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ISLAMIC PURITANISM MOVEMENT OF MUHAMMAD IBN 'ABD AL-WAHHAB

(Portrait of The Institutionalization of Islamic Ideology in State Space)

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Abstract:

Around the 18th century, Muslims experienced a period of intellectual stagnation as a result of ijtihad, which appeared to have been tightly shut. Furthermore, heretical and khurafat traditions are becoming increasingly common. Consequently, Muslims drifted further away from the Quran's teachings and the Prophet's Sunnah. These kinds of circumstances motivated Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab to respond by attempting to restore the original spirit of Islamic revivalism (Tajdid) by going back to the pure teachings of Tawhid, as his predecessors, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyyah, had done previously. This paper aims to examine the characteristics of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's purification of the Tauhid and his role in the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was regarded as one of the most successful ideologies institutionalizing the puritanical Islamic revival has ever seen in the history of contemporary Islamic politics. This work applies qualitative methodology with a historical approach, carried out by collecting data from Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's book as a primary source and other related books, journals, and articles as secondary sources. The research found that Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's tajdid began as a religious movement and rose to prominence after collaborating with Muhammad ibn Saud's political effort. After the foundation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia a century and a half later, this idea was successfully established as a state-owned ideology. The birth of the kingdom was inextricably connected to the growth of Nationalism in the Islamic world as a result of European colonialism.

Keywords: Al-Quran; Institutionalization; Revivalism; Wahhabi.

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INTRODUCTION

The first phase of Ibn Taymiyyah's renewal movement, which his student continued, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1292-1350 AD), mainly emphasizes the purification of Islamic monotheism. Then, three centuries after that, since the Islamic world was declining¹ in religion, politics, and civilization, it pushed for the second phase of the Islamic revivalism movement (renewal of the 18th century) after the fall of Baghdad and Andalusia. Among

¹ During this period, Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab recognized that the main problem causing the decline of Islam was the deviation of the aqidah of its adherents and the division of Islam into many groups (sects). Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masail al-Jahiliyyah*, dalam *Matan al-Tawhid wa al-'Aqidah* (Mekkah: Dar Ibn 'Umar, 2003), 132.



the renewal groups formed in this second phase is the Salafi Wahhabi movement, founded in Nejd, Arabian Peninsula, by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. The renewal movement, revived by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, has a harsher pattern and color of purification than its predecessors. The emergence of the Wahhabiyyah movement was inseparable from the condition of the Muslim community in the Arabian Peninsula at that time, which was experiencing setbacks, especially in the field of faith, with the rise of various practices of polytheism, heresy, and superstition. It is a result of the growing distance of Muslims from the main sources of their teachings, namely the Qur'an and al-Sunnah. In addition, it is also due to the influence of old religious practices that are reviving, unlike its predecessors².

According to Fazlur Rahman, this movement is a form of Islamic modernism in theology³. Starting from here, there will also be a mutually beneficial cooperation or relationship between the clergy and the ruling regime, namely between Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab and the Bani Sa'ud family in the Hijaz, which will move the Wahhabis not only limited to the religious sphere but also enter into the political area with the founding of the Kingdom of Modern Saudi Arabia in the future⁴. The movement that was pioneered by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab is also considered by many experts to have contributed positively to Muslims, for example, opening the door of ijihad, purifying monotheism according to their understanding, and fighting what they consider heresy and khurafat. Even Wahbah Zuhayli, in his book *Mujaddid al-Din fi al-Qarn al-Thani 'Ashr*, has included Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab as one of the Mujaddid figures of the 12th H. Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadim Zallum also acknowledged that Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab was a mujtahid in the Hanbali School⁵.

The relationship between Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, who represents a religious group, and Muhammad ibn Sa'ud as a representation of political power, which ended sweetly with the founding of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was later regarded as one of the portraits of the process of institutionalization of ideologies and movements engendered by the most successful puritanical Islamic revival ever seen in the history of contemporary Islamic politics.

