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INTRODUCTION

In the previous part I have shown how totalitarianism's main features, in terms of its ideology, show remarkable similarities with religious concepts such as exile and redemption, the exclusivist authority of transcendent laws, and the fuehrer-prophet figure as the head of the new *ecclesia*, the mass movement. As Voegelin, Bärsch and Hesemann have detailed, and I have summarized, the totalitarian 'order of being' is written in the language of religion, mobilizes through rituals derived from religion and justifies its acts of purification and elimination through an appeal to secularized religious concepts. That is not say they are therefore religious movements or movements which singularly owe their existence to religious thought. Whenever specific religious concepts were employed by a totalitarian movement, it should be recalled that the political landscape in which they operated was itself heavily influenced by religion. Again, that does not mean that these movements are therefore religious or inspired by religion, but the language of religion was surely a commonly accepted form of expressing ideas. More importantly, however, is my opinion that the similarities between secular totalitarianism and religion are the consequence of a particular type of thinking about ourselves and about the society in which we live in which is very human. The origins of totalitarianism are neither wholly secular nor wholly religious; they are to be found in a quintessentially human characteristic which is addressed by both types of thought to varying degrees. Wherever man is confronted by a situation of despair, he will grab unto hope, wherever he finds chaos he will look for order, whenever he is in doubt he will look for truth. This should require little explanation and it is a narrative that runs through religious and secular literature alike without the one having to be derived from the other. In religious works we can find it in the story of Judaism's exile and redemption, Christian belief in sin and salvation, and in Islam's solution for tribal war through the establishment of a religious-political contract. Secular social contract theory too aimed to

provide the means by which man could live better lives than the ones in which they found themselves. Rousseau's *Du contrat social*, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, or Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*, all share, to varying degrees, these same themes derived from the experience of being human in an imperfect world. As Voegelin states:

When the heart is sensitive and the mind is perceptive, one look at the world will suffice to see the misery of the human creature and to guess at ways of salvation [..]⁴³⁸

As stated, secular totalitarian ideologies and totalitarian Gnostic speculations are voiced in the conceptual vocabulary of religious terminology: salvation, redemption, a return from exile or the subordination of the individual to immutable laws. Even the most vehement opponents of religious thought, such as the Stalinists, could not escape this similarity. Voegelin comments on those movements by stating that:

Followers of movements that want to be anti-religious and atheistic refuse to concede that religious experiences can be found at the root of their fanatical attitude, only venerating as sacred something else than the religion they fight.

Likewise Hoffer states:

For though ours is a godless age, it is the very opposite of irreligious. The true believer is everywhere on the march, and both by converting and antagonizing he is shaping the world in his own image.⁴³⁹

In order to discern between 'true' religions and Gnostic speculative *ersatz religionen* Voegelin offers the following thought:

⁴³⁸ Voegelin, "Political Religions," p. 33.

⁴³⁹ Hoffer, *The True Believer; Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*. Preface.

[..] we need to draw a linguistic distinction: The spiritual religions, which find the *realissimum* in the Ground (*Weltgrund*), should be called trans-worldly religions (*überweltliche Religionen*); and all others, i.e., those that find the divine in subcontents of the world, should be called inner-worldly religions (*innerweltliche Religionen*).⁴⁴⁰

The last category, the *inner-worldly* religions were the subject of Part One of this study. I have described these movements as being based on a non-metaphysical, i.e. *inner-worldly*, transcendence. The transcendence refers to the fact that these movements do not derive their particular ideological content from the necessities imposed by the real world affairs of individuals at a specific point in time, but on the contrary, derive them from what they perceive as being supra-human, transcendent, laws of Nature or History and their accompanying Laws of Movement. To these movements, all human affairs, regardless of whether it concerns the individual or a collective, are at all times governed by immutable laws. The origin of these laws is not divine or meta-physical, but located in the physical world, i.e.; race theory and dialectical materialism.

The second part of the study is devoted to a political movement that not only uses the conceptual vocabulary of religion, but which claims to be the only true representative of an *überweltliche Religion*. It derives its ideological content not from some inner-worldly transcendence but from what it perceives to be a purely divine metaphysical transcendence. This movement is Islamism. Although I will elaborate on the definition of Islamism and its constituting elements in the next chapters, I will briefly summarize my findings on the Islamist' objective as follows:

The Islamists principle of action is founded upon the notion that the canonical sources of Islam dictate and proscribe the fabrication, if necessary by force, of a Utopian society in which

⁴⁴⁰ Voegelin, "Political Religions," pp. 32-33.

all of mankind is submitted to the laws of the divine, the Shari'ah, and in which all are transformed into the living embodiment of a 'perfect' Muslim.

This study first and foremost investigates whether or not the totalitarian paradigm can be applied to Islamist movements. It seeks to answer whether or not the Islamists movements can truly be understood in terms of the totalitarian paradigm or if they should rather be seen as more conventional forms of political organization from the authoritarian spectrum such as a theocratic or clerical-fascist movement. This in turn leads to the second aspect of this research namely the question as to the consequences of such a typology of Islamism for law and policymakers both in Islamic and non-Islamic societies. Every totalitarian movement we have studied so far has been both a movement of purification of internal enemies and annihilation of external enemies. The threat posed by Islamism is therefore not first and foremost directed at the non-Islamic world, but at the Islamic world.⁴⁴¹ In addition, totalitarian movements, due to their devout belief in the need to 'immanentize the Eschaton' are at once aimed at purifying their own societies whilst at the same time being wholly impervious to outside interference, negotiation or compromise. If Islamism can be understood in more conventional authoritarian terms such as forms of theocracy or clerical-fascism, then the opportunity for constructive engagement, dialogue, appeasement, rapprochement and even pacification exists. It would

⁴⁴¹ I will delve into this issue in greater detail in the course of this research. For a brief overview of literature devoted to exposing the threat posed by Islamist movements to Muslims see: Amir Taheri, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution* (London: Hutchinson, 1985), ———, *Holy Terror: The inside Story of Islamic Terrorism* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), Jean-Charles Brisard and Damien Martinez, *Zarqawi: The New Face of Al-Qaeda* (New York: Other Press, 2005), Sarah Chayes, *The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan after the Taliban* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), Tibi, *Der Neue Totalitarismus: "Heiliger Krieg" Und Westliche Sicherheit*, ———, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe: Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam Versus Global Jihad*, Combatting Terrorism Center, "Deadly Vanguard: A Study of Al-Qa'ida's Violence against Muslims."

demand a vastly different approach by law and policy makers than the approach needed to counter a totalitarian phenomenon. As I have shown in the chapters two through four of the previous part, whilst authoritarian forms of government are primarily concerned with internal power balancing and survival, the option of peaceful co-existence with, and the avoidance of crimes against humanity at the hands of totalitarian movements is virtually impossible. If law and policy makers do not recognize the totalitarian nature of Islamist movements, then they cannot be expected to take the measures needed to safeguard populations, both in Islamic and non-Islamic societies, against them.

In the course of this study I have come across four arguments which have been repeatedly raised by academics, government officials and laymen alike against this type of research and its methodology. I feel it is pivotal I explain and engage these arguments in order to explain why this particular study is indispensable in an era in which the Islamist phenomenon poses severe threats to international peace and security. The first argument, which consists of two points, is the idea that the particular methodology employed is unsuitable because religion and totalitarianism are by definition mutually exclusive. It maintains that neither the field of totalitarianism nor religious studies stands to gain anything from the research question at hand. The second argument holds that the totalitarian nature of Islamism is quite irrelevant to the question of counter-terrorism strategies. Lastly and unfortunately most prevalently, an objection is raised against identifying religious elements in a political philosophy as loathsome as totalitarianism. This act, as I will show shortly, is often labelled as being either Islamophobic bigotry or incitement to religious intolerance, much in the same way as equating Communism with totalitarianism was depicted as a 'fascist mode of thinking'. I will address these three arguments in order to make the purpose of, and need for this research clear.

Four reasons for the relevance of this research

The relevance to the field of totalitarianism studies

The first argument maintains that a religion cannot be totalitarian because of the former's adherence to noble virtues which are quite the opposite of what one expects from the latter. In other words, the nature of religion itself is the antidote to any totalitarian interpretation of that religion. The possibility of religious forms of totalitarianism seems to be largely ignored by the classical works on the totalitarian phenomenon. Some scholars on totalitarisms, such as Voegelin, argue that totalitarianism borrows heavily from religion but is not related to it; totalitarianism is a perverted form of religious thought, profoundly secular and antithetical to religion. Voegelin emphasized the demise of religion, the 'decapitation of God', as a precondition for the rise of totalitarian thought:

[..]when god is invisible behind the world, the contents of the world will become new gods, when the symbols of transcendent religiosity are banned, new symbols develop from the inner-worldly language of science to take their place.⁴⁴²

On the whole this does not mean that religion is the anti-dote to totalitarianism. I would rather suggest that Hayek's uncertainty principle is the strongest barrier against any totalitarian political aspiration since it denies the mere possibility of having a totalistic ethical code, let alone making that totalistic ethical code state policy.⁴⁴³ The latter of course being the basic characteristic of all

⁴⁴² Voegelin and Henningsen, *Modernity without Restraint*, pp. 9, 44, 60.

