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Two Cities and Two Orders – jāhiliyyah by Sayyid Qutb in the context of Saint Augustine's thought

Abstrakt: W niniejszym artykule zestawione zostały dwie koncepcje dotyczące ładu politycznego – na tle myśli św. Augustyna ukazana została koncepcja *jāhiliyyah* Sajjida Qutby. Jak podkreśla Erik Peterson doktryna wypracowana przez św. Augustyna ostatecznie przekreślała możliwość tworzenia w ramach chrześcijaństwa teologii politycznej – to co boskie i to cesarskie zostało rozdzielone, chociaż możliwość współpracy między tymi dwoma porządkami została zachowana. Tym samym w aspekcie polityki pojawiła się sfera świeckości. Koncepcja przedstawiona przez Qutbę także akcentuje istnienie dwóch porządków, jednak w odróżnieniu od św. Augustyna porządki te nie mają charakteru duchowego, a ściśle empiryczny. Władza i prawo Allaha powinno rozciągać się na całość życia społecznego, politycznego i gospodarczego. Wszystko co się tej wizji przeciwstawia, ujęte jest w kategorii rebelii przeciw Allahowi. Stąd konflikt między tymi porządkami jest nie tylko nieunikniony, ale ma także charakter egzystencjalny.

Słowa kluczowe: Sajjid Qutb, islamizm, fundamentalizm, św. Augustyn, *jāhiliyyah*, państwo Boże

Abstract: This paper presents a comparison of two concepts of political order – Saint Augustine's thought is a background for the presentation of the *jāhiliyyah* concept developed by Sayyid Qutb. As Erik Peterson emphasizes, the doctrine developed by Saint Augustine ultimately eliminated the option of building political theology within the framework of Christianity – the divine was separated from the imperial. However, the possibility of cooperation between these two orders was maintained. In consequence, the sphere of secularism appears in the aspect of politics. The concept presented by Qutb also emphasizes the existence of the two orders. However, unlikely to the Saint Augustine conception, these orders are not spiritual but purely empirical. Allah's rule and the law should extend over

the entirety of the social, political and economic life. Whatever stays is contrary to this vision, is classified as a sort of rebellion against Allah. Therefore, the conflict between the two orders is not only unavoidable but also have an existential character.

Keywords: Sayyid Qutb, Islamism, fundamentalism, Saint Augustine, *jāhiliyyah*, city of God

Introduction

There can be no doubt as to the fact that Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) is one of the most prominent and at the same time most controversial 20th-century thinkers associated with the Islamic renaissance period (*as-Sahwah*) [al-Mehri 2006: 7; Black 2011: 309], whose range of influence has spread far beyond Egypt. When Qutb started his public activity, he took nationalistic and anti-British position¹, yet he gradually moved towards a more Islamic stance. In 1948, as an employee of the Ministry of Education, he was sent by his superiors to the United States, in the hope that his anti-Western attitude could be somehow mitigated. Qutb returned to Egypt on 20 August 1950 [Khatab 2006a: 2]. The consequences of his stay in the United States were opposite to those intended by his superiors; Qutb became an uncompromising antagonist of the Western civilization, which he identified with materialism, racism, promiscuity, militarism and moral primitivism, Zionism and bias against Islam². Since then, he associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, to become the natural successor for Hasan al-Banna, the Brotherhood's founder and leader, who was murdered in 1949. In 1953, Qutb became editor-in-chief of the Society's official gazette (*al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*). With his radicalized views and calls for Islamization of the State, he was on a colliding course with the Revolutionary Council, in power since 1952, which was taking a more secularist path. In 1954, the government prohibited the functioning of the Brotherhood, arresting about four thousand people, including Sayyid Qutb, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison. He stayed there, except a short episode of several months³, continuously until his death in 1966. The period of his imprisonment was characterized by the further radicalization of Qutb's views. At the same time, he wrote his two key works – namely the multiple-volume commentary on the Qur'an:⁴ – *In the Shade of the Qur'an* and the *Signposts on the Road, or Milestones* (*Ma'alim*

¹ He was a member of a nationalist party *Wafd*.

² In Qutb's memoirs [Qutb 1951], you can find out more about Qutb's views about America.

³ Qutb was out of prison from December 1964 to August 1965.

