

PART II

Specific Issues

Wahhābis and the Development of Salafism:

The nature and policy trend of Salafis

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1. Introduction

In Egypt's parliamentary elections, which started in November 2011 and continued till February 2012, parties under the influence of Islamism such as the Freedom and Justice Party, a political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, have won a number of seats. Most notably, "al-Nur Party," a party upholding a stern Islamism referred to as Salafi, has won 25% of the total seats in the People's Assembly, which is equivalent to the Lower House, and 26% of the elected seats of the Shura Council, an equivalent to the Upper House. The Salafi force is expanding its influence across the Arab countries including Egypt and Tunisia, along with the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Salafists' movement is rapidly spreading in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen, the countries whose administrations had been toppled in the wake of Arab Spring and in Morocco as well. The presence of Salafists was known in Kuwait or Lebanon from the days of old. Though the Salafists were also known in Egypt or Tunisia for a long time, they were refrained from engaging in activities under the old administrations including Hosni Mubarak's. When the old administration was overturned, they were unleashed from the weights of surveillance and oppression posed by the authorities. Amid the power vacuum produced immediately after the old administration had been overturned, the Salafists began to step up their activities and take the center stage of the society, rapidly showing their presence

on the political arena.

Although information about Salafi abounds, it is difficult to grasp what Salafi really is, because the information is inconsistent or sometimes even contradictory. The origin of Salafi is often described in conjunction with the creation of the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia. This paper is an attempt to examine the development of Salafi, its nature and policies, by reflecting the information that has been made available, especially within the context of its relationship with the Wahhabi in Saudi Arabia. It also delves into its relationship with and differences from the Muslim Brotherhood. It is my pleasure and honor if my attempt should help contribute to the understanding of Salafi.

2. Salafi and Muslim Brotherhood

In today's Egypt or Tunisia, the Salafi and the Muslim Brotherhood are treated as discrete entities by the media. Both are religious and political forces based on Islam, but their ideas and principles differ from each other; hence, they exist as separate organizations and forces.

For example, in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood has the Freedom and Justice Party under its umbrella while al-Nur party belongs to the Salafi, and the two parties have been engaged in a fierce battle against each other to win the parliamentary elections. On the primary voting for the presidential election in May, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists supported different candidates. Also, in Tunisia, the Salafi movement has existed as a religious and political force different from the Nahda party, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood. In May 2012, the Salafi force in Tunisia was allowed to form their political party, the Reform Front, and has been strengthening their political campaign.

In this way, in today's Arab countries, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists exist as separate religious and political forces. However, academic studies often

treat the Muslim Brotherhood as part of the Salafi, rendering it difficult to differentiate the Salafi from the Muslim Brotherhood, and causing confusions about the Salafi.

The dictionaries or books on Islam used by scholars or researchers say that the Salafi originates in the Wahhabi, which rose to power in Saudi Arabia in the 18th century, and grew and developed as the Islamic reformists mainly in Egypt in the latter half of the 19th century. Salafism more often than not is described in relation with those ideologists and activists who advocated for Islamic reform from the latter half of the 19th century to the 20th century, such as al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, al-Kawakibi, and Rashid Ridha. Furthermore, the Salafis in Egypt entered a new phase when the Muslim Brotherhood was established in 1928, through which Salafism, which used to exist only in the discourses by intelligentsia, began to spread amongst the ordinary people with its organization (sources: “*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, E. J. Brill”, “*Islam Jiten (Dictionary of Islam)*, Iwanami Shoten”, “*Shin Islam Jiten (New dictionary of Islam)*, Heibonsha.).

The dictionaries and research papers describe the Muslim Brotherhood as part of Salafism. In a broad sense, Salafi, which derives from the word Salaf (the ancestor, the initial period of Islam), encompasses a reform movement that calls for followers to go back to its Islamic origin in order to resurrect Islam. And if the Muslim Brotherhood is viewed to have been generated in line with the movement, it is understandable that the Muslim Brotherhood is included as part of Salafism.

However, as mentioned before, in contemporary Egypt, etc., Salafi is used as the term for indicating an Islamic current different from the Muslim Brotherhood, and apparently, the Salafi and Muslim Brotherhood are treated as separate entities. In this paper, “the contemporary Salafi” and Muslim Brotherhood are treated as being different bodies, and as such, this study evolves regarding the two forces as being different, treating the Salafi in a narrow sense.