⁴⁴³ "The point which is so important is the basic fact that it is impossible for any man to survey more than a limited field, to be aware of the urgency of more than a limited number of needs. Whether his interests centre round his own physical needs, or whether he takes a warm interest in the welfare of every human being he knows, the ends about which he can be concerned will always be only an infinitesimal fraction of the needs of all men.[..] To direct all our activities according to a single plan presupposes that every one of our

totalitarian movements. This principle does not state that religion or secularism is either the cause or the cure of totalitarianism, but rather states that the need for a totalist ethical code and its ensuing implementation is the fundamental totalitarian problem. With this I wholeheartedly agree. That question aside, one would not be held at fault for thinking that totalitarianism is an exclusively non-religious phenomenon. All the great totalitarisms of the 20th century have been either vehemently anti-religious, such as Communism in its various formulations, or quasi-religious, as in the peculiar 'Positive Christianity' and German pagan mythology of the National Socialist movement.⁴⁴⁴ The heart of the foremost part of totalitarianism studies has thus been focused on movements which we cannot possibly identify as being 'religious' in any conventional sense. I aim to prove that this history notwithstanding, the established totalitarianism theories can be applied to secular and religious movements alike. I will demonstrate that it is irrelevant whether the source of totalitarian ideology is religious or secular. What matters is the totalitarian interpretation of texts and ideas, whether they are atheist, pagan, or religious and the actions that such an interpretation in the form of an ideology spawns. We have already seen how atheism and paganism have materialized in respectively Communist and National Socialist ideologies. As I will show in the coming chapters, a third alternative, the totalitarian interpretation of religious texts

needs is given its rank in an order of values which must be complete enough to make it possible to decide between all the different courses between which the planner has to choose, it presupposes, in short, the existence of a complete ethical code in which all the different human values are allotted their due place." Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, pp. 60-61.

⁴⁴⁴ In this respect it should be mentioned that the research done by Claus-Ekkerhard Bärsch and Michael Hesseman has shown amply that National Socialism was certainly not as devoutly atheistic as Communism was. Bärsch, *Die Politische Religion Des Nationalsozialismus: Die Religiöse Dimension Der Ns-Ideologie in Den Schriften Von Dieter Eckart, Joseph Goebbels, Alfred Rosenberg Und Adolf Hitler*, Hesseman and Meiser, *Hitlers Religion: Die Fatale Heilslehre Des Nationalsozialismus*.

is exemplified by the Islamists ideologues. Expanding upon the Islamists totalitarianism thesis of the Syrian born scholar Bassam Tibi and the Iranian born Afshin Ellian, I will show how the Islamists' discourse is rife with both thoroughly religious references and at the same time appears to have been influenced rather heavily by secular totalitarianism's logicity of ideological thinking and its vanguard model of mass organization.⁴⁴⁵ Thus, whereas secular totalitarianism derived its concepts, rituals and symbolism from religion, the question which now arises is whether or not Islamism, as a religious movement, derives its logicity of ideological thinking and mode of organization from secular totalitarianism. If this is true then we have come full circle and are indeed witnessing a new form, a second generation, of totalitarianism. Such a phenomenon has received little attention in the field of totalitarianism studies and this research aims to add to the knowledge of the totalitarian phenomenon in the 20th and 21st century. As such this research and its methodological approach seek to add to the research field of both totalitarianism studies and the larger study field of Islam, of which Islamism is a part.

The relevance to the field of Islamic studies

The only real difficulty in applying the totalitarianism paradigm to a religious movement lays in the fact that religious movements cannot 'invent' their own Law of Nature or History; they cannot be the author of their own 'Gnostic speculation' for it is bound by the nature of the revealed canonical texts. The objection that one therefore frequently encounters in this debate from the field of religious studies is the idea that a religion, due to its commonly professed values of brotherly love, forgiveness and other lofty values is intrinsically opposed to totalitarianism. I am of the opinion that such a view is not only false; it

⁴⁴⁵ Tibi, *Der Neue Totalitarismus: "Heiliger Krieg" Und Westliche Sicherheit*, Ellian, "The Legal Order of Political Religion: A Comparative Study of Political Islam and Political Christendom."

is in fact dangerous and counterproductive from the viewpoint of the advancement of human rights. The well know scholar of Islam Olivier Roy for instance holds that 'Islamic totalitarianism is impossible' due to Islamic societies' 'respect for the family and lack of interest in the social sphere'.⁴⁴⁶ This position is indicative of a widely held misconception about the nature of totalitarianism and the supposed immunity of religion from totalitarianism. As soon as a certain system of beliefs moves beyond a personal mystical experience and moves into the direction of a codified set of rules devised to organize the private *and* public life here on earth as the precondition to self and world salvation, the more the possibility of a totalitarian *interpretation* of such a belief increases. If a detailed formula for the bringing about of a just order of being is given then the totalitarian 'spirit' dictates that man, being his brother's keeper ought to force his brother to be free. It is in that sense not the religion itself, which is in the end merely a collection of texts, but the inevitable interpretation of it which can turn it into a totalitarian program of salvation. This point is pivotal to understand: a religion is at its core a text, or in the eyes of the believer, codified revelations. As I have mentioned in my general introduction and will elaborate in the coming chapters, it is the *interpretation* of these texts which makes a religious movement mystical, orthodox, traditional, modernistic, fundamentalist or totalitarian. The interpreter is the architect of the text's meaning. If we apply this to the Islamic canonical sources we must ask ourselves the following question: if those texts were truly as unequivocal as some hold them to be, then why is that Islamic history has been replete with disputes between Sunni's and Shi'a's, between rationalists and scripturalists and how do you explain the abundance of Sufi mystical orders? All of these groups claim legitimacy by referring to Islam's canonical sources and yet their interpretations on those sources can vary to such a degree that they are fundamentally irreconcilable. This phenomenon applies equally to other religions. Judaism equally sports divisions between Chassidic, Reform, Orthodox

⁴⁴⁶ Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, pp. 10, 197.

and Reconstructivist Judaism. Moreover, the Jewish legal tradition is one of legal debate and argumentation, not one of legal certainty. Christianity equally sees a division between Catholicism and Protestantism, the latter being infamously replete with schisms and theological differences of opinion. So what do we mean when we refer to the general categories of Islam, Judaism or Christianity? In my opinion, we can at best refer to principles on which a large body of consensus within the religious community exists. No Jew, Christian or Muslim would deny that God is one; it is the quintessential aspect of monotheism and there is no dispute on this issue. However, what if a religious edict were to say 'thou shall not kill', whilst another says 'kill the apostate'? How do you resolve this contradiction? Is the former to be taken literally and the latter symbolically? Alternatively, is the latter to be seen as an exemption to the former? What if the canonical text does not answer this question, how does one come to a decision? Moreover, if disputes arise over the correct interpretation, which one of these is then representative of that religion as a whole? The one with the largest number of adherents? What if the one with the largest amount of adherents is in conflict with a long standing tradition that runs contrary to their interpretation? Islam is no stranger to this phenomenon of interpretation and contradictory interpretations and it has devised a legal methodology of its own to cope with these issues: *usul al-fiqh*. Of course, one might argue that the text should be read in total isolation and that they always speak for themselves, but this is not the way in which Islam treats its canonical sources. Whilst there are schools of thought that advocate this position, even these acknowledge that the canonical sources have to be read in some sort of larger context. The idea then that the sources are always unequivocal is a more extreme literalist position than the most literalist of Islamic scholars are willing to adopt. In addition it ignores the fact that the canonical sources themselves contain injunctions which are contradictory and which cannot be resolved by a literal reading. When such contradictions exist, the Islamic scholar, very much like a private law jurist, has a choice in

methods on interpretation: literal, analogous, contextual, historical, systematic et cetera. The bandwidth of interpretation accorded to the Islamic scholar depends on his specific school of thought and it explains the existence of the different streams of Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore if we are to say anything about a certain Islamic religious injunction we must be acquainted with the different meanings that are given to it in that religious tradition and we must try to ascertain if there is some sort of consensus on that issue.

Thus the idea that these texts are unequivocal in their meaning and represent that religion as whole cannot be maintained. Does this mean that these canonical texts in themselves are devoid of meaning? Far from it; on most issues deriving from the Islamic canonical texts a corpus of consensus exists that transcends the boundaries time and the divisions between the various schools of thought. This is especially true when it comes to issues of jihad. Nevertheless, even in those areas disagreements arise and one must be aware of those differences, the reasons underlying those differences and their relative legitimacy in terms of the established methodology of interpretation. This research is interested in the school of thought we can loosely describe as Islamism. As I will show it has its own consensus on the meaning of Islam's canonical sources, and a consensus on the bandwidth of interpretation. They stand at odds with other schools of thought such as the traditionalists or the rationalists, oftentimes to the degree that they will accuse the latter two of apostasy, *takfir*, with all the legal consequences that may entail. This study is thus not interested in ascertaining the totalitarian nature of 'Islam' or of 'Muslims' as general and vague categories, but endeavours to investigate if the *Islamists' interpretation of Islam* leads to an ideology and movement that complies with the hallmarks of totalitarianism.

