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Andrej Iliev
General Mihailo Apostolski Military Academy, Skopje
andrej220578@gmail.com; andrej.iliev@ugd.edu.mk
Aleksandar Grizev
General Mihailo Apostolski Military Academy, Skopje
aleksandar.grizev@ugd.edu.mk
Aleksandar Petrovski
General Mihailo Apostolski Military Academy, Skopje
aleksandar.petrovski@ugd.edu.mk

Abstract

Wahhabism represents an ideological and religious movement. It is the dominant islamic movement in Saudi Arabia. The founder of this ideology is Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab (1703-1792).

In the introductory part of this paper, the authors give an explanation of the historical paths of Wahhabism as a general Islamic doctrine. The main focus of the paper is on the basis of the ideology of wahhabism. This ideology starts with the Muslim brotherhood of Hassan el-Banna in 1928, through the Islamic ideological movements of Abul ala Maududi and Sayid Qutb and ends with the extremist Deobandi faith in South Asia. All of these Islamist movements established a strong presence in the Muslim world during the second half of the 20th century.

In the sesond part of the paper, the authors give a review on wahhabism ideology, as in its basis, wahhabism is not an officially recognized and approved Islamic religious direction. Having in mind that the main role of wahhabism is unification of Saudi Arabia, this religious direction has always been a broader subject of public attacks and criticism. However, the interest in wahhabism increased at the beginning of the 21st century, especially with the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11.09.2001. One of the first Islamic movements based on wahhabism was founded in Saudi Arabia, known as "Ikhwan". This Islamic movement was represented by Bedouin tribes that were formed by Ibn Saud.
Finally, having in mind the full spectrum of ideological and doctrinal steps of wahhabism in general, we must mention the influence of wahhabism towards the other Islamic movements, and also gave a clear vision of its widespread vision in global frames.

The ideology of wahhabism, according to the world views on radical Islam movements, represents a prototype ideology of some extreme and terrorist groups.
The aim of this paper is to analyze the historical development and social role of the modern ideology of wahhabism towards other Islamic movements. All of the above mentioned will be analyzed through the comprehensive social changes that have taken place in the world over the last century.

Keywords: *ideology, modern wahhabism, islamic movements, influence, terrorist groups*

1. INTRODUCTION

Wahhabism can be characterized as a religious ideology and movement. Its ideologist was Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab (1703-1792), who proposed the purification of Islam from what he considered to be novelty. Wahhabism is the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism is considered to adhere to the correct interpretation of the general Islamic doctrine (the concept of monotheism in Islam), the oneness and harmony of God, just like the majority of Muslims, but all of which are uniquely interpreted by al-Wahhab[95]. Wahhabism is a very specific phenomenon, which seeks to be recognized as a separate school[96]. Wahhabis are sometimes defined, especially by non-Muslims, as "extreme" or "conservative" Sunnis. In the literature, the terms Wahhabi and Salafi are often used interchangeably as synonyms, but Wahhabis are also considered a "special orientation within Salafism", an orientation that some consider ultraconservative and heretical[97]. For the Wahhabism followers, the term "Wahhabism" is a misnomer, even an offensive name for their efforts to revive fundamental Islamic beliefs and practices. Instead, they prefer either the term "Salafism" (someone who follows the path of the first Muslims, Salafis) or "muwahid" (muwahhid is literally a monotheist, someone who believes and acknowledges the oneness of God)[98].

According to many authors, the basic feature of Wahhabi ideology is normative consistency, which emphasizes the expansion and unity in the name of Islam as a reaction to the disunity that was characteristic of the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, because of the right to rule and the rules by which al-Wahhab interprets Islam, opposition to Wahhabi rule is illegitimate, thus enabling the Al Saud dynasty, as the pinnacle of the Wahhabi movement in its time, to have the exclusive right to rule[99].

