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# Strategic Thinking of the Salafi-Jihadi Movement

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## Executive Summary

The strategies of the World Jihad movement headed by al-Qaeda are not uniform, though they all are inspired by the same religious sources: medieval authorities such as Ibn Taymiyya and later intellectuals and leaders that have written since the early 1980s. The broad common denominator of this literature in all its forms is the unambiguous statement that all matters – religious, political or military – must be directly derived from two sacred religious sources, the Koran and the Sunna. In other words, its fountainhead is the Law of God itself. The room for independent interpretation and adaptation to modern reality is narrow and marginal and where it does exist must derive from the way of life and customs of the Islamic patriarchs (*al-salaf al-salih*). Any idea, concept or religious ruling in this literature in the individual, social or political spheres is binding and sanctified and becomes the Word of the living God by basing it on citations of rulings from the Koran or the Hadith. Its application is a sacred duty, whether it be individual, societal or through Islamic rule. Deviation from its application may bring about a declaration that the deviate, whether an individual or rule – is an apostate that has abandoned the Muslim community and whose fate is death. This inflexible and uncompromising religious approach has turned the followers of the Jihadist stream into totally loyal people who obey any order or religious ruling, especially the one calling for jihad and self-sacrifice for its sake.

Based on this methodology, the World Jihad movement led by al-Qaeda has developed a corpus of strategic thinking. While this corpus has not been processed into one consensual document, and remains hidden in different treatises and ideas, certain common elements can be discerned. This literature focuses mainly on addressing the definition of the enemy and its nature, the global view of relations between Islam and the outside world, the ultimate aims and the ways and means of attaining them. This thinking also deals with apocalyptic ideas from which it may be inferred – and sometimes it is even explicitly stated - that the present era is approaching End of Days in which redemption and victory over its enemies are predicted. In any event, the Muslims are called upon not to remain indifferent but to take the destiny of the Ummah and their divine mission into their own hands and fulfill their mission of local and global jihad in which victory is promised by Allah.

World Jihad strategy was not created *ex nihilo*. It developed under the impact of the collapse of nationalist-secularist ideology in the Arab and Islamic world, the protracted socio-economic crises that beset it, and the political and strategic developments that turned it into an arena of violent cultural conflicts between external forces and factors and the local peoples and states. The movement's harbingers identified the ideological schism on the one hand, and the political opportunity on the other, and acted toward breathing life into anachronistic Salafiyya concepts and ideas and dressing them up in ideological attire in line with the spirit of the times and circumstances, thereby providing an answer to the spiritual yearnings and needs of a wide public. They derived from the original slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood – *Al-Islam huwa al-Hall* (Islam is the Solution) – that was mainly intended to enlist the masses for revolution in the Arab states, but did not stop there. They adopted an agenda with a global framework and composition. The struggle conducted by the "Afghan Arabs" for the liberation of Afghanistan from Soviet occupation in the 1980s was the crucible in which the al-Qaeda organization, the World Jihad movement, and

the platform for enriching the doctrine of jihad and its establishment in its new form, were forged. The battle taking place today over the fate of Iraq is in fact the continuation of the earlier one, and fuels the preservation and development of jihad doctrine through al-Qaeda and the advancement of its global agenda.

The Jihadi texts enumerate four key principles that guide the strategy of the movement, as follows:

- Hakemiyat Allah - The Rule of Shari'a as a condition for Islamic rule.
- Al-wala' wa- al-bara'a - total loyalty to Allah and acceptance of his absolute authority, on one hand and disavowal of any connection with infidelity or infidels.
- Takfir – “heretication” of Muslims, justifying waging Jihad against them.
- Balances of power – realistic military and political analyses of the balance between the Muslims and their enemies.

The **perception of the enemy**, its definition, the laws of war against it and its rationale, be it a defensive, deterrent or initiated war – are a pivotal component of Jihadist strategy. From the standpoint of Jihadist intellectuals the enemy of Islam is comprised of both local and external entities. These however are not separate entities but two concentric and inter-related circles of conflict. In the inner-local circle the World Jihad conflict is with the Arab and Islamic regimes, “the apostates who have abandoned Islam” (*murtaddun*) and the Shi'a. In the outer circle the conflict is with "Crusaders", (i.e. the West) and Zionism. The former are the “agents” of the latter in the Muslim Ummah and the latter are the strategic hinterland of the former. The enemy is assessed in religious terms and analogous with the war fought against it by the Prophet Muhammad. It is therefore not new but the continuation of the same enemy of the Prophet from the inception of Islam: the enemy without – the infidels (*kuffar*) and the traitor within – the “apostates” (*murtaddun*). These latter may be “natural apostates” (*murtadd fitri* - born Muslims who has left Islam) or “local apostates” (*murtadd milli* - Muslims who had not been born a Muslim who have recanted and abandoned Islam). The enemy is amorphous, yet persistent in its worldview, its nature as “corrupter of the faith”, its hatred of true Islam that follows the path of *al-salaf al-salih*, and its cohesion into a single camp.

According to the Jihadist worldview, Islam's war against these enemies from within and without is an ancient one and is inherent to Islamic military history. This confrontation was at the root of the wars that the Prophet waged against the original apostates and the tribes that abandoned Islam (the “*ridda*” wars). The conflict however is not restricted to the purge of Islam from the “fifth column” but it is rooted in the concept of the clash of civilizations that will continue until the End of Days. Hence there can be no recognition of a world order built upon international bodies, treaties, agreements and conventions. All of these are rendered worthless as civilizations are, by their very existence, doomed to be constantly at war with each other until the ultimate victory of Islam. For Islam, this is an existential war. In the balance is not only the physical existence of Muslims, but also the existence of belief in the unity of God and its rule in the world. This Weltanschauung is bound up in the concept of *al-wala' wa-al-bara'a*, whose literal and conceptual meaning is absolute belief in God on the one hand, and on the other, disavowal of anything representing apostasy, whether it be idolatry or concepts drawn from the outside world and

assimilated into Islamic society, such as nationalism, democracy and socialism. Hence Islam's war is not only directed against a physical, concrete enemy, but against an ideological enemy in the form of apostasy and the abovementioned imported concepts.

The priority accorded to concentrating the war and cultural effort against one enemy or another varies in accordance with global circumstances and existing opportunities, and is the result of strategic calculations on the one hand, and existing opportunities and constellations on the other. Thus the 9/11 terror attack against the World Trade Center in Manhattan was carried out after the onus had been shifted from the internal enemy – due to operational difficulties in waging a war against it – to the external enemy that was perceived as an attractive target, as it was unprepared and not on the alert for an attack from the outside.

**Jihad** in the parlance of the Jihadist movement is at the present stage of the conflict, primarily a means of defense against the enemies of Islam that will evolve later on into a strategy for attack. **However, Jihad is not a “necessary evil” but an aim in itself.** Prominent in the literature is the raising of jihad to the status of an obligation, when only the principle of faith in God itself is loftier. It is aimed against infidels and apostates of all sorts, as the latter are considered to be worse than the former (hence their punishment and sentence are harsher). The means permitted by jihad are becoming ever more radical, to the point of *fatwas* condoning the sabotage and destruction of oil resources in Muslim states (with emphasis on Saudi Arabia), and even the use of non-conventional weapons against the crusading West – the “natural” infidels. ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, the prophet of the jihad doctrine, and intellectuals that followed him have further radicalized his conception, to the point of mandating jihad on every Muslim, not only for the liberation of occupied Muslim land, but also to extend Muslim rule over what is known as “*dar al-harb*”, territory under non-Muslim rule, with the aim of achieving the ultimate dual objective: from a political standpoint, the reestablishment of the Islamic Caliphate over the entire world, and from a religious standpoint, establishing faith in the unity of God and imposing the Word of God on the whole world.

Jihadist Salafiyya sanctifies the value of self-sacrifice for God (*istishhad*) and perceives it as deriving from the duty of jihad. Self-sacrifice brings with it reward: assurance of reaching the next world, or paradise. Hence there is nothing loftier than jihad and self-sacrifice except for the faith itself, and there is no greater reward than fulfilling these two commandments. Al-Qaeda is in contention with the religious establishments that refute what is known by al-Qaeda as “*istishhad*”. Furthermore, it is attempting to globalize the idea of *istishhad*. Today, this idea serves al-Qaeda as its principal weapon in the battle for Iraq, and more recently it began using it in the Maghrib.

The mission of jihad is entrusted first and foremost to the *mujahidin* who are considered to be the vanguard of the Islamic nation. A vast body of literature has been written about this group, which is presented under the name attributed to the Companions of the Prophet himself, *al-ta'ifa al-mansura*, i.e., the group meriting God's grace (or the group that Allah gives victory and his support to). This elite group has had compliments lavished on it with the aim of raising its morale and heightening

motivation, particularly in light of the criticism leveled against it, from a security and religious standpoint alike, by religious regimes and establishments.

Al-Qaeda's military-operational conception can be summarized by the following principles:

- Freedom of action in dealing with the enemy: the use of any possible means to inflict damage on the enemy on the basis of the logic of spilling the enemy's blood (istihlal) to get rid of him (al-bara'a). Muslims are permitted to inflict any damage whatsoever on countries against which war can be waged (bilad al-harb), but not on countries with which there is a convention ('ahd), because their people, their blood, their money and the honor of their women (a'raduhum) are permitted to Muslims, as they were to the Prophet Muhammad in his wars against Quraysh, Bani 'Uqayl, Bani Nasir and al-Ta'if. Bin Laden relates to the West as a country against which war can be waged.
- Striking against the enemy's centers of economic and military power and symbols: the objective is not only to strike at the enemy's arrogance but also to inflict tremendous material damage and cause collapse. The obligation is to bring about change by the use of force and not influence policy because of political aims. 9/11 illustrates this mode of attack.
- Extending military actions: al-Qaeda has set itself the aim of attacking American targets throughout the world. In effect, actions of this kind have been executed in several continents, but the most serious warning is in taking the front into the heart of enemy territory ('aqr darihi) in order to bring about collapse.
- Adopting unconventional tactics in the war against the enemy by employing creative and unconventional thinking, such as the use of the enemy's own methods to attack it. In this context the most important method touches upon numerous groups of suicide fighters that will undertake acts of sacrifice ('amaliyyat fida'iyya istishhadiyya) designed to bring about collapse.
- Use of propaganda and psychological warfare together with military force.
- Use of the "Threat of Force" method: the most notable example of this was when bin Laden asserted the right to acquire weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. However, the main thrust of his plans is on the actual use of weapons against his enemies. Armed violence and military force are the principal and almost only means, in contrast with other means of influence he mentions, but in effect the "life of killing and battle" is the main thing.
- Decentralization of jihad in the way the al-Qaeda elements and its allies conduct and execute it; each independently in its own theater in accordance with prevailing circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

A small number of World Jihad intellectuals have addressed the question of weapons of mass destruction. This discussion focuses on the legalistic permission to use such weapons (that may kill Muslims as a corollary of killing infidels, etc.). There does not however seem to be a serious strategic discussion of the implications of use

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<sup>1</sup> Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, pp. 259-262, 263, 265.

of such weapons. The discussion of WMD per se is mainly focused on nuclear weapons. Chemical and radiological weapons are generally perceived as legitimate means that do not require special dispensation to use against infidels (see below – Jihad by means of harming economic interests).

A compilation of different discussion regarding the stages of the Jihad looks, more or less, as follows:

- **Awakening the Masses:** This phase began in earnest on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and continues with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The goal is to broaden the ranks of the Jihadi movement and generate local opposition to the “apostate regimes”.
- **Attrition** – this stage (*Harb Istinzaf*) is aimed at bleeding the economically, militarily, and politically until it disengages from the Muslim lands altogether and severs its alliances with the “apostate regimes” (in this context, some texts bring the historic examples of the abandonment of South Vietnam and the Shah’s regime as cases in point).
- **Toppling “apostate regimes”** – this stage focuses first on the “inner circle” of susceptible regimes such as Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia). This stage has been referred to sometimes as “*tasfiyat hisabat*” (settling accounts).
- **Taking control over the formerly “apostate” lands** – this stage is considered to be one of the most sensitive as the breakdown of the old regimes will most probably be followed by a breakdown of law and order.<sup>2</sup>
- **Establishing Shari’a Law** – In this stage new regimes will be formed based on Shari’a. These regimes may not necessarily be identical in form and only in a later stage will unity be achieved.
- **Purging all Western influences from the Muslim world** – This stage includes the total liberation of all Muslim lands ruled by infidels such as Palestine, Kashmir, and al-Andalus (Spain).
- **Reestablishment of the Caliphate** – This will be the final phase of organizing the Muslim world that will then allow for the final confrontation with the West.
- **Final Conflict** – This phase is the final one which is in many Jihadi texts intertwined with eschatological allusions.

In formulating their philosophy the radical Islamic movements give priority to questions in the sphere of the faith and reforming the faith of the individual and the public at large on the one hand, and the development of the idea of jihad on the other. They are less deeply involved in issues related to formulating political, economic and social programs for the Islamic state or Islamic Caliphate they seek to establish in accordance with their theocratic model. Moreover, the perception that the establishment of the Caliphate in one territory or another is an objective worthy of aspiration is gradually being assimilated by the clerics in general and the al-Qaeda leadership in particular. It should not be perceived solely as an ideal and a vision that has been part of Islam since its inception. From an ideational standpoint, there are

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<sup>2</sup> See: Abu Bakr Naji, "Idarat al-Tawahush: The Most Dangerous Phase That The Islamic Nation Will Go Through," The Center for Islamic Studies and Research, as viewed on al-Firdaws Website, October 2005



some signs of increased thinking on the image and foundations of the Caliphate. At the same time, in the view of its leaders al-Qaeda is becoming not only a Jihadist military organization but also a politically oriented organization in its thinking and activities, with an eye to the establishment of the Caliphate. At the end of the day, an important change can be detected in the al-Qaeda strategy led by bin Laden, from one focused on terror as an objective in itself, to a strategy of conducting a military and political battle for the establishment of an independent Islamic entity.

The al-Qaeda leadership perceives the battle for the fate of Iraq as a historic, not to be missed opportunity of controlling this theater so it can be used as a stepping stone to expand jihad to adjacent theaters, their occupation and unification under an Islamic caliphate. Although the declaration of the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq by al-Qaeda in Iraq is high-flown, it is a symbol of these desires.

The revolutionary nature of the Jihadi strategy – in contrast with the more “gradualist” Muslim Brotherhood strategy – is based on the principle that there is no hope for reform of a “Muslim” country ruled by “apostate rulers” in order to adapt it to the Islamist model, but rather only a general revolution and the reestablishment of the Islamic state, from top to bottom, in accordance with that model can reinstate the theological, social and political values of Islam. The absolute de-legitimization of the “apostate states” that is expressed in Jihadist Salafiyya literature necessitates revolution that will topple regimes, replace them with Jihadist elements and establish the model of the Islamic state. Only such a revolution can bring about the restoration of the glory, power and leadership role of the Islamic nation throughout the world is reaffirmation of **all** Islamic values and enable the Islamic nation be able to enlist all its potential– in ideological, spiritual and material terms – for its return to its role as the world’s leading power.

# Introduction

## General Background

The present study presents and analyzes the strategy of Takfir/Jihad Salafiyya of the World Jihad movement, led by the al-Qaeda organization. This strategy does not constitute a doctrine *per se* and is not based on a specific official document of one of the entities belonging to this ideological-religious stream. It was molded into its present form on the basis of concepts, treatises, positions and religious rulings supported almost exclusively by the Koran and Sunna and is inspired by the Salafist tradition (*al-salaf al-salih*) formulated in Islam in the first three centuries since its foundation.<sup>3</sup>

This Jihadist Salafiyya literature was mainly created during the war waged by the Arab Afghans in Afghanistan in the 1980s through some principal intellectuals, led by ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, Muhammad al-Maqdisi, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Qattada, Sheikh ‘Abd al-Mun’im Mustafa Halima (a.k.a Abu Basir al-Tartusi) and ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Hakim (a.k.a. Abu Mus’ab al-Suri), and the Saudi ideologists who rose to prominence in the present decade and are known as *Shuyukh al-Sahwa* (“the Sheikhs of Islamic Awakening”), led by Sheikh Hammud bin ‘Uqla al-Shu’aybi (d. 2002) and Yusuf al-‘Ayiri (killed in May 2003). However, this literature was not created ex nihilo. First, it derives its roots and inspiration and even consolidated theological positions from three Islamic clerics and theologians who are considered to be the founding fathers of Salafism: the theologian Ibn Taymiyya, known as Sheikh al-Islam, who was active in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab of the 18<sup>th</sup> century who founded the Wahhabiyya movement in the Arabian Peninsula, and Sayyid Qutb who was active in Egypt in the Muslim Brotherhood and formed a radical ideological stream in the movement. He was executed by the Nasser regime in the mid-1960s.<sup>4</sup>

From an ideological standpoint, the formulation of World Jihad strategy was also influenced by local Jihad movements that mainly sprang up in Egypt, beginning in the mid-1970s. Particularly noteworthy in this context is ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj who wrote the treatise *Al-Farida al Gha’iba* (The Absent Obligation, i.e., the Jihad) and Ayman al-Zawahiri who wrote some important books and later joined bin Laden, became his deputy and greatly influenced him.

Traumatic events that took place in the Arab and Islamic system together with the ideological-national-secular collapse in it brought about the renewed relevancy of the doctrines of the three founding fathers of the abovementioned Salafist concept, for the enrichment and building of even more radical philosophical strata on their foundations by their disciples.

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<sup>3</sup> For the beliefs and program of the al-Qaeda organization in Iraq, see the *Al-Jihad fi Sabil Allah* website: <http://jihadweb.5gigs.com/home.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Matti Steinberg, “The Theology and Strategy of Al-Qaeda and World Jihad,” Part 1, *Hakeshet Hahadasha*, No. 12, Summer 2005.

In the first stage, these doctrines were a source of inspiration for local Takfir and Jihadist organizations that were founded mainly in Egypt, Jordan and Algeria. Their principal aspiration was to topple the “heretical” regimes in their countries, islamize their societies in the spirit of their Salafist beliefs, and establish an Islamic *Shari’a* state in their place. In the 1980s, during the Arab Afghan struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and influenced by it, a new pan-global ideological Jihadist movement began emerging which held that Islam must face a global front of enemies and heretics from within and without, in order to fulfill the religious Islamic ideal of victory of the faith over heresy, and in strategic terms, imposition of Islamic rule and establishment of an Islamic caliphate throughout the world. From an operational standpoint it inscribed on its escutcheon the implementation of the Jihad as a war like any other, not only locally but especially globally.

The rise of the radical Islamic Jihad movement in Afghanistan with al-Qaeda at its center and its spread from this area throughout the Muslim world and to Islamic minorities worldwide, took place against the backdrop of combined strategic developments:

- A deepening of the socioeconomic crisis in the Islamic countries, particularly the Arab ones, except for the oil states that continued to enjoy economic prosperity.
- The military weakness of the Islamic world that was fully demonstrated in the wars in the Arab-Israeli arena and the occupation of Afghanistan by the USSR.
- The collapse of the national-secular ideologies and the failure of the Arab socialist message, which did not attain the pretentious aspirations of turning the Arab and Islamic world into a focal point of economic and military power in the world.

The increasing power of the West, led by the United States, and the appearance of the new world order inundated the Islamic world with Western cultural patterns that were alien to the culture and religion of Islam. Moreover, from the viewpoint of the radical Muslims these phenomena threatened to topple Islam while exploiting its weakness, and in the worst case turn it into a meaningless and cultureless entity losing its identity throughout the Western world, and at best into a satellite of that world. When referring to the enemies of Islam, particularly prevalent is the term “crusading” (*al-Salibiyya*) or “the crusading war” (*al-harb al-Salibiyya*). This war against Islam is especially attributed to the United States, with Israel and Zionism perceived as the United States’ main ally.

In the view of the radicals this is a long-term war against Islam throughout the world. The First Gulf War led by the US against Iraq, which included the stationing of American troops on “holy soil” in Saudi Arabia, greatly advanced the development of the idea of the “Crusader attack” against the Islamic world. From the point of view of Abu Mus’ab al-Suri the war was conducted under the pretext of liberating Kuwait, but in fact its objective was “the Islamic nation, the Arabian Peninsula, its holy sites (the heart of this world – ‘*aqr dar al-Islam*) and resources, and particularly its oil. Either directly or indirectly, all the governments of the Arab states, without exception, contributed to the American war effort. This war sent philosophical and psychological shockwaves through the Arab and Islamic nation that affected its Islamic awakening (*al-sahwa al-Islamiyya*) which was at its peak in Afghanistan in 1990. The shock

caused us to fully understand the objectives of the new Crusader attack against the Arab nation.”<sup>5</sup>

The weakening of Islam on the one hand, and the strengthening of its adversaries, that threatened to destroy it on the other, created rising waves of agitation, frustration and disappointment and brought about a significant drop in the sense of trust and security of the masses vis-à-vis the ruling elites. This created fertile soil for the appearance, growth and flourishing of the Islamic Jihadist organizations, particularly those of the World Jihad type. They exploited the ideological vacuum created and the feeling of loss of way that spread to raise anew the banner of the Islamic message. This ensured the restoration of Islam’s former glory and the renewal of Islamic superiority over its adversaries. This was conditional upon the return of the masses to original Islam, i.e., Islam that followed the Jihadist Salafiyya path that had been abandoned; renewal of jihad that had fallen into obsolescence; and rallying round the new radical Islamic leaderships that constituted the vanguard (*al-ta’ifa al-mansura* – the group meriting God’s grace).

