

ISLAMIC RADICALISM AND BOKO HARAM; A REVIEW

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Abstract

The incidence and terror activities of boko-haram in Nigeria can not be over-emphasised especially in the North Eastern part of Nigeria, its activities has led to a very high rate of death, human casualties and monumental capital loss in terms of society and its structural losses. This study is basically dependent on the use of secondary data newspaper reports, books and internet writings. The paper findings reveal that government clamp down on the group has reduced its evil assault on the Nation State of Nigeria and North East in particular, with hope that after the rooting out of Shambisha forest, the incident of Boko- Haram would soon be an incident of the past. The paper recommends that the Nation collectively attend to the incidence of very high unemployment rate in Nigeria and youth restiveness as a way of bringing about lasting peace in Nigeria.

Keywords: Boko-Haram, Terror, Development, unemployment and youth restiveness

Introduction

Why do Islamist radicals engage in high-cost/risk activism that exposes them to arrest, repression, and even death? At a group level, it appears perfectly rational: zealous contention places enormous pressures on adversaries and increases the likelihood that the group will achieve its objective. Yet, although extreme tactics may be deployed as part of a logical, coherent, and rational strategy to maximize group goals,

We argue that radical Islamic groups offer spiritual selective incentives to individuals who are concerned with the hereafter. Although some radical Islamists are compelled by economic incentives or personal psychological needs that may have nothing to do with religious conviction (the need for revenge against perceived oppressors, a need for a sense of empowerment, or a desire for prestige), religion matters for many. In cases where individuals take spirituality seriously, movement ideologies offer strategies for fulfilling divine duties and maximizing the prospects of salvation on judgment day. In essence, these ideologies serve as heuristic devices or templates that outline the path to salvation. Where individuals believe that the spiritual payoffs outweigh the negative consequences of strategies in the here and now, high-cost/risk activism is intelligible as a rational choice.

This article uses al-Muhajiroun as a case study to demonstrate the rationality of radical Islam. Based in the UK, with branches throughout the Muslim world, this movement supported al Qaeda; jihad against the United States in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia; terrorism against Israel; attacks against the United Nations; military coups against governments throughout the Muslim world; and the establishment of an Islamic state in Britain. After September 11, it garnered extraordinary media attention in the UK and raised serious concerns among governments combating Islamic terrorism. Although it was less radical than groups such as al Qaeda, al-Muhajiroun openly promoted an assortment of extremist causes and is a good example of high-cost/risk activism. The movement was formally disbanded in October 2004, but its activists continue to operate through two successor organizations: al-Ghurabaa' (the Strangers) and the Saviour Sect. Al-Muhajiroun's leader and founder, Omar Bakri Mohammed, left the UK for Lebanon in August 2005 and was barred from returning as a result of the British government's crackdown on Islamic extremism after the terrorist attacks on the tube system earlier in July.

The focus of this article is on how spiritual incentives inspire Islamic radicalism. As a result, it does not directly address why individuals initially chose al-Muhajiroun over more moderate Islamic organizations that require less sacrifice. Nor does it focus on the process of preference reordering. These are important issues and are addressed extensively by the first author in a separate publication, which points to the importance of social networks, low levels of prior religious knowledge, identity crises, negative experiences with moderate Islamic figures and organizations, the public outreach activities of al-Muhajiroun, and perceptions about the credibility of the movement's leader as compared with moderate alternatives and radical rivals.' All of these drew individuals into study circles, where they were socialized into the movement ideology.

For those who eventually accepted the ideology as "true Islam" (and this was heavily influenced by perceptions about the credibility of the movement leader as an interpreter of Islam rather than the superiority of al-Muhajiroun's spiritual incentives relative to other groups), why did they engage in high-cost/risk activism? Why not simply

continue taking lessons without graduating to riskier behaviors? In other words, why not free-ride off the sacrifice of others?

We argue that the choice to move to high-cost/risk activism can be understood as a rational decision if we take the content of the movement's ideology seriously. Al-Muhajiroun's ideology outlines an *exclusive* strategy to salvation, which entails a number of costly and risky behaviors. Any deviations from this strategy mean that an individual will not enter Paradise, thus eroding tendencies toward free-riding. For those who accepted the movement ideology and sought salvation, a refusal to engage in high-cost/risk activism was tantamount to violating self-interest, because it meant that they would go to Hell.