3. Wahhabi and Salafi

Although the origin of the contemporary Salafi in Egypt, etc., still remains obscure, as there are several interpretations with respect to its origin, it is often regarded as having been influenced by the Wahhabi of Saudi Arabia. It can safely be said that the emergence of contemporary Salafi had relation to the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia.

Then, what was the relationship between the Wahhabi and Salafi in Saudi Arabia like? Let us go back to the past.

Saudi Arabia is a kingdom created through the collaboration of the Wahhabi movement and the house of Saud. The kingdom was initiated in the middle of the 18th century when Muhammad b. Abd al-Wahhāb, the founder of the Wahhabi movement, and Muhammad b. Saud, the chief of the house of Saud, a small clan in the Najd region (central area in the Arabian Peninsula where cities such as Riyadh are located) signed an agreement so as to form a collaborative relationship. Since then, the house of Saud and the Wahhabi had joined forces in expanding their realm, leading to the establishment of the Saudi state (the first Saudi state, 1744/45–1818). The Saudi state came to a halt twice, before getting resurrected (the third Saudi state) in 1902 by Abd al-Aziz (assumed the first King later on). It then changed its name to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 and has survived to this day. By the agreement, Wahhabism has become the national religion of the Saudi state. The tie between the state and Wahhabism has been kept even today since the state was changed to the Kingdom, and Wahhabism's positioning as the dominant Islamic sect remains unchanged. The majority of the people in Saudi Arabia belong to Wahhabism.

Wahhabism burgeoned in the first half of the 18th century as a reformist movement of the Sunni school of Islam influenced by the Hanbali school of jurisprudence (one of the four major Sunni schools of jurisprudence and, attached

importance to the initial period of Islam). The Wahhabi, attaching importance to the Quran and Sunna, the teachings of the early Islam, denied the Shi'a, excluded those that were added to the Islamic thought and society later on (bida), which included the Saint worshipping, Sufism. And they tried to strictly protect Islam in its original form. Their rigorous attitude is related to the intolerance in their attempt to rule the society under Islam and their intolerant and exclusive nature against the Shi'a.

Because of its posture of attaching importance to Islam from the time of Salaf (the early days of Islam) as the model, Wahhabism, which rose to prominence in the 18th century, is regarded as the starting point of modern Salafism. There are many grounds that are commonly found in the arguments and actions of the Wahhabi and Salafists of today, therefore Wahhabism can be regarded as the prototype of today's Salafism.

Moreover, amongst the Wahhabi followers who are especially pious, there are many who grow their beard long imitating Prophet Muhammad, wear the traditional clothes in a unique style (prefer clothing that have no taste for gaudiness; they don't use ring ornaments for holding hoods, shorten the length of clothes, etc.) or try to avoid music or dancing, or anything that is gorgeous. Their tendency toward leading a Islamic way of life has had a huge impact on the contemporary Salafists in various countries, and there are many who try to follow such Islamic way of life.

Saudi Arabia is the center of the Islamic world; its two holy places, Makka and Madina, attract millions of pilgrims from all over the world, and the country is home to many headquarters of the international Islamic institutes. Wahhabism has existed as the dominant Islamic sect in the Saudi states and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for many years, and has had an impact across the Islamic world through the exchange of people such as pilgrims traveling to the holy places, exchange of

knowledge and people through teaching and study at the Islamic Universities in the country, and dissemination of Islamic information through the media or documents by Saudi Islamic scholars (nowadays through sermons via satellite TV or the Internet), and through support to the Muslims in many countries.

In addition to those, the fact that Saudi Arabia is an oil-producing country having high economic power also helped boost its influence in Islamic affairs. And the influence brought by the millions of expatriates who crossed the border to Saudi Arabia in order to find jobs not just from the Arab countries but from around the world (the number of expatriates currently working in Saudi Arabia is around 9 million) should also be noted.

Thus Wahhabism has influenced Muslims in the Arab countries and in the world in various ways and there are many countries where Salafism had started to take root under of the influences.

4. Wahhabism and Salafism and Their Involvement in Politics

The Salafists in many countries used to stay away from politics. Perhaps it was because the influence of Wahhabism was largely observed in religious and spiritual spheres. Throughout its history, the Wahhabis also tried to avoid getting involved in politics, and their attitude might have also influenced the Salafists in other countries.

The Wahhabis' avoidance in political affairs was attributed to the agreement between the Wahhabis and the House of Saud sealed in the middle of the 18th century. In sealing the agreement, Muhammad b. Saud, the chief of the House of Saud, promised to grant Muhammad b. Abd al-Wahhāb protection, when he had come to the House of Saud to flee from persecution. Abd al-Wahhāb, in return for his protection, allegedly responded, "You (Muhammad b. Saud) will be Imām, leader of the Muslim community, and I (Abd al-Wahhāb) will be leader in

religious matters”¹, if Muhammad b. Saud would perform jihād against the unbelievers.