⁴ Commentary to the Qur'an.

fi'l-tareeq). In the second book, which he wrote two years before he passed away, Qutb clearly and unambiguously presented his viewpoint on the status and role of Islam in the contemporary world, by referring to the concept of *jāhiliyyah* and defined the primary goal to be pursued by Muslims as setting up an *Islamic state* [Khatab 2006b: 7]. In this aspect, it would be valuable to confront Qutb's thought with that of Saint Augustine, presented in his monumental work *The City of God*. The theological doctrine developed by Saint Augustine ultimately legitimized the autonomy of the religious and the secular. Both Saint Augustine and Qutb assume the existence of two orders – divine and earthly, yet their mutual relationship is defined in a completely different way.

In this context, here is the fundamental research question: what is Islamic fundamentalism? Which model of the relationship between the City (State) of God and the earthly state is applied in Saint Augustine's theology? What is the meaning of *jāhiliyyah* in Qutb's reasoning? What form of a relationship between the Islamic state and the *jāhiliyyah* is assumed in Qutb's model? If these models differ, what might be their political consequences? It is claimed in this paper that Sayyid Qutb's concept defining the relations between the Islamic state and the *jāhiliyyah* converges in some aspects with the concept of the two cities by Saint Augustine⁵. However, this concept is entirely different in its fundamental point, namely the relationship between the divine order and the worldly order. Saint Augustine's theology is not only based on the assumption of simultaneous continuity of these two orders in time but also on their collaboration to maintain peace on Earth. Qutb's thoughts about this matter are uncompromising – the state must be ultimately (and completely) founded on Islamic principles; otherwise, it would become *jāhiliyyah* and hence remain under Satan's rule. Consequently, any collaboration between these two communities becomes impossible.

These fundamental theological assumptions bear significant consequences for politics. Whereas Saint Augustine's theology leads to a model in which religion not only abstains from contesting but even supports politics and its secular character – *jāhiliyyah* in Qutb's model – must be eliminated and replaced by Allah's Sharia law. The fight, or *jihad*, thus becomes unavoidable until God's order is implemented completely and ultimately on Earth.

⁵ The similarities between the thought of Saint Augustine and Qutb were noted by A. Black, see: [Black 2011: 310].

Islamic fundamentalism

Islamic fundamentalism is among the most significant challenges faced by the contemporary world. It is not only evidenced by the subsequent stages of the struggle with Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, or the terrorist attacks by radical Islamic fighters in Europe. Also, a highly fundamentalistic interpretation of the Qu'ran exists among Muslims living in Europe [Koopmans 2015: 43] (together with the fact that this community is growing continuously [PEW 2017]), which should raise concerns about a deeper insight into that phenomenon. As J. Jansen notes, *we need a theologian's outlook to understand what fundamentalism is about. Fundamentalism is not a protest against being poor. To think so is simply unsophisticated.* [Jansen 2005: 23].

Only the theological perspective will reveal the intellectual background of the concepts and, at least as importantly, the *actions* of Islamic fundamentalists. Without this perspective, the insight will not only be reductionist but in fact, it will fail altogether, while its explanatory value will become negligent: ... *it transpires, in a completely obvious manner,... that fundamentalism, according to all the applicable standards, is a religion and not a mere political ideology. It is also at the same time a political movement and an ideology. Modern political science categories do not fit and are irrelevant* [Jansen 2005: 30]. The dual nature of Islamic fundamentalism, which is both religious and political, has some major consequences for religion itself as well as for politics. In this article, we follow Jansen's definition of fundamentalism as *a set of beliefs that draws modern political power into the realm of religion; it offers a religious approach to political power. It wants power in order to coerce mankind into obeying God's commands; it even wants to enforce the advent of the Kingdom of God itself.* [Jansen 2005: 24]. Fundamentalists relentlessly strive for the implementation of the divine order, and their actions are motivated by religion. As Jansen bluntly notes, *the desire to murder got its theological justification from Sayyid Qutb* [Jansen 2005: 216].

To be able to perceive the weight of the essential presumptions adopted by Islamic fundamentalists, we must first refer to a point of reference and comparison, i.e. the model which constituted the relationship between State and religion in Europe, based on the evangelical distinction between the divine and the imperial (Mt 22, 21), elaborated upon from the theological perspective by Saint Augustine.