Before proceeding, it is important to note limitations in conducting fieldwork on radical Islamic groups. The primary obstacle is access. Although surveys and large samples are preferable, they are rarely possible, given the secretive nature of these movements. As a result, one is left with small samples of respondents and ethnographic methods, if access is granted. In this study, the first author conducted thirty interviews (many tape-recorded) with movement leaders and activists and interacted with about one hundred other activists and movement "supporters." In addition, he attended movement-only lessons, public study circles, demonstrations, and community events, and collected movement documents and audio/written materials, including leaflets, protest announcements, training books, taped lessons/talks, and press releases. Although this hardly represents a probability sample of individuals, publications, and activities, the fieldwork results offer rare empirical evidence that addresses individual rationality

RADICALISM

Most studies of the causes of Islamism offer a grievance-based explanation implicitly rooted in functionalist social psychology accounts of mass behavior, which view collective action as derived from exogenous structural strains, system disequilibrium, and concomitant pathologies (alienation, anomie, atomization, normative ambiguity, etc.) that create individual frustration and motivation for "deviant" social behavior.' The model posits a linear causal relationship in which structural strains, such as modernization, industrialization, or an economic crisis, cause psychological discomfort, which, in turn, produces collective action. The implication is that participation is the result of "irrationality."

The preponderance of research argues that the underlying impetus for Islamic activism derives from the crises produced by failed secular modernization projects in the Middle East. Rapid socioeconomic transformations and manipulated economic policies concentrated wealth among the Westernized elites, state bourgeoisie, and corrupt government officials. Large swathes of the population, in contrast, faced housing shortages, insufficient municipal services and infrastructure, rising prices, declining real wages, and unemployment. The professional classes and lumpen intelligentsia, in particular, faced blocked social mobility and relative deprivation as a result of economic malaise and widespread employment preferences that emphasized *wasta* (connections) above merit.' The crises were compounded by the bitter Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel, the legacy of colonialism and cultural imperialism, and political repression.' According to this perspective, individuals responded by seeking to re-anchor themselves through a religious idiom.

Rather than viewing Islamists as grievance-stricken reactionaries, recent research has reconceptualized Islamic activists as strategic thinkers engaged in cost—benefit calculations. Lisa Anderson, for example, observes that "the closer the movements were to the prospects of sharing power, the more pragmatic they appeared to be." Empirical studies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan illustrate this point: the Brotherhood has demonstrated its willingness to sacrifice ideological ideals for political gains.' And movement activists make strategic decisions about organizational resources and relationships, " participation in political alliances,' responses to economic liberalization,' and intra-movement competition.'

Even radical movements previously described as unflappable, ideological zealots trapped by rigid adherence to dogma are now analyzed as strategic thinkers. Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, for example, argue that Hamas strategically responds to changes in the political context!' Prior to the al-Aqsa intifada in 2000, the growing popularity of the Palestinian—Israeli peace process challenged the viability of Hamas. Strict intransigence toward peace was likely to erode support from a population that sought an end to the economic and social hardships of occupation, thereby threatening the organizational survival of Hamas. In response, Hamas tactically adjusted its doctrine to accommodate the possibility of peace by framing it as a temporary pause in the jihad. Mohammed M. Hafez uses an implicit rational-actor model to explain Muslim rebellions in Algeria and Egypt during the 1990s. He contends that violence erupted as a response to "an ill-fated combination of institutional exclusion, on the one hand, and on the other, reactive and indiscriminate repression that threaten[ed] the organizational resources and personal lives of Islamists." To defend themselves against regime repression, the Islamists went underground and formed exclusive organizations, leading to a process of encapsulation and radicalization. Stathis N. Kalyvas views the Islamist-led massacres that plagued Algeria in the 1990s as strategic assaults intended to deter civilian defections "in the context of a particular strategic

conjuncture characterized by (a) fragmented and unstable rule over the civilian population, (b) mass civilian defections toward incumbents and (c) escalation of violence.'" Several scholars have argued that the tactic of suicide bombing is rational in that it helps Islamic (and other) terrorist groups achieve their group goals.' And Michael Doran conceptualizes al Qaeda as a rational actor, arguing that "when it comes to matters related to politics and war, al Qaeda maneuvers around its dogmas with alacrity." In this understanding, "al Qaeda's long-term goals are set by its fervent devotion to a radical religious ideology, but in its short-term behavior, it is a rational political actor operating according to the dictates of realpolitik."