The agreement meant that the House of Saud would control political affairs, while leaving the religious matters in the hands of the Wahhabis as the Wahhabis would endorse the governance by the House of Saud. As the time passed on, a clear line of segregation was formed between their realms of dominance, which kept the Wahhabis from interfering in political affairs. The tie the Wahhabis sought to establish with the House of Saud led them to turn over the political realm to the hands of the House of Saud.

The tie between the two forces allowed the House of Saud to grow later on and granted legitimacy to its governance. Meanwhile, for the Wahhabis, the tie brought about a major turning point for modifying their approaches towards politics.

However, the Wahhabis were not completely away from the political affairs, and there were times when they had their presence felt in politics. For example, in the 20th century, when the third Saud state (1902-) was created by Abd al-Aziz, a soldier group (called Ikhwān) made up of settled Bedouins who were pious Wahhabi followers engaged in conquest of territories. As the Saudis went on with the conquest and the expansion of their territories, the Ikhwān who fought on the front lines gradually mounted their political clout, and started to ask for the strict application of Islamic law and the continuation of jihād. They began to confront Abd al-Aziz by the second half of 1920s, and ended up being suppressed and resolved by Abd al-Aziz. The Ikhwān could be noted as one of the roots of radical Salafism, Salafi-Jihadism, which emerged later in 1990s out of Wahhabism.

After the incidents of Ikhwān, the Wahhabis refrained again from getting involved in political affairs except for those that were deeply related to Islam. The House

of Saud did not allow the Wahhabis to get involved in politics, either. In this way, the Wahhabis' tendency of keeping distance from the real politics was formed.

Because of this historical posture that the Wahhabis has taken, the Wahhabis' influence in other countries was felt mainly in religious and spiritual matters; the Salafi in various countries also tried to place importance on religious and spiritual aspects, trying to avoid involvement in political affairs. This fact is believed to account for the reason why the Salafists had rarely involved in political affairs.

However, what should be noted here is that the Wahhabis strategically tried not to seek political clout in view of their relationship with the House of Saud, which was by no means in the streak of their nature. If one recalls that politics by the unity of religion and politics was exercised during the period of early Islam (the time of Salaf), it is plain to see that the Wahhabis having the characteristics of the Hanbali school embraced the strong orientation toward politics in their ideology. It may hold true to today's Salafists in various countries.

5. From Political Activities to Radicalism

As for Saudi Arabia, after the mid-20th century, the country and the politics began to undergo drastic transformation towards autocracy, as its oil revenue allowed the country to further solidify the sovereign power and the governance by the house of Saud. After the surge of the oil boom in the latter half of the 1970s, there were some Wahhabi followers who made attempts to get engaged in politics under a host of influences from inside and outside of the country amid on-going changes in the country's economy and social affairs.

The Wahhabi followers, after the 1960s, came to make direct contact with the new Islamic ideas and principles in the Arab countries. Particularly, the ideologists or scholars, who started to teach at academic institutions after having fled to Saudi Arabia in order to escape from suppressive regimes in Egypt or Syria, as they

were the then or former members of the Muslim Brotherhood, had an enormous impact on the Wahhabi students². Furthermore, various Islamic movements and political turbulence that were taking place in adjacent countries in those days, such as the Islamist movements or the Iranian Revolution kept influencing Saudi Arabia as well.

Although the Wahhabis had tried to keep their distance from politics, as described before, they had a strong latent inclination towards politics. As they were stimulated by the Islamists in Arab countries, after the 1990s, political moves started to emerge out of the Wahhabi followers. Formation of political parties or groups was prohibited in Saudi Arabia, and no political activities were allowed. Those who got involved in politics had to strengthen their activities by getting confrontational against the government.

The turning point came in 1990–91 at the outbreak of the Gulf Crisis/Gulf War. It goes without saying that the war gave a profound shock to the Saudi people. What's more, the fact that the US troops, made up largely of Christians, were stationed in Saudi Arabia, the country where Muslims' holy land Makka is located, throughout the Gulf Crisis, ignited a sense of crisis amongst the Muslims. In addition, as Saddam Hussein incited anti-American sentiments in neighboring countries by making the most of Islam, the anti-American sentiments amongst Saudi Muslims grew, further leading some political movements. Then, after the Gulf War came to a close, the political movements by the Wahhabi Islamists started to surface.