As mentioned, Oliver Roy is of the opinion that an Islamic form of totalitarianism is an *a priori* impossibility due to Islam's 'family values' and 'lack of interest in the social sphere'. This would automatically

mean that the Islamists cannot be Muslims; their interpretation of Islam would be un-Islamic. This in turn presupposes that Roy has the final word in what constitutes Islam. Yet, the Islamist ideologues that will be analyzing in chapters three through six identify themselves as being thoroughly religious men who see themselves as the true representatives of Islam. How can this be so? It would seem that either Roy is right and the Islamists are indeed not Islamic, or the Islamists are on the right and Roy's assessment of Islam is wrong. I argue that both positions stem from a thorough misunderstanding of the concept of totalitarianism and that both positions are wrong.

Roy's appeal to the existence of noble concepts such as family life in the canonical texts of Islam does not prohibit the possibility of an *interpretation* which could lead to a totalitarian *ideology*. As we have seen, both Nazism and Communism both professed to exist in order to achieve universal equality, brotherhood and liberty. I reiterate the point I made earlier that one should not make the oft repeated mistake of being tempted to see totalitarian movements as the means to attain political power or personal wealth and glory. These movements were above all *moral* movements which truly believed they were working for the salvation of all mankind. The values they professed are easily confused with the meaning a humanistic audience might accord to them, but they only revealed their true meaning when seen through the lens of the totalitarian ideology. This applies equally to religious movements. Whereas in a humanist interpretation the concept of brotherhood could indicate a universal equality and empathy devoid of denying anyone access to the universal brotherhood on account of their sexual preference, ethnicity, religion or class, the totalitarian concept of brotherhood is particular, exclusionist, and epitomizes the very opposite of the humanist interpretation whilst using the very same words. Moreover, the totalitarian movements do not use these terms cynically, they actually believe that their form particular interpretation of these terms is the only valid one. The term 'brotherhood' therefore needs to be explained before it can be used in any meaningful analysis.

Assuming that we all understand it in the same way is not only illegitimate; it also plays into the hands of the totalitarians which actively abuse such a false understanding in order to confuse their opponents as to their intentions. The same applies to the concept of family life. The Nazi's emphasized the importance of family life albeit a family life which at its core served to further the interest of the race and racial purity. Communist family life too was well respected, as long as it was not bourgeois family life, which 'needed to be abolished'.⁴⁴⁷ The point is that Roy's statement that a respect for family life prevents Islam from becoming totalitarian is a hollow phrase. What concept of family life exactly? What does Islamic family life look like? Is a family free to order their family life in a way which would constitute a breach with the edicts of Islamic law, or would they then be liable to external force in order for them 'to become free'? Some schools of Islamic law hold that when a person abandons Islam, his marriage is automatically annulled and the apostate is liable to be executed.⁴⁴⁸ Is this 'respect for family life'? Moreover, how

⁴⁴⁷ "The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital. [...] Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty. But, you say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social." Marx et al., *Manifesto: Three Classic Essays on How to Change the World*, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁴⁸ The Egyptian Liberal theologian Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd (1943-2010) suffered this fate when the Cairo Appeals Court annulled the marriage of Abu Zayd in 1996 on the grounds of his supposed apostasy from Islam. Mona Eltahawy, "Lives Torn Apart in Battle for the Soul of the Arab World," *The Guardian*, Wednesday 20 October 1999. Sunni Islam's prime religious authority, the al-Azhar university in Cairo, reiterates the need for the state to exact the proscribed death penalty for apostates. The al-Azhar accredited Shafi'i handbook of Shari'ah law, *Umdat as-Salik*, also known as *The Reliance of the traveller*, states simply: "When a person has reached puberty and is sane voluntarily apostasies from Islam, he deserves to be killed. [...] In such a case, it is obligatory for the Caliph [...] to ask him to repent and return to Islam. If he does, it is accepted from him, but if he refuses, he is immediately killed. [...] There is no indemnity for killing an apostate [...] since it is killing someone who deserves to die. Ibn al-Naqib al-Misri and Keller, *Reliance of*

should one treat those forces, such as non-Islamic values of full gender equality in matters of civil and criminal law, when they are at odds with the universal establishment of this concept of family life? Should they be persecuted as being enemies of mankind's ultimate happiness? The issue at hand is how these noble sounding concepts are interpreted by those who use them. One should not look from the outside in, but from the inside out and avoid what Arendt called 'reading the familiar back into the unfamiliar'. She quite rightly warned for the danger of using the familiar meaning of concepts such as 'brotherhood' or 'freedom' to systems of thought which are radically different from ours:

Every science is necessarily based upon a few inarticulate, elementary, and axiomatic presumptions which are exposed and exploded only when confronted with altogether unexpected phenomena which can no longer be understood within the framework of its categories.⁴⁴⁹

If we want to understand what 'family life' means in the context of Islamism we have to do so through an understanding of their particular brand of the *logicality of ideological thinking*. As I will show in the coming chapters, the Islamists argue that the concepts of family life, equality, brotherhood and liberty have a very specific, well defined and restricted meaning. What they seek to implement is the *Islamist family life, Islamist equality and Islamist brotherhood*. Anything that contradicts or acts in opposition to that specific meaning is deemed an enemy of mankind and must be annihilated.

the Traveller: The Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law Umdat Al-Salik, pp. 595-596. o8.1, 08.2, o8.4 Whilst the Judicial system of Egypt does not allow for this punishment to be exacted, Sheikh al-Ghazali, a member of the Islamic research council of the al-Azhar reaffirmed the orthodox position that if the state fails to live up to this Islamic law, then a persons who does kill an apostate should not be punished for it. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 147.

⁴⁴⁹ Arendt, "Social Science Techniques and the Study of Concentration Camps," p. 232.

This entails not only those who reject Islam but also those whose interpretation of Islam is at odds with the *Islamists'* interpretation of Islam. Seeing that the Islamists derive their concepts from the same Islamic sources as non-Islamist Muslims do, there is no valid reason why a totalitarian interpretation of religion can be deemed an *a priori* impossibility.⁴⁵⁰

The question which then arises is twofold: First, are that interpretation, the ideology, and the movements it spawns truly totalitarian? That question is the subject of this research. The second question is whether or not such an interpretation has any validity in the larger light of the religion which it claims to represent. Simply put: is Islam *itself* to be credited with the totalitarian impulse visible in Islamism? This question will not and cannot be answered by this research for reasons which I will explain in chapter one.

Now a second aspect of this research appears in Roy's argument which applies to the ideology *as a guide to action*. Roy makes the claim that Islam has had little interest in the social sphere and this is one of the reasons why totalitarianism is impossible in Islam. If this assertion were true, if Islam indeed did not have any interest in the social life, then I would easily agree that there can be no validity to the Islamist claim that they represent Islam. However, as I will explain in chapters one and two, Islamic law is rife with very detailed rules pertaining to the just ordering of private and public life including sanctions on the violations of these rules. For that reason alone, the claim that Islam has no interest in the social realm seems to be very odd. This does not mean that *therefore* the Islamist claim is correct; far from it. One can argue, and it is argued, that Islam is above all an ethical system but not a manual for a political–legal order, but this is up to the interpreter.⁴⁵¹ It does not mean that a

⁴⁵⁰ Tibi, *Der Neue Totalitarismus: "Heiliger Krieg" Und Westliche Sicherheit*, p. 6.

⁴⁵¹ See in this regard the works of Bassam Tibi: ———, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, Fatah, Chasing

totalitarian interpretation of those laws is *a priori* impossible as Roy argues. The statement that Islam has little interest in the social sphere is rejected by a consensus of the various law schools of Islam themselves. More important however, is the fact that the perceived 'lack of interest in the social sphere' is arguably more a result of the political constraints placed on the implementation of Islamic laws in Islamic societies throughout history than it is the result of any inherent 'lack of interest in the social sphere' by Islam itself. The body of Islamic law, *Shari'ah*, and jurisprudence, *fiqh*, is certainly not lacking in any interest in the social sphere. It is precisely the *lack* of implementation of Islam's legal and political edicts by the rulers in Islamic societies which has been one of the main causes for the rise of the Islamist phenomenon. The Islamists, as we will come to see, argue that the world is in chaos because Islam has not been implemented, its interest in the social sphere not actualized. For this, they blame internal enemies, i.e. apostate or hypocritical rulers, secular and moderate Muslims, and external enemies, i.e. Western powers and above all, the Jews. The Islamists therefore describe the Islamists' principle of action as a need to purify Islamic societies and the world entire of all those elements that stand between man and his full submission to the edicts of Islam and Islamic law.⁴⁵² They do not claim to invent an Islam that never existed but rather implement an Islam that was never implemented. They claim that a true Muslim, an *Islamist Muslim*, is obliged to pursue the implementation of Islam's edicts, as perceived by the Islamists, in the here and now, in other words, to fabricate Utopia. Any other conception of Islam, for

a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State, Tibi, *Islam between Culture and Politics*, ———, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe: Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam Versus Global Jihad*. In addition see also: Taha, *The Second Message of Islam*, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim, *Islam and the Secular State* (Cambridge: Harvard university press, 2008), A. Soroush, M. Sadri, and A. Sadri, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush* (Oxford University Press, 2002), Fatah, *Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State*.