Rational-choice theory points to the use of selective incentives or side payments as means of inducing participation and overcoming the free-rider dilemma. These are benefits that individuals only accrue if they contribute to the collective good.' Although early models of rational choice assumed that individuals were primarily interested in maximizing some wealth function,' scholars have since expanded their view of human preferences. For example, rational-choice studies of voting behavior have focused on nontangible incentives to explain why an individual chooses to vote regardless of whether her vote is really likely to maximize the probability of producing a particular public policy outcome vis-a-vis the election. Voting is seen as providing nontangible psychological gratification for those who feel as though they are fulfilling their civic duty.'

Most radical Islamic groups offer a nontangible *spiritual* incentive to attract participants: participation produces salvation on judgment day and entrance to Paradise in the hereafter. The difference among Islamic groups is over *how the spiritual payoff should be pursued* (that is, strategy). Each proffers its ideology as an "efficient" (and often exclusive) path to salvation, which serves as a heuristic device for indoctrinated activists to weigh the costs and benefits of certain actions and behaviors. A cornerstone of these ideological templates is that individuals must face high risks and costs because God demands this as a condition for the spiritual payoff. In other words, radical Islamists choose to face great personal risks and costs because otherwise they are not pursuing their self-interest. Just as importantly, because individuals are judged as *individuals* on judgment day according to whether they personally followed the commands of God, free-riding jeopardizes salvation.

BACKGROUND TO TERRORISM IN NIGERIA.

Recently, global peace and security have come under severe stress on account of terrorist activities also national peace and security have come under stress too because of terrorist groups (Boko Haram) in Nigeria, especially by ultra-left wing Islamic groups who are desirous of creating a society of their own vision and dream (Al-Attas, 1999:41).

In this respect, it becomes important to trace such activities known as Islamic terrorism which is synonymous with the Boko Haram sect in Northern part of Nigeria. Islamic terrorism operates all over the world, though with different ideologies, but maintains a secret sleeper cell, these sleeper cells share intelligence and training, hence their belief in a similar cause. Based on the fact that there is an affiliation or connection between Boko Haram Islamic sect in the Northern part of Nigeria with other Islamic terrorist sects, such as the Hezbollah, Al-Qeda and Hamas. In Nigeria specifically, there is no history of terrorism in the form of coordinated attacks to spread fear and undermine the government of the country until recently. It is therefore contended here that terrorism was imported into Nigeria by the Niger Delta Militants in the early 1999 as a means to influence international audience and secure commend surate compensation for the degradation of their environment through oil exploration and production.

Since the Amnesty deal in 2009, their menace seems to be in a suspended animation or holiday, thereby paving the way for the Boko Haram insurgents to fill the vacuum created. To be sure, Boko Haram which implies that "western education is sinful" was launched into existence in 2002 by a school drop-out Mohammed Yusuf in the city of Maiduguri as an amorphous Islamic sect seeking to purify Islam & spread it by force as well as dismantle western education and civil service across the northern states of Nigeria. At the incipient stage, the group leader established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school where many poor families from across northern Nigeria and neighbouring countries such as Niger and Chad enrolled their children. Soon, the initially seemingly innocuous group began to work as a recruiting ground for future jihadists to fight the state. When the group became rather difficult to control the then Governor of Borno state Ali Modu Sheriff asked them to leave the state. Consequently, the group relocated to Kanama, Yobe State in 2003 and named itself the Taliban. From its new location which they renamed "Afghanistan", the group began the process of "Afghanization" of the North by launching fierce, dangerous and sporadic attacks on the citizens of the country including western institutions. In retaliation to the killing of Yusuf in police custody on July 30, 2009, the sect under its current leader Ibrahim abubakar launched its first terrorist attacks in Borno state that recorded the death of four people. Since then the menace of the group has escalated both in frequency and intensity to the extent of becoming a

thorn in the flesh of Nigerian leadership. Onwuamueze Dike (A thorn in the flesh of the Nation). News watch July 4, 2011.

