

Jihadi-Salafi Ideology: The Suspension of Dialectic and Radicalization of Thought

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Abstract: *The ideology of Jihadi-Salafism seeks to suspend the dialectic through the positing of an ahistorical state which exists under an unmediated divine sovereignty, through the full exclusion of the “other”. Thus the period of the salaf is understood as a golden age, which can be revived without regard to historical context. The “Islamic State” is considered as existing directly under the rule (hakimiyya) of God by way of the shari’a code. There is an attempt to sever oneself from apostates by exercising al-walawal’-bara and the practice of takfir. The reaching of the perfect end state, however, necessarily entails an activist pursuit of violent change whereby all opposition elements are forcibly removed. Despite its ahistorical pretension, the Islamist ideology developed through distinct stages in Islamic history. The present essay depicts the historical formation of the Jihadi-Salafi ideological principles by tracing back the trajectory. Through attention to the deductive logic implied in the principles, the paper reveals an absolute standpoint precluding the possibility for any form of*

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mediation that has come to be formed. With the delineation of the reasoning underlying Jihadi-Salafi concepts, the basis for the rejection of dialectical development is demonstrated, as well as the implications of the absolutist standpoint for the intensification of extremism culminating in the "Islamic State".

Key Words: *Jihadi-Salafism; Ideology; Dialectic; Radicalization*

The attainment of extremist states of behavior and belief can be understood as entailing an elimination of modes of knowledge and development which could moderate principles and practices. A lack of recognition for contrary standpoints leads to a closing off of channels for mediation and to a radicalization towards society. This often arises as a consequence of a presumed access to absolute knowledge and, in seeking to realize a perfect state on this foundation, an attempt to halt the function of the dialectic as a process of evolutionary change.

The ideology of Jihadi-Salafism seeks to interrupt the dialectic through the positing of an ahistorical state which exists under an unmediated divine sovereignty, through the full exclusion of the "other". Thus the period of the *salaf* is understood as a golden age, which can be revived without regard to historical context. Secondly, the "Islamic State" is considered as existing directly under the rule (*hakimiyya*) of God by way of the shari'a law. Thirdly, there is an attempt to withdraw one's self from apostates by exercising *al-walawa'l-bara* and by the practice of *takfir*. The achievement of the perfect end state, however, necessarily entails a militant pursuit of violent change whereby all oppositional elements are forcibly removed. The Jihadi-Salafi ideology is thus defined through an attempt to restore the norms of the period of the *salaf*, where the state was allegedly under direct rule of God, for which jihad is considered as a necessary means to rid the Islamic world of apostasy.

Despite its ahistorical claim, the Islamist ideology developed

through discrete stages in Islamic history. The present essay depicts the historical formation of the Jihadi-Salafi ideological principles. Through attention to the deductive logic implied in the principles, the articles show an absolute standpoint precluding any form of mediation has come to be shaped. With the delineation of the reasoning underlying Jihadi-Salafi concepts, the basis for the rejection of dialectical development is demonstrated, as well as the implications for the intensification of extremism culminating in the “Islamic State”.

I.

(1) The Dialectic and Its Suspension

Dialectic first became central to the philosophical tradition when introduced by Plato as the method attributed to Socrates, whereby flaws in an argument were exposed through questioning. A more expansive concept of the dialectic can be found in Hegel for whom dialectic is not only a method of argument. Since the substructure of history is, according to Hegel, the development of consciousness as represented by ideas, the movement of history is also formed by the tensions of the dialectical movement (Nikulin, D., 2010).

The assumption of the dialectic is that one begins from a limited standpoint and by a process of contention a broader, more universal and therefore truer standpoint can be attained. By comparing and contrasting ideas through a process of mediation, one becomes aware of the errors in one’s initial position and thereby arrives at a more refined view. This consideration of other perspectives leads to a reaction against one’s initial stance and a moderation as other elements of reasoning are integrated.

