Sayyid Qutb: An Historical and Contextual Analysis of Jihadist Theory

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Sayyid Qutb: An Historical and Contextual Analysis of Jihadist Theory

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Grand Valley State University
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THESIS

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Thesis Committee

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صديقي دكتور وايت: ألف الشكر
Abstract

The purpose of this research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of a salient jihadist philosopher by the name of Sayyid Qutb. Qutb is arguably among the most influential ideologues of modern-day Islamic militancy; yet, there is very little research examining his works. Through in-depth analysis of the historical, social, and political contexts surrounding Qutb and Islamic militancy, this research will examine selected works of Qutb to determine the frequency of his use of militant language and how his usage of militant language relates to his overall ideology; place Qutb's writings into historical, social, and political contexts while at the same time examining if, and how, they are influencing militants today; and, identify the importance of understanding the beliefs conveyed by Qutb for the purpose of informing counterterrorism policy.
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Introduction to the Research

Modern terrorism has gone through many changes since World War II. Hoffman (1995, 2006) argues that it has transformed from anti-colonial violence supporting guerrilla movements immediately after 1945 to ideological terrorism from approximately 1965 to 1985. He believes the world is currently witnessing a period of religious terrorism. Rapoport (1988, 2003) argues in a similar vein, stating that the world of terrorism experienced an explosion of religious violence with the birth of Hezbollah after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Many analysts believe that religion became one of the major factors influencing terrorism after Hamas followed the lead of Hezbollah in 1987 during the first Intifada, or uprising, in the area of historic Palestine (Marty & Appleby, 1991-1995; Rubin & Rubin, 2002; Jenkins, 2006; White, 2006; Palmer & Palmer, 2007).

Certainly, the militant interpretation of Islam has been an important factor in this development (Stern, 2001, 2003; Juergensmeyer, 2003; Rapoport, 2003; Hoffman, 2006; White, 2006). Whether religion is the dominant trend or simply another motivation in modern terrorism, it is the critical factor in domestic and international terrorism and is the basis of the jihadist movement (Sageman, 2004, Scheuer, 2006). After the attacks of September 11, analysts began paying more attention to the philosophy behind militant Islam. Many blamed so-called Wahhabism, Salafism, and Mawlana Mawdudi’s writings in the Deobandi tradition (White, 2009). Regardless of the theological strain, many
analysts believe that modern militant ideology is based on the writing and philosophy of one man, Sayyid Qutb.

The writings of Qutb serve as the primary historical source of the philosophy of the modern jihadist movement (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; Kepel, 2002; Laquer, 2003; Haneef, 2004; Musallam, 2005; Combating Terrorism Center, 2006; White, 2006; DeLong-Bas, 2008; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). Ayman Zawahiri, second in command under Osama bin Laden, describes Qutb as the most important influence on his life. Former republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee (2007) identified the importance of understanding jihadist philosophy, specifically Qutb’s philosophy, in order to effectively address the threat from Islamic militancy. An abundance of literature exists that suggests Qutb’s significant influence on Muslims, calling them to take violent action against the West and Western values. Qutb’s influence extends to most modern Wahhabi and Salafi preachers whose fiery rhetoric directly reflects Qutb’s view of an “Islamic solution” for the social ills that are believed to plague modern society (Garnham & Tessler, 1995). Sayyid Qutb (1993) wrote that “The way is not to free the Earth from Roman and Persian tyranny in order to replace it with Arab tyranny. All tyranny is wicked! The Earth belongs to God and should be purified for God, and cannot be purified for Him unless the banner ‘No Deity except God,’ is unfurled across the Earth” (p. 26).

In lieu of the current global climate stemming from terrorism and the evident influence of Qutb’s ideology on modern Islamic militancy, the purpose of this study is to describe a primary source of militant Islamic ideology. Using an historical-descriptive methodology, coupled with content analysis, this thesis will examine the ideology of one of the leading militant Islamic thinkers in an attempt to make known the true belief
system governing Islamic militancy and jihadist philosophy. The overall purpose of this research is three faceted. This research will:

1. Examine selected works of Qutb to determine the frequency of his use of militant language and how his usage of militant language relates to his overall ideology;

2. Place Qutb's writings into historical, social, and political contexts while at the same time examining if, and how, they are influencing militants today; and

3. Identify the importance of understanding the beliefs conveyed by Qutb for the purpose of informing counterterrorism policy.

This research will become part of a growing body of literature that will allow policymakers to gain an understanding of one of the greatest threats to the United States. The literature illustrates how current policy addressing Islamic militancy breeds counterterrorism procedures that are flawed and saturated with polemics. In order to correct these flawed policies it is necessary to understand the basis of militant Islamic rhetoric. Most religious terrorism specialists recognize that the contemporary rhetoric is based on the writings of Qutb (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; Sageman, 2004; Hoffman, 2006; Scheuer, 2006; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). This research will explain the teachings of Sayyid Qutb.

As the prevalence of terrorism and terrorist groups around the world seem to be gathering more attention, both scholars and politicians are continually attempting to understand the basic principles of terrorism to aid in effective policy formulation. Though greater emphasis is being placed on responding and preventing terrorist activities, very
few people understand the nature of terrorism and, more specifically, the aspects of
religiously motivated terrorism.

Understanding the basis of militant philosophy is important for several reasons.
First, current U.S. policy places emphasis on addressing groups that adhere to Islamic
religious doctrine due to the United States’ current involvement in the Middle East and
Southwest Asia (United States National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 2006). The
idea that U.S. counterterrorism policy is geared towards Islamic militancy suggests that
the threat from religiously motivated Islamic militants is genuine. This raises the issue of
whether or not the United States is effectively responding to the threat from Islamic
militants. Counterterrorism policy should directly incorporate methods to increase
domestic and international cooperation, promote a comprehensive understanding of the
enemy and their motivations, and endorse the continued physical removal of terrorist
groups and sponsors through effective utilization of the executive, legislative, and
judicial branches of government. The United States’ National Strategy for Combating
Terrorism (NSCT) (2006) incorporates these policy recommendations; however, it fails
to illustrate a resolute understanding of the terrorist enemy.

A second reason that illustrates the necessity to understand religious terrorism is
that sub-national, religiously motivated conflict has changed the nature of warfare;
therefore, the response to religious terrorism must also evolve (Rapoport, 1988, 2003;
Hoffman, 1995, 2006; White, 2003; Barnett 2004). One of the major weaknesses of the
NSCT (2006) is that it introduces the traditional “war paradigm”, which describes
conventional styles of war tactics (p. 1). It is important that those fighting the “War on
Terror” understand the nature of the terrorist as an enemy. Terrorists utilize an
unconventional style of warfare and employ unconventional tactics such as suicide bombings, hijackings, kidnappings, and publicized executions. Counterterrorism policy needs to emphasize the importance of understanding the full capabilities of the enemy within the changing nature of conflict. This not only includes a tactical analysis, but also an examination of the belief systems that govern the tactics of terrorist groups. For example, the NSCT (2006) claims that death is a deterrent for terrorists and that terrorist ideology is "based on enslavement" (p. 10). Death for the sake of their cause is viewed as martyrdom in the eyes of those who die for their cause. Death is a reward for their religious loyalty, not a punishment. Responses such as these are not supported by evidence to have an impact on religious terrorism, nor do they reflect a thorough understanding of the nature of religious terrorism (Hoffman, 1995; Stern, 2001; Juergensmeyer, 2003; White, 2001).

Third, failure to understand the philosophy of radical Islam results in a policy that is directed towards military operations and the physical removal of terrorists through use of force (Scheuer 2006, 2008). Though there is a need for this type of action in the "War on Terror," the NSCT (2006) ignores the complex social nature of the threat. Building off of Sun Tzu's (2003) concept of knowing and understanding the enemy, most analysts believe that terrorism is either an intelligence problem or a concern for law enforcement (Hoffman & Sageman, 2008). The failure to understand the social roots of religious terrorism and militant Islam, in particular, has led to an overemphasis on military solutions to the terrorism problem.

Fourth, militant Sunni Islamic theology is complicated and tends to move along three differing axes. The so-called Wahhabi purification movement began in Arabia
Sayyid Qutb during tribal wars in the eighteenth century. Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792) launched a reform movement designed to reemphasize the unity of God. His followers, however, militarized the movement over the next two centuries, culminating in the "Wahhabism" of Osama bin Laden, the original leader of al Qaeda. The Salafiyya movement developed in the mid-nineteenth century with the writings of Rashid Rida (1865-1935), and it galvanized during the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood under Hassan al Banna (1906-1949) in Cairo in 1928. This philosophy guides Ayman al Zawahiri. The Deobandi movement of Central Asia also advocates militant interpretation of Islam. Baitullah Mehsud, heir apparent to the al Qaeda movement in the tribal areas of Pakistan, embraces this ideology. All three movements are grounded in one isomorphism; they embrace the theology of Sayyid Qutb. He is the common denominator in Wahhabi, Salafi, and Deobandi militancy (Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009).

Finally, Egypt plays a leading ideological role in the development of both Arab and Islamic thought (Gerner, & Schwedler, 2004). Al Azhar University houses the most influential school of theology in Sunni Islam and militants within the school base their religious interpretations on the writings of Sayyid Qutb (Gabriel, 2004). This enhances the spread of Qutbism because of Egypt's historical significance on the Arab world in general. Egypt was among the first to advocate a pan-Arab movement to unite all Arabs under the guidance of Gemal abd al Nasser. Egypt was also among the first to recognize Israel's right to exist in 1979 following the Camp David Accords in 1978, creating much tension throughout the Arab world. Additionally, Egypt is home to the Suez Canal which has revolutionized shipping between the East and the West, including easier access to the Arabian Peninsula and the Mediterranean (Gerner & Schwedler, 2004). Although there
are many influences on Islamic militancy, Egypt's role is one of dominance. Much like Egypt's role as one of the more powerful Arab states has been sustained over-time, so too has Qutb's influence on militant Islam which is fitting because Qutb was Egyptian. In fact, some may argue that his influence has not only been sustained as time has progressed since his execution in 1966, but has actually gained fervor and acceptance since, and continues to do so (Bozek & White, 2008).

Clearly, experts in terrorism believe that religion has become a dominant factor in international terrorism. In addition, militant interpretations of Islam have played a pivotal role in the development of modern religious violence, and some analysts would even argue it is the dominant force. American counterterrorist policies must take the importance of militant Islam into consideration, and officials need to understand the ideology behind movements such as Wahhabism, Salafism, and Deobandism. Finally, the role of Egyptian thought and influence is crucial to understanding the evolution of militant thought. All of these factors point to the necessity of examining the philosopher of modern jihad, Sayyid Qutb.
Chapter 2 – Review of the Literature

Introduction of the Literature

The issue of terrorism is extremely complex, and this factor complicates any type of literature review concerning militant Islam. In order to explain the importance of Qutb, his influence on militant Islam, and the necessity for understanding this influence from a policy perspective, this literature review will begin with a general analysis of some of the major works on terrorism and move toward specificity with an examination of English-language works about Sayyid Qutb. It will conclude with a discussion of recent literature on policy responses to militant Islam.

Each section of this chapter has a specific purpose, moving readers from general information to specific sources of literature concerning Qutb and counterterrorism policy. The first section will focus on the complications surrounding the definition of terrorism, and examine the necessity for accepting some type of common context. The next section moves from definitional problems to a general history of terrorism. Literature concerning the rise of religious terrorism within the historical context will be discussed after this section. This process makes the review of works on militant Islam and those on Qutb more comprehensible, and it clarifies debates about his influence on radical Islam. Finally, literature on counterterrorist policy will be discussed.

The process of moving from general information to specificity is warranted for several reasons. First, a discussion of Qutb’s works without either an understanding of terrorism or the rise of religious terrorism places Qutb’s influence completely out of context (Palmer & Palmer, 2007). Second, terrorism has changed over the course of history. Failure to review vacillating opinions about these changes, especially major
alterations after the Second World War, results in the inability to grasp the nature of organizational structures and psychological characterizations of individual terrorists (Sageman, 2004; Scheuer, 2008). Third, political terrorists behave differently than ordinary criminals, and the behavior of religious terrorists differs from their political counterparts (Bodrero, 2002; White, 1989, 2001). Changes in behavior have produced varied opinions about the psychological and social influence of militant theologians, including Qutb. Fourth, there is a body of literature debating the threat of militant Islam (Esposito, 1999, 2002; Lewis, 2003; Spencer, 2003). Fifth, the rise of modern terrorism and a shift toward religious violence has influenced modern warfare, and there is an emerging body of literature concerning the role of militant theology in this shift (Cebrowski & Gratska, 1998; Cebrowski & Barnett, 2003; Barnett, 2004; Gordon & Trainor, 2006; Ricks, 2006; White, 2009). It is possible to discuss the literature surrounding Qutb without discussing or understanding general literature; yet, when this happens it results in misguided counterterrorist policy (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). To address this issue, this chapter moves from generalities to specific discussions so that the nuances in debates about Qutb can be more fully elucidated.

Various Definitions of Terrorism

The abundance of definitions – in H.H.A. Cooper’s (1978, 2001) original terminology “Terrorism: The problem of the problem definition” – reveals a variety of approaches to terrorism. Such variations are important because in some definitional frameworks Qutb would not be labeled as a militant philosopher and the idea of religious terrorism would not exist. The wide array of definitions leads to confusion among scholars, politicians, and oftentimes sovereign nations, about the nature of modern
terrorism which clouds policy responses. For example, Zeidan (2006) articulated, “States cannot adequately counteract a phenomenon that they absolutely agree must be eliminated, as long as they fundamentally disagree on its very definition” (p.1). The main argument being that in order to effectively combat terrorism there needs to be a universal foundation in which to define the problem and Falkenrath (2000) clearly stated that “There is no agreed definition of terrorism or consistent system for categorizing it” (p. 6). Zeidan (2006) expanded by stating that, “While definitions of terrorism abound, most center on two elements: extreme fear and the use of violence for political purposes” (p. 1). Fear and violence are two of the key concepts that should be incorporated in all definitions of terrorism, as they are identified as being the inherent result of terrorist activity; however, more recent definitions expand to include a variety of other motivations aside from those that are political in nature.

The literature on definitions takes Zeidan’s conclusions into account, and it reveals three trends (Cooper, 2001; White, 2009). The first and most accepted trend seeks to define terrorism within normative academic, political, legal, and social structures (Schmid, 1992; Schmid & Jongman, 2005). A second school attempts to define terrorism through relativism (Hoffman, 2006). This leads to Ariel Merari’s (1985) infamous phrase “one man’s freedom fighter is another man’s terrorist.” Finally, there is a critical trend claiming that terrorism is the outcome of governmental policies and that it is not caused by small groups of violent people. Such groups are merely reacting to repressive governments (Herman 1983; Chomsky, 2002).

In the normative academic and governmental approach, two of the main components of terrorism are the use of violence to instill fear and doing so as a means of
influencing the politics of a particular society (Zeidan, 2006); however, political agendas are not the only ones being sought by terrorists. As the motives for partaking in terrorist activities evolve, so too must the definitions of terrorism. Long (2000) utilized the U.S. Department of the Army's (1990) definition of terrorism that “defines terrorism as ‘the unlawful use of – or threatened use of – force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives’” (p. 8). Bergesen and Lizardo (2004) similarly defined terrorism “as the premeditated use of violence by a nonstate group to obtain a political, religious, or social objective through fear or intimidation directed at a large audience” (p. 38). These definitions are unique as they incorporate the previously mentioned components used to define terrorism, but expand by identifying the various motivations that influence the tactic of terrorism to be implemented. Cohen (2002) also identified motivating factors that may guide terrorist action, but added that the motivating factors may be economic or social, along with political, religious, or ideological whereas Katzman (1998) failed to provide any specifics pertaining to motivations of terrorism, but suggested that three types of terrorism exist: state terrorism, state-assisted terrorism, and independent terrorism. State terrorism refers to a sovereign nation who publicly shows support and provides support to a particular terrorist organization. State-assisted terrorism is similar; however, in most instances, the state does not publicly announce its support of the organization. The state hopes to have plausible deniability and ensure that logistical support, in the form of money, supplies, and providing of a safe-haven cannot be traced back to the government of the state. Independent terrorism refers to an organization that is employing terror tactics, but operates without any support from a sovereign nation.
The definitions presented represent only a fraction of those that exist relating to terrorism; however, the notion that there is a lack of congruency in defining terrorism is compounded further when trying to comprehensively categorize terrorist acts.

It is evident that terrorism invokes fear and employs violence; however, that definition does not necessarily provide a comprehensive examination of what actually constitutes terrorism. Kielsgard (2006) expanded upon Zeidan's (2006) definition by suggesting that “terrorism utilizes unlawful methods for intimidation and the promotion of fear...” (p. 1); furthermore, “Terrorist acts include, but are not limited to, murder, kidnapping, and seriously injuring innocent parties, which all deny victims their human rights to life, liberty, and dignity” (p. 5). Not only does this definition include the fear component of terrorism, it also integrates the tactics that terrorists may use in their quest for creating fear and disorder. Another element is also presented in this definition. The mention of “unlawful methods” presents a criminality component to terrorism. This notion is furthered by Der Bagdasarian (1999) in presenting a more legalistic approach to defining terrorism. Der Bagdasarian referenced the League of Nations' (1937) Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism that described “… acts of terrorism as ‘criminal acts directed against a state intended or calculated to create a state of terror in minds of particular persons, or a group of persons or the general public’” (p. 2). Again the criminal aspect of terrorism is introduced. According to these definitions, not only is terrorism meant to instill fear, but it is criminal in nature.

The definition of terrorism is further complicated by the attempts to incorporate into the definition the aspirations of those who employ terrorist tactics. Crenshaw (1997) suggested that terrorists seek gains beyond instilling fear in stating that:
Much terrorism violence is aimed specifically at influencing not so much
government decision makers or leaders of governments, but civilian populations:
to have a psychological effect on that audience in the hopes that they will pressure
governments into either submitting or overreacting. (p. 2)
The basic presumption being that terrorism is used as a tool to illicit a negative response
from either the public or a government. This definition contains the element of fear;
however, the terrorist act is used to instill fear for the purpose of reaching a different
outcome: public pressure to entice a government response. The intent behind an act that
meets the parameters of this definition would be to create chaos and panic within a given
society leading to the government either giving into the demands of the terrorists, or
responding in such a way that would create an unfavorable image of the government. No
matter what the outcome, any creation of a perception of fear that elicits a reaction is a
success for the terror group.