However, focusing purely on the ideology of the Wahhabi movement, even in the context of the wider tribal political system, seems inadequate. "It is not enough to set up ideology alone ... it is also necessary to link it to the key context of social action, in which the elite actually persuades or forces to accept authority by manipulating effective political symbols"[100]. According to Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, in order to become a Muslim, one needs to acknowledge the oneness of God, fully accept the message of the Prophet Muhammad and act in accordance with it. Al-Wahhab therefore sees three aspects of Islam: submission, belief and proper behaviour[101].

According to Al-Wahhab's vision of the relationship between religion and the state, Derek Hopwood[102] believes that "In a state without power, religion is in danger and without the law and discipline, the state is a tyrannical organization." Therefore, the state exists to

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[95] Esposito. J. L. The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, York, Oxford University press, 2010, 333-334.

[96] Algar, H. Wahhabism: A Critical Essay, Oneonta, NY, Islamic Publications International, 2002, 7-9.

[97] Esposito. J. L., What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam, New York, Oxford University Press, 2002, 5-7.

[98] Commins, D., The wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997.

[99] Beatty, A. The wahhabi tribe: an analysis of authority in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula, 1902-1932, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2003, 7-9.

[100] Caton, S. C., Anthropological Theories, in Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East: Ideology and the Semiotics of Power, eds. Khoury P. and J. Kostiner, London, LB. Tauris, 1990

[101] Yusron, M., Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab: What He Believes Based on His Writings. Master's Thesis, New York University, 1987, 49-52.

[102] Hopwood, D., The Ideological Basis: Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's Muslim Revivalism, in State, Society and Economy in Saudi Arabia, ed. Tim Niblock, London, Croom Helm, 1982, 33-37.

reflect the unity of God and to obey his rules. There is an interesting parallel between Al-Wahhab's understanding of the state and his emphasis on religious beliefs, which forms the basis of behavior in the sense that the state becomes the primary means by which human actions can be dedicated to God[103].

Therefore, the authority of the ruler is legitimate only insofar as it implements Wahhabi beliefs and norms. In this regard, this is a fundamental reorientation of the conceptualization of authority, away from tribal norms and standards to those defined by Wahhabi beliefs. As long as the ruling group rules in the name of Islam (according to Al-Wahhab) and follows its rules, it is the duty of Muslims to obey the orders and prohibitions of the ruler[104]. One should not oppose the ruler unless he transgresses the laws of God. According to al-Wahhab (Machiavellian) understanding, the means and the way in which power is acquired are largely irrelevant[105], as long as the ruler follows the normative order, according to his idea. The ulema (the educated class of Muslims, connoisseurs of Sharia) are the ones who define Orthodoxy in this scenario, and the Al-Saud dynasty has been associated with the ulama through the alliance of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab and Muhammad Ibn Saudi since 1744, thus gaining legitimacy for the ruling dynasty, and opposition to the ruler becomes impossible[106].

In other words, because the right to rule is based on the implementation of Wahhabi thought and because the Al-Saud dynasty has committed itself to such a role, the opposition to them undermines the norms and values constructed by the Wahhabis and is therefore illegitimate. Moreover, in this context, the expansionist element of Wahhabism is becoming increasingly prominent, to the extent that the legitimacy of power is determined by the implementation of Wahhabism, and not by the means by which it is implemented. The goal of Wahhabism, simply put, is to create more followers[107]. As such, the focus is on the final result, not the means. Therefore, it can be said that Al-Wahhab's conception of the state is nothing more than a spread of its interpretation of Islam and it is in complete harmony with his critique of the social and political context of the Arabian Peninsula.

2. HISTORY OF THE IDEOLOGY OF WAHHABISM

Starting from the agreement of 1744 between Al-Wahhab and the House of Saud, Wahhabism seems to have weakened in its influence in Saudi Arabia. The Al Saud dynasty seems to be somehow distancing from the Wahhabi establishment, pressed between the rigidity of Wahhabism, the state of the modern world and the presence of non-Muslim citizens in the country, especially the United States. Additionally, the emergence and strengthening of the "Islamic Liberals" group, made up of former Islamists and liberals, Sunnis and Shiites, who call for democratic change within Islam through the revision of the official Wahhabi religious doctrine as a great importance[108].