RESEARCH METHODS

Due to the broad scope of the discussion, the author confines his work to the influence of the development of the nationalism ideology in the Arabian Peninsula, which was introduced by European colonial nations beginning in the 18th century, and its relation to the movement of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's purification of the Tauhid as well as his role in the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a qualitative

² In its teachings, this group does not hesitate to perform takfir on anyone who has violated the ten injunctions of Islam, one of which is the disbelief law against individuals or groups who allow, doubt, or justify aqidah errors committed by Muslims who have violated the ten nullifiers of Islam that they have compiled. Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, "Nawaqid Al-Islam," in *Matan Al-Tawhid Wa al-'Aqidah* (Mecca: Ibn 'Umar, 2003), 159.

³ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*, Publications of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 136, <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/I/bo41314165.html>.

⁴ Thoha Hamim, *ISLAM & NU DI BAWAH TEKANAN PROBLEMATIKA KONTEMPORERDialektika Kehidupan Politik, Agama, Pendidikan Dan Sosial Masyarakat Muslim* (Diantama, 2004), 222.

⁵ 'Abd al-Qadim Zallum, *Kayfa Huddimat al Khilafah* (Beirut: Dar al-Ummah, 1990), 14.

study, this library research employs a historical method, which is carried out by gathering data and documents written by persons involved in or who witnessed the events described in this study. These documents are precious. A literature review examined the works of study subjects on topics pertinent to the challenges of Hijaz historiography in the early nineteenth century.

This work is based on the theory of content analysis. It indicates that the basic procedure of this writing is to design categories relevant to the research. The first stage is to categorize using categories, specifically the historical and changing categories. The following phase is interpretation and analysis⁶. The content analysis will also clearly explain contextual explanations such as political, historical, and social contexts. It is intended that by providing this explanation, the research objectives will be met and accounted for.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biographical Summary of Muhammad Ibn 'Abd Al-Wahhab

Salafi-Wahhabi is a religious movement whose main goal is to purify monotheism and the religious behavior of Muslims who have deviated a lot from the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The name of this movement is attributed to Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn Sulayman al-Najdi. He died at an ancient age (about 91 years), after more than half a century of holding the position of minister of information for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab is the main figure and the founder of Salafiism. He studied basic religious knowledge from the Hanbali school of thought from his father, a qadhi (judge)⁷. While at Mecca and Medina, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab was concerned about the amount of Muslims who committed shirk, which he believed should not be done by someone claiming to be a Muslim. He witnessed how many Muslims visited the Prophet's (PBUH) tomb and other holy graves to seek mediation. He even requested something from the grave and its residents, which he considered completely unjustified by Islam⁸. It was eventually used as justification for destroying tombs and other Islamic holy sites, working together with the new ruler of Saudi Arabia, Bani Su'ud⁹.

Among the works of earlier thinkers that had the most significant influence on his thoughts were those of Ibn Taymiyyah, a well-known Mujaddid of 7th century Hijriyah¹⁰. Later, Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab related all the teachings of the Salafi-Wahhabi movement that he formed to this great teacher. It seems that the followers of this movement believe that the greatness of Ibn 'Abd Wahhab, who lived in the nineteenth century, accomplished what Ibn Taymiyyah wished for during his life, which was full of suffering and pressure from the government. The opponents of this school gave the label

⁶ A. Khozin Afandi, *Langkah Praktis Merancang Proposal* (Pustakamas, 2011), 120.

⁷ Ahmad Dallal, "The Origins and Objectives of Islamic Revivalist Thought, 1750-1850," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113, no. 3 (July 1, 1993): 342.

⁸ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Al-Qawa'id al-Arba'*, 2006, 87.

⁹ Abdullah Mohammad Sindi, "Britain, the Rise of Wahhabism and the House of Saud," Kanaan, January 21, 2015, 2, <https://kanaanonline.org/en/2015/01/20/britain-the-rise-of-wahhabism-and-the-house-of-saud/>.

¹⁰ This is reflected in Ibn Taymiyyah's book, *al-'Aqidah al-Wasatiyyah* which was printed together with the works of Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab in one collection of matan. Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Matan Al-Tawhid Wa al-'Aqidah* (Mecca: Dar Ibn 'Umar, 2003), 199.