The literature on the normative academic and governmental approach has resulted
in a comprehensive synthesis of definitions (Weinberg, Pedahzur, & Hirsch-Hoefler,
combing the elements of dozens of differing definitions into a single comprehensive
approach he called “The Academic Consensus Definition.” White (2009) utilized
Schmid’s (1992) definition that reads:

Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by
(semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or
political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of
violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are
generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought. (p.12)

The main elements of this definition attempt to incorporate important components of numerous other definitions pertaining to terrorism into one large, comprehensive definition describing what actually constitutes terrorism.

While there are problems with the normative approach and even debates about the efficacy of Schmid’s (1992) comprehensive approach, religious militancy employing violence against innocent people for political purposes is terrorism within this context. The second approach, relativism, has scant literature, but little variance of opinion. Crenshaw (1983) conveyed that terrorism is defined by perspective. People who apply the relative definition of terrorism favor violence when they agree with the political position of the violent group. Although she rejected this position, stating that violence against innocent targets falls within the normative approach, she acknowledged the political popularity of such an approach. Merari (1985) coined the phrase “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” by describing the actions of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, a Jewish terrorist group fighting for the creation of Israel within British-occupied Palestine. Members of the Irgun were called freedom fighters when they attacked the
Palestinians and British, but members of Yasser Arafat’s Fatah were terrorists when they attacked Israelis twenty years later (Smith, 2001). Relativism depends on perspective.

The literature concerning the definition from the relativistic approach may be scarce, but it could be comprehensive if it were examined logically. If the definition is relativistic, then one could feasibly review all of the literature regarding political violence. Those who favor Qutb’s call to militancy would find his writing inspirational. Those who reject his writing would call him a terrorist. Laqueur (1999) concluded that such debates fill academic journals and provide material for conferences; yet, they fail to add anything of substance to the issue of understanding terrorism. Qutb’s influence and the meaning of his work are lost in relativism.

The literature on government repression falls into a similar category; however, it gains relevance when analyzed in conjunction with Qutb’s own writing. As will be demonstrated in the section on the literature on Qutb, the Egyptian militant felt that repression justified Islamic violence. On the one hand, this seems to be a version of relativism. On the other hand, Qutb, and those he continues to influence, see it as validation for their actions. Herman (1983) championed this idea. According to this perspective, Western governments, particularly the United States, are viewed by other groups around the world as being responsible for far more tragic human rights violations than those who are presently characterized as being “terrorists.” This is accomplished through the arming and training of militaries around the world who are responsible for violently degrading and demoralizing their own citizens. Similarly, Chomsky (2002) explained that an act of terrorism evokes a response from the victimized party. The basis for a response generally focuses around morality. It is immoral to attack innocent people;
yet, in most instances, governments are willing to cast aside their own morality in their response to the act of terrorism. If an act is condoned by the United States, it is not an act of terror because the United States is in the position of high morality; yet, a similar act against the United States is an act of terror because it is viewed as an act against morality. Qutb and his followers agree that his philosophy, as it adheres to their interpretation of Islam, is the moral framework of society and the actions that they perceive to be against Islam are immoral acts of terror against innocent Muslims.

Benjamin and Simon (2002) concluded that the school favoring government repression is important because of its influence on counterterrorist policy. Oftentimes the possibility that acts of terror may result from government repression is ignored. The result is the creation of counterterrorism policy that is misguided, placing sole emphasis on use of conventional military tactics to address an enemy whose strongest asset is its unconventionality.

The literature on definitions reveals three trends: normative, relative, and government repression. Modern terrorism and religious violence are best understood within the normative approach (Hoffman, 2006; Palmer & Palmer, 2007; White, 2009). A review of the literature on the history of terrorism helps to explain why, and it puts the writings and influence of Qutb into perspective.

*Terrorism in Historical Literature*

The literature pertaining to terrorism begins to address the inherent complex nature of terrorism itself. History has shown that terrorism and terrorist tactics are evolutionary and that they have changed dramatically from those employed during the time of the Crusaders. The literature fails to adequately address the importance and
growing need to understand the complex belief system that guides terrorists and how this knowledge can be used as a tool to more effectively counter terrorism. Terrorism today now incorporates the use of bombs and bullets as opposed to use of the sword; it focuses on religious survival and the conquest of evil as opposed to military conquest for land and resources. As the tactics employed have evolved, so too have the motivations, and justifications for terrorist acts. Much like the definition of terrorism, research shows that the history of terrorism is relatively complex and fragmented (Rapoport, 1988; Hoffman, 1995, 2006; White, 2009).

In attempting to explore the history of terrorism it is important to take into account that the very nature of terrorism has evolved since World War II. Hoffman (1995, 2006) suggested that after World War II, terrorism was most notably centered on anti-colonial violence utilizing guerilla tactics; however, a shift occurred where terrorism became driven by ideological influences. Religion became the dominating force behind what is called modern terrorism shortly after the emergence of Hezbollah, and later Hamas, in the areas in and surrounding Palestine (Rapoport, 1988, 2003; Marty & Appleby, 1991-1995; Rubin & Rubin, 2002; Jenkins, 2006; White, 2006; Palmer & Palmer, 2007). In order to fully understand modern terrorism it is crucial to examine both the foundations of terrorism in general that provided the framework for the present era of religious terrorism, most notably, terrorism rooted in the Islamic tradition.

Though, at the time, there was no recognition of terrorist groups or terrorist acts; the history of terrorism can be traced back to the first century and is evidenced by Long's (2000) analysis of the history of terrorism. He stated that:
Millenarian groups like the Jewish sect called Zealots, whose activities against the Roman Empire 'brought about two millennia of exile,' recorded from 66-70 AD. The Assassins (Nizari), Islam’s ‘best known holy terrorists,’ attempted to purify Islam for the coming of the Madhi or Messiah from 1090 to 1275. Furthermore, the First Crusade initiated by Urban II in 1095 was only the beginning of a ‘righteous war against the infidel’ that perpetrated irrefutable acts of holy terror for several years. All of these groups shared the common doctrine of theological justification to commit acts of terror in the name of God. (Long, 2000, p. 2)

These groups and acts pre-date the formal recognition of terrorism which, according to Cohen (2002), “is of French origin and is believed to have been used in 1798 when terrorism was explicitly identified with the ‘reign of terror’ of the French Revolution” (p. 3). Kastenberg (2003) supports Cohen’s claim and noted that “The term ‘terrorism’ is more than two centuries old” (p. 6). This period following the French Revolution has been classified as the period of “modern terrorism” (Nafziger, 2002 p. 5); however, Rapoport (2003) suggested that “Modern terror began in Russia in the 1880’s, and within a decade appeared in Western Europe, the Balkans, and Asia” (p. 1); however, he also argued that terrorism as evolved in waves that reflect the general course of history around the world (Rapoport, 1988). Hoffman (1995, 2006) described the history of terrorism similarly arguing that terrorism itself has persisted in phases and the current phase is religious terrorism. Though there are many works on the history of terrorism, the ideas presented by both Rapoport (1988) and Hoffman (1995, 2006) most accurately describe the emergent nature of religious terrorism from the post World War II era to the present.
and the literature relating to religious terrorism is best understood within these same contexts.

*Literature on Religious Terrorism*

The ability to evolve with the changing times has allowed for the survivability of terrorist tactics, making terrorism a viable option for those seeking to institute some level of reform without having access to the resources required to achieve the same level of change through legitimate, conventional means. Though there is an abundance of literature on terrorism in general, very few have explored the nature of the religious terrorist. To accomplish their objectives, terrorists have employed various tactics for various purposes. Today, humanity is faced with a unique type of terrorist, a religious terrorist (Hoffman, 1995, 2006; Rapoport, 1988; Scheuer, 2006; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). Hayden (2006) suggested that “The war against terror is not fought just on battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan but necessarily is concerned with fighting an ideology. And unlike ideologies the United States has fought in the past – communism, fascism, Nazism – Islamic extremism is inextricably attached to religion” (p. 2). Those partaking in religious-based terrorism employ tactics and an ideology that has no standard for comparison. Religious terrorism is unique in that it has attached religious justification to acts that historically have been used to obtain political objectives (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; Kepel, 2002; Laqueur, 2003; Combating Terrorism Center, 2006; White, 2006; Scheuer, 2006, 2008; DeLong-Bas, 2008; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). Crenshaw (2000) pointed out that “the ‘old’ terrorists sought short-term political power through revolution, national liberation, or secession, the ‘new’ terrorists seek to transform the world” (p. 411). In other words, political change is no longer the sole goal of terrorist
activities. In the past, terrorists were often categorized as freedom fighters, but escape from oppression may not be the primary goal of the religious terrorist (Crenshaw, 1983; Herman 1983; Merari, 1985; Chomsky, 2002). Cohen (2002) disclosed that the "[...] religious terrorists may focus their aims on a worldwide quest for religious hegemony rather than on specific political points" (p. 4). Creation of a unified social structure that adheres to specific religious principles is the goal of the religious terrorist. Their aim is not political, nor is it localized. No longer is changing the immediate political structure of a specific state central to the terrorist organization; on the contrary, central to the religious terrorist is global change subscribing to the specific beliefs of the religious group.

The limited literature pertaining to terrorism attempts to identify the concept that religious terrorists are not fighting a war that they feel is necessary to obtain power, they are fighting a war that they feel is necessary for the survival of humankind. Juergensmeyer (1996) suggested that "acts of religious terrorism are justified as part of a larger spiritual struggle, a war between the forces of good and evil that morally sanctions violence not for purposes of political power, but for the triumph of good itself" (p. 1). This end has led to the justification of a variety of means. "Hope of a supernatural reward makes 'religious' terrorists indifferent toward their own lives; they are prepared to die because they are persuaded God will reward their sacrifice with eternal life" (Ferrari, 2004, p. 1). Different from any other enemy in the past, religious terrorists do not fear death, but embrace it. They are immortalized in death as their actions are revered as exemplifying complete and utter devotion to the will of God. Religious terrorists are motivated by the promise of a reward after death for fulfilling what they perceive to be
their “divine duty” (Cohen, 2002, p. 11). Religious terrorists feel that they do not have a choice in committing their acts of terror; it is a duty which has been placed on their shoulders by God. Failing to partake in the struggle against those they feel threaten their very existence would not only be wrong, but would be an act of blasphemy. Again, the religious component of terrorism creates an unrelenting commitment to partake in heinous acts for the purpose of obtaining some sort of large scale societal change (Kastenberg, 2004). These acts have become more frequent and more violent in recent times as religious terrorists’ unwavering commitment to the survival of their ideology supersedes their regard for life.

As mentioned earlier, the goal of religious terrorists is to preserve their way of life by violently ridding the world of those they perceive as threats to humanity. Parachini (2000), in his review of Laqueur (2000), disseminated that:

In the 1990s, terrorist acts took on a decidedly less political, more indiscriminate and violent character. The World Trade Center in New York, the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma, the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack, and the recent bombings of American embassies in Africa all illustrate a disturbing new trend. (p. 164)

With each passing attack, more and more people are falling victim to terrorist action and history shows that the evolution of terrorism is leading to acts that are both more violent and less predictable (Lewis, 2003; Goldschmidt, 2002; Rapoport, 2003; Spencer, 2003; White, 2003). The September 11, 2001 attacks are a prime example of the evolutionary nature of terrorism, which in more recent times has consisted of religiously motivated Islamic militants. Mahalingam (2004) proposed:
The history of militant Islamic fundamentalism movements suggests that other variants will appear regardless of a particular leader or organization, and will continue, unless challenged and discredited, to be a potent political force within the Islamic world. Moreover, because of their intense ideological commitment, fundamentalist groups will continue to confront Western and U.S. interests. The scale and audacity of the September 11th attacks will be the barometer by which future militant Islamic fundamentalist activity is measured. (p. 2)

In other words, the nature of terrorism will continue to evolve, as will the tactics employed by terrorists. As time progresses terrorists are becoming more and more violent and desperate. Without an effective response, the impending result of this type of terrorism would ultimately lead to more death and despair.

The literature explored the issue of religious terrorism by summarily describing the level of violence terrorists are capable of achieving to facilitate their goals. Long (2000) states that “The combination of the availability of lethal resources and the recent increase in the number of fatalities, primarily perpetrated by religiously inspired terrorists, makes terrorism one of the most significant transnational problems facing governments today” (p. 2). Terrorism is not a problem for one nation; it is a problem that threatens all of humankind around the globe, as the goal of religious terror groups is to enact global change. It is imperative to recognize that all religions have adherents who subscribe to extreme beliefs and focus should not be limited to only Islamic groups. Jews, Christians, Catholics, and Protestants have at one time or another had constituents who subscribed to extremist thought and the very nature of religion facilitates this evolution from tolerance and peace, to aggression and torment. Stern (2003) described that “Religious terrorism
arises from pain and loss and from impatience with a God who is slow to respond to our plight. [...] It is about purifying the world. The way forward is clear: Kill or be killed. Kill and be rewarded in heaven. Kill and the messiah will come” (p. xi). Each individual is capable of formulating their own interpretations of their religion and using it to justify violence to achieve a perceived need for change. Kastenberg (2003) expanded upon this notion in stating that “Each major world religion potentially has a core constituency of possible terrorist groups. However, since World War II, fundamentalist Islamic movements emerged at the forefront of state-sponsored terrorism” (p. 6). Not only is terrorism described as a real threat to governments around the world, religion is what is fueling the violence.

Literature on Militant Islam

Keeping definitional, historical, and contextual issues in mind, the literature specifically relating to militant Islam revealed that there are a variety of matters that should be explored when examining Islamic militancy. First, the potential for increased violence is great, especially from Islamic-based terrorist groups (Stern, 2001, 2003; Kepel, 2002; Juergensmeyer, 2003; Laqueur, 2003). This trend is evident in Egypt, which has been the locality of numerous terrorist attacks, most of which can be attributed to religious-based Islamic militancy.

From the late 1970s to the mid-1990s, militants killed dozens of foreign tourists, bombed banks, tour buses, and a café in a five-star Cairo hotel, assassinated cabinet ministers, attempted to kill President Mubarak Himself (Egypt’s current president) and carried out the bloodiest massacre in modern Egyptian history in
the Pharaonic town of Luxor, in November 1997. Fifty-eight foreign tourists and
four Egyptians were killed, some hacked to death with knives (Abdo, 2000, p. 5).
Those perpetrating these acts call themselves Muslims and feel it is their religious duty to
purify the world for God. In their eyes they are doing God’s work; hence, their actions
are just (Herman, 1983; Merari, 1985; Chomsky, 2002; Hoffman, 2006).

Second, the literature relating to militant Islam seems to convey an idea that
perception is everything. Stern (2003) stated that “What is so deeply painful about
terrorism is that our enemies, whom we see as evil, view themselves as saints and martyrs.
As such, religious terrorism is more than a threat to national security. It is psychological
and spiritual warfare, requiring a psychologically and spiritually informed response” (p.
xxviii). In regards to religious terrorism and Islamic militancy, perception seems to be
central to both the terrorists themselves, and those tasked with countering terrorism.
Scheuer’s (2006) analysis of Murray (1997) revealed that “America’s defense is not
optimal, because its leaders are ‘wholly disconnected from what others think, want, and
can do’ and refuse to accept that ‘[w]hat matters most in war is what is in the mind of
one’s enemies, from command post to battlefield points-of-contact’” (p. 20). Though the
U.S. is militarily responding to terror networks around the world, terror operations have
only been interrupted, not defeated, since the beliefs governing acts of terror are not fully
understood (Scheuer, 2006, 2008; White, 2009).

Third, the literature attempts to explain the sophistication needed to respond to
Islamic militancy, while at the same time revealing some of its core tenets. Scheuer
(2006) revealed that the United States creates a problem for counterterrorism operations
in labeling various groups and leaders as terrorists as it limits how the problem of terrorism is perceived (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). Scheuer (2006) stated that:

When the U.S. and other Western leaders describe bin Laden as a terrorist problem, not a religious issue, they mislead their publics. By doing so, they fail to teach their listeners that bin Laden is far more than a run-of-the-mill terrorist, that he is, rather, a multitalented Muslim leader who claims to be motivated by his love for God and his fellow Muslims and has acted in a manner he believes is prescribed by laws given by that God and explained and amplified by God’s messenger, the Prophet Muhammed. (p. 19)

The idea being portrayed is that the threat from Islamic militants is one of sophistication and complexity; therefore, the response should be reflective of the problem (Tzu, 2003; Sageman, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Palmer & Palmer, 2007). The 9/11 Commission (2004) reported that “… the enemy is not just ‘terrorism,’ some generic evil. This vagueness blurs the strategy. The catastrophic threat at this moment in history is more specific. It is the threat posed by Islamist terrorism – especially the al Qaeda network, its affiliates, and its ideology” (p. 362). Though the literature does not specifically recommend what should be done, it does begin to bring to light a basic understanding of the nature of Islamic militancy and some of the issues of responding to this threat. Peters (1998), of the Washington Post, was noted as saying that “Too often we forget that if the terrorist has any outstanding quality besides vengefulness and cunning, it is patience; he may strike back next week, next month, or next year” (p. C1). Scheuer (2006) further explained stating that “… the truth lies in the enemy’s mouth when he says the motivation for attacking America comes from a belief that U.S. policy threatens Islam’s
survival. This fact makes America’s Islamist enemies infinitely more lethal, patient, and enduring than a foe who is motivated simply by hate for elections, R-rated movies, and gender equality” (p. 296). Not only is the threat more complicated than perceived, it is founded by a belief that is not entirely understood by those responsible for initiating policy (NSCT, 2006, Bozek & White, 2008).

It is evident how vital a role understanding religious terrorism, and more specifically, Islamic militancy, plays in actually responding to terrorism; however, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of terrorism, it is necessary to examine those who are responsible for the development of the belief system. Again, the literature exposed the idea that Islamic militants view themselves as liberators of the Muslim faith and humanity. Though the literature divulges what militants are and what they do, it does not reveal the true nature of why they behave in the manner in which they do. This understanding can only be obtained through analysis of Sayyid Qutb (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; Kepel, 2002; Laqueur, 2003; Haneef, 2004; Musallam, 2005; Combating Terrorism Center, 2006; White, 2006; DeLong-Bas, 2008; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009).

Literature on Sayyid Qutb

The literature on militant Islam points to Sayyid Qutb as being influential in the development of militant Islamic ideology. Scheuer (2006) concluded that Qutb is among the most influential militant Islamic theologians whose militant philosophy stems from his experiences in the United States and his belief that the West is responsible for abolishing all sense of morality and value among mankind. Similarly, Laqueur (2003) stated that Qutb’s influence on Islamic militancy is far reaching and he attributes Qutb’s philosophy to being the prominent founding doctrine of both the Jihad Group and
Gama’a Islamiyya, which are two notorious Egyptian terror organizations in existence today.