As Voegelin emphasizes, the social order in the Middle Ages was constituted by three sources of authority: the emperor, the philosophy, and the Revelation⁶. These sources were intertwined and their relationships formed the *rule of the Western governance: when these three authorities retained their relative autonomy, holding each other in check, without anyone overpowering the others, order prevailed. Yet whenever one of them absorbed the others or take over all the three functions, disorder ensued.* [Voegelin 2003: 337]. Voegelin points out that in a totalitarian state, the ruler would also cover spiritual leadership with the ideological coat. Based on the foundations of the *rule of Western governance*, a new space was formed in Europe for civic liberties [Acton 2006: 33]. The presentation of Islam in Qutb's categories means an endeavour to combine all these three power functions within a single hand, thus giving rise to a serious question about the totalitarian character of the Islamic state.

Saint Augustine – the two cities

Saint Augustine (354-430) was the first theologian in the history of Christianity who took up a systematic review and description of the Church and State relationship. In response to the political status of the declining Roman Empire, he wrote a monumental treaty entitled *The City of God*, where he analyzed the essence of the relationship between the City (State) of God and the earthly state. It should be emphasized at this early stage of analysis that neither the divine state nor the earthly state can be identified in the categories of empirical institutions [Voegelin 1997: 214]. The City of God is a transcendent community, not identifiable with any historical institution. As E. L. Fortini points out, *these communities are called 'cities' by way of analogy only. The City of God is not a separate political community that would exist along with others, based on God's law. ... Both the City of God and the worldly city extends beyond the borders of individual political communities; neither can be identified with any specific city or kingdom* [Fortin 2010: 201]. Although the City of God shows itself empirically on Earth, it is still a transcendent category. This is understandable if we consider the fact that for Saint Augustine, religion is mainly something that concerns the human soul and heart: 'there', in its transcendent space, is where real cult happens and genuine respect is given to God:... *we honour Him with the sweetest incense when, in His sight, we burn with*

⁶ In his commentary to the thought of Saint Augustine, E. L. Fortin notes that while philosophy deals with the truths generally accessible to all human beings, forming a natural meeting place for believers with nonbelievers. Only with philosophy can a Christian make their position comprehensible for others and, if need be, oppose any claims that may be raised against them, with their own weaponry [Fortin 2010: 183n].

pious and holy love; to Him we devote and surrender his gifts in us and ourselves ... to Him we offer on the altar of our heart the sacrifice of humility and praise, kindled by the fire of love [Augustine 1977, X.3; vol. I, p. 444n]. Also, Saint Augustine links the etymology of the word *religion* with the word *religerent* – to choose (God); hence, its meaning indicates an action of will and reason instead of something external to the human being⁷.

As Saint Augustine says, *the holy city is above among the holy angels, yet it bears citizens here on Earth, too* [Saint Augustine 1977: XV 1, p. 165]. So what is the essence of citizenship in one or another city? *Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin* [Saint Augustine 1977: XV.2, p. 167]. Hence, the determining categories are not any external, earthly acts of law, even Church law, but rather spiritual categories, i.e. grace and sin. Mere formal membership of the Church does not warrant being a citizen of the City of God. By remaining within the Church in its “institutional” aspect only, sin can deprive a person of grace and such a person will then cease to be a part of the City of God – these are people *whose morals are utterly corrupt but who think they are safe because they persevere, in a way, in communion with the Catholic Church... Such people, by the wickedness of their lives, abandon Christ* [Saint Augustine 1977: XXI, 25.4, p. 542]. Therefore, paradoxically, a person who is perceived as a Christian can internally belong to the earthly city [Kornatowski 1965: 67]⁸. Grace builds the city of God, whereas sin constitutes the earthly city. In this context, we can read the probably most famous thought of the entire treaty by Saint Augustine: *Two loves have built two cities: the love of self, which reaches even to contempt for God, the earthly City; and the love of God, which reaches even to contempt for self, the heavenly City* [Saint Augustine 1977: XIV.28, p. 162].

At the same time, Saint Augustine claims that the earthly city *through its rulers or the nations it conquered is controlled by a desire to rule* [Ibid., p. 163]. Does this presentation imply that the institution of a city (state) is inherently evil? Absolutely

⁷ *Being attached to Him, or rather let me say, re-attached – for we had detached ourselves and lost hold of Him, – being, I say, re-attached to Him, we tend towards Him by love, that we may rest in Him, and find our blessedness by attaining that end ...* [Augustine 1977, X.3; vol. I, p. 444n].