The Islamists who took the center stage of politics anew started to demand that the government carry out a political reform. In 1993, the Committee for the Defense of the Legitimate Rights (CDLR) was established, and started to confront the government in their strife for political reform. The government banned and suppressed the CDLR. Some CDLR members who sought political asylum

overseas continued their activities in London, for instance. However, the CDLR in Saudi Arabia stopped its organizational activities completely under the suppression by the government.

The newly emerged current of Islamists made up mainly of those CDLR members came to be referred to as the Sahwa (awakening) later on. Those were the people in line of Islamic related vocations, college professors, administrative officers, lawyers, and the staff members of the courts, who had once belonged to the regime that endorsed the Kingdom under the agreement between the Wahhabis and the House of Saud (the royal family). They came to be awakened in politics and started to take part in political movements. Sahwa is not a coherent organizational entity. It is a name given to a current of Islamic political movement consisting of a group of people or groups sharing the similar ideological inclinations.

The authorities stepped up their suppression, and a number of Islamists who belonged to the Sahwa current were arrested in Saudi Arabia in 1994. Among those arrested were the prominent holy men and scholars of Islam, Salmān al-Awda and Safar al-Hawālī.

Against such a backdrop, a new current of Salafism began to spread in Saudi Arabia. They were increasingly concerned over the predicament of Muslims in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and other countries surrounding the former Soviet Union. They started to raise donations to support them and began to be actually engaged in politics. Through participating in the support of Islamic forces in Afghanistan, they gradually came to embrace jihād, intensified their criticism against the United States and the monarchy by the House of Saud, leading them to take radical behaviors such as terror.

It was not until the 1990s that the word Salafī began to appear in the media in

conjunction with the Islamic movement in Saudi Arabia, and the word started to be used more than before in the 2000s. Although Wahhabism had a lot of Salafi elements, it had not been referred to as Salafism in itself, nor had Wahhabis got involved in systematic political activities. The tendency of taking on political campaigns and radical actions started to emerge in the 1990s, which eventually led to the Salafi-jihadist.

The people who took the center stage of the Sahwa movement were the religious elites from Wahhabism. In contrast, about the educational level, around 80% of those who took part in the new Salafi current, namely, the radical Salafi, were below university level³, most of them were official workers, teachers, and other ordinary people⁴. Geographically, there were many who hailed originally from the areas such as Hijāz or Asīr, where many residents were Sunnis but not Wahhabi followers⁵. This is indicative that the new Salafi current had emanated beyond the school of Wahhabism although it was based on Wahhabism. These were the people who had received little benefits from the economic growth that blossomed from the latter half of the 1970s, these were the people who had been adversely affected by the social transformation. They started to find their identification in the new current of Salafism⁶.

Because it was difficult for those radical Salafists to develop their activities in Saudi Arabia due to the harsh clampdown by the government, they beefed up activities abroad, which eventually led them to form the international al-Qaida movement of Usāma b. Lāden. Al-Qaida is an organization formed by the radical Salafists and the Egyptian radical group descended from the Muslim Brotherhood. The influence deeply imbued with the radical Salafism can be found in the ideology of al-Qaida, for instance, in taking a harsh attitude towards Shi'a in denial of them (they condemn the Shi'a as unbelievers, and regard them as the target of terror with the takfir ideology).

The radical Salafists who had their roots in Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia began to exert influential power on the radical movements in various parts of the Arab world through their unflinching anti-American approach and anti-government movement, or by way of international activities of al-Qaida.

The Islamists who are descended from the Sahwa in Saudi Arabia, upon the incident of 9/11 in 2001 synchronized terrorist attacks in the United States, have scaled down their activities as the authorities have reinforced the suppression and oppression since 2004. Salmān al-Awda who became famous by his anti-government remarks and activities started to take compromising approaches toward the government, and the Sahwa followers began to fade away from the center stage of politics after 2005. The radical Salafists were also unable to engage in activities in Saudi Arabia because the government beefed up clamping down on them.

However, the Sahwa movement was not totally perished. In 2005, the municipal council (city assembly) elections were held across Saudi Arabia as the first elections ever implemented. In Dammam city, seven seats were contended in an election of the local council, a group (Surūrī), which is descended from Sahwa, announced a list of seven candidates from their party⁷, out of which six won the seats. This clearly indicates that the Sahwa still retains their strong influential power socially and politically. Meanwhile, a group from the Muslim Brotherhood announced their list of seven nominees and ended up sending two candidates to the council. But, the names of these two candidates were also found in the list of the Surūrī group.