ORIGIN OF BOKO HARAM SECT IN NIGERIA

It is though difficult to pinpoint the exact origin of the Boko Haram sect. Prof. Soyinka while speaking on the 100 anniversary of Kings College Lagos emphasized that Boko Haram has always existed before the country as a sect. Historically, the Boko Haram sect was purportedly founded in the 60s by Mohammed Yusuf the late leader of the Boko Haram sect but its activities came to limelight in 2002 in the city of Maiduguri as a notorious Nigerian militant Islamic group that seeks imposition of Sharia law in the states of Nigeria. The origin of this sect can be better understood viewing from the history of sectorial groups in the Northern part of Nigeria since independence. It is feared that these sects might have metamorphosed into the present day Boko Haram.

Boko Haram is just one of the many sects that sprang up to declare Jihad in the Northern part of Nigeria in recent times in 2004, a group called the Al sunny wal jama, attacked police stations in Yobe State killing police they made away with guns and ammunition in the station and burnt it down the group later retreated to a primary school in Kanama where it hoisted the flag of Afghanistan. There are other sectorial groups such as shite, which literally means set the street of Zaria on fire. It was the mediative group, which terrorized the northern states in the 1980s. The origin of Boko Haram according to Mmadike (2011:1) started in 1995 of sahaba and was virtually led by Lawan Abubakar, who later left for the University of Medicine in Saudi Arabia for further studies. Yusuf was said to have taken over the leadership after departure of Abubakar and indoctrinated the sect with his own teachings, which he claimed was based on purity.

The group which initially drew membership from the south-west started off as the “Taliban” it was first invited to Yobe State during the warm up to the 2003 elections, in the wake of sharing implementation in some states in the north. Due to the fact that the election did not assume the dimension their host thought it would take, the group was said to have been abandoned to its fate, before the state government ordered them to vacate its vicinity. Findings from the sun newspaper (Friday, 17, 2001) indicate that the group’s critical abode was Burtati, in Busari council of Yobe State before leaving for Kanama, a border from between Nigeria and Niger. Kanama is the headquarters of unsure council, also is Yobe state, it is not far from Gardam local government, where the leader of the group Ustaz Mohammed hails from. Similarly, the first documented major attack by the group was in Yobe state on December 2003, precisely on December 22, a day affirming to the then Governor, senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, they had promised to leave the state. This marked the dawn of the group violent ideology. After this came attacks one after another, that it has become a daily activity and a very stronghold.

Funding, Membership and Ideology of the Boko Haram Islamic Sect.; It has been practically difficult to ascertain the source of the funds that the Boko Haram uses in running its creation. But just like every Islamic extremist, the Boko Haram attracts international Islamic sympathizers. These similar cells which believe in the sects ideology always, tend to support the activities of other sect around the world.

However, considering the new sophistication that has been adopted by the group, it is rumored that some influential citizens from all works of life not ably the political and economic bourgeoisie sponsor the activities of this group, though behind the scene. Based on this, it is also possible that some politicians may likely hide under the canopy of the Boko Haram to pursue their various political ends. If this is the case, then such politicians are supposed to provide not only funds but also logistic assistance. This is similar to the murders which have been said to be committed by these sects most of them take the posture of political killings so one can argue from this angle that the political class can also, seek the services of the Boko Haram Islamic sect, lets recall that in 2005 when the late leader of the group was first arrested it appeared on the national daily (Punch Newspaper 07 June, 2005, sun newspaper 10 June 2005) that his release was facilitated by a notable political gladiator in the corridors of the people democratic party (P D P). Considering the technicality and fragile nature of the democracy in Nigeria and the crisis engulfed by the Boko Haram Sect, the name of the so called political big shot was never mentioned neither did it surface anywhere in public discussion. The much that was heard about it is that the politician hails from the north central and also contested in the presidential election.

