schemes, to enter into pacts with them, to spy on their behalf, and to fight in their ranks.
- (3) Muslims should not seek the advice of the non-believers.
- (4) It is forbidden for Muslims to incline towards the non-believers.
- (5) Muslims should not give the non-Muslims authority over the Muslims.
- (6) Muslims must not trust the non-believers.

Issue 4 — Accepting Gifts from *Kuffar* and Congratulating Them on Their Festivals

The concept of WB as claimed by modern Salafis aims to regulate the social relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. To regulate the basis of such a relationship, Salafis have distinguished certain activities that amount to the wrong type of *wala'* and developed a framework for Muslims to adhere to. These activities form the social dimension of WB. For example, some Salafis believe that Muslims should refrain from imitating non-Muslims in their dressing, language, morality and culture because such an imitation invariably invests Muslims deeper into that culture and leads them down a deviant path. Salafis describe the act of imitating the non-Muslims as a form of showing *wala'* and expression of love (*mahabbah*) to them. Salafis therefore place great emphasis on personal piety and call Muslims to avoid giving any type of loyalty to non-Muslims.

One of the main concerns among Salafi scholars is Muslims' participation in the religious festivals of the non-Muslims such as Christmas and New Year's celebration, as this is considered to be an

expression of Christianity. Thus, Salafis view the act of observing the holidays, festivals and celebrations that originate from the tradition and culture of non-Muslims such as Mother's Day⁶⁵ as resemblance (*tashabbuh*) of the *kuffar* and *haram*.⁶⁶ One Salafi website states: "Mother's Day is a *haram* to celebrate because this is a celebration invented for the *kuffar* by a *kafir*. In Islam every day of the year should be for one's mother, not just one day."⁶⁷

The impermissibility of celebrating these festivals such as Christmas and Easter includes such aspects as congratulating the non-Muslims during those seasons, attending their functions and exchanging gifts during their religious festivals. Salafis consider these actions to be expressions of love and acknowledgment for the non-Muslims.

However, Salafi scholars have differing opinions on the permissibility of accepting the gifts given by non-Muslims on the occasion of their religious festivals. Some scholars have prohibited it, considering such acceptance to be an indication of approval for the festival. Others have said that there is nothing wrong with accepting those gifts.

⁶⁵See *fatwa* by Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Salih Al-Uthaymin, *The Ruling Concerning Celebrating Mother's Day*, available at <http://ummuabdulazeez.wordpress.com/2012/05/13/the-ruling-concerning-celebrating-mothers-day/> (accessed 12 May 2012). This *fatwa* in Arabic is available at <http://www.bidah.com/articles/ufvri-celebrating-mothers-day.cfm> (accessed 12 May 2012).

⁶⁶There are many *fatwas* and statements issued by modern Salafis on the impermissibility of celebrating the festivals of the non-Muslims. All these *fatwas* and statements can be obtained from the internet. For example, see *Celebrating The Holidays of The Kuffar is Haram* at <http://www.khilafah.com/index.php/concepts/islamic-culture/4557-celebrating-the-holidays-of-the-kuffar-is-haram> (accessed 12 May 2012); *Is Saying Merry Christmas Haram?* at <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?52438-Is-Saying-Merry-Christmas-Haram> (accessed 12 May 2012); and *Ruling on Celebrating Christmas and Congratulating Them* by Ibn Uthaymin, available at <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/archives/2006/ruling-on-celebrating-christmas-and-congratulating-them/> (accessed 12 May 2012).

⁶⁷See *fatwa* by Sheikh Muqbil Bin Hadi, *The Islamic Ruling on Celebrating Mother's Day*, available at <http://ahlusunnah.waljamaah.com/2011/04/01/the-islamic-ruling-on-celebrating-mothers-day/> (accessed 23 May 2012).

For example, Sheikh Rashid Bin Hassan Al-Almai, a professor at King Khalid University, says that the basic ruling regarding the gifts given by the People of the Scripture and other non-Muslims is that their gifts are lawful for a Muslim to accept.⁶⁸ According to him, this is based on many evidences that can be found in the Prophetic tradition. He reasoned that Prophet Muhammad accepted gifts from the ruler of Persia and the King of Ayla who were non-Muslims. To him, this indicates that it is permissible for Muslims to accept gifts from non-Muslims as long as the gifts themselves are not things that are unlawful. This permissibility is general, and it is not restricted by considerations of whether or not the gift is being given on one of their religious holidays. As for Muslims giving gifts to non-Muslims, Al-Almai says that it is permissible as long as it is not done with the intention of celebrating the latter's holidays or out of love for their religious festivals.⁶⁹

Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid, while agreeing that it is permissible for Muslims to accept gifts from a *kafir*, forbids Muslims to give gifts to a *kafir* on his day of festival. In his *fatwa*, Al-Munajjid says:

It is not permissible to give a *kafir* a gift on the day of one of his festivals, because that is regarded as approving of or participating in celebration of the false festival. If the gift is something that will help in celebrating the festival, such as food, candles and the like, then it is even more *haram*, and some of the scholars are of the view that this is *kufr*.⁷⁰

The impermissibility of celebrating non-Muslims' festivals such as Christmas and New Year's celebration is shared by many Salafis,

⁶⁸ Sheikh Rashid Bin Hassan, *Exchanging Gifts with Non-Muslims on Their Holidays*, available at <http://en.islamtoday.net/artshow-416-2993.htm> (accessed 12 December 2011).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid, *Accepting a Gift from a Kafir on the Day of His Festival*, available at <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/85108> (accessed 8 August 2012).

even the official scholars of Saudi Arabia. In response to the query posed to them on the ruling of celebrating the Millennium (the arrival of year 2000), the Permanent Committee for Research and Fatwa of Saudi Arabia concluded that:

It is not permissible for Muslims who believe in Allah as their Lord, Islam as their religion, and Muhammad as their Prophet, to celebrate any festival that has no basis in the *din* of Islam, and that includes the so-called new millennium. Neither are they permitted to attend such festivals or to take part in them, or to help others do so in any way whatsoever, because this is sin and transgression of the limits set by Allah. Allah says:...but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is severe in punishment.⁷¹

The *fatwa* forbidding Muslims to congratulate the *kuffar* on their festivals is based on the saying of Ibn Al-Qayyim:

As for offering congratulations on the special ritualistic occasions of *kufr*, this is agreed to be *haram*, such as congratulating them (the *kuffar*) on their festivals and fasts by saying, "Happy or blessed festival to you" and the like. Even if the one who says so escapes committing *kufr*, it is still *haram*. It is like congratulating someone for prostrating to the Cross; in fact it is even more sinful in the sight of Allah and more hateful than congratulating someone for drinking *khamr* (intoxicants), killing a soul, or committing adultery, and so on. Many of those who have no respect for their *din* fall into this error; they do not realize the abhorrence of their action. Anyone who congratulates a person for committing an act

⁷¹See *fatwa* by the Permanent Committee for Research and Fatwa of Saudi Arabia, available at <http://www.alifta.com/Fatawa/FatawaChapters.aspx?View=Page&PageID=10438&PageNo=1&BookID=7> (accessed 23 December 2012). See also *fatwa* by Ibn Uthaymin, *Ruling on Celebrating Christmas and Congratulating Them*, available at <http://www.bismikaallahuma.org/archives/2006/ruling-on-celebrating-christmas-and-congratulating-them/> (accessed 12 May 2012).

of disobedience, *bid'ah* (innovation in religion) or *kufr* exposes himself to the hate and wrath of Allah.⁷²

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that while Salafis stress the importance of WB to be applied at all levels of a Muslim life, they differ on how the meaning of *wala'* and *bara'* should be understood in certain circumstances. While promoting the same concept in their writings, Salafis from different backgrounds and orientations have attempted to distinguish activities that constitute the “true” *wala'* and the “supposed” *bara'*. Many of these distinctions revolve around issues of politics, social and ideological questions, level of strictness, and general contents of the concept. The chapter has illustrated that the modern Salafi concept of WB resides on a wide spectrum that ranges from what might be termed the “very soft” to its “most extreme” form of the concept. As a foundational belief for all Salafis, the concept calls for Muslims to be loyal to Islam and other Muslims, and at the same time disavow anything that is deemed un-Islamic. However, Salafis differ in the types and level of loyalty that one should give, and likewise, what, who and when to disavow. They also differ in their understanding and application of the concept into practice.

Examples from the four issues presented in this chapter show that differences among Salafis on the element of WB have produced substantial debates and also disputes within and among different Salafi streams of thought. As modern Salafism embraces and amplifies the Islamic injunction of promoting “Islamicness” in many spheres of life, WB has become the main tool to reach this objective. However, this tool is not a standard one that can be utilized by all Salafis in all circumstances, but it can be altered and transformed depending on who or which group of Salafis uses it. Importantly, the chapter has proven that there is no single understanding of WB in modern Salafism. Different Salafi groups and individuals provide

⁷² *Ibid.*

different legal frameworks when dealing with the concept. The most important question to ask next is: What are the reasons for these diverse opinions on WB? It is believed that the primary reason for such division and dispute on the concept is due to the various Salafi orientations and lines of thinking that they possess. These different orientations of Salafism play a critical role in understanding the reasons behind their disputes and disagreements, as will be proven in the following chapter.

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Chapter 5

Analyzing the Writings of Purists, Politicos and Jihadi Salafis on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*

Introduction

In Chapter 1, we learnt that modern Salafis can be categorized into different factions and groups. The reason for this diversity in modern Salafism is fundamentally due to the different ideological leanings modern Salafis have, such as their diverse approach to Islamic law, perception towards the ruling regimes, and whether they are political or apolitical. As mentioned before, Salafis can be broadly categorized into three distinct groups. The first group of Salafis — known as purists or quietists — spends most of their time emphasizing the importance of purification of the Islamic faith (*tazkiyah*) and educating the masses (*tarbiyah*) on the Salafi *da'wah*. They are apolitical and are predominantly subservient to their ruling regime. The second group of Salafis believes that *tazkiyah* and *tarbiyah* alone are insufficient without also incorporating elements of politics in the Salafi *da'wah*. These Salafis are hence called the politicians. Finally, the Jihadi Salafis believe that rebellion and the use of violence are the most viable means to change the status quo.¹

¹Wiktorowicz, Quintan, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement”, pp. 207–239.

This chapter aims to highlight the different approaches of presenting WB by all the three categories of Salafis mentioned above. It attempts to show that a particular Salafi background and orientation has an effect on the style of writing and presentation of the concept by modern Salafis. In other words, Salafis who belong to the purist group would present the concept in a more conservative, socially-oriented form, while the Jihadi Salafis would present the concept as one that is hostile towards the non-Muslims. They believe that the greatest manifestation of *bara'* of the *kuffar* is to eliminate them through what they believe is *jihad* in the path of God.

Towards this objective, the writings on WB by several prominent modern Salafi thinkers belonging to the three Salafi categories will be analyzed. They are the purist Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, the politico Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, and the famous Jihadi Salafi Ayman Al-Zawahiri from the Al-Qaeda organization. Salih Al-Fawzan is one of the official scholars of Saudi Arabia who serves on the country's Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Religious Edicts. Abdul Rahman is a famous Salafi figure in Kuwait, while Al-Zawahiri is the man believed to have replaced Osama Bin Laden, leader of Al-Qaeda, after the latter's death in 2011. Apparently, all of them have written on the concept of WB exclusively in the form of books and treatises. Their writings on WB are widely available and can be accessed from the internet. Some of these writings have also been translated into English.²

Apart from these three Salafi thinkers, the chapter will also look at the writings of another well-known modern Salafi writer, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani from Saudi Arabia, who, as mentioned before, is believed to be one of the first, if not the first modern Salafi scholar to write a book exclusively on the subject of WB. His famous groundbreaking book on WB has been printed numerous times, is widely disseminated and has also been translated into many languages. Al-Qahtani's book, apart from being comprehensive in its explanation of the concept, seems to incorporate all elements of the purists, politicos and Jihadis.

²See the Introduction chapter, under the section called "Sources of Research and Methodology", for further details on these books.

The chapter begins with a brief description of the characteristics of purist, politico and Jihadi Salafis. This serves as a background to understand the differences between them. This will be followed by highlighting the main contents of the books by Al-Fawzan, Abdul Rahman, Al-Zawahiri and Al-Qahtani, respectively, before analyzing them. The chapter concludes that, though it is obviously not absolute, the effect of one's adoption of a particular Salafi orientation could result in different dimensions of presenting religious issues. This reflects that the concept of WB in modern Salafism is fluid and multi-dimensional.

Contemporary Salafi Factions: The Purists, Politicos and Jihadis

As explained before, there is indeed a common shared ideology among modern Salafis. They believe in the same understanding of *tawhid* and the importance of emulating the ways of the *salaf al-salih*, but their doctrinal differences and subjective interpretations of religious sources lead to division between them. This division often centers on ways of dealing with the society and contemporary politics. For example, modern Salafis and Salafi groups answer quite differently contentious questions like what constitutes *kufir*, how to wage *jihad* and against whom, and whether or not incumbent Muslim rulers are sinners. Sometimes there are significant disputes between the various Salafi factions. It is believed that their differences in *manhaj* are due to their different orientations and backgrounds.³

Purist Salafis

Purist Salafis believe that the primary objective of the Salafi *da'wah* is the purification of the *aqidah* from religious innovations and deviant practices. This has to be done through the methods of *tazkiyah*

³For more on the different Salafi groups and their characteristics, see Chapter 1 of this book.

(purification) and *tarbiyah* (education).⁴ Purist Salafis are generally apolitical. They refrain from participating in government affairs and politics in order to remain uncorrupted. They believe in gaining power through propagating their religious views and argue that political participation will only lead to sin and corruption.

Purist Salafis are subservient to their government even if the government is viewed by other Salafis as corrupt. In addition, they do not support violence against the state. They justify their stance by arguing that when the Meccans repressed Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims, the Prophet did not respond in kind (i.e., by using violence), but rather, adopted a peaceful way to spread the message of Islam.⁵ Purists believe that their actions should not create a “greater evil” such as weakening the Salafi *da’wah*. They are against declaring the government infidel because that leads to reprisal which they view as a “greater evil”. Thus, purists are not above attempting to influence the state; they believe it should happen only through a mass movement of “believers” (*mukminun*) and propagation, not through political action, which inevitably leads to corruption and/or violence, thereby putting the Muslim community in danger.

Purist Salafis are mostly found in Saudi Arabia. However, purist Salafism has also spread its influence to other Muslim and Arab countries in the Middle East and Europe.⁶ Famous purist Salafis include the religious establishment of the Saudi regime such as the

⁴ See *Debate between Muhammad Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani and a Jihadi Supporter*, available at <http://abdurrahman.org/jihad/albanidebatewithjihadi.html> (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁵ Wiktorowicz, Quintan, “Anatomy of the Salafi Movement”, p. 217.

⁶ See Amghar, Samir, “Salafism and Radicalisation of Young European Muslims” in Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur and Michael Emerson (eds.), *European Islam: Challenges for Public Policy and Society*, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, 2007, pp. 38–51. See also Adraoui, Mohamed Ali, “Purist Salafism in France”, *International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) Review*, Vol. 21, Spring 2008. See also by the same author, “Salafism in France: Ideology, Practices and Contradictions” in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, 2009, p. 364.

former mufti of the country, Ibn Baz, Ibn Uthaymin, Al-Albani, Al-Fawzan, and the current mufti, Abdul Aziz Al Al-Shaikh.