The power of the Muslim Brotherhood is limited in Saudi Arabia in both their activities and influence. The most striking characteristic of the Muslim Brotherhood is that it is a social organization that systematically conducts activities, for instance, offering aid or support to the poor. In a country like Saudi

Arabia, where the formation of political or social groups was strictly banned by the authorities, and where the people were enjoying affluence with high personal income, the spread of such group's activities was limited. It is also understood that the Muslim Brotherhood refrained from engaging in organizational activities reciprocally in the country that provided them shelter to survive.

6. Propagation of Salafism to the Arab World

Amongst the surrounding countries, a country where the Salafi movement can be observed from an early period (the 1960s) is Kuwait. In Kuwait, Salafists still maintain their constant force to date.

In the election for the parliament held in Kuwait in 2008, candidates from the Salafi took ten seats out of the quorum of 50 seats of the parliament. Candidates from the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the political wing of the Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood, won three seats. Although both the Salafi and Muslim Brotherhood had suffered a substantial loss in the parliamentary election in 2009 after the parliament was dissolved, they made a comeback in the February 2012 election. Though the details concerning the seats are not yet available, it is regarded that the Salafi party has won about ten seats in the parliament.

Although the formation of a political party has been prohibited in Kuwait, the members of the parliament have been allowed to form political blocks within the parliament, and in reality, the political blocks engage in activities in the parliament. Because people can announce what ideas or principles those candidates stand for as they go on the campaign, it is possible to classify parliamentary members based on their political inclination.

Kuwait is a small country bordered by Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, and is susceptible to the influence from surrounding countries. The development of oil fields in the 1940s spurred the country's economy from early on. In around 1950,

a great number of Arab expatriates started to migrate to Kuwait from Palestine or Egypt for work. Moreover, the merchants had strong political influence throughout its history, and the country had a relatively free political environment compared to other gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia. Under such circumstances, from the early days, Arab nationalism or ideas of Islamism had been propagated to Kuwait from other Arab countries.

The Islamists who started activities before others in Kuwait were the Muslim Brotherhood, and it was in 1947 that the movement of the Muslim Brotherhood was spread to Kuwait. Then, after Kuwait obtained its independence in 1961, in the first parliamentary election in Kuwait in 1963, one candidate who endorsed the Muslim Brotherhood won the election. The liberation party (Hizb al-Tahrir), which was an Islamic party formed by Palestinian people also started their activities from around 1953⁸.

It was in the middle of the 1960s that the people referred to as the Salafi started their activities in Kuwait, and it is considered an extension of the Wahhabi movement of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait⁹. In other words, the people referred to as the Salafi in Kuwait are the people who had been influenced by the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia.

Among the Salafis in Kuwait, as described in the section on Wahhabism, there are the people who prefer to wear long beards and shortened traditional clothes. They started to gain their influential power gradually with mosques as the base of their activities and in the society. They were collecting Zakat. At the outset, they did not get involved in politics much. But, later they nominated candidates for the 1981 parliamentary election, and had two of their men won in the election. In the same election, candidates of the Muslim Brotherhood won two seats¹⁰.

The people referred to as the Salafi in Kuwait have created a loose current made

up of several groups. They call for the application of the Islamic law to the legal structure of Kuwait in the elections in 1990s and after. Moreover, the Salafis in Kuwait had criticized the Muslim Brotherhood for having strong interests in politics way beyond the creed of Islam, and they have continued their activities in a confrontational and tense relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Amongst the GCC countries, the Salafi has been conducting political activities in Bahrain as well. In 2010, a group related to Salafī (al-Asāla al-Islāmīya) won three seats out of the quorum of 40 seats in the election of the Chamber of Deputies (corresponds to the Lower House). A group related to Muslim Brotherhood (al-Minbar al-Islāmī) won two seats in the same election. In the previous election held in 2006, the Salafi won five seats while the Muslim Brotherhood clinched seven seats. A formation of political parties has been also banned in Bahrain; however, conducting NGO-like group activities is allowed. How they have spread to Bahrain is unknown.

Lebanon is another country in which the Salafi was active from the early days. The Salafi was already active by the middle of the 1970s in Lebanon mainly in and around Tripoli where many Sunnis were living.