The present wave of Islamist strategic thought is the result of the experience of the attacks of 11 September, Afghanistan and Iraq. World Jihad clerics have formulated a general strategy which is widely accepted by the majority of the organizations and clerics belonging to this stream. This literature, however, is not monolithic. It reflects the existence of ideological streams, some of which are more radical and others less so. At the tactical level there are different and sometimes contradictory *modi operandi* that are a product of particular environmental conditions or special political circumstances. Thus, for instance, Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi led his struggle against his “infidel” adversaries in Iraq – foreigners and Muslims alike – in accordance with particularly tough and aggressive modes of action, which were not to the liking of the al-Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan, were considered too brutal and likely to harm the Jihad in Iraq. In his letter to Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, Ayman al-Zawahiri advised him to moderate his actions, especially towards the Shi’a.

Zawahiri’s criticism of the indiscriminate attacks on the Shi’a is not unique in the al-Qaeda circles. Many Salafist *‘ulama* claim that such attacks are counterproductive for al-Qaeda’s strategy of gaining mass Muslim support for its struggle. The older generation of al-Qaeda-linked Salafist *‘ulama* is clearly growing uneasy. Included in this group are Abu Basir al-Tartusi, who took a stand against the London bombings on the basis of his interpretation of Islamic law on jihad; Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, who criticized Zarqawi, his erstwhile disciple, in a public statement on the same basis; and Muhammad al-Ma’sari, one of the fathers of the Saudi Arabian reform movement in London. These intellectuals hold undeniable Jihadist Salafiyya credentials and are close to Zawahiri ideologically and organizationally. It is conceivable, therefore, that they influenced Zawahiri’s decision to add his weight to their arguments.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Hakim and Abu Mus’ab al-Suri, *Da’wat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya al-‘Alamiyya* (The Call for World Islamic Resistance), Part 1 – Roots, History and Circumstances, December 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Shmuel Bar and Yair Minzili, “The Zawahiri Letter and the Strategy of al-Qaeda”, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 3, Hudson Institute, 16 February 2006.

The Jihadist Salafiyya literature demonstrates a certain degree of intellectual pluralism. Even if the clerics were bound, to a great extent, to religious sources focused on the Koran and Sunna, they did not always prophesy in the same spirit. They sometimes presented and supported each other's ideas, sometimes adding clarifications and strata to their colleagues' ideas, and sometimes presenting a more rigid or more moderate perception than those of their colleagues, or according a certain value greater weight than their fellows had. This is germane, *inter alia*, to the perception of jihad in our times: the more lenient hold that it is the public's duty (*fard kifaya*) against a foreign enemy on its soil and a personal duty (*fard 'ayn*) against an enemy occupying Muslim land. The more severe hold that jihad is a personal duty against an enemy anywhere – on its own soil and on Muslim soil occupied by it. At the same time, and in comparison with his colleagues, 'Abd al-Mun'im Mustafa Halima, a.k.a. Abu Basir al-Tartusi, represents a more balanced and moderate approach to the foundations and principles upon which the Islamic state should be founded. He accords special weight to the value of justice upon which this state should be founded. He rejects the legitimacy of an "Islamic regime" that abandons this principle even if it maintains *Shari'a* to the letter, and prefers a regime of "original apostates". It is important in this context to map and identify the radicals, the less radical, and those who become influential, from an authoritative-religious standpoint, over the World Jihad movement.

This emerging strategy is characterized by dynamic development that attempts to meet challenges, political developments and issues, which due to their very innovativeness or uniqueness, cannot be resolved by the early or late literature. Thus, for example, reality mandated a religious ruling on the issue of whether an attack on Muslim oil resources is permissible when the resources are controlled by "heretical" Islamic regimes or the question of the use of non-conventional weapons by the Jihadist organizations against "the infidels". The leaders of World Jihad are continuously faced by central developments like the Second Lebanon War, the war in Somalia, the tensions between Sunnis and Shiites, which all arose in the past year.

In modern Jihadist Salafiyya literature a distinction should be drawn between the different categories of documents and publications, between their relative level of importance, and more to the point, their level of authoritativeness. The documents with the highest authority are the religious rulings (*fatwa*, *hukm*), particularly those issued on behalf of the most accepted and authoritative clerics. These are mainly issued on the basis of addressing a particular issue or event. Media statements and manifestos serve as a platform for the foremost leaders – bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi – for presenting their position on various political events, conveying messages and demonstrating their presence in the Islamic and world arenas. In this context the speeches and interviews given by Usama bin Laden are of particular importance. In light of his lofty status they are considered to a great extent as a doctrine that must be respected and followed. On more than one occasion he advanced the issuing of *fatwas* on central issues, as in the statement in which he declared that it was his right, even his duty, to acquire non-conventional weapons. There is, however, also great importance in the books that were widely published by clerics over the last two decades. Their importance is manifested by their constituting the detailed religious-legal basis – which is based upon the Koran and Sunna and on leading clerics and religious arbiters – for a series of issues such as

jihad, the external and internal enemy, relations with the outside world, use of economic warfare, attitudes towards the Shi'a, etc.

These Salafist scholars play a critical but not widely observed role in the global Jihadist movement. Ideology is often overlooked and is considered separate from the strategic and operational aspects of Islamist militancy. Yet the intellectuals behind the Jihadist movement set the framework for debates and provide direction that is by and large adhered to, or is at least a determining factor in the planning of attacks. By better understanding their role in the movement, governments combating terrorism can attempt to intervene earlier in the radicalization process and ultimately work toward undermining their influence.<sup>7</sup>

With its inception the Internet became a most significant multiple of power for the Jihad organizations and their ideological heralds. They recognized its advantages and possibilities for an unprecedented structure of propaganda and indoctrination on a global scale, for conveying their detailed ideas to every Web surfer.

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<sup>7</sup> Chris Heffelfinger, "The Ideological Voices of the Jihadi Movement", *Global Analysis*, The Jamestown Foundation, Vol. 4, Issue 24, 14 December 2006, <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2370233>

## Sources of Authority: Islamic Jurisprudence and Political Concepts

According to its official spokespersons and presenters, Jihadist Salafism as part of the World Jihad stream is exclusively based on sources of religious law – the Koran and Sunna – which are the Word of the living God. A modicum of interpretation is permissible on the basis of the heritage of the Patriarchal Caliphs in Islam's first three centuries, if the Koran and Sunna cannot provide an adequate answer to questions and knotty problems. On the basis of these principles, theologians and arbiters from previous centuries structured central and often detailed concepts that serve as a kind of guide for the behavior required from the Islamic nation, its leaders and subjects. A Muslim, be he ruler or subject, who does not accept or apply these principles according to the Jihadist Salafiyya interpretation, is *ipso facto* an apostate who has abandoned the religion of Islam. Moreover, Jihadist Salafiyya draws inspiration from the course of human history, with emphasis on Islam contending with its enemies from the dawn of its founding, and from it draws conclusions and courses of action:

The Koran and Sunna determine the principles of faith, worship, morals and Islamic worldview from the global-strategic, political, economic and social standpoints, side by side with the relationship between Islam and the outside world. They are also the source that confirms the existence and religious-cultural character of the conflict between Islam and the West, and the cultural clash between them. They ensure the triumph of the Muslims. The conflict exists both because the “unbelievers” are determined to destroy Islam and because Islam is duty bound, by divine commandment, to eradicate apostasy from the face of the earth. The Jihadi texts enumerate four key principles that guide the strategy of the movement, as follows.

### The Rule of Shari'a as a condition for Islamic rule

The Principle of *fa-uhkum baynahum bi-ma anzala Allah* (Judge between them by what Allah has revealed – Sura 5:48) also appears in a very common version, “*al-hukm bi-ma anzalahu Allah*” (Judgment according to what Allah sent down to you from Heaven). Everyone, rulers and subjects alike, is subject to the judgment and law of Allah as they appear in the Koran and Sunna. No one can share this privilege with Him. Anyone not judging according to what Allah sent down from Heaven is an unbeliever. Hence, a country that takes upon itself a different law and legislator, even if he believes in Allah, is not considered Islamic.

### The Principle of al-wala' wa-al-bara'a

This concept constitutes a two-word title embodying one of the central principles of Jihadist Salafiyya. Its origins are in the philosophy of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of *al-Wahhabiyya*, but it gained a new dimension in Jihadist Salafiyya as a weapon against Wahhabism itself and Arab regimes considered heretical. According to the Jihadist Salafiyya concept, *al-wala'* means total loyalty to Allah and acceptance of his absolute authority, while *al-bara'a* means disavowal of any connection with infidelity or infidels. Condemnation of every other loyalty derives from this absolute loyalty to Allah. This illegitimate loyalty is not only

idolatry and loyalty to the unbelievers – about which Allah cautioned in the Koran – but also adoption of ideas and concepts instead of or in addition to the original Islamic concept deriving solely from the Koran and Sunna, such as democracy, nationalism, socialism and constitution, which are idols that must be shattered. Any ideology that by its very nature threatens exclusive loyalty to Islam is completely unacceptable and forbidden. Hence any Muslim regime not based solely upon *Shari'a* is heretical, and jihad must be declared against it.

The centrality of the principle of loyalty and disavowal is manifested in books on this subject written by, inter alia, Abu Mus'ab al-Suri. From this concept al-Zawahiri draws some central principles on which a large body of literature has been written: the severe proscription on Muslims taking apostates for protection, and on the other hand, the obligation of aiding believers and demonstrating hostility towards apostates; opposition to any kind of call to cease the jihad, and on the other hand, calling upon the nation to join the jihad in order to defeat its enemies; viewing the jihad against the Americans and the Jews and their allies, the “natural” apostates, those who have disavowed Islam (*murtaddun*) and the hypocrites (*al-munafiqun*) as the duty of every Muslim (*fard 'ayn*), and calling upon the Islamic nation, particularly the young fighters, to display patience in everything pertaining to the obligations of religion, especially jihad for the sake of Allah which after belief is the most important duty, as the *'ulama* concurred. Not without cause does the author quote the Hadith in the last sentence of his book: “Among my people is a group of warriors for Allah, it overcomes its enemies and its adversaries are unable to harm it to the End of Days.” This verse is quoted in similar wordings by the senior ideologues of Jihadist Salafiyya. Its aim is to grant religious credence to the argument that the group, also known as *al-ta'ifa al-mansura*, i.e., who merit the grace of God, which is loyal to the path of the Prophet and his Companions, is immune to all evil, harm and tempest through the power of God, and will, in the end, bring redemption to the Muslims. This group – which sometimes arises directly and sometimes implicitly in Jihadist Salafiyya – is in the image of the groups loyal to the path of Jihadist Salafiyya itself (see below).<sup>8</sup> In conclusion, belief in and loyalty to God (*wala'*) is not enough, also required is the eradication of idolatry and apostasy (*shirk*, *kufir*, *ilhadi*) and their rejection.<sup>9</sup>

## The Principle of *Takfir*

This concept determines whether the Muslim, whatever he may be from the standpoint of status and ethnicity, meets the criteria of a believing Muslim who belongs to the Muslim community, or has become an apostate according to Islamic religious law, i.e., he has become *murtadd*, whose religious-legal meaning is excommunication from the Muslim community and the passing of a death sentence on him. Due to the blatantly radical character of *takfir*, which is subject to harsh attacks by the religious establishment, which claims that it runs counter to Islamic beliefs, the

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<sup>8</sup> Ayman al-Zawahiri, *Al-Wala' wa-al-Bara'a: 'Aqida Manqula wa-Waqi' Mafqud* (Belief [from generation to generation] and Lost Reality), *Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad*, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws), December 2002-January 2003 (Shawwal, AH 1423).

<sup>9</sup> The Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia addressed *Al-Wala' wa-al-Bara'a* in Islamic religious law in order to attack Takfiri Jihadist Salafism, and ruled that all these should be disavowed (*al-bara'a*) – meaning the Takfir and Jihadist groups – which cause discord among Muslims, harm their security and threaten their economy. [www.maktoob.com](http://www.maktoob.com), 6 March 2006.



Jihadist Salafiyya religious arbiters had to explain and justify at length the use of the weapon of *takfir*, particularly from the religious-legal standpoint. The point of departure of their explanations is that *takfir* is not a new invention but is rooted in the Koran and Sunna. In his treatise “*Takfir is the Law of Allah*”,<sup>10</sup> ‘Abd al-Mun’im Mustafa Halima (Abu Basir al-Tartusi), attacks those fighting against “the *takfir* faith”, and who claim that it is the main problem of countries and regimes, and suggest a religious ruling relating to “the young people of the *tawhid* and the *jihad*” as apostates, and to excommunicate from Islam anyone adhering to the belief of *takfir*. Abu Basir states categorically that *takfir* is a Koranic and prophetic belief (*‘aqida qur’aniyya wa-nabawiyya*) and draws on evidence in hundreds of quotations from the Koran and Sunna. Anyone fighting the *takfir* culture is in fact fighting Allah and his Messenger, and the Koran and Sunna. Sheikh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab determined that in the ten *nawaqid* of Islam (the acts that annul a person’s right to be a Muslim) – which are extensively quoted in Jihadist literature as a religious ruling – are included anyone who does not view apostates as *mushrikun*, or doubts their apostasy or believes in their school of thought, and therefore denies the existence of God. Yet Abu Basir emphasizes that the act of denial must not be exaggerated. *Takfir* is indeed the law of Allah, but its exaggeration is harmful and constitutes an unbridled attack and *irja’* (the deferment of Allah’s sentence against great sinners), and therefore this method must be opposed.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Abd al-Mun’im Mustafa Halima, *Al-Takfir Hukm Allah, fa-Ayna Tadhhabun* (*Takfir is the Law of Allah*), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws), 27 November 2005 (25 Shawwal, AH 1426).

<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Nasir al-din al-Albani, one of the last century’s greatest Salafi scholars, notes that all the *takfir* organizations – from the *Khawarii* onward – base their concept of *takfir* – which in his view is unacceptable – on a Koranic verse without a deep understanding of the principles of the Islamic religious precept: “And whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers” (Sura 5:44). According to him, the *takfir* organizations interpret the concept of “*kufr*” and “*kafirin*” in over-general terms in the Koran and Hadith, as leaving the Islamic community (*khuruj min millat al-Islam*). According to him, each case should be discussed on its merits, whether it is “*kufr*”, denial that is bound up in leaving the community of Islam, or less severe denial that is not apostasy (*kufr duna kufr*). In the first, more severe case, *kufr* done out of belief and intention (*kufr i’tiqadi*), and permission for *kufr* by the heart (*istihlal qalbi*). For example, a ruler who does not judge in accordance with what God sent down from Heaven and feels that it is suitable for adoption in this generation. The second, less severe case, is practical *kufr* (*kufr ‘amali*) that a person permits himself from a practical standpoint (*istihlal ‘amali*) and not by permission of the heart. He says that it should be interpreted in the same way as the concepts of “*dhalimin*” (the unjust) and “*fasiqin*” (the transgressors) [Sura 5:47 and Sura 5:45 respectively]. Saudi Arabian Sheikh ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Baz who accepts al-Albani’s approach to this issue, terms the first case as “a great denial” (*kufr akbar*) and the second as “a small denial” (*kufr asghar*).

Source: ‘Ali ibn Hasan ibn ‘Abd al-Halabi al-Athari, *Al-Tahdhir min Fitnat al-Takfir* (Warning Against the Conspiracy of Takfir), 1996, pp. 49-82.

In total contradiction of al-Albani and Ibn Baz, and in accordance with Jihadist Salafism, the Saudi Arabian Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf determines that in the abovementioned three verses, as in the Koran and Sunna, the meaning of *kufr*, *dhulm* and *fisq* is a great transgression that excludes the person from the community of Islam. Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Al-Nidham al-Dimuqrati – Nidham Kufri* (A Democratic Regime is a Regime of Unbelievers), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Islam, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws)

The International Islamic Conference held in Amman between 4-6 July 2005, with the participation of delegates from Sunni and Shi’a religious establishments, went to extremes in the struggle against the *takfir* approach adopted by both the Sunni camp and radical Sunni bodies acting against the Shi’a. In a *fatwa* it determined that anyone belonging to the eight accepted Sunni and Shi’a schools of thought is a Muslim, and that declaring a person an apostate is unacceptable (Jordan Times, 6-8- July 2005). This means equality between the abovementioned schools of thought and their legitimacy. A further meaning is total rejection of the *takfir* approach.

## The Principle of the Influence of Human History and Balances of Power

The experience of history has shaped the worldview of Jihadist Salafiyya scholars who hold a political view, in several aspects:

- An ancient historical view of the clash between Islam and the unbelievers from the beginnings of Islam. The emphasis is on the clash between Islam and the Crusaders (crusading), especially since the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD Crusade. The Jewish component is an integral part of the Crusades.
- A contemporary political-strategic view – the attack by Western crusading and its allies, Zionism and Israel, against the Islamic world since World War One (The Sykes-Picot Agreement) is the first central stratum of this attack. The most notable present link is the US invasion of Afghanistan on 7 October 2001. The American goal of destroying the Islamic world is their paramount challenge, for the Americans are convinced that they will not be able to achieve their aims in the region while it is dominated by Islam, in light of Islam's ability to fight back. In contrast, the Americans are capable of coexisting with other Western and Eastern nations because they can mislead them and thus take over their resources and yoke them. The motive behind the American attack on Islam is mainly religious and cultural, and only secondarily economic and military.

### *Analysis of the Balance of Power between Islam and its Enemies*<sup>12</sup>

Despite the common denominator of the unbeliever camp, there are internal conflicts among the states comprising it. Exploiting this reality is important. International relations are based on fraud, falsehoods and deception. Honoring conventions, treaties and the new world order is not based on values but on the balance of terror and mutual interests. These relations are fragile and vulnerable. On the one hand, the power of the US is real; on the other hand it is an illusion. The 9/11 attack proved that this power can be hit with small resources. In effect, its power is in decline, despite its increasing brutality.

The elements required to ensure victory are: knowing the enemy and correct planning on the one hand, and fear of God (*taqwa*), loyalty to Allah and walking the true path, on the other. Islam, under continuous crusading attack, must defend itself, fight for its very existence, and fight back. The duty of eradicating apostasy and exalting the Word of Allah also mandates attack. It would seem that this perception is rooted in “the existing reality of the need for defense” on the one hand, and divine moral duty, and the reemergence of the meaning of jihad as a holy war in the full sense of the term, on the other (see “The Origins of Shari’a” below).

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<sup>12</sup> *Iraq: Al-Jihad, Amal wa-Akhtar* (Iraq: Jihad, Hopes and Dangers), Al-Hay'a al-I'llamiyya li-Nusrat, al-Sha'b al-'Iraqi, Markaz Khidamat al-Mujahidin, <http://www.lahdah.com/vb/showthread.php?t=27231>.

# The Enemy – “Crusaders”, Israel and “Apostate” Regimes

## General

The perception of the enemy and the rules of war are extensively discussed in Jihadist Salafiyya literature from various perspectives – religious law, historical, topical and military. Included in the category of “enemy” are: Crusaders, headed by the US, Israel and Zionism, Islamic and Arab regimes that “deny and abandon Islam”, the hypocrites<sup>13</sup> and the Shi’a. Identification of the enemy derives from Islamic religious law – the Koran, the Hadith and the rulings of noted religious arbiters. The intensive preoccupation with the enemy and mainly its demonization, with emphasis on crusading, and the recurring declarations on the existence of this enemy, are designed, to a great extent, to recruit followers for World Jihad and enlist financial, operational and moral support for it, for without an enemy of Islam in this world there is neither justification nor a basis for the existence of World Jihad. Hence the enthusiastic support for the ‘clash of civilizations’ theory in which Islam is depicted as the persecuted victim of the Crusader attack that has been going on since time immemorial. As part of their obsessive preoccupation with the enemy, the Jihadist Salafiyya scholars also had to take into account the Islamic rules of war regarding each enemy separately. This is meant to grant legitimacy to their terror attacks, including religious justification for the 9/11 attack, and to repel any criticism leveled at them in the Islamic world. Moreover, at times when “the American enemy” was on the brink of war against a Muslim state (as in the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, when there were also Muslim states that participated in the preparations), and in the course of the war itself, a special propaganda effort was instigated to dissuade the general public from offering aid to “the Crusader enemy”, claiming that such aid would oil the wheels of the war against Islam.