MEMBERSHIP OF BOKO HARAM SECT; In discussing the membership of Boko Haram Sect, emphasis should be laid on the belief of Islam as a religion. Boko Haram is basically Islamic terrorism reserved for Nigerians alone. This is also considering the strategic location of the Boko Haram Islamic sect based in Kanama village in Yobe state, which is the boarder of Nigeria and Niger republic. Considering the porous nature of Nigerians border, the bulk of the sects member include terrorists who are drawn from other neighboring Islamic states such as Chad and Niger republic. As earlier noted, Islamic terrorism and its fight is perceived by the actors and its fans as a vast curse. And as such, it is a collective duty for all. For instance, an Islamic fanatic may be born in a country, then go to fight in a third country and take refuge in a fourth country, their traditional believe is that Jihad is permanent global and not linked with a specific territory. The membership and environment of members of the Boko Haram Sect is the same thing as other terrorist operations in the world. On this account, instruction, recruitment and membership is synonymous to this issue. For instance, social networks such as facebook and twitter have social pages for friends and followers. The Boko Haram sect has seven (7) face book accounts with different members. (The Nation June 6 2011).

In the beginning of 21st century, a worldwide network of hundred terrorist coach emerged that inspire, train, educate and recruit young members to engage in jihad against the west and its disciples.

Ideology of Boko Haram

The Boko Haram Islamic sect is just like any other terrorist sleeper cell operating around the world based on ideology, the similar attribute that these groups such as Al-Qaeda share can be described as anti-westernism just as the al-Qaeda attacks on America are not motivated by a religiously inspired hatred of America culture or religion but by the belief that US foreign policy has oppressed, killed or otherwise harmed Muslims in the middle east condensed in the phrase. They hate us for what we do, not who we are” (Abony, 2006:27).

This can also be deduced in determining the ideology stands of the Boko Haram Islamic sect in Nigeria. The group ideology is based on its radical oppositions to the group education. Based in Maiduguri capital, of Borno state, the followers include former university lecturers and students in other northern states including Kano, Yobe, Sokoto, Bauchi, so well as illiterate, jobless youths. Boko Haram means “western education is sinful” and all other westernized way of life is condemned by the group. This sum up the ideology of the group. It is geared towards establishing a state denied of any western orientation. The ideologies of the group as earlier mentioned as anti-western can also be better understood by its quest for the declaration of Sharia law in the 12 Northern states in the country. This implies that the ideology of this group is based on the complete Islamic orientation in the Northern part of the country.

As a radical group with a very striking ideology some of these members resigned their jobs as lecturers and then joined the sect. this is in conjunction to the ideology of “say no to westernization” tyrannically this perceived ideology of the sect has been bewildering the entire nation especially those who have been following the recent happenings. The late leader of the group Ustaz Yusuf, who should be in his mid-thirties have considerable private wealth and properties which are made by the west, but his followers who came from diverse ethnic background in the predominantly Muslim north said he was also educated in Iran.

Members of the sect pray in separate mosque in cities including Maiduguri, Kano and Sokoto states. Anybody who does not follow their strict ideology either Muslim or Christian is considered an infidel. The group also believes that wives are scared being that should not be seen by anybody except their husbands. That sect discouraged its members from engaging in any western oriented jobs. Instead they were encouraged to take up any manual job, such as hawking, weaving, pastoral farming, shoe mending etc. most Muslims and Islamic scholars believe that the doctrines of Boko Haram is different from the teachings of Islam. These people argue that the western education we acquire new is in-line with Islam and that Islam is to obey contributed authorities and the sharia law.

Fulani War

In the early 19th century, Islamic scholar Usman dan Fodio launched a jihad, the Fulani War, against the Hausa Kingdoms of Northern Nigeria. He was victorious, and established the Fulani Empire with its capital at Sokoto.