Politico Salafis

Politico Salafis emphasize the need for political activism as a means to protect Islam and expand its influence within the society and the state. Politico Salafis claim that they have a clearer vision of the political situation. They share a common view with other Salafi currents on the Muslim rulers and government, but perceive these rulers as sinners. They are of the view that ruling with other than the *shariah* is a minor *kufur*. In terms of participation in politics, they agree to the democratic process and participation in the secular government based on “public interest”. They also stick to the point of *ijtihad* and *taqlid* where *fatwas* are only permissible by those who are qualified. Unlike the purists, politico Salafis hold a lot of respect for individuals such as Sayyid Qutub,⁷ although they might differ from him on many points such as what was claimed to be his views on the Attributes of God and the categorization of the society as *jahili* (ignorant). Also, they see *jihad* as part of Islam, but they stand on the side of *jihad* as being theoretical and unnecessary.

In some countries such as Kuwait and Algeria, Salafis form political parties and participate in democratic political elections. In fact, in the 1990s, political Salafism was the main vehicle of political contestation in Algeria. Politicos criticize the purists for being too obsessed with issues of religious rituals and practices, and

⁷ Purist Salafis condemn the politicians for the latter’s admiration of Sayyid Qutub. The *manhaj* of Qutbi Salafism is heavily influenced by the political ideas of Sayyid Qutub and Hassan Al-Banna of the Ikhwan Al-Muslimin. Purist Salafis regard the *manhaj* of Qutbi Salafism as one that deviates from the “true” Salafiyah. They even produce books condemning its ideology such as *Baraa’ah Ulamaa il-Ummah Min Tazkiyah Ahl il-Bid’ah wal-Mudhammah* (The Innocence of the Scholars of the Ummah from the Commendation of the People of Innovation and Censure). See <http://www.themadkhalis.com/md/articles/sxptl-shaykh-saalih-al-fawzaan-distinguishes-between-the-salafi-manhaj-and-the-qutbi-manhaj.cfm> (accessed 3 February 2012).

for their relative silence over political issues and affairs of the regime.⁸ They condemn the purists for being silent and not taking any action against the corrupt leaders and governments. They believe they are better equipped to address political issues and have a role to interfere in the affairs of the regime.⁹ However, politicians agree with the purists on the notion of using violence. Unlike the Jihadis, politico Salafis do not believe in the use of violence for political change. They consider that attacking the state physically would create more problems, and the only way to gain power and bring about change is through participating in politics.¹⁰

In Saudi Arabia, the Sahwis mostly dominate this group of politico Salafis. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the most prominent of them are Salman Al-Awdah, Safar Al-Hawali and Aid Al-Qarni. Apart from Kuwait and Algeria, political Salafism is also popular in Egypt.¹¹ In Kuwait, Salafis form political parties such as the Islamic Salafi Alliance headed by Khaled Al-Sultan Bin Essa (b. 1940). In Egypt, they established the Hizb Al-Umma Party, while the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was formed in Algeria.¹² Other politico Salafis include the famous Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq (b. 1939) who heads the Society for the Revival of Islamic Heritage

⁸ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 37.

⁹ Wiktorowicz, Quintan, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement", p. 221.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Kuwait and Algeria are two strongholds of political Salafism. In Kuwait, Islamic political movements targeted the information and education ministers in an attempt to move the country's policies toward conservative Salafi doctrine. See Janardhan, N., "Kuwait Wake Up to the Face of Militant Islam", *The Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 9, May 2005. Like Kuwait, Salafis in Algeria also cause the government significant consternation by challenging the way Islam is practised by pressuring mosques and local imams to move toward more conservative Islam. See Nazim Fethi, *Algerian Government Curbs Extreme Religious Practices*, 22 December 2006 at http://magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/reportage/2006/12/22/reportage-01 (accessed 13 March 2012).

¹² For political Salafism in Algeria, see Boubekeur, Amel, *Salafism and Radical Politics in Postconflict Algeria*, Carnegie Paper No. 11, September 2008; Reene, Jared and Scott Sanford, *The Fortunes of Political Salafism in Gaza and Algeria*, The Institute for Middle East Studies (IMES), Capstone Paper Series, May 2010.

(*Jam'iyyah Ihya' At-Turath Al-Islami*) in Kuwait, Abdul Razak Al-Shaygi (b. 1967), Dr Sajid Al-Mutairi (b. 1964) and Dr Hamid Bin Abdallah al-Ali (b. 1960).

Politico Salafis are also known as Scientific or Academic Salafis (*as-salafiyyah al-'ilmiyyah*)¹³ due to the highly rational methods they employ to discuss and implement their version of Salafism. They are regularly featured in Arab newspapers and television programs because they tend to be among the most vocal on social and political issues. However, like the purists and unlike the Jihadis, they do not sanction *takfir*. They view most Islamic rulers today as sinners but not apostates. They may openly concede that these regimes violate the strenuous demands of Islam, but they view most of their actions as minor transgressions. The fact that these rulers have not implemented *shariah* law is, for politico Salafis, an undeniable sin, but it is not grounds for excommunicating them.

Jihadi Salafis

Finally, the Jihadi faction of Salafis, which is believed to have emerged in Afghanistan¹⁴ during the 1980s, believes in the use of violence to change the society which they see as un-Islamic. Jihadi Salafis are political in nature but they emphasize politics as warfare. They are not hesitant to practise *takfir* on Muslim leaders who they believe have apostatized, and also rebel against them with force. In addition, Jihadi Salafis have a strong anti-Western sentiment and are very hostile to the West and to all *kuffar*. Today, prominent Jihadi Salafi figures include individuals such as Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, Abu Qatada (b. 1960), Abu Basir al-Tartusi (b. unknown), Umar Abdul Rahman (b. 1938), and the Saudi-based

¹³ See Abdel Haleem, Tariq, *The Counterfeit Salafis: Deviation of the Counterfeit Salafis from the Methodology of Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*, p. 29.

¹⁴ It is believed that the Jihadi faction that first emerged in Afghanistan is the Al-Qaeda organization formed by Osama Bin Laden during the Soviet–Afghan war between 1979–1989. For more on this historical fact, see Gunaratna, Rohan, *Inside Al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2002, pp. 3–5; Brachman, Jarret, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice*, p. 8.

Nasr Al-Fahad, Hamoud Al-Shuaibi, Sulaiman Al-Ulwan (b. 1969) and Ali Al-Khudair.

In short, all three Salafi factions — despite being “Salafis” in their creed — differ in the implementation of the Salafi methodology. All of them believe that modern governments are un-Islamic and corrupt, but they have different ways of addressing this issue. The purists refrain from taking part in politics as they believe it corrupts the sanctity of the religion. The politicians see participation in politics as an important means to address pressing modern problems. Finally, the Jihadis believe in physically opposing the regimes and their opponents in order to uphold what they believe is proper.

The categorization of Salafis into these three factions will be used as a framework to analyze the writings and evaluate the differences modern Salafi thinkers have in presenting the concept of WB. This analysis is conducted by mainly observing the roles of WB within their intellectual systems. In particular, I attempt to identify which of the four dimensions of WB are present in their writings. As the chapter argues, a particular Salafi orientation or background, although not absolute, could have an impact on the way WB is presented by modern Salafis. We therefore study the contents of the books on WB by Salih Al-Fawzan, Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, who are of purist, Jihadi and politico orientation, respectively. This will be followed by examining the book by the fourth Salafi figure, Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani.

Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan

Brief Profile of Al-Fawzan

Salih Ibn Fawzan Ibn Abdullah Al-Fawzan (b. 1933) is a prominent Islamic scholar and a prolific writer in Saudi Arabia. In his early days, Al-Fawzan studied in the state school in Al-Qamariyah. In 1950, he completed his primary studies at the Faysaliyyah School in Buraydah and subsequently was appointed as a teacher at the same school. In 1956, he graduated from the Educational Institute in Buraydah. Later, Al-Fawzan joined the famous Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, initially studying at the

Faculty of *Shariah* and graduating in 1960. Thereafter, he earned his Master's Degree and Doctorate from the same university, majoring in *fiqh*. Currently, he serves as a member of Saudi Arabia's Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and *Fatwa*, a member of the Council of Religious Edicts and Research, a member of the Senior Board of Scholars, a member of the *Fiqh* Committee in Mecca, and a member of the Committee for Supervision of the *Du'aat* (Callers of Islam).¹⁵

Al-Fawzan's Book: Al-Wala' wal Bara' Fil Islam¹⁶

The contents of Al-Fawzan's book on WB are divided into three parts. In the first part, he lays out the main characteristics of Muslims who take non-Muslims as their friends or supporters. In the second part, on the other hand, he describes the outward manifestations of Muslims who possess *wala'* for their Muslim brothers. Finally, Al-Fawzan explains the three categories of people who deserve "love and hatred" of the Muslims: first, those whom Muslims should love purely with no intention of being an enemy to them; second, those whom Muslims should hate and take as enemies with no love, support or respect for them; and finally, those whom Muslims should love for their particular good deeds and hate for their other evil deeds.

In his opening chapter, Al-Fawzan calls Muslims to the concept of WB by reiterating the usual Salafi claim that the Islamic belief system or *aqidah* obligates Muslims to love the people of *tawhid* and

¹⁵ Al-Fawzan's biography can be found at his website <http://www.alfawzan.af.org.sa/node/13198> (accessed 15 March 2012). See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saleh_Al-Fawzan (accessed 15 March 2012).

¹⁶ Al-Fawzan's book on WB in Arabic is widely available on the internet. See, for example, <http://www.saaid.net/book/open.php?cat=1&book=792> (accessed 5 December 2012). For the English version, see Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan, *Al-Walaa' wal-Baraa' (Allegiance and Association with the People of Islam and Emaan and Disassociation and Enmity with the People of Falsehood and Disbelief in Islaam)*, Calgary Islamic Homepage, 1997, available at <http://www.calgaryislam.com/imembers/pdf/manhaj/16.pdf> (accessed 23 March 2009).

hate the people of *shirk*. In other words, he asserts that loving God and His Messenger includes loving those who love Him and His Messenger, and hating those who oppose God and His Messenger. As a typical Salafi argument on WB, Al-Fawzan writes that this obligation stems from the Quranic concept of *Millat Ibrahim*.¹⁷ The opening chapter also saw Al-Fawzan's literal use of Quranic injunctions showing that befriending the non-believers, especially the Jews and Christians, is prohibited (Quran 60:4; 19:49–1; 11:54–6; 43:26–8; 10:41; 3:118–20; 3:28; 4:89; 5:51).

Indications of Taking the Kuffar as Mawla (Friends or Supporters)

In this section of the book, Al-Fawzan lays out some of the main characteristics of Muslims who take the non-Muslims as their *mawla* (plural of *wali*). These characteristics, Al-Fawzan argues, are indications of loving the non-Muslims, an act which is forbidden in the Salafi ideology. They are:

- (1) Imitating non-Muslims in their appearance (dress) and language.
- (2) Residing in their lands and not migrating to the land of Islam.
- (3) Travelling to the land of the *kuffar* for tourism and vacation.
- (4) Helping them, giving them victory over the Muslims, and defending their honor.
- (5) Seeking assistance from them and making them as advisors.
- (6) Using their calendar instead of the Islamic calendar.
- (7) Observing their holidays, assisting in their celebrations and attending their festivals.
- (8) Speaking well of them through what they have of material wealth and being satisfied with their actions.
- (9) Using their names.
- (10) Supplicating for them and being compassionate to them.

In explaining what each of these characteristics entails, Al-Fawzan supports them with Quranic verses and *hadith* of the

¹⁷See the meaning and Salafis' understanding of *Millat Ibrahim* in Chapter 2.

Prophet. Unsurprisingly, for each Quranic verse and *hadith*, there is no quotation from any *mufassir* or *muhaddith* (a scholar who interprets the Quran and *hadith*, respectively). Al-Fawzan does not make any references to the *Ilm al-tafsir* (Science of Quranic interpretation) and *Sharh al-hadith* (Explanations of the Prophetic Traditions) which are traditionally used by scholars to understand the meanings of Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions. Instead, his explanation of the Quranic verses and *hadith* seems to originate from his own understanding. For example, Al-Fawzan simply says that Muslims should not imitate the *kuffar* in dress and language because the Prophet says so in one of his well-known *hadith*: “*man tashabbaha bi-qaumin fahuwa minhum*” which means “whoever imitates a people is one of them”. Without providing the interpretation of *tashabbuh* (imitation) as stipulated in many of the books of *hadith*, Al-Fawzan explains instantly after citing this particular *hadith* that “Allah forbids imitating the *kuffar* in their worships, traditions, and things special to them. We should not imitate them in their appearance and morals. Also, we should not speak their language, except when necessary, and we should not adopt their way of dressing and eating”.¹⁸

The Outward Manifestations of Taking the Muslims as Mawla

After explaining the characteristics of Muslims who take the non-Muslims as friends, Al-Fawzan proceeds to detail the manifestations of Muslims who should show their *wala*’ exclusively to their Muslim brothers. In essence, these manifestations can be seen as the opposite of the characteristics of Muslims who take non-Muslims as friends, as detailed above. These manifestations are:

- (1) *Hijrah* from the lands of the *kuffar* to the lands of the Muslims.
- (2) Assisting the Muslims with wealth, strength and support for their needs in religion and material life.

¹⁸ Salih Al-Fawzan, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ fil Islam*, p. 4.

- (3) Sympathizing with Muslims when they are harmed.
- (4) Advising and counseling the Muslims, praying for their well-being, and not cheating or going behind their backs.
- (5) Being respectful to them, and not humiliating or speaking bad things about them.
- (6) Joining them in times of happiness and hardship.
- (7) Visiting and loving to meet with them.
- (8) Respecting their rights.
- (9) Being kind to the weak among them.
- (10) Making supplication for them and asking forgiveness for them.

Most of these acts mentioned by Al-Fawzan could be seen as the normal good character that all Muslims should manifest in their daily lives. While these activities seem to be the norm of an ideal Islamic society, Salafis, especially the purists, regard these acts as a form of absolute *wala'* that should only be given to Muslims.

Al-Fawzan explains that the obligation to perform *bara'* from the *kuffar* does not mean that Muslims should treat the *kuffar*, especially those who do not fight the Muslims nor drive the latter out of their homes, with hostility. To these *kuffar*, Muslims ought to show their kindness and justice to them. This, according to him, is based on the Quranic verse 60:8. However, Al-Fawzan reminds readers that whilst being kind and just to the non-Muslims, one should hate them in their hearts for their rejection of Islam. Al-Fawzan clarifies that in Quran 60:8, God states "...from dealing kindly and justly with them..." and does not mention befriending or loving them. Thus, a Muslim is obliged to hate the *kuffar* whilst being kind to them. As described in the previous chapter, such an argument is evident in the words of purist Salafis who believe that WB requires Muslims to be kind to non-Muslims while not having love for them at the same time.¹⁹

¹⁹ See previous chapter on this and the *fatwa* by the former Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Ibn Baz, on WB, available at <http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/1764> (accessed 5 December 2012).

On the issue of being kind to the *kuffar*, Al-Fawzan explains that kindness and equal treatment is different from love and close friendship. Communication and good treatment could lead to the encouragement of non-Muslims to embrace Islam — which is a form of *da'wah*. However, loving them makes them feel good about what they believe and will not make them become Muslims, argues Al-Fawzan. He also states that the prohibition of loving the *kuffar* does not mean that interactions such as trading and having commerce with them are prohibited too.