Wahhabi itself¹¹. Followers of Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab themselves chose to be known as al-Muslimun or al-Muwahhidun, which means supporters of teachings that purify monotheism to Allah SWT. They are also recognized as Salafis, referring to Ibn Taymiyyah's adherents or ahl al-Salaf. In addition, they used to refer to themselves as Sunnis, followers of Hanbali Madhhab.

Institutionalization Process of Ibn 'Abd Wahhab's Ortodhoxy In Saudi Arabia Kingdom Space

There are at least two significant backgrounds that constitute the revivalism era of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, namely: First, the colonialism of European nations towards the Islamic world, which increasingly influenced the spread of a new ideology in the Islamic world called Nationalism; and Second, the establishment of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the culmination of the institutionalization process of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's orthodoxy movement.

a. The Influence of European Colonialism on the Islamic World in the Spread of Arab Nationalist Ideology

If a common thread is drawn, the eighteenth-century revival movement in the Arabian Peninsula cannot be separated from the general conditions of the Islamic world when Europe began to dominate the world, including Islamic areas previously under complete control of the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, the rapid growth of production factories and the development of transportation and communication equipment, accompanied by the discovery of steamships, trains, and the telegraph as new communication icons, have brought Europe into a new era that will have a significant impact on the history of Islam in the future, namely the era of trade expansion. It was followed by the European nations' expanding military power, which continued to strengthen¹².

The fall of Constantinople, the East Roman Empire's capital city, into the Ottoman Dynasty's hands initially became the driving factor for European hegemony towards Islam. It encourages a spirit of aggression in Europeans against Muslims¹³. Thus, the weakening of the Ottoman Empire after the death of Sulayman al-Qanuni (d.1566 AD) gave European nations the desire to establish influence in the Islamic world. Of course, this phenomenon has had its impact on the Islamic world in general, including the emergence of the idea of Nationalism among Muslims, which played an essential role in the future process of the birth of the modern Saudi Arabian state.

In this case, when European countries decided to overthrow and destroy the Khilafah Ottomans, they began to confirm their influence on Islamic countries by promoting Nationalism within those countries. The countries targeted are those based on Islamic Aqidah. Arab and Turkish countries were among the first to be sought after. These imperialist infidel countries are working to organize a group of Arabs and Turks to carry out their dreadful goals. Its operations started in France and quickly spread to other

¹¹ A. Mukti Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam Modern Di Timur Tengah : A. Mukti Ali* (Djambatan, 1995), 43.

¹² Harun Nasution, *Islam Rasional : Gagasan Dan Pemikiran* (Mizan, 1998), 105.

¹³ Bertrand Russell, *Sejarah Filsafat Barat;Kaitannya Dengan Kondisi Sosio-Politik Zaman Kuno Hingga Sekarang* (Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 647.

nations¹⁴. To achieve their purpose, these Europeans formed secret societies, such as the Young Turks, which the French first supported through their consulate. The Young Turks staged a coup, kidnapped Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and gained power in 1908. They then eliminated Arabic in favor of Turkish. They call for the adoption of Western culture and their way of life. They also sacrificed Turkish Nationalism by compelling the population to declare allegiance to Turkey. In response to this approach, Arabs, Kurds, Albanians, and other community groups have also organized their secret community groups.

There were various Arab groups during the period, such as the Arab Brotherhood, Young Arabs, and others. Initially, when these organizations were formed with the support of Europeans, only non-Muslim Arabs participated. However, over time, even Muslim Arabs became affected by Arab Nationalism. The British became involved in the Arabian Peninsula when this occurred throughout the Khilafah. The British had an impact on Sharif Hussein and his son. The Arab Revolution of 1916 resulted from the Young Turks' political policies and British influence on Sharif Hussein. After the Arab Revolution, the Caliphate and the Ottomans were destroyed. Under the cover of Nationalism, colonial non-believers were preparing to divide the Islamic state into small pieces to make it easier to rule over.¹⁵

Nationalism is a new model of thought that has never been known in classical and medieval Islamic thought traditions. This idea became popular in the Islamic world around the 19th century. The concept of dividing and then controlling Islam was first introduced to Europe by European nations. However, in reality, modern Islamic reformers, most of whom were educated in the West, are trying to bring this idea to fight against Western colonialism. The impact of this idea is visible in the formation of new Islamic states, apart from the influence of the Ottomans¹⁶.

