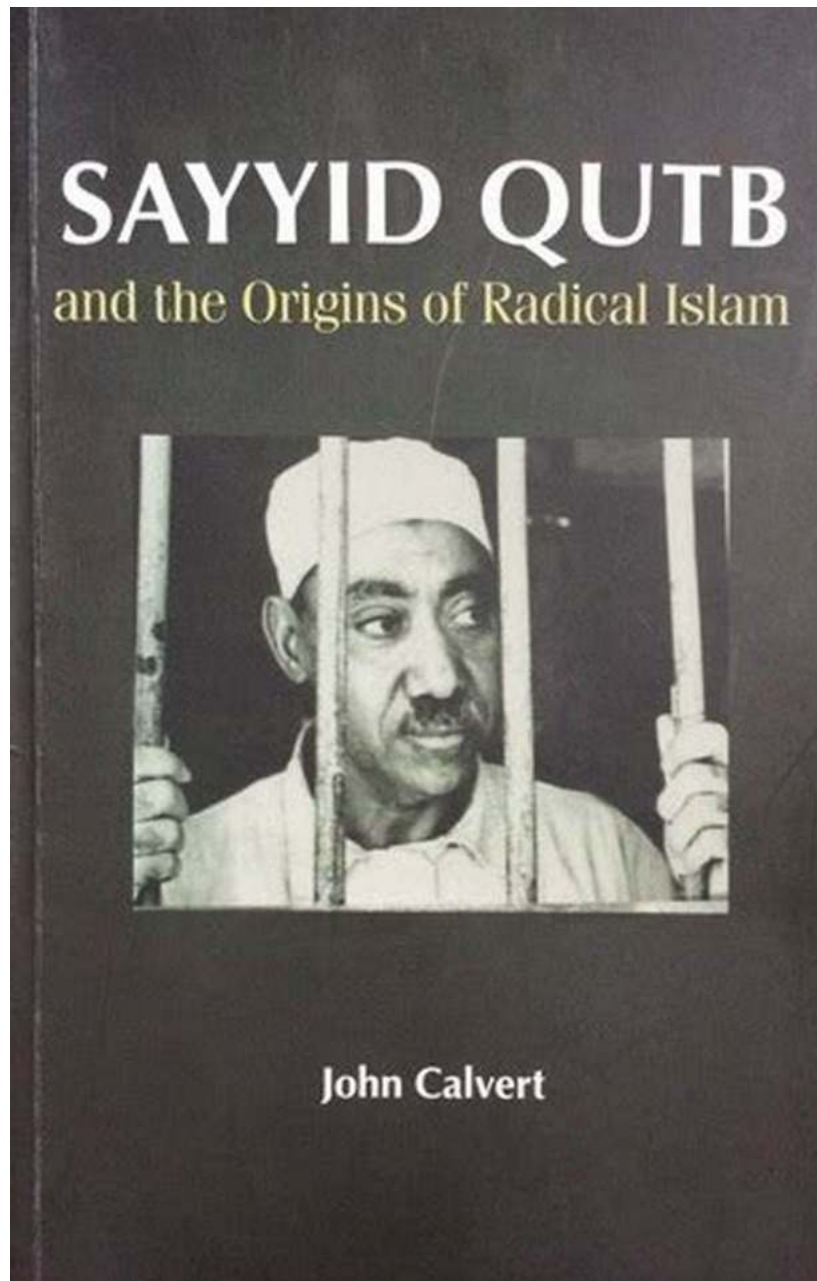


# **Unraveling Sayyid Qutb: The Architect of Radical Islamism**

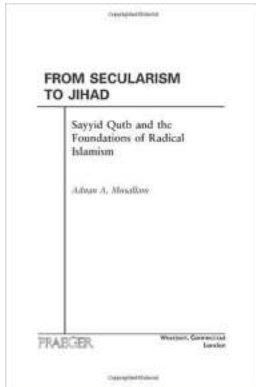
For decades, the world has grappled with the rise of radical Islamism, a political ideology often associated with terrorism and extremism. To understand the roots of this dangerous movement, one must delve into the life and ideas of Sayyid Qutb.