⁸ Saint Augustine emphasizes that it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible, for a person to determine whether another person is honest or not, due to the fact that the state of the soul is not perceivable by senses. In-depth cognition is reserved for God only [see Augustine 1953: 205].

not; for the reason of the original sin, the city is a necessary *institution*. Moreover, this situation is not limited to a Manicheic duality – the two cities *are somehow intertwined for the time being, or amalgamated in this world* [Saint Augustine 1977: XI.1, p. 6]. This amalgamation continues *until they are separated through the Last Judgment and each of them reaches its proper end, which will be without end* [Saint Augustine 1977: XVIII, 54, p. 388]. From the perspective of Christian theology, the final separation of the two cities throughout history is neither possible nor desirable. The weeds *grow intermixed with the wheat up to the time of harvest* [Augustine 1977: XX,9, p. 457]. Only at the end of history, on the day of the Last Judgment, will God Himself separate the two.

This intermixing is also demonstrated through the fact that a Christian is a double citizen – of the City of God as well as an earthly city. The earthly city, i.e. the empirical one, is a source of particular goods which help Christians throughout their lives, while the designation of the City of God *is not to replace that community, but rather to strengthen it by supplying benefits carried by the City of God, or resources appropriate for accomplishing a higher goal than any goal towards which a civic community could lead by itself* [Fortin 2010: 202]. On the one hand, Saint Augustine's theology uniquely revolutionizes the predominant social relations. On the other hand, it preserves the incumbent political status: *... as the heavenly City is wayfaring on earth, she invites citizens from all nations and all tongues, and unites them into a single pilgrim band. She takes no issue with that diversity of customs, laws, and traditions whereby human peace is sought and maintained—*[Augustine 1977: XIX, 17 (vol. II, p. 424)]. The heavenly City crosses all references to ethnicity, nation, language or custom, and at the same time... *Instead of nullifying or tearing down, she preserves and appropriates whatever in the diversities of diverse races is aimed at one and the same objective of human peace, provided only that they do not stand in the way of the faith and worship of the one supreme and true God* [Ibidem].

Hence, the understanding of Christianity or the very phenomenon of religion in the West refers in its central point to *faith*, whereas it is not understood primarily as *the law revealed in a divine way, governing every action and opinion, dedicated to replace the earthly laws people comply with. ... The only practices it opposes are those condemned by reason itself, as offensive or immoral* [Fortin 2010: 206].

Consequently, Saint Augustine's theology prevents and hinders the formation of any orthodox *political theology* within the framework of Christianity. Any expectation of God's City to be realized on Earth has no theological basis whatsoever

[Fortin 2010: 203] and is an inherently failed concept. E. Peterson emphasizes in his polemic dispute with Carl Schmitt that through orthodox Christian theology, *this 'political theology' was abandoned, as it misused the word of Gospel to justify the political situation. Something like 'political theology' can only exist against the background of Judaism or paganism* [Peterson 2012: 58]. Within the Christian theological reflection, the political project of a God's State on earth has been considered heresy. It is only the Church and not the State to be perceived as a rearing institution [Fortin 2010: 190]. Salvation is only possible in the Church and not in a political community.

Yet even the existence of cooperation between the City of God and the earthly city in respect of achieving peace on Earth has not prevented Augustine from doubting whether the arrival of Christianity will not cause wars to disappear. The earthly city will not be able to elude wars because earthly rulers have always been striving and will continue to strive to take hold of continuously larger areas of land and greater power [Augustine 1977: IV, 3 (vol. I, p. 221)]. Moreover, he opposed any *human guesswork* announcing the arrival of an era of peace for the Church; on the contrary, the Church will be persecuted until the end of time and the coming of the Antichrist [Augustine 1977: XVIII, 52 (vol. II, p. 382)]. Augustine's realistic approach to this matter is evident⁹.