The strength of Nationalism can be seen in the formation of new countries. The term nations (nation-state) was not common in the Middle Ages. Generally, only mention political power alone. A dynasty or a conqueror may exercise power itself. It had not occurred to people then that the state was synonymous with the nation¹⁷. Towards the end of the 18th century, Nationalism became a feeling that began to be generally recognized in the modern sense that every nation must form a state¹⁸.

Simultaneously with the increasing European intervention in the Islamic world, dividing the Ottoman administrative area into several autonomous regions with minimal control further widened the distance between the central Islamic government in Constantinople and local rulers. On the other hand, most of the Muslim reformers who had studied and lived in Europe continued to say that the leadership of the Islamic world under the Ottoman Dynasty was no longer suitable for the conditions of Islam at that time. They also offered to replace the state's religious understanding with a new one they thought was more promising, namely Nationalism¹⁹.

¹⁴ Max Laurens Tamon, "Nationalism in Arabic Countries," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 10, no. 1 (January 9, 2023): 55, <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v10i1.4272>.

¹⁵ Tamon, 56.

¹⁶ Tamon, 58.

¹⁷ Tamon, 12.

¹⁸ Tamon, 11.

¹⁹ William Ochsenwald, "Ironic Origins: Arab Nationalism in The Hijaz, 1882-1914," in *Ironic Origins: Arab Nationalism in The Hijaz, 1882-1914* (Gorgias Press, 2011), 189, <https://doi.org/10.31826/9781463233471-009>.

b. The Influence of Nationalist Ideology in the Process of Institutionalization of Wahhabi's Puritan Ideology in the Arab

Nationalism is a feeling in the loyal human soul and a burning passion for forming a nation. Arab Nationalism, in this case, is all people who speak and culture Arabic, are loyal and feel Arab, and personally become Arab citizens. Initially, this spirit of Nationalism introduced by the Western World to the Islamic World played a significant part in establishing the Modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries, particularly from an intellectual perspective. It is apparent from comparing the characteristics of Arab thinkers in the early 1800s, who had not been heavily influenced by Western thought, and modern Islamic thinkers after that century²⁰.

Specific characteristics of Arab intellectuals have been observed since the early 1800s. They are conservatives who strive to preserve the Arabian Peninsula's native character and Islamic traditions. After the 1800s, Arab thinkers began to develop in areas bordering Arab countries. These intellectuals have, of course, been exposed to Western cultural influences. Tahtawi from Egypt, Al-Afghani from Turkey, Farabi from Syria, and several more Arab modernists are among them. Apart from that, the Arab countries' independence was inseparably tied to the West's influence. The phases of Arab Nationalism's history began with the presence of Western nations in the Arab world, specifically Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, with the concepts of democracy, equality, and nationality. It broadened the views of Arab conservatives and traditional thinkers among Islamic leaders²¹. It is where nationalist ideology plays its role.

Naturally, these reformers' nationalist movements also wanted freedom from the shackles of European colonialism. In Egypt, for example, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897 AD) strongly criticized the Egyptian rulers who let foreign nations freely interfere or intervene in the internal affairs of Islamic countries.²² Nationalism in Islamic countries was inspired by European Nationalism, which was also stimulated by the Tanzimat institution founded by the Ottoman Empire (1916 AD). Tanzimat is an institution that seeks to raise awareness of national identity and awaken the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the last centuries of this dynasty²³.

These new ideas have gradually succeeded in inflaming the spirit of Arab Nationalism. Various resistances in the form of criticism of reform and revolution continue to flare up in various Islamic areas. In Egypt, for example, after various resistances against British colonialism at the end of the 19th century, it was finally declared independent with a royal system by the British protectorate with Fuad as its King and a constitution in 1923 AD²⁴.