Though Sayyid Qutb was an Egyptian Islamic philosopher, his works are not limited only to Egypt and Egyptian-based terror groups. The examined literature provides insight into the global acceptance of Qutb’s philosophy among Islamic militants. White (2006) suggested that Qutb’s works are among the most influential works read by the most prominent figures associated with present day terrorism, including Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden was once a student of Mohammed Qutb, Sayyid Qutb’s brother and, after having been exposed to Sayyid’s militant philosophy of Islam, “… bin Laden left the nonviolent Wahhabism of the Saudi royal family and turned toward Qutb’s philosophy” (White, 2006, p. 108). In reference to Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri becoming the leaders of the al Qaeda organization, White (2006) also pointed out that they did so according to the philosophy of Sayyid Qutb (p. 110). The CTC (2006a) supported White’s (2006) claim in describing Zawahiri, who works in cooperation with Osama bin Laden as leader of al Qaeda, as an “ardent” subscriber to Qutb’s teachings (p. 54). The influence of Qutb is further perplexed when all of his literary works are introduced. The CTC (2006b) ranked Milestones, one of Qutb’s works, as being one of the most popular works read on the former radical Islamic website Tawhed.ws (p. 18). White (2006) also revealed that “The al Qaeda manual (al Qaeda, n.d.) cites Qutb as a source of inspiration” (p. 105). In addition to being cited within the al Qaeda manual, the CTC (2006b) reported that Sayyid Qutb is, on average, cited 8.7% of the time by the following: al-Akhir (3.2%), `Abd al-Rahman (0.9%), Abu Basir al-Tartusi (25%), al-Ansari (12.5%), al-Maqdisi (7.1%), and al-Sa’idi (4.0%). All of whom

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1 The website Tawhed.ws has been removed from the internet server which hosted it.
have been identified by the CTC of the United States Military Academy as ascribing to, and professing, militant ideological thought along with making reference to Qutb’s ideological framework (Combating Terrorism Center, 2006b). Scheuer (2008) concluded that one of the most important things to remember about modern-day Islamic militancy is that it is not driven by people, but by texts, and the messages conveyed in these texts are those developed by Qutb.

Li terature on Responding to Terrorism

Understanding the literature pertaining to the response to terrorism is best accomplished after thorough examination of literature explaining the definitional, historical, and contextual nature of terrorism in general and the complex nature of militant Islam. There are a variety of issues explained by the literature pertaining to the task of responding to terrorism, all of which stem from similar definitional, historical, and contextual concerns already discussed.

First, the literature identified the variation that exists in defining terrorism as a challenge to creating counterterrorism policy. Nafziger (2002) concluded that “One problem in defining terrorism is the sheer diversity of objectives and characteristics we associate with terrorism, including religious vendettas, social revolution, transnational revolution, national self-determination, and even genocide” (p. 5). According to the literature, constructing sound counterterrorism policy requires that policymakers create a working definition of what constitutes terrorism. Falkenrath (2000) mentioned that “There is no agreed definition of terrorism or consistent system for categorizing it” (p. 6). In other words, defining terrorism needs to be approached from a legalistic perspective that is communicated and understood globally. White (2003) concluded that there are
benefits to creating a legal definition of terrorism. He argued that legal definitions are constructed with specific actions in mind that would allow law enforcement and the intelligence community to effectively address the terrorism problem. The United Kingdom, Spain, and Germany have already adopted legal definitions of terrorism and it is argued that constructing a legal framework for counterterrorism policy would better suit the long-term goal of terrorism prevention (White, 2003). Nevertheless, White (2003) cautioned against relying solely on a legal definition because it fails to address the varying motivations and intentions of terror groups, which is important in formulating an effective response.

Second, the very nature of terrorism, especially terrorism rooted in Islamic militancy, is extremely complex which exacerbates the difficulty in trying to develop a response. Ferrari (2004) explained, “To fight terrorism, it is essential to understand the terrorists’ motivations” (p. 1). One of the major difficulties is that there are significant disparities between the acts of conventional warfare and terrorism as well as conventional soldiers and terrorists. Religious terrorists are defending an ideal, not a specific territory, which creates an environment that may not lend itself well to the use of conventional military tactics (Cohen, 2002; Ferrari, 2004). Pillar (2001) suggested that policy must directly reflect the nature of terrorism itself. He argued that adaptability needs to be incorporated into counterterrorism foreign policy with the understanding that “...terrorism cannot be ‘defeated’ – only reduced, attenuated, and to some degree controlled” (p.218).

Third, the literature exposed a wide array of counterterrorism policy objectives for the United States and the global community. Long (2000) argued that not enough
attention is given to the terrorism problem and first and foremost, counterterrorism needs to be made a national priority, which includes developing sound responses to the terrorism threat through the creation of achievable goals and objectives. Malvesti (2002) disseminated that counterterrorism efforts should be directed at achieving two main goals, prevention and holding those responsible for acts of terror liable for the atrocities they commit. According to Presidential Directive 39 (1995) “It is the policy of the United States to deter, defeat and respond vigorously to all terrorist attacks on our territory and against our citizens, or facilities, whether they occur domestically, in international waters or airspace or on foreign territory” (p. 1). These policy objectives were also endorsed by Deutch (1997) who reiterated that emphasis should be placed on the prevention of terrorist acts through utilizing both defensive and offensive procedures, along with the use of the judicial branch of government for prosecution of terrorist actors. Former FBI Director Freeh (1997) reaffirmed the aforementioned policy objectives in his statement to the Senate Appropriations Committee Hearing on Counterterrorism where he proposed that:

There are four major cornerstones through which the government’s policy on terrorism is to be implemented. These are: To reduce the vulnerabilities of the United States to terrorism; to deter terrorist acts before they occur, including apprehension and punishment of terrorists and management of the consequences of terrorist acts; and to develop effective capabilities [to] address the threat posed by nuclear, chemical, or biological materials or weapons (p. 2).
Though the literature illustrated that effective counterterrorism policy should be operationally configured to meet the abovementioned goals and objectives, it also proposed other criterion that is elemental to the effectiveness of counterterrorism policy.

To date, the United States has placed great emphasis on militaristic responses to terrorism resulting from public outcry for immediate results in the “War on Terror;” however, Malvesti (2002) proposed that the nature of the United States’ response to terrorism must shift and counterterrorism efforts be directed towards “…diplomatic engagement of allies, law enforcement action, and economic measures aimed at the disruption of terrorist financial networks” (p. 1). According to Nafziger (2002) and O’Connor (2002) the shift in response should not only take place in the United States, but among the global counterterrorism community. They agreed that:

When we turn from homeland security to initiatives abroad against terrorism, it is clear how much we will have to depend on international cooperation. It is also clear … that ‘[t]he power of international cooperation and understanding is greater than the obstacles we face.’ But it is clear how little we have really cooperated in addressing the root causes of terrorism and how much catching up we have to do – on both domestic and international fronts – to resume a position of constructive leadership in the global community. (Nafziger, 2002, p. 4)

Each and every government and government agency has access to different sources of information relating to terror groups. Deutch and Smith (2002) explained that “The security services of friendly nations are important sources of information for U.S. intelligence; they know their neighborhoods and have access that U.S. agencies do not” (p. 65). Deutch (1997) specified that “Future success requires greater exchange of
information on threats, adoption of common policies on how to negotiate with terrorists and their supporters, and common action to find and dismantle terrorist organizations” (p. 21).

In addition to discussing the need for different tactics to address terrorism and international cooperation, Deutch and Smith (2002) exposed the importance of human intelligence and infiltration of terror groups, but do so with the understanding that “It takes a long time to build a team of experts who understand the language, culture, politics, society, and economic circumstances surrounding terrorist groups” (p. 66); however, as Falkenrath (2000) suggested, “… the policy relevance of terrorism studies derives from the insight they can furnish on the motivations, modus operandi, strategies, tactics, and limitations of terrorist movements in general” (p. 13). Understanding what the terrorists believe and insight into their true motivations, beliefs, and intentions creates a strategically significant advantage for counterterrorism efforts. In striving to facilitate the goal of terrorism prevention, the United States Military Academy’s Combating Terrorism Center (2006a) proposed that a vital component of long-term counterterrorism policy was to “Understand and exploit the ideological breaks in the movement” (p. 53) and the movement of present-day Islamic militancy is rooted in the works of Qutb (Scheuer, 2006; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). Comprehensive examination of the beliefs of specific terrorists can lead to the possible recognition of dissent within a terrorist organization. These sources of tension can then be exploited as a means of creating internal conflicts within the group that could potentially lead to the collapse, or dissolution of the terrorist organization (Combating Terrorism Center, 2006a, p. 53).
Fourth, the literature relating to counterterrorism policy introduced the debated paradox relating to the balancing of civil liberties and the security of citizens. Ferrari (2004) cautioned that policymakers must try to address security issues resulting from specific religious-terror groups without alienating the public, or citizens, who may peacefully worship the same religion the extremists claim to represent while at the same time upholding the privacy provisions of the United States Constitution.

Finally, building on the challenges already mentioned, literature presented by the U. S. State Department (2007) has outlined other challenges pertaining to counterterrorism operations. Various sources of instability in the Middle East region which include the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the issue of Iran and Syria sponsoring terrorism, the war between Israel and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, and the constant rift between Palestine and Israel, all add to the challenge of creating accepted and effective foreign policy (Pillar, 2001; Smith, 2001; Scheuer, 2008).

**Conclusion of the Literature**

Comprehension of Qutb and the importance of his impact on present-day Islamic militancy are best understood only after thorough examination of the definitional, historical, and contextual background of terrorism and its evolution into Islamic militancy. Examination of counterterrorism policy was also important as it evidenced the need to explore the teachings of Qutb for the purpose of understanding the driving force behind today’s terror movement that is rooted in Islamic militancy. Themes from this literature suggest that modern day terrorists are not struggling to obtain political freedom or to liberate their homeland. They are in a struggle of survival. They feel that the sanctity of humanity is on the verge of extinction and they are willing to do whatever is necessary to
ensure the survival of humankind. The religious terrorists perceive cleansing the mortal world of its impurities through violent action as their sacred duty, a duty meant to mold this world according to God’s will.

The literature also shows that religious ideology is the unifying catalyst that perpetuates the violence of these “modern terrorist” groups. They adamantly believe that they are ridding the world of its impurities in accordance to God’s will. The only way for the development and implementation of effective counterterrorism policy is to first and foremost understand what constitutes terrorism, who the terrorists are, what they are capable of, and most importantly, what compels their actions. Before this can be achieved, it is imperative that there exists a sound definition of what constitutes terrorism, analysis of past practice and the history of terrorism as well as a fervent understanding of the ideological philosophy, and philosophers, which thrusts the religiously motivated terrorist into action. It can be assured that the failure to address terrorism will continue to result in death and despair as religion continues to guide actions of desperation.

Policymakers need to understand that unless fully understood and addressed, this trend in terrorism will continue to evolve and threaten the existence of civilized society. The war strategist Sun Tzu’s (2003) philosophy of warfare accurately describes the present conflict the West faces today against militant Islam as he stresses the importance of understanding the enemy one faces. He stated that “If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle” (p.17). In order to fully know the enemy that employs terrorist tactics and justifies their actions with Islam, it is important
to examine the works of Sayyid Qutb to identify their meanings and impacts on present-day Islamic militancy. Unfortunately, Qutb's influence did not perish with his execution in 1966 and it can be argued that his effects on Islamic militants will not wane until those tasked with countering Islamic terrorism both recognize and understand why Qutb's philosophy continues to stimulate action in the name of God. The purpose of this thesis is to add to the body of knowledge relating to Islamic militancy by comprehensively examining and presenting the militant philosophy evident in the works of Sayyid Qutb.
Chapter 3 – Methodology

Research Questions

In light of the current global climate stemming from terrorism and the reported influence of Qutb’s philosophy, the purpose of this study is to describe a primary source of militant Islamic ideology. This thesis employs an historical-descriptive methodology, coupled with content analysis, to examine the ideology of a salient militant Islamic thinker in an attempt to bring to light the true belief system governing Islamic militants for the purpose of informing policy. The overall purpose of this research is three faceted. This research will:

1. Examine selected works of Qutb to determine the frequency of his use of militant language and how his usage of militant language relates to his overall ideology;
2. Place Qutb’s writings into historical, social, and political contexts while at the same time examining if, and how, they are influencing militants today; and
3. Identify the importance of understanding the beliefs conveyed by Qutb for the purpose of informing counterterrorism policy.

The following research will demonstrate the need to comprehensively understand the teachings of Sayyid Qutb for the purpose of informing policymakers and the policies that govern the actions of law enforcement and the intelligence community in their fight against terrorism that is rooted in Islamic thought.

Sample

The literature portrays an abundance of information pertaining to terrorism, religious terrorism, and counterterrorism policy. The literature also evidenced the
importance and influence of Sayyid Qutb, but failed to provide any further insight into what his philosophy actually represents. In an effort to gain a better understanding of the influence of Qutb, this thesis will examine the literary works cited most frequently by religious terrorism experts. These works include: *al-‘Adalat al-Ijtima‘yya fi ‘l-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam), *Fi Zilal al-Qur‘an* (In the Shade of the Quran), and *Ma‘alim fi ‘t-Tariq* (Milestones). These works were chosen because they have been revered as the most influential of Qutb’s works. Qutb is believed to have published approximately 25 literary works; however, most are not available for sale or purchase. Ironically, the works being used have been translated into English from their original language of Arabic. There is an extremely negative stigma attached to his works as many of them have been outlawed in various Arab countries such as Egypt, where Qutb spent most of his life. While using translated texts could affect the internal validity of the research as some Arabic words have several meanings, uses, and translations, the gains that could result from the examination of these texts, whether in English or Arabic, far exceed the minor disparities that may have existed from being translated from the language in which they were originally composed.

*Research Design & Concepts*

As a means to better understand militant Islam for the purpose of formulating better informed counterterrorism policy, the principle investigator employed an historical-descriptive analysis methodology to assess the contexts in which Sayyid Qutb’s ideological premise was grounded. The argument being that the best predictor of future behavior is past practice; furthermore, augmenting the historical analysis is a content analysis aimed at determining the inherent messages of Qutb’s works and their militant
nature. To achieve this goal, the researcher analyzed and combed through Qutb’s texts for any language that could be perceived as language that would incite or promote the use of violence and provided religious justification for the use of violence. Religious justification refers to Qutb’s use of passages from the Quran, Islam’s holy book, to support his claim of the need for violent action against those he described as threats to Islam. To minimize researcher bias in analyzing Qutb’s works, conclusions based on his work were supplemented with passages directly from his texts. This process, as a whole, is an accepted one as it is currently employed by the United States Military Academy’s Combating Terrorism Center; however, their work has yet to examine the full breadth of Qutb’s influence.

Based on the definitions, terminology, and analysis of the frequency of militant terminology used by Qutb, further analysis was conducted in order to place the writings and doctrines of Sayyid Qutb into historical, political, and social context. This was important as it provided greater insight into the conditions that existed when Qutb’s ideology came into fruition. After analyzing the context in which these texts were written, the principle investigator explored the various messages conveyed through the texts as well as attempted to discover what exactly the texts are communicating to religious militants today.

Once the messages were uncovered, the researcher compared current U.S. counterterrorism policy to the ideology being conveyed through Qutb’s works. The goal was to find areas where counterterrorism policy may, or may not accurately reflect the current threat from Islamic militancy. Using this information, the researcher was then able to make policy recommendations that could be utilized, in conjunction with other
resources, as a tool in pre-incident planning and prevention of terrorist attacks sought to be carried out by Islamic militants.

Research Subjects

The only human subject involved in any aspect of the research was the principle investigator, a Master of Science candidate of the School of Criminal Justice at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was determined that it was not possible, or feasible, to safely and effectively interview suspected Islamic militant ideologists and philosophers; therefore, the researcher chose to analyze the literary works of a known militant Islamic ideologist. As a result, there is no chance of harm coming to any living human subject, which is further enhanced by the fact that the author of the works being examined was executed by the Egyptian government in 1966. Due to the fact that Qutb was executed such a long time ago, only his published works were being utilized by the researcher, and the researcher’s choice to employ an historical-descriptive analysis and content analysis research design, the faculty thesis advisor and the researcher were able to conclude that obtaining approval from Grand Valley State University’s Human Research Review Committee was not necessary.

In order to ensure no cultural harm comes to the Muslim population, the researcher saw fit to reiterate throughout his study that the ideas being analyzed in Qutb’s works do not reflect the attitudes of the majority of Muslims around the world. This is important as cultural and religious awareness and sensitivity should be observed in an age when the average citizen may not fully understand Islam, or the Arabic culture.
Chapter 4 – Data and Analysis

Introduction to Data and Analysis

One of the most accurate ways to effectively examine the current trends and teachings of an ideology that has survived some 40 plus years is to explore the conditions that led to its fruition. Exploration of Qutb’s life begins and ends in Egypt; however, in death, his message has spread the expanse of the globe (Sageman, 2004; Scheuer, 2006; DeLong-Bas, 2008; White, 2009). In attempting to explain the militant Islamic philosophy of Sayyid Qutb, it is imperative to describe the social, political, and historical conditions that existed which facilitated the radicalization of one man’s beliefs into a guiding force for present day Islamic militants.

Though there are many different types of Islamist groups within Egypt, including, but not limited to the Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian Islamic Jihad (The Jihad Group), and Al-Gama’a al-Islamiyya (Islamic Group), all have similar intentions, political or religious reform in some way or another (Abdo, 2000; Kepel, 2002; Stern, 2003). Though they have similar intentions, the means in which they seek to achieve their goals of reformation vastly differ. The purpose of these groups is not to aimlessly kill and pillage society; on the contrary, they seek to transform the society in which they live. “Egypt’s Popular Islam, a grassroots movement emerging from the streets, aims to transform the social structure of Egyptian society from the bottom up, creating Islamic order” (Abdo, 2000, p. 5). This feeling of the need for reform has emerged from a growing distaste for the secular regimes that have existed in Egypt prior to, and following, the Revolution of 1952, and the perceived imperialistic presence of the secular West, both in Egypt, and within surrounding regions. To combat the professed oppression,
various groups have adopted violent tactics in an effort to bring about change, many of whom know the teachings and philosophy of Qutb all too well.