Categories of People Whom Muslims Should Hate and Love

In his final chapter of the book, Al-Fawzan summarizes for Muslim readers three categories of people who deserve *wala'* and *bara'*. They are:

- (1) Those whom Muslims should love purely with no intention of being an enemy to them. These include all believers, The Prophet, His family and companions, the *Salaf*, the Truthful, and all those who are on the righteous path.
- (2) Those whom Muslims should hate and take as enemies with no love or support and respect for them. They are the *kuffar*, the Pagans, the Hypocrites, the Apostates, and backsliders of all races and nationalities.
- (3) Those whom Muslims should love for their particular good deeds and hate for their evil actions. This, according to Al-Fawzan, is the category of people whom should be loved and hated at the same time. They are those Muslims who commit sins and do not practice Islam well. They are loved for the *iman* or their belief in God and Islam, but hated for their sins which obviously exclude *kufr* and *shirk*. Due to the love that Muslims have for them (the sinners), they should find ways to advise the latter and warn them against the evil or sin that they have committed. Muslim sinners, argues Al-Fawzan, could be punished so that the Muslim society could learn the lesson and be protected from evil. Punishment would also serve as an opportunity for

the sinners to repent. According to Al-Fawzan, Muslims should not purely hate the sinners or reject them as the *Khawarij* do, who consider people to be pagans if they commit an act of disobedience to God, major or minor. Nor should the sinners be completely loved and treated as sincere believers, as practiced by the *Murji'ah*.²⁰

Al-Fawzan concludes his book on WB by reiterating that WB is one of the major pillars of *iman*. Consequently, people in the hereafter will be with the ones whom they loved in this life. Unfortunately, the situation today has changed, argues Al-Fawzan, where people now love each other for the sake of the worldly life and to gain benefit, even though the one that is loved is an enemy to God, His Messenger and Islam.

Ayman Al-Zawahiri

Brief Profile of Al-Zawahiri

Ayman Mohammed Rabie' Al-Zawahiri (b. 1951) is the current leader of the well-known militant Islamist organization Al-Qaeda. He is believed to have replaced Osama Bin Laden who was reportedly killed in 2011. Previously, Al-Zawahiri was the leader of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the group allegedly responsible for the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat in 1981. A physician by training, Al-Zawahiri is considered to play a key role in the planning and mapping of strategies of Al-Qaeda. Though Al-Zawahiri is not regarded as an Islamic scholar, he nevertheless depicts himself as one in many of his lectures and audio recordings. He has published books and treatises outlining Al-Qaeda's ideology. His writings have become the theological references by Al-Qaeda members and other militant Islamists. Two of his famous writings

²⁰ *Murji'ah* refers to a sect in early Islam that advocated the idea of deferred judgement of people's belief. Their doctrine held that only God has the authority to judge who is a true Muslim and who is not, and that Muslims should consider all other Muslims as part of the community.

are *Fursan Tahta Rayah al-Nabi* (Knights under the Prophet's Banner) which was published in 2001, and *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud* (Loyalty and Enmity: An Inherited Doctrine and a Lost Reality).

Al-Zawahiri's Book: Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud²¹

Al-Zawahiri's book on WB was published in December 2002, a year after the publication of his first book, *Fursan Tahta Rayah al-Nabi*. It was published by the Arabic-language London daily newspaper *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*. It reaffirms the doctrinal foundations of "global Jihad"²² which he had laid out in his previous book, and identifies its targets and goals.²³

Al-Zawahiri's book is divided into two parts. The first part entitled *Arkan al-Wala' wal Bara'* (The Pillars of Loyalty and Disavowal) sets down the Islamic grounds for the doctrine of WB. Like Al-Fawzan, Al-Zawahiri meticulously delineates the many Quranic verses, *hadith* of the Prophet, and quotations from the *ulema* to support the doctrine of WB. The second part of his book known as *Suwar Min al-Inhiraf 'an Aqidah al-Wala' wal Bara'* (Various Deviations from the Doctrine of Loyalty and Disavowal) specifies the doctrine's modern application, in order to mobilize the resources of religious tradition in the service of *jihad*. Here, Al-Zawahiri attempts to

²¹ The Arabic version of this book can be downloaded at <http://www.e-prism.org/pages/5/> (accessed 10 March 2012). For a full translation in English, see Raymond Ibrahim (ed. and trans.), *The Al-Qaeda Reader*, pp. 66–115.

²² Global Jihad is a contemporary term used in academic disciplines to denote the struggle which comes in the form of violence and aggression by militant Islamists and Jihadi Salafis against their adversaries. The term "global" indicates the nature of attacks by these Islamists everywhere around the world, and the common ideology that all Jihadi Salafis share across the globe. See, for example, Al-Rasheed, Madawi, "The Local and the Global in Saudi Salafi-Jihadi Discourse" in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Global Salafism*, p. 301.

²³ See Kepel, Gilles, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West*, p. 134.

demonstrate how almost all of the Muslims' woes are due to their lack of faithfully upholding the concept of WB.

In his introduction, Al-Zawahiri begins by painting the picture that the current world is witnessing a serious struggle between two camps at war: the infidels and tyrants who are enemies of Islam; versus the Muslim *ummah* and its *mujahidin* vanguard. Such an opening introduction could reflect Al-Zawahiri's feelings of hatred and hostility toward the West. This is further confirmed by his sanctioning of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 where he describes the attacks as a "blessed raid" (*ghazwah mubarakah*) and undermining former US President George W. Bush's declaration of the "War on Terror".²⁴

According to Al-Zawahiri, due to the events of the so-called "war" between Muslims and their infidel enemies, there is an urgent need for Muslims to understand the concept of WB. Negligence and indolence, argues Al-Zawahiri, have spread in the Muslim world with regard to upholding this doctrine which forms a great pillar of the *tawhid*. Furthermore, deception has spread among the Muslim community who has obliterated this doctrine by portraying enemies as friends while casting accusations of depravity against the pious.²⁵ Al-Zawahiri claims that deviating from the doctrine of befriending the Muslims and maintaining hostilities against the infidels is, in this age, the greatest threat to *tawhid* and the Islamic faith. It is due to this critical reason that he wrote the treatise as a caution and warning to the Muslim *ummah* in its sacred awakening and victorious *jihad*.

The Foundations of Loyalty and Disavowal

In his first part of the book, *Arkan al-Wala' wal Bara'*, Al-Zawahiri describes ten points which form the religious basis for the concept of WB. The contents of the first part of his book are as follows²⁶:

²⁴ Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, p. 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ This table of contents is reproduced from Al-Zawahiri's book, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*.

- (1) The prohibition against befriending non-Muslims.
 - (a) The difference between befriending and dissembling.
- (2) Hating the infidels and renouncing their love.
 - (a) God forbids Muslims from showing affection to those who oppose Him and His Messenger.
 - (b) God has revealed that the infidels despise the Muslims.
 - (c) God has revealed that the infidels shall never be content with the Muslims as long as the latter persist in their faith.
 - (d) Infidels wish to turn the Muslims back into a state of infidelity.
 - (e) The relationship between loving God, befriending the Muslims and *jihad* in the path of God.
 - (f) Refuting a disingenuous argument.²⁷
- (3) The prohibition against taking non-Muslims as intimates and sharing the secrets of Muslims with them.
- (4) The prohibition against appointing infidels to dignified and important posts.
- (5) The prohibition against glorifying the infidels' religious ceremonies and customs, encouraging the infidels and apostates in their falsehood, and embellishing or praising it.
- (6) The prohibition against aiding the infidels against Muslims.
- (7) The commandment to wage *jihad* against the infidels, expose their falsehood, have no love for them and keep away from them.
 - (a) *Jihad* against the original infidels is obligatory if they occupy the lands of Islam.
 - (b) *Jihad* against the apostate rulers of the lands of Islam.
 - (c) *Jihad* against the hypocrites who propagates specious arguments.

²⁷ Here, Al-Zawahiri refutes the claim that Quranic verse 60:8 (“*Allah does not forbid you from those who have not made war against you on account of your religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes, from showing them kindness and dealing with them justly. Surely Allah loves the doers of justice*”) allows Muslims to love the infidels. He explains that kindness and justice are not considered forms of friendship. What is forbidden, however, is love, friendship, aid by word or deed, shared outlooks and actions, and the taking of infidels as confidants and revealing to them the secrets of the Muslims. See Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*, p. 13.

- (8) Legally unacceptable excuses from those who befriend the infidels.²⁸
- (9) The command to befriend and aid the believers (Muslims).
- (10) Summary.

Illustrations of Deviations from the Doctrine of WB

In the second part of his book, Al-Zawahiri describes four groups of people who according to him have deviated from the concept of WB. They are:

- (1) Rulers who have fused governance without the *shariah* with friendship for Christians and Jews.
- (2) The rulers' henchmen. They are the official *ulema*, journalists, media personnel, writers, thinkers, and other officials who receive their pay for aiding and embellishing falsehood.
- (3) Supporters of an illusory reconciliation. This is the class that calls for a reconciliation with the secular governments that oppose *shariah* in order to resist the *ummah's* enemies.
- (4) Those who are associated with the *jihad* in Afghanistan and who have befriended the Americans.

In his conclusion, Al-Zawahiri emphasizes nine points which could be summarized into the following:

- (1) Re-affirmation of the critical doctrine of WB that forms the pillar of Muslims' faith. The manifestation of this doctrine stretches from befriending the Muslims only to the battling and killing of infidels.
- (2) The urgent need for Muslims to distinguish between those loyal to Islam, the enemies who attack it, and the oscillators (*muzabzabin*)

²⁸ Al-Zawahiri here claims that God does not accept the excuses of the Muslims who claim that they befriend the infidels and enable them to victory simply because they fear the vicissitudes of time and chance, especially since if the infidels overcome the Muslims, the Muslims will stand to gain from the infidels. See Al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, p. 19.

who seek only to pursue their own interests by weakening the resistance of the *ummah* and diverting it from the truth.

- (3) The call of *jihad* in the path of God to the entire Muslim *ummah*, especially its youth, against enemies of Islam. Al-Zawahiri states in his conclusion:

We must act and act. Enough time has been lost. Let the Muslim youth not await anyone's permission, for *jihad* against the Americans, Jews and their alliance of hypocrites and apostates is an individual obligation, as we have demonstrated for the *ummah* and make plans to defend it from its foes. We must set our lands aflame beneath the feet of the raiders, they shall never depart otherwise.²⁹

In conclusion, Al-Zawahiri portrays in his book that the comprehensive nature of WB is such that once it is upheld, everything else that Jihadi Salafis yearn to see will fall into place. The entire world becomes a dichotomy: Islam versus the West, the good versus the bad. In such a situation, other doctrines that Jihadi Salafis promote become more obligatory and urgent. For example, the obligation to uphold the rules of God on this earth becomes more pressing. This is so since the primary way for Muslims to distinguish themselves from the non-Muslims is the former's complete adherence to and practice of *Shariah* laws. Waging *jihad* against the infidels (which is manifested in the form of bombings, terror strikes and assassinations by the Jihadi Salafis) becomes more logical and palatable. This is so since Muslims can never love or befriend infidels in any way until the latter submit to Islam. All Muslims would be obliged to assist, fund and provide shelter to the so-called *Mujahidin*, since they must at all times be loyal to fellow Muslims.

Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq

Brief Profile of Abdul Rahman

Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq Al-Yusuf is one of the prominent Salafi scholars from Kuwait. He was born in the city of Manoufiyyah, Egypt

²⁹ Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud*, p. 29.

in 1939.³⁰ In 1956, Abdul Rahman left for Saudi Arabia and stayed in the country for nine years before he moved to Kuwait in 1965. In Saudi Arabia, Abdul Rahman studied Islamic Jurisprudence at the Islamic University of Medina. He then took up teaching in Kuwait from 1965–1990. He is also the head of *Jam'iyyat Ihya' At-Turath Al-Islami* (Society for the Revival of Islamic Heritage) based in Kuwait. It was reported that only after more than thirty years of residing in Kuwait was Abdul Rahman granted a Kuwaiti citizenship.³¹ However, *Al-Anba'* newspaper from Kuwait recently reported that Abdul Rahman had returned to Egypt after being away from his homeland for more than three decades. His return to Egypt, according to the report, was because he wished to join in the happiness of the Egyptian society over the successful revolution that had shifted Egypt from the dictatorship of President Mubarak to democratic rule, which according to Abdul Rahman was a great shift.³² In his career as a religious scholar *par excellence*, Abdul Rahman has authored more than sixty books on religious issues, especially on the Salafi *manhaj* and fighting religious innovations. One of his books is *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* which we intend to discuss.

Abdul Rahman's Book: Al-Wala' wal Bara'³³

Initially, Abdul Rahman's writing on WB appeared in the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al-Watan* (The Nation) in 1978. In 1979, his article on

³⁰ Profile of Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq is taken from http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%86_%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82 (accessed 23 March 2012).

³¹ See *Abdul Rahman 'Aada ila Misr: Madinun Jami'an lil Majlis Al-'Askari* (Abdul Rahman Returned to Egypt: All Owe to the Military Council), *Al-Anba'*, 13 January 2012, available at <http://www.alanba.com.kw/AbsoluteNMNEW/templates/oula2010.aspx?articleid=259116&zzoneid=12&m=0> (accessed 16 February 2012).

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Abdul Rahman's book on WB is available at <http://khaledabdelnaser.forumr.net/t481-topic#538> (accessed 16 February 2012). For a list of his books, see <http://www.salafi.net/list.html> (accessed 16 February 2012).

the subject was published in a small booklet and was printed several times due to its popularity. It was not until September 1986 that Abdul Rahman published the book entitled *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*.

Unlike Al-Fawzan and Al-Zawahiri, Abdul Rahman discusses the concept of *wala'* and *bara'* separately in two chapters. He does not provide a lengthy introduction chapter explaining the significance of the concept and what prompted him to write on the subject like what Al-Zawahiri did. The book consists of only two chapters without any conclusion chapter or remarks.

Abdul Rahman begins his work on WB in his first chapter entitled *Al-Wala' au Al-Wilayah* by providing a detailed explanation on both the linguistic and *shariah* meanings of the term *wala'*.³⁴ He explains the manifestations of *wala'* by stating the obligatory rights of a Muslim toward his Muslim brothers. Here, he distinguishes between “obligatory rights” (*al-huquq al-lazimah*) and “special rights” (*al-huquq al-khassaah*). *Al-Huquq al-Lazimah* are the rights that should be given to all Muslims, namely *al-hubb* (love), *al-mujamalah* (courtesy), and *al-nusrah* (support). *Al-Huquq al-Khassaah* are the rights that should be given to certain individuals or groups of people, who are: (1) Prophet Muhammad; (2) *ulema* and educators; (3) parents and relatives; (4) neighbors, friends, associates and visitors; and (5) the poor, travellers in need of provisions, and all those who are in need.

Abdul Rahman then proceeds to explain three things that nullify a Muslim's *wala'* (*nawaqidh al-muwalah*) for his Muslim brother. First, the situation where a Muslim leaves the religion of Islam. Here, Abdul Rahman warns of the danger of the practice of *takfir*. Basing his argument on the Prophetic *hadith*, he stresses that any Muslim who accuses his Muslim brother of *kufir* whilst knowing that the latter is a Muslim (from his own confession) has apostatized — meaning he becomes a *kafir*. However, if a Muslim excommunicates someone wrongly or assumes that the latter has apostatized, he becomes a sinner only and not a *kafir*. Second, is the

³⁴This section of the chapter summarizes the key contents of Abdul Rahman's book.

situation when a Muslim permits or legalizes the shedding of his Muslim brother's blood and the taking of his possessions and wealth. In this regard, Abdul Rahman mentions that *istihlal al-ma'siyyah* (permitting disobedience to God) constitutes *kufr*. Third, when a Muslim supports the *kuffar* and assists them against the Muslims. Such an act, according to Abdul Rahman, constitutes *kufr* and leads to nullification of a Muslim's *wala'*.