²⁰ Muhamad Ali, "Nationalism and Islam: Perspective of Egyptian and Syrian Muslim Intellectuals," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 4, no. 1 (June 1, 2014): 51-79, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v4i1.51-79>.

²¹ Ali, "Nationalism and Islam."

²² Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 113, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511801990>.

²³ Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918*, 1997, 13.

²⁴ Ahmed Abdalla, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt, 1923-1973* (American Univ in Cairo Press, 2008), 4-5.

Meanwhile, in the historical context of the Hijaz²⁵, as one of the administrative states of the Ottoman Empire under Egypt, the Hijaz was an area that, although difficult to reach by the center of government, was still affected by the European colonization of the Islamic world. As in other Islamic regions, the political upheaval in this region was still centered on the competition for the authority of the Ottoman rulers with local rulers who were commonly called Sharif²⁶.

The political situation in the Hijaz heated up with the emergence of the Muwahhidun movement in the mid-18th century, led by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. The movement succeeded in instilling the idea that Islam practiced by Muslims at that time had a significant deviation from what had been taught by the Prophet. His persistence and determination to purify and save Islamic teachings at that time made the ruler of Nejd, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud (d.1765), interested in becoming his ally and son-in-law. With the support of the British Empire, its alliance succeeded in spreading religious beliefs, and Ibn Sa'ud's power expanded rapidly throughout the Arabian Peninsula²⁷. When it reached political and military power, this movement systematically destroyed everything that was seen as the cause of the development of heretical teachings in Islam. Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab was protected by the ruler of Nejd, Muhammad bin Sa'ud, who was based in Dar'iyah. His purifying enthusiasm became the decisive force behind the Saudi family's political expansion. At the end of the 18th century AD, they were able to occupy all of Nejd; they even attacked Iraq. They controlled the holy cities in the Hijaz and cleaned them of practices that were seen as contrary to the teachings they professed²⁸.

Since the emergence of the Wahhabi movement allied with the Saudi family, the Arabian Peninsula, especially the Hijaz region, has become an arena for a struggle for influence involving many parties. Naturally, the rulers of the Ottoman Empire were compelled to react, and the Sultan ordered the governor of Egypt, Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, to confront the Wahhabis. In 1818, Muhammad Ibrahim Pasha, son of Muhammad Ali Pasha, succeeded in conquering Dar'iyah, the center of the Wahhabi movement at that time, and occupied the Hijaz. Turks were then brought to the Hijaz to secure the political interests of the Ottoman Empire there. Meanwhile, in Nejd, the Ottoman Empire supported the local rulers, the Rashidiyyah family, who became enemies of the Saudi family²⁹. At the time World War I began to flare up, many Arab leaders began to have doubts about the future of their country if it remained under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Knowing this, in 1916 AD, a British high commissioner based in Cairo, Egypt, succeeded in persuading Sharif Mecca, the head of an Arab family that controlled the holy cities as the representative of the Sultan, to ally with the British, who promised Arab independence, against the Arabs—the Ottoman Empire in the Hijaz. Sharif Mecca, known as Raja Husayn, accepted the invitation and was determined to create a united Arab state with Mecca as its center. He then sent his son Faisal to become ruler of Syria in 1918 AD.

²⁵ Hijaz is one of the five areas of the Arabian Peninsula. The other four areas are Yaman, Tihamah, Nejd and Arud. Muhammad Bayyumi Mahran, *Dirasat Fi Tarikh Al-'Arab al-Qadim* (Riyadh: al-Matabi' al-Ahliyyah, 1997), 98.

²⁶ Rashid Khalidi, ed., *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 192.

²⁷ Khalidi, 104.

²⁸ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, "Nawaqid Al-Islam," 159.

²⁹ Philip K. Hitti, *History of The Arabs : Rujukan Induk Paling Otoritatif Tentang Sejarah Peradaban Islam*, 1st ed. (Serambi, 2013), 927.