⁴⁵² Qutb, *Milestones*, p. 62.

instance the conception of Islam as 'merely' a private ethical code, is seen by the Islamists as apostasy and as an existential threat to Islam's mission of self and world salvation. The question therefore is *not* whether they are right in claiming that Islam as such guides their actions, the question is whether there is logical consistency in their reasoning: does it comply with the principle of the logicity of ideological thinking, does it amount to a coherent ideology that can function as the foundation of a political movement? Again, Roy's observation that an Islamic totalitarianism is impossible due to Islam's 'lack of interest in the social sphere' runs aground due to his misinterpretation of totalitarianism.

In the paragraph above I have shown why the field of Islamic studies could benefit from a better understanding of totalitarianism. The out of hand statement that Islam could never lead totalitarianism is not only flawed, it is dangerous. If one wants to preserve human rights and prevent human rights violations than one is not helped by misdiagnosing the potential threat that emanates from Islamist movements. A thorough assessment of the Islamist danger starts with understanding their internal logic, the actions that stem from them and the legitimacy their arguments may have in the wider circle of believers. If their arguments appear legitimate then the danger posed by these movements grows exponentially. Furthermore, those individuals who are daring enough to propose reforms in Islamic law, such as Tibi, Taha, An Na'im or Fatah, are not helped at all by the statement that Islam and Islamic law are impervious to the totalitarian temptation; on the contrary, they are delegitimized by it.

The relevance of the totalitarianism paradigm to counter-terrorism policies

The second argument that can be brought against this methodological approach is that the question of Islamism and totalitarianism is in fact quite irrelevant. Such an argument would state that physical acts of violence and international terrorism are the issues at hand, the question of whether or not the movements engaging in them are

totalitarian or not is academic nitpicking. I have encountered this argument a number of times in conversations with counter-terrorism specialists and find it deeply disturbing. Such a line of reasoning might seem valid on the surface but betrays a great flaw in terms of thinking about counter-terrorism strategies. If counter-terrorism strategies merely focus their efforts on the actual prevention of violence, then it would miss the underlying movement which makes this violence inevitable. It would focus on the symptoms without addressing the disease that causes these symptoms. It presupposes that a divorce can be made between ideology on the hand and terrorism on the others. Such a divorce can be legitimate when dealing with what I called practical or non-ideological terror in chapter five of the previous part. To call into memory: practical terror is that form of terror which is used as a temporary means to a specific limited goal but which is neither inevitable nor necessary in achieving that goal. Separatist movements such as the ETA or the IRA have both used terror as a means of promoting their cause, but their cause is of a limited scope, national independence, and the use of terror is never a necessity. With necessity I mean that it is not irrevocably linked to the cause at hand; that cause can be achieved through other non-violent political means. Ideological terror on the other hand is the hallmark of totalitarianism. Its scope is universal and perpetual, it is a goal unto itself, not a means to an end, and it is inextricably linked with an ideology that is wholly divorced from reality. It is the link between ideology and terror which separates practical from ideological forms of terrorism and which is of pivotal importance to formulating a sound counter-terrorism strategy. As I will demonstrate in the coming chapters, terrorism is but a symptom, the crest of a much larger wave, the consequence of an underlying momentum. A thorough counter-terrorism policy depends on understanding the nature, the force and the direction of that wave. This research aims to give insight into those factors and explain why terroristic acts are not incidents which can be ameliorated by debate or concessions but are rather unavoidable and logical consequences of the ideology which

perpetually legitimizes and necessitates them. Furthermore, terrorism is but one aspect of the wider arsenal of jihadist actions. All of these non-violent actions aim to further the Islamists' cause and shift gears towards violent action when the opportunity arises and it is deemed opportune. This can only be explained and understood when one is familiar with the nature, the logicity and the modus operandi of totalitarian movements. Therefore the question of the potential totalitarian nature of Islamism should be at the centre of the counter-terrorism debate.

The relevance to the protection of human rights

The third argument raised against the methodology at hand is situated in the larger realm of political, legal and social dynamics. It holds that identifying religious motives in a totalitarian movement is equal to Islamophobic bigotry or incitement to religious intolerance. Seeing that totalitarianism is commonly perceived as the vilest form of political organization, it should not be surprising that accusing a religious movement, Islamism, of being totalitarian is greeted with some reluctance. As I will show it has led a multitude of national and international social and political actors to condemn such an accusation as being inflammatory hate speech which they seek to criminalize. What they seek to achieve is an *a priori* rejection of such a research question since this question itself, from their perspective, amounts to hate speech against the religion of Islam. I propose that such an attitude is not only stifling the sort of critical debate which lay at the foundation of the Enlightenment and the development of human rights, it is also aiding the Islamists' cause and actually facilitates the discrimination of Muslims at the hands of the Islamists. Although I wished this research to be limited to the clean field of objective academic research into the question at hand, I cannot help but address this political issue. I feel it is important to address them for the sake of clarity for the reader, in order to elucidate on the political and academic climate surrounding this topic, and to underscore that this position is not in any way helpful in preventing a repetition of the scourge of totalitarianism. I aim to show that if one

truly holds human rights and the principles of non-discrimination as the highest value, then one is morally obliged to investigate this question lest we allow history to repeat itself.

Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia

It must be said that in the current debate about Islamism, some writers and public figures will use the phenomenon of Islamism to attack Muslims themselves. Such behaviour has nothing to do with valid research into the Islamist phenomenon and is often a poorly disguised form of religious bigotry; Islamism becomes the excuse needed to attack a religion. By recognizing that Islam, Islamic societies and Muslims as a group constitute a varied tapestry consisting of both Islamist and anti-Islamist views, movements and theories, such unjustifiable attacks can be countered. It is only when we deal in monolithic terms and categories that the world can be divided into antagonistic categories of good and evil. Those who seek to vilify Islam for its own sake have no place in an academic debate. Modern day western society is a multicultural society. Muslims cannot be expected to harbour any feelings of allegiance to the states in which they reside if these states do not protect them against ethnic or religious discrimination. I recognize that such acts of discrimination originate both from the side of those who seek to criminalize Islam as such, and by those who seek to purge the Muslim community of all those whom they deem to be heretical Muslims. The framework of criminal law in the Netherlands and other European countries already provides in protection against the former. This goes without saying for Islamic countries. Unfortunately there are those who seek to abuse these same laws in order to *undermine* the protection of Muslims against the heretic hunting of the Islamists. It is with this in mind that I write the following.

This study in its totality ultimately aims to advise the 21st century law and policymakers who are faced by the threat of Islamist totalitarianism. By clarifying the structure and content of Islamist ideologies, the overlap with secular forms of totalitarianism, and the

danger it poses to Islamic and non-Islamic societies alike, this research aims to further the cause of strengthening the mechanisms enacted to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. If anything, the danger posed by Islamism is directed primarily towards Muslims living in Islamic societies, secondarily to Muslims and, as I will come to show, Jews living in non-Islamic societies and only thirdly towards non-Islamic societies in general. The wellbeing of any of these categories is not safeguarded by wilfully closing our eyes to the possible threat of an Islamic form of totalitarianism anymore than the lives of the Soviets were safeguarded by refusing to investigate Communism. In that respect, the accusation of Islamophobia which is being directed at those who criticize Islamism is not a novel phenomenon. Just as the Islamist' phenomenon mimics many traits of secular totalitarianism, so too the current debate about Islamism and Islamophobia is very much a repetition of history. The very same sort of accusations existed within the academic debate on totalitarianism where it concerned Communism. The communists portrayed themselves as being anti-fascist and anti-Nazi and as such those who opposed Nazism were reluctant to condemn Communism. It was therefore hard for their defenders and fellow travellers to accept that Communism and National Socialism are in fact two varieties of the same species instead of diametrically opposed opponents. This resulted in a widespread reluctance amongst authors, academia and politicians to label Communism as being totalitarian due to their own political standpoints and the negative connotation the term 'totalitarian' carried with it.⁴⁵³ The same danger lurks with respect to Islamism. Be it due to political correctness, the fear of being labelled Islamophobic or the sheer threat of violence on the one hand, or the deliberate attempt to undermine any efforts aimed at combating Islamism on the other; the enforced ban of the use of term 'totalitarianism' when in fact it potentially should apply, constitutes

⁴⁵³ Lefort and Thompson, eds., *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism*, pp. 273-275. See also on this issue Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror: An Essay on the Communist Problem*.