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[103] Beatty, A. The wahhabi tribe: an analysis of authority in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula, 1902-1932, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2003, 8-10.

[104] Al-Azmeh, A, Wahhabite Polity in Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society To Modem States, ed. Ian Netton, London, Croom Helm, 1986, 78-81.

[105] Yusron, M., Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab: What He Believes Based on His Writings. Master's Thesis, New York University, 1987, 94-97.

[106] Al-Azmeh, 1986, 87-90.

[107] Beatty, A. The wahhabi tribe: an analysis of authority in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula, 1902-1932, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2003. 20-24.

[108] Lacroix, S., Between Islamists and Liberals: Saudi Arabia's new IslamoLiberal reformist trends, Middle East Journal 58, No.3, Summer 2004, 5-7.

In fact, there are more people who pay attention to political criticism than to criticism of Wahhabism (its political, social, and religious aspects). Although, looking back, some doctrinal aspects of Wahhabism have been attacked from time to time, it can be said that Wahhabism has long been a taboo subject in Saudi Arabia. Today's situation is a little different, so the criticism of Wahhabism comes from within, from the very ideological Wahhabi core.

Given the fact that Wahhabis are strongly opposed to the worship of anything other than Allah, it is not surprising that throughout the history of Wahhabism, its followers, in imitation of the Prophet Muhammad, have destroyed monuments and tombs that could become potential shrines. For example, in 1801 and 1802, they attacked the Shiite holy cities of Iraq, Karbala and Najaf, destroying the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Ali's son Hussein[109]. This is one of the reasons why Shiites are so critical of Wahhabism. Additionally, in 1803 and 1804, the Wahhabis occupied the two holiest cities for Muslims, Mecca and Medina, and destroyed a number of various monuments, shrines and tombs[110]. Among other things, the Wahhabis destroyed the shrine that was built around the grave of Muhammad's daughter, Fatima. In 1998, the Wahhabis ransacked the tomb of Muhammad's mother, and all of their actions were met with harsh criticism, outcry and opposition throughout the Muslim world[111].

There are many authors who believe that Wahhabi ideology greatly contributes to the creation of militant and political Islam, but the impact of Wahhabism on other Islamic movements will be discussed in one of the following chapters. Suffice it to mention here the attitude and thinking of Feldman, who distinguishes between "deeply conservative" Wahhabis and the so-called "Followers of political Islam in the 1980s and 1990s" (including other Islamic movements) considered Wahhabis to oppose resistance to Muslim governments and the assassination of Muslim rulers, believing that "the decision to start jihad should brought by the ruler, not the individual believer[112].

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[109] Muhyidin, Triyono, and Mira Novana Ardani. Pioneer Manuscript in Refuting Wahhabism: The Perspective of Kiai Dimyati bin Abdul Karim as-Surakarta as a Basis for Islamic Moderation, JMSNI (Journal of Maritime Studies and National Integration), Faculty of Law, Universitas Diponegoro – Indonesia DOI: 6 (1) 2022: 70-71. https://doi.org/10.14710/ jmsni. v6i1.14425

[110] Muhyidin, Triyono, and Mira Novana Ardani. Pioneer Manuscript in Refuting Wahhabism: The Perspective of Kiai Dimyati bin Abdul Karim as-Surakarta as a Basis for Islamic Moderation, JMSNI (Journal of Maritime Studies and National Integration), Faculty of Law, Universitas Diponegoro – Indonesia DOI: 6 (1) 2022: 72-74. https://doi.org/10.14710/ jmsni. v6i1.14425

[111] Bradley, J. R., Saudi Shiites walk tightrope, Asia Times, March 17th, 2005. [229] Rabasa, A. et al, The Muslim world after 9/11, Rand Publishing, 2004, 15-18.