Should there be a finality with respect to the knowledge that is attainable and were the fruits of knowledge to be exercised, then the state within which this is realized must necessarily be a final

state from which no further development is possible. The idea of a culmination of history, therefore, follows logically from the premise of absolute knowledge, since a claim to the absolute standpoint necessarily cancels the need for any further dialectical process of development (Dale, E., 2014: 210-211).^①The notion of the absolute as a universal category also leads to the temptation to attain global revolution as its logical corollary. In order to sustain the idea that an absolute standpoint has been reached with finality, it is necessary that the dialectic be suspended and the legitimate existence of any contending standpoints must be eliminated.

(2) The Golden Age of the *Salaf*

The *salafi* movement adopts its name from the *salaf* who were the Companions of Muhammad. This period of the Companions comprises three generations following the passing of the Prophet. It was during this formative period of Islam that the Islamic empire made its most extensive conquests and the Hadith came to be consolidated into the tradition of the Sunna.

For the *salafi* movement, this period is considered to be an ahistorical ideal. The lives of Muhammad and the *salaf* are to be imitated in every detail, according to *salafi* creed, and any innovation (*bid'a*) since this time is forbidden (Wicktorowicz, Q., 2006: 209). Some Jihadi-Salafis, such as Shaykh Shukri of *takfir wa-l hijrah*, even question historical narrative considering history “a series of unauthentic events,” genuine history consisting “only of the stories narrated in *Quran*, and therefore he prohibited any

^①The concept of the “end of history” was popularized by Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and the Last Man* as an interpretation of Hegel. While Hegel did consider an absolute standpoint possible, scholars generally accept that he did not hold there to be an end of history, since for Hegel knowledge only develops immanently. Therefore, in Hegel’s idiosyncratic terminology, within the “absolute standpoint” finality of knowledge is not possible. In this article, the use of the term absolute standpoint is used in the more conventional meaning of finality of knowledge.

interest in or study of the periods of the Islamic caliphate.” (al-Qaradawi, Y., 1987: 34).

Such an ahistorical and non-dialectical approach is also followed in the pursuit of knowledge. It is assumed that the *Qur'an* and the Sunna are self-evident and can be accessible directly without the aid of the interpretation of the four schools of Islamic law that emerged in the Middle Ages. The jurisprudential theorist adhered to by the *salafi* is Ibn Taymiyya, whose work mainly entailed seeking to remove heretical traces from Sunni tradition in defense of a purist orthodoxy. Since all disputations have been addressed by Ibn Taymiyya, it is considered no longer necessary to engage in theological debate (Haykel, B., 2009: 39-40).

(3) The First Takfirists

Yet far from Islamic orthodoxy emerging in a pristine state from the *salaf* only to be assailed by later heresies, the orthodoxy of the Sunna developed through dialectical struggle with standpoints only in opposition to which it came to be defined. The main force in reaction to which mainstream Islam has come to be for medemanated from the Kharijites.

Appearing shortly after the death of Muhammad, members of the Kharijite faction were distinguished by their fanaticism in seeking the elimination, either through excommunication or assassination, any deemed to be unbelievers. The Kharijites focused on the Medina period, when Muhammed led an isolated group of followers and ignored the Meccan period, where Muhammed reconciled with the leaders of Quraysh. It was the aim of the Kharijites to make *hijra* and set up a similar community of pure believers. Those who did not follow the Kharijites were presumed heretics (Nagel, T., 2006: 44).

Based on their fanaticism, the Kharijites established an exclusionary group within Islam, one to whom allegiance must be either declared, or who may be considered an unbeliever. It is this exclusion and non-acceptance of dialectical interaction with the

“other” that characterizes the Jihadi-Salafi movement and with this impossible quest for purity leads to a propensity towards violence.

II.

(1) Sunni Opposition to the Khawarij

While Jihadi-Salafism freezes theological debate with a dichotomy between belief and unbelief, mainstream Islam, precisely in reaction to the extremism of the Khawarij, has adopted a more nuanced approach to questions of belief. The question of belief and apostasy within Islam turns on whether belief is a matter of the utterance of testimony (the *shahada*), belief in principles or in actions usually expressed in terms of “speech, belief and actions” (Lav, D., 2012: 24).