## The Clash of Civilizations

Jihadist Salafiyya literature accepts Huntington’s theory to the effect that throughout human history there has been a clash of civilizations. Bin Laden endows this clash with an Islamic character when he describes it as one characterized by religion and faith that is taking place between believers and unbelievers, and further states that this is supported in the Koran and Sunna.

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<sup>13</sup> Abu Mus’ab al-Suri includes the hypocrites that deviate from the straight path (*al-munafiqun al-dalla wa-al-mudillin*) in the category of “the enemy aggressor” (*al-‘aduw al-sa’il*) together with other enemies – the Jews, the Americans and their allies, Russia, and the governments that deny and abandon Islam (*al-hukumat al-murtadda*). He accuses the hypocrites among the Muslims of inciting people away from the jihad against “the enemy aggressor” and of decreeing death to those commanded to follow the straight path, i.e., the Jihadist organizations. Abu Mus’ab al-Suri, *Mas’uliyat Ahl al-Yaman tujah Muqaddasat al-Muslimin wa-Tharwatihim* (The Responsibility of the People of Yemen to the Muslim Holy Places and Their Resources), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Sunna, October 1999. It is worthy of note that the term “the enemy aggressor” is taken from Ibn Taymiyya and serves numerous religious Salafist-Jihadist clerics for defining the abovementioned enemies and the declaration of Jihad against them.

Abu Basir al-Tartusi devotes a comprehensive treatise to this perception<sup>14</sup> in which he unequivocally states that the struggle between the cultures exists and is eternal. He presents its value, religious and moral character, and refutes, as he puts it, the approach of political Islam “that is convinced that this is a belligerent struggle of a military or economic character, etc., and seeks to end the struggles between cultures”. The author describes this struggle as “a struggle between contradictory concepts, values and beliefs – a struggle between the values of evil, oppression and tyranny, and the values of good, truth and justice, a struggle between belief in one God (*tawhid*) and His people and apostasy (*shirk*) and its people, a struggle between corruption and destruction and peace and development. A struggle of this kind was created by Allah in the beginning between Satan (*iblis*) and ‘Man’, while turning them into enemies. A struggle of this kind and the contrasts created with it will exist so long as Allah wills it.”

It should be emphasized that the struggle between the civilizations in the Jihadist Salafiyya context aspires to bring apostasy and its dominion to an end and impose the majesty of Allah and His word on the face of the earth (*I’la’ kalimat Allah fi al-‘alam*). To a great extent it adopts Huntington’s concept as ammunition against “Western crusading”, which it accuses of making almost incessant war against Islam. In the Arab media and discourse there is a trenchant debate that reflects the deep schism between Jihadist Salafiyya, which does not in fact recognize the existing world order, its treaties, conventions and institutions, and establishment Islam and even political Islam that recognize the world order, hence they do not accept the concept of a clash of civilizations and reject it outright.<sup>15</sup>

## The Crusader Attack

As part of the clash of civilizations theory Jihadist Salafiyya philosophers address the Crusader attack against Islam not only as a historical process but also as a concrete event endangering the very existence of Islam, and which obliges it to buckle down and counterattack as part of a jihad of the harshest kind that binds each and every Muslim (*fard ‘ayn*).

The period from World War One to the present day, including the occupation of Iraq, is part of the clash of civilizations. The prime objective of the crusading attack is the destruction of Islam, which impedes its domination of the Middle East. The duty of all Muslims in the face of this attack derives from a central Islamic principle in Jihadist perception – *al-wala’ wa-al-bara’a* – displaying loyalty to Allah and the believers (*wala’*) and disavowal (*bara’a*, *tabri’a*) of the unbelievers (*shirk*, *kufr*, *ilhad*).

Sulayman bin Nasser bin ‘Abdallah al-‘Alwan from Saudi Arabia holds that the Islamic world became a target for geo-strategic and historical reasons, and because of

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<sup>14</sup> Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *Sira’ al-Hadarat: Mafhumuhu wa-Haqiqatuhu wa-Waqi’uhu* (The Struggle Between The Cultures: Its Meaning, Veracity and Reality), 20 May 2006, [www.abubaseer.bizland.com](http://www.abubaseer.bizland.com).

<sup>15</sup> The Second International Forum of al-Azhar graduates stated that Islam supports positive coexistence between cultures in accordance with the principle of cultural pluralism, and opposes the concept of the clash of cultures. *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 12 April 2007, [www.asharqalawsat.com](http://www.asharqalawsat.com)

the oil-rich Persian Gulf, the backbone of the development of the Arab economies. The occupation of Iraq derives from this strategic consideration.<sup>16</sup>

Based on three elements, Saudi Arabian Nasser bin Hamad al-Fahd attempts to prove that the American attack on Afghanistan, which was declared as a war against “terror” as it were, was in fact a Crusader Attack (*hamla salibiyya*) the purpose of which was to destroy Islam. In 2001 he predicted that the next blow would be aimed at Iraq: the first element is religious-determinist: “The words of Allah in the Koran on the hatred of the unbelievers (*kuffar*) towards the Muslims – hatred that will not cease until they force the Muslims to abandon their faith and become annexed to the unbelievers’ community.” In this context the author quotes verses from the Koran (including Sura 2:109, 120, 217; Sura 3:100, 149). The second element is historical-empirical: “The hatred of the unbelievers from among the Jews and the Christians and their fellows towards the Muslims has not ceased and comes in waves throughout history. In the Modern Era – after the Crusades had ceased for a while – or ‘colonialism’ as they falsely called it – these Crusades were renewed under the aegis of the United Nations. They struck at Iraq, planted Israel in Palestine and acted similarly in Libya, Lebanon, Sudan, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo together with the conversion of Muslims to Christianity.” The third element is concrete – the declarations by American and Western leaders against Islam and the massive recruitment of the NATO countries, Russia, China, Japan and others, either militarily, financially or politically, to take part in the Crusade against Islam.<sup>17</sup>

Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf addresses “the Jewish-Crusader aggression in progress today against the Islamic nation” from the angle of “a test put to his worshippers by Allah in order to differentiate between the fighters loyal to Allah and his Prophet, and the false ones, the hypocrites and those evading the jihad and who protect the Crusaders and their agents, and aid them in their fight against Muslims.”<sup>18</sup>

## **Bin Laden’s Perception of “The American Enemy” as the Main Enemy**

Bin Laden’s perception of the Americans as the main enemy began to be formulated with the deployment of American forces in Saudi Arabia in Operation Desert Shield, and later with the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990. As part of this emerging perception he decided to wage a real war against the Americans, the ‘head of heresy’ (*ra’s al-kufr*). He viewed their very presence in the Arabian Peninsula (*bilad al-haramayn*) as occupation of Muslim states, and war against them and their supporters as the duty of every Muslim (*fard ‘ayn*). The 1998 announcement of the establishment of “The World Islamic Front for War against the Jews and the Crusaders” included a *fatwa* obliging Muslims to kill Americans wherever they may be and steal their money. In fact elements of bin Laden’s group had begun to wage

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<sup>16</sup> *Fatwa fi Tawjih al-Umma fi Hadhihi al-Ahdath wa-Wujub al-I’dad li-Waqf Zahf al-Salibiyyin* (Fatwa for the nation’s guidance in the face of these events and the need for readiness to halt the Crusaders’ attack), 19 March 2003 (16 Moharram, AH 1424), [www.al-alwan.org](http://www.al-alwan.org).

<sup>17</sup> Nasser bin Hamad al-Fahd, *Al-Tibyan fi Kufr man A’ana al-Amrikan* (Guide on the denial of those who aid the Americans), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, November 2001, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws).

<sup>18</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Maqasid al-Jihad wa-Anwa’uhu: al-‘Iraq wa-Ghazw al-Salib – Durus wa-Ta’ammulat* (The Objectives and Types of Jihad: Iraq and the Incursion of the Cross – Lessons and Observations), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-jihad. Published on the eve of the occupation of Iraq.

small wars against the Americans in Somalia in 1993, then in Riyadh and al-Khobar in Saudi Arabia in 1996, the blowing up of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the attack against the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000, and finally the 9/11 attack.

Bin Laden's attitude towards America is based on the following motifs: hostility towards anything American – every American is an enemy and any American target is fair game; there is no difference between civilian taxpayers and combat troops; the image of the American enemy is based upon its image in the street – it maintains discriminatory policies, occupies Saudi Arabia; all its actions are guided by oil and are controlled by the Jews; and also, great contempt of America's power is much in evidence. Apart from all this, the possibility is presented of inflicting a defeat on America in a very simple way, based on the lessons learned from the Vietnam War and the USSR's intervention in Afghanistan. In his view, although the US is a world power militarily and economically, its foundations are in fact unstable. A handful of fighters can completely shatter its myth.<sup>19</sup>

## **Bin Laden's Perception of Israel and the Jews**

The leitmotif in bin Laden's speeches and writings is the perception that Israel and the Jews are an integral part of the crusading attack against the Islamic world. From a political standpoint bin Laden relates to "the Jewish enemy" as an aggressive enemy (*'aduw sa'il*) that occupies land that does not belong to it, and aspires to establish a "greater Israel in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, all of Palestine and parts of Saudi Arabia".<sup>20</sup>

From the moral-religious standpoint, he says, "this enemy" is subject to Ibn Taymiyya's *fatwa*, which states that after belief itself, the supreme duty is to unconditionally repel an aggressive enemy (*'aduw sa'il*) that is corrupting the faith and the world. Against this backdrop and in response to Sheikh ibn Baz's *fatwa*, "which permits peace with the Jews", bin Laden states that it is forbidden to sign a peace treaty with this "enemy" as it is one that attacks from within, albeit under certain circumstances it is permissible to make peace with an enemy that fights from without.<sup>21</sup>

## **The Rules of War against "Natural Infidels"**

Yusuf al-'Ayiri, one of the leaders of the Saudi Arabian *Shuyukh al-Sahwa* who was killed in 2003, discussed the legal and political aspects of Islamic religious law in the war against original apostates. In this context he discussed the specific, extremely

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<sup>19</sup> Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, p. 261.

<sup>20</sup> *'Id al-adha* speech, al-Jazeera TV, 16 February 2003.

<sup>21</sup> *Risala ila ibn Baz bi-Butlan Fatwahi bi-al-Sulh ma'a al-Yahud* ([bin Laden's] Letter to ibn Baz Regarding the Invalidity of His *Fatwa* on Peace with the Jews), Hay'at al-Nasiha wa-al-Islah/Maktab Landan, Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, 30 December 1994 (27 Rajab, AH 1415).

radical case of the 9/11 al-Qaeda attack on an American strategic target, the World Trade Center, to determine what he presents as a purely religious ruling.<sup>22</sup>

He first asserts that before clarifying the issue of the killing of women, children and the elderly in America, the question of whether America is a country against which war can be waged (*bilad harb*) or a country with which a convention has been signed (*bilad 'ahd*) must be examined. The US is not a country with which a convention has been signed (*bilad 'ahd*). Even if we agree that it is a country with which a convention has been signed, it has reverted to the status of a country against which war can be waged and which has breached its convention (*bilad harb naqida li-'ahdiha*) by virtue of its aiding the Jews to occupy Palestine and expel its people; it has struck against Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan and attacked Muslims.

Those accepting that it is a country against which war can be waged also accept that Muslims are permitted to inflict maximum damage on it since its blood, money and women (*a'rad*) are permitted to Muslims, just as the Prophet did with his enemies, including Quraysh and the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir, and as he did with al-Ta'if. The testimonies and proofs of the Crusader states are null and void and cannot be used from a legal-religious standpoint. If the action against the World Trade Center was indeed perpetrated by Muslims, then it is legally permissible because it was an attack against a combatant state (*dawla muhariba*) and those in it can have war waged against them (*harbiyyun*). If you say that there were innocent victims: women, the elderly and children who are an unlawful target even if they are part of the combatant forces, how, then, is the attack permissible? This must be answered thus: the proscription (*hurma*) against the spilling of the blood of protected persons (*ma'sumun*), i.e., women, the elderly and children, is not absolute. There are seven criteria/conditions (such as the inability to distinguish between defenders and fighters) whereby it is permissible to kill protected unbelievers (*ma'sumun*) if they are from the population of the combatant state. If even one of these criteria exists, then these protected persons can be killed. With regard to the abovementioned attack, one of the seven criteria certainly existed with regard to women, the elderly and children, hence they could be killed.

The seven criteria whereby Muslims are permitted to kill protected persons from among the unbelievers are as follows:

- Lex talionis (*al-mu'amala bi-al-mithl*) – if the unbelievers kill young and old, Muslims are permitted to act in the same way.
- A situation wherein protected persons (*ma'sumun*) cannot be distinguished from combatants (*muqatilun*). It is permitted to kill the protected persons unpremeditatedly.
- A situation wherein the protected persons aided in the fighting, either by deed, word or by any other means.
- A situation wherein the burning of the enemy's forts or farms is required to weaken it or topple the state, as the Prophet did with the (Jewish) Banu Nadir tribe.

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<sup>22</sup> Yusuf al-'Ayiri, *Haqiqat al-Harb al-Salibiyya al-Jadida* (The Truths of the New Crusader War), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

- A situation wherein firing by heavy weapons is required that cannot distinguish between combatant and protected persons, as the Prophet did with al-Ta'if.
- A situation wherein the enemy uses its women and young people as a human shield (*tatarrus al-'aduw*) and the combatants can only be killed by killing those used as a human shield (*al-turs*).
- A situation wherein the people with whom a convention was signed (*ahl al-'ahd*) breached (*nakathu*) their convention (*al-'ahd*) and the Imam has to kill the protected persons to cause their defeat (*tankilan lahum*) as the Prophet did with the (Jewish) Banu Quraytha tribe.

It is agreed that the protected persons from among the unbelievers meet at least one of the seven criteria (hence their killing is justifiable).

Muslims were killed in the 9/11 attack. It is therefore permitted to kill these (and other) Muslims in a situation of war against the enemy of Islam, if they meet one of the following six criteria/conditions:

- A situation wherein there was a vital need to wage the war.
- The assumption that there are no Muslims in the attack targets.
- It is permissible to destroy the country of the unbelievers' combatants even if there are Muslims in it that are likely to be killed in the attack, for cessation of the war in a theater in which there are Muslims will prevent the enhancement of the cause of jihad.
- There is no country in which there are not many Muslims and many people are killed in wars.
- A Muslim involved in killing Muslims must pay an indemnity.
- It is permitted to act against a Muslim aiding the unbelievers as if he were one of them.

Together with the religious justification of the attack on the US in particular and on a country against which war can be waged in general, al-'Ayiri defends this mode of action against those who rejected it from a religious standpoint and excommunicated those who perpetrated it from the Islamic community (*ikhrajuhu min al-Islam*). He employs a similar weapon when warning anyone aiding the Crusaders that he will be accused of abandoning Islam (*ridda*) and with a breach of the central principle of the faith – *al-wala' wa-al-bara'a* – for according to him anyone offering any kind of aid to the enemies of Allah has no part and inheritance in Islam.

Yusuf al-'Ayiri also justifies the 9/11 attack on the US from the viewpoint of the interests (*masalih*) that Islam gained from it: causing heavy economic damage to the US; forcing the US to change its position on Muslims in a way that would ameliorate its tyrannical attitude towards them, while displaying a degree of level-headedness with regard to their problems, and particularly regarding the problem of Palestine; a severe blow to the US globalism regime that was likely to destroy the world.

In conclusion, the 9/11 attack on the US was permissible because it met several of the central religious criteria on this matter.



It is worthy of note that on the face of it, bin Laden is attempting to draw a distinction between men and women, the elderly and children, as part of his defense against accusations of attacking civilians. His distinction, however, is superficial and not supported by a clear religious ruling. Moreover, bin Laden has no “rules of war” of his own in regards to the use of force in general, and attacking civilians in particular. He makes use of religious rulings, such as the legitimacy of killing Muslims who are in the way of killing infidels (*tatarrus*), the principle of *al-bara’a* and the “nature” of the Americans to justify his actions. From his point of view, every American is a target.

## **The Attitude towards Apostate Regimes in the Region**

After "Crusaders" and Israel, the third component of the enemies of Islam are the Islamic/Arab regimes in the region known as “the internal enemy”, or more commonly the tyrannical, false-god regimes (*al-tawaghit*, a sobriquet that appears in the Koran and used by Jihadist Salafiyya), or the apostate regimes (*andhimat al-ridda*). From a political viewpoint, bin Laden feels that they obtained [government] positions in exchange for betrayal. From the *Shari’a* viewpoint, he views them as apostates that abandoned the faith and the Islamic public. In this context he refers to a very popular ruling in Jihadist Salafiyya which states that offering support and aid to the infidels in their fight against the Muslims (*al-munasara wa-al-munadhara li-al-kuffar ‘ala al-Muslimin*) is included in the ten transgressions, commission of one of which by a Muslim is sufficient to excommunicate him from the Islamic community (*nawaqid al-Islam al-‘ashara al-mukhrija min al-milla*).<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, there is a zero sum game between the Jihad movements and the “apostate” regimes of the region in light of the gaps between the two sides regarding the following principles: imposing the laws of Allah, non-use of Man’s laws, and taking unbelievers as shields.

## **The Attitude towards Apostate Muslims (*murtaddun*)**

Abu Jandal al-Azdi discusses the importance of the battle against the Muslims who abandoned the Islamic faith and community (*murtaddun*). He states that throughout history the Muslims have waged bitter wars against the *murtaddun*. The *Sahaba* (the Prophet’s companions) invested great efforts in the jihad against the *murtaddun* and Bani Hanifa in particular. The wars against the apostates (*al-zanadiqa*) were even bitterer than those waged against the Crusaders. Al-Azdi provides two explanations of the particular seriousness of the war against the *murtaddun*.<sup>24</sup>

The first is derived from the ruling according to which the rules of war against the *murtaddun* are more stringent from the *Shari’a* standpoint than those in the war against original infidels (*hukm qital al-murtaddin min hukm qital al-kuffar al-*

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<sup>23</sup> Bin Laden’s statement to al-Jazeera TV on the initiative by Crown Prince ‘Abdallah of Saudi Arabia regarding the Israeli-Arab conflict, 4 January 2004. In Diya’ Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-‘Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Abu Jandal al-Azdi, *Al-Bahth ‘an Hukm Qatl Afrad wa-Dhubbat al-Mabahith* (Law Regarding the Killing of Secret Police Officers and Men), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

*asliyyin*). Peace-making (*musalaha*), truce (*muhadana*) and protection (*aman*) with apostates are forbidden, whereas all these and conciliation (*muwada'a*) with original infidels are permissible. In the context of the attitude towards original infidels, al-Azdi refers to the Koranic verse (Sura 8:61): "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou [also] incline towards peace, and trust in Allah." Also supporting this is the fact that the Prophet implemented a truce with them in "*Yawm al-Hudaybiyya*". The rules of war and appeasement must be observed, but deceit (*ghadr*) and betrayal (*khiyana*) are forbidden with regard to original apostates, unless they have breached the conventions (*al-'ahd*) and beliefs (*al-mawathiq*).

At the same time Abu Jandal quotes Ibn Taymiyya, according to whom the Sunna clearly states that the punishment of a *murtadd* is more severe than that of an original infidel (the intention here is mainly to Jews and Christians) from different standpoints: the *murtadd* will be executed in any event. He will not be subject to *jizya* (a tax imposed on protectees) and *dhimma* (the protection afforded to non-Muslims by Islam), in contrast with the existing situation regarding original apostates. In contrast with original apostates the *murtadd* cannot inherit and have marital relations, and the ritual slaughter of animals is forbidden to him.

Abu Jandal applies these rulings to the present situation and in accordance with them determines the required code of behavior towards the current Arab rulers that he considers worse than the original apostate rulers: The rulers of these countries are *murtaddun* and it is forbidden to implement peace-making (*musalaha*), conciliation (*musalama*) or a truce (*muhadana*) with them under the reasoning that by so doing there is an interest (*maslaha*) for the jihad group (*jama'at al-jihad*). It is forbidden to collaborate with a *murtadd* in order to fight against a group of original infidels. Accordingly, conciliation with the *murtadd* Hassan II, ruler of Morocco, is forbidden to the *jama'at al-jihad* even in order to benefit jihad in Algeria. The *jama'at al-jihad* in Libya is also not allowed to reach a settlement with the *murtadd* Husni Mubarak in order to achieve false interests for jihad in Libya.