[112] Feldman, N., After Jihad: America and the struggle for Islamic democracy, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003, 45-47.

Figure 1. *Wahhabism against colonialism in the Gulf in the XIX-th century*[113]

According to many, the gap between the House of Saud and the Wahhabi establishment dates back to before the end of the 20th century. After the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait in 1990, the Saudi ruler allowed the presence of American forces on the territory of Saudi Arabia, ostensibly to defend the country from a possible invasion by Iraq. Their presence in the "cradle of Islam" is in stark contrast to the entire Wahhabi ideology, yet the Wahhabi establishment has been forced by the Al Saud dynasty to issue a fatwa legalizing the presence of foreign troops in Saudi Arabia. This move by the Wahhabi ulama was met with sharp criticism by the public and especially by other Islamic movements (Muslim Brotherhood and Jamaat-e-Islami), who believe that the Wahhabi establishment abandons the basic principles of the ideology they share, only to satisfy it.

"The House of Saud." Although factions have emerged in modern Wahhabism lately, here lies the fundamental difference between radical Islamic movements and the Wahhabi ideology: Wahhabis believe that as long as the ruler rules according to Sharia, opposition is illegitimate. This is the period of the appearance of the first dissidents or the so-called "Sheikhs of the awakening", who call for reforms to return to the "righteous path". According to them, the biggest threat to Islam comes from traitors to culture from within, that is, Muslims who are supporters of liberal and secular ideas. According to them, believers must fight these agents of cultural imperialism[114].

Dissidents are attacking the Wahhabi leadership in Saudi Arabia, their insistence on ritual accuracy, while Muslims are suffering under foreign occupation in Palestine, Iraq, Kashmir and Chechnya. According to Commins, this is in fact the main difference between Wahhabism and modern Islamic movements[115].

In the 1990s, the religious ideas offered more than one product: dissidents advocated for efficiency, equality, broader political participation, and greater rulers' concern for the people; these demands reflected modern political demands and concerns of Islamic

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[113] https://newlinesmag.com/essays/how-wahhabism-led-the-fight-against-the-british-in-the-gulf/
[114] Fandy, M., Saudi Arabia and the politics of dissent, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, 23-25.
[115] Commins, D., The wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997, 182-185.

revivalists[116]. This became apparent after the events of 1990-1991 (Iraq's invasion of Kuwait), when the ruling dynasty approved the presence of foreign forces on the territory of Saudi Arabia. Part of the Wahhabi apparatus opposes the presence of foreigners (infidels according to their vocabulary) in the cradle of Islam. Given the fact that the official Wahhabi establishment stood up for the dynasty, they were also branded as corrupt[117].

However, in an attempt to summarize, it can be said that there are various opinions about the ideology of Wahhabism, but many of them are critical. Algar considers the Wahhabis, in the context of Islamic thought, to be "intellectually marginalized." According to him, if they were not close to Mecca and Medina and if they did not have the money from Saudi oil, "Wahhabism could go down in history as a marginal and short-lived sectarian movement." The author states that the Wahhabis call themselves muwahhidun, "declarators / supporters / defenders of the unity of God." He therefore concludes: the basis of Islam implies dismissing other Muslims, staining them for not performing their duties"[118].

Having in mind this, it seems that the hegemony and authority of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia is not at the highest level. Criticism coming from within, from Saudi Arabia, refers to the social manifestation of Wahhabism (religious police, ban on women driving), pointing to the link between Wahhabism and violence in the country, criticism at the expense of the doctrinal rigidity of Wahhabism, i.e., tendency to imitate Al-Wahhab and Ibn Taimiya and perhaps the most important criticism is that of the intolerance of Wahhabi ideology. The Saudi government has been driven by much criticism in the recent years, embarked on concrete social and religious reforms. An obvious move in that direction was the organization of the First Conference on National Dialogue in June 2003, which was attended by thirty ulama of different faiths represented in the country (not only Wahhabis but also non-Wahhabi Sunnis, Sufis, Ismailis, Shiites). Several conclusions emerge from this conference, some of which represent a real blow to Wahhabism, such as the recognition of individual and confessional diversity within the Saudi nation, which is at odds with traditional Wahhabi exclusivism. In addition, none of the officials of the Wahhabi establishment was invited to attend the conference, which obviously speaks of the possible readiness of the Saudi government to marginalize them[119].