He established his government in Damascus, while his other son, Abdullah, was also sent to Iraq³⁰.

However, after the Arab territories in Asia were divided between Britain (Iraq and Palestine) and France (Syria and Lebanon) in 1920 AD, the ideals of a united Arab state began to slacken. If King Husayn was previously seen as the King of Arabia, after that, he was only recognized as the ruler of the Hijaz. The ambition of King Husayn vanished after 'Abd al-Aziz bin Sa'ud, the leader of the Wahhabi movement from Nejd, in 1924 AD, made a severe attack on the Hijaz. The attack ended King Husayn's reign there, and he eventually fled to Amman, Jordan. 'Abd al-Aziz bin Sa'ud then crowned himself the King of Hijaz and Nejd, who controlled most of the Arabian Peninsula³¹.

This second movement of Wahhabis did ideally succeed in forming the Modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 AD. The seizure of power and the assassination of King Rashid (ruler of Riyadh at that time) began Modern Saudi Arabia's history. Apart from declaring tribal movements illegal, modern Saudi Arabia also regulated the cost of hajj pilgrimage transportation as the kingdom's main source of income before the discovery of abundant oil sources. In contrast to other Islamic regions, Saudi Arabia, which is still strong today, can almost be said to have never been involved in disputes with foreign non-Arab countries and has even become a close ally in stimulating the wheels of the kingdom's government to this day³².

Patterns and Roots of the Movement of Ibn 'Abd Al-Wahhab's Orthodoxy

The Wahhabi movement has strong links to Ibn Taymiyyah's purification movement. The lives of these two scholars are about four centuries apart. Since Ibn Taymiyyah died, his knowledge and teachings have been continued by his students. However, all of that is more within the scope of efforts to develop knowledge through halaqah knowledge, majlis Taklim, writing books, scientific debates, etc. On average, circulating in scientific fields, no one seems to be trying to convey Ibn Taymiyyah's great ideas as a natural da'wah movement in society³³. The historical relationship between Ibn 'Abd Wahhab and Ibn Taymiyyah can be fully understood by knowing how the Wahhabi ideology evolved through Ibn Taymiyyah's teachings. This recognized teacher was the first to give the green light for militant measures aimed at promoting the so-called purist form of Islam. The message only traveled farther and was genuinely implemented due to the relationship between the Ibn Saud family and the Ibn 'Abd Wahhab family.

The origins of modern-day Wahhabism can be traced back to the 13th century by a scholar called Ibn Taymiyyah. He was born in Turkey but lived in Syria for most of his life until his death. He spent an important part of his life studying numerous religious issues in depth, following in the footsteps of his father, who used to deliver lectures at a mosque. He was raised as a Sunni Muslim, according to mainstream theology in Islam. Ibn

³⁰ Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Sosial Keagamaan Tanah Suci Hijaz(Mekah Dan Madinah) 1800-1925* (Logos Wacana Ilmu, 1999), 4.

³¹ Sindi, "Britain, the Rise of Wahhabism and the House of Saud," 2.

³² Hitti, *History of The Arabs*, 969-70.

³³ Talip Kucukcan, "Some Reflections on the Wahhabiyah Movement — As-Sunnah Foundation of America," accessed October 17, 2023, <https://sunnah.org/2012/12/26/reflections-wahhabiyah-movement/>.

Taymiyyah belonged to the Hanbali school of thought of the Sunni sect, which was formed in the nineteenth century by the Muslim thinker Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal³⁴.

Due to his religious competence, Ibn Taymiyyah became the regional spokesperson for the Hanbali school of thought. However, from the outset of his Islamic study, Ibn Taymiyyah had significant difficulties with many theological judgments established through the Hanbali system. Ibn Taymiyyah's problems came when he began questioning many of the teachings and practices of scholars who lived among him and elsewhere in the Muslim world. He began to believe that the scholarship of the time was moving far from the actual teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet. Consequently, he decided to make it a priority in his life to renew and revive the fundamental principles of Islam. From the very beginning, he considered acts like visiting the graves of respected deceased ones or asking God for help through the spiritual assistance of another person to be shirk (polytheism). Though there is no question that polytheism is a severe sin in Islam and has no validity, Ibn Taymiyyah was unable to assess the intentions of other Muslims around him and considered anyone undertaking such acts to be an unbeliever³⁵.