The earliest school to oppose the Kharijites were the *Murji'ites*, who held that judgment should be postponed as to whether or not a person who sinned can be determined as apostate. Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi School, drew out from this the dogma that belief consists in speech (the *shahada*) and belief in the heart, but not in actions (Lav, D., 2012: 24).

Some schools of theology, rather than excluding acts from judgment, held that while certain acts could be considered as unbelief (*kufr*), not all forms of unbelief are equally serious. Commenting on *Qur'an* 5:44: “Those who do not rule by what Allah revealed, they are the unbelievers”, Ibn Abbas, stated “This is not an unbelief of apostasy ... this is an unbelief that is less than unbelief” (Lav, D., 2012: 152). Following Ibn Abbas, mainstream Islamic thought has distinguished between greater unbelief and lesser unbelief, with only the former deserving the punishment of an apostate (Lav, D., 2012: 152). Thus for such Sunni thinkers, the charge of apostasy can depend on acts, but only certain classes of acts (Lav, D., 2012: 72).

Ibn Taymiyya was among those who held that acts, as well as speech and belief in the heart, were constituent of belief with grave sin rendering one an apostate (*kafir*). The error of the Kharijites, according to Ibn Taymiyya, was that they extended too broadly the types of acts that would be considered apostasy. Nevertheless, despite his sternness, Ibn Taymiyya tempers his own position by also calling for patience, especially for the errors of leaders, in a standpoint contrary to Jihadi-Salafism and that would in the present age be known as quietism (Rahman, F., 2000: 157).

(2) Wahhabism and the Revival of *Takfir*

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792), an Arab preacher, disillusioned with the corruption of religion he perceived in the Ottoman empire sought to revive Islam through an idiosyncratic interpretation of Ibn Taymiyya. The Wahhabist movement is notable for its perhaps unprecedented degree of violence perpetrated on Muslims and the closeness of its ideology to Jihadi-Salafism.

The core idea of importance in Islam for al-Wahhab is *tawhid al-ibada*, meaning the directing of worship to the Oneness of God. Through subsuming all within the Oneness of God, al-Wahhab seeks to remove all possible mediation with the divine, thereby eliminating plurality within Islam. He believed that, as *tawhid* was revealed before the revelation on devotional duties, it is not enough merely to fulfill duties such as prayer, rather these must be practiced in such fashion as no way violates *tawhid al-ibada*. One is otherwise guilty of idolatry (*shirk*) labeled as *takfir* and liable to execution (Algar, H., 2002: 32). Any practices contrary to devotion to the Oneness of God are deemed nullifiers of Islam whose exercise effectively cancels one's allegiance to Islam rendering one an apostate (*kafir*) to immediate effect.

The religious activities particularly targeted as *shirk* by the Wahhabis were Sufism or visiting of shrines, the latter being

regarded as praying to saints rather than to God alone. Whereas historically Islamic theologians, such as 'Izz al-Din, considered some innovations good and others not permitted, for al-Wahhab, any innovation in matters of religion (*bid'a*) not practiced by the Prophet and his Companions was condemned as an unqualified evil (Algar, H., 2002: 35). Moreover, not only was anyone who did not practice *tawhid* considered an apostate, but anyone who disagreed with the condemnation of an apostate was likewise considered an apostate (al-Ibrahim, 2015: 413).

In 1740, al-Wahhab began implementing his ideas by destroying a shrine of al-Khattab, one of the Companions of the Prophet (Algar, H., 2002: 18). Soon he formed an alliance with the House of Saud and in 1746 declared *jihad* against those who did not conform to his ideas. On these grounds, the Wahhabi-Saudi alliance proceeded to commit atrocities, including mass killings, looting of the mosque of the Prophet, as well as banning the commemoration of the Prophet's birthday or the smoking of tobacco (Algar, H., 2002: 28). The looting and sale of antiquities, the destruction of shrines and ancient sites, as well as severe punishments for activities seemingly arbitrarily designated as crimes are features observable in the present "Islamic State" echoing the early stages of Wahhabism.