The situation outside the borders of Saudi Arabia is very different. The Saudi government is allocating huge sums of money to spread the Wahhabi message. It is an indisputable fact that the Saudis had a special opportunity to influence and spread the Wahhabi message in the 1970s, with the drastic increase in oil prices. The Saudi government has begun spending tens of billions of dollars across the Islamic world to promote Wahhabism, or "petro-Islam"[120].

Al-Fadl believes that the message of Wahhabism to other Muslims, that is, the possibility of propagating Wahhabi ideology, comes from, among other things:

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[116] Faksh, A. M., The future of Islam in the Middle East: Fundamentalism in Egypt, Algeria and Saudi Arabia, Praeger, 1997, 5-7.

[117] Hitman, Gadi. Saudi Arabia's Wahhabism and Nationalism: The Evolution of Wataniyya into Qawmiyya. JO - Digest of Middle East Studies, Ariel University, 2018, 9-12.

[118] Algar, H., Wahhabism: A Critical Essay, Oneonta, NY, Islamic Publications International, 2002, 12-14.

[119] Lacroix, S., Between Islamists and Liberals: Saudi Arabia's new Islamo-Liberal reformist trends, Middle East Journal 58, No.3, Summer 2004, 3-5.

[120] Kepel, G., Jihad: The trail of political Islam, Cambridge, MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, 7-9.

- Arab nationalism, which intensified after the Wahhabi invasion of the Ottoman Empire;
- The control of Mecca and Medina, which gives the Wahhabis the opportunity to exert great influence on Muslim culture and thinking[121];
- The Oil production which after 1975 provided them with billions of dollars in revenue and allowed them to spread the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam[122].

According to Schwartz, Wahhabism is very influential in Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, and has many supporters in Yemen (Stephen Schwartz on Wahhabism on National Review Online). In the above interview, Schwartz thinks that outside the Peninsula, Wahhabism is generally unpopular, but whenever there are problems somewhere, Wahhabism appears. According to him, Hamas in Israel is pure Wahhabism, and forms of neo-Wahhabism or Wahhabi ideology are powerful in Egypt (Muslim Brotherhood) and Pakistan (Jamaat-e-Islami). In these countries, neo-Wahhabis are the initiators of attacks on other Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Wahhabi infiltration continues in Chechnya and Kashmir, and although the number of supporters is small, Wahhabism manages to influence Nigeria, Uzbekistan, Indonesia and the Philippines. Schwartz believes that the Wahhabi infiltration in Bosnia has failed (this is debatable and will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter), and the same goes for Kosovo. According to him, Albanian Muslims in Macedonia and Albania do not like Wahhabism, which goes in the direction of confirming some of the research questions (they consider it too distant and different from their way of practicing Islam).

The Deobandi movement, which has a very similar ideology to the Wahhabi movement, is the basis of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. As for the immigrant Muslim communities, Wahhabism is present in France, but is weakened by the Muslims of Algeria, who did not allow the penetration of the ideology in their home country. According to Schwartz, Britain has aggressive Wahhabi and neo-Wahhabi elements, but in reality has little support from local Muslims. However, a 2007 study in Britain found Wahhabi literature in at least a quarter of Britain's mosques during the two years of the study[123]. All of this literature was published and distributed by agencies affiliated with the Government of Saudi Arabia. Recommendations have been found in the literature that homosexuals should be burned, stoned, or thrown from mountains or tall buildings and then re-stoned to make sure they are dead. Almost half of the literature was in English, aimed at young British Muslims. The same article states that in 2007, reporters managed to find literature in British mosques, where women were portrayed as intelligently inferior and that they needed to be beaten if they did not follow the Islamic dress code, and children over 10 should be scolded if they do not pray (characteristic of other Islamic radical orthodox concepts, ideologies, organizations and groups). The author of the article states that "the Saudis spend between two and three billion dollars for religious purposes outside the country, money that is spent on 1,500 mosques, 210 Islamic centers, but also on a dozen Muslim academies and schools." Another tactics used by Wahhabis in Britain is to flood the market with cheap Wahhabi literature, 5 to 10 times cheaper, for English-speaking Muslims. The article states that the