Centuries passed, and while Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas inspired many people, including many well-known followers, they could not entirely and politically dominate any society to implement these principles on a large scale. It wasn't until the beginning of the nineteenth century that a man named Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, with the help of political collaboration, brought about a change in modern-day Saudi Arabia, which continues to afflict many regions of the world. To comprehend Ibn Abdul Wahhab's influence, one must first understand the political background of the time in Saudi Arabia. Ibn Abdul Wahab came from the Najd region and studied Islamic law in Mecca. While there, he thoroughly studied Ibn Taymiyyah's books and was enormously impressed by what he had read. He was in complete agreement with his teachings and started to question the scholars around him and the practices of many Muslims.

In addition, he reinstated the stone-throwing punishment for those who committed adultery and was able to successfully carry it out on a female who was found guilty of the wrongdoing. High-ranking intellectuals and tribal officials, on the other hand, were not pleased with this and banished him from the town to a neighboring town. Here, he allied with the ruler of Najd, Muhammad ibn Saud, and this would begin the journey of the expansion of Wahhabism—the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah through Ibn Abdul Wahab³⁶. Indeed, according to its adherents, the Wahhabi sect arose from considerations based on their belief that the collapse and weakness of Islam were caused by the spread of Muslim customs that were very contrary to Islamic teachings, as well as the increasingly widespread acts of shirk, which are very contrary to the straight teachings of monotheism. Furthermore, they believe the pure Islamic faith was the most crucial mission assigned to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) when he was sent to Mecca. Therefore, the most essential Salafi task is to promote and correct Muslims' monotheistic doctrines³⁷.

As a result, the fundamental goal of this movement is to make Ibn Taymiyyah's magnificent ideas a reality in people's lives. When looking at the Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab

³⁴ Badrus Samsul Fata and Idznursham Ismail, "Brother against Brother: Early Refutation of Wahhabism by the 18th-Century Hanbali Scholars," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 23, no. 1 (June 3, 2022): 18–36, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v23i1.3243>.

³⁵ Kucukcan, "Some Reflections on the Wahhabiyah Movement — As-Sunnah Foundation of America."

³⁶ Fata and Ismail, "Brother against Brother," 18–36.

³⁷ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Kitab Al-Tawhid al-Ladzi Huwa Haqqullah 'ala 'Abdih* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islamiy, 1391), 5.

movement, the focus is not on scientific discussions or extended scholarly disputes but on spreading the influence of Islamic da'wah. The actual proof of this can be found in the books he wrote, on average, only in the form of thin, practical, and short-winded books. Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's preaching was inspired by the condition of the Muslim community in Nejd, which, according to him, was significantly damaged, especially regarding faith. At that time, polytheism was rampant, Muslims were increasingly carrying out sinful practices, and from a moral point of view, crime and bandits roamed the desert, especially at night. This condition prompted Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab to make improvements. So, as a follower of the Hanbali Madhhab, he still tried to be consistent with his fiqh school, but from a thought point of view, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab adopted Ibn Taymiyyah's style of tajdid. When his da'wah experienced various obstacles and contradictions, he also made a da'wah strategy with a jihad and political model simultaneously, namely cooperation between the followers of his movement and the rulers of the Bani Sa'ud³⁸.

Ibn Taymiyyah's thought influenced this movement, especially in his method of interpretation, which is scripturalist and rejects elements of heresy in Islamic law³⁹. However, it cannot be denied that 'Abd al-Wahhab gave a large proportion to the use of ijtihad compared to blind taqlid⁴⁰. Meanwhile, in the field of aqidah, the tajdid movement has an understanding that seems complicated and dogmatic. Among the aqidah thoughts of the Salafi Wahhabi school are that three primary religions must be known by every Muslim to be faithful to Islam, namely: Knowledge of Allah SWT (Ma'rifat Allah), knowledge of the Islamic religion, and knowledge of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. He believes knowledge of these three things is more important and must take precedence over practice. Each point has a description and elaboration, as well as its pillars, which are strengthened by the Qur'an and Sunnah arguments. This basis also includes the concept of the pillars of Islam, the seventy branches of faith, and the concept of ihsan, which is also included in these three principles⁴¹.