propaganda in the same way as when this term is used without warrant. What is relevant is that as long as it concerns the *content* of religion, and not the person of the individual *believer*, criticism of religious movements is protected by the freedom of thought and expression enshrined in the Dutch constitution and a myriad of international human rights treaties. The very foundation of our current legal-political order, the European Enlightenment would not have been possible if it were not for the freedom to criticize religion.⁴⁵⁴ Moreover, if the history of the 20th century has proved anything, it is that any legal-political doctrine, regardless of its origins, must be severely scrutinized in order to assure that totalitarianism never again has a chance to rule over mankind. In that sense men are holy; texts, political and religious ideas are not. Tragically this freedom and this historical heritage are increasingly under pressure. Many intellectuals, public figures, political entities and NGO's actively oppose any mentioning of Islam in conjunction with violence. The UN General Assembly in its 2006 Global Counter-terrorism strategy specifically states that terrorism:

⁴⁵⁴ See for instance Nietzsche's harsh critique of not only Christianity but also on its adherents: In the New testament "I find nothing but petty sectarianism, mere rococo of the soul, mere involutions, nooks, queer things," J. Golomb, *Nietzsche and Jewish Culture* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 7. On Christians: "The everyday Christian cuts a miserable figure; he is a man who really cannot count to three, and who precisely on account of his spiritual imbecility does not deserve to be punished so harshly as Christianity promises to punish him." Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Paragraph 116 Voltaire declared: "Christianity is the most ridiculous, the most absurd, and bloody religion that has ever infected the world", Quoted from J. A. Haight, *Holy Horrors: An Illustrated History of Religious Murder and Madness* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1990), p. 131. See for an inventory of radical critiques of Judaism: J. Carlebach, *Karl Marx and the Radical Critique of Judaism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

[..] cannot and should not be associated with any religion.⁴⁵⁵

Likewise the European Union aims to ban the use of the word Islam in conjunction with references to acts of terrorism.

Brussels officials have confirmed the existence of a classified handbook which offers "non-offensive" phrases to use when announcing anti-terrorist operations or dealing with terrorist attacks. Banned terms are said to include "jihad", "Islamic" or "fundamentalist". The word "jihad" is to be avoided altogether, according to some sources, because for Muslims the word can mean a personal struggle to live a moral life. One alternative, suggested publicly last year, is for the term "Islamic terrorism" to be replaced by "terrorists who abusively invoke Islam".⁴⁵⁶

Under the banner of tolerance, anti-racism, multiculturalism and respect for Islam, an a priori and *thus* utterly unfounded dogma is promulgated and enforced which reads: Islam cannot inspire violence. From this follows the claim that any violence committed in the name of Islam *must* be either an abuse of Islam for personal and political gain or a misinterpretation of it. In no way and under no circumstances can it possibly be a product of an authentic and sincere interpretation of that religion. In so doing, a representation of Islam is formed which is not the result of critical study, but the product of ideological thinking. It dictates what thoughts one may entertain about that religion and which not, or to paraphrase Linz's observation on the nature of the totalitarian ideology, 'beyond its borders lies heterodoxy which does not go unpunished'. Ironically, this assumes to know what the *true* doctrines of a certain religion are whilst at the same time banning others from doing independent critical research into the same subject. It monopolizes the 'truth' about Islam and

⁴⁵⁵ General Assembly of the United Nations, "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy," (New York: United Nations, 2006).

⁴⁵⁶ Bruno Waterfield, "Don't Confuse Terrorism with Islam, Says Eu," *The Telegraph* 2007.

deems all who disagree as heretics. In that respect we are witnessing a revival of Voegelin's Gnostic speculation. "The system is justified by the fact of its construction; the possibility of calling into question the construction of systems, as such, is not acknowledged. That the form of science is the system must be assumed as beyond all question."⁴⁵⁷ The Gnostic, deeply unsettled by the critique aimed at Islam and the social tensions that might bring, seeks to return the flock to the Garden of Eden by constructing a system of truth which, if followed or enforced, will guarantee peace and bliss for all, at least as defined by the Gnostic.

Whilst some argue that Islam and violence should not be mentioned out of respect for Islam, tolerance and some presumed brotherhood of all religions, others argue the same for very different reasons; first of which the Islamists themselves who do not wish their ideological foundations to be scrutinized. That this is not mere conjecture is exemplified by actual practice. Some highly acclaimed and influential International Organizations claim that any allegation of a link between Islam and terrorism is in fact Islamophobic and urge governments to adopt legislation criminalizing such allegations. These organizations actively use the international legal instruments of human rights law to defame and criminalize those who mention any possible link between Islam and violence, even if such is done in the course of formulating international security policies.⁴⁵⁸ Such efforts have also resulted in the

⁴⁵⁷ Voegelin and Henningsen, *Modernity without Restraint*, p. 247.

⁴⁵⁸ The OIC, the organization of the Islamic Conference, is an International organization of 57 predominantly Islamic nations that seeks to further the interest of Islam and functions as the self declared political representative of the Muslim nation, the *ummah*. On numerous occasions it has declared that references to Islam and violence are in fact Islamophobic. This extends to a condemnation of any type of thought that seeks to imply a link between violence and Islam. In the words of the OIC, Islamophobia is caused by the 'misrepresentation and incorrect interpretation of Islam' on the side of those who criticize Islam. On the academic and intellectual level this has led to a condemnation of all those who have sought to research the manifestations of violence in Islam such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Bernard Lewis and Andrew

enactment of policies in the EU which advice government spokespersons to avoid the use of the word Islam in reference to acts of violence.⁴⁵⁹

Bostom. The latter person is the author of 'the legacy of jihad'. This book which uses almost exclusively primary *Islamic* sources to come to an understanding of the phenomenon of jihad, was accused of Islamophobia since, in the words of the OIC: "The author described Islamic jihad as a destructive character, refuting the primacy of jihad being a "rich" concept and maligning it in terms of war, bloodshed, subjugation and expansion of the faith by violence." Apparently, translating and publishing original Islamic scholars' opinions on jihad constitutes Islamophobia. More importantly, the OIC sought to establish an international legal framework through which such 'Islamophobic' criticism was to be penalized. The OIC lamented the 'lack of legal mechanisms to prevent provocative literature and statements that incite religious and intercultural intolerance as well as the absence of a binding international instrument to contain defamation of religions.' In so doing, the OIC maintains that *any* allegation of a link between Islam and violence is per definition Islamophobic, thus forcing all to subscribe to the OIC's point of view that Islam and violence are mutually exclusive whilst at the same time outlawing any research into the validity of that claim. This has gone so far as to label the counter-insurgency manual of General David Petraeus as a 'manifestation of Islamophobia' since it "details an alleged link between Muslim groups and terrorists" and utilizes terms such as "Islamic insurgents" and "Islamic extremists." (OIC) Organization of The Islamic Conference, "1st Oic Observatory Report on Islamophobia –May 2007-March 2008," (Jeddah: OIC, 2008). Nathaniel Sugarman, "Oic: Petraeus Guilty of Islamophobia," (2010), <http://www.legal-project.org/blog/2010/08/oic-petraeus-guilty-of-islamophobia>. The efforts by the OIC to curtail the freedom of speech, and expression have led to the adoption by the UN human rights council of the infamous 'defamation of religions' resolution in which is stated that the UNHRC: "expresses deep concern in this respect that Islam is frequently and wrongly associated with human rights violations and terrorism". United Nations Human Rights Council, "Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance, Follow-up to and Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action," (UNHRC, 2009). (OIC) Organization of The Islamic Conference, "Third Oic Report on Islamophobia, May 2009 to April 2010," (Dushanbe: OIC, 2010).

⁴⁵⁹ Bruno Waterfield, "Don't Confuse Terrorism with Islam, Says Eu."

It is in my opinion tragic to see how those who seek to prevent totalitarianism and religious violence from ever ravaging mankind again, are accused of such a vile thing as racism or incitement to religious hatred. Moreover, just as the reluctance to condemn Communism did not help but rather abandoned the victims of communist oppression, so too the reluctance to engage the root causes and motives of Islamism abandons those who suffer most from it: Muslims. A 2009 study by the US Combatting Terrorism Center indicated that 85% of the victims of al-Qaeda's terror between 2004 and 2008 have been Muslims.⁴⁶⁰ If the object of the international academic and political community is to safeguard the lives of Muslims then this is all the more reason for an unbiased and objective research into the roots of Islamism, unhindered by false accusations of Islamophobia or racism.