## **The Early Life of Sayyid Qutb**



Sayyid Qutb was born on October 9, 1906, in the small Egyptian village of Musha. Growing up in a religious household, Qutb received a traditional education and showed great promise as a student. He was particularly known for his eloquence in Arabic literature and poetry.

**From Secularism to Jihad: Sayyid Qutb and the Foundations of Radical Islamism**



by Adnan Musallam (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2276 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Print length : 280 pages



After completing his primary education, Qutb moved to Cairo to pursue higher studies. He enrolled at Dar al-Ulum College, where he studied a wide range of subjects, including education, psychology, and literature. It was during this time that he became interested in political ideologies and started engaging more actively in Egyptian society.

## Shift Towards Islamic Fundamentalism

Although initially influenced by Western values, Qutb later developed a deep concern over what he perceived as the moral degradation of Egyptian society brought on by secularism and Western cultural imperialism. He started viewing Islam as the only solution to restore moral order and protect Muslim identity.

Qutb's experiences during a two-year stay in the United States added fuel to his growing radicalism. Witnessing the permissive Western culture, he believed that it posed a threat not only to Muslims but to humanity as a whole. He condemned what he saw as the materialism, objectification of women, and overall immorality prevalent in Western societies.

Upon returning to Egypt, Qutb shifted his focus from literature to religious studies. He became involved with the Muslim Brotherhood, a political and religious

organization aimed at establishing an Islamic society based on Shari'a law.

## **The Milestones of Qutb's Ideology**



Qutb's most influential work is considered to be his magnum opus, "*Milestones*" (Ma'alim fi al-Tariq). Published in 1964, this book laid out his radical Islamist vision for transforming society. In it, he denounced any form of government or system that did not adhere strictly to Islamic principles.

One key concept introduced by Qutb in "*Milestones*" is the concept of *Takfir*, which refers to declaring someone as an apostate due to deviating from what he perceived as true Islam. This allowed extremists to justify violence against those they considered as enemies of Islam.

Another significant aspect of Qutb's ideology is his rejection of the idea of a nation-state. He argued that Islam transcends national boundaries, advocating for a global Islamic caliphate that would unify all Muslims under a single government, thereby abolishing the existing world order.

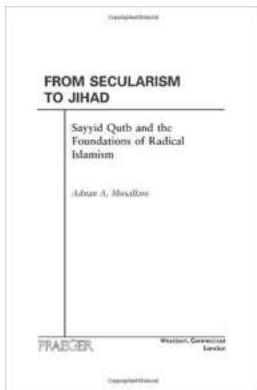
## **The Legacy of Sayyid Qutb**

Qutb's radical ideas greatly influenced subsequent generations of Islamists and jihadists. His belief in the necessity of armed struggle against nonbelievers and the establishment of an Islamic state resonated with those seeking to challenge Western dominance and reclaim Muslim territories.

His writings, including "*Milestones*," have been used by various extremist groups as a justification for acts of violence. Qutb's ideas continue to inspire terrorists even today, highlighting the lasting impact of his contributions to radical Islamism.

Sayyid Qutb, once a promising literary figure, transformed into one of the most influential ideological architects of radical Islamism. His views on the supremacy of Islam over all other systems and his call for armed struggle continue to shape the actions of extremists worldwide.

Understanding Sayyid Qutb and the foundations of radical Islamism is crucial in combating this dangerous ideology. By examining the life, ideas, and legacy of Qutb, we can gain insights into the radicalization process and work towards countering extremism.