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[121] Блажевски Иван, Грижев Александар. Морал, Религија, Фундаментализам, Битола, 2018, 137-139. ISBN 978-619-7246-08-7

[122] Abou al Fadl, K., The great theft: Wrestling Islam from the extremists, San Francisco, Harper, 2005, 9-11.

[123] Vallely, P., Wahhabism: A deadly scripture, The Independent, 01.11.2007, 5-7.avaible on: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/wahhabism-a-deadly-scripture.pdf

Saudis have reserved for foreigners 85% of the seats at the Islamic University in Medina, where there are more than 5,000 students from 139 different countries. All of these students, after embracing the Wahhabi ideology, return to their home countries and continue to spread the same ideology[124].

Freedom House report from 2005 also found that a large number of mosques in the United States had found literature from agencies affiliated with the Saudi government, which also called for violence against infidels[125]. Similar findings were made in a report on Saudi funding for radical Islamic groups in Australia[126]. In this direction, the Wahhabis and their sponsors use tactics, which also speaks to the fact that even in US federal prisons, "it is difficult to find authentic Islamic books because Wahhabism does not dominate in the prisons"[127].

The Saudis and most of the major Saudi foundations are directly sponsors of terrorist activities in places such as: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Philippines, Indonesia, Chechnya and Bosnia[128]. One of the priorities of the ideology of Wahhabi is the spread of the Muslim community in Western non-Muslim societies. Efforts are being made to secure Wahhabi dominance in the existing Muslim establishment, mainly by taking over old ones or building new Wahhabi mosques, Islamic centers and educational institutions. Usually, according to Aleksiev, the template for taking over mosques or other institutions is as follows: a Saudi representative offers the community sponsorship of the construction of a new mosque, which usually includes an Islamic school. Upon completion of the project, financial assistance is offered to the community, which would supposedly be used for maintenance, thus making the community dependent on Saudi generosity. The Saudis install their own board members, bring Wahhabi imams and free Wahhabi literature, and change the program and adapt it to the Wahhabi principles. Furthermore, guest lecturers are regularly brought in, who have extremist views and usually lead Friday prayers, thus further radicalizing the members. The most promising candidates are selected for further religious education and indoctrination in Saudi Arabia, and then they return as Wahhabi missionaries, thus completing the cycle[129].

The seizure of the mosque offers other benefits besides propagating the Wahhabi version of Islam. Among other things, it gives the imam and the other members of the boards the opportunity to raise money and then with their discretion to dispose this funds to various extremist organizations and groups.

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[124] Algar, H., Wahhabism: A Critical Essay, Oneonta, NY, Islamic Publications International, 2002, 12-15.
[125] Freedom House, Saudi publications on hate ideology invade American mosques, Center for religious freedom, 2005, 3-5.
[126] Bendle, F.M., Secret Saudi funding of radical Islamic groups in Australia.
National observer: Council for the national interest, Melbourne, No.72, Autumn 2007, avaible on: http://www.nationalobserver.net/pdf/2007_secret_saudi_funding_of_radical_islami c_groups_in_australia.pdf
[127] Foundation for defense of democracies, Islamic religious groups jockey for prison access as concerns over inmate terrorism grow, достапно на http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/islamic-religious-groups-jockey-forprison-access-as-concerns-over-inmate-t/ (30.10.2017)
[128] Alexiev, A., Wahhabism: State-sponsored extremism worldwide, Testimony in front of the U.S. Senate subcommittee on terrorism, technology and homeland security, June 26, 2003, avaible on:http://www.au.af.mil/ au/awc/awcgate/congress/sc062603_alexiev.pdf, 5-7.
[129] Alexiev, A., Wahhabism: State-sponsored extremism worldwide, Testimony in front of the U.S. Senate subcommittee on terrorism, technology and homeland security, June 26, 2003, avaible on: http://www.au.af.mil/ au/awc/awcgate/congress/sc062603_alexiev.pdf, 5-8.