(3) The Rise of Pan-Islamism

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, with the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the increased impinging of the European powers, the Islamic world was faced with the reality of their relative weakness. Exposure to the European ideas of nationalism and of "civilizing mission" raised to historical consciousness the idea of the renewal of the glories of Islamic civilization, which has since served as a frame of reference for the ideologists of radical Islam. Influenced by Guizot's *The History of Civilization*, the thinker and propagandist, Al-Afghani believed that the greatness of civilization depended on virtue (Hourani, A., 1962: 115). Yet while

European thinkers of the time thought religion only of secondary importance, Al-Afghani held that only by being true to Islam could the greatness of Muslim civilization be restored, for it is the practice of Islam which brings virtue and strength to the people (Hourani, A., 1962: 115) (Hourani, A., 1962: 119). Such a restoration of the civilization, he believed, could be achieved through pan-Islamism, uniting the *umma* in solidarity around their shared religious commitment (Hourani, A., 1962: 115). The collaborator and follower of al-Afghani, Muhammed 'Abduh, further systematized his ideas by emphasizing that Islam is the most rational basis for society. Together with his disciple, Rashid Rida, these ideas were propagated around the Muslim world through a widely-read journal, *al-Manar* (Hourani, A., 1962: 226).

The Islamic modernists were known as the *salafiyya*. While the movement shares a common name with the contemporary salafi, they are not of the same movement as contemporary radical Islam. Although the modernists and Islamism share an enthusiasm for *ijtihad*, meaning interpretation drawing directly from the sources of the period of the salaf, the modernists were open to reform and adaptation, whereas radical Islamists are strictly against any innovations (*bid'a*) (Haykel, B., 2009: 46). Despite the openness to reform, Rashid Rida in his later life came to identify with the Wahhabi movement, which he regarded as revitalizing Islam (Algar, H., 2002: 231). In more recent times, the Pan-Islamist ideas that the modernists propagated were to be instrumental in advancing the idea of political Islam which, with the perceived failure of the ideals of Arab nationalism, was to become a serious contending force.

The importance of the modernists lay in setting out the position that Islam is the solution for the formidable challenges of the Muslim world, a proposition later formulated by al-Qaradawi in the memorable motto "Islam is the Solution" (Tibi, B., 2012: 26). While allowing for differentiation within Islam and a measure of

reform, the positing of Islam as holding the universal answer laid down a foundational assumption setting boundaries within which all social contradictions were supposed to be resolvable. It was left to the successors among the Islamists to extend a restrictive version of this argument to its logical conclusion. If answers could be found only within Islam, it followed that dialectical channels with non-Islamic ideas were to be closed.

(4) The Formation of Islamism as An Ideology

Although in its practices Jihadi-Salafism has been most influenced by Wahhabism, Islamist ideas were crystallized into an ideology by Abul A'la Mawdudi. In an age where Fascism and Communism exercised a strong pull, Mawdudi undertook to erect Islam into an ideological system which could supplant its rivals' as a basis to run a state in accordance with divine law (Hartung, J., 2014: 43-59).

Fundamental to this project was a portrayal of the world as a struggle between forces of good and forces of evil from which realization of good was only possible through the political realization of the "Islamic State". Within the *Qur'an*, the period considered as the dark ages before the arrival of Muhammad is termed *jahiliyyah*. While in Islamic thought there have always been considered to be remnants of *jahiliyyah* and the danger of its return, Mawdudi sets out a dichotomy between the acceptance of a pure Islam or an ahistorical, ever-threatening *jahiliyya* as the sole alternative facing humanity with no middle position available (Hartung, J., 2014: 65).