Abdul Rahman subsequently explains the acts that dispraise a Muslim's *wala'* but do not nullify it. They are: (1) *dzulm* (oppression); (2) cursing and backbiting; (3) cheating and to sell against one's purchase; and (4) desertion (*al-hajran*), that is, the act of refraining from talking to one another for more than three days. In the last section of his first chapter, Abdul Rahman explains at length two groups of Muslims who go against the "original" *wala'* (*mukhalifun li asl al-wala'*). They are³⁵:

- (1) The Hypocrites (*Al-Munafiqun*) — This group of people, according to Abdul Rahman, is the most hostile of those who violate the true *wala'*. This is primarily due to the *kufr* in their hearts which are filled with hostility, enmity and hatred to the Muslims. The Quran speaks abundantly about the characteristics of this group of people.
- (2) The *Khawarij* (Kharijites) — According to Abdul Rahman, the *Khawarij* refers to those who permit the shedding of Muslims' blood and taking their properties, those who go against the ruler and kill him, and those who call for the *bara'* and killing of Muslims who commit sins and acts of disobedience to God. Abdul Rahman first explains the origins of *Khawarij* referring to the group of Muslims who killed the fourth caliph of Islam, Ali Bin Abi Talib. After discussing the historical accounts of the *Khawarij*, he speaks about the "neo-*Khawarij*" of today who submits to the ideology of the *Khawarij* (*al-afkar al-kharijiyyah*). This ideology, according to Abdul Rahman, did not disappear but exists until today. He describes the neo-*Khawarij* (*al-khawarij*

³⁵ Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, *Al-Wala' wal Bara'*, pp. 13–15.

al-mu'asirun) as those who read the Quran but do not practise the commands of God, and even though they memorize the *hadith* they fail to understand its meaning. Here, Abdul Rahman criticizes the conservative Salafis whom he describes as being extreme in many matters. He denounces these Muslims for forbidding things like social gatherings, working in the government sector, studying in schools, using currency notes because there are pictures on them, watching the television, travelling to non-Muslim countries, learning subjects like geography, physics and chemistry, etc. Abdul Rahman describes these Muslims as worse than the hypocrite Muslims.³⁶

The second chapter of Abdul Rahman's book is dedicated to the explanation of *bara'*. First, he provides evidences of *bara'* from the Quran and *hadith*. He quoted Quranic verses forbidding alliance with the non-Muslims, and revealed the reasons behind the first verse of *Surah Al-Mumtahanah* which is the story of Hatib Bin Abi Balta'ah (as discussed in Chapter 2). Next, he explains how this *bara'* from the "enemies of God" could be manifested. He talks about four ways³⁷:

- (1) The obligation and importance of holding strongly to the religion of Islam.
- (2) The obligation to portray one's *bara'* from the *kuffar*.
- (3) The forbidding of assisting the *kuffar* against Muslims.
- (4) The forbidding of taking the *kuffar* as leaders.

According to Abdul Rahman, while it is important to have *bara'* from the *kuffar*, the *kuffar* should be treated with kindness, mercy and justice as long as they do not fight the Muslims. *Bara'* from the *kuffar* also does not mean closing the door on performing *da'wah* (i.e., calling them to the religion of Islam). This *da'wah* to the *kuffar*, according to Abdul Rahman, should be done in a soft and compas-

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

sionate way. He bases this on Quranic verse 16:125³⁸ where Muslims are encouraged to call people to the path of God with wisdom and good instruction, and to argue with people in a “[...] way that is best [...]”. Here, he criticizes Muslims who fail to distinguish between *bara’* and *da’wah*, and who believe that *bara’* from the *kuffar* means to slander and kill them. He stresses that *da’wah* needs to be carried out with utmost compassion, good character and kind words so as to convince and attract non-Muslims to Islam.

Abdul Rahman gives examples of practices that are not included in the meaning of *bara’* from the *kuffar*³⁹:

- (1) Visiting them when they are sick.
- (2) Attending their funeral.
- (3) Giving and receiving gifts from them.
- (4) Congratulating them on their festivals.
- (5) Giving condolences to them.
- (6) Helping the poor and needy among them.
- (7) Praying and supplicating for them so that they be guided to Islam (even though they attack Muslims).

Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani

Brief Profile of Al-Qahtani

Muhammad Bin Saeed Bin Salim Al-Qahtani was born in 1956 in Seira Obeida (city of the Qahtan tribe), Saudi Arabia. He graduated with a Master’s Degree in *Shariah* from Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in 1980 and obtained his Doctorate from the same university in 1984. Upon graduation, Al-Qahtani served as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of *Usuluddin wa Da’wah* (Theology and Missionary) at the same university. He is also the head of the

³⁸The verse reads: “Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.”

³⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 23–27.

Department of *Qiraat* (Science of Quranic Recitation) at the university. Besides being a scholar, Al-Qahtani is also a *shariah* lawyer and has served at Abu Bakar As-Siddiq Mosque and Al-Furqan Mosque, located in Mecca, as *imam* and *khatib* (deliverer of sermons) for seven years. He has delivered lectures in many states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Holland and Britain.

Al-Qahtani has written books and articles mainly on the subject of *shariah* and *aqidah*. His publications include the famous *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Fil Islam* (Loyalty and Disavowal in Islam), *As-Sunnah li Abdullah Bin Al-Imam Ahmad* (The Prophetic Tradition by Abdullah Bin Al-Imam Ahmad), *Sharah As-Sunnah lil Barbahari* (Explanation of The Prophetic Tradition by Barbahari), *Tazkiah An-Nafs li Ibn Taimiyyah* (Self-Purification by Ibn Taimiyyah), *Al-Istihza' bid Din wa ahlih, A'dat wa Alfaz Tukhalif Dinallah* (Customs and Utterances Which Oppose the Religion of God), and *Wa Yakuunad Diinu Lillah* (And The Religion Be To God).⁴⁰

Al-Qahtani's Book: Al-Wala' wal Bara' According to the Belief of the Salaf

Al-Qahtani's book on WB was originally submitted in the form of a thesis for his Master's Degree to the Department of Aqeedah of the Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The examining committee for Al-Qahtani's thesis comprised of Muhammad Qutub, the supervisor and chairman; Shaykh Abdur Razzaq Afifi as a panel member; and Dr Abdul Aziz Obeid as a panel member. Al-Qahtani was awarded a Master's Degree with an excellent grade on Saturday evening, the 4th of *Sha'ban* 1401H of the Islamic calendar.

In his Introduction, Al-Qahtani highlighted that the subject matter of WB is of paramount importance and utmost interest for two major reasons. Firstly, it is closely connected to *tawhid*. *Wala'* is understood as sincere love for God, His prophets and the Muslims. *Bara'*, on the other hand, is an expression of enmity and hatred

⁴⁰See brief profile of Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani at http://www.islamway.com/?iw_s=Scholar&iw_a=info&scholar_id=238 (accessed 1 January 2011).

towards falsehood and its adherents. Both are evidences of the Islamic faith.⁴¹ Secondly, some Muslims are no longer aware of those qualities which distinguish them from the non-Muslims. Al-Qahtani alleges that their faith has become so weak that the Muslims have adopted patterns of behavior that are absolutely repugnant to a sincere believer and have taken the non-Muslims as their friends. Al-Qahtani has tried to concentrate on a number of concerns brought on by the current socio-political reality. The following are some of the questions he raises in his book:

- To whom should a Muslim pledge his allegiance?
- To whom should a Muslim entrust his loyalty?
- To whom should a Muslim direct his hatred?
- What is the law for pledging allegiance to non-Muslims?

Al-Qahtani views the need to address these questions as a consequence of the existing lack of decency in this world as the Muslim *ummah* are left behind in a deplorable state of backwardness. Muslims nowadays are more oriented towards the pursuit of wealth and decadent way of life such that they are contaminating and wasting away their faith and wisdom.

Al-Qahtani's book is divided into three parts. The first part, which contains ten chapters, focuses on declaration of the Muslim faith, its prerequisites, and what negates the faith, love and hate in Islam and disbelief in action and conviction. Al-Qahtani argues that WB is inseparable from the divinity of God as proclaimed in the *shahadah*. It is thus a consequential extension of the *shahadah*. On the strength of this argument, he ranks the status of WB as a central part of the Islamic faith in that devotion to and love of God and His Prophet, and hate towards heresy, transgression and immorality, are the desired core values Muslims should hold dear.

The second part of the book contains eight chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the significance of WB according to the Quran and

⁴¹ See Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah al-Salaf*, Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 16.

Sunnah and the history of its literatures. Chapter 2 consults the nature of enmity and conflict between two ideological groups, namely the allies of God and the allies of Satan. Chapter 3 deals with the concept according to the *Ahl As-Sunnah wal Jamaah* and their position with regards to religious innovations and heretics. Chapter 4 portrays examples of WB from pre-Islamic nations as recorded in the Quran. Chapter 5 discusses the concept in the Meccan period with a particular focus on the relationships between the Muslims and their enemies. Chapter 6 looks at the concept in the Medinan period. In Chapter 7, Al-Qahtani describes twenty types of alliances with non-Muslims. He concludes the second part of his book by describing the position of the Shiites and Kharijites with regards to WB in Chapter 8.

The final part of the book contains seven chapters and covers issues such as prerequisites of WB, the rights of Muslims with one another, *jihad*, *hijrah*, abandoning heretics, severance of marriage and inheritance between Muslims and non-Muslims, prohibition of imitating the non-Muslims and assertion of Islamic identity, and finally, how to deal with the non-Muslims.

It could be said that Al-Qahtani's book is the most popular and is widely available in the Muslim world. The book also exerts an overwhelming presence in cyberspace. If one were to Google "*al-wala' wal bara'*", six out of every ten hits makes a reference to the book by Al-Qahtani. Looking at its presence on the internet, one can conclude that the book has become the voice of authority for those who wish to understand the subject in greater depth today. IslamicWeb.com on its official website describes Al-Qahtani's book as one that has a very significant importance. It says: "*This book (Al-Qahtani's) has been chosen by IslamicWeb.com as the best book that has been written about this important part of the Islamic Aqidah. It has been taught at many Islamic universities such as The American Open University.*"⁴² The use of the book as a point of reference for the

⁴²See *Al-Wala' wal Bara' (Love and Hate for Allah's Sake)* by Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani, available at http://islamicweb.com/beliefs/creed/Wala_wal_Bara.htm (accessed 25 January 2011).

topic is echoed by a blogger on an online forum who calls herself Umm Ayesha, who said, “*This is the best book regarding this topic in the English language — a must-read!*”⁴³ The acceptance of the concept as an article of the Islamic faith as suggested by Al-Qahtani is clear in this comment by a fellow blogger called Mujahidah, who said, “... *al-wala’ wal bara’ is an extremely important part of aqidah... For those who deny this, they have only wronged themselves. There is a set of three books that discusses this in great detail, “Al-Wala’ Wal Bara’” by Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani.*”⁴⁴ As mentioned before, the book has also been translated into several languages. To date, there are versions in English, Malay, Indonesian,⁴⁵ Chinese and German.⁴⁶

Like Al-Fawzan, Al-Qahtani also mentions that WB is intended for three groups of people:

- (1) Those who merit love in its fullness — the fellowship of God’s believers.
- (2) Those who earn the love of fellow believers for a specific deed or contribution, while they could also incur the wrath of the believers for another reason — these are Muslims whose good deeds are tampered by their transgressions.
- (3) Those who are comprehensively hated — the infidels and those whose submission of faith is to other than God.

Like Abdul Rahman, Al-Qahtani illustrates the importance and forms of *wala’* that a Muslim must show towards his Muslim brother. As for the rights of Muslims towards one another, Al-Qahtani concedes that there are many, but assistance and affection are the most

⁴³ See *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’ According to the Aqeedah of the Salaf*, Part 2, available at <http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f15/new-al-wala-wal-bara-according-aeqedah-salaf-part-2-a-8765/> (accessed 25 January 2011).

⁴⁴ See *What is Al-Wala’ wal Bara’?*, available at <http://muslimvillage.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=23006> (accessed 25 January 2011).

⁴⁵ See *Loyalitas dan Pengingharan* (WB in Indonesian), available at <http://kajiantarbiyah.blogspot.co.uk/2007/06/al-wala-wal-bara.html> (accessed 25 January 2011).

⁴⁶ See Al-Qahtani’s book in German at <http://i24.de.am/buch.html> (accessed 25 January 2011).

relevant to the discussion of WB. Affection according to Al-Qahtani is meant to be between the Muslims, while the non-Muslims, the corrupt and the heretical have no place in it. In addition, assisting the Muslims regardless of race, color, nationality or social class is a must and is required by the faith. Muslims must help and defend their Muslim brothers with wealth and life. This includes things such as coming actively to their defence, giving them whatever material and moral support necessary whenever they are threatened, and offering up their own wealth and lives to break the power of the oppressor. Al-Qahtani asserts that alliance to non-Muslims represents a danger to the whole community and is more serious than the case of a person who abandons his belief privately within his own heart. Relying on the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Al-Qahtani laid down twenty types of alliances that he considers to be heretical and forbidden in the eyes of Islam⁴⁷:

- (1) Contentment with the non-Muslims and with their faith. This is so as endorsement of the validity of their faith is an act of disbelief.
- (2) Reliance on them for help, assistance or protection.
- (3) Agreeing with them on some points of disbelief.
- (4) Seeking their love and affection.
- (5) Inclining towards them.
- (6) Flattering and adulating their faith.
- (7) Taking them as intimate friends. Intimacy here means closeness of confidence or trust.
- (8) Obeying their wishes and desires.
- (9) Siding with them who ridicule the Quran.
- (10) Giving them authority over the Muslims.
- (11) Trusting them.
- (12) Expressing contentment with their actions, imitating their dress or adopting any refinement associated with their faith.

⁴⁷Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah al-Salaf*, Part 2, Chapter 7, pp. 111-123.

- (13) Drawing near to them, enjoying the time with them, revealing inner feelings and showing respect to them.
- (14) Aiding or abetting them in their wrongdoings.
- (15) Seeking advice from them.
- (16) Honoring and giving them grand titles. This includes placing hands over their hearts or removing hats upon greeting them as a gesture of affection for them.
- (17) Joining and living with them.
- (18) Colluding with them, helping them in their schemes, entering into pacts with them, spying on their behalf, informing them about the Muslims or fighting in their ranks.
- (19) Fleeing from the lands of Islam to the lands of disbelief.
- (20) Supporting their ideologies such as communism, nationalism and secular politics.

Having listed all these acts of forbidden alliance, Al-Qahtani however agrees with the idea of benefiting from non-Muslims. Based on the book *Ma'alim fit Tariq* by Sayyid Qutub, Al-Qahtani claims that Islam permits Muslims to approach non-Muslims in order to benefit from their knowledge of chemistry, physics, medicine, manufacturing, agriculture, management and so forth, when these sorts of useful knowledge have not been acquired by Muslims. Muslims are also allowed to trade with the non-Muslims, ask them for directions, buy arms and clothing from them, and make use of their things which Muslims need.