The second explanation: The fate of the *murtadd* is more severe than that of the original infidel because the former has already experienced the Islamic faith and its truths, but abandoned it out of hatred and thus is ineligible for its protection. Furthermore, the attitude of the *murtaddun* towards Muslims and the war against them is extremely inflexible. In contrast, the original apostates are dragged into war without knowing the reasons for it, and after the end of the war they accept the Islamic faith as happened in countries conquered by the early Muslims. Can the Tatars' violence be compared with Saddam Hussein's bloodbath? Can the apostates' oppression throughout history be compared with Qadhafi's apostasy (*kufur*) and oppression? In human history has there been a regime comparable with that of the al-Sa'ud family – a family in which there is no convention between ruler and ruled, and the people are the ruler's slaves? According to al-Azdi, in light of the "policy of suppression and oppression of the present Arab rulers" the *tawhid* and jihad groups find themselves in a situation that is far more difficult than any other faced throughout Islamic history. They are compelled to fight the *murtaddun*, the enemies of Allah, from unsafe bases and are persecuted by tyrannical rulers (*al-tawaghut*), while "the secular apostate states" have raised their security alert to its highest ever level. These groups are implementing the most spectacular and difficult jihad. They therefore deserve special remuneration. The Prophet asserted that the wages of those who adhered to their faith

at times like this is double those of the patriarchs (*al-awa'il*), for today the *mujahidin* are acting without aid, while the patriarchs found people to aid them. See how the *mujahid* suffers to reach the jihad arena. He surmounts security checkpoints to fulfill his duty to the war for Allah (*faridat al-qital min ajl Allah*) against the *murtaddun*. The whole world – original infidels and *murtaddun* – has joined forces to encircle the jihad and the *mujahidin* who have no support or country to protect them.

It would seem that when al-Azdi wrote this article, hovering in the background was the reality in the Arab states in which the *mujahidin* are under heavy siege and a hunt by the security services, who caution the public against offering them aid. It appears that his principal objective is to raise the *mujahidin's* spirits to continue their jihad against the “apostate” rulers, a jihad on which they embarked after their return to their countries from Afghanistan with a victory over the USSR that forced it to withdraw from that country. On the one hand al-Azdi is conducting total religious and political delegitimization of the current Arab rulers and regimes (including the regime of his own country, Saudi Arabia), which are considered worse than the original apostates. On the other hand, he lauds the *mujahidin*, encourages them and sets them a high wage for their war against these regimes.

## **The Attitude towards the Saudi Arabian Regime**

An article that appeared on the Jihadist website, *Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad*, opens an important window to understanding the Jihadist Salafiyya perception of the “apostate” Arab Islamic regimes in general, and that of Saudi Arabia in particular.<sup>25</sup> It opens with two important preambles: the first briefly summarizes the principle of *al-wala' wa-al-bara'a*, which is the article's framework. Implicitly deriving from this principle is the requirement of denial (*al-bara'a*) of the Saudi regime, which according to the criteria set out in the article is considered apostate in all respects, like the Christians and Jews. The second preamble addresses the relationship between Muslims and their fellows, or more precisely, the required attitude towards apostates. There can be no doubt that the writer intentionally chose certain proscriptions to be avoided by a Muslim in his relationships with apostates in order to provide evidence for the crowning of the Saudi regime as “apostate”.

## **Muslim-Infidel Relations**

In the Koran Islam sets out the character of relations a Muslim must observe with infidels. Establishment of relations not in accordance with the path of Islam leads to apostasy (*kufr*) and abandoning the Islamic community (*al-khuru'j min millat al-Islam*).

First, Islam forbids Muslims from taking Jews and Christians as protectors. A Muslim doing so will become one of them, for they will not let him be until he follows their path: “O ye who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: they are but friend and protectors to each other. And he

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<sup>25</sup> *Al-Nidham al-Sau'di fi Nidham al-Islam* (The Saudi Arabian Regime in the Islamic System), *Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad*, no date.

amongst you that turns to them [for friendship] is of them. Verily, Allah guideth not a people unjust.”

The commentators discussing this proscription categorically state that a Muslim who disobeys it will be considered an apostate (*kafir*) who has abandoned the Islamic community (*kharij min millat al-Muslimin*). Based on Sura 5:81, Ibn Taymiyya states that the faith opposes taking infidels as protectors. Another commentator, Sheikh ‘Abdallah bin ‘Abd al-Latif, goes even further by noting that anyone submitting to the infidels, obeys them and takes them as protectors (*adhhar muwalatihim*) is considered to be fighting against Allah and his Messenger and has abandoned Islam (*irtadd ‘an al-Islam*). It is therefore a duty to undertake jihad against him.

Second, the ‘*ulama* unanimously determined that a country, group or individual aiding the enemies of Islam in their war against the Muslims (*yudhahir a’da’ al-Islam didd al-Muslimin*) by means of money, people, arms, espionage and information are considered as having abandoned the Islamic community (*kharij min al-milla*). The founder of the Wahhabiyya, Sheikh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, determined that aiding the infidels in their war against the Muslims (*muhadarat al-mushrikin wa-mu’awanatuhum ‘ala al-Muslimin*) is one of the strictest proscriptions, among which are taking indemnity for a protector (*muwalat al-mushrik*), supporting and aiding him either verbally or financially. Third, the ‘*ulama* ruled that anyone delivering Muslims to the enemies of Islam is an apostate (*murtadd*). Fourth, it is the duty of the Muslim state to disseminate Islam, strengthen the *da’wa* everywhere and deal with the problems of the Muslims.

Based on this preamble the author gives examples that are proof of the war the al-Sa’ud ruling family is waging against Islam and its conspiracy with the enemies of Islam.

- The family’s relations with the Americans: the Saudis have become the Americans’ slaves. The latter guide the kingdom’s policies in their entirety: foreign, military, social, economic and financial. The Americans determined that the kingdom’s enemies are its neighbors in the Arabian Peninsula itself and they determined the price of oil and held the oil reserves. During the Gulf War the al-Sa’ud family permitted the stationing of half a million American troops in the Arabian Peninsula, the destruction of Iraq and the encircling of its Muslim people. After the war, tens of thousands of American troops did as they pleased in Saudi Arabia. This categorically contravenes Islamic law. The final sign of submissiveness was the official announcement by the Saudi foreign ministry on the termination of the boycott against Israel.
- The kingdom’s relations with regimes that attack Muslims and fight Islam, especially the North African states: the al-Sa’ud family aided these regimes financially and with propaganda. In addition, it extradited to their countries, for the purpose of killing them, preachers who found refuge in the Saudi state from the tyrannical rulers (*tughat*) of their countries. This is the most serious transgression that is defined by the ‘*ulama* as abandoning Islam (*ridda ‘an al-Islam*). Even the *Jahiliyya* and the apostate countries did not dare commit such an act.
- Plainly aiding atheistic states, institutions and companies that openly fought Islam: the Saudi regime offered financial aid to the USSR during the war

against the *mujahidin*, and also to the atheistic regime in South Yemen, to John Garang and the Maronite Phalanges.

- Enthusiastic support of peace plans with the occupying Jews: thus the Saudi regime acted in secret in the sphere of security and military coordination to conspire against the Islamic movements and groups.
- Saudi regime penetration of all the Islamic movements, central groups and institutions with the aim of destroying them, inciting conflict within them, thwarting their plans, distorting Islam and turning the Islamic institutions into institutions serving the Saudi regime's propaganda, and hence American and Jewish objectives. After the rule of King Fahd it became clear that the al-Sa'ud family played an active role in the catastrophe that befell Islam and the Islamic *da'wa*.

In his summary the author states that against the backdrop of all the above it is clear that the Saudi rulers take the enemies of Islam as protectors (*yuwaluna a'da' al-Islam*), harbor hatred of Muslims and conspire against them. Their relations are based on provision of aid for any action that harms Islam and Muslims. The handing over to their own countries of fighters seeking asylum is sufficient evidence of this. Can such a regime be defined as a *Shari'a* regime after such actions?

## **Agreements Signed between the US and Apostate Regimes in Muslim States**

Following the 9/11 al-Qaeda terror attack against the US, and in the course of the preparations for the American counterattack in Afghanistan, the issue of agreements between the US and similar countries (in a state of war against the Muslim peoples) and the "apostate" regimes that had "abandoned Islam" (*murtaddun*) arose in all its gravity, as did the attitude towards the US of a Muslim visiting it.

Abu Basir al-Tartusi draws a sharp distinction between the two questions: the first in the political sphere and the second in the individual one. With regard to the political aspect he rules, like other Jihadist Salafiyya intellectuals, that "conventions (*'uqud*) and treaties (*'uhud*) drawn up between America and other apostate states fighting against Islam and the Muslims, and their traitorous (*khawana*) agents (*'umala*) and those who have abandoned Islam (*murtaddun*) and dominate the Muslim peoples," are invalid for two reasons: the first stems from the religious ruling determining that a protection (*aman*) convention of an apostate that has abandoned Islam is invalid (*la i'tibar li-aman al-kafir al-murtadd fi al-Shari'a al-Islamiyya*), and that this protection convention is not binding upon the nation and anyone under its rule. The second reason derives from the fact that the apostate states (*kafira*), especially the US, are in breach of the conventions in that they adopt a policy of war, destruction and conspiracy against Islam and Muslims everywhere, including Palestine, Iraq, Chechnya, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Afghanistan.

With regard to the individual aspect he states that a Muslim legally entering an infidel state, including the US, is legally subject to a protection convention (*'aqd aman*) between him and the host country. He is therefore bound to observe its laws and is forbidden to execute any act that harms the host country. Should he do so he is considered a sinner and a criminal. Al-Tartusi's position in this case reflects his relatively balanced approach in comparison with that of other intellectuals, especially

the Saudis (*Shuyukh al-Sahwa*). It falls into line with his declared adherence to “morality and justice, on whose principles Islam was born.”<sup>26</sup> This adherence is manifested in his ruling on the image of the Islamic state to the effect that it cannot be called “Islamic” if it does not adhere to justice.

## Providing Aid to Infidels in Their War against the Muslims

On the eve of the occupation of Iraq Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf published an article on the provision of aid to the Americans in their attack against the Muslims.<sup>27</sup> Its aim was to warn the Muslims against an alliance with the Americans and against providing aid to them in their occupation of Iraq. As a rule, Allah forbade Muslims to take apostates as protectors (*muwalat al-kafirin*). He viewed taking apostates as protectors of Muslims and the provision of aid to apostates to attack Muslims (*mudhahaaratuhum ‘ala al-Muslimin*) as great apostasy (*al-kufr al-akbar*) whereby the apostate removes himself from Islam. A concrete example of this is the taking of Americans as protectors and aiding them in their occupation of Iraq (including the bases in Saudi Arabia from which the American forces invaded Iraq). These acts are considered a breach (*naqid*) of Islam, following Sura 5:51, cited above.

The rush to aid the infidels for protection derives from the request to obtain protection from the Jews and Christians against another enemy, but it is also due to economic motives. Those states in the region maintaining an alliance with the Americans against the Muslims are impelled by these motives, and their attempts to excuse their aiding the apostates because of protection will not free them of the title, “deniers of Islam” (*al-rida ‘an al-Islam*).

Based on Ibn Taymiyya’s classification of apostates into four categories, the Americans and their allies in the second invasion of Baghdad can be classified into four groups, similar to those that forged an alliance with the Tatars in the first invasion of Baghdad:

- The “original infidels” such as the Americans, British, Australians and other Christians.
- The secularists that abandoned Islam (*al-ta’ifa al-murtadda ‘an al-Islam min al-‘almaniyyin*) such as some Iraqi Arabs and Kurds that combined secularism with Jihadist nationalism, thus splitting the Muslims. The criterion of protection between Muslims is the faith and fear of Allah, not ‘asabiyya and Jihadist nationalism.
- The Iraqi Shi’a (*al-rafida*) who fought side by side with the Americans just as the Shi’a patriarchs fought together with the Tatars.
- The spineless hypocrites and the misleading soldiers who throw off all restraints and enlist in the service of the Americans and their allies, and aid them with words and fighting.

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<sup>26</sup> *Mas’ala Tata’allaq fiman Dakhala fi Aman wa-‘Ahd al-Mushrikin* (The Question Regarding Someone Entering under the Protection of Apostates). Al-Tartusi’s response to a question put to him by a visitor to his website, 13 November 2001, [www.abubaseer.bizland.com](http://www.abubaseer.bizland.com).

<sup>27</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Hukm Mudhaharat al-Amerikan ‘ala al-Muslimin* (Aiding the Americans in Their War against the Muslims), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

# The Means: Jihad, its Nature and Importance

## General

It is with good reason that there is a wealth of Jihadist Salafiyya literature devoted to the commandments of jihad, its laws, types and circumstances. Even though there is much repetition in the presentation of jihad by intellectuals who nourish the Jihadist Salafiyya, each of them illuminates the subject from his own unique angle in an attempt to provide more enhanced innovations than his predecessors. In any event, they all draw on the doctrine of the man known as the “Imam of the modern Jihad”, who is the present generation’s authority on this matter, ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, who cites the authority of Ibn Taymiyya. ‘Azzam’s work on jihad<sup>28</sup> is a guide. The Jihadist laws appearing in it are quoted in numerous books by other intellectuals. Notable in this literature is the raising of jihad to the level of a nonpareil faith and commandment, except, of course, for the Islamic faith. Jihad is a means, for either defense against the enemies of Islam or attacking them, but also an objective in its own right. It is directed against the apostates, be they original or regimes that have abandoned Islam, became apostates and are considered to be even worse than the original apostates (hence their punishment and sentence are harsher). The means permitted by jihad are becoming ever more radical, to the point of issuing a *fatwa* permitting sabotage and destruction of oil resources in Muslim states (with emphasis on Saudi Arabia), and even the use of non-conventional weapons against the crusading West – the original apostates.

The vast amount of Jihadist propaganda found on websites and in other forms of dissemination – religious treatises or specific *fatwas* – is, to a great degree, the fuel that drives the wheels of the volunteering of numerous young Muslims for central jihad theaters under occupation, such as Soviet-occupied Afghanistan or Iraq under the present American occupation, or by their joining local Jihadist terror groups, such as in the case of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Jordan and North Africa. It is therefore with good reason that religious establishments attack the attempt to dissuade young people from answering the call of volunteering for jihad.

## ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam – Revitalizing the Idea of Jihad

An article that appeared on ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam’s website instructively presents the circumstantial-political background for the revitalization of what is known as the military significance of jihad and its re-adoption by Muslims as such a means against their enemies.<sup>29</sup>

According to this article, jihad in Islam has passed through several stages: it was forbidden in Mecca, then permitted, later there was an order to implement jihad against anyone who killed Muslims, even later it became a duty (*fard*) against apostates in all lands when verses 5, 9 and 39 of Sura 9 were handed down (*al-Tawba*). A *fatwa* regarding the last stage is to sustain jihad until the End of Days

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, *Al-Difa’ ‘an Aradi al-Muslimin – Ahamm Furud al’A’yan* (Defending Muslim Territory – The Greatest Personal Duty), Dar al-Mujtama’ li-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzi’, 1978.

<sup>29</sup> Unsigned article, <http://abdallaazzam.4t.com/Azzam12.htm>.

(*yawm al-qiyama*). However, the true meaning of the jihad verses has diminished in the minds of Muslims over the last centuries. Jihad has undergone several incarnations:

- In the early days of Islam the first generation understood the meaning of jihad correctly, it raised the sword and attacked the world in order to fight for Allah, conquer the world and fill it with honesty and justice.
- The intellectuals of the world of apostasy and hypocrisy (*fikr 'alam al-kufr wa-al-nifaq*) founded new religions (like the Bahai) that called for the annulment of Jihadist beliefs.

Following the failure of these movements to eradicate jihad from Muslim hearts, and their demise with the death of their leaders, there was a massive attack against the idea of jihad. It was claimed that Islam is belligerent and lives by the sword. The Muslims, who at the time suffered military and economic inferiority, believed these utterances. For the purpose of attaining the apostates' objectives, international organizations were founded, such as the UN (the General Assembly and the Security Council) and human rights organizations. These bodies were established in order to act against Muslim interests and prevent the fulfillment of their aspirations. These organizations attempted to persuade the Muslims not to use the sword and accept their advice.

The stage of eradicating the image of Islam from Muslim consciousness and life in the wake of attempts made by the Orientalists. Influenced by these attempts the Muslims stated, in a spirit of defeatism, that their religion was not founded by force of arms but by fair preaching (*al-maw'idha al-hasana*). Attempts were made to obscure jihad and even in the view of the '*ulama* it became dubious. In their eyes it became just an expression voiced in Friday sermons in the mosque, or which appeared in books without their author having ever raised a sword for Allah. For a long period the true meaning of jihad vanished from Muslim minds. This duty (*fard*) was almost erased from Islamic reality.

Under these circumstances Allah opened the gates of jihad on the soil of Afghanistan and conferred upon the nation the *shahid* 'Abdallah 'Azzam, whom Allah raised to the heights of Islam (*dhurwat sanam al-Islam*, i.e., jihad). The *shahid* 'Abdallah 'Azzam tried to raise the nation anew to the heights of Islam. He declared without fear: It is true that our religion was founded by the sword. The sword is the only means of dismantling obstacles and beheading the apostates. He first raised the banner of jihad on the soil of Palestine and then on the soil of Afghanistan. He resolutely decided that he would not lay down the rifle until he saw the State of Islam rising on the soil. He is first and foremost in reviving this commandment – the commandment of absent religious duty (*al-farida al-gha'iba*), which has long been absent from the reality of the Muslims' life. He has also restored true meaning to the verses of jihad. The thinking of the '*ulama* changed after it became confused and use of the rifle and cannon was completely erased from their minds after the distortion of the jihad verses and the voiding of their religious content and meaning. The Imam of the Jihad ('Azzam) is the first to restore the true meaning of the jihad verses to the minds of the '*ulama* and has returned them to the *Shari'a* meaning of jihad, that is, fighting. He knew that the Islamic nation would not be awakened by words and sermons, but by the heat of blood and the falling heads of the *shuhada*. He therefore



realized that there was no choice but to channel Islamic power through Muslim youngsters onto the soil of Afghanistan so that Muslim blood would mix into one blood. He supported the duty of jihad (*fard al-jihad*) after the loss of Muslim homes and their fall into the hands of the apostates. The Muslim youngsters began gathering in Afghanistan and competing for a martyr's death (*shahada*) for Allah. The value of the next world became an ideal for them and in their eyes there was no worth in the values of this world. They left their schools and universities and came to the jihad theaters. The jihad in Afghanistan proved that it can restore to the nation its place in the leadership and Islam's ability to lead humanity anew. The *shahid* Imam is worthy of the title of Imam of the Fighters (*imam al-mujahidin*) who acted to return the wandering nation to its original path from which it had deviated.

It is worthy of note that in his book 'Abdallah 'Azzam discusses the future of jihad in Palestine and Afghanistan at the time he headed the "Afghan Arabs" in Afghanistan. He demands that the jihad be focused mainly on these theaters because of the centrality of the problems there. Their solution will resolve the problems in the Islamic region. He asks that the Arabs give top priority to the jihad in Palestine and if this is not possible, then they should go to Afghanistan. With regard to the rest of the Muslims, they must begin their own jihad in Afghanistan because the fighting there is fierce and the objective is that the Word of Allah reign supreme (*li-takun kalimat Allah hiya al-'ulya*). Furthermore, the jihad leaders there belong to the Islamic movement while in Palestine the leadership includes communists and nationalists together with true Muslims.

## Jihad and its Advantages

Bin Laden states that jihad, which from his standpoint is the waging of war in every sense of the word, is the main means of action against the crusading war and is the duty of the entire Islamic nation. He bases this on the Hadith that presents the required types and usages of jihad – hand, tongue and heart. But he also states that jihad by sacrifice and fighting is jihad in its loftiest form. First and foremost he presents jihad as observance of a religious and moral commandment: in the scale of values, only faith precedes jihad. Jihad is the zenith of religion. Its mission is to enforce justice and annul lies (*ihqaq al-haqq wa-ibtal al-batil*). Bin Laden is actually discussing the advantages and achievements that can be attained through the acquisition of military strength in general, and by jihad in particular.<sup>30</sup>

- Practically, jihad is the only efficient path to take in the conflict with the enemy, which will ensure liberation of the land.
- In the defense sphere, religion will cease to exist without jihad. Jihad is vital to the very existence and honor of the Islamic nation.
- Empirically, the history of the US and the West shows that termination of war is the beginning of the dismantlement of the state. You fight, ergo you are.
- In the sphere of international relations, a call to lay down arms in the name of peace is a call to surrender.

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<sup>30</sup> 'Id al-adha address, al-Jazeera TV, 16 February 2003.

- In the sphere of political processes, the Americans and the West only began investing effort in reaching a solution to the Palestinian problem after the 9/11 attack (*ghazwa*).
- Deterrence: the enemy only understands the language of force. Fighting back is designed to create a balance of terror vis-à-vis the enemy.
- Possessing or acquiring non-conventional weapons is not only a right for the purpose of self-defense, but also the duty of Muslims to achieve a balance of terror.