*Origins of Islam*

Qutb's philosophy is grounded in Islam. Early in the 7th century C.E. an Arab merchant named Muhammad experienced what Muslims refer to as the “Night of Power and Excellence” and the world's history was profoundly impacted by this event (Esposito, 1999; Spencer, 2005). At the time Muhammad was residing in the city of Mecca. Mecca was composed of numerous Arab clans and tribes all adhering to differing beliefs that included Christianity, Judaism, and various types of polytheism and animism (Goldschmidt, 2007). Muhammad began to view the civilization within Mecca as one that was drifting away from the ideals and values that were supposed to be instilled within its children. He also noticed much corruption within the upper echelons of leadership within the city which led him to begin observing the practices and teachings of Christianity and Judaism as they were monotheist faiths (Goldschmidt, 2007). It was only after Muhammad concluded that the monotheist faiths seemed to have something the others did not that, while meditating in a cave, he was told by the angel Gabriel that he was the final prophet and that he was to bring the nations to Allah, which literally translates from Arabic to mean “the God” (Esposito, 1999; Spencer, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2007). Immediately Muhammad began to profess the message given to him by God to anyone who would listen and he slowly began to gain supporters, of whom the most notable were his cousin and son-in-law, Ali; his good friend, Abu Bakr; and, two other young men by the names of Umar and Uthman (Goldschmidt, 2007).
As time progressed, Muhammad’s newly forming religion of Islam began to gain greater prominence within Mecca, which was viewed by the leaders as a great disruption to their hold over the city. Though the Meccan leaders had strong influence over the inhabitants of the city, they were unable to address their issues with Muhammad because of the influence of his uncle, Abu Talib; however, Muhammad’s fate quickly changed with the passing of his uncle in 619 (Esposito, 1999; Goldschmidt, 2007).

As opposition toward Muhammad continued to grow, he realized that Mecca was not the place for his religion to flourish. To escape persecution, Muhammad and his followers ventured to a small city called Taif, but were quickly turned away by its inhabitants and attempted to return to Mecca. Needless to say, their return was not one of welcome; however, Muhammad was approached by members of the Yathrib (Medina) tribe to help them settle a dispute, and, in return, he and his followers were granted sanctuary in Medina (Spencer, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2007). This journey to Medina, which took place in 622 CE, is known as the “Hijra” and is extremely important because it was in Medina where Muhammad established the first Islamic community in which he reigned as both political and religious leader. Though a commune of Muslims was established, there was still emerging opposition from the Jewish inhabitants of Medina. In response to the growth of the Muslim community, the Jews began to block the Muslim community from access to any source of commerce. Without any local source of sustenance and knowledge that all of the nearby trade routes were dominated by the Meccans, Muhammad began a campaign of raiding Meccan trade caravans for supplies and commerce which later progressed into the historic Battle of Badr (Fletcher, 2003; Spencer, 2005).
In the Battle of Badr, Muhammad and his army of a few hundred were confronted by a substantially larger Meccan force of around 1,000 soldiers. Though the Meccan force was larger, the Muslims were more tactically savvy and were able to defeat the Meccans in a gruesome battle where no lives of the enemy were sparred, not even those who surrendered (Fletcher, 2003; Spencer, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2007). A series of smaller battles ensued following the Battle of Badr, many of which were lost by the Muslims; however, the Meccan army was never able to capture the city of Medina. The raids on trade caravans continued and many inhabitants of Medina and local tribesman viewed each successful raid as a success for the Muslims and joined in their cause. It was not until 628 CE when many of Muhammad’s followers began to miss their families back in Mecca that Muhammad and the Meccans were able to negotiate a treaty that would allow for the Muslims to safely return to their homes in Mecca. In 630 CE, on the belief that the Meccans had breached their agreement with the Muslims, Muhammad and his followers militarily took the city of Mecca, claiming it as a city of Islam (Lewis, 1995; Esposito, 1999; Goldschmidt, 2007).

Despite Muhammad’s death in 632 CE, Islam’s potent mixture of military success and religious teachings encouraged and rewarded Muslims to spread God to the world. Shortly after his death, Muhammad’s first successor, Abu Bakr, was named as the new leader of the Muslim people. This was a source of some dissent as many Muslims felt that Muhammad’s successor should be of blood relation and was the catalyzing event that ultimately led to the rift in Islam between the Shia, those who felt the leader of the Muslims should be a descendant of Muhammad, and the Sunni, those who agreed that blood relation was not necessary, only dedication and knowledge regarding the faith.
Though there was opposition to his being appointed, Abu Bakr led from 632-634 CE at which time he was succeeded by another one of Muhammad’s converts, Umar (Lewis, 1995; Goldschmidt, 2007).

Umar, who led from 634-644 CE, was responsible for much of the expansion of the Islamic faith. Goldschmidt (2007) summarized Umar’s rule as being one centered on jihad, where Umar sought to expand the reach of Islam. Much of this expansion was achieved through military conquest and in a decade, the Islamic empire stretched from Spain in the west, to the western border of China in the east. It was during these years that Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and much of northern Africa, including Egypt, were seized; however, the expansion of Islam began to slow with the passing of Umar and the naming of Uthman as his successor (Lewis, 1995, Spencer, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2007).

Uthman was elected by a committee that was appointed by Umar prior to his death. Again, there was dissent as the older Muslims felt a descendant of Muhammad should lead the Islamic empire. Unable to quell the opposition, Uthman was eventually killed in 656 CE. It was after the death of Uthman that the first caliph to share the blood of Muhammad was named.

Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, reluctantly accepted the appointment to be successor to Uthman. The belief still existed among many that leadership for Muslims should come from Muhammad’s descendants, and his descendants only. At the same time, there was growing support for a man by the name of Mu’awiyah, who was appointed by Uthman to rule the area known today as Syria. Mu’awiyah was angered that those responsible for the death of Uthman were never captured and punished and he placed the blame upon Ali. Tensions between the
followers of Ali and the followers of Mu’awiyah began to grow and various battles between the two forces ensued. Eventually, Ali was assassinated in 661 CE after some of his former followers disapproved of his decision to allow the former governor of Kufa, who at one time tried to organize against Ali, to once again hold a position within his government (Lewis, 1995; Fletcher, 2003; Goldschmidt, 2007). This civil war, and the martyring of Husayn, Ali’s son, in Karbala by Yazid, Mu’awiya’s successor, resulted in the institutionalization of the schism that currently exists within Islam between the Sunni and the Shia. Though this rift exists, both sects adhere to the Islamic holy book known as the Quran. The Quran consists of the transcription of Muhammad’s interactions with God. Muslims believe the Quran to be the word of God (Goldschmidt, 2007).

By word and by sword Islam continued to spread and flourish for nearly eight centuries, expanding throughout northern Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and reaching as far as Indonesia. Throughout this time many conflicts and battles in the name of God took place in an attempt to convert those who were not already living in adherence to the principles of Islam. Often times those who were unwilling to convert were deemed unfit to inhabit the physical world of God and had the choice to either pay the jizya, tax, or suffer the fate of sacrifice in the name of God. The same basic principles of the Muslims of the past are similar to those guiding the Islamic movements of today.

*Islam and Politics*

Before addressing the role of Islam in Egypt, it is necessary to examine the role and bearing of Islam in its relation to politics in general. Politics, whether void of religion or not, are extremely complex even in their simplest form. Political systems are the means by which interests are managed. In most cases the interests being managed are
“competing” interests, or even “clashing” interests between various groups (Eickelman & Piscatorri, 1996). These groups are all vying for power in one way or another. This thirst for power and control is the driving force behind most politics, but that is not always the case when religion is involved. When ideology enters the realm of politics, the guiding force is much more affluent than the simple goal of attaining power and control, salvation becomes the founding principle governing the political action.

Political Islam is not a simple struggle for power or control. It is a battle of morality, spirituality, justice, and order. “...Islam constitutes the language of politics in the Muslim world, ... Islam is a relatively stable type of expression and thus constitutes a discursive but culturally specific genre of politics” (Eickelman & Piscatorri, 1996, p. 12). Secularist governments may not be entirely absent of religion in their politics, but they are not governed by religion. For example, the coins of the United States are minted with the saying “In God We Trust.” This shows the Christian roots of the West; however, the West developed a tradition of separating church and state. The same does not hold true for Muslim politics and Islam. Islam is not merely a religion; it is a way of life. It is meant to be all-inclusive and “The distinctiveness of Muslim politics may be said to lie rather in the specific, if evolving, values, symbols, ideas, and traditions that constitute Islam” (Eickelman & Piscatorri, 1996, p.21). This was evident in the city of Medina in the early 7th century when Muhammad moved his Muslim followers to the city of Medina. Goldschmidt (2002) explained that Muhammad was not only revered as a religious leader, but as a political one as well. The same held true for his community of followers who were governed by both the religion and politics of Islam. Unlike other popular religions that may guide politics, Islam itself is meant to be the only way of governance. The
Quran preaches the word of God and is meant to guide Muslims down the path of righteousness. When coupled with the principles of Shari’a, or Islamic Law, Islam is viewed by many as being all that is necessary for both self and state governance.

Those seeking to form Islamic communes adhering only to the principles of the faith urge strict adherence to Shari’a. The basic premise behind Shari’a is that it is the judicial system of Muslims and the only necessary system of law due to its roots in the Islamic faith. Goldschmidt (2002) described that early appointed qadis, or judges, were chosen to administer Shari’a, not to interpret it. The argument often presented is that men are not capable of, nor should they even attempt to interpret the word of God from which Shari’a developed. This sentiment has led many to narrowly interpret the laws of Islam, which is evident in Qutb’s writing and helps to explain his militarized way of thinking.

The argument made by Islamists is not that Islam should have a role in politics, but that Islam itself is political and that the only way to govern is in accordance to the word of God. To some, Islam may have the foundation for governing all aspects of life; even so, others feel it is not the ideal system for politics or governance. Some suggest that politics by nature is a corruptive force and that religious involvement would only lead to corruption amongst religious practitioners. Due to man’s inability to stray from this corruption, it is urged that religion and politics remain separate entities. Eickelman and Piscatori (1996) stated that “[…] men are given the earth to govern but are not worthy to do so until they can govern themselves. In effect, therefore, they must eschew politics until they prove themselves worthy of being political” (p. 51). Men have enough difficulty in governance and politics which is why it is suggested that religion must
remain absent from politics because it could potentially mislead religious practitioners from the path or righteousness.

The very essence of religion is a factor that makes Muslim politics an extremely difficult practice. One of the key components of religion is text. All of the monotheistic religions, including Islam, are taught and spread through the preaching of textual material. The problem arises in that not all people exposed to these texts are of the same mentality. A characteristic of humankind is that they are able to reason and interpret. "Increasingly, in the venture of Islam, Muslim politics constitutes the field on which an intricate pattern of cooperation and contest over form, practice, and interpretation takes place" (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996, p. 21). In other words, there are millions of people around the globe who refer to themselves as devout Muslims; however, not all worship the same nor share identical beliefs. It is human nature to question and analyze, and people do this to varying degrees. It is this analysis of the teachings of Islam, or other worldly religions, which makes religion and politics a delicate pairing in the governance of life.

One of the key components of politics is logic and rationality. It is necessary that actions are taken based on rational judgments free from emotional interference. It is not possible to segregate religion and emotion. Being a Muslim is not something that can be turned on and off. A Muslim is always a Muslim whether he is a peasant or the president. It is this inability to separate emotion from religion that makes governments based solely on religion questionable. "Part of the reason lies in the general preference in the social sciences for the rational actor, which ... tends to make religion a nonrational – if not an emotional and irrational – factor" (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1996, p. 56). Emotions and
beliefs have the ability, and often the tendency, to make people behave groundlessly. It is not that people are incapable of having their own beliefs and it is not suggested that religion itself is irrational. Religion plays a key role in society; however, it is too personal and complex to be the only means of governance and social order. The argument presented by Eickelman and Piscatori (1996) is that God is the reason for religion; mankind is the reason for its politicization.

*Early Jihadist Movements*

Though the history of Islam and its role in politics have been briefly discussed, complete understanding of Qutb is not possible without an understanding of some of the earliest jihadist movements that paved the way for Qutb and his militant Islamic ideology. As is evident in the modern day Islamic fundamentalist movement that is founded on principles dating back to the days when Muhammad preached the "word of God," Islamism has undergone a revitalization movement. Esposito (1999) explained fundamentalism, in its most basic form, as being "... return to foundational beliefs or the fundamentals of a religion" (p. 5). Building off of this interpretation of fundamentalism, the Islamic fundamentalist movement has emerged in various facets. First, there exist those who adamantly feel that Islam has strayed from its intended path and a purification of the way of life of the Muslim needs to take place to preserve the integrity of Islam and its teachings. In many ways the fundamentalists have a valid argument. They seek to rid Islam of corruption and abuse. In many instances they do so by peaceful means such as preaching what they feel to be the literal word of God; however, not all who feel a change is vital for the survivability of Islam resort to the word for means of reform, some rely on the sword. Intertwined within this movement are jihadists and radical Islamic militants
who feel that preaching is not effective and the only approach to ensuring the preservation of Muslim life is a bloody road of violence, deceit, and terror. These are the principles conveyed through Qutb’s writings (Scheuer, 2006; Bozek and White, 2008; White, 2009).

Though the earliest instances of violent jihad existed during the time when the Prophet Muhammad led his Muslim armies, the 13th century gave birth to one of the most influential preachers of the jihadist movement. Taqi al-Din ibn Tamiyya was born in what is now known as Turkey. He preached that jihad was as equally important to Islam as were the "five pillars of Islam" (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). During this time, the Mongols, who were perceived as barbaric infidels, had dominated a large portion of the Middle East. Tamiyya viewed the Mongols as a direct threat to the Islamic civilization and sought to end the pagan triumph. In order to combat the "semi-pagans," Tamiyya felt he had to centralize the belief of jihad among his fellow Muslims. In centralizing the belief, Benjamin and Simon (2002) described his proposal of two types of jihad. The first is based on the expansion of the "realm of Islam," and the other, a defensive jihad derived upon the principle that all Muslims had a duty to protect their territories and their faith from unbelievers. On several instances, Tamiyya quoted scripture to help strengthen and teach his idea of jihad. He preached various passages from the Quran in order to validate the importance of jihad (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). Tamiyya and his followers literalized the teachings of the Quran for justification of their rise against the Mongols and their goal of expanding the realm of Islam, no matter what the cost to life. The extremists preached that those obstructing the growth of Islam were impure and that God’s sacred land needed to be cleansed of its impurities. This mentality
began to flourish among the emerging extremists.

Though Tamiyya was one of the first fathers of what is modern day jihad, he is not the only one to suggest the purification of those who are not true Muslims. Mohammad ibn Abd al- Wahhab was born in 1703, and much like Tamiyya, sought to strengthen Islam. Though his goal was the same, his target greatly differed. Tamiyya was faced with an external force, the Mongols, occupying what he believed to be Islamic territory. Wahhab, on the other hand, felt that Muslims had lost touch with pure Islam and jihad was the way to remedy the problem. Seeded within Wahhab's Sunni beliefs was that Muslims needed to get back to basic principles. It was deemed unacceptable for some to call themselves Muslims and deny predestination, shave their beards, be absent from public prayer, and fail to participate in other sacred rituals (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). Several other Sunni Muslims also recognized the drift away from basic Islamic practices and Wahhab obtained a large following. Burning deep within his followers was a strong hatred for Shia Muslims that led to the creation of Saudi-Wahhabism. Nearly one hundred years after his birth, the followers of Wahhab began to "purify" the Arab world by destroying Shia shrines and occupying territory throughout the Middle East (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; White, 2009).

It is evident that both Tamiyya and Wahhab viewed religion as an extremely important aspect of life. Both suggested that in order to remain strong and pure, one must rid the sacred world of the sinful (Benjamin & Simon, 2002). This sentiment was reiterated by DeLong-Bas (2008) whose analysis of Wahhab revealed similar concepts; however, she concluded that modern day terrorism was rooted in other men's philosophies. Kepel (2002) explained how in more recent times, two other influential
men emerged to preach ideas similar to those of Tamiyya and Wahhab, one of whom was Sayyid Qutb, the other, Mawlana Mawdudi. Kepel (2002) suggested that following World War II, much of the Islamic world was overrun with a strong sense of nationalism. Religion was no longer governing society and secular governments began emerging. Both Qutb and Mawdudi sought to reform the nationalist movement. The nationalists sought to create a Muslim state on the Indian sub-continent of what is now Pakistan (Kepel, 2002). Mawdudi saw impiety in nationalism and felt the only state that should exist was an Islamic state, "... a state in which sovereignty would be exercised in the name of Allah and the sharia would be implemented" (Kepel, 2002, p. 34). Much like his predecessors, Mawdudi felt that the "five pillars of Islam" were merely precursors to train Muslims for the struggle against those too sinful to praise God (Kepel, 2002). This was a critical time in the jihadist movement. It is during this time that Kepel (2002) proposed that a shift occurred in the movement. He wrote that jihad began to move from a religious foundation to a more ideological foundation. People began to base their actions on visionary theories rooted in the Islamic faith; however, several aspects became literalized and new meanings were created for ancient myths and teachings. Those following the concepts proposed by Mawdudi felt they were honoring Muhammad by purifying the world and eliminating those attempting to oppress their faith, much like Mohammad did in 630c.e. in Mecca (Lewis, 1995; Spencer, 2005; Goldschmidt, 2007). Though extreme in his beliefs, Kepel (2002) argued that Mawdudi was not extreme in his actions and he sought to fight his "holy war" through participation in the political system of Pakistan, not through radical opposition or violence. Building off of the beliefs of Mawdudi and other jihadists before him, Qutb felt a more radical approach was necessary
to adequately oppose the corrupting ideals of non-Muslim society, which is why his works are of such great significance today (Benjamin & Simon, 2002; Kepel, 2002; Laqueur, 2003; Haneef, 2004; Musallam, 2005; Combating Terrorism Center, 2006; White, 2006; DeLong-Bas, 2008; Bozek & White, 2008; White, 2009). However, the works of Qutb are best understood only after careful examination of the history of Egypt and the emergence of Islam within Egypt.

Pre-Islamic and Islamic Egypt

Egypt's history dates back to 3000 B.C. when the Pharaoh Narmer ruled. This is a time period prior to the creation of Islam; hence, pharaonic societies are deemed societies of jahiliyya or societies of ignorance (Goldschmidt, 2007). Mention of this time period is important because it has been used as justification for attacks from militant Islamists. Eickelman and Piscatori (1996) described that:

In Egypt, many Islamists have attacked the pyramids, Egypt's paramount national symbol, as a celebration of the pre-Islamic 'era of ignorance' (jahiliyya). They find inspiration for their views in the Qur'an, which memorializes the Pharaoh as 'arrogant' and 'insolent' in the land beyond reason. (p. 65).