Among the issues related to the subject of WB which Al-Qahtani discusses in his book are the obligation of *hijrah*⁴⁸ and *jihad*. For *hijrah*, Al-Qahtani argues that living in a non-Muslim land is not permissible in Islam as Muslims would have to live under non-Islamic

⁴⁸ *Hijrah*, as argued by Al-Qahtani, is the essence of *tawhid*. According to him, Muslims should abandon all else and flee to God. He acknowledges that there is both a physical and a spiritual dimension to the concept. Al-Qahtani says, "A physical movement is from one place to another and a spiritual migration is to Allah and His Messenger. It is this second migration which constitutes the real migration, as the body simply follows the soul." Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam Min Majahim Aqidah al-Salaf*, p. 228.

conditions. Thus, *hijrah* is necessary and obligatory.⁴⁹ He also claims that Muslims who willingly accept the rule of non-Muslims, and live under any rule other than the *shariah*, are committing acts that will nullify their faith.⁵⁰ For *jihad*, Al-Qahtani asserts that it is one of the fundamental characteristics of WB. He argues that the highest expression of *bara'* is *jihad* for the sake of God, as it is the only way to sever truth from falsehood and to sever the party of God (*hizb Allah*) from the party of Satan (*hizb aslshaitan*).⁵¹ Looking back at the life of Prophet Muhammad, *jihad* became normality soon after his migration. This stands as proof of the importance of *jihad* and of the establishment of Islamic faith. Al-Qahtani claims that *jihad* is the way in which Muslims call others to Islam, and it was not a peculiar response to conditions in the first days of Islam, but rather an inseparable part of the call to the religion. If it were only a response to conditions of the times, it would not have been so deeply rooted in the Quran and in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.⁵²

Observations and Analysis

After presenting briefly the four books written by Al-Fawzan, Al-Zawahiri, Abdul Rahman and Al-Qahtani, we will now turn our attention to the analysis of their writings. The analysis is done by observing three things: (1) what contents and dimensions of WB (social, political and *Jihadi*) are presented in the books; (2) the

⁴⁹Salafis who argue that Muslims should perform *hijrah* base their arguments on Quran 4:99–100. Literally, these verses state that if a person cannot practise his religion, then he should emigrate. It clearly highlights that it is an injustice for one to accept living under conditions of humiliation while being able to move to another land that offers freedom, security and the means of a dignified life. The only people excused from this judgment are those who possess neither the power nor the means of deciding such matters. Thus, *hijrah* is permissible, in fact compulsory, if the destination allows the Muslim more means of practicing his religion than the land of origin.

⁵⁰Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah al-Salaf*, pp. 223–224.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁵²*Ibid.*

style and approach taken by the writers in presenting the concept; and (3) what distinguishes their writings from one another. Undeniably, all of them agree on the importance of WB for Muslims and that it is closely connected to the Islamic faith. They also agree that Muslims are obliged to love the Muslims and hate the non-Muslims. However, as the previous chapter has clarified, these Salafi thinkers — despite their unity on the importance of WB — differ on the practical aspects of the concept. In what follows, we attempt to provide some observations and analysis of their writings individually before we conclude the chapter.

Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan

Al-Fawzan's book is considered to be the simplest and shortest of all. The 18-page book is a point-by-point approach written by Al-Fawzan to illustrate daily life examples of how Muslims should portray *wala'* to their fellow Muslim brothers and *bara'* from the non-Muslims. For each of these examples, Al-Fawzan does not elaborate much on their meanings but only quotes a verse or two from the Quran or *hadith* to support his claim. One could also notice that Al-Fawzan only discusses the social dimension of WB in his book. The first two chapters are filled with examples of how a Muslim ought to express his love for his fellow Muslim brothers and hatred towards the non-Muslims. His writing seems to suggest that the main objective behind the concept of WB is to maintain the purity of Islam as outlined in the Quran, Sunnah and consensus of the Companions, and this purity is achieved through denouncing religious deviations and avoiding contact with non-Muslims.

In his course of explaining WB, Al-Fawzan does not mention anything about the obligation of *jihad*, which according to other Salafi thinkers like Al-Zawahiri and Al-Qahtani is the highest expression of showing *bara'* of the non-believers. This is a typical purist Salafi line of thinking that always avoids any kind of overt activism and opposition, let alone the use of violence against the regime and the non-Muslims in general. Purist Salafis prefer to counsel and provide advice to leaders rather than taking the path of overt opposition

and rebellion. They believe that the current time is analogous to the Meccan period during the time of the Prophet, when he propagated Islam through peaceful means and focused on *tarbiyah* and *tazkiyah*. As a famous purist Salafi, Muhammad Nasir al-Din Al-Albani, puts it: "History repeats itself. Everybody claims that the Prophet is their role model. Our Prophet spent the first half of his message making *da'wah*, and he did not start it with *jihad*."⁵³

It is not surprising that Al-Fawzan avoids raising issues of politics and governance in his writing. For example, he does not mention anything about the issue of *takfir* of Muslim leaders who fail to implement the *shariah* fully, even though all Salafi groups (including the purists) believe that Muslims should uphold the *shariah*.⁵⁴ Purist Salafis do not see Muslims who fail to uphold the *shariah* as *kafirs*, although they could be sinners. The use of *takfir*, especially upon Muslims who do not comprehensively uphold the *shariah* and upon those who are deemed *kuffar* for adhering to non-Islamic systems, has a high connotation of politics which purist Salafis always refrain from. To them, politics is something that is best left to the politicians, and the purist Salafis do not view themselves as a political movement. They even accuse other Salafis such as those of the politicians and Jihadis as straying away from the Salafi creed because they fail to follow the proper implementation of the Salafi *manhaj*. In this respect, the purist Salafis distinguish between the Salafi *aqidah* and *manhaj*. The *aqidah* comprises "the knowledge of *tawhid*" and is the basis of belief. *Manhaj*, on the other hand, is methodology

⁵³ Debate by Sheikh Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani, available at http://www.allaahuakbar.net/scholars/albaani/debate_on_jihad.htm (accessed 20 February 2012).

⁵⁴ Purist Salafis argue that *takfir* upon Muslim leaders is not feasible due to several reasons. First, most Muslim leaders still incorporate Islamic laws into their constitutions and regard the *shariah* as a source of legislation. Second, although Muslim leaders are sinful for committing sins like usury and corruption, there is no evidence that they regard these activities as lawful in Islam. In other words, they are not doing *istihlal* (permitting what is Islamically forbidden) of God's laws. Third, purist Salafis argue that one should evaluate the consequences and benefits of doing *takfir* against the incumbent rulers and whether *takfir* results in greater or lesser evil. They believe that such an act will not bring any benefit to the religion.

and signifies the Prophetic model of putting beliefs into practice. According to purist Salafis, one must adhere to both the proper belief and method in order to be a Salafi Muslim.

Ayman Al-Zawahiri

Al-Zawahiri's approach in presenting WB could be seen as one that is very hostile towards the non-Muslims. Although Al-Zawahiri covers the social elements of WB, his book tends more towards promoting *jihad* as the greatest expression of WB and portraying enmity and hostility towards the *kuffar*. His feeling of deep hatred to the West, especially the United States, is reflected in his book and can be clearly seen as early as in the first few lines of his introductory remarks. In addition, his final chapter is called "America's Mujahidin" (*Mujahidu Amrika*) where he praises those who fought against the Americans in Afghanistan and opposes Muslims who allied with the US in the war and describes them as having deviated from the doctrine of WB.

Just as he portrays WB as deriving logically from the essence of the *shahadah*, so too does Al-Zawahiri believe *jihad* to be the natural result and the highest form of disavowal from the *kuffar* and the regimes he views as un-Islamic. *Jihad*, according to Al-Zawahiri, serves two major purposes: (1) to denounce the political leadership of the Muslim regimes and force them to fully submit to the commands of Islam; and (2) as the best way to express *bara'* from the *kuffar*. This is justified based on Quran 60:4 (as explained in Chapter 2), as this verse speaks not only of disavowal but also of enmity and hatred between Abraham and his enemies. Thus, Al-Zawahiri believes that *jihad* is the greatest way to express these feelings.

It is strongly rooted in Al-Zawahiri's thought that the concept of WB is one that obligates Muslims to totally sever the relationship with non-Muslims. The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) recorded one of Al-Zawahiri's sayings: "*As for al-wala' wal-bara', its meaning is, in very condensed form, a total and complete break with the West and its civilization, and perpetual jihad against it until its*

final defeat.”⁵⁵ Such a statement from Al-Zawahiri clearly shows the ideology of Jihadi Salafis who call for the killing and elimination of the *kuffar* from the earth.

As mentioned before, WB is a significant concept in the Islamist militant ideology such as Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda members who are Jihadi in orientation use WB to portray that the world is divided into two warring camps: Muslims versus the rest. According to the Jihadi Salafis, these two camps cannot co-exist in peace and there will always be a clash between the Muslim world and the non-Muslim world. Al-Qaeda seeks to highlight this reality by bringing the concept of WB into their ideology. The clash and dichotomy between the two camps will be inevitable if all Muslims follow and practise the concept. Such a position taken by Al-Qaeda can be further confirmed in the writings of many other Salafis who belong to this group such as Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi and Nasr Al-Fahad.

The politico-jihadi dimension of WB can be clearly seen when Al-Zawahiri discusses the affairs of ruling regimes and their incumbent rulers. For example, in Chapter 2 of his book, Al-Zawahiri criticizes the Grand Mufti of Egypt for issuing a *fatwa* sanctioning the execution of Muhammad Abd Al-Salam Faraj, Abd al-Hamid Abd Al-Salam, Khalid Al-Islambouli, Hussein Abbas and Atta Tayil in 1982 for their involvement in the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat in 1981.⁵⁶ Al-Zawahiri considers these individuals as the *mujahidin* heroes of Islam in Egypt. He also condemned the government of Egypt for signing four treaties with Israel including the popular 1979 peace treaty which permanently ended the state of war between the two countries and prevented Egypt from aiding any country that fell under Israeli aggression. Al-Zawahiri also pointed to the infidelity of the Saudi regime for seeking America’s aid in the Gulf War of 1990. He claims that there

⁵⁵ See MEMRI report, *Tunisian Intellectual Lafif Lakhdar to the G8: Solving the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict Will Dry up Support for Islamist Terrorism*, available at http://www.memri.org/report/en/print2308.htm#_edn1 (accessed 20 February 2012).

⁵⁶ Al-Zawahiri, Ayman, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*, p. 24.

was no need for an American presence as the armies of Arab and Islamic states were sufficient and able to protect and liberate Kuwait. According to him, the US presence on the Arabian Peninsula was nothing more than the usurpation of the oil wells.⁵⁷

Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq

As a politico and academic Salafi, Abdul Rahman's work on WB could be seen as one that has a slant towards explaining the concept in a scholarly and academic way. This is evident in the way he discusses the linguistic and *shariah* meanings of *wala'*, quoting from the famous Arabic dictionary of *Lisan Al-Arab* and exposing the various derivations of the term in classical Arabic usage. This is in contrast with Al-Fawzan and Al-Zawahiri's approach of not to delve deeper into the linguistic meaning of WB, but to immediately discuss the manifestation or the practicality of the concept in their books. Academic Salafis are naturally more into writing and theorizing their beliefs than the other groups that have the same or close beliefs and applications.

Unlike Al-Fawzan and Al-Zawahiri, Abdul Rahman's conception of WB also seems to be quite compromising and lenient to the non-Muslims. While he acknowledges the importance of showing *bara'* from the *kuffar*, he does not forbid the acts of praying for them, exchanging gifts and congratulating non-Muslims — acts which, according to the purist and Jihadi Salafis, are not acceptable. Such a stance towards non-Muslims could explain politicians' inclination to politics in that they are willing to adopt un-Islamic systems such as democracy and taking part in elections, which are unlawful in the eyes of the purists.

One could also notice that Abdul Rahman is the only author who explicitly criticizes the other strands of Salafism, especially the purists, for being too "strict" and "extreme" in their *manhaj*. He also criticizes the Jihadis for permitting the shedding of Muslims' blood and taking their properties, and for going against the Muslim rulers

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.

and killing them. Such a criticism from Abdul Rahman could be explained as arising from his politico background. Like Al-Fawzan, Abdul Rahman does not mention anything about *jihad* against the *kuffar* when discussing WB. This is due to the fact that purist and politico Salafis are both against the Jihadi Salafis' method of resorting to violence.

Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani

It can be said that Al-Qahtani's book is the most comprehensive of all in terms of its contents and also capturing the three dimensions of WB: social, political and *Jihadi*. The entire first part of his book, which consists of ten chapters, is dedicated to the discussion of WB in relation to the declaration of Muslim faith. Al-Qahtani begins his discussion on the concept by emphasizing its creedal (*aqidah*) aspect, before he moves to describe the manifestations of the concept in a Muslim life in the second and third parts of the book. Apart from explaining WB as an integral part of the Islamic faith, Al-Qahtani also highlights the concept as one that requires Muslims to love the Muslims and Islam, and hate *kufr* and the *kuffar*. He states that love is the source of loyalty and hate is the source of opposition; and it is by this that both the heart and hand are moved to act.

The social dimension of WB is evident when Al-Qahtani elaborates how WB should be applied in the daily life of Muslims. Al-Qahtani provides examples of the acts that constitute a forbidden alliance with the non-Muslims, which include taking them as friends, loving them and seeking their assistance. His political inclination could also be seen in the fact that he uses the ideas and quotations of Sayyid Qutub whose scholarship of Islam is only accepted by politico Salafis.⁵⁸ Other Salafi strands like the purists do

⁵⁸It is interesting to note here that Muhammad Qutub, the brother of Sayyid Qutub, sat on the examining committee for Al-Qahtani's thesis *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* which Al-Qahtani submitted for his Master's Degree. Qutub served as the supervisor for Al-Qahtani's thesis and exam, while the other panel members were Shaikh Abdul Razzaq Afifi and Dr Abdul Aziz Obeid.

not consider Qutub as a Salafi. Some even go to the extent of labeling Qutub as a *kafir*. Al-Qahtani agrees with Qutub's ideas of permitting Muslims to approach non-Muslims in order to benefit from their knowledge of chemistry, physics, medicine, manufacturing, agriculture, management and so forth, when these sorts of useful knowledge have not been acquired by Muslims.

Like Al-Fawzan, Al-Qahtani also discusses the obligation of *hijrah* as one of the most important manifestations of WB. He readily admits that "*The hijrah is a vitally important aspect of Islam; it is at once the guiding principle of alliance and dissociation and the supreme example of it.*"⁵⁹ Al-Qahtani argues that living in a non-Muslim land is not permissible in Islam as Muslims will have to live under non-Islamic conditions. Thus, *hijrah* is necessary and obligatory. He also claims that Muslims who willingly accept the rule of non-Muslims, and live under any rule other than the *shariah*, are committing acts that will nullify their faith. This is so as loyalty and sovereignty can only be given to and by God, and Islam is the only way of life for Muslims. By affirming this, Al-Qahtani has also portrayed the concept as one that has a political connotation.