## The Aims of Jihad

In his treatise published on the eve of the occupation of Iraq, Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf presents the aims (*maqasid*) of jihad and its forms.<sup>31</sup> From a religious standpoint, jihad was determined by Allah so that His Word would reign supreme, that only He would be worshipped, and so that the Muslims and Islam would gain victory through jihad. Jihad is called for to defend Islam and establish *Shari’a* on earth. Abandoning jihad will enable the enemies to dominate the nation, remove the Law of Allah and abandon the Islamic states. Therefore, jihad for the sake of Allah is a principal element and integral part of *Shari’a*. It defends *Shari’a* and establishes the Islamic state on earth. It will last to the End of Days (*qiyam al-sa’a*). It is one of the most notable attributes of *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* (the group meriting the grace of Allah) – *ahl al-sunna wa-al-jama’a* (a common name for the jihad fighters leading the fight against the enemies).

According to the logic of Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, abandoning the jihad against the Jews in Palestine and the Christians flooding the Islamic world constitutes a danger, catastrophe and ruin for Muslims, their religion, honor, property and land, for should the enemy dominate the Muslim states it will uproot everything and fight against religion and morality. A Muslim who denies jihad and seeks the worldly life is harming his religion and joining the hypocrites (*munaḥiqun*). Denying jihad, weakness of the fighters and displaying fear of the Crusaders’ attack is not the way of salvation, but the path to ruin that damages the Muslim with regard to his religion and his money, as determined in the Koran. Jihad and the honor of the nation go hand in hand, as do abandoning jihad and humiliation. Evidence of this can be found both in religious law and reality. Caliph Abu Bakr warned against abandoning jihad, which brings with it humiliation, enemy dominance and the destruction of the Islamic state.

## Stages of Jihad

The Jihadi texts abound in analysis of the various stages of the Jihad. While some of this writing is directed towards encouraging the “troops” with a picture of a coherent future of the struggle and to prevent a sense of Jihad as some sort of “sysyphic” labor, some of these texts indicate a sense that the victory may come earlier than expected and the Jihad must be prepared for the next stage.<sup>32</sup> A

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<sup>31</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Maqasid al-Jihad wa-Anwa’uhu* (The Objectives and Types of Jihad), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

<sup>32</sup> This is clearly indicated in the letter from al-Zawahiri to Abu Maus’ab al-Zarqawi. See Shmuel Bar and Yair Minzili, “The Zawahiri Letter and the Strategy of al-Qaeda”, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 3, Hudson Institute, 16 February 2006.

compilation of different discussion regarding the stages of the Jihad looks, more or less, as follows:

- **Awakening the Masses:** This phase began in earnest on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and continues with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The goal is to broaden the ranks of the Jihadi movement and generate local opposition to the “apostate regimes”.
- **Attrition** – this stage (*Harb Istinzaf*) is aimed at bleeding the economically, militarily, and politically until it disengages from the Muslim lands altogether and severs its alliances with the “apostate regimes” (in this context, some texts bring the historic examples of the abandonment of South Vietnam and the Shah’s regime as cases in point).
- **Toppling “apostate regimes”** – this stage focuses first on the “inner circle” of susceptible regimes such as Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia). This stage has been referred to sometimes as “*tasfiyat hisabat*” (settling accounts).
- **Taking control over the formerly “apostate” lands** – this stage is considered to be one of the most sensitive as the breakdown of the old regimes will most probably be followed by a breakdown of law and order.<sup>33</sup>
- **Establishing Shari’a Law** – In this stage new regimes will be formed based on Shari’a. These regimes may not necessarily be identical in form and only in a later stage will unity be achieved.
- **Purging all Western influences from the Muslim world** – This stage includes the total liberation of all Muslim lands ruled by infidels such as Palestine, Kashmir, and al-Andalus (Spain).
- **Reestablishment of the Caliphate** – This will be the final phase of organizing the Muslim world that will then allow for the final confrontation with the West.
- **Final Conflict** – This phase is the final one which is in many Jihadi texts intertwined with eschatological allusions.

## Types of Jihad According to Circumstances

Sheikh Yusuf bin Salih al-‘Ayiri, who as mentioned above was killed in Saudi Arabia in 2003, summarized the “Religious law pertaining to the types of jihad according to existing political circumstances”. Like other clerics he draws the presentation of the laws of jihad from ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, “Imam of the Jihad”.<sup>34</sup>

The author sees a need to discuss the duty of jihad against the backdrop of the hardships to which Islam is subject in various places around the world: Jewish domination of the Muslims in Palestine, Christian domination of the Muslims in Afghanistan, atheist domination of the Muslims in Chechnya, and the domination of the Indian and Kashmiri Muslims by the cow worshippers. The author discusses two types of jihad: *jihad al-talab wa-al-ibtida’* and *jihad al-daf’/jihad al-difa’*.

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<sup>33</sup> See: Abu Bakr Naji, “Idarat al-Tawahush: The Most Dangerous Phase That The Islamic Nation Will Go Through,” The Center for Islamic Studies and Research, as viewed on al-Firdaws Website, October 2005

<sup>34</sup> Yusuf al-‘Ayiri, *Hukm al-Jihad wa-Anwa’uhu* (The Laws and Types of Jihad), Sharia Research Center, no date.

- *Jihad al-talab wa-al-ibtida'* – The meaning of this jihad is seeking out the apostates (kuffar) and pursuing them (outside the borders of the territory under Islamic rule, i.e., dar al-harb) in the heart of their own country (fi 'aqr darihim), calling upon them to accept Islam, and killing them if they do not submit to Islamic rule or accept the jizya tax (levied on non-Muslims). The authority for this jihad is in the Koranic verses, especially the verse known as “the Verse of the Sword” (Sura 9:5): “But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem [of war]; but if they repent and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is oft-forgiving, most merciful.”<sup>35</sup> Another verse (Sura 9:36) says: “... and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together.” The duty of this jihad is imposed upon all Muslims (fard kifaya). The aims of such a jihad are: eradication of corruption from the earth, spreading and extending Islamic rule over all the land. The duty of jihad imposed on all Muslims will only be annulled once the supreme objective has been attained, which is domination of all the land until there is not even a single sod that is not under the rule of Islam, or until the Muslims invest all their efforts to fulfill the aim of jihad. Then the duty of jihad will be removed from them, not because the objective has been attained, but because they have invested all that they were able.<sup>36</sup> al-'Ayri supports the radical view which holds that Muslims must uphold the duty of jihad, the duty of war against the apostates and incursions (ghazwa) into their country at every possible opportunity, without limitation. He also attacks those who deny the duty of jihad al-talab and hold that there is only jihad al-difa' – a situation wherein Muslims are called upon to liberate occupied Muslim land. The author goes even further by setting out a number of conditions whereby jihad al-talab is beyond the public's duty and becomes an individual duty (fard 'ayn): if the apostates are holding Muslim prisoners; if a Muslim is in a Muslim army in a state of war against the enemies; if there is a general mobilization; or if the imam has imposed the duty of jihad on the individual. He dismisses the use of Koranic verses by moderate Muslims to prove that there is only jihad al-difa', not jihad al-talab of incursion (ghazw) into the heart of the enemies' land. According to the author, this refers to the following Koranic verses: “There is no compulsion in religion” (Sura 2:256); “And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits” (Sura 2:190). The author also refutes the argument that the Prophet's rais (ghazawat) were *jihad al-difa'* and not *jihad al-talab*.
- *Jihad al-difa'* – Repelling the enemy that has occupied Muslim land is the duty of every Muslim (fard 'ayn), until the enemies' evil has been repulsed. This jihad is fard 'ayn for every Muslim until the liberation of the lands of Afghanistan, Chechnya, the Philippines, Kashmir and other lands in the dar al-Islam states, and until all the prisoners held by the unbelievers are freed. The author quotes a religious law, according to which should an enemy approach dar al-Islam and not

<sup>35</sup> “Kill the pagans”: This is considered to annul any other Koranic commandment that implies moderation towards non-Muslims. It accords the title “the Verse of the Sword” to the verse. Uri Rubin, *The Qur'an*, Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2005 (Hebrew).

<sup>36</sup> The author mitigates the duty of this jihad and leaves on opening for its non-fulfillment, i.e., to the non-attainment of the supreme objective of conquering the world and turning into *dar al-Islam* under conditions whereby the Muslims have exhausted their capabilities, but this implies that if they preserve their strength they must continue and aspire towards maintaining this jihad until the supreme objective is achieved.

enter its territory, it is every individual's duty to oppose it. The author concludes his article by calling and preaching for jihad and not to be absent from it, for the Koran and Sunna call upon Muslims to undertake jihad. This is mandated by the situation of the oppressed and besmirched Muslim honor.

In this book 'Abdallah 'Azzam explains the duty of the individual (*fard 'ayn*) as the duty that every Muslim must fulfill just like prayer and fasting. The duty of the public (*fard kifaya*) is one that if part of the public fulfills it fully, it exempts the others from it. However, if this duty is not fully performed by this part of the public, the entire public is considered to have sinned.<sup>37</sup>

Mustafa Sit-Maryam (a.k.a. 'Umar al-Hakim, but better known as Abu Mus'ab al-Suri) presents an even more stringent approach, whereby jihad today is the duty of every individual (*fard 'ayn*). "On every Muslim rests the duty of jihad against the Jews and Christians wherever they may be: in our countries or their own, civilians, the military, occupiers, economists, preachers of apostasy and wantonness, and this with the sword and arms. The jihad battle against the rulers who have abandoned Islam (*murtaddun*) who protect their bases and presence (of Jews and Crusaders) is the duty of every individual (*fard 'ayn*) in accordance with jihad against the Jews and Christians, and this with the sword and arms". Abu Mus'ab al-Suri views the jihad to liberate the holy places in the Islamic states as an even greater duty of Muslims, especially those in the Arabian Peninsula, the focal point of Islam, where the mosque of their Prophet is, the Muslims' *Qibla* and the oil resources, from where the Prophet ordered the exclusion of every apostate (*mushrik*), and determined that at this place two religions will not meet. Abu Mus'ab al-Suri bases this stringent perception, which mandates jihad by every individual against "the Jews and the Crusaders" wherever they may be, and against those Arab rulers who have abandoned Islam (*murtaddun*), on a conception combining a religious ruling that leans heavily on the law of jihad of 'Abdallah 'Azzam and Ibn Taymiyya on the one hand, and on a strategic view of the new world order on the other. From his point of view, the new world order represents an attack by four awe-inspiring forces acting against Islam: first, the Jews, occupiers of Palestine and its environs, who seek to conquer the entire Islamic Arab world through economic, cultural and even security and military normalization plans. Second, the attack by the US, Great Britain and their NATO allies, in addition to Russia in central Asia, against all the Islamic states and especially the focal points of Islam, i.e., the holy places and the oil resources. Third, the attack by the governments that have abandoned Islam, their armies and security apparatuses against Muslims; these governments have become enemy agents. Fourth, the attack by the hypocrites (*al-munafiqun*) who have strayed and misled, and who block the path to jihad from the people and their hearts. Abu Mus'ab al-Suri concludes his analysis by delegating the duty of conducting the jihad to the *mujahidin* to both liberate their own country and the holy places in the Arabian Peninsula – a duty to which he ascribes both religious and strategic significance.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> 'Azzam, *ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, *Mas'uliyat Ahl al-Yaman tujah Muqaddasat al-Muslimin wa-Tharwatihim* (The Responsibility of the People of Yemen to the Muslim Holy Places and Their Resources), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Sunna, October 1999. In this book the author sets a strategic plan for the *mujahidin* in Yemen for the conquest of the entire Arabian Peninsula and the liberation of the holy places from the local apostates (the Saudi regime) and the foreign apostates ("the Crusaders"). As in his 1,600 page book published in December 2004 (*Da'wat al-*

## Types of Jihad According to Means

In his treatise “The Objectives and Types of Jihad”, Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf discusses the types of jihad set out by the Prophet Muhammad in the Hadith: fight the deviates with your wealth, your souls and your tongues (*jahidu al-mushrikin bi-amwalikum, anfusikum wa-alsinatikum*). Abandoning the jihad of the soul and wealth will cause the nation to lose two qualities – courage and honor – and relinquishment of its sacred mission. Allah warned the nation that He will replace it with another if it abandons the jihad of the soul and wealth, thus relinquishing its sacred mission.

The common taxonomy of Jihad among Jihadi scholars includes the following:

- *Jihad of the soul*: It is the duty of Muslims to seek sacrifice (shahada) in the name of Allah, to prepare to fulfill it, to relinquish worldly pleasures and to break free of the shackles of apostate governments. The young and old must be strengthened in their love of shahada and cautioned against the hatred of war and sacrifice (istishhad), and to desire it. Seeking sacrifice is the weapon that terrified the enemies, vanquished them and left them helpless in finding counter measures. They began asking their agents to oppose the culture of sacrifice (thaqafat al-istishhad).
- *Jihad of wealth*: This is a duty like jihad of the soul. For the sake of jihad Muslims must sacrifice their money in order to provide means for jihad and the mujahidin in Palestine, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir and elsewhere.
- *Jihad of the tongue*: A jihad designed to warn the nation of the danger threatening it. At the same time use is made of the media in order to urge Muslims to embark on jihad to repel the Crusaders and Jews. This type of motivation is part of the duty of “the commandment to enjoin civility and forbid evil” (*al-amr bi-al-ma’ruf wa-al-nahi ‘an al-munkar*).

## Preparations for Jihad

Unlike his colleagues, Sulayman bin Nasser bin ‘Abdallah al-‘Alwan, the Saudi ideologue and one of the leaders of *Shuyukh al-Sahwa*, does not stop at presenting the existing religious commandments for conducting the jihad war. In a comprehensive *fatwa* on his website he discusses the preparations required from the nation in the present circumstances under which Iraq was occupied and where a war against terror is being waged. He emphasizes the religious and practical need to prepare for jihad, which appears, inter alia, in the Koranic verse: “And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them, whom you do not know [but] Allah knows them; and whatever thing you will spend in Allah’s way, it will be paid back to you fully and you shall not be dealt with unjustly” (Sura 8:60).

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*Muqawama al-Islamiyya al-‘Alamiyya*), here, too, the author calls for world Islamic resistance. The author presents a strategy for the *mujahidin* based both on religious law and a political-strategic conception. These books place their author, a veteran of Afghanistan who has become a religious arbiter, at the forefront of contemporary World Jihad ideologues.

Al-‘Alwan adjures governments, groups and individuals to prepare for jihad and prepare arms, money, etc., to repel and defeat the enemy. He adjures them to learn from the example of the patriarchs (*al-salaf al-salih*) who made thorough preparations for jihad and perceived it as a fundamental duty. He also notes that the ‘*ulama* ruled that preparations for jihad are a public (*fard kifaya*) and individual duty (*fard ‘ayn*) for Muslim men capable of fulfilling it. He seizes the opportunity to address a number of groups so that each of them fulfills its role in this sphere: the ‘*ulama* must fulfill the belief in *al-wala’ wa-al-bara’a* and urge the people to prepare to resist the Crusaders’ belligerency; the merchants and wealthy must donate money in return for which they will gain great recompense.<sup>39</sup>

## Jihad as Guerilla Warfare

On the eve of the occupation of Iraq, Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf determined that jihad in the form of long-term guerilla warfare was called for, based on the following rationale:<sup>40</sup>

- Prolonged guerilla warfare is the Achilles heel of modern armies and their weaponry. Israel suffered heavy casualties in guerilla warfare in Palestine and Lebanon.
- The US entanglement in two guerilla wars at the same time, in Afghanistan and Iraq, will accelerate its defeat.
- Iraq’s size and the great quantity of weapons in it will facilitate guerilla warfare, cause the disintegration of the enemy and its inability to control the country.
- The defense of Iraq is like defending the nation and the country of those fighting for it, to which the Americans may come. Fighting the Americans equals fighting the Jews. An American defeat equals defeat of the Jews.

## Use of Non-Conventional Weapons

A small number of World Jihad intellectuals have addressed the question of weapons of mass destruction. Bin Laden has insisted on the right to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Others have gone even further; noting that possessing or acquiring such weapons is not only the Muslims’ right, but also their duty. In May 2003, Sheikh Nasser al-Fahd, one of the leaders of *Shuyukh al-Sahwa*, published a *fatwa* mandating the use of weapons of mass destruction, particularly against the US, based upon *lex talionis* (*al-mu’amala bi-al-mithl*).<sup>41</sup> In his book (see below), ‘Abd al-‘Aziz bin Rashid al-‘Anzi (a.k.a. ‘Abdallah bin Nasser al-Rashid), who also belongs to *Shuyukh al-Sahwa*, discusses the question of using non-conventional weapons, and in the context of Nasser al-Fahd’s *fatwa* says that the use of weapons of mass destruction is permissible when employed against a combatant enemy, but not against

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<sup>39</sup> *Fatwa fi Tawjih al-Umma fi Hadhihi al-Ahdath wa-Wujub al-I’dad li-Waqf Zahf al-Salibiyyin* (Fatwa for the Nation’s Guidance in the Face of These Events and the Need for Readiness to Halt the Crusaders’ Attack), 19 March 2003 (16 Moharram, AH 1424), [www.al-alwan.org](http://www.al-alwan.org).

<sup>40</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Maqasid al-Jihad wa-Anwa’uhu* (The Objectives and Types of Jihad), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad.

<sup>41</sup> Shmuel Bar, *Warrant for Terror: Fatwas of Radical Islam and the Duty of Jihad*, Hoover Studies and Rowman and Littlefield, 2006, pp. 70-73.

one that has surrendered. If a person has surrendered, then the principle is not to brutalize him.

Abu Mus'ab al-Suri does not see much benefit from the guerilla warfare waged against the US by al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia. Hence, "the ultimate choice is the destruction of the United States by operations of strategic symmetry through weapons of mass destruction, namely nuclear, chemical or biological means, if the *mujahidin* can achieve it with the help of those who possess them or through buying them." One other option, he says, is by "the production of basic nuclear bombs, known as 'dirty bombs.'"<sup>42</sup>

The discussion of WMD per se is mainly focused on nuclear weapons. Chemical and radiological weapons are generally perceived as legitimate means that do not require special dispensation to use against infidels (see below – Jihad by means of harming economic interests).

## **Jihad by Means of Harming Economic Interests**

'Abd al-'Aziz bin Rashid al-'Anzi issued a *fatwa* on harming oil interests in Muslim countries, particularly Saudi Arabia.<sup>43</sup> In general terms he asserts that Muslim-owned oil interests should not be harmed, even if they are in apostate hands. However, if it transpires that the resulting damage to the apostates exceeds that caused to the Muslims, then it is permitted. According to al-'Anzi, damage to oil wells and their facilities, such as oil ports, should be avoided because of the damage to the Muslim population, and the damage should be focused on Saudi Arabian-owned oil pipelines in either Iraq or Saudi Arabia. Even if the good name of the jihad fighters is harmed and some damage is caused to some Muslims, there will still be great benefit in view of the damage caused to the enemies of Allah. Oil pipelines are an easy target and are difficult to protect. It is worthy of note that in the announcement made by al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia regarding the attempted attack in Abqaiq (the biggest oil refinery complex in Saudi Arabia) in March 2006, the religious ruling in al-'Anzi's book regarding attacks on oil facilities is mentioned. It should be further noted that in December 2005, bin Laden himself declared the need to hit Saudi Arabian oil complexes.

Other Jihadi texts point out that the power of the US is not purely military but is composed of economic "soft power" and social resilience - both of which are necessary conditions for effective wielding of military power. Therefore the effects of the attacks of 11 September are pointed at as proof of the ability of the Jihadi movement to drag the US into an asymmetric conflict in which its strategic superiority will be compromised. Jihadi strategists seem to believe that there is potential in such attacks not only for moral uplifting of the Muslims but for causing actual strategic damage to the West. The goal of such attacks is therefore to bleed the United States by forcing it to spend enormous amounts of money and effort to protect its presence in the Muslim world and even in the West itself. This will ultimately result in the weakening of the US and Western economy of the United States and the

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<sup>42</sup> Reuven Paz, "Global Jihad and WMD: Between Martyrdom and Mass Destruction," *Current trends in Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 2, Hudson Institute, 12 September 2005.

<sup>43</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Rashid al-'Anzi, *Harming Oil Interests and Economic Jihad*, no date.