The theology taught by Saint Augustine, based on the evangelical separation of the divine and the imperial (Mt 22,21), was implemented in practice at the point in time when Christians began to hold significant political offices in the Empire¹⁰. The situation became extremely burdensome when the Christian emperor Anastasius I tried to influence the development of the Catholic doctrine. When the emperor began to support the heresy of monophysitism, he was instructed by Pope Gelasius I that... *obviously, Emperor Augustus, there are two supreme authorities that rule this world: the sanctified gravity of the bishops and the emperor's superiority* [Gelasius 1986a: 167]. In this way, the Church reserved for itself a monopolistic position on resolving matters of a theological nature. The Pope further emphasized that this separation was transpiring from Christ's will, as Christ – considering the imperfection of human nature – thus *distinguished between the offices of both*

⁹ The paradox of striving towards peace and at the same time the unavoidability of war in the earthly world is also emphasized by E. Gilson, see: [Gilson 1953: 229].

¹⁰ Initially, they were emperor's officers converted from pagan beliefs. The first accounts of Christians holding important offices in the Empire date back to the second half of the 3rd century, see: [Eusebius of Caesarea 2013: VIII,6 (p. 567); VIII 9 (p. 575)].

powers according to their own proper activities and separate dignities, wanting His people to be saved by healthful humility and not carried away again by human pride, so that Christian emperors would need priests for attaining eternal life and priests would avail themselves of imperial regulations in the conduct of temporal affairs... Thus the humility of each order would be preserved, neither being exalted by the subservience of the other, and each profession would be especially fitted for its appropriate functions [Gelasius 1986b: 171]. In this way, the *principle of the Western governance*, consisting of a distinction between the two orders and their respective fields of activity, began to constitute Europe's political and religious order [Halecki 1950: 47].

Qutb – the two states

Sayyid Qutb's thought, too, is based on a separation of reality into two communities, this time the Islamic one and the *jāhiliyyah*. According to its classic definition, *jāhiliyyah* means the age of ignorance and barbarity [Goldziher 1966: 202]¹¹ and is generally used to negatively define the moral and religious state of the society of Arabia during the pre-Islamic period [Encyclopedia of Islam 2004: 370; Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an 2001: 37]. In this meaning, *jāhiliyyah* became a closed chapter of history, with the victory of Islam. Yet Ibn Taymiyyah (deceased 1328) linked this term to pre-Islamic customs maintained among the Muslims of his time. For Ibn Taymiyyah, the reality of the *jāhiliyyah* was not a description of the past, but of the present. The same path was taken by Muhammad Abd al-Wahhāb, living in the 18th century (founder of Wahhabism) or, in the 20th century, by such thinkers as Muhammad Rashīd Ridā (deceased 1935), Abū l-'Alā' Mawdūdī (deceased 1979) and, finally, by Sayyid Qutb.

Qutb defines *jāhiliyyah* in the context of the Qu'ran sūrahs 41-50 V which, as he points out, discuss *the most important issue of the Islamic faith and its codes of living and justice... of government, law and the administration of justice in matters of dispute* [Qutb 2009: 90]. Referring to the concept of *jāhiliyyah* as the term is used in the Qu'ran (pagan ignorance), Qutb explains that it ... *means that people are ruled by people, because this signifies that they submit to one another. They refuse to submit to God alone and reject His Godhead, acknowledging instead that some human beings have qualities of Godhead and hence they submit to their* (human – M.S.) *authority. As such, the term pagan ignorance, or jāhiliyyah, does not refer*

¹¹ I. Goldziher emphasizes that the word *jāhiliyyah* carries a strong pejorative axiological burden, involving brutality, aggression, wildness and cruelty, generally opposed to the gentleness of Islam. More about the origins of the concept, see: [Goldziher 1966: 201-208].

to a particular period of time (i.e. to pre-Muslim Arabia – M.S.), but to a certain situation which may come into existence at any time. Whenever it exists, it must be described as *jāhiliyyah*, which is in contrast to Islam [Qutb 2009: 112; see also: Qutb 2006: 160]. Hence, anything which is not Islam, which is not expressed in the Islamic state and the Islamic culture, is *jāhiliyyah* [see: Qutb 2006: 106, 123]. Two societies do exist, but without Augustine's intermixing; there is only the uncompromising *either-or*. ... *Anyone who does not wish to be ruled by God's law actually desires to be ruled by the law of pagan ignorance. It is at this point that the two ways part and people are left to their choices. ... It is either Islam or jāhiliyyah, faith or unfaith, the rule of God or the rule of pagan ignorance. Those who choose not to judge in accordance with what God has revealed are unbelievers, wrongdoers and transgressors. People who do not accept God's law are not believers* [Qutb 2009: 113].