The Jihadi element of WB in Al-Qahtani's book can be clearly observed in his chapter on *jihād*. His writing on *jihād* is centered into two parts. The first part focuses on armed struggle, and the other on the merits of martyrdom. Al-Qahtani believes that *jihād* is one of the fundamental characteristics of WB, and the highest expression of *bara'* is *jihād* for the sake of God. It is, according to him, the only way to distinguish truth from falsehood and to sever the Muslims from the others. The aims of *jihād* according to Al-Qahtani are threefold: (1) the non-Muslims should be fought to assure everyone's right to choose between truth and falsehood; (2) the non-Muslims should be fought to assure the right of Muslims to call others to Islam; and (3) the non-Muslims should be fought to establish the rule and authority of Islam on earth. Al-Qahtani asserts that the achievement of all these objectives by Muslims is the supreme liberation of humanity as it frees them from the worship of others besides Allah.

⁵⁹ Al-Qahtani, *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam Min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf*, p. 217.

In this regard, Al-Qahtani has the same stance as Al-Zawahiri who seeks to eliminate *kufur* and the *kuffar* from this earth unless they submit to Islam. Al-Qahtani belongs to the camp which views that armed *jihad* or war is the only kind of relationship that exists between Muslims and non-Muslims. To the proponents of such views, armed *jihad* is a standing obligation; its aim is to fight the infidels wherever they may be found, in accordance with the Prophet's utterance to "fight the polytheists until they say 'There is no God but Allah'". Armed *jihad* is to be carried out until all lands are liberated from non-believers and when all non-believers submit to the rule of Islam.⁶⁰ This view of *jihad* proposes the idea of perpetual warfare between Muslims and non-Muslims that will only cease when all non-Muslims embrace Islam, fall under the rule of a Muslim nation, or enter into a peaceful agreement with Muslims.

The observations and analysis of the writings by the four Salafi thinkers are summarized in Table 1.

Al-Fawzan's approach of presenting WB in his book could be explained from his purist background which forbids dealing with political affairs and avoids the use of violence (understood in the form of *jihad*) against the regime. Purist Salafis apply *bara'* strictly at the social level (which does not pose any threat to the rulers), without applying similar policies at the political level.⁶¹ As for Abdul Rahman, his political orientation is clear from the way he presents the concept in a more academic manner. Politico Salafis are very vocal in expressing their concerns and this could explain his criticism of other Salafi strands in his book. His detailed explanation of the characteristics of the neo-*Khawarij* also highlights his political orientation when discussing the concept. Like the purists, the politicos do not believe in violence, and this could explain the absence of the Jihadi element in his writing. One of the things that distinguishes Abdul Rahman's writing from all the others is his method of

⁶⁰ Khadduri, Majid, *The Islamic Law of Nations: Shaybani's Siyar*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1966, pp. 16–17.

⁶¹ Al-Rasheed, Madawi, *Contesting the Saudi State: Islamic Voices from a New Generation*, p. 50.

Table 1. Analysis of the Writings on WB by Selected Modern Salafi Thinkers

	Social	Political	Jihadi	Remarks
Al-Fawzan	Yes	No	No	Presentation of concept is straightforward and simple. Entire book is focused on social dimension of the concept.
Abdul Rahman	Yes	Yes	No	Presentation of concept in a more academic and politically-oriented manner. Criticizes purist position on the concept and Jihadis' use of violence. Portrays a slightly compromising form of <i>bara'</i> .
Al-Zawahiri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Although his book covers all the three dimensions of WB, the Jihadi dimension is the most obvious and thoroughly emphasized throughout the book.
Al-Qahtani	Yes	Yes	Yes	Comprehensive presentation of concept including historical aspects of concept. Covers all dimensions of WB equally.

categorizing *wala'* into several rights, something which is not done by the others.

Al-Zawahiri's inclination toward presenting the concept in a full-fledged Jihadi orientation could be observed as early as his opening remarks which reflect his deep hatred towards the West, especially the US. Throughout his discussion on the concept, there is no trace of tolerance for the non-Muslims, especially the Jews and Christians. He lumps them all together indiscriminately and calls for their killing and elimination. The same applies to those Muslims whom he views have apostatized and the hypocrites who do not heed the call of *jihad* and who associate with the infidels. Finally, Al-Qahtani's

book could be seen as the most comprehensive of all in terms of its presentation and incorporation of all the social, political and Jihadi elements. Such a comprehensive presentation of WB could be among the main reasons why Al-Qahtani's book on WB is the most popular in the Salafi world and occupies a significant presence on the internet.

The different styles and approaches these Salafi thinkers have in presenting religious issues such as the concept of WB could have an impact on the wider Salafi community. For example, Al-Fawzan's straightforward and apolitical approach will appeal more to the general Salafi community who are not politically inclined and reject violence. It could have the widest base of supporters. Purists' appeal and attraction lies in its simplicity and the social message which they are conveying. Books of politico Salafis, on the other hand, would probably appeal to the more educated and academically inclined Salafi population. Their style of writing and message is geared towards a political objective. Finally, books written by Jihadi Salafis would obviously appeal more to the so-called militant Islamists who are passionate in using violence against their adversaries. Jihadi Salafism could have the narrowest base of supporters among the Salafi community and is not a fertile ground for the masses due to the unacceptability of using violence by many Salafis.

Lastly, it is important to emphasize here that the different views purist, politico and Jihadi Salafis have on WB, as shown in this chapter, are not absolute. In other words, it is inaccurate to say, for example, that all purist Salafis will avoid raising political issues when discussing WB; or that all politico Salafis criticize the purists for being too "extreme" in their understanding of the social dimension of WB; or that all Jihadi Salafis view *jihad* as the highest expression of showing *bara'* from the *kuffar*. The analysis conducted and conclusions made in this research are mainly based on the works of selected Salafi thinkers. As the nature of WB is very complex, it is without doubt that Salafis from the various ideological backgrounds could share similar positions or disagree on issues related to WB in other ways that have not been discussed in this research. Our conclusion is based on the unique differences in

understanding this concept as treated by writers from different ideological backgrounds.

Conclusion

In conclusion, after observing and analyzing the contents of the books on WB by the four Salafi thinkers, we can make several concluding observations:

- (1) The chapter has proven that the Salafi concept of WB is not static and fixed. This confirms the flexible nature of the concept as explained in the previous chapter — WB is fluid, multi-dimensional and resides on a *continuum* that can range from what might be termed the “very mild” to the “most extreme”. It connotes a wide range of meanings: an inward spiritual struggle to attain perfect faith, severance of contact with the *kuffar*, or a political or military struggle.
- (2) The chapter also confirms the hypothesis that the Salafi concept of WB consists of several dimensions, i.e., the *aqidah* (which is generally agreed upon by all Salafi currents), social, political and *Jihadi*. Thus, in a broader sense, the concept can be applied at both the religious or social and political level. At the religious level, WB is characterized by a portrayal of non-Muslims as potential enemies of the purity of Islamic rituals and customs, while at the political level, Salafis use WB by actively incorporating politics, violence, rulers and diplomatic ties with other countries into their belief.
- (3) The chapter proves that a particular Salafi background and orientation has a significant effect on the Salafi *manhaj* and the way this *manhaj* is presented and argued. Though it is obviously not absolute, the effect of one’s adoption of a particular Salafi orientation could result in different dimensions of presenting religious issues. Their diverse ideological trends lead them to produce different rulings, or at least similar rulings but in different levels of severity and flexibility.

- (4) The flexibility of the concept could be seen in the way Salafis connect other religious concepts to WB. For example, purist Salafis, though they believe in *jihad*, do not connect the concept of *jihad* to WB — something that is done by the Jihadis. Likewise, politico Salafis do not agree with the purists' idea of *hijrah* as one of the manifestations of WB. This can be seen when Abdul Rahman explicitly condemns purists for forbidding Muslims to travel to non-Muslim countries.
- (5) The chapter suggests that the different ways Salafis have in presenting religious issues have an impact on the wider Salafi adherents. Naturally, Salafis will look for books and scholars who belong to the same or similar Salafi orientation that they adopt.
- (6) The chapter suggests that the categorization of modern Salafis into three distinct factions — purist, politico and Jihadi — is a useful framework to analyze and explain the diversity of rulings and opinions in modern Salafism.

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Chapter 6

Conclusion

Modern Salafism is a complex phenomenon in contemporary Islamic thought. The complexity of modern Salafism is proven in this research in two ways: (1) the emergence of different ideological trends and inclinations in modern Salafism; and (2) the diverse interpretation in matters of religion, society and politics within modern Salafism. In terms of religious legitimacy, this research has shown that using the same Islamic sources, modern Salafis produce different rulings and opinions depending on how they view the current social and political context.

Chapter 1 of this book provides the background and essential understanding of modern Salafism and the concept of WB. The understanding of WB in modern Salafism is further enhanced in Chapter 2 when we look at how Quranic scriptures have significantly impacted modern Salafis' understanding of WB and shaped its conception. Chapter 3 begins to uncover the realities of this concept by looking at how the concept originated from the teachings of Wahhabism. It also shows the active propagation of modern Salafis to spread their version of WB, not only in Saudi Arabia, but also to other parts of the Muslim world and beyond. The complexities of modern Salafis' concept of WB are described in Chapter 4 when we portray the spectrum of the concept in modern Salafism. By using the examples of four issues that are related to the concept, the chapter shows that the spectrum of WB in modern Salafism can range from what might be termed the "very mild" to the "most extreme" position. Finally, Chapter 5 attempts to prove that one of the main reasons for the spectrum or diverse understanding of the concept is the different Salafi orientations or the backgrounds from which

modern Salafis emerge. This is done through analyzing the books on WB by several modern Salafi thinkers from the various Salafi backgrounds. This analysis has shown that the various ideological trends in modern Salafism have an impact on the manner in which modern Salafis present the concept of WB, which in turn highlights the fluidity and multi-dimensional nature of the concept in modern Salafism.

The analysis on Salafis' concept of WB as shown in this research is believed to be able to make contributions in the following arenas. First, it helps to improve our understanding of WB in modern Salafism in several ways: (1) the research proves that the understanding of WB in modern Salafism is not static, and that different Salafis view it in different ways; (2) like other Islamic concepts, the basis of WB from the Quran is taken literally and applied generally in modern Salafism. This can be seen clearly in how modern Salafis treat the term "enemies" in the Quran and generalize the verse that says "*Do not take the Jews and Christians as protectors*" to include all Jews, Christians and non-Muslims in general. This reflects and reaffirms the modern Salafis' characteristic of literalism and generalization which they are known for when dealing with Quranic texts and Prophetic tradition. Arguably, from the perspective of *tafsir* methodology, the generalized view towards non-Muslims is flawed because of its over-reliance on generalities (*`am*) found in the Quran, over-reliance on the *hadiths*, and the failure to observe the rule of *takhsis* (specification) as required and observed by Muslim exegetes; and (3) the research discovers that modern Salafis' concept of WB could be applied at four different dimensions, i.e., *aqidah*, social, political and *Jihadi*. The various dimensions of this concept highlight the uniqueness of the concept in modern Salafism. The research also shows how important these various dimensions of WB are to the different modern Salafi factions.

Second, until now, no systematic research has been conducted on the modern Salafi concept of WB, and this study aims to fill the lacunae. This study is seen as an important preliminary effort to understand in-depth and analyze the dynamics of modern Salafism. Through this study, we are able to appreciate not only the various interpretations of the concept, but also the different ideological trends modern Salafis have. It also helps us to appreciate that issues such as social interaction, politics and governance play a part in the

formulation of religious rulings and opinions by modern Salafis. In a similar way, this research shows that it is possible to analyze modern Salafism by studying other doctrines present in it such as *jihad*, *hijrah* and *takfir*. In a broader sense, it shows that the dynamics of any modern Islamist movement cannot be understood by ignoring its religious doctrines.

Third, one of the greatest challenges the current world is facing is how to deal with the security threat posed by violent and militant Islamist movements such as Al-Qaeda and the like-minded groups. Much research has exposed that one of the main strategies of these movements is the active propagation of their ideology or religious doctrines. The use of modern technologies such as the Internet, for example, has allowed the spread of radical ideologies beyond geographical borders. It is concluded, through research and my interviews with several Jihadi Salafis, that WB constitutes an important foundation in the ideology of Jihadi Salafism, which is subscribed to by most contemporary militant Islamists. In recent years, many governments and security agencies have realized that challenging and countering the religious doctrines of these militant Islamists is imperative in the struggle against terrorism and in managing the threat posed by these individuals.¹ This has led them to develop several counter-ideological efforts including programs to ideologically rehabilitate the detained militant Islamists. Such a program is popularly known today as “de-radicalization” and is apparent in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Algeria, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.²

¹See report on the ‘International Conference on Terrorist Rehabilitation’ organized by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, 24–26 February 2009, available at http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/conf_reports.html (accessed 15 April 2012).

²See Gunaratna, Rohan, Jolene Gerard and Lawrence Rubin (eds.), *Terrorist Rehabilitation and Counter-Radicalisation: New Approaches to Counter-Terrorism*, Routledge, 2011; Ashour, Omar, *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements*, Routledge, 2010; Bjorgo, Tore and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, Routledge, 2009; Gunaratna, Rohan and Mohamed Bin Ali, “De-Radicalization Initiatives in Egypt: A Preliminary Insight”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 2009, pp. 277–291.

As stated earlier, challenging the religious doctrines of Jihadi Salafism, especially the concept of WB, is important in dealing with the threat posed by militant Islamists. This is due to the fact that Jihadi Salafis use WB to identify who are their friends and foes and to develop hatred and enmity toward their adversaries. Importantly, the concept has become the basis for the legitimacy to kill the non-Muslims and Muslims alike. As such, this research aims to make a major contribution in the area of countering the religious ideology of contemporary militant Islamists. It hopes to enhance the understanding of how Jihadi Salafis use and treat the concept of WB, and subsequently formulate an appropriate response to the concept.

Modern Salafism is not homogeneous; rather, modern Salafis are divided based on their distinct ideological trends and inclinations. This reality concerning modern Salafism and the analysis on its concept of WB could assist the governments and security agencies in their counter-terrorism work, especially in identifying which are the “Salafis” that actually pose a security threat and should be dealt with. This notion is important as we have seen that the term “Salafism” is widely misunderstood and is often equated with terrorism. The assumption that Salafism equals terrorism or that it could lead to acts of terrorism is simply a sweeping statement, incorrect and highlights over generalizations. Roel Meijer in his recent book *Global Salafism* has pointed out this fact by saying that “much of the research and literature on modern Salafism has been through the prism of ‘security studies’ or books that play on the popular view that equates Salafism with violence”.³

The present research has, in a way, proven that not all modern Salafis are violence-oriented and that only Jihadi Salafis sanction the use of violence against their adversaries in the name of WB. Thus, this research hopes to benefit those involved in counter-terrorism efforts in several ways: (1) it improves the understanding of modern Salafism, particularly the fact that modern Salafis are divided into several factions and groups. Also, religion and ideology play an

³See “Introduction” chapter in Meijer, Roel (ed.), *Global Salafism: Islam’s New Religious Movement*, p. 2.

important role in the radicalization of Muslim individuals. This proves that the claim that Muslims are radicalized due to social, political and economic factors and not religion is inaccurate; (2) it helps us understand what are the ideological trends and inclinations these different Salafi groups and individuals have. Such an understanding will assist in formulating a more effective counter-terrorism and counter-ideological strategy; (3) it provides the knowledge that WB is one of the most important doctrines in the ideology of Jihadi Salafis, and this suggests that more study and emphasis should be focused on the concept, and that an appropriate response to the concept is needed; and (4) the understanding of points 1, 2 and 3 will inevitably help the security agencies to determine who are the “Salafis” and individuals that should be arrested and dealt with.