Maitatsine

A fringe group, led by Mohammed Marwa Maitatsine, started in Kano in the late 1970s and operated throughout the 1980s. Maitatsine (since deceased) was from Cameroon, and claimed to have had divine revelations superseding those of the Prophet Muhammad. With their own mosques and a doctrine antagonistic to established Islamic and societal leadership, its main appeal was to marginal and poverty-stricken urban in-migrants, whose rejection by the more established urban groups fostered this religious opposition. These disaffected adherents ultimately lashed out at the more traditional mosques and congregations, resulting in violent outbreaks in several cities of the north.

Quranists

Non-sectarian Muslims who reject the authority of hadith, known as Quranists, Quraniyoon, or 'Yan Kala Kato, are also present in Nigeria. 'Yan Kala Kato is often mistaken for a militant group called Yan Tatsine (also known as Maitatsine), an unrelated group founded by Muhammadu Marwa. Marwa was killed in 1980. Marwa's successor, Musa Makaniki, was arrested in 2004 and sentenced in 2006, but later released. And another leader of Yan Tatsine, Malam Badamasi, was killed in 2009. Notable Nigerian Quranists include Islamic scholars Mallam Saleh Idris Bello, Malam Isiyaka Salisu, and Nigerian High Court Judge Isa Othman.^{[20][21]}

ISLAM IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY

Two features of Islam essentially concern its place in Nigerian society. They are the degree to which Islam permeates other institutions in the society, and its contribution to Nigerian pluralism. As an institution in emirate society, Islam includes daily and annual ritual obligations; the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca; sharia, or religious law; and an establishment view of politics, family life, communal order, and appropriate modes of personal conduct in most situations.

Thus, even in 1990, Islam pervaded daily life. Public meetings began and ended with Muslim prayer, and everyone knew at least the minimum Arabic prayers and the five pillars of the religion required for full participation. Public adjudication (by local leaders with the help of religious experts, or Alkali courts) provided widespread knowledge of the basic tenets of sharia law—the Sunni school of law according to Malik ibn Anas was that primarily followed.

Air transport has made the hajj more widely available. Upper-income groups went several times and sent or took their wives as well.

Sheikh Adelabu has claimed an even greater influence of Islam in Nigeria. He cited Arabic words used in Nigerian languages, especially Yoruba and Hausa names of the days such as Atalata (Ar. Ath-Thulatha (Ar. Ath-Thulatha) aburala ,yadseuT rof (اء ثلاثاء -Arbi'a) for Wednesday, Alamisi (Ar. Al-Khamis (Ar. Al-Khamis) for Thursday, and Jimoh (Ar. Al-Jum'ah (Ar. Al-Jum'ah) for Friday. By far Ojo Jimoh is the most favourably used. It is usually preferred to the unpleasant Yoruba word for Friday Eti, which means Failure, Laziness or Abandonment. Maintaining that the wide adoption of Islamic faith and traditions has succeeded to lay impacts both on written and spoken Nigerian vernaculars, Sheikh Adelabu asserted nearly all technical terms and cultural usages of Hausa and Fulani were derived from Islamic heritages, citing a long list of Hausa words adopted from Arabic. In furthering supports for his claims, Sheikh Adelabu gave the following words to be Yoruba's derivatives of Arabic vocabularies:

- Alaafia i.e. Good, Fine Or Health(y) from derivative Al-Aafiah (Ar. (ال عاف ية)
- Baale i.e. husband or spouse derived from Ba'al (Ar. (ب عل)
- Sanma i.e. heaven or sky adopted for Samaa` (Ar. (ال سماء)
- Alubarika i.e. blessing used as Al-Barakah (Ar. (ال بركة)
- Wakati i.e. hour or time formed from Waqt (Ar. (وق ت)
- Asiri i.e. Secrete or Hidden derivative of As-Sirr (Ar. (ال سرّ)

Organization of Nigerian Islam

Nigerian Islam is not highly organized. Reflecting the aristocratic nature of the traditional ruling groups, there were families of clerics whose male heirs trained locally and abroad in theology and jurisprudence and filled major positions in the mosques and the judiciary. These ulama, or learned scholars, had for centuries been the religious and legal advisers of emirs, the titled nobility, and the wealthy trading families in the major cities. Ordinary people could consult the myriads of would-be and practicing clerics in various stages of training, who studied with local experts, functioned at rites of passage, or simply used their religious education to gain increased "blessedness" for their efforts.