Scholars and religious men in Lebanon who had learned Islam in Saudi Arabia played a pivotal role in the development of Salafism in Lebanon. The man who spearheaded the movement was Sālim al-Shahāl, (ca.1922–2008), who, returning to Lebanon after having learned in Saudi Arabia, started the Salafism activities. He then went on to establish his movement in Tripoli by the middle of the 1970s. Shahāl is also known as having a close relationship with Abdul al-Azīz ibn Abdullāh ibn Bāz (1910–1999), a famous Wahhabi scholar in Saudi Arabia¹¹.

Ibn Bāz became the Grand Mufti¹² of Saudi Arabia in 1993, and was designated as the chairman of the Council of Senior Ulama (Islamic Scholars) by the king

Fahd, and as such, he was the central figure of the Wahhabis, who represented the religious circle in Saudi Arabia. It is known that Ibn Bāz offered opportunities for hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinians to learn Islam in the universities in Saudi Arabia. This also illustrates the fact that the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia played a major role in the development of Salafism in Lebanon.

Lebanon plunged into a long civil war in the middle of the 1970s. Amid the uncertainty in which various forces fought against one another, religious, political, and militia groups began to launch their campaigns in many different places. The radical Salafists (the Salafi-jihadists) also began to step up their influence under such circumstances. However, the movement of radical Salafists shall not be dealt in this paper. It may be dealt with at some other opportunity.

As observed in the examples of Kuwait or Lebanon, the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia had an enormous influence on the creation of Salafism. Based on these aspects, it could be understood that the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia have significantly influenced the development of today's Salafism in various countries including Egypt.

The ideas and principles of Salafism had spread far beyond the realm of Wahhabism and made an impact across the Middle East and the Islamic world. What made it possible for them to spread amongst non-Wahhabi Sunnis? Salafism underlines the importance of initial Islam in the days of Salaf. It was the time before the four orthodox schools of Islamic law (madhhab) within Sunni Islam were created, the time when there was no distinction amongst the schools of Islamic law. The spirit of Salafism, which attached importance to the Quran and Hadis as the origin of Islam, had resonated in the hearts of Sunni people and had been accepted by them irrespective of their school of law, thus spreading beyond the realm of Wahhabism.

The Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia, in this way, had an impact on other Islamic countries including the neighboring countries, and played a major role in the process of generating Salafism. On the other hand, the Wahhabis existed as a dominant Islamic sect in Saudi Arabia, and the Wahhabi Salafists did not appear as an independent movement until the 1990s in the country. In the 1990s, the Wahhabi Salafists started to embark on their own movement in Saudi Arabia. The Salafists' movement developed into radical Salafism, taking on a different course from the contemporary Salafism.

7. Policies of the Salafi Party

Initially, Salafism was a current (*tayyār*) made up of individuals or groups who did not have any organization. In Egypt, it was a loose group of people who came to know each other through the gatherings at the Mosque or through other networks. They stayed away from politics and worked mainly for religious activities.

In Egypt or Tunisia, the Salafists have been strengthening their political movement and some of them have formed political parties in the aftermath of the so-called "Arab Spring." From the perspective of Salafism, which regards the time of Salaf as the model, the time when a unity of politics and religion was exercised, it is natural that the Salafists who were liberated from the authoritarian government are trying to strengthen their involvement in politics.

The policies that Salafists will draft in the future will attract wide attention. However, as they have seldom engaged in politics before, there are many uncertainties with regard to the concrete policies that the Salafists are to make in the future.

In Saudi Arabia, Wahhabism that has many elements of Salafism is exercising its influential power on the state institution, economy, and society as the dominant

Islamic sect. As for the legislative system, the Basic Law of Governance stipulates that “the Quran and Sunna are the constitution of the Kingdom”¹³, and the legal system is based on the Islamic law (centered on the Hambali school of jurisprudence). The court is centered on the Islamic court (the mahkama), and the country’s diplomacy, economy, and media are also immensely influenced by Islam. Its judicial and educational systems are placed under the strong influence of Wahhabism. Those committing grave crimes regulated in Islamic law are sentenced to decapitation in the public place. Whipping is also performed as punishment.

On the social front, many types of restraints are imposed on people: women should wear a veil, women must not drive a car, saint worshipping or Sufi is banned, public activities by other religions such as Christianity are not allowed, a man and a woman, especially Saudi woman, are prohibited and kept from being together at work or at school except some rare cases, alcohol is prohibited, women are not allowed to go on a trip by themselves without male guardian, stores or restaurants should close during the time of prayer (in order to give preference to the prayer), women are restricted to take part in sports, movies also are restricted to be played, and so on. On the streets, religious police are clamping down on what they deem as anti-Islam behavior¹⁴.