Qutb's vision does not encompass an "institution of double citizenship" – either one is a member of a society ruled by Allah's law or of a society ruled by *jāhiliyyah* laws [Qutb 2006: 106]. Whereas for Saint Augustine, the categories of the City of God and the earthly city were derived from the spiritual realm instead of being empirical categories, Islam and *jāhiliyyah* for Qutb are concepts that describe the reality we experience empirically. Among other reasons, this is because in the Islamic order, the Church does not exist as a separate institution. B. Lewis notes that *the state was the church and the church was the state* [Lewis 2003: 119]. The sacral and spiritual essence of the Church has been incorporated into the framework of a political community.

Qutb's uncompromising stance on this matter is very prominent when compared to the position taken by Saint Augustine. As it has already been emphasized before, according to the author of *The City of God*, Christians maintain a lot of 'earthly' customs and laws, under one condition only: that these are not in opposition towards honouring God and God only. However, when Qutb considers the grandeur of the generation of the Companions of the Prophet, he postulates a complete departure from anything which is not Islamic: *purified from the influence of all other sources, free of the Greek philosophy and logic, ancient Persian legends and their ideas, Jewish scriptures and traditions, Christian theology, and, in addition to these, fragments of other religions and civilizations* [Qutb 2006: 31]. Hence, all the problems faced by Muslims are due to non-Islamic influences, which should always be perceived as negative by their very nature. If Islam is *again to play the role of the leader of mankind, then it is necessary that the Muslim community be restored to its original form* [Qutb 2006: 25]. The purity of the original form,

expressing complete submission to Allah, is the only criterion by which Islam can be differentiated from *jāhiliyyah*. Diversion from the original purity was caused by the fall of Islam. Therefore Muslims today should *remove [themselves] from all the influences of the Jāhiliyyah... return to that pure source*. Here, the Manicheic view of reality is particularly prominent. All the relations with ignorance should be *cut off* [Qutb 2006: 33]. This shift should be comprehensive, involving *our concepts of life, our principles of government, politics, economics and all other aspects of life.... Jahili society... is not worthy to be compromised with* [Qutb 2006: 34n]. Qutb emphasizes that the *chasm between Islam and Jāhiliyyah is great, and a bridge is not to be built across it so that the people on the two sides may mix with each other* [Qutb 2006: 156], whereas any attempt at building a system that would encompass these two components is doomed to fail [Qutb 2006: 149] because *God does not forgive any association with His person* [Ibidem].

Whoever attempts at mixing these two orders is *Shirk* – a polytheist who usurps his right to hold God’s power. The category of *Shirk* (polytheism) is not just a narrowly defined theological category. Polytheism also occurs when a person attributes God’s power to himself, for example, by creating the laws instead of abiding them. By reference to the Qu’ran, Qutb claims that Allah is the only legitimate legislator [Qutb 2006: 67]. It is a critical point in Qutb’s thought: whereas in the Western culture, religion is mainly conceived as faith (even though the latter is dead without deeds – Jacob 2,17) and a personal bond with God, Qutb would emphasize the prevalence of the law. To become an *Islamic society*, it will not suffice for a group of people to call themselves that, as Westernized Muslim scholars would also do [Qutb 2006: 86]; it is not even sufficient to regularly perform one’s duties such as prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage (al-Hajj). The decisive factor is the compulsory status of Shari’ah, the Islamic law. *The Islamic society is not one in which people invent their own version of Islam, other than what God and His Messenger-peace be on him-have prescribed and explained, and call it, for example, ‘progressive Islam’* [Qutb 2006: 106]. Speaking of the Islamic creed *There is no deity except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God* cannot remain as a mere declaration in the heart of an individual Muslim person. Faith should materialize as an active group that will cut itself off from the jahili society and become independent. At the centre of such a community, there should be a new leader, who would break the relation of loyalty towards the old order and remain loyal to the new Muslim community [Qutb 2006: 58]. This is the context in which Qutb’s memorable words about the essence of Islam appear: *The people ought to know that Islam means to accept the creed “La ilaha illa Allah” in its deepest sense, which is this: that every aspect*

of life should be under the sovereignty of God, and those who rebel against God's sovereignty and usurp it for themselves should be opposed [Qutb 2006: 48]. Every force perceived as one that refuses God's order and power is treated as rebellion.