West, in reduction of Western influence in the Muslim world and ultimately will bring about the abandonement of the “apostate” regimes by their Western supporters. Such an effect, in the eyes of some Jihadi strategists is much more productive to the cause than just killing a large number of Americans. Jihadi manuals that deals in instructions for preparation of chemical and radiological dispersal device explains that such an attack is effective mainly against targets with high economic profiles (interestingly enough, the manual lists houses of worship among these along with banks, casinos and brothels – evidence of a somewhat truncated cultural view of Western economy). The rationale for targeting these institutions with such weapons is based on the economic damage and not number of casualties: the high cost of decontamination, the economic cost of closure of commercial centers, unemployment, etc. The cities to be targeted are always those cities with high economic profiles and “around the clock” economic activity, thus maximizing the damage.<sup>44</sup> In the same vein, Jihadi texts point at the efficacy of targeting businessmen and business conventions in Muslim countries as a means to break commercial relations between the West and those countries and thus to weaken the “apostate” regimes that rely on those relations.<sup>45</sup>

### **The Principle of Self-Sacrifice for the Sake of Allah (*istishhad*)**

According to the Jihadist Salafiyya the value of self-sacrifice for the sake of Allah derives from the perception of jihad as a duty in fulfillment of Allah’s commandment, and the very conduct of jihad calls for it. There is also a reward: assurance of reaching paradise. Hence there is nothing greater than jihad and self-sacrifice, and no greater reward than fulfilling these two commandments. A *shahid* who has fallen in Allah’s name stands in the first rank of Muslims. According to al-Qaeda values, what is perceived as suicide (which Islam forbids) is an integral part of self-sacrifice and is considered its acme, the peak of faith and a symbol of World Jihad. Sacrificing one’s life for Allah is the principle of faith sought by the jihad fighter (*mujahid*) and is described in terms of pleasure. It will ensure the victory of Islam over apostasy. Al-Qaeda is attempting to hand down the vision of globalization of the idea of *istishhad*. It should be noted that in the past Arab leaders preached, and even promised, that tens of thousands of *shahids* would embark on the struggle for liberation. Thus the Algerian leader in the war against France declared that there would be a million *shahids*. Hence al-Qaeda relied on an existing value, one at the top of the scale of Islamic values, *istishhad*, and transmuted it into an organizational and operational tool that extended its framework, even as far as everything perceived as suicide, and obscured the difference in Islam itself between suicide and sacrifice per se. Islamic establishment intellectuals relate to al-Qaeda’s suicide attacks as acts of suicide forbidden by the Muslim religion.<sup>46</sup>

Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf states that the Islamic nation must be urged to love, seek and look forward to sacrifice (*shahada*). He views sacrifice as the sublime value of great

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<sup>44</sup> See: Mubtakkar al-Farid: Li Irsaal al-Safah al-Athiri Ila al-Kafir al-`Anid -- The Unique Invention: To Deliver the Atheric Killer to the Stubborn Infidel," al-Firdaws Jihadi Website, October 2005, Abu al-Usood al-Faqir, "Instances of Radiation Pollution from 1945-1987," al-Farouq Jihadi Website, October 2005

<sup>45</sup> Abi Hajer Abd al-Aziz al-Muqrin, "Military Sciences -- Targets inside the Cities," *Mu`askar al-Battar (al-Battar Camp) Magazine*, Volume 7, p. 23-27

<sup>46</sup> Yoram Schweitzer & Sari Goldstein-Farber, *Al-Qaeda and the Globalization of Suicide Terrorism*, Memorandum 76, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, June 2005, pp. 19-21.

devotion that will be rewarded in paradise, a test of sincere faith and profession of the unity of Allah, and especially as a practical means of restoring Islam to its former glory, to a position of power and rule in the world. He quotes verses from the Koran and the Hadith to illustrate the value of sacrifice.<sup>47</sup>

In a *fatwa* he issued in reply to a question, Sheikh Hammud bin ‘Uqla al-Shu’aybi, who was considered to be a leading ideologue in the *Shuyukh al-Sahwa*, states as follows: The acts of sacrifice (*istishhad*) in Palestine, Chechnya and elsewhere are legal and part of the jihad for the sake of Allah, for they can inflict losses and defeat (*nikaya*) on the enemy. He bases this on proof from the Koran and Sunna from which the legality of acts of sacrifice in our era can be learned and hence should not be perceived as suicide. Moreover, on the basis of a *fatwa* issued by Ibn Taymiyya he also permits acts of sacrifice that cause the killing of Muslims under the protection of the apostates (*tatarrrus*), if these acts are vital to the defeat of the enemy.<sup>48</sup> In a series of *fatawa*, Sheikh Sulayman bin Nasser bin ‘Abdallah al-‘Alwan also asserts the legality of acts of sacrifice (*‘amaliyyat istishhadiyya*) when he refers mainly to those carried out in Palestine and Chechnya. The effectiveness of these acts is manifested in their inflicting major defeats on the enemy with minimal damage, and he calls to increase them. In this framework it is permitted to kill women and children if they are among others, and men, women and the elderly cannot be distinguished. Israeli women have undergone military training and are considered to be fighters, hence killing them is permitted.<sup>49</sup>

Surprisingly, Abu Basir al-Tartusi broke ranks and in the wake of the July 2005 bombings of the London Underground, he published on his website (24 August 2005) a direct and significant criticism of acts of sacrifice (*istishhad*) from a religious point of view. In his criticism he states that these acts are closer to suicide (*intihar*), which Islam forbids, than to sacrifice (*istishhad*). According to him there are dozens of decrees (*nusus*) in the Koran and the Hadith that forbid the act of suicide, for whatever reason: “And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands” (Sura 2:195). Abu Basir’s anomalous position did not pass without reaction on Islamic websites. One such respondent scoffed at him, noting that the laws of jihad are taken from fighters (*mujahidin*) and not from idlers who publish announcements from London (where Abu Basir resides).<sup>50</sup>

## Bin Laden’s Military-Operational Conception

Usama bin Laden’s and al-Qaeda’s military-operational conception can be summarized by the following principles:

- Freedom of action in dealing with the enemy: the use of any possible means to inflict damage on the enemy on the basis of the logic of spilling the enemy’s

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<sup>47</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf, *Maqasid al-Jihad wa-Anwa’uhu* (The Objectives and Types of Jihad), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

<sup>48</sup> *Jawaz al-‘Amaliyyat al-Istishhadiyya* (Permitting Acts of Sacrifice), al-Majda Forums, <http://said.net/Warathah/hmood/h30.htm>, 26 April 2001 (3 Safar, AH 1422).

<sup>49</sup> *Fatwa al-Shaykh Sulayman bin Nasser al-‘Alwan fi al-‘Amaliyyat al-Istishhadiyya* (Sheikh Sulayman bin Nasser al-‘Alwan’s *fatwa* on Acts of Sacrifice), Al-Markaz al-Filastini li-al-I‘lam, [snallwan@hotmail.com](mailto:snallwan@hotmail.com), 18 May 2001, (24 Sahwal, AH 1422).

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.shirazi.org.uk>, the website of Imam al-Shirazi.

blood (*istihlal*) to get rid of him (*al-bara'a*). Muslims are permitted to inflict any damage whatsoever on countries against which war can be waged (*bilad al-harb*), but not on countries with which there is a convention (*'ahd*), because their people, their blood, their money and the honor of their women (*a'raduhum*) are permitted to Muslims, as they were to the Prophet Muhammad in his wars against Quraysh, Bani 'Uqayl, Bani Nasir and al-Ta'if. Bin Laden relates to the West as a country against which war can be waged.

- Striking against the enemy's centers of economic and military power and symbols: the objective is not only to strike at the enemy's arrogance but also to inflict tremendous material damage and cause collapse. The obligation is to bring about change by the use of force and not influence policy because of political aims. 9/11 illustrates this mode of attack.
- Extending military actions: al-Qaeda has set itself the aim of attacking American targets throughout the world. In effect, actions of this kind have been executed in several continents, but the most serious warning is in taking the front into the heart of enemy territory (*'aqr darihi*) in order to bring about collapse.
- Adopting unconventional tactics in the war against the enemy by employing creative and unconventional thinking, such as the use of the enemy's own methods to attack it. In this context the most important method touches upon numerous groups of suicide fighters that will undertake acts of sacrifice (*'amaliyyat fida'iyya istishhadiyya*) designed to bring about collapse.
- Use of propaganda and psychological warfare together with military force.
- Use of the "Threat of Force" method: the most notable example of this was when bin Laden asserted the right to acquire weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. However, the main thrust of his plans is on the actual use of weapons against his enemies. Armed violence and military force are the principal and almost only means, in contrast with other means of influence he mentions, but in effect the "life of killing and battle" is the main thing.
- Decentralization of jihad in the way the al-Qaeda elements and its allies conduct and execute it; each independently in its own theater in accordance with prevailing circumstances.<sup>51</sup>

## Setting Priorities for Attacking Targets of the Enemies of Islam

Bin Laden relates to the three abovementioned enemies – crusading, Israel and the regimes in the region – as a militarily coordinated, US-led entity, and thinks that striking at each of them will of necessity harm the others. However, his top priority is damaging the US, which is considered to be the chief apostate (*ra's al-kufr*) and the Muslims' principal enemy; on the basis of operative-expediency considerations: hitting the US will have a domino effect on the other enemies, save effort in a residual war and neutralize globalization, which is an obstacle in the path of the liberation of

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<sup>51</sup> Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, pp. 259-262, 263, 265.

Palestine and which threatens the political and cultural existence of Muslims due to its direct closeness to them.<sup>52</sup>

## The Leadership of the Mujahidin Qualities and Obligations

A vast body of literature has been written in Jihadist Salafiyya around the ideal, mystical figure of the *mujahidin* group, its qualities and the demands made of it. In general terms it is a vanguard group noted for its lofty qualities and attributes. In order to highlight this group and present it as a factor continuing the path of the Prophet and his Companions, whose leadership Muslims are adjured to accept, its name was borrowed from the Hadith: “*al-ta’ifa al-mansura*”. In the Hadith and on the basis of the words of the Prophet, this term is attributed to the companions of the Prophet who loyally and zealously continue his teachings. Its literal meaning is ‘a group meriting the grace of Allah’. In numerous instances the name appears, and in others a synonym, *Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a*. It should be noted that in a March 2005 publication on the identity of the “al-Qaeda Organization in Iraq”, it was called *Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a*.<sup>53</sup>

The leading intellectuals of the Jihadist Salafiyya have devoted a vast body of literature to *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*: Abu Qattada, whose website goes by the same name; Ayman al-Zawahiri, whose last book bore the same title; and Abu Basir al-Tartusi. Among the lofty qualities of *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* the latter enumerates defense of justice, justice as a source of hope for the oppressed (*al-mustad’afun*), and implicitly at the present time, victory with the help of Allah.<sup>54</sup>

Abu Qattada stresses the operational functioning of *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*, and graces it with the title of “the fighting group” (*ta’ifa muqatila*). He cites Hadiths from which he concludes that Allah has praised it, entrusted it with the war for the sake of Allah and to glorify the name of the faith. It will never cease. It is based upon truth. It follows in the footsteps of the patriarchs (*al-salaf al-salih*) and adheres to the Koran and Sunna. At one time Ibn Taymiyya attributed this name to *al-Sham* and Egypt who defended Islam against the Tatars.<sup>55</sup> In another book he states that the two principal qualities of *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* (which Allah praised) are: continuous jihad, which is a divine commandment, and the right to take booty in the war so that it can continue to exist from a material standpoint. He also states unequivocally that the Jihadist Salafiyya movements were founded to fight the gods that had abandoned Islam (*al-tawaghit al-murtaddin*) in the countries that abandoned Islam (*bilad al-ridda*) and are the most worthy of bearing the name *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*. Their political role is to topple these regimes and revivify the Islamic government that will bring the nation together under the banner of the Islamic Caliphate. They surpass other groups in their

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<sup>52</sup> Bin Laden leans on the Koranic verse that gives precedence to war against a close enemy: “...fight the close apostates” (Sura 9:123). From Abu Ayman al-Halali, “Bin Laden and the Palestinian Problem,” which appeared on Islamic websites, no date.

<sup>53</sup> In this publication the strategic aims of the organization also appeared, including the restoration of the caliphate. From *The al-Qaeda Organization in Iraq: A Self-Portrait*, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage & Communications Center (source: The Middle East Media Research Center), [http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/memri/apr\\_b\\_05.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/memri/apr_b_05.htm), 22 March 2005.

<sup>54</sup> Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *Sifat al-Ta’ifa al-Mansura al-lati Yajib Takthir Sawadiha* (The Attributes of the Group Meriting the Grace of Allah Which Must be Strengthened), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

<sup>55</sup> Abu Qattada, *Ma’alim al-Ta’ifa al-Mansura* (Milestones of the Group Meriting the Grace of Allah), no date.

comprehension of the religion of Allah, but the absence of contact and the lack of generation of mutual benefit between these movements cause them to be of inferior status. Abu Qattada also calls upon the Jihadist movements to open new jihad fronts outside their own countries and view themselves as a single unit, since the struggle has the character of all-out war. He states that wherever there is faith there is victory, and wherever faith is found lacking, they will have nobody to blame but themselves.<sup>56</sup>

Ibrahim ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Barakat emphasizes the religious and cohering aspect of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a*. He categorically supports any Muslim (*fard ‘ayn*) who follows the path of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* (which, as mentioned above, also appears under the name *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*). According to him the people of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* must adhere to two basic qualities: first, to follow the path (*ittiba’*) of the Prophet and his Companions (*al-Sahaba*), and second, accord (*ijtima’*) in following this path (which he calls “*Ahl al-Ittiba’ wa-al-Ijtima’*”). He in fact determines that the people of truth (*Ahl al-Haqq*), i.e., the contemporary *mujahidin* group that continue the teachings of the original *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* (*al-Sahaba*), fulfill these qualities, are united in their views guided by solid rulings and conventions (the Koran and Sunna), and are based on cohering principles, unlike other groups founded on divisive principles and ideas deriving from interpretation and thinking (*afkar ijthadiyya wa-hawa’iyya*). In the conclusion of his treatise he calls upon Muslims to adhere to *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* and act at their side so they will achieve victory. It is worthy of note that Barakat uses a Koranic verse to warn anyone not following the path of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* that he is “sinning and deviating from *al-fi’a al-mansura*” and on the Day of Judgment his fate will be hell: “And whoever acts hostilely to the Messenger after that guidance has become manifest to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We will turn him to that to which he has [himself] turned and make him enter hell; and it is an evil resort” (Sura 4:115). Barakat explains that this verse unequivocally mandates following the Muslim path that is the path of the Prophet’s Companions (*al-Sahaba*).<sup>57</sup> It should also be noted that in his article Sheikh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani also makes “political” use of this verse, but in a way that casts blame on the Jihadist groups to which Barakat belongs. According to him, this verse attests to the fact that preachers deviating from the Koran and Sunna and the path of the faithful, due to their lack of understanding of the principles of Islamic religious law, are in disagreement with the Messenger himself.<sup>58</sup>

The intellectuals’ main common denominator is quoting the Hadith that appears in various wordings (see the section on *al-wala’ wa-al-bara’a*, above) with regard to *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* and its invulnerability to all evil and being eternal to the End of Days. It should be noted that Jihadist terror groups that were exposed and arrested in 2005-2006 in Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, took the name “*al-ta’ifa al-mansura*” for themselves, apparently to furnish themselves with the qualities attributed to this title.

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<sup>56</sup> Abu Qattada, *Al-Jihad wa-al-Ijtihad: Ta’ammulat fi al-Minhaj* (Adopting the Line of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* is the Duty of Every Muslim), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, 27 February 2005 (18 Muharram, AH 1426).

<sup>57</sup> Ibrahim ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Barakat, *Ittiba’ Minhaj Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a: Fard ‘Ayn ‘ala Kull Muslim* (Adopting the line of *al-Sunna wa-al-Jama’a* is the duty of every Muslim), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, 27 February 2005 (18 Muharram, AH 1426).

<sup>58</sup> ‘Ali ibn Hasan ibn ‘Ali ibn ‘Abd al-Halabi al-Athari, *Al-Tahdhir min Fitnat al-Takfir* (Warning Against the *Takfir* Plot), 1996, pp. 49-51.

It would seem that turning the *mujahidin* groups into a symbol and source of admiration by means of these and other terms is designed, on the one hand, together with other such reinforcements, to maintain their morale on the various fighting fronts and strengthen their adherence to the values required in the spheres of faith and jihad, and on the other to gather support around them, particularly by means of a religious duty to follow their path as these groups are the flag-bearers of *al-Sahaba* and continue their path.

In contrast, relatively little has been written about the *mujahidin* in their entirety, their religious scholars and *amirs*. Abu 'Umar al-Sayf relates to the *mujahidin's* *amirs* and '*ulama* with great admiration who, according to him, are loyally doing their duty to jihad in comparison with the present rulers. Al-Sayf demands that the '*ulama* lead the people and organize their broken ranks. They must lead the young people to the place of the struggle (*nizal*) and the battle (*qital*) and meet all the needs of jihad in all the territories in which the banners of jihad for Allah have been raised. He envisages an expansion of the Crusades by conquest of additional Muslim states and hence raises the need for a new jihad, similar to that in North Africa and elsewhere.

Abu Jandal al-Azdi discusses the qualities necessary for Muslim spokespersons: they must possess expertise in the issues of rule and act in accordance with Muslim and Islamic interests, and not personal interests. They must be capable of reaching definitions and rulings on the basis of religious law (*Shari'a*) and all its finer points and rules, as Allah has instructed them. At the same time they must reject all forms of apostasy (*shirk*).<sup>59</sup>

In contrast, Yusuf al-'Ayiri rules that it is forbidden to connect jihad with images of leaders and symbols. Jihad is a commandment (*shar'ia*) per se that Allah pledges will exist to the End of Days. Allah has promised victory if the Muslims fulfill the conditions of jihad, whether their leaders are at their side or have been killed in the name of Allah. Muslims must worship the Lord (*rabb*) of Jihad and not the jihad leadership. Even if Usama bin Laden is killed, thousands of Usamas will carry the banner after his death. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the jihad way of action was not changed by his Companions (*al-Sahaba*). In conclusion, jihad is a supreme commandment that does not vary with the loss of people and leaders.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Abu Jandal al-Azdi, *Al-Bahth 'an Hukm Qatl Afrad wa-Dhubbat al-Mabahith* (Law regarding the Killing of Secret Police Officers and Men), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

<sup>60</sup> Yusuf al-'Ayiri, *Thawabit 'ala Darb al-Jihad* (The Principles of the Way of Jihad), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

# The Ultimate Objective – Establishment of the Caliphate/Islamic State

## General

In formulating their philosophy the radical Islamic movements give preference to questions in the sphere of the faith (*'aqida, iman*) and reforming the faith of the individual and the public at large on the one hand, and the development of the idea of jihad on the other. They are less deeply involved in issues related to formulating political, economic and social programs for the Islamic state or Islamic Caliphate they seek to establish in accordance with their theocratic model. It seems that the pattern of intensive preoccupation with issues of faith stems from their perception that the flaws in the adoption of faith are the foremost reason for social and economic problems, and consequently reforming faith will provide a cure and remedy for these ills – in the spirit of the slogan of the political Islamic movements, “Islam is the Solution” (*al-Islam huwa al-hall*) – and will prepare the ground for fulfillment of the idealistic objective of reestablishing the Caliphate.

At the same time, in its thinking on shaping the concept of war, the al-Qaeda organization has, since its establishment, frequently focused on “crusading” and the Jews from a religious and realistic viewpoint. In this context, this organization, like other radical Islamic organizations, is intensively engaged in the laws of jihad against the internal and distant/external enemy and in preaching for jihad. On the other hand, the preoccupation with the establishment of the pan-Islamic state or the Caliphate, including its image, geographic and strategic spaces, and political, economic and social program, is significantly marginal and secondary to the preoccupation with the abovementioned issues. Scattered ideas pertaining to political, economic and social models of the Islamic state, based on Islamic law, such as adoption of the *shura* principle and proscription against interest on loans, can be found in the philosophy of al-Qaeda and the clerics of the Jihadist Salafiyya, as can approaches to the manner of establishing the Caliphate and its geographic boundaries.

With regard to the area of the Caliphate and its borders, Yusuf al-‘Ayiri presents the ideal model of establishing “Islamic rule”, with the concealed intention being establishment of the Caliphate itself over the entire universe, namely transforming the universe in its entirety into *dar al-Islam*: “The duty of jihad imposed on all Muslims will only be annulled once the supreme objective has been attained, which is domination of the entire world until there is not even a single sod that is not under the rule of Islam, or until the Muslims invest all their efforts to fulfill the aim of jihad.”<sup>61</sup> The al-Qaeda organization’s initial plans<sup>62</sup> speak at this stage of a caliphate that extends over the central Arab space – Iraq, the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt – with Iraq serving as its initial base. Other literature speaks of an entity extending over additional Islamic countries as well, such as Afghanistan and countries that were under Islamic rule in the past, such as Spain, Bosnia and Chechnya.

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<sup>61</sup> Yusuf al-‘Ayiri, *Hukm al-Jihad* (The Law of Jihad), no date.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, 11 October 2005, <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/006/203gpul.asp>.

With regard to the image of the Caliphate, its foundations and content in the various spheres, Abu Basir al-Tartusi in his treatise on “The Foundations of the Islamic State” (see below) sketches a systematic doctrine of the principles that should guide it in the theocratic and moral spheres, and less so in the governmental-political, economic and social spheres. Possessing a relatively balanced and pragmatic worldview that is based on morality, justice and equality, it is doubtful whether Tartusi’s treatise is accepted in its entirety by other clerics from his stream. In any event, the theocratic foundation, according to which the sources of authority of the Caliphate are the Koran and Sunna, constitutes a broad common denominator for clerics of the Jihadist Salafiyya.