The Islamists feel that using the pyramids as a national symbol promotes the time of ignorance, which to them is un-Islamic. It was not until 639 C.E. that Islam surfaced in Egypt; therefore, aggrandizing a time period prior to that is viewed by Islamic militants as being heretical.

It was under the rule of the second rightly guided caliph, Umar, operating under the banner of Islam, that many nations throughout northern Africa, the Middle East, and southwest Asia came to be conquered by the emerging Islamic Empire (Spencer, 2005;
Goldschmidt, 2007). During this time in the early 7th century, many of the lands previously discussed were under the rule of the Byzantine Empire in adherence to the principles of Christianity. The city of Alexandria, in northern Egypt, once home to Alexander the Great, was one of the most valued cities of the Byzantine Empire until its conquest in 642 CE (Spencer, 2005).

The conquest of Egypt began in 639 CE under the command of Amr ibn al-Ash who was one of the generals of the second rightly guided caliph, Umar. Most literature suggests that Amr was welcomed by the people of Egypt because of their distaste for the Byzantines who had come to rule following the decline of the Pharaohs; however, there is some disagreement as to whether or not Amr was a tolerant ruler (Spencer, 2005). It is argued that under his reign other religions were allowed to exist. At that time Egypt was composed of Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christians, as well as the newly arriving Muslims. Many were converted to Islam; however, as was previously mentioned, it was not required by the current ruler (Goldschmidt, 2007). From this period on, Egypt went through many different rulers. Each ruler had their own concept of how to rule their domain. Some were tolerant of people of other faiths while others were extremely violent and militant towards those with differing beliefs. This trend continued in Egypt through the Crusades and into the mid 20th century, paving the way for the Khedival period.

The Khedival period lasted in Egypt from 1848 until 1952. It was during this time period that Egypt progressed in many ways, while at the same time falling victim to British colonialism. Though a parliament was created along with a constitution, Egypt was still governed by a monarch, who oftentimes was viewed as merely a puppet serving
British interests (Goldschmidt, 2007). Needless to say, this was a great source of public distrust of the government which ultimately led to the overthrow of the monarch in the 1952 revolution and provided the climate necessary to breed militancy.

Another great source of discontent during this time period was the construction of the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal was not only important to Egypt, it was important to Europe as well, mainly the British and the French. Both countries helped to fund the project and also had much to gain from its construction. This canal provided a direct seaway from Europe to the East without having to travel all the way around Africa. Unfortunately for Egypt, the project was extremely expensive and the economy in Egypt was already in turmoil prior to the onset of construction. In order to relieve some of its debt, Egypt, under the rule of Ismail, sold its stock in the canal to Britain to help relinquish some of the economic strife being suffered. Selling of its stock meant that the British now controlled the Suez Canal and Egypt still had some lingering debt to Britain; hence, Britain was literally in control of Egypt. This proved unfavorable to the Egyptian people and unrest ensued. In 1881 a revolt took place in an attempt to overthrow King Tawfiq who succeeded Ismail. In order to protect their interests, Britain invaded Egypt and from this time until 1952, Egypt was merely a puppet of the West even though the monarchy was still in tact; it had little control over Egypt’s affairs (Lewis, 1995; Gerner & Schwedler, 2004; Goldschmidt, 2007).

Foundation of Contemporary Egypt

In 1952 a group of young military officers felt it was time to end the corrupt, British controlled monarch in Egypt. The Free Officers were driven by their hatred for their British occupiers and their strong sense of nationalism. Under the leadership of
Muhammad Naguib and Gemal abd al-Nasser, the Free Officers mounted a successful coup against the monarchy and in 1953 Muhammad Naguib was named Egypt’s first president with Nasser as his prime minister. Shortly after Naguib took office he was ousted by Nasser, who in 1954 became both president and prime minister. He felt Egypt needed to be a military state and was against elections and the emergence of political parties. He sought to model Egypt after Turkey, which was prospering under the secular rule of Kemal Ataturk. It appeared as though secular rule and the push towards modernization was to lead to the triumph of Egypt; however, it rapidly fell into a recession in the 1960’s and in 1967, following the decisive victory of Israel in the Six Days War, secularism as it existed in Egypt was defeated and shortly after, in 1970, Nasser passed away (Goldschmidt, 2007).

Emerging from the shadows of Nasser was his successor, Anwar Sadat. Sadat was faced with battling the legacy of Nasser and secularism. The people of Egypt felt that they had lost the war against Israel because it was God’s will. As a result, Sadat felt it was important to show the people of Egypt that he was a devout Muslim. Under Sadat, Egypt had an open door policy towards foreign investment, known as infitah. This policy led to increased Westernization of the country. Sadat was also under immense pressure from the West to normalize relations with Israel. The United States was a supportive ally of Israel because of its orientation in regards to the communist Soviet Union. Eventually the pressure on Sadat proved overbearing, and in 1978, without support from the rest of the Arab world, he signed the Camp David Accords, officially recognizing Israel. Egypt faced many repercussions because of its negotiations with Israel. One of the most dramatic of those repercussions was the assassination of its president, Anwar Sadat by a
militant Islamist by the name of Khalid Islambouli (Goldschmidt, 2007). The assassination of Sadat can be attributed to many different events that had been taking place in the late 1970's; however, Camp David seemed to be among the most influential.

Hosni Mubarak was vice president of Egypt under Anwar Sadat and was in line for presidency following Sadat's assassination. Mubarak, who was Egypt's president at the time of this research, faced many of the same problems during his rule as Nasser and Sadat. The suppression of opposition groups that had been initiated by Nasser, was lessened by Sadat, and lessened even more by Mubarak. It is important to note; however, that the existence of opposition groups is by no means encouraged or even accepted by the current regime, their existence is merely constitutionally legal. The current political state of Egypt under Mubarak's rule is turbulent. Much of the support for the regime comes from outside influences such as the United States who currently supplies Egypt with economic aid in order to protect its interests in the region. It is evident that Egypt has had a complex history. The history presented is sparse; yet, no matter how broad, it is vital to divulge the history of Egypt in order to provide clarity and a foundation in which to discuss the emergence of Islamic militancy in adherence to the concepts of Qutb.

*Qutb's Egypt*

In 1928, under a corrupt King, emerged one of the most popular and widely known Islamist groups, the Muslim Brotherhood. Hasan al-Banna, founder of the Ikwan al-Muslimiyya, or the Muslim Brotherhood, "aimed to apply religion directly to politics and popular life" (Abdo, 2000, p. 6). The Muslim Brotherhood materialized during a time when Egypt was in hardship. Current rule was dominated by a corrupt monarch that
was merely a puppet of British interests. Al-Banna sought to unite Muslims in an effort to combat the British in Egypt and the Jews who were present in Palestine. Through the call to Islam, al-Banna wanted to create a Muslim society. He wanted the values, economy, and the political systems to all exist in accordance with the teachings of Islam.

Al-Banna obtained a large following. He was one of the few who recognized the growing turbulence between the current rule and the Egyptian people. He was also one of the few people that were willing to take action to help facilitate some level of reform. Ideally, reform that placed emphasis on Islamic principles. According to the Brethren, Egypt was a society of jahiliyya, or a society of ignorance, resulting from the absence of Islam in everyday life practices and the existence of a community of believers who were unable to subdue the rise of the colonizers. Abdo (2000) states that “In the religious camp, the belief that Egypt had strayed from pure Islam and failed to repel foreign influences helped lead to the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood” (p. 49). This was all taking place in the early 1920’s. From this time up until the revolution in 1952 the Brotherhood existed as an alternative to the corrupt monarchy and the invasive British Empire (Abdo, 2000). The Brotherhood was becoming a legitimate and strong response to the weakening government that eventually crumbled under the pressures of Nasser and his Free Officers.

Prior to the revolution in 1952, Hasan al-Banna was attempting to legitimize the notion of an Islamic society within Egypt; however, after 1949, this struggle for power was to take place without the creator and voice of the Brotherhood. In 1949, Hasan al-Banna was assassinated in what many have claimed to be a state sponsored plot (Abdo, 2000). Reportedly, al-Banna’s death was the government’s response to the assassination
of Egyptian Prime Minister Mahmud Fahmi al-Nuqrashi by a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. From its inception in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood and the concept of creating and Islamic society were avidly opposed by the Egyptian government and the death of al-Banna seemed to perpetuate the religious followers’ dedication to the cause. The result was the adaptation of the Brotherhood from a group suspected of striving for legitimacy, to a group operating with no boundaries and no limitations. Guenena (1986) described this transformation stating that:

The Ikhwan (Brotherhood) movement ... while militantly reformist in its first stage prior to 1940, was not bent on resorting to violent means in order to achieve its objectives. In the late 1930’s, however, opposition within the ranks of the Ikhwan began to surface. The issue was Hassan al-Banna’s refusal to implement reform through violent means. (Guenena, 1986, p. 34)

Since there existed no means for legitimacy, the Brotherhood continued on illegitimately and the formation of splinter groups with varying degrees of radical ideologies began emerging. At the same time, a new leader was put in place to take on the task of implementing the principles of Islam into Egyptian society.

The Revolution in 1952 was a landmark moment for Egypt and had a significant impact on shaping the future of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamism. The Brotherhood still held expansive popularity among the citizens of Egypt; however, they were not welcomed by the new governing regime who viewed them as a threat to their newfound power. In 1954, a member of the Brotherhood was accused of attempting to assassinate Nasser, who was now president of Egypt. In response, Nasser began to secretly seek out members of the Brotherhood and imprison them. Actions such as these were kept secret
because he feared that the ramifications of imprisoning Muslims, who were attempting to spread the word of God, would de-legitimize his socialist regime (Abdo, 2000).

Despite the evident prevalence of support for Islamism within Egypt’s borders, Nasser continued his path towards secularization and sought to further increase state authority. Meanwhile, the Brotherhood, composed mainly of the middle and the unemployed lower class, sought to change society from within. They felt reform needed to take place from the bottom up and that the power lied within the Muslim people, not the government. Prior to being executed, Al-Banna conveyed that his Brotherhood was the solution for Egypt and Islam. He was noted as having said:

My Brothers, you are not a benevolent society, nor a political party, nor a local organization … rather you are a new soul in the heart of this nation to give it life by means of the Koran. … If you are told that you are political, answer that Islam admits no distinction. If you are accused of being revolutionaries, say ‘We are voices for right and peace in which we dearly believe’. (Abdo, 2000, p. 79)

Al-Banna envisioned Islam as the voice of Egypt; however, this was not possible because the constitution strictly forbade the creation of religious-based political parties. The Brotherhood had no platform in which to run and no legitimate means, according to man-made law, of gaining power in Egypt.

Hasan al-Hudaybi, al-Banna’s successor, led the Brotherhood through the revolution in 1952 and was responsible for dealing with the intolerance Nasser had for his organization. During this time, the Brotherhood was undergoing mass reorganization. No longer were they free to spread their message in public which forced them to operate covertly and underground. Members began holding educational sessions that acted as
fronts for Brethren activities. Those who succeeded in avoiding capture by Nasser’s security forces were the ones who were left to attend these underground sessions (Kepel, 2002). At the same time, in the 1940’s through the mid 1960’s, a man by the name of Sayyid Qutb claimed allegiance to Islam as well as to the legacy of al-Banna and Hudaybi. Unlike many others, Qutb was unable to escape the clench of Nasser’s security forces and from 1954 until 1964 spent time in and out of prison until his eventual arrest and execution in 1966 (Kepel, 2002).

The tradition of imprisonment, torment, and torture of the Islamists in Egypt that began with Nasser’s regime was not immediately practiced by Nasser’s successor, Anwar Sadat. He felt it better to embrace the Islamists. He was responsible for releasing many of those who were imprisoned under Nasser and sought to embrace and encourage Islamic teachings and education. Still angered by the loss to the Israelis in the 1967 war, Egyptians, mainly students and the middle class, received and participated in the Islamic revitalization movement believing that failure to defeat the Israelis was a direct result of secularization. University students set up organizations preaching the word of God and examining the role of Islam in everyday life (Goldschmidt, 2007).

As time progressed, Sadat slowly began to fear the growing popularity of the Islamists and, much like Nasser, began suppression of religious groups who had the power and the following to oppose his regime. The religious programs Sadat adamantly encouraged were perceived to be a direct threat to his governance and resulted in a shift from support and acceptance, to intolerance and oppression. The battle between the Islamists and Sadat continued until his assassination in 1981 by extremist Khalid Islambouli of the jihad group Gama’a Islamiyya (Kepel, 2002). Before his death, Sadat
saw to it that physical constraints were placed on the Islamists, but he had no tool within his regime to subjugate their ideology.

President Hosni Mubarak faced, and still faces to this day, the same struggle as his predecessors. No matter how many extremists, radicals, or fundamentalists are exposed or incarcerated, he cannot defeat the ideology. In 1992, in an effort to combat the Gama’a Islamiyya, he sent a force of security personnel into an area of Egypt known as the Imbaba district. Imbaba was not an area known for its niceties. It was run down and dirt ridden with a majority of its residence being illiterate (Abdo, 2000). The government felt that this area had been taken over by the Gama’a group and felt it was necessary to regain control of the district. Hundreds were arrested only to be released without charge. Kepel (2002) suggested that “it was Egypt’s biggest security operation in recent history” (p. 20). Events similar to the Imbaba raid have been a common occurrence in Egypt under Mubarak’s control. This practice implies that despite what actions are taken against these “extremist” groups, they are still growing in strength and still pose a threat to the current regime. It was for this reason that in 1995 the United States allegedly hosted secret meetings with the Muslim Brotherhood group out of fear that a revolution, like in Iran, could potentially mar U.S. – Egyptian relations and threaten American interests in the region. These meetings were being conducted at the U.S. embassy in Cairo, and when President Mubarak learned of these meetings he released a statement to the New Yorker stating:

Your government is in contact with these terrorists from the Muslim Brotherhood. This has been done very secretly, without our knowledge at first. You think you can correct the mistakes you made in Iran, where you had no contact with the
Ayatollah Khomeini and his fanatic groups before they seized power. But I assure you, these groups will never take over this country, and they will never be on good terms with the United States. (Kepel, 2002, p. 77)

This qualified the notion that the Islamist groups were gaining strength in Egypt, so much that the United States began negotiations with one of them in fear that a revolution, similar to that in Iran, was brewing.

In reference to the Islamists, the regimes of Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak all failed to conquer the identity and ideology of those who see it their duty to reestablish Islamic order in Egypt. Even though Qutb was executed in 1966, his ideology and teachings live on as though they were newly conceived. The events and actions of the Muslim Brotherhood and other like Islamist groups, whether they are radical or not, can be measured, they are historical fact; however, it is impossible to measure the belief system. For example: It is a historical fact that Khalid Islambouli, member of the Gama'a Islamiyya, assassinated Anwar Sadat, successor of Gamal abd al-Nasser, in 1981. He even confessed stating “I have killed Pharaoh and I do not fear death,” comparing President Sadat to the Egyptian Pharaohs who ruled during the time of ignorance, the time before the Prophet Muhammad and Islam (Abdo, 2000, p. 14). It is possible to place a date and time to this event. Likewise, it is also historical fact that:

From the late 1970’s to the mid-1990’s, militants killed dozens of foreign tourists, bombed banks, tour buses, and a café in a five-star Cairo hotel, assassinated cabinet ministers, attempted to kill President Mubarak himself, (Egypt’s current president) and carried out the bloodiest massacre in modern Egyptian history in
the Pharaonic town of Luxor, in November 1997. Fifty-eight foreign tourists and four Egyptians were killed, some hacked to death with knives. (Abdo, 2000, p. 5)

All of the events described have taken place and there is evidence to show that they have indeed occurred. The evidence lies in cemeteries and with the families of those whose lives were lost; however, there is no quantifiable evidence supporting why any of these actions took place, or why these people who call themselves Muslims see fit to take the lives of others in the name of their struggle. Sayyid Qutb provides the “why” to these actions. Kepel (2002) described that:

> It was the occasion for Sayyid Qutb, the Brotherhoods main thinker, to construct, from the concentration camp where he was imprisoned, the theory of Islamic rupture with the established order. His works represent for the militants of reislamization today what Lenin’s *What Is To Be Done* was for the communists.

(p. 12)

It is apparent how these groups formed, but what has yet to be presented is an in-depth view into the ideology of these groups. What do the radical Islamists believe? Very few people understand their cause. It is easy to pick up a book and read about the history of Egypt and its opposition groups. The difficulty lies in the comprehension and understanding of the complex nature of the beliefs possessed by those who fear their way of life is on the brink of extinction, an extinction that they believe is forcing them to take action in the name of God for the preservation of Islam. Unfortunately, their actions are being governed by a doctrine that preaches unimpeded violence against all who do not fit their perception of what constitutes “pure” Islam. This philosophy is that which was created by Qutb during his life and has managed to supercede him in his death.
Examination of the history of Egypt exemplifies the evolution of Islamic militancy within the region. This same pattern of militant evolution holds true not only for the movement itself, but for individuals as well. Sayyid Qutb was not born with militant ideals or a strong distaste for the West. His childhood reflected that of a normal Egyptian boy. He was born in 1906 in the Egyptian village of Musha. Like most Muslim children, he had begun studying the Quran, the main religious book of the Islamic faith, at an early age having memorized its contents by age 10. Placing great emphasis on education, Qutb attended the Dar al-Ulum, house of learning, which was a preparatory school for those wishing to become educators. In 1929, he had completed his preparatory studies and joined the teachers training college (Algar, 2000).

After completing his studies in 1933, Qutb was offered a teaching position in Dar al-Ulum and a short time after accepted a government position with the Egyptian Ministry of Education (Algar, 2000). It is at this time that Qutb is said to have began his literary career. In the introduction to Social Justice in Islam, Algar (2000) detailed that “He (Qutb) wrote poetry, autobiographical sketches, works of literary criticism, and novels and short stories dealing with the problems of love and marriage” (p. 2).

His interest in literature could only be rivaled by his dedication and attentiveness to Egyptian politics which is reflected in his participation and alliance with the Wafd political party in Egypt. The Wafd party was an opposition group to the present monarchy that was ruling Egypt at the time. During this time Qutb was known to be completing works for numerous journals that began to evidence his growing distaste for the Egyptian monarchy and further demonstrated his slow evolution towards an Islamic
response to government corruption. Needless to say, the current ruling regime was not overly accepting of Qutb's oppositional views and thought best to send him to the United States to study the West's educational system. At the time, Egypt was attempting to mimic the politics of Turkey which, after the end of World War I in 1919, had abandoned the notion of religion coupled with politics and adopted a concept of secular rule.