In Mawdudi's interpretation, submitting to any intermediate authority besides God, such as the state or a leader, is idol-worship (*shirk*) forbidden by Islam and constituting *jahiliyya*. The possibility for dialectical intermediation or moderation is thereby void, laying out the foundations for violent extremism ideology: "The followers of the *din* of Islam have been ordered to fight on earth and not to pause until the infestation [fitna], i.e., [all]

the prevalent systems which are based on a revolt against the divine foundation have been wiped out again and the only way of obedience and submission is exclusively for God" (Hartung, J., 2014: 97).

Mawdudi further expanded on this ideological struggle in his work, *Jihad in Islam*, where he sets out the argument for a jihad of universal reach. Jihad is characterized as the revolutionary means to establish justice as can solely be realized through Islam (Mawdudi, A., 2006: 7). Whereas Communism is not a just system since the proletariat establish a dictatorship for their own class interests, jihad for Islam is a true justice, as it is only for the sake of God, without regard to class or national interest (Mawdudi, A., 2006: 15). By this logic, since all of humanity should benefit from the justice in Islam, jihad must necessarily be a global revolution (Mawdudi, A., 2006: 22).

In the *Milestones*, Sayyid Qutb encapsulates the ideas of Mawdudi on Islam as an ideology in a captivating form. Qutb defines the *jahilisociety* as "any society other than the Muslim society" or one "which does not dedicate itself to submission to Allah alone, in its beliefs and ideas in its observances of worship, and in its legal regulations" (Qurb, S., 2006: 91). In *jahiliyyah*, the rule of man is substituted for God. However, since man can only be free through serving God, *jahiliyyah* subjects man to servitude. The purpose of jihad is "to free those people who wish to be freed from enslavement to men so that they may serve Allah Almighty alone" (Qurb, S., 2006: 65).

Islam is a way of life, Qutb holds, therefore it is not sufficient to preach, but rather entails "practical steps to organize a movement for freeing man" (Qurb, S., 2006: 85). To realize this way of life, he argues, it is necessary to have a foundation, entailing faith and the establishment of a community. Since Allah created the universe, to live in harmony with the universe is to submit to God's will. In following *shari'a* within a community,

man can, therefore, live in harmony with the universe (Qurb, S., 2006: 101). Human civilization is where every man may actualize freedom by following the law of God. Such an ideal can be accomplished only through rejection of *jahiliyya* and the establishment of a state under the sovereignty of God (*hakamiyya*) (Qutb, S., 2006: 86).

Qutb's ideological doctrine is rational in its deductive logic, albeit from the axioms of God's sovereignty over the universe and Islam as the true religion, but in the strictness of these deductions, allows for no dialectical interchange or mediation. The choice is only between an intolerable servitude in *jahiliyya* or the establishment of an Islamic state, the former having to be radically rejected and the latter being an obligation to be realized through the struggle of *jihad*.

III.

(1) The Jurisprudence of Violence

The ideas of Qutb spread rapidly among imprisoned Islamists, eager to draw the conclusions towards a concrete program. Among those influenced by Qutb in prison, Shukri Mustafa took his doctrine to its most extreme interpretation. Mustafa founded an organization widely known as *al-Takfirwa'l-Hijra*, due to its doctrines of *takfir* and belief in separation from infidel society (Lav, D., 2012: 59). Upon his release from prison, the group was implicated in the murder of al-Dhahabi, the Egyptian Minister of Religious Affairs and in 1977, Mustafa tried (Lav, D., 2012: 59).

During his testimony, Mustafa outlined his belief that all sins are a form of *kufir* (apostasy) and, therefore, to be a Muslim one must abide by every commandment. On this basis, Mustafa explicitly rejected the Sunni orthodoxy and portrayed society as a whole as apostate (Lav, D., 2012: 60). This extremism was remarkable both for its revival of Khawarijism and for its

excommunication of society as a whole in a pattern which was to repeat itself among later Islamist groups.