One might ask the question: Isn't this research about Islamism and totalitarianism and *not* about Islam? This would be a very valid question. If one wishes to deal with the Islamists phenomenon from the perspective of counter-terrorism strategies and totalitarianism and religious studies, then it is in no way helpful to assume *a priori* that Islamism has nothing to do with Islam and to sanction all those who dare question this. If we are to prevent crimes against humanity as those perpetrated by al-Qaeda and other Islamist groups, then we *must* understand their motives, their arguments and the validity of those arguments in the eyes of people of the Islamic faith. Islamist movements are above all movements which seek to mobilize the Muslim masses; the potential attraction of their arguments depends on the legitimacy those arguments have in the eyes of the believers and they are therefore of the utmost importance. The Islamist ideologues I will be discussing are not men interested in political power for power's sake, nor are they interested in wealth or fame. Their agenda is thoroughly motivated by a desire to implement what

⁴⁶⁰ Combatting Terrorism Center, "Deadly Vanguard: A Study of Al-Qa'ida's Violence against Muslims."

they see as Islam and Islamic law. We cannot understand them without knowing what Islam and Islamic law is, and how it relates to their ideologies. The *a priori* statement that Islamism and Islam are utterly unrelated is therefore intentionally or unintentionally counterproductive in the formulation of any successful counter-terrorism strategy.

On the general approach of this part

I have outlined some of the elements which form the background of this research. I have mentioned that Islamism as a legal-political philosophy is connected, but not equal to Islam as a religion. This research, in addition, is not about Islam nor is it a research into the validity of the claims of the Islamists in the light of Islam itself. This research seeks to ascertain whether or not the totalitarianism paradigm can be applied to Islamism. If this is the case, then we are dealing with a phenomenon which poses considerable more and considerably different threats to Islamic and non-Islamic societies than the mere authoritarian theocracy for instance would. This research is thus above all a quest to understand the Islamist phenomenon. In the process of that research I will look at the structure of the arguments given by Islamists. However, in order to understand these arguments it is pivotal that I explain some of the core concepts of Islam in general, for after all, Islamism's language, symbolism and legal-political vocabulary are derived from the larger framework of Islam. Overall I will be focussing on the works of Islamist ideologues and not so much on the structure of the movements which they spawned. I emphasize the word ideologies here since, as we shall see, most of the Islamist movements never bridged the gap between the ideology and a functioning movement, let alone obtaining power over the state. Whilst Nazism, Communism, Maoism or the Khmer Rouge are all ideological movements whose life cycle culminated in power over the nation state and whose policies could be fully implemented because of their wielding of state power, Islamist movements in general are forces of opposition that operate either on the fringes of political life or operate on an entirely different level of

political action, disregarding notions of the state, nation or geographical and traditional political boundaries altogether. The success of secular totalitarian movements has on the whole not been emulated by Islamist movements. The Islamic republic of Iran which was founded following the revolution headed by Ayatollah Khomeini may be, as we shall see in chapter four of this part of the book, an exception.

Having said that, it is paramount to our understanding of the totalitarian phenomenon that we acknowledge that a successful takeover of the state is not a criterion used to ascertain whether or not a certain ideological movement is totalitarian or not. It merely indicates in which point of the life cycle the movement has arrived. As I have specified in the previous part, totalitarian movements are highly fluid entities, often times bordering on the chaotic, which are only bound together under the name 'totalitarian' because of their adherence to the double wielding sword of ideology and terror. It is this uniquely totalitarian mindset and the political actions that are dictated by that mindset that define an ideology or movement as totalitarian. It can therefore take many shapes and appearances and this second part will investigate if Islamist ideologies comply with the basic criteria of totalitarianism. As such I aim to ascertain whether or not Islamism forms a novel and thoroughly religious form of totalitarianism. For these reasons I will focus for the most part on the ideological aspects of Islamist movements by way of an in depth analysis of the works of those ideologues that have constituted Islamist thought.

Three forms of Islamism

I will conduct this investigation into the possibility of a religious form of totalitarianism through an analysis of three different forms of Islamism. These forms all represent slightly different aspects of the Islamist spectrum: the mass mobilizational 'bottom-up' approach of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods main ideologue Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), the state centred 'top-down' approach of the architect

of the Islamic republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini (1902-1989) and the transnational, decentralized and apocalyptical approach of the chief ideologue of al-Qaeda Ayman al-Zawahiri (1951). These three ideologues have been chosen due to a variety of reasons. First of all, they have been of pivotal importance in formulating the various streams of Islamist doctrines. Whilst their works may differ on the exact approach needed to fabricate the Islamists' Utopia, their works betray a great deal of overlap when it comes to the actual nature of this Utopia and the legality, in light of the religion to which they claim to adhere, of the actions needed to fabricate it. Since their various formulations of the Islamists' cause all depend on the same canonical sources, it indicates a common logicity of ideological thinking. In addition, these three ideologues come from very different, and often times fiercely antagonistic backgrounds. Both al-Zawahiri and Qutb are Sunni Muslims whilst Ayatollah Khomeini is a Shi'a. Especially in the works of al-Zawahiri, the antagonism towards Shiism is pervasive. Yet, regardless of their theological and doctrinal differences, these ideologues come to the same ideology and principles of action through an exegesis of the same canonical sources, thus indicating again, that their interpretation of these sources has a consistency which transcends sectarian divides. This is extremely important to note. When viewing the enormous differences between Shi'a and Sunni Islam and the often bloody history of antagonism between them, it is most noteworthy that on the issue of the Islamists' mission, they rather unequivocally agree on their interpretation of the canonical sources. This indicates, as I aim to show, that their claims to legitimacy and authenticity cannot and more importantly, should not be dismissed out of hand. If Islamist movements are truly merely fraudulent abuses of Islam for personal gain, then they can be expected to wither away when the leadership itself ceases to be. At best they would be movements built around the personality of the leadership. Such movements would follow the evolutionary tract of other dictatorships built upon foundations which have no or no *enduring* authority or legitimacy in the eyes of the population. If,

however, the Islamists' interpretation of the canonical sources of Islam is *seen* as having authority and legitimacy, then the Islamist movements would be impervious to the death of the leadership and the Islamists' claim to authority would remain, thus ensuring the continuing threat of Islamist totalitarianism. The fact that ideologues from such diverse backgrounds and theological foundations as Qutb, al-Zawahiri and Khomeini can come to the same observations and conclusions is an indication that we are not dealing with mere abuses of Islam for personal gain, but rather with ideological movements built upon ideas which hold a great amount of validity and inner consistency. The Islamist threat, therefore, seems to be a severe one, one which cannot be tackled whilst denying any link between it and the religion it claims to represent.

Methodology

The framework of this part of the book follows that of the first part. This means that I will start by explaining some of the foundations upon which Islamism is built, namely those of Islam. I will then proceed to chart some of the historical intellectual, political, religious and social changes which have led to the formation of Islamist thought. This is followed by an in depth analysis of four main works by Islamist ideologues which each have played a pivotal role in forming what we now see as Islamist thought. I will give a more detailed description of the chapters shortly.

I will analyze the works of these ideologues by means of the schematic employed in the previous part. In chapter 5.4 I showed how Voegelin's Gnostic speculation could be easily adapted to display the movement inherent in totalitarian thinking. I will follow this schematic approach in this part of the book as well, albeit with a few connotations. Like all other aforementioned secular-totalitarianism theories, the application of Voegelin's theory has thus far been

limited to the study of non-religious totalitarian movements.⁴⁶¹ As mentioned, Voegelin names these movements *ersatz religionen* to indicate their non-religious nature. I propose that his theory is nonetheless applicable to the study of religious movements provided we reinterpret this theory slightly. As we have seen the Gnostic speculation theory gives us six criteria by which we can identify such movements.

⁴⁶¹ Whilst Voegelin did not give a clear reason for why he limited the applicability of his theory to secular movements, I suspect he omitted to do so for two reasons. The first reason seems to be that at the time of publishing his theory, religious political extremism was simply not an issue. None of the works of totalitarianism discussed thus far concern themselves with religious totalitarianism, presumably for the very same reasons. The second reason, and this is purely speculation on my part is that Voegelin himself was a devout Christian and placing his personal belief within the spectrum of Gnostic speculations might have been a bridge too far for him. His disdain for Gnostic movements resounds throughout his work, and for good reason seeing the historical circumstances. If he had included religion in this schematic he would have condemned religion to the unsavoury company of Nazism and Leninist-Marxist Bolshevism. Perhaps, but once again this is speculation on my part, Voegelin also felt that the Gnostic speculation rests firmly on the basis of a manmade invention. Religion on the other hand is a divine creation and thus irreconcilable with the former. This argument, however, forms no obstacle for me to extend the boundaries of the Gnostic speculation to include religious thought.