Qutb's journey to the United States in 1948 was one of extreme importance and may have been one of the more influential experiences of his life. Algar (2000) described that "Sayyid Qutb's impressions of America were, however, largely negative, and may even have been decisive in turning him fully to Islam as a total civilizational alternative" (p. 2). Qutb has been noted as describing the United States as being a society that "...laid heavy emphasis on materialism, racism, and sexual permissiveness as dominant features of American life" (Algar, 2000, p. 2). Qutb returned to Egypt in 1951 after obtaining a graduate degree from the University of Northern Colorado; however, while in the United States Qutb observed two history changing events, the creation of Israel and the assassination of the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood.

At this time, both Arabs and Muslims alike were strongly advocating the position of the Palestinians in an attempt to nurture a pan-Arab/pan-Islamic movement. Qutb witnessed first-hand American support for Israel and insularity towards the Palestinian position. In addition to the open prejudice he observed towards a religion and culture which was his own, Moussalli (1992) described how Qutb witnessed Americans celebrate the assassination of Hasan al-Banna, the leader and founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, in 1949 and upon his return to Egypt, he resigned from his position with the Egyptian
government, denounced American society, and rededicated his life to Islam and the dealings of the Muslim Brotherhood (Moussalli, 1992).

Upon returning to Egypt, Qutb had established a level of credibility with the Muslim Brotherhood due to a work that he had written while in the United States. *Al-’Adalat al-ljtim a’iyya fi ‘l-Islam (Social Justice in Islam)* described Islam as being much more than a religion. First published in 1949, and reprinted ever since, *Social Justice in Islam* is Qutb’s (2000) description of Islam as an all encompassing social, political, economic, and religious system meant to govern all aspects of life beyond only spirituality. Qutb viewed the Muslim Brotherhood as an avenue he could utilize to help bring his societal shift from secularism to Islam into fruition. Algar (2000) wrote that “His (Qutb’s) perception of the Brethren as defenders of Islam was further strengthened after his return to Egypt when a British official, James Heyworth-Dunne, told him that the Brethren represented the only barrier to the establishment of ‘Western civilization’ in the Middle East” (p.3). Qutb’s entrance into the Muslim Brotherhood was said to have attributed to the groups radicalization in Egypt as it now had an educated member capable of transcribing and spreading the group’s principles. However, as time passed the principles being spread were the philosophical insights of Qutb, who had denounced his position with the Ministry of Education, became an official member of the Brotherhood, and the editor-in-chief of the organizations main publication, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun (The Muslim Brotherhood)* (Algar, 2000).

As the Brotherhood was becoming more organized and more radical, the political stability in Egypt was waning to say the least. The Free Officers, under the guidance of Muhammad Naguib and former Egyptian President Gemal abd al-Nasser, successfully
overthrew the Egyptian Monarchy that had distastefully ruled; however, they were able to
do so due to aid from the Muslim Brotherhood. At the time, the Muslim Brotherhood had
obtained wide public support making an alliance with the Free Officers a necessary
component of the 1952 revolution. The influence of the Muslim Brotherhood was such
that Qutb was appointed as a cultural advisor after the revolution took place and was the
only non-military personnel to be present at the closed-door meetings. This was a mere
ploy by the Free Officers to absolve the Brotherhood and obtain total control of the
political arena in Egypt. Having offered numerous positions to other Brotherhood
members, only to have the offers be refused, the new government failed to peacefully
quell its only opposition. As a result, in 1954 the government declared the Brotherhood
an outlaw group and Qutb served his first stint in Egyptian prison (Algar, 2000). Shortly
thereafter, under the order of the leader of the revolution, Naguib, many of those
imprisoned were released; yet, Nasser was able to obtain control of the police, military,
and ultimately the government. In doing so, he reinstated the order to eliminate the
Muslim Brotherhood (Algar, 2000).

In government sponsored raids throughout Egypt, a substantial number of
Brotherhood members were re-arrested, including Qutb. This time he was sentenced to
15 years in prison only after being brutally tortured by his captors. Algar (2000)
described what prison meant to those like Qutb who were ideologues and philosophers
stating that “For many of them, it has meant not only suffering, but also the opportunity
to reflect on past struggles, to review theories and strategies, to deepen and sharpen their
insight, to plan and reorganize” (p. 7). Imprisonment was exactly these things for Qutb.
Amidst the torture and hard labor, Qutb managed to philosophize and strategize all under the banner of Islam.

Having had ample time to think and write, Qutb managed to complete numerous literary works relating to the religion of Islam and its purpose in society. Among the most prominent works were *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an (In the Shade of the Quran)* and *Ma'alim fi 't-Tariq (Milestones)* (Algar, 2000). Algar (2000) described *In the shade of the Quran* as a commentary of the Quran:

> Emphasizing guidance to correct action as the pre-eminent function of the Qur’an, Sayyid Qutb’s concern is to draw out the practical commands and instructions contained in each group of verses of the Qur’an and, beyond that, to demonstrate the coherent structure interrelating the variegated topics found in each section of the Qur’an, an aim inspired, perhaps, by his earlier literary interests. (p. 7)

Much like *In the shade of the Quran*, *Milestones* was both composed while in prison and was widely dispersed having been published and revised five times in the first six months of its release (Algar, 2000). According to Algar (2000):

> *Ma'alim fi 't-Tariq (Milestones)* consisted of some of the letters Sayyid Qutb had sent from prison and key sections of *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an (In the Shade of the Quran)*, and represented a concise and forceful summary of the main ideas Sayyid Qutb had developed: the *jahili* nature of existing society, government, and culture, and the long-term program needed for the establishment of an Islamic order. (p. 9)

Shortly after completing *Milestones* in 1964, Qutb was released from prison, only to be re-arrested a short time later. Among the charges against him was encouragement of sedition and the main evidence used to support the government’s claim was his widely
accepted publication, *Milestones*, due to its conveyance of revolutionary action supported by religious Islamic doctrine (Algar, 2000). Having been found guilty of the charges brought against him, on August 29, 1966 Qutb was hanged. He was martyred for conveying his belief.

Unfortunately, his militant philosophy did not perish with him. The works discussed are among the most influential written accounts of Islamic militancy to date. The principles discussed within these works are not only celebrated, but lived by those who feel the sanctity of life on Earth itself is on the verge of extinction. To better understand the ideas governing modern Islamic militancy, examination of its roots is critical and the man responsible for planting the seed was Sayyid Qutb through his works entitled *al-'Adalat al-Ijtima'iyya fi 'l-Islam (Social Justice in Islam)*, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an (In the Shade of the Quran)*, and, most importantly, *Ma'alim fi 'l-Tariq (Milestones)* whose foundation stems from *In the Shade of the Quran*. Examination of these works is extremely important as they are among the texts that drive modern Islamic militancy. The following will describe the messages they convey.

*Analysis of al-'Adalat al-Ijtima'iyya fi 'l-Islam (Social Justice in Islam)*

First published in 1949, *Social Justice in Islam* is among Qutb’s most widely read works. The message presented in *Social Justice in Islam* helps to show Qutb’s evolution from a state employed educator to a militant philosopher. Often supplementing his commentary with support from passages of the Quran, the main idea presented in this work was that Muslim’s around the world had strayed from the intended path of Islam allowing for the corrupting ideals of Western culture to obtain a firm grasp on society. Qutb (2000) argued that Islam was not merely a religion; it was a system of faith, law,
governance, and social construct that should be adhered to in all aspects of life. Most of Qutb’s attention was directed towards Muslims themselves, as he felt they were the ones responsible for straying from the traditional application of Islam into their everyday lives; in turn, he suggested that it was the responsibility of all Muslims to ensure a return to the incorporation of Islam into all aspects of life as was the practice during the times of the Prophet Muhammad. The following will present and summarize some notable passages from *Social Justice in Islam* to provide a clearer understanding of the principles of 21st Century militancy that is rooted in Qutb’s interpretation of Islam.

Qutb (2000) opened by explaining that there was an issue with the current state of Islamic affairs. Though Islam was being followed for religious purposes, it was no longer being incorporated into everyday life. Qutb viewed this as a huge mistake because God had intended for his followers to adhere to His word for guidance in all aspects of life, not only for religious purposes. He wrote that “... a society cannot be Islamic if it expels the civil and religious laws of Islam from its codes and customs, so that nothing is left of Islam except rites and ceremonials” (Qutb, 2000, p. 26). Qutb (2000) also conveyed that to merely use religious principles for worship, as opposed to guide one through life, stemmed from Muslims mimicking both Christians and Jews. During his time in the United States, Qutb viewed Western style of worship. He concluded that the West, in general, lacked any type of faith or values due to the simple fact that they did not live their religion, they merely attended church one day a week. He urged for those who claim to be Muslims to look to the Prophet Muhammad for guidance through examination of the roots of Islam from its inception.
Another critical message of Qutb that is conveyed in *Social Justice in Islam* is the idea of creating a unified global community. According to Qutb (2000) Islam was meant to incorporate all of humanity under what he believed to be the “true” word of God. He wrote that:

There can be no permanent system inhuman life until this integration and unification has taken place; this step is a prerequisite for true and complete human life, even justifying the use of force against those who deviate from it, so that those who have wandered from the true path may be brought back to it. ‘The recompense of those who make war against Allah and his Messenger, exerting themselves to cause corruption in earth, is that they be killed or crucified, or that their heads and feet on opposite sides be cut off, or that they be banished from the land’ (5:33).” (Qutb, 2000, p. 41)

Not only is Islam a system of governance of everyday life for Muslims, it is a system for all of humanity. For those who are not in adherence to this system, it is the duty of all Muslims to ensure that those who are not devoted to Islam either become so, leave, or perish. The unification of all of humanity under the banner of Islam, as described by Qutb, should be the ultimate goal of all Muslims.

To further strengthen his point that Islam was meant to apply to all of humanity and was the only righteous system of religion, politics, law, and society, Qutb (2000) presented examples of why other systems were inept. He described the notion that there is to be no inequality among the people of Islam because that was God’s design and that all of those who believe that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is his Prophet are of the same blood. This type of system does not lend itself to the unfair treatment of
others who also live according to the Quran. He suggested that Islam creates an environment where those who have wronged shall be wronged in the exact same way so as not to create an atmosphere of favoritism or inequality. He viewed the West and other non-Muslim societies as societies that embraced favoritism and whose lack of values bred inequality. He wrote that:

"Thus Islam was freed from the conflict of tribal and racial loyalties, and thus it achieved an equality which civilization in the West has not gained to this day. It is a civilization which permits the American consciences to acquiesce in the systematic eradication of the Red Indian race, and eradication that is being organized in the sight and hearing of all states. It permits also the South African government to introduce racial laws which discriminate against people of color and the governments of Russia, China, and India to massacre Muslims." (Qutb, 2000, p. 71).

Many would argue that these events are all events of great injustice; however, in response to them, Qutb (2000) proposed that it is the duty of Muslims to combat all unrighteous acts as God commands them to do so. He explained that "Every individual, again is charged with the duty of putting an end to any evildoing which it sees. 'Whoever among you sees any evildoing, let him change it with his hand; if he cannot do that, let him change it with his tongue; and if he cannot do that, let him change it with his heart; and that is the minimum faith requires'" (Qutb, 2000, p. 87). According to Qutb, the first response to any wrong should be physical coercion by the hand, then, if that does not work, verbal persuasion. Qutb (2000) presented a story of a man who had approached the Prophet Muhammad in search of forgiveness from God for his commitment of
adultery. The Prophet asked if he had in fact committed that sin and upon responding yes, the Prophet Muhammad commanded his followers that the man be stoned to death, in which case, he was. A short time after he was approached again by a woman who had became pregnant out of wedlock. After asking the Prophet for purification from her sin, he sent her away and told her to return after birthing the child. Upon her return Muhammad once again turned her away telling her to return after the child was at an age when he no longer needed to nurse. Again she returned, at which time she was stoned to death. This is the example Qutb used to describe his interpretation of Islamic justice. Those who sin are to be punished by the hand.

Qutb (2000) expanded upon his idea of justice within Islam in describing that it is the duty of every Muslim to not only protect and uphold the principles of Islam, but to protect mankind from any injustice. Should an injustice of any sort take place, not only should those directly responsible be punished, but those who allowed for it to happen shall be punished as well. He described that if some sort of injustice should take place, then:

The whole community is to blame and merits injury and punishment in this world and in the world to come if it passively accepts evildoing in its midst by some of its members. Thus it is charged with the duty of watching over every one of its members. ‘When We wish to destroy a town We command its luxury-loving citizens, and they deal corruptly in it; thus the sentence upon it is justified, and We destroy it.’ (17:17) Even though the majority of the people in it were not corrupt, but merely accepted the corruption passively, He still counted their destruction justifiable...There is no injustice in this, for the community in which
there is an immoral element and in which evildoing flourishes unchecked is a community which is exhausted and decayed, on the way to its end. The ruin which will overtake it is a natural fate, brought on by its own condition. (Qutb, 2000, p. 87)

In other words, all who are in close proximity to others who may be corrupt or who may have wronged in one way or another are responsible for any injustice that may come. As a result, they too should be punished without remorse and it is the duty of Muslims to do so to eliminate any threat to the sanctity, values, and moral delicacy of all of humanity. Failure to do so will result in punishment cast down from God for not succeeding in upholding His word. Qutb (2000) reiterated this idea over and over again throughout Social Justice in Islam later writing that:

...It (Islam) prescribes fighting in the way of Allah as a responsibility incumbent on every one who is able for it. But over and above that, it kindles a love for fighting by inciting the conscience to accept it, by depicting it in glowing terms, and by emphasizing its justice and the glories which it brings to a society. ‘Allah has purchased from the Believers their persons and their wealth, for the price of Paradise reserved for them; so they fight in the way of Allah, so they kill and are killed.’ (9:112) (p. 110)

Violence and fighting, as described by Qutb, is not only a duty of Muslims, it is an act that is glorified. Furthermore, the religion of Islam, as interpreted by Qutb, not only glorifies fighting, but urges acceptance of it is a normal component of everyday life for all Muslims who are able to take up arms.
Qutb (2000) later argued that the purpose of war for the Muslim is not to spread Islam, but to defend it due to the fact that forcing others to adopt Islam is a strict violation of the faith. In citing the Quran, Qutb (2000) wrote that:

‘Permission is given to those who have been opposed by force, because they have been wronged; verily Allah is able to help them.’ (22:40) ‘Fight in the way of Allah against those who oppose you by force; but do not open hostilities, for Allah does not love those who do so.’ (2:186) This is warfare, aimed at guaranteeing freedom of worship and preventing injury to Muslims; it does not aim at compelling anyone to adopt Islam. (p. 198)

The spread of Islam was not the result of Muslims attempting to expand and dominate, it resulted from Muslims upholding their duty to counter the oppression being inflicted upon them by coercive, material, and corrupt governments. These forces were viewed by Qutb as being oppressive because their coercive, tyrannical nature did not allow for people to embrace Islam as they sought fit.

In analyzing Social Justice in Islam, it is evident that Qutb was strongly indoctrinated with an “us vs. them” mentality. Through his interpretation of the Quran he urged all Muslims to reflect upon both their lives and their faith. He viewed Islam as much more than a religion, but a comprehensive means to govern life; however, he felt that Muslims were neglecting their duties to protect and guard Islam from corruption and oppression. Qutb (2000) concluded with a call to all Muslims stating that:

The world is broken by two consecutive wars, disturbed in faith and shaken in conscience, perplexed among varying ideologies and philosophies. It is today more than ever in need of us to offer to it our faith and our social system, our
practical and spiritual theory of life. But we cannot offer these things to the world at large until first we have applied them in our own life, so that the world may see their truth demonstrated in practice, may understand that this is not merely an imaginative and theoretical scheme. Conditions today are favorable because of the birth of two great new Islamic blocs in Indonesia and Pakistan, and because of the awakening of the Arab world, both East and West. The ultimate issue is with Allah; our duty is to trust in him, and have faith. (p. 319)

This statement is important as it is Qutb’s plea to Muslims to join a cause he feels is far greater than himself, the cause of God. Throughout Social Justice in Islam he explained all of the weaknesses he saw among his fellow Muslims and proposed that a change was needed. He proposed a revitalization of Islam in adherence to the fundamental practices brought forth by God as commanded to the Prophet Muhammad. This work explained Qutb’s view of why Muslims needed to change. In the Shade of the Quran and Milestones supply the religious justification and detail how this change should be accomplished by the Muslims who, Qutb claims, it is the religious duty to do so.

Analysis of Fi Zilal al-Qur’an (In the Shade of the Quran)

In examining In the Shade of the Quran, it is evident that Qutb was attempting to expand upon those thoughts developed in Social Justice in Islam. Though his previous works cited Quranic passages to strengthen his arguments, In the Shade of the Quran is based entirely upon the Quran itself. Throughout this work, Qutb provided his own commentary on each section of the Quran. His analysis extended 30 volumes of text, written from 1954-1964, all of which conveyed a variety of themes relating to Qutb’s interpretation of Islam.
First, Qutb (n.d.) attempted to explain that there had been a shift away from Islam that needed to be addressed. One of the key concepts presented in this work is that Islam is not a religion, but a system that is meant to incorporate all of society into one large Muslim community adhering to the word of God as written in the Quran. Qutb (n.d.) argued that Muslims themselves were not upholding all of the principles of the faith which made the creation of the Islamic society God had intended impossible. According to Qutb (n.d.), the only way to obtain success in the struggle to institute Islamic governance over all of society was for all Muslims to unite in responding to the Call of Islam through strict adherence to the fundamental principles upon which the faith was founded.

The second emergent theme was that the Muslim people were being opposed by non-believers in the form of the corruptive nature of Western nations and the inherent evil of the Jews (Qutb, n.d.). These opposing forces were viewed as such for various reasons. First, they did not adhere to the principle that there is no god, but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet, which is one of the most important tenets of Islam. Second, Qutb (n.d.) explained that faith, to these groups of people was somewhat of a novelty. He witnessed people in the West attending church on Sunday, but he felt that they did not live their faith. Qutb (n.d.) suggested that faith was not something that was individual, but communal. It is not possible to separate church and state because, as evidenced by Qutb through his interpretation of the Quran, Islam is not merely a religion, it is a complete system of governance of society and all aspects of life according to the word of God.
Third, Qutb proposed religious justification for action of Muslims to counter the drift away from what he believed were the true intentions of Islam. To combat the drift, Muslims needed to return their faith to what it was during the time of the Prophet. According to Qutb (n.d.) this meant a return to the fundamentals of Islam, as well as direct opposition to all forces that oppose the “true” word of God, that which Islam was believed to represent. Qutb (n.d.) argued that the need for action during his lifetime was no different from the need for action that existed in the early 7th Century. The Prophet Muhammad was faced with opposition in both Medina and Mecca; however, through adherence to the principles of Islam and to the word of God, Muhammad and his fellow Muslims were successful in resisting the non-believing Jews in Medina and the polytheists in Mecca.