However, should Salafists grab the administration in Egypt or perhaps join in the administration, for instance, an extreme Islamic policy just like in Saudi Arabia would not be immediately taken or examined.

Abdl-Munim Abul-Futūh, who won support by al-Nur party and garnered support by the Salafists, and Muhammad Mursi, the candidate from the Muslim Brotherhood, ran for the first phase of presidential election held in May 2012 in Egypt (the primary voting). For the election, the Ahrām Newspaper (the Ahrām online, the Web version, May 16, 2012) made and posted a minute listing,

which covered 26 items of compared and contrasted domestic and foreign policies and economic and social policies of individual candidates.

According to the listing, it should be noted that Abul-Futūh' (supported by the Salafists) claimed that he "would implement the Islamic law and attain democracy" for the "Type of State (Civilian vs. Religious)", and he "would boost Islamic financing" for economy, but, except for these two policies, he would not particularly pursue Islamic values on other agendas including the policy on women. Abul-Futūh himself did not belong to a Salafi party, but his claims of "implementing Islamic law" and "boosting Islamic financing" resembled very much what the Salafists were calling for. However, on other policies, he did not hold Salafi or Islamic aspects strongly. Notwithstanding, he won support from the Salafists.

The policies proposed by Mursi who was the candidate of a wing of the Brotherhood did not contain much Islamic inclination as a whole, although he proposed several new policies. It was perhaps because he was concerned with the reaction from the voters. He did not present concrete policies or refrained from sending out clear messages on policies on women or other policies that might provoke criticism or ignite arguments.

In view of those phenomena, it is highly likely that the Salafists and the Muslim Brotherhood, once they actually get engaged in politics, would try to find a middle ground so that they can choose realistic approaches on policies. They would try to avoid strong opposition amongst the people rather than push their ideas or principles forward. It is possible that they accept reality and propose more modest policies.

However, depending on the political development in the future, it is possible that the Salafi party might pursue policies that are inclined towards the Islamic

approach to a certain degree, and their positioning on the Islamic law, alcohol, or the clothing of foreign women could become an issue. Furthermore, apart from the level of the political party, the Salafists might step up their activities in the streets or at universities, for instance, interfering with women's outfits, opposing drinking, confronting Christians, and banning saint worshipping or Sufism. The possible move that the Salafists would take, who strictly observe Islamic teaching, is unfathomable in many ways.

Then, what might the economic policy be? The Salafists, who regard Islam in its initial days as the model, attach importance to the economic ideas of the original Islam. According to the economic philosophy of the original Islam, economic activity such as commerce was acknowledged as something that enriches Unma (Islamic community), and the private ownership of fortune was also acknowledged. Meanwhile, charging interest in financial transactions was prohibited. The Salafists' ideas on economy are akin to those of capitalism except for the prohibition of interests, and therefore, it is considered that they would claim economic policies in line with capitalism and liberalism. The Salafists would not prefer the government's intervention in economic affairs in order to adjust the gap between the rich and the poor.

Paul Schemm of Associated Press wrote in 2008 about Salafism in Egypt as following; "Salafism has proved highly adaptable, appealing to Egypt's wealthy businessmen, the middle class and even the urban poor -- cutting across class in an otherwise rigidly hierarchical society. In Cairo's wealthy enclaves of Maadi and Nasr City, robed, upper-class Salafis drive BMWs to their engineering firms, while their wives stay inside large homes surrounded by servants and children."¹⁵

This account shows us that Salafism and capitalism match well. And it also explains us one of the reasons why the Salafis have been acquiring influence in Egypt. Salafism has been appealing to wealthy businessmen, the middle class and

the urban poor who were created in the economic development and the social transformation during the reign of ex-president Hosni Mubarak.

On the other hand, the economic policy by the Muslim Brotherhood strikes a contrast. The Muslim Brotherhood is an organization that has been involved in social activities, mainly in voluntary social services for the poor in Egypt and other countries. The Muslim Brotherhood, which organization is essentially based on the people from the lower bracket of society, has a tendency of placing importance on social fairness and equality, and therefore, it is highly likely that they focus on the social measures and take policies beneficial to the poor people and farmers. Therefore, the roles the state in the economy are inevitably reinforced. Though, they may try to deal with political, diplomatic, or women's issues flexibly, it seems that they may be keeping strong concerns over social measures such as the poverty issue.

With respect to the economic policy, there are significant differences between the Salafists and the Muslim Brotherhood, despite that their supports for the Islamic banking and its financing are common.