Voegelin's Gnostic Speculation	
1.	The Gnostic is dissatisfied with his situation;
2.	The belief that the drawbacks of the situation can be attributed to the fact that the world is intrinsically poorly organized;
3.	The belief that salvation from the evil of the world is possible;
4.	The belief that the order of being will have to be changed in a historical process
5.	The belief that this salvational act is possible through man's own effort;
6.	It is the task of the Gnostic to seek out the prescription for such a change in the order of being and discover the formula for self and world salvation ⁴⁶²

The fourth condition immediately demarcates the boundary, both in secular and in religious theories of salvation, between privately held beliefs and beliefs that require universal dominance and exclusivity. Condition five and six are the most obvious obstacles to a religious variety of the Gnostic speculation since they clearly direct to 'man's own effort' and the manmade 'discovery for self and world salvation'. In Islamist texts the condition "man's own efforts" remains unchanged and is interpreted as meaning that it is the task of the Islamist vanguard group to bring mankind back into the fold of Islam. Where my adapted religious variety of Voegelin's schematic differs from Voegelin's original schematic is that in the original the 'discovery for self and world salvation' was the final stage of the Gnostic's search for order. In this revised schematic it is the starting point. The formula for self- and world salvation is already a given, namely: Islam. As we will see, Islamist ideologues will from there on describe their dissatisfaction with the state of the world which they attribute to an abandonment of Islam. This poor state of being can then be ameliorated by returning to what the Islamists see as a 'pure form of Islam' which will require the fabrication of a new order of being at the hands the Islamist Vanguard movement. Thus the revised schematic which I will be using will look as follows:

⁴⁶² Voegelin, "Ersatz Religion," p. 298.

	Secular	Religious	As a chapter
1	The Gnostic is dissatisfied with his situation	Islam is the formula for self and world salvation	The Nature of Islam
2	The belief that the drawbacks of the situation can be attributed to the fact that the world is intrinsically poorly organized	The observation that the world is in disorder, the fall from Eden	Exile: the observation of disorder
3	The belief that salvation from the evil of the world is possible	The reasons for the fall from Eden: the abandonment of the edicts of religion and the existence of existential enemies	The causes of Exile
4	The belief that the order of being will have to be changed in a historical process	The belief that salvation from the evil of the world and a return to Eden (<i>palingenesis</i>) is possible	The belief that salvation and a return to Eden is possible
5	The belief that this salvational act is possible through man's own effort	Changing the order of being in a historical process: manufacturing mankind according to the edicts of the religious order	The agent of salvation: the Revolutionary Vanguard
6	It is the task of the Gnostic to seek out the prescription for such a change in the order of being and discover the formula for self and world salvation	The belief that this salvational act is not only a possibility but an existential requirement imposed upon mankind by the religious order	The mechanism of salvation: Jihad

As I have explained, the revised schematic starts with the discovery of the formula for self and world salvation and from there on continues with conditions one through five of Voegelin's original schematic. The main chapter index of this part of the research will follow this schematic and start with a description of Islam, chapter one, the reasons why Islamists perceive disorder in the world and its causes, chapter two, and conclude with the belief in salvation, the changing of the order of being and the methods of change in the various forms of

Islamism, chapters three, four and six. Chapter five being excluded since it offers a short introduction to al-Zawahiri's main work.

These chapters themselves are organized according to the revised schematic's right column, thus making sure that this whole second part of the book is permeated with that structure. Each Islamist ideologue which I will be analyzing will follow this revised schematic by starting with an explanation of what *they* perceive to be the general contents, edicts and structure of Islam and from there onwards will move forward to the observation of the fall from Eden, the possibility of salvation and the means of salvation, culminating in their description of the necessity for, and the means of jihad. This methodology is incidentally also the same as the one used by the Islamist ideologues themselves. It is not a superstructure I imposed upon them. Whilst it does not appear in their writings in the orderly fashion in which I present it here, the schematic of the Gnostic search for order runs through their works as a red line. I will analyze their works accordingly.

I finally reiterate the following pivotal point: the core aim of applying this revised schematic is to ascertain whether or not a given formula for self and word salvation exists, and to which degree the 'believer' is willing to enforce this path to salvation on the rest of mankind. In other words, this research is concerned with the relevance of these ideas to political action and organization, or to put it in Arendt's terminology, to investigate if there is a logicity of ideological thinking which forms the principle of political action and its relevance to terror. With every ideologue I will therefore ascertain if the following quintessential and necessary elements of totalitarianism are present in that specific Islamists ideology:

- 1: Is there an axiomatic premise for self- and world salvation which cannot be falsified?
- 2: Does this Islamist ideologue apply the logicity of ideological thinking to this axiomatic premise?
- 3: Does this application of the logicity of ideological to the axiomatic premise reveal the existence of a law of movement?
- 4: Does this Islamist law of movement indicate the inevitability of the Mankind's salvation through the fabrication of a new order of being?
- 5: Does this Islamist ideologue aim to accelerate this law of movement through the annihilation of the law of movement's axiomatic existential enemies?
- 6: Does the Islamist law of movement result in a principle of action which conforms to the concept of totalitarian lawfulness?
- 7: Does Islamist lawfulness *necessitate* the perpetual application of ideological, not practical, terror?

Only if all of these questions could be answered in the affirmative could we safely conclude that that particular form of Islamism is a novel form of totalitarianism.

As mentioned, the issue of whether or not the source of these ideas can be defined as divine becomes of interest only when we discuss counter-terrorism policies, for if the ideologies of Islamism form part and parcel of divine revelation, then the appeal it will have on the masses increases dramatically. The weakness of all secular forms of totalitarian ideologies, as both Arendt and Islamist thinkers point out time and again, is that they are man-made and thus fallible. A recipe for self and world salvation that has God as its author, on the other hand, is hard to resist or refute. Whereas secular totalitarianism needed violence to supplant its lack of authority, a religion is the emanation of God itself and thus, in principle, requires far less

violence in order to submit and mobilize the masses due to the fact that it emanates from the highest authority possible.

The structure of the forthcoming chapters has been organized in such a way as to proceed in a logical progression from the larger fundamentals of faith and its particular legal-political philosophical vocabulary, to the specific doctrines of Islamist movements.

Chapter index

The chapter build up of this part of the book will follow my revised schematic of Voegelin's Gnostic speculation. Chapter one thus covers what Islamists see as the formula for self- and world salvation: Islam and Islamic law. It will start with some general introductory remarks. These general remarks seek to answer questions such as: what is the difference in general and in Islam in particular between religion, religious law and religiosity? What is the role of ordinary Muslims in this research? What is Islamism? What other competing interpretations of Islam are there that can disarm the Islamist appeal on Muslims? This is then followed by a summary of the basic tenets of the Islamic faith and those aspects of Islam and Islamic law that are important to understanding the Islamists' narrative. I should emphasize that the characteristics of Islam that I will be discussing are not equal to the views on Islam held by the Islamist. I will be merely painting a very broad stroked picture of Islam as it is seen by reputable scholars on Islam.

Chapter two deals with the Islamists' observation of the world in disorder, the causes of disorder and the possibility of salvation. This chapter will detail a specific area of Islamic law that forms the core motif of the Islamist ideologies hope for salvation namely the concept of *jihad* in all its different forms. It will chart the different conceptions of jihad in the canonical texts and in the reception of those texts by the early, medieval and modern Islamic legal experts up to the advent of the Islamist ideologies. It is augmented by a short description of the

historical political and social events which helped form the Islamist ideologies such as the role of Islamic societies' rulers and their relation to Islamic law and the advent of modernity. I will explain how jihad was first seen as an outward movement intended to spread Islam, how it diminished in importance in the later stages of Islam's history and ultimately was reinvigorated by Islamism which not only sought to reinstate its practice toward the non-Islamic outside world, but also turned it into a concept of purifying the Muslim societies; a highly controversial notion in orthodox Islamic circles. In addition to explaining the nature of jihad in the canonical texts and the orthodox works of jurisprudence, this chapter endeavours to answer the following questions: Can Islamism be seen as a reaction to the challenge of modernity? Can the advent of Islamism be explained by similar reactions to the challenges of modernity as those prevalent in pre-totalitarian western societies? Is the Islamist concept of jihad a modern innovation or does it have strong roots in classical Islamic legal theory? What role did the discovery of the masses, the politicization of the concepts of the 'ulama' and 'ummah' and western intellectual influences play in the formation of Islamist thought and action?

It should be said upfront that Islamist ideologues themselves constantly refer back almost exclusively to the foundations of Islam as their main argument. It is surprising that very little arguments are derived from the world outside of the canonical sources. If they are, it is mostly for propaganda used to entice the emotions of the masses; the core issues are, however, all derived from within the corpus of Islam's canonical texts and jurisprudence. Whilst I could have sufficed with referring to some of the standard works on these topics, I am convinced it would be nearly impossible to explain and analyze the works of Islamist thinkers without having explicitly mentioned these factors and events. Especially seeing that Islamist ideologies are intimately connected with these historical and founding facts and legal-political concepts, it would not do to merely apply the revised schematic to these ideologies. Furthermore, it is precisely the

interconnectedness of Islam and Islamism which is of importance to counter-terrorism law and policymakers. Without the proper background knowledge and familiarity with the basic terminology of Islam, any analysis of Islamist writings would surely go to waste and facilitate any a priori tendency to discard Islamism as un-Islamic. Whilst it may therefore not be clear from the start, or even seem irrelevant, the relevance of the subjects I will be describing in chapters one and two will become apparent in the following chapters.