Among the most important messages presented by Qutb (n.d) in his commentary on the Quran was his fervent belief that action must be taken to save humanity from being consumed by corruption. He often spoke of the jahili society, which referred to what was believed to be the faithless societies that existed prior to the creation of Islam in 610 C.E. These people were viewed as being ignorant due to the feeling that they did not accept Islam as the word of God and did not uphold the principles of the Islamic faith. Qutb (n.d.) presented the idea that the world was dominated by the jahili society and their failure to believe in the word of God was a direct threat to the Islamic faith and Muslims around the world. Qutb (n.d.) claimed that a revitalization of the fundamentals of Islam was needed to educate the world on the principles of Islam while at the same time suppressing the strength of the jahili society by any means necessary. This, according to Qutb (n.d.) was the duty of all Muslims. The themes presented by Qutb (n.d.) in his work
In the Shade of the Quran, mimicked those evident in Social Justice in Islam. Similarly, the basic principles being presented in both of these works were, once again, reiterated in his work Milestones; however, they were presented in much greater detail and with a completely different tone. Building off of the most important themes of In the Shade of the Quran, Milestones provides one of the most accurate accounts of the true nature of Islamic militancy and why it is such a threat to the United States.

Analysis of Ma' alim fi 't-Tariq (Milestones)

The themes presented in Milestones move far beyond the literary realm having become a primary source of militant Islam’s doctrine. Though many militants read a variety of Qutb’s other works, Milestones is the one work that is undoubtedly read by every Islamic militant. The entire premise of Milestones, first printed in 1964, was Qutb’s successful attempt at presenting the need for immediate action, mostly violent, to combat the spread of the coercive, corrupting, and valueless ideals of the West and to justify the spread of Islam through whatever means necessary in order to create the Islamic society that was intended by God. Once again, he argued that the current state of society, mainly in the West, was one based around ignorance. He described the ignorant society as a jahiliyya society. Qutb suggested that society as a whole was symbolic of the societies that existed prior to 610 C.E. and the prophecies of Muhammad. For this reason, the West, which was founded on Christian principles, not Muslim principles, was unfit to lead the mortal world. A more accurate summary of Qutb’s ideology is best presented in his own words. Qutb (1993) wrote:

During my stay in the United States, there were some people of this kind who used to argue with us – with us few who were considered to be on the side of
Sayyid Qutb

Islam. Some of them took the position of defense and justification. I, on the other hand, took the position of attacking the Western Jahiliyyah, its shaky religious beliefs, its social and economic modes, and its immoralities: 'look at these concepts of the Trinity, Original Sin, Sacrifice and Redemption, which are agreeable neither to reason nor to conscience. Look at this capitalism with its monopolies, its usury and whatever else is unjust in it; at this individual freedom, devoid of human sympathy and responsibility for relatives except under the force of law; at this materialistic attitude which deadens the spirit; at this behavior, like animals, which you call Free mixing of the sexes; at this vulgarity which you call emancipation of women; at these unfair and cumbersome laws of marriage and divorce, which are contrary to the demands of practical life; and at Islam, with its logic, beauty, humanity and happiness, which reaches horizons to which man strives but does not reach. It is a practical way of life and its solutions are based on the foundation of the wholesome nature of man.'” (p. 114)

The arguments raised in this passage from *Milestones* begin to explain the basis for present day Islamic militancy. To better understand the full depth of Islamic militancy, it is essential that a comprehensive understanding of the ideology of Qutb is obtained and this understanding is best acquired through exhaustive exploration of *Milestones.*

*Milestones* is unique in that the messages being conveyed by Qutb outline the need and justification for revolution, but they are not so specific as to limit how to initiate, and succeed, in a revolution. The following will provide analysis of each of the 12 chapters of *Milestones,* including passages, for the sole purpose of unveiling the nature of Islamic militancy rooted in the words of Qutb.
"Introduction." Qutb (1993) began his most influential work by describing the state of society as a whole. His most pivotal argument in introducing the ideas to be presented within *Milestones* was that the West was like a plague to society that contaminated its purity and ideals. He wrote:

Mankind today is on the brink of precipice, not because of the danger of complete annihilation which is hanging over its head – this being just a symptom and not the real disease – but because humanity is devoid of those vital values which are necessary not only for its healthy development but also for its real progress. Even the Western world realizes that the Western civilization is unable to present any healthy values for the guidance of mankind. It knows that it does not possess anything which will satisfy its own conscience to justify its existence ... It is essential for mankind to have new leadership! (Qutb, 1993, p. 3)

The purpose of this work was to convey the message that the West was a direct threat to the survival of humanity. To counter this perceived threat, Qutb (1993) proposed the establishment of a group of people, which he described as a "vanguard" to help institute an Islamic governed society feeling as though Islam was the only system capable of quelling the pestilence that was the West. The chapters that followed served as directions for this "vanguard," providing religious guidance and justification for the struggle of Islam, and humanity, against the corrosive influence of the West.

"Chapter 1: The Unique Quranic Generation." The first task, as proposed by Qutb (1993), was for all Muslims to distance themselves from the influences of the West, which he once again described as being jahili. The argument presented was that the ignorant society obeyed laws and principles developed by man, not the word of God.
Qutb (1993) outlined that “Our foremost objective is to change the practices of this society. Our aim is to change the Jahili system at its very roots – this system which is fundamentally at variance with Islam and which, with the help of force and oppression, is keeping us from living the sort of life which is demanded by our Creator” (p. 14). He proposed that this change stem first from resisting the influence of the jahiliyya. Second, he recognized that this would be difficult and implied that force may be needed to both resist, and to begin reinstatement of an Islamic system throughout society. Furthermore, use of force was justified because it was sanctioned by God who had once commanded the early Muslims to do the same against the Jews and polytheists in the Arabian Peninsula more than 1400 years earlier. Unfortunately, this same concept is being conveyed to Muslims today through Qutb’s works and are directing the Islamic militancy that employs tactics of terror against the United States and other developed societies around the world.

“Chapter 2: The Nature of the Qur’anic Method.” The message portrayed in this section of Milestones is relatively simple. Qutb (1993) laid the foundation in which his Islamic movement was to be directed, which was the principle that there is no god but God. Throughout this chapter Qutb explained the oneness of God and the importance of adhering to His word. He later explained that this was not the case in societies around the world, even among some Muslim societies and it was the duty of Muslims to ensure the belief in the oneness of God was conveyed and upheld as it was by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers. Qutb (1993) clarified that:

The way is not to free the earth from Roman and Persian tyranny in order to replace it with Arab tyranny. All tyranny is wicked! The earth belongs to God
Sayyid Qutb and should be purified for God, and it cannot be purified for Him unless the banner, ‘No deity except God’, is unfurled across the earth. Man is servant to God alone, and he can remain so only if he unfurls the banner, ‘No deity except God,’ – ‘La ilaha illa Allah’ – as an Arab with the knowledge of his language understood it: no sovereignty except God’s, no law except from God, and not authority of one man over another, as the authority in all respects belong to God.

(p. 19).

Much like the Prophet Muhammad did in the 7th Century, the Muslims of today are commanded to ensure that governance is based upon the word of God and not the dominance of one man over another. According to Qutb (1993) man was impure, immoral, and lacked any values. Purity, then, could only manifest from the word of God. Muslims were first directed to adopt this line of thinking, as it is the only line of thinking that reflects God’s intention of man. Next, they are again instructed to defy all attempts of any man who would try to assert his dominance over others be it through laws or any other methods that are not established according to Islamic principles. This is not a belief; it is described as being the only practical way in which to live life, according to God’s doctrine. These are the fundamental ideals that guide Islamic militancy. They are being commanded by the doctrine of God himself to ensure His purity reigns in both this world and the world hereafter.

"Chapter 3: The Characteristics of the Islamic Society and the Correct Method for Its Formation." In this chapter, Qutb (1993) again reiterated the concept of society being jahili; however, he blatantly stated that the jahili system needed to be confronted by
an “organized movement” whose intended goal would be to establish an Islamic society in its place. Qutb (1993) argued that:

Islam, then, is the only Divine way of life which brings out the noblest human characteristics, developing and using them for the construction of human society. Islam has remained unique in this respect to this day. Those who deviate from this system and want some other system, whether it be based on nationalism, color and race, class struggle, or similar corrupt theories, are truly enemies of mankind! (p. 39)

Qutb (1993) was describing to Muslims the importance of their duty. They are not merely fighting an enemy of God, but an enemy of mankind. Those who do not believe are of no importance to either God or man; hence, they are destined to spend their eternity in hell for their sins against all of humanity. Muslims, on the other hand, those who truly believe in, and live, the word of God, are destined for eternal harmony for their commitment to purifying this world for God. These are the battles being fought today. Islamic militants aim to purify the world for God utilizing any tactics at their disposal. This is what Milestones commands.

"Chapter 4: Jihaad in the Cause of God." This chapter is centered on the story of the Prophet Muhammad’s struggle to implement Islam in the 7th Century. Qutb (1993) explained that Muhammad, when confronted by non-believers, was instructed to act in various ways. First, Muhammad was instructed not to fight in order to amass a following that believed in the word of God. Next, he was commanded to do much of the same, but he was also instructed to leave Mecca and head for Medina. Finally, he was commanded to fight, but again, was given limitations. He was first commanded to fight only those
who aggressively opposed him and his followers. He then was instructed to war with all of the polytheists until he was able to fully institute the religion of Islam. The only exception was for those with whom an agreement was established in which case a tax was paid to the Muslims for protection. Qutb (1993) described that:

Now the people of the whole world were of three kinds: One, the Muslims who believed in him; two, those with whom he had peace and three, the opponents who kept fighting him. As far as the hypocrites were concerned, God commanded the Prophet – peace be on him – to accept their appearances and leave their intentions to God, and carry on Jihaad against them by argument and persuasion. He was commanded not to pray at their funerals nor to pray at their graves, nor should he ask forgiveness from God for them, as their affair was with God. So this was the practice of the Prophet-peace be on him-concerning his enemies among the non-believers and the hypocrites. (p. 41).

Much like the Prophet Muhammad was commanded by God to various stages in which to respond to those who did not believe, Qutb (1993) proposed that the Muslims of present-day should do the same. He proposed that “preaching and persuasion” should be used; however, it should be coupled with use of physical force because “…it (Islam) faced such material obstacles as the political system of the state, the socio-economic system based on races and classes, and behind all these, the military power of the government” (Qutb, 1993, p. 48). Qutb (1993) expanded by stating that:

It would be naïve to assume that a call is raised to free the whole of humankind throughout the earth, and it is confined to preaching and exposition. Indeed, it strives through preaching and exposition when there is freedom of communication
and when people are free from all these influences, as 'There is no compulsion in religion; but when the abovementioned obstacles and practical difficulties are put in its way, it has no recourse but to remove them by force so that when it is addressed to peoples' hearts and minds they are free to accept or reject it with an open mind. (p. 48)

In other words, the state of society was such that the jahiliyya, or unbelievers, had such dominance over all of humanity that their ability to determine their own beliefs was compromised. Islam, does not force itself upon others, nor is it the duty of Muslims to do so. It is the duty of Muslims to create a pure society that is free of any corrupting influences so that all people are able to choose for themselves without any hindrances. Qutb (1993) later explained that "The reasons for Jihaad ... are these: 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 ...” (p. 54). He described that accomplishing these goals should be everyday objectives for Muslims and, if necessary, should be attained through violence used as a means of purifying the world for all of humanity. Qutb (1993) concluded that:

Indeed, Islam has the right to take the initiative. Islam is not a heritage of any particular race or country; this is God’s religion and it is for the whole world. It has the right to destroy all obstacles in the form of institutions and traditions which limit man’s freedom of choice. It does not attack individuals nor does it force them to accept its beliefs; it attacks institutions and traditions to release
human beings from their poisonous influences, which distort human nature and
which curtail human freedom. (p. 59)

"Chapter 5: La Ilaha Illa Allah – The Way of life of Islam.” As was evidenced in
both Social Justice in Islam and In the Shade of the Quran, this section of Milestones
further explained the eternal struggle that existed between Muslims and the jahili society.
Once again, Qutb (1993) argued that humanity would never obtain purity without
implementation of Islam as an entire system of governance over society. In the same
light, this can, and would, never be attained as long as the jahili society was in existence
and it was the duty of every capable Muslim to ensure this change took place. Islam must
be protected by whatever means against the powerful influence of the jahili society for it
was described as the aggressor and the true threat to all civilization. Qutb (1993)
explained that:

The old jahili society may become submerged into the new Islamic society or it
may not, and it may make peace with the Muslim society, or may fight it.
However, history tells us that the jahili society chooses to fight and not to make
peace, attacking the vanguard of Islam at its very inception, whether it be a few
individuals or whether it be groups, and even after this vanguard has become a
well-established community. From Noah to Muhammad – peace be on them –
without exception, this has been the course of events at every Islamic call. It is
clear, then, that a Muslim community cannot be formed or continue to exist until
it attains sufficient power to confront the existing jahili society. (p. 63)

At the time, Qutb (1993) recognized that the jahili society was strong and would be
difficult to resist. As a result, he preached the need to organize against the corrupting
forces of the jahiliyya. The Islamic militants of today, those who are often referred to as terrorists, are those who understand Qutb's (1993) message and have organized for what they perceive to be the defense of Islam and humanity.

"Chapter 6: The Universal Law." The message communicated in this chapter was relatively simple. Throughout Milestones, Qutb (1993) spoke of the oneness of God. Building off of this idea, Qutb (1993) further explained the ultimate power of God as the creator of both man and the universe. Islam, as Qutb (1993) described, was meant to follow the word of God which meant adherence to the laws commanded by Him and Him alone. The only laws that fulfilled this requirement were those that were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad known as Shari’ā. So long as men followed laws implemented by other men, and not those established by God, there could be no peace or harmony on Earth. Qutb (1993) proposed that if men were being governed by both man made laws and the laws of God, there would be a constant imbalance between the truth encompassed by Islam and the falsehood of the principles governing the jahili society. According to Qutb (1993), Muslims were to be the warriors of the truth to curb the imbalance that resulted from man’s rule over man. Again, the message being conveyed was the need for action in order to implement the laws of God to create harmony and balance on Earth.

"Chapter 7: Islam is the Real Civilization." Having presented the concept of the jahili society over and over again, in this chapter Qutb (1993) began providing specific examples comparing the strengths of Islam, and all of its righteousness, with various aspects of jahili society. Qutb (1993) explained that "The jahili society is that which does not follow Islam and in which neither the Islamic belief and concepts, nor Islamic values or standards, Islamic laws and regulations, or Islamic morals and manners are cared for"
The issue, according to Qutb (1993) was that all aspects of society not in adherence to Islam were wrong and threatened humanity. The values and moral framework of the jahili were animalistic. True moral character could only be obtained through implementation and belief in Islam. Qutb (1993) also suggested that the jahili family was burdened with a conflict of roles and promiscuousness. He argued that the basis of Western society was founded on immorality. He claimed to have witnessed a society rampant with lust, free sexual relationships, illegitimate children, and woman’s abandonment of her responsibility to raise her children into productive human beings. Not only did Qutb see these things in society, he felt they were celebrated components of Western society from which mankind needed to be saved. He wrote that “Mankind can be dignified, today or tomorrow, by striving toward this noble civilization (Islamic society), by pulling itself out of the abyss of Jahiliyyah into which it is falling” (Qutb, 1993, p. 84).

“Chapter 8: The Islamic Concept and Culture.” To combat the persistent lack of morality that Qutb (1993) felt encompassed all societies that were non-Muslim, he instructed all Muslims to adopt and strictly adhere to the governing principles of Shari’a. He explained that Shari’a was more than legal codes and legislation, but a means for controlling and moderating morality within society. Islam would not be capable of confronting the West with all of its corruption and coercion until the Muslims of the world united under the guidance of Islam and its various principles. Qutb (1993) clearly stated that this was not his opinion or his idea, but was the intention of God of which no mortal being should ever question, only obey.
"Chapter 9: A Muslim's Nationality and His Belief." Qutb (1993) placed great emphasis on clarifying the nature of jahili society and how it failed to meet any of the principles of Islam. In this chapter, Qutb (1993) began to more clearly discuss the role of Muslims in the fight against the West. Citing the Quran, Qutb (1993) wrote that:

‘You will not find the people who believe in God and the Hereafter taking as allies the enemies of God and His Prophet, whether they be their fathers or sons or brothers or fellow tribesmen’ (58-22) In the world there is only one party of God; all others are parties of Satan and rebellion. ‘Those who believe fight in the cause of God, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of rebellion. Then fight the allies of Satan; indeed, Satan’s strategy is weak.’ (3:78). (p. 96)

This chapter depicted a clear theme that directly pits the jahili society, or all societies that are not Muslim, against Islam. Qutb (1993) continued:

The victory is achieved under the banner of faith, and under no other banners; the striving is purely for the sake of God, for the success of His religion and His law, for the protection of Dar-ul-Islam (House of Islam), the particulars of which we have described above, and for no other purpose. It is not for the spoils or for fame, nor for the honor of a country or nation, nor for the mere protection of one’s family except when supporting them against religious persecution. The honor of martyrdom is achieved only when one is fighting the cause of God, and if one is killed for any other purpose this honor will not be attained. (p. 103)

In other words, Muslims are to take up arms in defense of Islam. Society as a whole was described as the enemy for its persecution of those Muslims who truly believed in the word of God. Fighting for the jahiliyya, or failing to fight in the name of God, would
only lead to death and eternal damnation; however, as Qutb (1993) described, God would reward those who died fighting for His cause.