It seems that among the clerics in general, and the al-Qaeda leadership in particular, the conception is being assimilated that establishing the Caliphate in stages over one area or another is an objective that they should aspire to fulfill, and not only view as an ideal or vision that has attended Islam since the dawn of its appearance. In conceptual terms there are signs of increased investment in thinking concerning the image and foundations of the Caliphate. In the letter from al-Zawahiri to Abu Mus’ab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda raises the necessity of formulating an integrative action strategy that alongside the familiar military aspect also includes a clear political aspect. At the same time, al-Qaeda is becoming, in its leaders’ view, not only a military jihad organization but also one with political characteristics in its thinking and activities toward establishing the embryonic Caliphate. Thus, al-Qaeda has been striving to change the aggressive military *modus operandi* expounded by al-Zarqawi, which lacks political sensitivity, and to adopt political modes of thinking and operating that would be consistent with the organization’s shaping worldview.

From a political aspect, al-Qaeda places great importance on transforming the organization in Iraq into one with a broad public/popular base, first and foremost among the Sunni masses, although it was initially founded by a group of *mujahidin* that came from the outside to lead the organization in Iraq. Integrating the Sunni masses into al-Qaeda’s sphere of support in Iraq will only be effected after this mass undergoes a process of Islamization in the spirit of al-Qaeda’s Sunni Salafist doctrine. This approach comprises an important pragmatic political element advocating that it is preferable to absorb the Shi’a when it is cleansed of its characteristics than to declare an all-out war against it as an infidel element. In other words, “infidel” Shiites can be redeemed on condition that they undergo a process of repentance. Within the framework of developing its political doctrine al-Qaeda lays an ideological foundation for the process of building the institutions of the Caliphate. At this stage this is a preliminary plan that adopts familiar institutions from the Islamic dogma, primarily the *shura*.

In summary, an important change is evident in al-Qaeda’s strategy under the leadership of bin Laden, from one that focuses on perpetrating terrorism as an objective in itself to one of conducting a military and political campaign for the purpose of establishing an independent Islamic entity.



## The Objectives and the Plans to Achieve Them

Bin Laden presents the two strategic objectives of Islam en bloc:<sup>63</sup>

- In the political sphere: Liberation of expropriated Islamic territories, from Palestine in its entirety, to Spain and lost Islamic countries, combined with establishment of the Caliphate (*al-khilafa al-rashida*) by the Arab Islamic nation.
- In the religious sphere: Abrogation of man-made laws, which were enforced by the US, replacing them with enforcement of Islamic law and raising Allah's word/majesty in the world (*i'la' kalimat Allah*). In other words, enforcing faith that triumphs over apostasy.

These two objectives are pragmatically connected. Some clerics present the faith's domination of the world as the primary purpose of Islam, with all its resources directed toward achieving a faith objective, rather than to acquiring power and strength.

Bin Laden perceives a need for outlining a practical plan for reforming and uniting the nation – a plan to which the entire nation will devote itself, from devotion to Allah to fighting in the name of Allah. In effect, he presents a type of multifaceted integrative plan for the fulfillment of the ultimate objective he has set, namely, reforming and uniting the nation on the basis of the following components:<sup>64</sup>

- Rejecting the surrender initiatives, and enlistment of the masses for demonstrations and social rebellion to topple the traitorous governments.
- Attacking the apostates' leaders (meaning, Muslim rulers) who have abandoned their faith, and killing them.
- Striking at American interests around the world in general, and in the Islamic nation in particular.
- Boycotting American and Jewish goods.
- Killing Americans and Jews by any means.
- Reinforcing and supporting the fighters.

Bin Laden feels entitled since he has already laid an important foundation for the execution of his detailed plan by establishing "The World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders" together with many of his colleagues. In practice, the "plan" is one-dimensional since it focuses on the issue repeatedly emphasized in his preaching, namely waging war – jihad against Islam's principal enemies: the US and Israel on the one hand, and the Arab/Islamic regimes on the other.<sup>65</sup> This "plan" merely comprises familiar rules of waging an all-out campaign against the internal

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Taysir al-'Alwani, [www.alneda.net](http://www.alneda.net), 21 October 2001, in Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, p.227.

<sup>64</sup> Bin Laden's announcement on the initiative by Saudi Crown Prince Abdallah of Saudi Arabia regarding to the Israeli-Arab conflict, Al-Jazeera, 4 January 2004. In Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, p.229.

<sup>65</sup> Diya' Rashwan (ed.), *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi al-'Alam* (World Islamic Movements), Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 2006, pp.227-229.

and distant enemy as a necessary preliminary stage toward establishing the Islamic nation's Islamic state.

## Perception of Iraq as the First Stage

The letter mentioned above from Bin Laden's deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, to Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, which was sent in July 2005 and revealed by the Americans, constitutes an important window for gaining an insight to the ideas being inculcated by the al-Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan with regard to the strategy for the establishment of a pan-Islamic state. Iraq, where al-Qaeda established itself under the leadership of Zarqawi (following his killing, the organization is now led by Abu Hamza al-Muhajir), is identified by the organization as an important theater of activity that affords a unique opportunity to achieve actual control of Arab territory in a central theater and thus come closer to fulfilling the grandiose objective of establishing a caliphate, albeit in stages, across the expanses of the Mashriq (North Africa), the Gulf and even Egypt. Victory in Iraq and establishment of an Islamic emirate/caliphate in this theater has strategic and morale-boosting importance of the highest order for al-Qaeda in the following respects:

- Obtaining control of a theater that can serve as a good alternative for the loss of control over Afghanistan. Moreover, this alternative, Iraq, has a symbolic advantage since in Muslim history it was a glorious center of government of the Abbasid Caliphate.
- Defeating the principal enemy – the US – and triumphing over it, which will strengthen the morale of the organizations that comprise the World Jihad movement and encourage them to intensify the war in their theaters against the apostate enemies from home.
- Seizing control of oil resources that can constitute a source to finance the continued struggle outside Iraq.
- Using the Iraqi theater as a convenient springboard for seizing control of adjacent territories – the Gulf, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt – toward establishing a caliphate that will comprise the lion's share of the Arab world.

It seems that according to the perception of al-Qaeda, in later stages this caliphate will comprise the entire Islamic world – *dar al-Islam* – and even extend as far as possible toward other regions under non-Islamic rule (*dar al-harb*).

It should be noted that a year later al-Zawahiri reiterated his conception regarding the establishment of an Islamic emirate in Iraq that would constitute the first step on the way to conquering additional theaters and restoration of the Caliphate.<sup>66</sup> However, the declaration regarding the establishment of "The Islamic State of Iraq" is far from constituting a tangible first step in the direction toward which al-Zawahiri is striving.

A similar conception of Iraq as an essential theater and springboard toward attaining control of large adjacent territories appears in a document published by the

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<sup>66</sup> An interview published on the Al-Muhajir forum, 12 September 2006.

Information Authority for the Support of the Iraqi People:<sup>67</sup> “The battle for Iraq is the battle of the entire Islamic nation. In the event that the Americans are defeated, as we pray to Allah will be the case, the door will open to an Islamic groundswell and for the first time in our generation we will have a forward base for the Islamic renaissance and the Islamic jihad in the near vicinity of the two holy sites (*al-Haramayn*, i.e., Mecca and Medina) and the al-Aqsa Mosque (i.e., Jerusalem) that will look out over the land of “*al-Ribat*” (a borderland military station for waging war against the apostates) in *al-Sham* and will encourage Islamic renaissance in the Islamic world.”

A manifesto of the “Al-Qaeda Organization in Iraq” emphasizes that the purpose of the activities being undertaken in Iraq against the Americans and their collaborators is the restoration of the Islamic Caliphate from the capital of the Caliphate – Baghdad. The importance of the Caliphate is perceived as essential in the personal-religious aspect as well, for according to the Hadith he who dies without swearing allegiance (*bay’a*) to the [Muslim] ruler dies a *jahili* death, i.e., dies as an apostate.<sup>68</sup>

In the abovementioned letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi al-Qaeda reveals a conception adopting the “stage system” as a method of action to fulfill the strategic objective of establishing the Caliphate. It seems that the following elements comprise the background for adoption of the “stage system”:

Utilizing military success in Iraq to create a *fait accompli* for the establishment of a nucleus for the Islamic Caliphate fully controlled by al-Qaeda. Achieving this initial and limited objective will radiate power and enlist support and sympathy from within and without, similar to the role played by al-Qaeda in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. Moreover, declaring this center of control an independent Islamic emirate – whether on limited territory in Iraq or the entire theater – will serve as a symbol of and example for al-Qaeda’s ability to fulfill the Islamic ideal of establishing a caliphate that will restore Islam’s former glory.

Recognizing al-Qaeda’s limitations of power in the struggle against various regimes, which impels al-Qaeda to announce the fulfillment of the ideal of establishing the Caliphate in stages.

Focusing military and ideological efforts on the Iraqi theater in order to achieve control, albeit on an independent entity, which will constitute a precedent for al-Qaeda’s independent rule, whereas in the past al-Qaeda operated in the Sudan and Afghanistan under the auspices of the local regime. At the same time, al-Qaeda is not abandoning its struggle in other arenas and is even expected to continue operating through its organization in Iraq and its branches to wreak havoc in neighboring countries and destabilize their regimes in anticipation of expanding its control to these arenas.

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<sup>67</sup> *Iraq: Al-Jihad, Amal wa-Akhtar*, (Iraq: Jihad, Hopes and Dangers), Al-Hay’a al-I’lamiyya li-Nusrat al-Sha’b al-‘Iraqi, Markaz Khidamat al-Mujahidin, p.2. <http://www.lahdah.com/vb/showthread.php?t=27231>.

<sup>68</sup> *The al-Qaeda Organization in Iraq: A Self-Portrait*, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage & Communications Center (source: The Middle East Media Research Institute), [http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/memri/apr\\_b\\_05.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/memri/apr_b_05.htm), 22 March 2005.

Striving to establish a political entity in Iraq with its own institutions and Islamic codex, so that it can serve as base for establishment of the Caliphate over extensive territories, with all that this entails in terms of the political and institutional challenges.

## Foundations of Government in the Islamic State

Sheikh ‘Abd al-Mun’im Mustafa Halima, a.k.a. Abu Basir al-Tartusi, has published on his Internet website<sup>69</sup> a unique treatise presenting a model for the ideal Islamic state and the foundations and principles on which it is founded. The treatise focuses on the formulation of principles and values for the Islamic state within the theocratic whole, which are founded on Islamic dogma and its two principal sources, the Koran and Sunna, and the moral system. From his point of view, these two systems are essentially bound and connected to one another, and without the existence of one there can be no existence for a state as an Islamic state.

In the introduction to his treatise the author asserts that titles and values are being ascribed to an ostensibly Islamic state, whereas in reality it is, to all intents and purposes, a secular state that is not implementing the faith of *al-wala’ wa-al-bara’a* (loyalty and disavowal) and of “judge between them by what Allah has revealed” (*fa-uhkum baynahum bi-ma anzala Allah*) (Sura 5:48). Therefore, the rule according to which “slave has authority over slave” exists in this state. Consequently the author sees fit to present the principles and foundations on which the law/governance (*al-hukm*) is founded in the ultimate Islamic state without which it loses the justifications and foundations for its existence, even when it is unjustly called an Islamic state.

The importance of the treatise lies in its focused presentation of the Jihadist Salafiyya position regarding the religious, ideological and moral foundations of the Islamic state. The author uncompromisingly presents the obligation of the true “Islamic state” to implement the principles and foundations in their entirety. If it transpires that the “Islamic state” fails to implement a principle of an ideological and moral nature, the title “Islamic” will be revoked and it will be regarded non-Islamic even if it fully implements the religious principles. General political characteristics of the state, such as presenting the principles of the *shura*, are derived and stem from these foundations. Conversely, they also serve as ammunition for the author to delegitimize and negate the existence of the Arab Islamic regimes in the region that are regarded “tyrannical”.

Like other treatises by intellectuals from the Jihadist Salafiyya stream, this one, too, demonstrates the absence in the Jihadist Salafiyya of a detailed political, social and economic program for the Islamic state. This kind of program is overshadowed by a religious-moral concept on the one hand, and an uncompromising attack against the “tyrannical regimes that unjustly claim to be Islamic” on the other.

However, the author is not seeking to effect a reform in the so-called Islamic state in order to adapt it to the dimensions of his model, but by implication to effect an

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<sup>69</sup> Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *Raka’iz al-Hukm fi al-Dawla al-Islamiyya* (Foundations of Government in the Islamic State), [www.abubaseer.bizland.com](http://www.abubaseer.bizland.com), 5 March 2005.

overall revolution and reestablish the Islamic state from top to bottom according to the model he presents. He does not speak in terms of jihad against the apostate states that call themselves Islamic, but rather in terms of their total delegitimization. From the striving to undermine the foundations of their existence a need arises – that is explicitly manifest in all the treatises of the Jihadist Salafiyya – to effect a revolution to topple the regimes, replace them with Jihadist elements and establish the model of the Islamic state. As evident in another of his treatises, “The Struggle between the Cultures” (see below), the author asserts emphatically that the only formula for restoring the Islamic nation’s former glory, power and leadership role as a superpower throughout the world is reaffirmation of all Islamic values, i.e., by implementing the model for the Islamic state he presents in his two abovementioned treatises. Only then will the Islamic nation be able to enlist all its potential power – in ideological, spiritual and material terms – in order to resume its position as the leading world power.

In his treatise Tartusi details the principles of the ultimate Islamic state. These are: Islamic Law (*hukm*), “Consulation” (*shura*)

### **Islamic Law**

The government (*al-siyada*) of the Islamic state is subject to the Law (*hukm*) of Allah and not to any other law. All people, rulers and ruled alike, are subject to the Judgment of Allah and His Law as it appears in the Koran and Sunna. The law (*hukm*) and legislation (*tashri*) are Allah’s alone. This is the exclusive right of Allah and none can share this right with Him. This emphatic assertion leans on verses from the Koran, such as: “Judgment is only Allah’s; He has commanded that you shall not serve aught but Him; this is the right religion but most people do not know” (Sura 12:40); “And He does not make any one His associate in His Judgment” (Sura 18:26). Consequently, all judgment has to be subject to the Law of Allah that was handed down from Heaven. “Therefore judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires (to turn away) from the truth that has come to you” (Sura 5:49); “And whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers” (Sura 5:44).

By way of negation, Tartusi asserts that a state that adopts a different law and a different legislator, or one in conjunction with Allah, perpetuates the divinity (*uluhiyya*) and authority (*rububiyya*) of the created legislator over its citizens and subjects and accepts the dominion of slave over slave. Such a state cannot be called an Islamic state or belong to the faith of Islam. From the assertion that judgment and legislation are Allah’s alone, the author concludes that an Islamic state has to guide its internal and external policies, its social, economic and legal activities, as well as its course in the spheres of war and peace, in accordance with “what Allah has revealed” and cannot deviate from it even slightly.

In summary, the author in effect presents a basic Salafist principle associated with the true Islamic state, namely that law and judgment in this state belong to Allah who revealed them by means of the Koran and Sunna, which are the word of the living God, and not of flesh and blood. Moreover, policy and activity in any sphere must be derived from the Law of Allah. This radical Salafist concept accords uniqueness to the Islamic state by viewing it as a completely theocratic state on the

one hand, and distinguishing it from a state that does not toe the line and which is considered non-Islamic, on the other. According to this concept, the Middle Eastern states, including Saudi Arabia, are considered non-Islamic for they do not meet the criteria of the Islamic state, either because they adopted man-made laws alongside the laws of *Shari'a* or acted according to policies that contradict, according to this concept, Islamic law, for example joining forces with the “crusading” US and supporting it against Muslims.

It should be noted that Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf elaborates on the instructions pertaining to enforcing the Law of Allah. According to him, democracy, which grants sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) to people is likened to denying the sovereignty of Allah (*hakmiyyat Allah*) and Islam as a way of life. He employs this issue to project onto the position of Arab and Islamic regimes and onto the political reality in Iraq. With regard to the regimes he asserts that if they adopt the parliament, the laws and the UN, as well as other institutions, as a legislative authority and judiciary instead of Allah, they reinforce the apostates who have abandoned Islam. With regard to the situation in Iraq he cautions that if the Americans succeed in installing an apostate democratic regime, this means that they have entrusted judgment and law not into the hands of Allah but into those of His inferiors, and then Muslims will fall into the same sin into which they fell when imperialism enforced the laws of Christianity and its regimes on Muslims. Thus, he calls on Muslims to fight the Americans so that the Word of Allah will prevail and Islam will rule in the state.<sup>70</sup>

### **“Consultation” (Shura)**

The Islamic state must operate according to the principle of the *shura* in a binding manner in all public and personal aspects and in all aspects of government (*al-hukm*) and life. It is important for the Islamic society to transform the *shura* into a widespread culture that all will adopt – rulers and ruled alike (*hukkaman am mahkumin*). Rulers and ruled alike must implement the *shura* in action and deed and in all spheres as Allah determined: “And their rule is to take counsel among themselves” (*wa-amruhum shura baynahum*) (Sura 42:38); “And take counsel with them in the affair; so when you have decided, then place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who trust” (Sura 3:159).

By means of the *shura* the state will become the state of all. Its protection and superintendence are the responsibility of all. Conversely, a state that does not act in accordance with the principles of the *shura* is one in which the rule and aspirations of the individual prevail and it becomes a state of the individual, with the individual bearing responsibility for it. The state will not be sufficiently strong to face difficulties and challenges, and its decline and fall will occur rapidly. The characteristics of the *shura* are close to collective action, assistance and unity for all Muslims: “And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited” (Sura 3:103). Sustaining the *shura* will prevent rivalry between Muslims.

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<sup>70</sup> Abu ‘Umar al-Sayf (Muhammad bin ‘Abdallah bin Sayf Al-Jaber al-Buaynayn al-Tamimi), *Al-Nidham al-Dimuqrati – Nidham Kufri* (Democratic Rule is Apostate Rule), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Islam, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws), no date.

Al-Tartusi specifies boundaries and red lines for situations in which the *shura* can or cannot make decisions and rulings in various spheres. The *shura* cannot bring about the violation of any Koran and Sunna rulings or of agreements (*ijma'*) that have been agreed by the nation's '*ulama*'. The *shura* will not convene on an issue on which the Koran or Sunna make an explicit determination (*nass muhkam*). Furthermore, there is no room for interpretation where there is a source determination (*la ijtiḥad 'inda mawrid al-nass*). Employing the *shura* – in conjunction with sources of interpretation (*mawarid al-ijtiḥad*) and sources of deduction and the decision regarding toward which side the balance of preference is tipped (*mawarid al-istinbat wa-al-tarjih*) – is permitted when the issue is hidden or obscure. Employing the *shura* in this instance will be done by people of knowledge and clerics (*ahl al-'ilm wa-al-fiqh*) who will make a majority decision based on a study of the body of evidence and proof in order to determine whether the balance of preference tips toward one side or another (*rajih min al-marjuh*). When the issue in question touches upon matters and interests of the general public ('*ammat al-Muslimin*) or parts of it – such as electing a Muslim ruler (*hakim Muslim*) or his dismissal, employing the *shura* and "*tashawur*" (consultation) is virtually mandatory.

Although the author allots the *shura* relatively restricted boundaries for maneuver and activity since it cannot disagree with the Koran and Sunna or violate them, he assigns to it two very important political functions in the Islamic state. The first is maintaining the state's unity as part of the responsibility shared by all its citizens – rulers and ruled alike – for the state and its defense. The second political function serves as a unifying element and its neglect causes civil war (*fitna*), schism and hatred between Muslims – a traumatic event since the dawn of Islam. In cases in which there is danger of schism, the *shura* is mandatory. The reasons for the current schism in the nation and its weakness stem from failing to maintain the principles of the *shura* and their neglect by Muslims. Conversely, the main reason that the apostate nations (*al-umam al-kafira*) are united – despite the differences between them – is that they maintain the principles of the *shura* between them.

### **Justice (al-'Adl)**

Allah loves justice, teaches justice and rewards justice. Allah hates oppression and oppressors. Justice is a fundamental element of government in the Islamic state and for the existence of any state and society. The reverse of justice is oppression and tyranny. With regard to the state, its government and rule cannot exist in oppression (*dhulm*) and tyranny (*tughyan*). In this context Ibn Taymiyya ruled (*Fatwa* 146/28): Allah grants rebirth to a state in which there is justice even if it is apostate, and He does not grant rebirth to a state in which there is oppression even if it is Muslim (*muslima*). The world exists on justice and apostasy, but it does not exist on oppression and Islam (*al-dunya ma'a al-'adl wa-al-kufr wa-la tadum ma'a al-dhulm wa-al-Islam*). In the social sphere justice has to be done with others even if they are hostile, and with the oppressed even if he is an apostate and the oppressor is Muslim.