Having made an overview of all the background issues that formed the fundamentals upon which Islamist thought is built, the chapters three, four, five and six are dedicated to three major figures of Islamist thought namely: Sayyid Qutb, widely credited to be the 'grandfather of modern Islamism', Ayatollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic republic of Iran and lastly Ayman al-Zawahiri the chief ideologue of Al-Qaeda. I have already explained the relevance of these three in the preceding paragraphs.

In terms of the structure of this part of the research, the following chapters all detail exactly how these ideologues view Islam as the formula for self- and world salvation, how they see the disorder in the world, how jihad is to be seen as the core principle of Islam which must be reinvigorated if salvation in the form of *palingenesis* is to be attained, and how the model of mass movements based on the example of the totalitarian Vanguards are to be the instruments of fabricating a new *Islamist*' order of being.

In chapter three we will look at the thoughts of Sayyid Qutb, who is widely regarded as having laid the foundations of modern day Islamist movements. Any meaningful investigation into the 20th century rise of Islamism will take Qutb as a central figure for two reasons. Firstly, Qutb articulated the ideological framework of most of the Islamist movements that have come to the foreground in the 20th century. It is practically impossible to read modern day jihadist discourses without finding explicit or hidden references to the work of Sayyid Qutb. His

particular ideology envisioned a palingenetic, revivalist transformation of society towards another order of being, on a global scale through both violent as well as non-violent means. His main work *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* or 'Milestones' which I will be discussing in great depth, repeats classical Islamic legal-political teachings but reshapes them into a revolutionary manifesto for a 20th century audience through the use of a vocabulary that has strong similarities to that of Robespierre and the Leninist discourse. Secondly, apart from the strongly mobilizing and ideological content of his ideas, Qutb tries to describe the framework of action through which the ideology may be implemented in practice. Whilst it is true that many Islamist movements are violent, violence in itself is not a necessary precondition for any movement to be typified as being Islamist or even totalitarian. In line with Qutb's argument, and an argument which is repeated by Zawahiri amongst others, I aim to show that the idea of violence as being a necessary element in typifying a movement as Islamist is not an appropriate or satisfying criterion and indeed undermines counter-terrorism efforts to this day. Whilst Qutb's thoughts did indeed provide the legitimacy and rallying call for a wide array of violent Islamist movements, its true force lies in its ability to inspire, rally and organize a far greater and better equipped number of non-violent Islamist groups that operate largely under the radar and within the bounds of the law of both the Islamic and non-Islamic world up to this day. Especially in the non-Islamic world such movements are protected under the umbrella of human rights treaties and thereby have long been overlooked by counter-terrorism law- and policy makers. With regard to these non-violent Qutbist movements, the chapter on Qutb becomes important because more often than not, these movements will portray an image of moderation and rejection of 'radicalism' to the non-Islamic outside world. The criteria derived from Qutb's writing however show that many of these organizations in effect do ascribe to these ideals and cannot be in good conscience be called moderate or non-radical. This is of prime importance to law- and policymakers since these movements often

function as the gateway through which material, financial means or persons are funnelled towards violent Qutbist groups such as Hamas or al-Qaeda. Operating within the law and under the protection of human rights, these movements exploit the weaknesses of the political systems in which they reside. Knowing the Qutbian vocabulary will assist law and policy makers in recognizing Qutbian organizations for what they are. Something which is well nigh impossible if one is not familiar with their particular brand of *doublespeak* and *newspeak*.

If we find that Qutb's ideology is indeed totalitarian, then the network of 'Qutbist' movements that ascribe to his ideology should be seen in a new light. It would imply that the violent organizations, such as Hamas or al-Qaeda are not merely movements of resistance or opposition, as is sometimes claimed, but that they are in fact the outspoken vanguard of a totalitarian movement. The same holds for non-violent movements that aim to implement the political agenda of Sayyid Qutb by different means. This has consequences for the way in which we must 'read' their proclamations, the way in which we evaluate their strategies, the way in which we apply our laws that protect certain constitutional freedoms and the ways in which we formulate counter-strategies. In addition, there are also readers who might have the preconceived notion that these movements are indeed totalitarian and not merely movements that oppose western influences or their presence in the Islamic world, as these movements often claim themselves. To these people, the chapter on Qutb will offer the indicators needed to validate or, if warranted, revise their observations. A final remark on chapter three is the following: Many of the argument put forth by Islamist ideologues hinge on the same set of ideas and principles. Whilst it is imperative that we understand the internal coherence of these ideas, it would be a waste of time and effort to repeat their structure every time they appear. My analysis of Qutb's Milestones is therefore intended to be exhaustive. The following chapters on Khomeini and al-Zawahiri will all refer back to

the matter described in this chapter and will thus try to avoid making such repetitive arguments.

Chapter four deals with the Shi'a variant of Qutb's *Milestones*, namely Ayatollah Khomeini's *Velayat-e faqih*. Whilst Qutb and Zawahiri belong to the Sunni school of Islam which represents around 80% of the world's Muslim population, Ayatollah Khomeini belongs to the Shi'a stream of Islam which accounts, roughly, for the other 20%. Both Qutb and Khomeini struggle with the advent of modernity, and blamed much of the Islamic world's ailments to a number of 'existential enemies', and yet both find different solutions to it. Whereas Qutb's legacy, as we will see, on the practical level consists mainly of a vast network of movements that function in opposition to the state or that have moved beyond the conceptual focus on the state altogether, Khomeini's legacy is a state. As such the empirical criteria for totalitarianism discussed in part I of this book can be used to ascertain whether or not Khomeini's ideology actually resulted in a totalitarian state. In addition, the inclusion of a Shi'a ideologue will give insight into the popularity of this type of Islamist thinking, a popularity that transcends Shi'a-Sunni boundaries that are otherwise very much conflict-ridden. Furthermore, cross-referencing the radical Shi'a perspective on the legal-political implications of Islam with those of the radical Sunni perspective ought to give us some insight into the commonalities, differences and perseverance of such thoughts.

The chapters five and six are dedicated to one of the most identifiable and outspoken ideologues of Islamism today, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Zawahiri is the current leader of al-Qaeda and its chief ideologue. He represents the extreme violence to which the thinking of Qutb can lead. Whilst al-Zawahiri did not invent the discourse he professes, he is a very judicious exponent of this type of thinking and a study of his literature will reveal the depths in which his thinking and writing is founded on a long lineage of Islamic thinkers and in the end on canonical literature. Chapter five analyses briefly his work *Knights under the prophets banner*, which can be seen as a revision of

Qutb's *Milestones*. It details how and why the revolution Qutb envisioned did not work and which steps needed to be taken to ensure that it could work. This work thus details the reasons and events underlying the formation of al-Qaeda and is largely a historical account of the Islamists vanguard history.

Chapter six finally is al-Zawahiri's seminal work on Islamic jurisprudence *The Exoneration*. Whilst it is often said that the thinking of people such as al-Zawahiri constitutes a breach with classical Islamic thinking, al-Zawahiri makes an effort to show that the contrary is true through an appeal steeped in fiqh and Shari'ah argumentation. This makes him a most interesting subject of study for the practical implications of Islamist ideologies. The background to the *Exoneration* is an accusation written against al-Zawahiri by his former mentor Sayyed Imam. Following his capture and imprisonment by Mubarak's regime, Imam became a 'reformed jihadist'. In his writings he accused al-Zawahiri and al-Qaeda of being un-Islamic. Written as a response to this accusation, 'The Exoneration' forms a point by point defence of the motives and means of al-Qaeda. Unlike *Milestones*, *Velayat-e faqih* and *Knights under the prophet's banner*, the *Exoneration* is not a manifesto for rallying political action but a thoroughly and very dense expose on the Islamic legal rulings pertaining to jihad. It relies almost exclusively on those sources which would appeal to Sunni Muslims worldwide and thus offers us an unprecedented look into the heart and mind of al-Qaeda. Furthermore, if we understand their logicity of ideological thinking then we can use that knowledge to the benefit of counter-terrorism efforts.

A last remark about the methodology employed is this. The works which I will analyse are mostly incredibly thick and layered with references to classical and medieval Islamic doctrines which are not explained in these works themselves. They require a vast amount of pre-existing knowledge, the arguments offered are often interdependent and, in the case of al-Zawahiri in particular, of a more legal than political nature. Whilst this has the benefit of combining in

the grand total, the political and legal dimensions of Islamist thought, it does mean that I will often have to explain how these two relate to each other and how they relate to the material discussed in part one of this research. In order to facilitate this process I have in essence rearranged their arguments according to the adapted schematic of Voegelin's Gnostic speculation as mentioned earlier. The nature and essence of these works does not object to such a rearrangement since it is their hidden underlying structure. In order to make the connection with the research I did in part one of this study I will comment on that relation at every step of the way rather than referring to it in some sort of book by book summary. The benefit of this method is that the chapters three, four and six can be read in isolation. With this I mean that the central question: "is Islamism a novel form of totalitarianism", is answered in each of these chapters separately with all due references to the material discussed in the first part of this book.

Chapter seven will end with the conclusion of the book entire.