The economy has suffered enormous damage due to the social instability that had endured more than a year in countries such as Egypt. They first must tackle the economic reconstruction. Under the president Mursi, they will eventually proceed with the measures for the poor and the farmers.

Conclusion

In the Arab countries, the Islamic influence has been spreading dramatically in the wake of the so-called "Arab Spring." In Egypt, the influential power of the Muslim Brotherhood has been on the rise particularly, but the presence of Salafi influence is also clearly palpable. Under the new circumstance, it is undeniable that the roles that the Salafists are going to play in the political sphere are surely

going to expand in the future.

The Salafists live in the western countries as well as Islamic nations. The circumstances under which the Salafists live differ from one country to another, but they will have a variety of impacts on the society and politics of those countries as an Islamic current that is different from the Muslim Brotherhood.

As radical Salafism emerged from Salafism, the cautious opinions, which cast doubt over the radicalization of the Salafists, still remain. Under the new landscape created in the aftermath of the Arab upheaval, it may yet take some time before the Salafists will become able to play a major political role in stabilized countries.

¹ Al-Rasheed, Madawi [2002] *A History of Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge University Press, p. 17

² Amongst ideologists and scholars who came to Saudi Arabia, the most influential was a Syrian called Muhammad Surūr Zayn al-Ābdīn. Surūr was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria from the 1950s to the 1960s, but left the group as he came to confront other members. When the Syrian authorities stepped up crackdown the Islamic movement, he left the country for Saudi Arabia in 1967, and taught at an Islamic Institute in Buraida.

However, as he was marked by the authorities, he left Saudi Arabia six years later in 1973, worked as a journalist in Kuwait, and then moved on to England in 1983. He established the Sunnah Study Center in Birmingham, and started to publish a magazine "*Al-Sunnah*". Surūr kept having an impact on Saudi Arabia through writing and other activities, and is believed to have had a significant influence on the movement of Islamists in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War, which broke out in 1991. (Alshamsi, Mansoor Jassem [2011] *Islam and Political Reform in Saudi Arabia, The quest for political change and reform*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 62-63).

Those who came under the influence of Muhammad Surūr came to be referred to as the Surūrī. The Surūrīs have taken strict Islamic ideology from Ibn Taymīya (a 13th–14th-century scholar of the Hambali school of jurisprudence), and embraced a revolutionary attitude from Sayyid Qutb (a radical ideologist of the Muslim Brotherhood). It is akin to grafting the action principles of the Muslim Brotherhood on the Salafi ideology of Wahhabism. Though those who were called Surūrī were not members of the Muslim Brotherhood, they became interested in and got involved in politics as they learned more about the political and social nature of the Muslim Brotherhood.

³ Hegghammer, Thomas [2010] *Jihad in Saudi Arabia, Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 240-243.

⁴ The majority of the people in Saudi Arabia become public officials or teachers.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Sadashi, Fukuda [2006] *Saudi Arabia–Terror and Democratization* Sadashi Fukuda, et al., *The Bush Administration of America and the Middle East in Turmoil*, Institute of Developing Economies, pp. 177-184.

⁷ Because even groups were banned from engaging in political activities, the roster of recommended candidates was transmitted to voters covertly via cell phones or the Internet. Note that elections have not been held since in Saudi Arabia.

⁸ al-Mdaires, Falah Abdullah [2010] *Islamic Extremism in Kuwait, From the Muslim Brotherhood to al-Qaeda and other Islamic political groups*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 10-32.

⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 35.

¹¹ Gambill, Gary C, [2009] “Islamist Group in Lebanon.” In *Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis, Lebanon*, ed. Rubin, Barry, 131-154, Palgrave, New York.

¹² The Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia is appointed by the king. The Grand Mufti is the most senior scholar of Islamic law in Saudi Arabia who has the authority to issue fatwā (legal opinions) concerning the Islamic law, the Nation’s conducts such as war and social affairs.

¹³ The first article, the Basic Law of Governance of Saudi Arabia. The first article stipulates the Quran and Sunna as the constitution. The Basic Law does not say that the constitution is the Islamic Law. It is a reflection of Wahhabism, which places importance on the Quran and Sunna.

¹⁴ The details of the activities of the religious police in Saudi Arabia (the Commission for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice) are described on the homepage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. *The Safety Instructions for*

the Japanese living in Saudi Arabia The Embassy of Japan in Saudi Arabia. http://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp/manual/saudi_arabia.html

¹⁵ Paul Schemm, “*Ultraconservative Salafi Islam flourishing in historically liberal-leaning Mideast countries*”, 20th October, 2008, Associated Press Writer.