There is almost no difference between this concept and Islamic concepts widely known in Islam. Still, there is one interesting thing, namely, the definition and rules of hijrah. According to him, hijrah is the movement of Muslims from a shirk country to an Islamic country, which began from the time of the Prophet SAW. until the Day of Judgment⁴². It is interesting because when 'Abd al-Wahhab talks about polytheists and shirk countries today, it is as if the title is reserved for scholars and Islamic countries other than Saudi Arabia (anyone who does not conform to their teachings), which in their terms is called taghut⁴³. Muslims living in this infidel country, according to 'Abd al-Wahhab, have no other choice but to move to an Islamic country and obey the leaders there, namely leaders whose faith is straight⁴⁴.

³⁸ Fabe Armanions, "The Islamic Traditions of Wahhabism and Salafiyya," CRS Report for Congress, 2003, 2.

³⁹ Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah Dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII & XVIII: Akar Pembaruan Islam Indonesia*, Edisi Perennial (Prenada Media Group, 2013), 157.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 313. Azra, 313.

⁴¹ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Thalathah Al-Usul in Matan al-Tawhid Wa al-'Aqidah* (Mecca: Dar Ibn 'Umar, 2003), 5.

⁴² Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, 20.

⁴³ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, 25.

⁴⁴ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Sittah Ushul 'Adzimah in Matan al-Tauhid Wa al-'Aqidah* (Mecca: Dar Ibn 'Umar, 2003), 78.

CONCLUSION

Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab was a reformer in Islam in the 18th century AD who emphasized his teachings regarding rejecting taqlid and eradicating polytheism. Undeniably, Ibn Taymiyyah's teachings were very influential in the Wahhabi school. The book *Majmu' al-Tawhid*, one of the most important books on Wahhabi beliefs, which also contains the works of Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Qai'dah al-Wasitah*, and *al-Furqan Bayna 'Auliya' al-Rahman wa 'Auliya' al-Shaytan*, becoming one of their main references in the teachings of Tawhid. It is possible to say that this parallel understanding may be due to the similarity of sources. Muhammad ibn 'Abd Wahhab and Ibn Taymiyyah called themselves Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal followers. The difference between the Wahhab and Taymiyyah schools of thought, including his students and followers, is that Ibn 'Abd Wahhab mainly showed their struggle in trying to purify Islam from within because they argued that the collapse of Islam was not caused by factors that came from outside but that came from Islam itself, while Ibn Taymiyyah argued that the damage to Islam was caused by the Jews and Christians who put it into Islamic teachings. Wahhabi's statement is consistent with the famous statement of Muhammad 'Abduh, namely that Islam is closed to Muslims (*al-Islam mahjub bi al-Muslimin*).

Then, the consequences of including worship in the theological studies of the Wahhabi school gave birth to practical actions, namely the prohibition of appointing humans (living or dead) as intermediaries (*Wasilah*) to God, the prohibition of giving vows to graves or their occupants or guardians, and the prohibition on visiting the graves of the pious and of the Prophets. It is what caused the pros and cons and divisions among Muslims because the practical actions above often lead to acts of violence, the legalization of attacks on fellow Muslims, and the destruction of historical sites or relics, such as the tombs of pious Muslim figures, etc. The *Tajdid* movement, which was initially only a religious movement, reached the peak of its greatness after collaborating with the political movement of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. A century and a half later, in the hands of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the ideology of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab was brilliantly institutionalized as an official state ideology after he managed to establish the Modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 M. The establishment of the kingdom itself was inseparable from new political ideas that began to spread in the Islamic world, including the ideology of Nationalism, a result of European colonialism in the early 19th century against the Islamic world, which was increasingly unstoppable.

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