### **Integrity and Impartiality of the Ruler vis-à-vis his Subjects (al-Amana wa-Nazahat Yad al-Hakim qabla al-Mahkum)**

The integrity and impartiality of the ruler are qualities of the Islamic government in an Islamic state. The ruler must be put on trial for any deceit and

embezzlement of public monies. The conduct of Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab in particular, and of the first Muslims in general, serves as an example and model. Observance of this value, too, on the part of the ruler is important for the unity of Muslims: if the ruler ensures the welfare of his subjects and gives them preference when dividing limited resources – especially in periods of hunger and economic embargo by an enemy – the people will never contemplate rebellion against him. However, if the ruler steals public monies and accumulates great wealth and lives a life of luxury – as is the case with many tyrannical Arab rulers (*tawaghit al-hukm al-‘Arabi*) – while the people suffer poverty and hardship and see their money being stolen by the ruling clique (*al-tughma al-hakima*) – in such cases the people will be unable to meet the challenges and endure the economic embargo. Between the people and the corrupting and oppressing ruler there will not exist a relationship of shared protection or understanding, and the people’s entire concern will be focused on how to rid itself of the ruling clique and its oppression, even if this is effected by the nation’s enemies, as has been the case in several states. A ruler who does not provide protection and patronage to his subjects and is not interested in matters of government, but only in himself and in plundering the resources of the state for his personal benefit and for the benefit of his inner circle, is not worthy of being called a Muslim ruler and his rule is not worthy of being called Islamic rule. Furthermore, his rule cannot endure and his state will rapidly cease to exist. Presentation of the value of the ruler’s integrity and impartiality is also used by the author for political needs: delegitimization and total negation of the Arab rulers and their rule, and by implication also of those who rule the Gulf States, while accusing them of plundering the wealth of the Muslim public and using it for personal needs.

**Enjoin that which is Good and Forbid the Evil (*al-Amr bi-al-Ma’ruf wa-al-Nahi ‘an al-Munkar*)**

Al-Tartusi categorically asserts that what he terms the culture and faith of “enjoin civility and forbid evil”, which appears several times in the Koran, is one of the most prominent foundations and characteristics of the Islamic state, and without it there can be no existence for the Islamic state or Islamic society. The author cites the central verses from the Koran that instruct on “this culture”: “And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardian of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil” (Sura 9:71).

From the author’s point of view this instruction from the Koran should be the culture and way of life of all believing men and women and the role of the Islamic state. However, as the Koran itself instructs, it is possible for a group from among the believers to fulfill this task and supervise society from becoming infected with evil. “And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful” (Sura 3:104). However, if the believers do not fulfill this instruction they will fail in the task that Allah has imposed on them so that they can remain in their land.

The civility Allah has commanded us to instruct comprises the sayings and deeds, both overt and latent, that Allah loves. These include all the attributes of faith, and first and foremost “There is no other God but Allah”. Evil comprises all the sayings and deeds, both overt and latent, that Allah despises. These include all branches of apostasy (*al-kufr*), forsaking obedience to Allah (*fusuk*), and rebellion



(*'isyan*), and culminate with apostasy against Allah (*al-ishrak bi-Allah ta'ala*). The Islamic nation is known for its superiority, for being better than any other nation by virtue of “enjoin civility and forbid evil”, as it is said in the Koran, “You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit) of men; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah” (Sura 3:110).

In summary, al-Tartusi asserts that the above commandment serves as the safety valve (*simam al-aman*) in society and is likened to the immune system that protects it from damage and harm. Consequently, in the Islamic state no freedom can be permitted to the dishonorable (*al-munkar*), forsaking obedience to Allah (*fusuk*), rebellion (*'isyan*) and oppression (*dhulm*). Freedom of this kind is likened to destruction, ruin, devastation and corruption, which is inconsistent with the religion of Allah and the objectives of the government in the Islamic state. Consequently, thus the author, if those who promise absolute freedom in the name of the principle of democracy – including freedom of corruption, licentiousness (*fujur*), apostasy (*kufur*), atheism (*ilhad*), heresy (*zandaqa*) – and call to abandon the faith (*al-mujahara bi-al-irtidad min al-din*) – establish the Islamic state under the false claim that they are acting for the future of Islam and Muslims, they are in effect liars, for their words contradict dozens of explicit rulings from the Koran and Sunna. Furthermore, they do not understand the aims of Islam and the purpose of establishing the Islamic state on earth. They should reexamine their understanding of the instructions of the religion before speaking of the future of Islam and their longed-for state. They represent the absolute opposite of “a nation that enjoins civility and forbids evil”. As it is said in the Koran: “The hypocritical men and the hypocritical women are all alike; they enjoin evil and forbid good and withhold their hands; they have forsaken Allah, so He has forsaken them; surely the hypocrites are the transgressors” (Sura 9:67).

The author's final conclusion in effect aims to convey a clearly political message that joins previous messages that totally negate the legitimacy of the Arab and Islamic states, and especially those in the region. It enfolds not only the negation of democracy as a Western value that is alien to Islam, but also the systems of government extant in the Arab and Islamic states who lean on this value.

### **Security**

Al-Tartusi refers to the term security (*amn, amana*) from the viewpoint of preventing crimes that threaten the life, security and property of people. He asserts emphatically that no state will be established without achieving security vis-à-vis this internal threat and without assurance of maintaining security. A state in which criminal gangs operate without a deterrent is likened to a state in which the law of the jungle prevails and in which “might makes right”. In the Koran Islam stipulates the penalties (*hudud*) and retaliations (*qisas*) against criminals and regards them as a foundation for the existence of society and humankind. “And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves” (Sura 2:179).

The author advocates these penalties even though they include killing and dismembering, stating that they serve as an effective deterrent against aggression on the security and life of people. Proof of this can be found in the fact that the crime rate in the period of the Prophet and the rule of the four Caliphs that followed him is

infinitely lower than the crime rate in a single day in America. However, the author cautions against employing security means as a pretext by the government to deprive people of their rights and security, to intimidate them and spy on them. On this matter we should learn from the lessons of the oppressive and corrupt regimes (*al-andhima al-taghiyya al-kafira*), i.e., the Arab regimes that turned their societies into societies of people who spy on each other under the pretext of preserving security.

Al-Tartusi summarizes the principles of the Islamic state by stating that all Muslims expect that any Islamic state that will be established in the future will be committed to adopting these foundations, principles and values, and if not, it is not worthy of being called an Islamic state and its regime is not worthy of being called an Islamic regime. Such a state is detrimental to the power of Islam. Abu Basir al-Tartusi completes his conception of the image of the Islamic state in his treatise “The Struggle between the Cultures”<sup>71</sup> (20 May 2006). In this treatise he outlines the characteristics of Islamic culture. Although he does not mention the Islamic state, it is clear that the characteristics of Islamic culture are supposed to characterize the Islamic state. He conducts a comparison between the characteristics of Islamic culture and those of “democratic-crusading” Western culture, underscoring the variances between them, but as opposed to other Jihadist Salafiyya intellectuals he does not refrain from presenting positive content in the material and scientific, and even moral and legal spheres of the latter, while demanding that Islamic culture adopt them. In the abovementioned treatises the author ascribes unique characteristics to the true Islamic state, especially in the religious-theocratic and moral spheres, and presents it as the fulfillment of the Islamic ideal, while emphasizing the essential and ideological variances between it and the present Arab Islamic regimes and Western culture, and by implication delegitimization of the latter.

The characteristics of Islamic culture in comparison to those of Western culture are as follows:

Islamic culture stems from a divine origin (*rabaniyyat al-masdar*), for its cultural values draw on the Koran and Sunna, whereas Western culture stems from a human source (*bashariyyat al-masdar*) and its cultural values draw on the intellect, spirit and experience of human beings. The culture of Islam is founded on belief in the oneness (*tawhid*) of the Creator, whereas Western culture is founded on apostate beliefs (*shirk*, *juhud*) and idolatry (*al-wathaniyya*). Islamic culture encompasses all spheres of life – moral, social, economic, political and scientific. By contrast, in Western culture there is separation between religion and state. In Islamic culture Allah has absolute dominion in Heaven and Earth, whereas in Western culture Man has absolute dominion. Islamic culture is based on a balance between the material and the spiritual, whereas in Western culture there is only the material. However, the author states that Western culture has a number of important values that accord it power and a basis of existence: experimental scientific research, order and organization, utilization of natural and human resources, aspiration toward progress, scientific inquisitiveness, equality and justice before the law for ruler and ruled, strong and weak, mutual assistance, maintaining the principles of the *shura* and mutual consultation, prosecution of rulers who have transgressed, and protection of

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<sup>71</sup> Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *Sira' al-Hadarat: Mafhumuhu wa-Haqiqatuhu wa-Waqi'uhu* (The Struggle Between The Cultures: Its Meaning, Veracity and Reality), 20 May, 2006, [www.abubaseer.bizland.com](http://www.abubaseer.bizland.com).

the oppressed against the oppression of rulers and kings. According to the author, Islam recognizes the power of these values and even preceded Western culture in adopting them and benefiting from them, but in recent generations Muslims have lagged behind in absorbing and adopting these values. They lag behind in all that pertains to seizing leadership of the nations and the peoples and even of themselves, after being leaders of the entire world by virtue of their advanced cultural values. If the Islamic nation wishes to revive its culture, its glory and its leadership role since ancient times, it must resume its devotion and adherence to the entire system of Islamic cultural values, it must be more devoted to justice than any other. It does not suffice to speak of the power of Islam, of Islamic law (*Shari'a*) and morals without fulfilling the faith and these values in the conduct and reality of us all.

## Establishment of the “Islamic State of Iraq”

Abu Basir al-Tartusi's conception regarding the prominent characteristics of the ultimate Islamic state, as they are expressed in his above treatises, are consistent with the opinions of other intellectuals of the Jihadist Salafiyya stream. This is particularly the case regarding the divine source of the regime, authority and divine law. The announcement regarding the establishment of the “Islamic State of Iraq” in clearly Sunni regions made by the al-Qaeda organization in Iraq on 15 October 2006, included these prominent characteristics: according to the announcement a “*madinat al-haqq*” will be established that will enforce the Law of Allah among the people and the state (*dawlat al-Islam al-lati sa-tahkumu shar' Allah fi al-'ibad wa-al-bilad*).<sup>72</sup> Establishment of the state is the product of unity (*al-tawhid*).

## Institutions and Foundations of the Caliphate and the Qualities of its Leaders

Abu 'Umar al-Sayf cites a higher authority – Caliph Abu Bakr – and quotes one of his sermons regarding the qualities required of the regime in Islam, qualities upon which the *al-Rashida* Caliphate was founded: fear of God and benevolence on the part of the ruler (*al-hakim*), providing counsel to the ruler, reforming his ways and demanding accountability for his evil deeds, ensuring honesty (*sidq*) and disavowing untruth, equality for all before the law, instituting justice (*'adl*) between people, removal of oppression (*dhulm*), non-evasion of jihad (which may constitute grounds for humiliation [*dhull*], occupation by enemies and non-existence of the Islamic state), protecting against the spread of abomination (*fahisha*) and, finally, obedience to the ruler on worldly matters but not on matters that constitute rebellion against Allah and his Prophet (*ta'at al-hakim bi-al-ma'ruf fa-la yuta' fi ma'siyyat Allah wa-rasulihi*).<sup>73</sup>

In his letter to Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, Ayman al-Zawahiri presents in brief the mode of government and the process of building its institutions in accordance with Islamic dogma. He emphasizes that the government has to be founded not only on power but also on satisfying the needs of Muslims and their participation in governance. At the center of the government institutions is the *shura*, people of

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<sup>72</sup> Al-Muhajiroun website, 18 October 2006.

<sup>73</sup> Abu 'Umar al-Sayf, *Maqasid al-Jihad wa-Anwa'uhu* (The Objectives and Types of Jihad), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, no date.

authority (*al-hall wa-al-‘aqd*) and *al-amr bi-al-ma’ruf wa-al-nahi ‘an al-munkar*, who must possess the necessary qualifications to act in accordance with the laws of *Shari’a*, and their deeds will be tested according to compliance with the laws of *Shari’a*. Members of these institutions will be elected by the general public. Evident in this presentation of the process of building the government is an attempt to present a democratic facet of *Shari’a*. The letter summarizes the role of the fighting movement in government, as follows:

- To prepare society in a long-term process by reforming errors of faith, utilizing the *da’wa* and implementing a reform in education methods.
- To maximize the nation’s resources.
- To judiciously fill a leadership role in order to achieve the ultimate objective of establishing the Caliphate.

## Apocalyptic and Eschatological Aspects

The clash between Islam and the rest of the world, particularly the so-called “crusading” West, as it appears in the Jihadist Salafiyya, as well as “*al-ta’ifa al-mansura*” that plays a role in this clash, constitute a source for the emergence of apocalyptic thoughts and yearning, albeit beneath the surface. In the perception of the Jihadist Salafiyya this clash occurs in two parallel dimensions on the time axis.

The first and most important is the eternal dimension of the clash that began between the two sides with the birth of Islam and is destined to continue until the eschatological events of The End of Days. The triumph promised to Islam until The End of Days occurs in two theaters: in terms of faith and ideology - the triumph of faith over apostasy, of truth over untruth; and in terms of strategy - imposing Islam by means of Jihad on the entire world, which will then become *dar al-Islam*, and establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. Triumph in both these arenas has to be effected concurrently and must be absolute and uncompromising. Abu Mus’ab al-Suri asserts that there can be no compromise between truth and untruth in the spirit of the “middle path” (*wasatiyya*) of moderate orthodox Islam. This dialogue can only take place when truth prevails in its state and others will want to dwell under its wings. In other words, Islam can display a measure of tolerance toward the values and faith of the individual only when that individual accepts the political hegemony and governance of Islam.

Jihad, which is required in order to achieve strategic victory, will continue until the Day of Judgment, as will the elected group that merits the grace of God (*al-ta’ifa al-mansura*), i.e., the *mujahidin*. The extensive literature on *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* creates a mystic aura around it: it begins with the *Sahaba* and continues to exist – at times explicitly and others implicitly – until the Day of Resurrection (*yawm al-qiyama*). It possesses superior qualities and is immune to all evil. The fact that it has now surfaced and is identified in our generation with the Jihad and Mujahidin groups indicates that we are now living in a period of omens presaging the Day of Judgment at the End of Days. *Al-ta’ifa al-mansura* is expected, according to the eschatological events, to achieve military victory over its enemies and fill the central role of fulfilling the ideal of Islam on earth. In the concluding chapter of his book on the responsibility of the people of Yemen vis-à-vis the holy Muslim sites, Abu Mus’ab al-Suri identifies the young people of Yemen with *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*. From his writing it emerges that the young people of Yemen must now fill the role of *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* and embarks on a jihad against the apostates, citing the “Verse of the Sword” from the Koran.<sup>74</sup>

The second dimension is the present-day dimension of the clash, which is taking place concurrently with violent conflicts in various theaters around the world. This approach places emphasis on the sensitive situation of Islam, which for years has come under virtually constant crusading attack that shifts from one theater to another and threatens its existence to this day. The Jihadist Salafiyya intellectuals have a clear interest in focusing on the present-day dimension of the clash in order to reinforce

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<sup>74</sup> Abu Mus’ab al-Suri, *Mas’uliyat Ahl al-Yaman tujah Muqaddasat al-Muslimin* (The Responsibility of the People of Yemen to the Muslim Holy Places and Their Resources), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Sunna, October 1999.

their followers on the one hand, and encourage them to embark on a counter-attack on the other.

These two approaches appear to be given to mutual tension, but in fact complement one another in that together they create anticipation of delaying the end and triumphing over the enemy sooner or later.

One example of the apocalyptic approach is a book by ‘Adnan Taha’s book. This book is entirely based on an apocalyptic-eschatological approach, for which he finds evidence and support in the Koran and the Hadith.<sup>75</sup> In the apocalyptic dimension he presents a conception according to which we are living in an era in which increasingly more omens presaging the approach of the Day of Judgment (*ashrat al-sa’a*) are appearing. Some of these omens have already appeared and others are expected to appear: the spread and increase of licentiousness, prostitution, alcohol consumption and killing. According to him we are living in the last of a series of stages to be endured by the nation and about which the Prophet spoke. At the end of this stage the Caliphate will rise in accordance with the prophecy. In the present era Muslims live in conspicuous inferiority compared to the superiority of the apostates and their progress, but according to the determinations of the Koran and Sunna, the future triumph of the faith is assured. Based on verses from the Koran and the Hadith, the author outlines the occurrence of eschatological processes, which appear in one form or another in other books. In these scenarios a central role is accorded to *al-ta’ifa al-mansura*, which is fighting for truth, is strengthened by experience and none can cause it harm. The main theater of events in which *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* will operate is *al-Sham* (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and the Sinai). Then *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* will spread to the Arabian Peninsula. It will continue to operate until it fulfills the role imposed on it.

The appearance of the *Mahdi* will occur after the death of a caliph and after the outbreak of a devastating struggle, in which use may be made of weapons of mass destruction, causing total destruction and the return of humanity to ancient times. This will be the prelude to the appearance of the *Mahdi* and the beginning of Islam’s triumph over all other nations. The *Mahdi* will initially join forces with *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* in Mecca and Medina and will advance with it toward Damascus, where they will join with other *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* people. Damascus will become their base for waging war against the enemy. Later, the *Mahdi* and *al-ta’ifa al-mansura* will bring about a series of victories over the Greeks and conquer Istanbul and Rome. Following that, they will return to Damascus where they will learn of the appearance of *al-masih al-dajjal* – the antichrist – who will lay siege to the Muslims in Damascus. At this stage Jesus will descend and join forces with the Muslims. He will lead the Muslims and defeat the antichrist and his army. At the next stage, Gog and Magog will appear with their army, which is destined to be annihilated by Allah. Following that, Jesus will rule Muslims in accordance with the Koran and Sunna for a period of seven years. Jesus will shatter the cross and kill the pig. These will be seven years of abundance, prosperity and peace on Earth. (According to Abu Basir’s version, Jesus

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Adnan Taha’, *Al-Ayyam Akhira fi ‘Umr al-Zaman: Qira’a Mu’asira fi al-Fitan wa-alMlahim* (The Final Days of Time: A Contemporary Reading of the History of Machinations and Wars), Minbar al-Tawhid wa-al-Jihad, [www.tawhed.ws](http://www.tawhed.ws), no date.

will reign for forty years and then die.<sup>76</sup>) Then a great wind will come and gather the souls of all Muslims. Mecca, Medina and the Ka'ba will be destroyed and evil will reign in the world and Men will worship idols. After the death of the Muslims, chaos will prevail in the universe and the era of the cosmic verses in the Koran (Sura 41) will begin. Cosmic phenomena will occur and on the same day the beast (*al-dabba*) will depart from the land (Sura 27:82), and shortly after that the Day of Resurrection (*yawm al-qiyama*) will come. Upon witnessing the cosmic phenomena people will want to believe, but by then the gates of repentance will be closed and faith will be of no avail if it did not occur prior to this event. The author concludes that these prophesied developments oblige Muslims to learn them and prepare themselves for them so that they will know how to navigate in an unknown future.

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<sup>76</sup> Abu Basir al-Tartusi, *Sira' al-Hadarat: Ma'fhumuhu wa-Haqiqatuhu wa-Waqi'uhu* (The Struggle between the Cultures: Its Meaning, Veracity and Reality), 20 May 2006, [www.abubaseer.bizland.com](http://www.abubaseer.bizland.com).

## Summary

The present article endeavors to sketch the principal outlines of religious and strategic ideas and conceptions which two generations of clerics, intellectuals and military leaders in the ranks of al-Qaeda and World Jihad have attempted to shape and inculcate in the general public of Muslims – proponents, supporters and potential supporters.

These ideas, despite being founded on rigid basic principles that draw from religious sources and central religious authorities, draw inspiration from events and developments in the world Islamic arena. Furthermore, they constitute a source for mutual influence between intellectuals of the Jihadist Salafiyya. They are in a dynamic process of development by intellectuals, whether initiated by them or in the form of providing answers and religious rulings to questions posted by surfers on Internet websites. In addition, Jihadist Salafiyya intellectuals are forced to ideologically contend from time to time with their harsh critics from the religious establishment and even from political Islam. This contending, too, constitutes a source of enrichment for their ideas.

In any event, these ideas have already been transformed into the World Jihad's course of action – whether in the sphere of perpetrating terrorism or enlistment, recruitment and indoctrination of a broad Muslim public. It seems that some of these ideas surface in the consciousness of the Western public and are learned, at best in the wake of a wave of terrorist attacks whose perpetrators lean on these ideas. Even if these ideas have been learned too late, it is of the greatest importance to understand them and their destructive influence on a broad public, and to take preventive measures not only by learning the lessons in the sphere of early prevention but also in ideologically contending with them in order to remove their venomous sting.