Understanding the position and application of WB in Islam is critical because it has profound implications in today’s reality. Undeniably, the matter of WB is important in Muslim and non-Muslim relationships. This is so as it determines: (1) the way Muslims see non-Muslims or develop a perception about them; (2) the manner in which Muslims interact with non-Muslims; (3) Muslims’ ability to live harmoniously with non-Muslims; and (4) the way Muslims communicate with non-Muslims. Unquestionably, all this affects the interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims and the image of Muslims from the perspective of the non-Muslims. The question for Islam itself: is it true that Islam is a religion that loves peace and harmony and is characterized by mercy and love? For example, if a Muslim believes that the basis of relations with non-Muslims is war and not peaceful co-existence, then he will inevitably develop feelings of hatred and enmity towards them.

Related to the concept of WB is the notion of *hijrah*. As the research has shown, originally WB merely took on the meaning of rejection and isolation from all non-Muslim practices and culture. This has, among others, brought about solutions such as the concept of *hijrah*, which is to move away from the reaches of influence of what might render disbelief. Yet, the changing times and situations have transformed its nature to one that demands active or visible displays of animosity and hatred to non-believers in order to render

a Muslim's faith intact. More recently, this animosity has reached a new level of intensity with justifications for initiating violent attacks on non-Muslims inside and outside the battlefield zone — an understanding that totally transforms the concept of *jihad* in Islam.

It is mainly due to these consequences mentioned above that understanding WB in its proper perspective and context is believed to be an urgent priority in the lives of Muslims today. The concept as portrayed in modern Salafism poses great challenges to the realities of modern living. This is so especially in the context where Muslims are living as minority communities in non-Muslim countries. Practising the modern Salafis' version of WB could be seen as a barrier that could hinder integration between different ethnic and religious groups, develop intolerance amongst them, and could lead Muslims to live in isolation and inconvenience. At the very worst, the concept could be the foundational basis for the very extreme Salafis to incite hatred and legitimize violence against the disbelieving majority.

The opinion of modern Salafis who, on the basis of the Quranic verses on WB, prohibit the Muslims from developing friendly relations with people of other religions is arguable. If we study these verses in their proper context, we shall see that all these verses pertain to those people — whether Jews, Christians or the Polytheists of Arabia — who had come into direct or hidden confrontation with Islam and the Muslims. The Quran, in effect, has directed the Muslims that in these circumstances (of confrontation and war), they must not give away their secrets (*bitanah*) to these people and must not make them friends, preferring them over the Muslims (*min duni al-mu'minin*). Obviously, the directive given in these circumstances cannot be generalized. The position modern Salafis place on the concept of WB is also highly questionable. As a concept in Islam, is WB an *usul* (fundamental, linked to *aqidah* and non-variant) or *furu'* (branch, subject to change depending on context or situation)? This is an important fundamental question as it helps to provide solutions to the dilemmas faced by Muslims today, especially in the situation described above and in maintaining their Islamic identity. The impact of the modern Salafi concept of WB is serious

as it leads to the claim that non-Salafi Muslims who abandon the practice of WB as understood by modern Salafis have apostatized and are no longer Muslims. This is an example of the many consequences of applying modern Salafis' concept of WB.

Due to these effects and consequences of applying modern Salafis' version of WB, the so-called mainstream Muslims or non-Salafi Muslims have made attempts to challenge the modern Salafis and prove that their understanding of WB is incorrect and not appropriate, especially in the context of modern living. Below are some examples of the responses given to the Salafis' concept of WB:

- (1) In response to a query on whether it is permissible for Muslims to take part in the elections held in non-Muslim countries, the European Council for *Fatwa* and Research states that "Considering the issue of *Al-Wala'*, it is evident that there is nothing wrong Islamically in having some sort of such co-operation between Muslims and non-Muslims as regards worldly affairs. Besides, the Prophetic biography is abound with fine examples of how the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, dealt amicably with non-Muslims, both in the Meccan and Medinan societies. He shared in many pacts and alliances aimed at eliminating injustice and aggression. In addition, he shared in relieving the impact of adversities and famines."⁴
- (2) On the issue of Muslims befriending non-Muslims, Dr Muzammil Siddiqi, President of the *Fiqh* Council of America, says that "The Quran does not say that non-Muslims cannot be Muslims' friends, nor does it forbid Muslims to be friendly to non-Muslims. There are many non-Muslims who are good friends of Muslim individuals and the Muslim community. There are also many

⁴See *Elections in Non-Muslim Countries: Role of Muslims*, available at http://www.onislam.net/english/ask-the-scholar/shariah-based-systems/imamate-and-political-systems/175611-elections-in-non-muslim-countries-role-of-muslims.html?Political_Systems= (accessed 15 April 2012).

- good Muslims who truly and sincerely observe their faith and are very friendly to many non-Muslims at the same time.”⁵
- (3) Addressing the community in one of his speeches after the July 2005 bombings in London, the famous Islamic scholar from the US, Hamzah Yusuf,⁶ said that Muslims’ understanding of *Al-wala’ wal-bara’* needs to be changed. He said that “in some places, people are taught that *al-wala’* (allegiance to anything other than Islam) nullifies faith, making a person a *kafir* or a disbeliever. This is true in terms of creed, but it is not true in politics and social issues.”⁷ Hamzah Yusuf further criticizes the Salafis’ stance on WB and their use of Quranic verses to show the validity of WB by saying: “The Quran says, ‘Don’t take the *kafir* as protectors.’ There are many verses that say this, but there is one verse that says, ‘unless you have a reason to do so.’ For instance, in non-Muslim lands, you are obliged to follow the law. If you don’t like the law then you need to move. The most common response is to say there is no place to make *hijrah*. Allah says the world is vast. If people don’t want to live here they should go and live in certain Muslim lands and see how long they last before this country starts looking more like *dar al-Islam*.”⁸
- (4) Dr Ali Bin Abdul al-Shabl in his article entitled *Khuturah al-Jahl bi Tatbiq Aqidah Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* (Mere Ignorance in Applying the Belief of *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*) says: “The depiction that this belief (*al-Wala’ wal Bara’*) means enmity towards the non-Muslim

⁵See *fatwa* on “Does Islam Forbid Befriending Non-Muslims?” by Mufti Muzammil Siddiqi, available at <http://theislampath.com/smf/index.php?topic=1126.0> (accessed 1 April 2012) and http://www.answering-christianity.com/sami_zaatari/friends.htm (accessed 1 April 2012).

⁶Hamzah Yusuf Hanson is an Islamic scholar and is co-founder of Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, United States. He is an American convert to Islam, and is one of the signatories of *A Common Word Between Us and You*, an open letter by Islamic scholars to Christian leaders calling for peace and understanding.

⁷Sheikh Hamzah Yusuf, *Just Enough Religion to Hate*, available at <http://www.yanabi.com/index.php?/topic/88706-just-enough-religion-to-hate/> (accessed 1 April 2012).

⁸*Ibid.*

is completely against the true Islamic teachings. Hatred towards disbelief and non-believers is not the practice of the true Muslim. A non-Muslim can be accepted as having submitted to Islam by proclaiming the *shahadah*. One of the misunderstandings with regards to the application of this concept which I noticed, is the failure to distinguish between hating a non-Muslim and issues of good communication in matters of businesses, discussions, keeping promises and so on. These are also among the teachings and obligations of Islam.”⁹

- (5) Dr Saud Al-Sarhan in his article entitled “*Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*: A New Ideology for Islamist Movements” criticizes modern Salafis’ understanding of WB. He states that: “Extremist organizations perceive *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* as a pillar of the Islamic creed and it is the message of all the messengers and prophets of God. However, this is a false accusation. The pillar of *tawhid* is actually the profession of *shahadah* that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger, not *al-Wala’ wal Bara’* as they proclaim. The origin of *da’wah* of all messengers and prophets of God is submission to the Oneness of God and not to *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*. God says, ‘And indeed we have sent to every community a prophet bringing the message to worship Allah and refrain from evil.’”¹⁰
- (6) Dr Saeed Ismaeel in his book *The Relationship Between Muslims and Non-Muslims* explains that according to the Quran and the Sunnah, contrary to the common understanding, *al-wala’* does not automatically include love, support, intercession, protection or guidance. It means to take someone as a guardian; it could be mutual or one-sided. It could be accompanied with any grade of love or no specific feeling. On the other hand,

⁹Dr Ali Bin Abdul al-Shabl, *Khuturah al-Jahl bi Tatbiq Aqidah Al-Wala’ wal Bara’* (Mere Ignorance in Applying the Belief of *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’*), available at <http://www.alriyadh.com/2005/02/11/article38109.html> (accessed 15 April 2012).

¹⁰Saud Bin Salih Al-Sarhan, *Al-Wala’ wal Bara’: Al-Aidiolojiyya Al-Jadidah li al-Harakat Al-Islamiyah* (Loyalty and Disavowal: A New Ideology for Islamist Movements), 28 January 2004, available at <http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=17&article=214849&issueno=9192> (accessed 15 April 2012).

al-bara' does not automatically include hatred for a person. It could be any grade of dislike of a behavior and sometimes of the person who does it, but not always. In fact, sometimes *al-bara'* can be accompanied with sympathy and pity for the person who has an abhorred conduct. The essence of its meaning is to cut off the relationship with something or someone. It is also important to note that *al-bara'* does not prohibit fair dealings that meet a real need of a Muslim or of a Muslim community.¹¹

These statements, articles and *fatwas* clearly show that there are alternative interpretations to the modern Salafis' concept of WB. Importantly, it shows that WB exists in Islam and that a "nuanced" or "sophisticated" understanding of the concept is critical. "Mainstream" and non-Salafi Muslims do not deny the principle that *wala'* in Islam is only for God, the Prophet and fellow Muslims. This is a Quranic principle that has to be followed by all Muslims. It is essential to note that in classical Islamic literature, the idea of *wala'* denotes the beauty of close servanthood to God, without giving emphasis to the idea of hatred to others. However, the Quranic injunction that Muslims should give their loyalty to God, Islam and Muslims does not mean that non-Muslims should be disavowed and subjugated. Similarly, *bara'* as traditionally understood is to disavow *shirk* and anything that constitutes *shirk*, as it is the only act that will not be forgiven by God. One who reads the Quran carefully would find that this is the most-accepted meaning of *bara'* in the Quran. Regarding the example of Abraham and his people in Quran 60:4, the verse should be seen as part of the entire passage of Chapter 60 of the Quran. The Quran prohibits Muslims from making friends with those engaged in active hostility towards Muslims, not to hate every non-Muslim on earth. Abraham and his people had enmity and hatred because these non-Muslims were actively hostile towards them.

¹¹ Ismaeel, Saeed, *The Relationship Between Muslims and Non-Muslims*, Al-Attique Publications, Canada, 2003, pp. 29–49.

The modern Salafi version of WB exerts an overwhelming presence in cyberspace.¹² Books written by modern Salafis on WB are more widely available than those written on the same subject by non-Salafi Muslim thinkers. What is particularly worrying is the increasing influence of these books on the wider Muslim community, especially the militant-minded Muslims and Islamists. For example, Al-Qahtani's book on WB was said to have been used at the religious school in Indonesia founded by the influential leader of Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, Abu Bakar Bashir.¹³ Members of Jemaah Islamiyah have been executed for their role in the Bali bombings in 2002 which killed 202 people. Al-Qahtani's book, however, has not been banned in many countries and is readily available for sale on the web. Religious leaders in Singapore worry that the availability of the book in their country may signal the book as an authoritative religious source.¹⁴ The Jewish Community Council in Victoria, Australia is considering legal action to block the sale of the book in a local bookstore as it considers the book as one that incites hatred for disbelievers: "Of chief concern, said the council, was *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* (*Love and Hate for Allah's Sake*) by Muhammad Saeed al-Qahtani. It describes all non-Muslims as 'the allies of Satan' who should be 'trampled underfoot'."¹⁵

¹²Prior to the Internet, the voices of authority in Islam were communicated via traditional learning modes, books, public lectures and talks. To a large extent, this prevented non-mainstream Islamic thought from filtering down to the masses. The accessibility and largely uncensored nature of the internet, however, has the effect of blurring the authoritative lines in Islam.

¹³See International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah's Publishing Industry*, Asia Report No. 147, 28 February 2008, available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/147-indonesia-jemaah-islamiyahs-publishing-industry.aspx> (accessed 23 March 2010).

¹⁴Zakir Hussain, "Importers Make Sure Not to Bring in 'Harmful Books'", *Straits Times Singapore*, available at <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=47378> (accessed 1 April 2012).

¹⁵Clay Lucas, *Holy War Book Sparks Legal Threat*, 14 July 2005, available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/war-on-terror/holy-war-books-spark-legal-threat/2005/07/13/1120934301928.html> (accessed 3 March 2010).

Invariably, there is still a lot of work to be done in the area of intellectual reform. It is our belief that there is a need to expand the literature pool and research on the subject of WB in order to balance out the largely one-sided understanding of the concept. This is due to several reasons: (1) a “sophisticated” understanding of the concept will guide the direction of integration and is crucial to enable Muslims to confidently lead good lives wherever they may be. In this globalized world, many Muslims feel that their key beliefs are being challenged and their identity threatened. As a result, Muslims are searching for signposts and guidelines to practice Islam in a world seemingly at odds with Islamic principles; (2) as a divine code of conduct, the consequences of applying modern Salafis’ version of WB are serious — it arguably promotes a life that is insular and hostile towards non-Muslims; (3) the need to reach a legitimate meaning and position of the principles of WB as it applies to contemporary Islam in light of the primary Islamic resources; and finally (4) it could be argued that the claims made by modern Salafis lack legitimate and substantial support in Islamic primary sources, historical records and the essence of Islam.

Finally, by exposing the realities and complexities of WB in modern Salafism as the study has shown, it could be concluded that practising WB as prescribed in modern Salafism is controversial and problematic. Hence, the time has come for the Muslim scholars and thinkers to not only challenge the modern Salafi version of WB, but more importantly, develop an understanding of WB based on Islamic principles and sources that would suit Muslims in all situations and would also assist them in facing the many challenges ahead.

Appendix A

Books and Fatwas on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* by Modern Salafi Thinkers¹

- (1) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' min Mafahim Aqidah Al-Salaf* by Muhammad Bin Saeed Bin Salim Al-Qahtani.
- (2) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fi al-Islam* by Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan.
- (3) *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* by Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq.
- (4) *Al-Wala' wal 'Ada' fi 'Alaqa al-Muslim bi Ghayr al-Muslim* by Abdullah Al-Tarifi.
- (5) *Al-Wala' wal Bara': Aqidah Manqulah wa Waqi' Mafqud* by Ayman Al-Zawahiri.
- (6) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' in Surah Al-Mumtahinah* by Wasim Fathullah.
- (7) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Baina Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Mukhalifahim* by Ibrahim Bin Uthman Bin Muhammad Al-Faris.
- (8) *Haqiqah Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam* by Sayyid Saeed Abdul Ghani.
- (9) *Al-Muwaalah wa Al-Mu'aadah* by Mahmas Bin Abdullah Al-Jal'ud.
- (10) *Al-Muwaalah wa Al-Mu'aadah* by Abu Muhammad Al-Mas'ari.
- (11) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' Baina Al-Ghuluw wal Jafa' Fi Dhau'i al-Kitab wa Al-Sunnah* by Hatim Nasir Al-Sharif.
- (12) *Aqidah Al-Wala' wal Bara'* by Mahir Al-Fahal.
- (13) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' wa Wujub Nasr Al-Taliban wa Hukm Man Zahara Al-Amrikan 'Alaiha* by Hamoud Bin Uqla Al-Shuaibi.