Sufi brotherhoods, a form of religious order based on more personal or mystical relations to the supernatural, were widespread, especially in the major cities. There the two predominant ones, Qadiriyyah and Tijaniyyah, had separate mosques and, in a number of instances, a parochial school system receiving grants from the state. The brotherhoods played a major role in the spread of Islam in the northern area and the middle belt. Sa'adu Abubakar, the 20th Sultan of Sokoto, is considered the spiritual leader of Nigeria's Muslims.

Origins

In Modern Standard Arabic, the term *jihad* is used for a struggle for causes, both religious and secular. The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic defines the term as "fight, battle; jihad, holy war (against the infidels, as a religious duty)". Nonetheless, it is usually used in the religious sense and its beginnings are traced back to the Qur'an and words and actions of Muhammad.^{[25][26][page needed]} In the Qur'an and in later Muslim usage, jihad is commonly followed by the expression *fi sabil illah*, "in the path of God." Muhammad Abdel-Haleem states that it indicates "the way of truth and justice, including all the teachings it gives on the justifications and the conditions for the conduct of war and peace." It is sometimes used without religious connotation, with a meaning similar to the English word "crusade" (as in "a crusade against drugs").

Quranic use and Arabic forms

According to Ahmed al-Dawoody, seventeen derivatives of jihād occur altogether forty-one times in eleven Meccan texts and thirty Medinan ones, with the following five meanings: striving because of religious belief (21), war (12), non-Muslim parents exerting pressure, that is, jihād, to make their children abandon Islam (2), solemn oaths (5), and physical strength (1).

Hadith

The context of the Quran is elucidated by Hadith (the teachings, deeds and sayings of the Islamic prophet Muhammad). Of the 199 references to jihad in perhaps the most standard collection of hadith—Bukhari—all assume that jihad means warfare.

Among reported saying of the Islamic prophet Muhammad involving jihad are

The best Jihad is the word of Justice in front of the oppressive sultan.

— cited by Ibn Nuhaas and narrated by Ibn Habbaan

and

The Messenger of Allah was asked about the best jihad. He said: "The best jihad is the one in which your horse is slain and your blood is spilled."

— cited by Ibn Nuhaas and narrated by Ibn Habbaan

Ibn Nuhaas also cited a hadith^[which?] from Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, where Muhammad states that the highest kind of jihad is "The person who is killed whilst spilling the last of his blood" (Ahmed 4/144).

According to another hadith, supporting one's parents is also an example of jihad. It has also been reported that Muhammad considered well-performing hajj to be the best jihad for Muslim women.

History of usage and practice

The practice of periodic raids by Bedouin against enemy tribes and settlements to collect spoils predates the revelations of the Quran. According to some scholars (such as James Turner Johnson), while Islamic leaders "instilled into the hearts of the warriors the belief" in jihad "holy war" and *ghaza* (raids), the "fundamental structure" of this bedouin warfare "remained, ... raiding to collect booty". According to Jonathan Berkey, jihad in the Quran was may originally intended against Muhammad's local enemies, the pagans of Mecca or the Jews of Medina, but the Quranic statements supporting jihad could be redirected once new enemies appeared. According to another scholar (Majid Khadduri), it was the shift in focus to the conquest and spoils collecting of non-Bedouin unbelievers and away from traditional inter-bedouin tribal raids, that may have made it possible for Islam not only to expand but to avoid self-destruction.

Classical

"From an early date Muslim law laid down" jihad in the military sense as "one of the principal obligations" of both "the head of the Muslim state", who declared the jihad, and the Muslim community. According to legal historian Sadakat Kadri, Islamic jurists first developed classical doctrine of jihad "towards the end of the eighth century", using the doctrine of naskh (that God gradually improved His revelations over the course of the Prophet Muhammad's mission) they subordinated verses in the Quran emphasizing harmony to more the more "confrontational" verses of Muhammad's later years and linked verses on exertion (*jihad*) to those of fighting (*qital*). Muslims jurists of the eighth century developed a paradigm of international relations that