"Chapter 10: Far-Reaching Changes." In this chapter Qutb (1993) explained that there could be only two possible outcomes from the struggle between Islam and everyone else. First, Islam could triumph over the jahili society and institute a society in adherence to the principles of Islam, which was described to be a society based on truth, morality, and purpose. On the other hand, Islam could fall to the evil that was the jahili society in which case all of humanity would be destined to destroy itself. Compromise could never be attained for it would only be possible with Muslims accepting systems of governance that deviate from the word of God. Qutb (1993) described that:

Either Islam will remain, or Jahiliyyah: Islam cannot accept or agree to a situation which is half-Islam and half-Jahiliyyah ... The mixing and co-existence of the truth and falsehood is impossible. Command belongs to God, or otherwise to Jahiliyyah; God's Shari'ah will prevail, or else people's desires ... The foremost duty of Islam in this world is to depose Jahiliyyah from the leadership of man, and to take the leadership into its own hands and enforce the particular way of life which is its permanent feature. (p. 107)

Qutb (1993) further explained that Muslims were to do whatever was necessary to implement Islam, not out of hatred for those who do not believe, but out of love for humanity and the belief that following the word of God was the only path that would ensure the sanctity of human life remained.
"Chapter 11: The Faith Triumphant." The struggle between good and evil, between Islam and jahiliyya, is one that moves far beyond the physicality of war. Qutb (1993) proposed that:

Conditions change, the Muslim loses his physical power and is conquered, yet the consciousness does not depart from him that he is the most superior. If he remains a Believer, he looks upon his conqueror from a superior position ... Even if death is his portion, he will never bow his head. Death comes to all, but for him there is martyrdom. He will proceed to the Garden, while his conquerors go to the Fire. What a difference! And he hears the voice of his generous Lord: ‘Let it not deceive you that the unbelievers walk about in the land. A little respite and their abode is Hell, and what an evil place! But for those who fear their Lord are Gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein - a hospitality from God; and that which is with God is best for the righteous.’ (3:196-198). (p. 120)

In other words, the struggle is ultimately one of beliefs. Those who do not believe in the oneness of God, the pillars of Islam, and all Islamic principles are doomed. Though they may possess the physical prowess to dominate in this world, their failure to adopt the call that there is no god but God and Muhammad is his Prophet will ultimately lead to their demise. For those who do believe should not fear death, as it will bring them to God who rewards those who are faithful to Him.

"Chapter 12: This is the Road." Though this is the final chapter of Milestones, the messages presented herein radiate far beyond the pages of the text. Qutb (1993) began by describing the call to God as being one all Muslims must accept, despite what the outcome of their struggle may be. He wrote:
This is a story of a group of people who believed in God and openly proclaimed their belief. They encountered tyrannical and oppressive enemies who were bent upon denying the right of a human being to believe in the All-Mighty, the All-Praiseworthy God. They intended to deprive man of that dignity which has been bestowed upon him by God and without which he is reduced to a mere plaything in the hands of tyrants, to be tortured, burned alive, and provide entertainment to his tormentors by his cries of agony. (Qutb, 1993, p. 123)

The tyrants and oppressors Qutb spoke of were those who did not believe in the principles of Islam. They were those who had defiled the morality of humanity; in turn, tainting the word of God.

The recourse, as described by Qutb (1993) was to fight in the name of God to reclaim all that is His. Again, the outcome should not be feared because, as Qutb (1993) expressed:

All men die, and of various causes; but not all gain such victory, nor reach such heights, nor taste such freedom, nor soar to such limits of the horizon. It is God’s choosing and honoring a group of people who share death with the rest of mankind but who are singled out from other people for honor – honor among the noblest angels, nay, even among all mankind, if we measure them by the standards of the total history of generations of men. It was possible for these Believers to save their lives by giving up their faith; but with how much loss to themselves, and with what a great loss to all mankind? They would have lost and would have killed this great truth, that life without belief is worthless, without
freedom is degrading, and if tyrants are allowed to dominate men’s souls as well as their bodies, then it is entirely depraved. (p. 125)

Those who fight in the way of God do not choose to do so, but are chosen by God. They have been given the prestige to defend His name and His purity. As a result of their sacrifice, they will be revered above all other men who may have died in the same way, but failed to do so under the banner of Islam. Those who do perish following the path proposed by Qutb (1993) shall be martyrs:

And it is life from God for the martyrs: ‘Do not consider those as dead who were killed in the way of God; they are living and find sustenance from their Sustainer. They enjoy what God has given them from His bounty, and are glad for those who are left behind (on earth) and have not reached there yet, that they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. They are jubilant at the favor from God and His bounty; indeed, God does not destroy the reward of the Believers.’ (3:169-171). (p. 127)

Those who truly believe and partake in this struggle should be aware that they are under the command of God and God alone. Qutb (1993) reassured that those who had followed the same path in the past were victorious evidencing the fall of the Pharoanic Empire, the successes of Muhammad in Medina and Mecca, and the creation of an Islamic society that spread from Spain to Western China under the guidance of the caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. This was the path Qutb (1993) urged all Muslims to follow and is a path that still subsists today.

Conclusion of Data and Analysis

History shows that the creation and evolution of Islam throughout the world has been a process of great complexity. Understanding of the roots of Qutb and his continual
influence on present-day Islamic militants could only be obtained after thorough examination of the environment that fostered his adoption of militant ways of thinking. The presentation of the messages of *Social Justice in Islam, In the Shade of the Quran,* and, most importantly, *Milestones* all provide incomparable insight into the belief system constructed by Qutb more than 50 years ago; yet, still evident in today’s struggle against terrorism that is rooted in Islamic militancy. The question that still remains; however, is what can be done with this information?
Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction to Discussion and Conclusions

Now that the belief system that govern the actions of militant Islam have been presented, it is important to offer some possible recommendations into what should be done with the information. The sole purpose of exploring this topic was to provide insight into the foundation of modern Islamic militancy that is rooted in the works of Qutb. Comprehensive examination of the literature explained the nature of religious terrorism while at the same time evidencing the importance of understanding Qutb. Supplementing the literature was a thorough examination of the history surrounding the evolution of Islam leading up to Qutb’s adoption of militant thinking with the purpose of providing the historical, political, and social contexts that ultimately led to the cultivation of an ideology that directly threatens civilized society around the world. This ideology was born from Qutb’s beliefs and has survived through his writings entitled Social Justice in Islam, In the Shade of the Quran, and Milestones. Keeping all of the previous analysis and examination in mind, the final goal of this research was to provide counterterrorism policy recommendations that reflect the historical, political, and social contexts of militant Islam and the works of Qutb.

Counterterrorism Policy Recommendations

The threat of terrorism is a global crisis that plagues the minds of policymakers around the world as a result of the complex nature of terror groups. This complexity has created numerous difficulties for policymakers tasked with formulating effective counterterrorism policy. Effective counterterrorism policy should be formulated with the understanding of the difficulties present in attempting to respond to terrorism. One of the
more prevalent difficulties, in responding to terrorism, as discussed in the literature review, is constructing a definition of what actually constitutes a terrorist act. This difficulty materializes from the diversity among the motivations of terror groups and the tactics they employ. Adding to the difficulty of counterterrorism policy formulation is the fact that policymakers must try to address security issues resulting from specific religious-terror groups without alienating the public, or citizens, who may peacefully worship the same religion the extremists claim to represent. With these difficulties in mind, and building off of concepts already discussed within the literature, long-term counterterrorism policy should aspire to prevent terrorist threats through the utilization of both defensive and offensive action. These preventative actions should be directed at increasing domestic and international cooperation pertaining to counterterrorism efforts, promoting a comprehensive understanding of the enemy and their motivations, and the continued physical removal of terrorist groups and sponsors through effective utilization of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.

A necessity in the formulation of counterterrorism policy is the identification of the goals and objectives hoped to be achieved by that policy. Effective counterterrorism policy needs to be operationally configured to meet a variety of goals. Prevention of terrorist acts should be the initial short-term goal of the policy, but should not be overly relied upon. This short-term response to terrorism should be achieved through understanding of the tactics employed by various terrorist groups and by identifying their intended targets. Both of these objectives can be attained through a comprehensive understanding of specific terrorist groups and their motivations. In pursuit of fulfilling these objectives, policymakers must also look to long-term prevention of terrorism which
can only be obtained through utilization of a spectrum of approaches aimed at specific
groups and their motivations.

Long-term policy must ensure there is a complete understanding of what constitutes terrorism allowing for those responsible for actively pursuing terrorist actors a framework from which to base their action. This can be obtained through the creation of a universal legal definition of what constitutes terrorism. A legal definition is important because it incorporates the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government all of whom have a role in the prevention, capture, and trial of terrorist actors. With a working legal definition of terrorism, law enforcement has a guideline for action against criminal activity and the courts have a means of prosecuting terrorists for their acts; however, beyond guiding specific action, a legal definition alone does not adequately provide for an effective response to combat terrorism. To be completely effective, the definition needs to be widely accepted to ensure consistency in its implementation and effectiveness.

Constructing a legal framework for counterterrorism policy would better suit the long-term goal of terrorism prevention. The United States has placed great emphasis on militaristic responses to terrorism because of public outcry for immediate results in the “War on Terror.” Ultimately, effective counterterrorism policy should not be clouded by short-term goals meant to foster public support; it should be tailored towards long-term success at prevention of terrorism and the protection of lives.

At the same time they develop a legal framework for counterterrorism operations, policymakers must emphasize, and actually enforce, both international and domestic cooperation among counterterrorism actors. A lack of coordination among the various
agencies within the United States is still extant, even after the September 11 attacks. Policymakers need to establish cohesion among these agencies to reduce the duplication of services and the fragmentation that still exists among the CIA, FBI, NSA, and other government entities tasked with counterterrorism operations. There is no room for political meandering or selfishness when faced with threats such as those presented by Islamic militancy. Sole emphasis needs to be on the protection of innocent human life, not being re-elected, or praised for a job well-done.

Understanding what the terrorists believe and insight into their true motivations, beliefs, and intentions creates a significant strategic advantage for counterterrorism efforts. Qutb (1993) himself supported this idea suggesting to his followers that “The enemies of the Believers may wish to change this struggle into an economic or political or racial struggle, so that the Believers become confused concerning the true nature of the struggle and the flame of belief in their hearts become extinguished” (p. 132). This supports the claim that the tactics of the United States need to move beyond those of conventionality simply due to the fact that the enemy is in no way conventional. Qutb (2000) also wrote that:

The Islamic conquests, then, were not wars of aggression, nor yet were they a system of colonization for economic gain, like the colonizing ventures of later centuries. They were simply a means of getting rid of the material and political opposition that stood between the nations and the new concept that Islam brought with it. They were an ‘intellectual war’ with respect to the peoples and a physical war with respect to the powers that held these peoples, and which denied them access to the new religion through the exercise of power and coercion. (p. 199)
The main point is that the war against the West should be fought on two fronts, with the mind, and with physical force. Unfortunately, a majority of counterterrorism policy places exhaustive emphasis on addressing only the physical front failing to confront the root of the terrorism threat. Understanding of the enemy and their motivations is the first step at combating the intellectual front that Qutb (2000) proposed to those responding to the call to Islam.

In order to fulfill the objective of understanding the enemy, counterterrorism policy must place emphasis on exploring the nature of Islamic militancy, which means thorough exploration of the concepts and ideas conveyed by Qutb. In his writings, Sayyid Qutb justified the spread of Islam, by whatever means necessary, by arguing that the current state of society, mainly in the West, is one that is based around ignorance. He described the ignorant society as a jahiliyya society. Qutb’s suggested that present day society is symbolic of the societies that existed prior to 610 C.E. and the prophecies of Muhammad. For this reason, the West, which was founded on Christian principles not Muslim principles, is unfit to lead the mortal world. The West is described as being valueless; hence, they are worthless and corrupting. The only way to end their reign of corruption is through the Islamic movement which has adopted militant tactics. Qutb argued that the only hope for the salvation of mankind is Islam which fosters an “us vs. them” mentality.

In this fight, Muslims must remain unsullied by Western ideals and they must embrace God. Their mere existence is for Him and in servitude of Him. Without His guidance they are lost, making them no better then the jahilis, the unenlightened people prior to the revelation of Islam to Muhammad, in the West. The devotion to God needs
to be all encompassing and must not waiver. It must be reflective in their government, politics, economics, and all aspects of their daily lives.

People often wonder how it is that those who commit heinous acts against humanity such as suicide bombings, which are believed to be martyrdom bombings to Muslims, have the nerve and the barbaric instinct to do so. The reason is that in their hearts and minds it is not barbaric, it is not random, and it is not suicide, it is an act of devotion, loyalty, salvation, but even simpler, it is a tactic of their style of warfare. They are not killing innocent life; they are ridding God’s earth of its impurities, those who have not taken the Shahadah recognizing that there is no God, but God, and Muhammad is his messenger. They are fighting what they believe to be God’s war. Children grow up knowing nothing other than the West is evil and it is their duty, as Muslims, if they want to spend eternity in paradise, to rid the earth of that evil.

After thorough examination of the works of Qutb, the ideology is clear; Qutb is not preaching murder, or violence, but whatever is necessary for survival. He is preaching against a threat, against an enemy of mankind. He is reaching out to Muslims in hopes that they struggle against the infidel. He is calling all Muslims to unite in jihad much like the Prophet Muhammad and his followers had to unite in the struggle against non-believers in the 7th century.

According to modern extremists the current jahili society is overrun with the types of corrupt systems that not only warrant jihad, but rely on it for the preservation of life. The ideology described and brought forth by Qutb is not limited to Qutb’s Muslim Brotherhood. This ideology is encompassed by all extremists and radicals striving for change and reform. These militant Islamic groups have become desensitized to the
violence they commit and it has become an act of normalcy for them (Guenena, 1986, p. 63). The ideology has grown to catastrophic proportions. Not only is violence a tactic of these militant based groups, it is their livelihood. "Most crucial is the militants' belief that it is their religious duty to see to it that a truly Muslim social order comes about" (Ibrahim, 1980, p. 430). The struggle the extremists present are unlike any other mankind has ever seen. It is a struggle that ultimately seeks to destroy mankind in an effort to purify mankind for God.

Terrorists employ a variety of unconventional tactics as a means of achieving a variety of goals. The best and only way to combat "true believers" who utilize terrorist tactics is through comprehensive examination of the beliefs and motivations that guide their actions, increased cooperation of counterterrorism efforts, and exercising the full capabilities of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. These policy recommendations are vital to the success of counterterrorism efforts. The strategic advantages that could be obtained from implementing such recommendations could prove influential in ridding the world of the terror that threatens the survival of modern, civilized society and the sanctity of life. The enemy does not fear death, it welcomes it. Policymakers within the United States need to construct policy in a similar vein, abandoning all hopes and dreams of prosperous political careers for one purpose and one purpose only, protection of innocent life from those who will stop at nothing to take it.

Limitations of this Research

The intended purpose of this research was to add to the current body of knowledge that already exists pertaining to religious terrorism by comprehensively examining the works of Sayyid Qutb and examining the historical, political, and social
contexts that helped to facilitate the creation and survivability of his philosophy. Though the goals of this research were achieved, there are some evident limitations. First, one could argue that this research has little practicality. The purpose of this research from its onset was to add to the current understanding, or lack thereof, of militant Islam. It was by no means meant to create policy, but to provide information to better understand the threat posed by Islamic militancy; in turn, helping to create better informed policy. Comprehensive understanding of Qutb affords policymakers greater insight into the concepts that govern Islamic militancy. For example, the United States often associates the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Tareek-e-Taliban of the Federal Tribal Areas of Pakistan with al Qaeda; however, complete understanding of militant ideology, such as that proposed by Qutb, would show that the only relations among the groups described are those presented by the misguided policies of the United States. Unlike al Qaeda, whose philosophy is grounded in Qutbian militancy, the Taliban movement is an historical purification movement rooted in the Deobandi tradition. Each group presents differing motivations requiring differing responses. Unfortunately, a lack of information pertaining to the ideologies governing these groups does not afford policymakers the ability to accurately and effectively address the threats each poses.

Second, this research has limited generalizability. Emphasis was placed on examining the works of one salient Islamic philosopher, Sayyid Qutb. Qutb was a Sunni Muslim and though the Sunni sect of Islam comprises a majority of the Islamic population around the world, there are a variety of other religious sects, both within and outside of Islam, that have militant adherents who promote the use of terrorist tactics. This research does not address all religious-based terrorism, only a specific segment.
Finally, the primary sources of data relating to Qutb were translated works. The three works examined were translated to English from their original language of Arabic. Efforts were made to ensure accuracy of the translated texts by comparing the same titles translated by different translators against one another; however, as with any translated document, there is always the risk of variance in the meaning of words from one language to another.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

In addition to this research, there are a variety of other avenues that could be explored relating to this topic area. Building off of the evident influence of Qutb on present-day Islamic militancy, it would be interesting to compare his philosophy, rooted in Islam, with militants who obtain their justification and directions from a different religious denomination, as well as comparing the differences among Sunni extremism and Shia extremism. Similarly, this too would add to the continued understanding of religiously motivated terrorism and could provide insight into areas where similar resources and tactics could be utilized to address and assess the emergence of terrorism.

To address the importance of conducting research with the purpose of adding to knowledge and understanding of a problem, it would be interesting to conduct a survey that assesses various peoples understanding of Islamic militancy, basing questions on principles developed by Qutb and other prominent ideologues. Participants could include law enforcement, the intelligence community, military personnel, policymakers, and the public. A study of this type would identify where the flow of information is lacking while at the same time showing areas where current counterterrorism policy may be weak
due to inadequate understanding of the nature of Islamic militancy or any other form of terrorism.

Concluding the Research

Any research relating to terrorism and the ideologies that govern its existence would be beneficial for the simple fact that it would add to the current body of knowledge relating to terrorism. The premise of this research evolved from Sun Tzu’s (2003) concept that the most strategic advantage in any war is complete and comprehensive understanding of ones enemy. It is the researchers adamant belief that, with regards to Islamic militancy, the United States and its allies have yet to fully grasp the nature of the enemy who continually threaten the lives of so many with their reckless abandon.

Counterterrorism policy of the United States has yet to accurately reflect the complex system of beliefs governing religious militancy around the world. The ideology is extremely persistent which is evidenced by the continual influence of Ibn Tamiyya, who died in 1328; yet, his philosophy endures. It is evidenced by the continual influence of Muhammad ibn abd al-Wahhab, who died in 1792; yet, still continues to amass a following of adherents dedicated to his movement. Finally, it is evidenced by the unwavering influence of Sayyid Qutb, who was martyred in 1966; yet, his thoughts and ideas still emanate in the minds of those who claim to be purifying this world for God utilizing uninhibited violence as commanded by God. The future of terrorism is not reliant on people, but the survival of the belief, and to this day, those responsible for counterterrorism policy have yet to fully grasp and understand that the future of terrorism rests solely on the policy failures of today. If nothing else, this research and analysis of Qutb provides a glimpse into the determination, persistence, and means these religious
militants will embrace to achieve an end that to any rational person seems completely irrational. That is the problem, to us it is utterly irrational, but to them it is exactly the opposite; their abhorrent actions are logical, necessary, and most importantly, their duty as “true” believers of God.
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