Religion in this version bears an obligation to carry certain external consequences, i.e. to seize the political power and to implement the Shari'ah: *wherever an Islamic community exists... it has a God-given right to step forward and take control of the political authority so that it may establish the Divine system on earth, while it leaves the matter of belief (sic! – M.S.) to individual conscience* [Qutb 2006: 86]. Hence, it is mandatory to comply with Shari'ah, God's law, which by its very nature, encompasses the public field, whereas personal beliefs one holds in their heart remain private. Allah's rule must be established on earth, not just as a spiritual reality but as a very concrete one, empirical and practical: *to establish God's rule means that His laws be enforced and that the final decision in all affairs be according to these laws* [Qutb 2006: 68]. Thus, the assessment of a deed, particularly a political one, does not depend on its intentions but only on the consequences. This uniquely "behavioristic" approach is completely inconsistent with Christian ethics.

In this concept, the separation of State from religion, the distinction of two powers and their respective fields of competence not only becomes groundless, but as a matter of fact, it becomes the worst of all sins: *Shirk*. Qutb does not leave any doubt in this matter, claiming that *Islam initiates the constitution of law and injunctions, rules and regulations* [Qutb 2006: 44]. Thus, Islam is a religion and a state at the same time. Khatib emphasizes that for Qutb, *State is not just some blurred concept, but a community with one and only overlord – Allah, holding the complete power hakimiyyah*. He is also the only source of authority [Khatib 2006b: 8]. A true Muslim lives according to the Shari'ah or strives to implement Shari'ah – *one should accept the Shari'ah without any question and reject all other laws in any shape or form. This is Islam. There is no other meaning of Islam* [Qutb 2006: 48]. Qutb's radicalism rules out any links to Saint Augustine's understanding of religion.

Another crucial matter, which is reviewed by political scientists with increasing frequency, concerns the completeness, or the totality of Islam, i.e. the extent of Allah's rule on earth and the human obligations arising from there. In Qutb's terms, Shari'ah covers not only purely legal matters but also *attitudes, the way of living, the values, criteria, habits and traditions*, which are legislated and affect people [Qutb 2006: 108]. There is a prominent link between the range of matters covered by Islam and social/political activism. Islam should not focus on the *theory*

of faith, but rather transform this faith into a *living reality* [Qutb 2006: 50], whereas *the object of this religion is all humanity and its sphere of action is the whole earth* [Qutb 2006: 83]. *Islam constructs its foundation of belief and action on the principle of total submission to God alone* [Qutb 2006: 99]. Hence, Islam comprises the entirety and the totality of political and social life.

The above provides grounds for Qutb to conclude about the *Jihaad* obligations, existing for the following reasons: *to establish God's authority in the earth; to arrange human affairs according to the true guidance provided by God; to abolish all the Satanic forces and Satanic systems of life; to end the lordship of one man over others. ... The Jihaad of Islam is to secure complete freedom for every man* [Qutb 2006: 81]. Promoting Islam is just the first step, which will be followed by a confrontation of forces with non-Muslim society [Danecki 1991: 124].

In the context of the requirement to fully submit to Allah, we notice the Manicheic tendency to present anything other than Islam (anything jahili) as an enemy of Islam – *In the world there is only one party of God; all others are parties of Satan and rebellion* [Qutb 2006: 130]¹², *For human life, there is only one true system, and that is Islam; all other systems are Jahiliyyah* [Qutb 2006: 131]. Whereas a certain duality can be observed in Saint Augustine, this distinction still remains spiritual in nature. For Qutb, on the other side – the non-Islam – is an empirical category, and the measures undertaken towards it have a practical dimension, both political and military. *There is only one place on earth which can be called the home of Islam (Dar-ul-Islam), and it is that place where the Islamic state is established and the Shari'ah is the authority and God's limits [limits set by God – M.S.] are observed, and where all the Muslims administer the affairs of the state with mutual consultation. The rest of the world is the home of hostility (Dar-ul-Harb)* [Qutb 2006: 131]. As regards *Dar-ul-Harb*, a Muslim can be in a state of war or a state of peace, based on an arrangement¹³.