CONCLUSION

The Wahhabi movement and ideology today is perceived by many academics authors as too aggressive and expansionist ideology, which calls for a return to the fundamentals of Islam, which in many aspects differs from traditional Islam practiced in many parts of the world. Wahhabi ideology is considered by many authors as a kind of threat to traditional Islam and therefore explanation will be given below.

As mentioned earlier, interest in Wahhabism increased dramatically in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, especially after the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001. Although Islamic extremism as an ideology is not a new phenomenon, it was not institutionalized until the mid-18th century, when al-Wahhab's teachings were accepted by Al Saud as the state religion[130].

Today, the Wahhabi ideology, with its doctrinal beliefs and practices, is characterized as overly hostile to the values and interests of the majority of Muslims (especially Sufism and Shi'ism), and even more so to non-Muslims. Wahhabis continue to believe in and propagate violence and jihad as a pillar of the Islamic values, rigid conformism to religious practice, institutional repression of women, and a complete rejection of modernity, secularism, and democracy. According to them, it is not an exaggeration to say that Wahhabism has become a prototype of the ideology of many extremist and terrorist groups, even for those who despise the Al Saud dynasty.

Stephen Schwartz, one of the world Wahhabism experts, agrees and believes that Wahhabism and Pakistani Islamists, the so-called Islamic Society or Jamaat-e-Islami, is the main source of Islamic extremist violence in the world today. Speaking of contemporary Islamic renewal movements, Commins, distinguishes between modern Salafists / Wahhabis and those from the time of the Ottoman Empire[131].

According to him, the early Salafis / Wahhabis saw the original sources of Islam as a way to combat ritual innovation, while modern Salafists / Wahhabis share common aspirations to establish correct types of ritual practice, but not with modern dimensions: their imperative is the rejection of secular regimes and replacing them with Sharia-based Islamic states. However, modern Wahhabism seems to be in a paradoxical situation: while the spread of Wahhabi ideology beyond the borders of Saudi Arabia is on a huge scale, the situation in the country does not seem to be in favor of the Wahhabi establishment.

From all of the above mentioned, it can be summarized that Wahhabism is the ideology of the socio-political movement that first conquered the Arabian Peninsula. Three aspects are particularly important in order to explain the influence that Wahhabism has on the construction of authority by the dynasty. First, Wahhabism is by nature an expansionist ideology, to the extent that its goal is the elimination or conversion of all perceptual enemies, including non-Muslim non-Wahhabis (mentioned above for their view of the goal). Because of their desire to implement their doctrines, Wahhabism 'targeted' the population it came in contact with, imposing its normative principles. Second, by regulating public behavior according to its principles, that is, by disciplining social space, the imposition of Wahhabi ideology produced an increase in the authority of the dynasty in Saudi Arabia (Ibn Saud). Moreover, by making the implementation of Wahhabism a declared goal of unification efforts, Ibn Saud's cultural authority, in the form of leading the Wahhabi movement, became politicized. The third aspect of Wahhabism is the monopoly of positions of authority that it

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[130] Alexiev, A., Wahhabism: State-sponsored extremism worldwide, Testimony in front of the U.S. Senate subcommittee on terrorism, technology and homeland security, June 26, 2003, avaible on: http://www.au.af.mil/ au/awc/awcgate/congress/sc062603_alexiev.pdf, 2-3.
[131] Commins, D., The wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997, 250-253.