In 1981, while conducting an investigation into the assassination of Sadat, the police found a treatise by Muhammed Faraj, one of the conspirators, titled, *The Neglected Duty*. In this work, Faraj introduced an argument derived from Ibn Taymiyya which was to become commonplace among radical Islamists as a justification for *takfir*. The context in Ibn Taymiyya's original work is the invasion by the Mongols, who had recently converted to Islam, of the Mamluk territories. Ibn Taymiyya declares that, despite their conversion, the Mongols are infidels (*kufar*), as they do not keep the commandments of fasting, prayer, the pilgrimage and the zakat tax. Moreover, they march under the banner of Genghis Khan, who they consider near or equal to Muhammad. "Is this not (exactly) what is the case (in Egypt) today?" Faraj asks rhetorically (Faraj, M., 2009: 328).

On the basis of this ruling against the Mongols by Ibn Taymiyya as not genuine Muslims, Faraj condemns the leadership of Egypt for holding the "Pharoah" even higher than God and therefore to be held as apostates (Faraj, M., 2009: 328). President Anwar Sadat's assassination, the first stage of the revolutionary program of Mawdudi was achieved.

(2) *Al-walawa-l'bara*

The meaning of *al-walawa-l'bara* is loyalty to believers and disavowal of non-believers. While the concept, like all salafi concepts, is rooted in the *Qur'an*, the ideologist who most comprehensively applied *al-walawa-l'bara* to the contemporary context is Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. This concept has served to retrench the salafists' rejection of any non-divine law.

A similar idea is referenced in the *Qur'an* several times, such as the verse: "Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends (*awliya*, i.e., people to who one shows *wala*) rather than the believers" (Wagemaker, J., 2012: 148). The disavowal of

non-believers was the defining characteristic of the Khawaraj. Ibn Taymiyya also emphasizes the importance of enmity towards the enemies of Allah and avoidance of any loyalties to non-Muslims (Rahman, F., 2000: 148).

While drawing on earlier tradition, especially of Ibn Taymiyya, in *Millat Ibrahim*, al-Maqdisi synthesizes the concept of *wala* with the Qutbist idea *hakamiyyat*, that sovereignty belongs to God alone, by arguing that legislation is a form of worship. On this basis, he holds that “man-made law” entails a *wala* (loyalty) which can be properly directed only to God and so is a form of idolatry (*shirk*) (Rahman, F., 2000: 168). For al-Maqdisi, then, the state is to have a wholly unmediated relationship with God, free of human intervention or invention, by which the individual can be directly subject to Allah’s law.

Correspondingly, the disavowal of unbelievers, *bara*, for al-Maqdisi, inextricably follows from the fundamental tenet of Islam in the *shahada*: “There is no God, but God...” implying active rejection of polytheists and their idols. However, this not only refers to “idols of stone and wood”, but also “the idols of ruling according to something other than what God has sent down... the idols of the law” (Rahman, F., 2000: 171). Disavowal would be through declaring those loyal to laws enacted by the disbelievers (*kuffar*) and waging jihad against them (Rahman, F., 2000: 171-173).

(3) Takfir as a Condemnation of Society

The violence associated with modern Islamism and accusations of *takfir* reached new heights during the 1992 Algerian Civil war. The fighting that ensued escalated as the *Groupe Islamique Armé* (GIA) entered the fray. Whereas earlier Islamists focused primarily on fighting secular governments, the GIA sought to spread general terror by killing tourists, doctors and intellectuals.

In a manifesto titled, *The Sharp Sword*, the GIA leader Antar Zouabri, sought to justify the GIA’s terror by accusing reporters of

supporting the apostate regime through propaganda. Students are held to be helping the regime because those who “continue their studies are helping the tyrant to ensure stability and thereby are not accomplishing the jihad” (Wictorowicz, Q., 2005: 88). Indeed, any member of society not supporting the GIA was tacitly in favor of the regime and therefore deemed apostate and a legitimate target (Wictorowicz, Q., 2005: 88). The hostility to any form of mediation by the GIA with contending standpoints is captured by their motto: “No agreement, no truce, no dialogue” (Kepel, G., 2002: 260, 266).