divides the world into three conceptual divisions, dar al-Islam/dar al-‘adl/dar al-salam (house of Islam/house of justice/house of peace), dar al-harb/dar al-jawr (house of war/house of injustice, oppression), and dar al-sulh/dar al-‘ahd/dār al-muwada‘ah (house of peace/house of covenant/house of reconciliation). The second/eighth century jurist Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161/778) headed what Khadduri calls a pacifist school, which maintained that jihad was only a defensive war.^{[48][49]} He also states that the jurists who held this position, among whom he refers to Hanafi jurists, al-Awza‘i (d. 157/774), Malik ibn Anas (d. 179/795), and other early jurists, "stressed that tolerance should be shown unbelievers, especially scripturaries and advised the Imam to prosecute war only when the inhabitants of the dar al-harb came into conflict with Islam." The duty of Jihad was a collective one (*fard al-kifaya*). It was to be directed only by the caliph who might delayed it when convenient, negotiating truces for up to ten years at a time. Within classical Islamic jurisprudence – the development of which is to be dated into the first few centuries after the prophet's death – jihad consisted of wars against unbelievers, apostates, and was the only form of warfare permissible. (Another source—Bernard Lewis—states that fighting rebels and bandits was legitimate though not a form of jihad, and that while the classical perception and presentation of the jihad was warfare in the field against a foreign enemy, internal jihad "against an infidel renegade, or otherwise illegitimate regime was not unknown."

The primary aim of jihad as warfare is not the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam by force, but rather the expansion and defense of the Islamic state. In theory, jihad was to continue until "all mankind either embraced Islam or submitted to the authority of the Muslim state." There could be truces before this was achieved, but no permanent peace. One who died 'on the path of God' was a martyr, (Shahid), whose sins were remitted and who was secured "immediate entry to paradise." However, some argue martyrdom is never automatic because it is within God's exclusive province to judge who is worthy of that designation. Classical manuals of Islamic jurisprudence often contained a section called *Book of Jihad*, with rules governing the conduct of war covered at great length. Such rules include treatment of nonbelligerents, women, children (also cultivated or residential areas), and division of spoils. Such rules offered protection for civilians. Spoils include *Ghanimah* (spoils obtained by actual fighting), and *fai* (obtained without fighting i.e. when the enemy surrenders or flees).

The first documentation of the law of jihad was written by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Awza'i and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani. (It grew out of debates that surfaced following Muhammad's death. Although some Islamic scholars have differed on the implementation of Jihad, there is consensus amongst them that the concept of jihad will always include armed struggle against persecution and oppression.

As important as jihad was, it was/is not considered one of the "pillars of Islam". According to one scholar (Majid Khadduri, this is most likely because unlike the pillars of prayer, fasting, etc., jihad was a "collective obligation" of the whole Muslim community," (meaning that "if the duty is fulfilled by a part of the community it ceases to be obligatory on others"), and was to be carried out by the Islamic state. This was the belief of "all jurists, with almost no exception", but did not apply to *defense* of the Muslim community from a sudden attack, in which case jihad was an "individual obligation" of all believers, including women and children.

In the early era that inspired classical Islam (Rashidun Caliphate) and lasted less than a century, jihad spread the realm of Islam to include millions of subjects, and an area extending "from the borders of India and China to the Pyrenees and the Atlantic". The two empires impeding the advance of Islam were the Persian Sassanian empire and the Byzantine Empire. By 657 the Persian empire was conquered and by 661 the Byzantine empire was reduced to a fraction of its former size.

The role of religion in these early conquests is debated. Medieval Arabic authors believed the conquests were commanded by God, and presented them as orderly and disciplined, under the command of the caliph. Many modern historians question whether hunger and desertification, rather than jihad, was a motivating force in the conquests. The famous historian William Montgomery Watt argued that "Most of the participants in the [early Islamic] expeditions probably thought of nothing more than booty ... There was no thought of spreading the religion of Islam." Similarly, Edward J. Jurji argues that the motivations of the Arab conquests were certainly not "for the propagation of Islam ... Military advantage, economic desires, [and] the attempt to strengthen the hand of the state and enhance its sovereignty ... are some of the determining factors." Some recent explanations cite both material and religious causes in the conquests.

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