¹Books are not listed in alphabetical order. This list of books on WB by modern Salafi thinkers is not exhaustive. These books are just examples of the books on WB which I have managed to identify. The number of books written by modern Salafis on WB or matters related to it is believed to be more than this list.

- (14) *Bara'ah Ahlu al-Iman min Al-Nasara Ubbad Al-Sulban* by Hamd Al-Hamdi.
- (15) *Mulakkhas Li Masa-il Muhimmah min Kitab Al-Wala' wal Bara' li Al-Syaikh Muhammad Bin Saeed Al-Qahtani* by Sulaiman Al-Kharashi.
- (16) *Tahrir Al-Maqal fi Masalati Munasarah al-Muslim li al-Kuffar fil Qital* by Faysal Al-Jasim.
- (17) *Tuhfah al-Ikhwān bima Ja-a fi Al-Muwalah wa Al-Hubb wal Al-Bughud wal Al-Hajran* by Hamoud Abdullah Al-Tuwaijiri.
- (18) *Al-Hubb fi Allah wa Al-Bughud fi Allah* by Abdul Aziz Aal Abdul Latiff.
- (19) *Al-Saif al-Battar 'ala man Yuwaali al-Kuffar* by Abdullah Bin Abdul Bari Al-Ahdal.
- (20) *Wujub 'Adawah Al-Yahud Wa Al-Mushrikin wa Ghayruhum min Al-Kuffar* by Abdul Aziz Ibn Baz.
- (21) *Naqad Fatwa Al-Ubaykan fi Hukm Muwalah Al-Mushrikin* by Abu Muhammad Al-Najdi.
- (22) *Al-Ibtal li Nazariyyah Al-Khalat Baina Al-Islam wa Ghayruhu min Al-Adyan* by Abu Bakar Zaid.
- (23) *Millat Ibrahim wa da'wah al-Anbiya' wa al-Mursalin wa asa'alib al-Tughah fi tami'i'ha wa sarfi al-du'aati 'anha* by Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi.
- (24) *Awthaq 'Ura Al-Iman: Al-Hubb fi Allah wa Al-Bughud fi Allah* by Juhayman Bin Saif Al-Utaibi.
- (25) *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr Man A'ana al-Amrikan* by Nasr Bin Hamad Al-Fahad.
- (26) *Al-Qawl al-Mukhtar fi Hukm al-Isti'ana bi al-Kuffar* by Hamoud Bin Uqla Al-Shuaibi.
- (27) *Al-Dawahi Al-Madhiyyah li Al-Firaq Al-Mahmiyyah (fi Al-Wala' wal Bara')* by Idris Ja'far Al-Kattani.
- (28) *Al-Wala' wal Bara' fil Islam* by Salih Al-Suhaimi.
- (29) *Nasihah Al-Ulama' fi Wujubi Al-Bara-a Min Ahli Al-Ahwa'* by Samir Bin Khalil Al-Maliki.
- (30) *Hukm Muzaharah Al-Amrikan 'ala Al-Muslimin* by Abu Umar Al-Sayf.

- (31) *Hukm Al-Fanah Al-Kuffar 'ala Ghazwi Al-Muslimin wa Al-Duaa' Lahum bi Al-Nasr* by Hamid Bin Abdallah Al-'Ali.
- (32) *Hazihi 'Aqidatuna* by Hamad Bin Rais Al-Rais.
- (33) *Waqafat ma'a Al-Waqafat* by Nasr Bin Hamad Al-Fahad.
- (34) *Al-Ikhwah Fillahi: Huquq wa Wajibat* by Abu Sa'ad Al-Athari.
- (35) *Al-'Urwah Al-Wuthqa* by Samir Bin Khalil Al-Maliki.
- (36) *Al-Manhaj Al-Qawim fi Ikhtisar Iqtida' Al-Sirat Al-Mustaqim* by Muhammad Bin Ali Muhammad Bin Al-Ba'li.
- (37) *Taqsim Khati' li Anwa' Al-Muwalah* by Hamid Bin Abdallah Al-'Ali.
- (38) *Hukm 'Iyadah Ahl Al-Kitab* by Sulayman Bin Nasir Al-Ulwan.
- (39) *Mas-alah Intifa' Qasdi Muwalah Al-Kuffar* by Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi.
- (40) *Naqd Fatwa Al-Ubaykan fi Hukm Muzaharah Al-Mushrikin* by Abdullah Bin Ibrahim Al-Sa'udi.
- (41) *Al-Hadd Al-Fasil Baina Al-Muwalah wa Tawalli Al-Kuffar* by Ali Bin Khudayr Al-Khudayr.
- (42) *Al-Farqu Baina Al-Mudarah wa Al-Mudahanah* by Abdul Latiff Bin Abdul Rahman Al Al-Shaikh.
- (43) *Al-Naksah Al-Tarikhyyah: Min Naqbah Afghanistan Ila Al-'Iraq* by Ziyab Bin Saad Al Hamdan Al-Ghamidi.
- (44) *Mukhtasar Iqtida' Al-Sirat Al-Mustaqim* by Walid Bin Idris Al-Munisi.

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Appendix B

List of Salafi Websites on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* (English and Arabic)¹

<http://www.saaaid.net/arabic/ar45.htm/>

<http://www.islamweb.net/media/index.php?id=14580&lang=A&page=article>

<http://www.binbaz.org.sa/mat/1764>

<http://islamqa.info/ar/cat/234>

<http://ar.islamway.com/collection/4017>

<http://ar.islamway.com/article/7596>

<http://ar.islamway.com/fatwa/8340>

<http://www.bdr130.net/vb/t379946.html>

<http://www.alminbar.net/malafilmy/walaa/malaf1.htm>

http://archive.org/details/walaa_baraa

<http://www.tawhed.ws/c?i=31>

<http://www.dorar.net/art/434>

¹These websites (including the links to the audio and video lectures listed below) are some examples of the many Salafi websites on WB and are not exhaustive. Some of these websites may not be accessible anymore. One need only to type “*Al-Wala' wal Bara'*” in Google to get more than 150,000 hits on the subject and more than 22,000 YouTube videos on the topic of WB or issues related to the subject.

http://www.albetaqa.com/papers/categories.php?cat_id=32&sessionid=711f84ae6fcf76867488ba1387da7a37

<http://ar.islamway.com/collection/1896>

<http://www.islamhouse.com/p/262127>

<http://www.saaid.net/Doat/mehran/67.htm>

<http://www.dialogueonline.org/alwala-wabaraa.htm>

<http://quranicverse99.tripod.com/islamicways/id15.html>

<http://www.islamworld.net/docs/wala.html>

<http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?29384-Shaykh-ul-Islam-Ibn-Taymiyyah-on-Al-Wala-wal-Bara-ah>

<http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f20/al-wala-wal-bara-26010/>

<http://www.salafimedia.com/aqeedah/al-walaa-wal-baraa.html>

http://islammonitor.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3754:al-wala-wal-bara&catid=199:islamic-doctrine&Itemid=21

http://www.muftisays.com/blog/Seifeddine-M/1447_19-04-2011/al-wala-wal-bara.html

<http://sifatusafwa.com/en/aqeeda-creed/255-al-wala-wal-bara-alliance-and-disavowal-shaykh-fawzaan.html>

List of Salafi Audio and Video Lectures on *Al-Wala' wal Bara'* (English and Arabic)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svy_tBZcPFU

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHfWKytz4tY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APgpFgHWS0c>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rD4RBawAWGg>

http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=UU79H8g2u_5xbq3oD7yfpIuA

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA5dsghBfBU>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2qw_AZbON4

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OG-k8GXxpm8>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6_BPgGb8oQ

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnleDaV2H78>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCovMmhYWEY>

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5E8692F126B05BD3>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PURY4GgT6i4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdWNhVfdyQI&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWwtGYBFnUw&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVPAE163RrE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWO75nDyWCc>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrR9poPBYig>

http://www.pureislam.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=234&Itemid=46

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Appendix C

Short Biographies of Key Salafi Thinkers Whose Works on WB are Consulted for This Research

Abdullah Al-Faisal (b. 1963). Al-Faisal is a Jamaican Muslim convert who preached in the United Kingdom until he was convicted of stirring up racial hatred and urging his followers to murder Jews, Hindus, Christians, and Americans. He studied Islam at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University in Riyadh for seven years. Al-Faisal was sentenced to nine years in prison, of which he served four years before being deported to Jamaica in 2007.

Abdullah Al-Farsi (b. unknown). Al-Farsi, a Saudi scholar who holds a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from Cleveland State University, USA, has been active in the field of Islamic missionary since 1980, mostly in America and Europe. He has taught many books on *aqidah* in Kuwait. He is also a member of the Standing Committee for Scholarly Research and Issuing *Fatwas* in Saudi Arabia (*al-Lajnah al-Da'imah lil Buhuth al-'Ilmiyyah wa al-Ifta'*).

Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdullah Ibn Baz (d. 1999). Born in Riyadh in 1910, Ibn Baz was Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 1993 until his death in 1999. He had also assumed a number of posts and responsibilities including President of the Permanent Committee for Research and *Fatwa*, and Head of the Council of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia.

Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq (b. 1939). Originally from Egypt, Abdul Rahman is active in the field of the Salafi *da'wah* in Kuwait.

He studied at the Islamic University of Medina in Saudi Arabia before he moved to Kuwait in 1965. He is the founder of *Jam'iyyat Ihya' At-Turath Al-Islami* (Society for the Revival of Islamic Heritage).

Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi (b. 1959). Born Isam Mohammad Tahir al-Barqawi, Al-Maqdisi is a Jordanian-Palestinian Salafi writer. He is best known as the teacher and mentor of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, the former leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq who was reportedly killed in 2006. Al-Maqdisi is believed to be the most influential Salafi alive whose writings have greatly influenced the minds of many Jihadi Salafis.

Abu Waleed (b. 1980). Abu Waleed, who was born in London, is an Islamic activist and a Salafi preacher who was greatly influenced by the teachings and lectures of radical Salafis including Abdullah Al-Faisal, Abu Hamza Al-Masri and Omar Al-Bakri. Abu Waleed is known for his radical preachings and anti-Western sentiments. His lectures which mostly revolve around the issue of WB are widely available on the internet.

Ayman Mohammed Rabie' Al-Zawahiri (b. 1951). Al-Zawahiri is the former leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the group allegedly responsible for the assassination of former Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat in 1981. He is believed to have replaced Osama Bin Laden, the leader and founder of Al-Qaeda who was reportedly killed in 2011.

Hamad Ibn Ali Ibn Atiq (d. 1883). Ibn Atiq was born in Al-Zulafi in present-day Saudi Arabia and was from the *ulema* of Najd. He was a well-known *faqih* (expert in *fiqh*) and authored many works on theology and *fiqh* including *Ibtal al-Tandid Sharh Kitab al-Tawhid* and *Sabil al-Najat Wal-Fikak*. He was appointed by Imam Abdul Rahman Ibn Hasan Al Al-Shaikh as a *qadhi* (judge) of several cities such as Al-Kharaj and Al-Aflaj.

Hamoud Bin Uqla Al-Shuaibi (d. 2001). Al-Shuaibi was a Saudi scholar who is believed to be the mentor of many Jihadi Salafis

including Nasr Al-Fahad. He has been seen as a radical element and is believed to have supported the mission of Al-Qaeda. Al-Shuaibi was vocal in his condemnation of the Saudi government, particularly its diplomatic ties with the United States.

Juhayman Al-Utaibi (d. 1980). Juhayman was a religious activist and militant who led the storming of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in 1979. He and many of his followers were beheaded by the Saudi government following the assault. Juhayman's writings are believed to have significantly influenced Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi.

Muhammad Al-Mas'ari (b. unknown). Al-Mas'ari is an exiled Saudi physicist and political dissident who gained asylum in the United Kingdom in 1994. He runs the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights and is an adviser to the Islamic Human Rights Commission.

Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab (d. 1792). Born in Najd, Saudi Arabia, Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab was a theologian and is known as the founder of Wahhabism. He signed a pact with Muhammad Ibn Saud, founder of the first Saudi state. The descendants of Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab, the Al Al-Shaikh, have historically led the *ulema* in the Saudi state, dominating the kingdom's clerical institutions.

Muhammad Ibn Al-Uthaymin (d. 2001). Born in Saudi Arabia, Ibn Uthaymin was one of the most prominent and influential Islamic scholars in Saudi Arabia during his time. He studied under well-known scholars of his time including Ibn Baz and Muhammad Al-Shanqiti. Ibn Uthaymin was known for his knowledge on *fiqh* and authored more than fifty books on the subject.

Muhammad Nasir Al-Din Al-Albani (d. 1999). Al-Albani was an influential Salafi scholar in the twentieth century who specialized in *hadith* and *fiqh*. Born in the city of Shkoder in Albania, Al-Albani studied Islam in Damascus. He taught many students books on *aqidah*, *usul*

and *fiqh*. He also taught *hadith* at the Islamic University of Medina for three years and was also a member of the University Board.

Muhammad Saeed Al-Qahtani (b. 1956). Born in Seira Obeida (city of the Qahtan tribe), Saudi Arabia, Al-Qahtani graduated with a Master's Degree in *Shariah* from Umm al-Qura University in Mecca in 1980 and obtained his Doctorate from the same university in 1984. He was a *shariah* lawyer and has served at several mosques in Mecca as *imam* and *khatib* (deliverer of sermons) for seven years. He has delivered lectures in many states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Holland and Britain.

Muhammad Salih Al-Munajjid (b. 1960). Al-Munajjid is an Islamic lecturer who graduated from King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. He runs a website where he provides *fatwas* and discusses religious issues. The website was launched in 1997 and is presented in a question and answer format. It has been translated into 11 languages.

Nasr Al-Fahad (b. 1968). Al-Fahad, who was born in Riyadh, had a distinguished academic career, graduating from the Imam University and the University of Shariah in Riyadh. In 1991, he earned his doctorate and was appointed dean at the Faculty of Principles of the Religion (*Usul al-Din*) in the Department of Creed and Modern Ideologies. In 1994, he was arrested and imprisoned for his radical and subversive teachings, and he was subsequently released in 1997.

Salih Bin Fawzan Al-Fawzan (b. 1933). Al-Fawzan is a prolific writer and a well-known Islamic scholar in Saudi Arabia. He graduated from the Faculty of *Shariah* of the Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh. He holds several important positions including member of Saudi Arabia's Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and *Fatwa*, member of the Council of Religious Edicts and Research, and member of the Senior Board of Scholars.

Sulayman Ibn Abdallah (d. 1818). Sulayman was the grandson of Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab. At the young age of thirty-two, Sulayman was executed by the Ottomans who invaded the Arabian Peninsula in 1818. Apparently alarmed by the serious defections from the Wahhabi cause to the invading Ottomans whom he regarded as “unbelievers”, Sulayman wrote his influential epistle *Al-Dalalil fi Hukm Muwalat Ahl Al-Ishrak*.

Salman Al-Awdah (b. 1955). Born in Al-Basr, Saudi Arabia, Al-Awdah is a Muslim activist and scholar who studied under famous scholars including Ibn Baz and Ibn Uthaymin. In 1994, Al-Awdah was imprisoned for allegedly conducting anti-government activities. In particular, Al-Awdah was critical of the Saudi government’s decision to allow the US military to defend the kingdom during the Gulf War of 1990.

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