bestows on the Ibn Saud family. According to Wahhabi beliefs, the legitimacy of political authority was directly proportional to the extent to which Wahhabism was practiced and followed. As long as the Al Saud family remained authorities and defenders of the Wahhabi faith, no one could legitimately oppose them. Therefore, as an ideology and in terms of the construction of political authority, Wahhabism can be identified as expansive, normative and exclusive ideological movemnet and religious direction[132]. It is an indisputable fact that the ideology of Wahhabism fits into the framework and derives from Sunni Islam, however, the same ideology differs in many ways from any of the four officially recognized Islamic schools and directions. Wahhabism is a conservative branch within Islam. As mentioned, Wahhabism is not really a separate recognized school, but can be best described as "a religious movement among fundamentalist believers, with an aspiration to return to the primordial fundamental sources[133].

Muslim critics have seen Wahhabism as a deviant sectarian movement started by an ambitious but misguided religious leader from Arabia who spred a heretical movement. Muslims strongly oppose this teaching, because the basic idea of Al-Wahhab's teaching is to determine whether a person is a Muslim or an infidel. As a controversial figure in the history of Islamic thought, Al-Wahhab's theology and personality have been attacked from many positions[134].

In the history of Islam, the term infidel was seldom used for Muslims, but was reserved for those who did not accept the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad as a holy authority. Muslims believe in one God and this belief is the basic pillar of Islam. The statement of faith or shahada, says, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." Throughout history, most Muslims have agreed that a shahada statement makes someone a Muslim. One may not perform the other obligatory rituals regularly (the pillars of Islam - the five daily prayers, fasting, giving alms, pilgrimage), which does not strictly adhere to Islamic ethnic and moral standards, but as long as one believes that Allah is one and that Muhammad is his messenger, he is only a sinner, not an unbeliever.

Al-Wahhab's position on the issue was different. He considered that the criterion for declaring oneself a Muslim or an infidel was proper worship, as an expression of belief in one God. However, disapproval and opposition to Al-Wahhab's teachings were present from the very beginning. Among the first to oppose were his brother and his father, well-versed in Islam. Although it played an important role in the unification of Saudi Arabia, Wahhabism has been the target of constant attacks and criticism[135].

In recent years, criticism and attacks on Wahhabis have grown louder from within the cradle of Wahhabism - Saudi Arabia. Young people, influenced by the teachings of members and followers of the Muslim Brotherhood, are beginning to lose faith and loyalty to the foundations of Wahhabi ideology. Wahhabism loses exclusive control of public religious discourse[136], where *"Wahhabis are trying to turn the Prophet away from Islam"*. Stephen Schwartz is actually one of the biggest critics of the Wahhabi ideology, although he

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[132] Beatty, A. The Wahhabi tribe: an analysis of authority in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula, 1902-1932, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2003, 15-18.
[133] Commins, D., The Wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997, 19-22.
[134] Beatty, A. The Wahhabi tribe: an analysis of authority in the unification of the Arabian Peninsula, 1902-1932, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2003, 35-37.
[135] Commins, D., The Wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997, 19-21.
[136] Commins, D., The wahhabi mission and Saudi Arabia, London, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 1997, 205-207.

himself is a Muslim, has accepted Islam and is a follower of Sufism[137]. According to him, Wahhabism is an extremist, puritanical and violent movement. Wahhabism has always viewed Shia Muslims genocidally, as non-Muslims to be exterminated. Also, Wahhabism has always attacked traditional Islam, but also Sufism; Wahhabism and neo-wahhabism, according to him, are the main source of Islamic extremism and violence in the world today: Wahhabism is an extreme, ultra-radical form of Islamism, which is completely subsidized by the Saudi regime, through oil revenues.

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[137] Schwartz, S., The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa'ud from Tradition to Terror, New York, Doubleday, 2002, 12-15.

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