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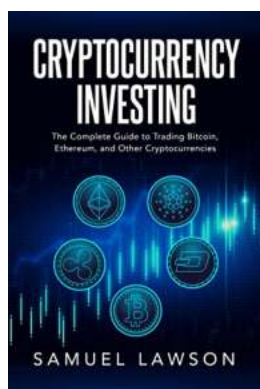
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The modern political idea of jihad—a violent struggle against corrupt or anti-Islamic regimes—is essentially the brainchild of one man who turned traditional Islamic precepts inside out and created the modern radical political Islamist movement. Using the evolution of Sayyid Qutb's life and writings, Musallam traces and analyzes Qutb's alienation and subsequent emergence as an independent Islamist within the context of his society and the problems that it faced. Radicalized following his stay in the United States in the late 1940s and during his imprisonment from 1954 to 1964, Qutb would pen controversial writings that would have a significant impact on young Islamists in Egypt for decades following his death and on global jihadist Islamists for the past quarter century. Since September 11, 2001, the West has dubbed Qutb the philosopher of Islamic terror and godfather ideologue of al-Qaeda. This is the first book to examine his life and thought in the wake of the events that ignited the War on Terrorism.

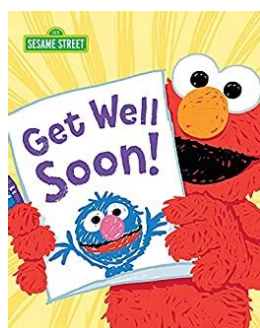
A secular man of letters in the 1930s and 1940s, Qutb's outlook and focus on Quranic studies underwent drastic changes during World War II. The Quran became a refuge for his personal needs and for answers to the ills of his society.

As a result, he forsook literature permanently for the Islamic cause and way of life. His stay in the United States from 1948 to 1950 reinforced his deeply held belief that Islam is man's only salvation from the abyss of Godless materialism he believed to be manifest in both capitalism and communism. Qutb's active opposition to the secular policies of Egyptian President Nasser led to his imprisonment from 1954 to 1964, during which his writings called for the overthrow of Jahili (pagan) governments and their replacement with a true and just Islamic society. A later arrest and trial resulted in his execution in August 1966.



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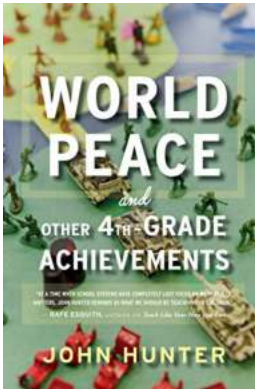
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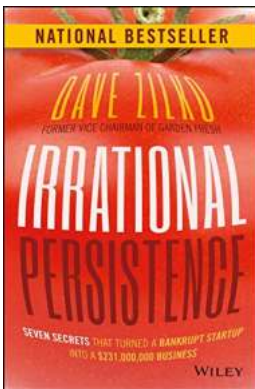
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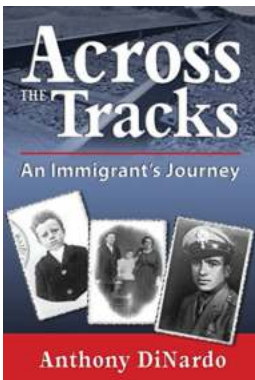
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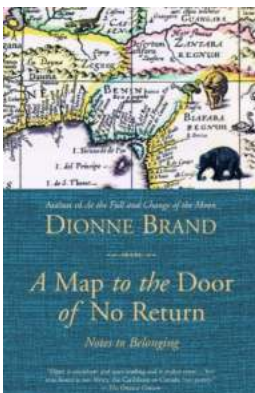
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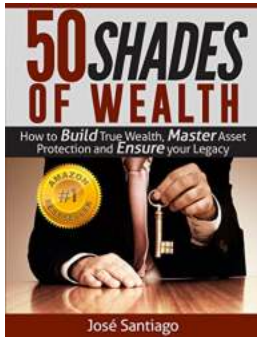
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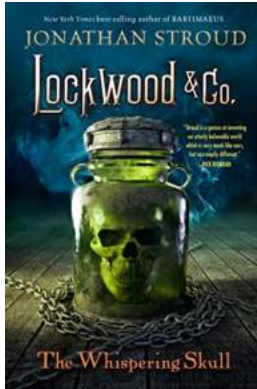
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