Qutb emphasizes that even possible discontinuation of attacks on Islam will not change Islam's attitude towards the society of ignorance until they pay the Jizya tax, which will imply *surrender* [Qutb 2006: 84]¹⁴. The effort (*Jihaad*) takes up

¹² Here, Qutb references surah 4,76: *Those who believe fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the Shaitan. Fight therefore against the friends of the Shaitan!*

¹³ For more insight into the practical aspect of the division into *Dar-ul-Islam* and *Dar-ul-Harb* in the contemporary world, see [Bar 2003].

¹⁴ An interesting matter in this context is the status of Christians, who – along with Jews – are called *the People of the Book* in the Qu'ran. Qutb emphasizes that until Christians submit to Shari'ah and pay the jizya tax, they should be treated as *Shirk* – polytheists [Qutb 2006: 94].

the form of direct confrontation, which *broke into pieces all those walls which were standing between man and the truth* [Qutb 2006: 49]. After *annihilating the tyrannical force*, Islam establishes a new social, economic and political system, in which the concept of the freedom of man is applied in practice [Qutb 2006: 70]. Qutb's radicalism is inherently linked to a Utopian belief not just in the necessity but in the practical possibility of building a new world: *Islam did not come to support people's desires, which are expressed in their concepts, institutions, modes of living, and habits and traditions, whether they were prevalent at the advent of Islam or are prevalent now, both in the East and in the West. ... It has come to abolish all such concepts, laws, customs and traditions, and to replace them with a new concept of human life, to create a new world on the foundation of submission to the Creator* [Qutb 2006: 148]. The intention to create a new concept of human life and a new world reveals both his deep aversion towards the old reality and the radicalism of his choice of resources. Qutb emphasized that to leave the *miserable state of mankind*, people cannot allow themselves the comfort of small changes, but the actual transformation needs to be *vast and far-reaching* [Qutb 2006: 151, 153]¹⁵. If anyone claims that *it is possible to adapt Islam to Jahiliyyahh*, he is not a Muslim [Qutb 2006: 154]¹⁶.

Conclusions

The presentation of Islam in Qutb's categories is an endeavour to combine all these three power functions in a single hand, thus giving rise to a serious question about the totalitarian character of the Islamic state.¹⁷ Concerning Voegelin's words, we should conclude that the political and religious order defined by Qutb is strictly anti-Western and represents *the maximum disorder*. The two states not only cannot be intertwined but even have any common points – where Islam is, *jāhiliyyah is not allowed* Shari'ah, the law of Allah, becomes a tool for structuring the political and social reality. According to that law, anything "outside" Islam must be subordinated. Paradoxically, the vision of *creating a new world* reveals certain gnostic aspects of Qutb's political thinking; in this perspective, it places Islam on equal terms with such ideologies as Communism, striving to set up *a kingdom of freedom* on earth.

¹⁵ *The truth is that Islam not only changes concepts and attitudes, but also the system and modes, laws and customs, since this change is so fundamental that no relationship can remain with the jahili way of life, the life which mankind is living* [Qutb 2006: 153].

¹⁶ In this context, it would be reasonable to look at any attempts at building the so-called *Euroislam*, a version of Islam which would be consistent with the European values.

¹⁷ More about the relationship between Islamic fundamentalism and totalitarianism: see also [Bäcker 2004: 83-98].

Islam is presented, on the one hand, as a *total* principle, which structures every aspect of human life, and on the other, as an *annihilating* force, destroying every obstacle in its path. The world has to be liberated by force because it will not go under the rule of Allah voluntarily. Rémi Brague notes that one particular attribute of Allah is very strongly emphasized in Islam: His omnipotence *Allah is not the Father in Islam, what is left here is the omnipotence itself. The creation presents this almighty force and not the beauty of the Creator. This force would more often materialize as a destructive rather than a constructive capacity* [Brague 2014: 158]. This comment has a particularly strong effect when Qutb's thinking is concerned. In terms of Saint Augustine's theology, the definition of Islam as presented by Qutb, in which Allah demands absolute obedience and enviously guards His monopolistic power [Danecki 1991: 124] would rather match order of a city of Satan than a city of God.

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