Subsequent to the publication of the manifesto, the GIA became implicated in mass slaughters of entire villages held to be supporting the rival political party’s army, the Islamic Salvation Army. The proclamation of *takfir* against the whole of the society proved too much for even the Islamists and the spiritual leader of GIA, al-Qatada, disavowed the organization (Kepel, G., 2002: 260, 266). Although the application of *takfir* to an almost universal scope was rejected by Islamists at the time, debates on suicide bombings broadened the scale of applicability of *takfir* once more and were extended still further by the “Islamic State”.

(4) The Transition to Global Jihad

Hitherto, jihadist struggles had mostly focused on targeting the “near enemy”, the secular Arab governments regarded as tyrants, along with its associates, however broadly defined, and occupied Muslim land. The first significant though isolated foiled attack on the West was perpetrated in the 1993 by Omar Rahman on the World Trade Center in New York. In 1998, Bin Laden followed in taking a sharp turn in strategy from attacking the occupying infidels within Muslim territory, to attacking the “far enemy” in America directly. In a fatwa penned by Bin Laden and associates titled, “The World Islamic Front against the Jews and Crusaders”, the crimes of Americans are listed as the occupation of land in the Arabian Peninsula, devastation on the Iraqi people,

and support for the Jewish state. "All these crimes and sins committed by the Americans", the ruling states, "are a clear declaration of war on Allah, His messenger, and Muslims. And ulama (religious scholars) have throughout Islamic history unanimously agreed that the jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries" (Bin Laden, O., 1998).

The conclusion that the fatwa draws, though, is not limited to fighting the US in the country it occupies. Rather, "the ruling to kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it..." (Bin Laden, O., 1998). In the same year, the US embassy in Nairobi, Kenya was bombed followed, three years later, by the 9/11 attacks. Thus the fatwa marks the transition from localized jihadi struggles to global jihad.

IV.

(1) Necessity and Collateral Damage

With the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, the efforts of Al-Qaeda turned against America as occupier. However, targeting American forces and their Iraqi accomplices clearly led to collateral damage of innocent Muslims being killed. Rather, than avoiding this eventuality, Al-Qaeda sought to justify and excuse the collateral damage of Muslim blood in the violent campaign.

By portraying an absolute dichotomy between the evil of the rule of apostates and the perfect harmony of Shari'a, sacrifice of Muslim blood is justified as removing the impediments to attaining this end state. According to al-Libi, the classical Islamic scholars held "the reign of unbelievers over any Muslim country the mother of all disasters, the gate of all evils, and the final catastrophe.... Thus we say that the dominance of unbelievers, be they apostates or original infidels, over the lands of Muslims must be put at the head of the list of corruption that the people of Islam

must strive to end, no matter how much it costs them in lives, property and trouble” (Bin Laden, O., 1998: 32). The lack of any possible mediation or bridge between the abomination of *jahiliyya* and the unity of divine rule results in a sheer urgency of ridding the world of this incomparable evil by which all means however terrible are to be justified.

(2) The Ideology of the “Islamic State”

When al-Zarqawi was killed in 2006, al-Masri took over the leadership of Al-Qaeda in Iraq only to transform the organization into the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, later known simply as the “Islamic State” (IS). Since the rise of the so-called “Islamic State”, the same or similar logic has been used by its leaders to apply violence and commit atrocities. As with earlier Islamists, IS systematically seeks to rationalize their depravities within traditions of Islamic Law which serve as the foundation for the Jihadi-Salafist ideology.

Although purporting in their *Aq’eeda* or “creed” (Jawad, A., 2015) to be cautious in applying *takfir*, the Islamic State has liberally employed the label of apostate, slaughtered many on those grounds and openly called for prominent figures to be targeted. The basis on which *takfir* is practiced is vividly described in the aptly titled article, “Kill the Imams of Kufr in the West”, in issue 14 of *Dabiq*. In this article, “apostate scholars”, such as Hamza Yusuf, who accepted an invitation to the White House and Tawfiq Choudhoury who gave a speech titled, “Muslim Scholars: The West’s Natural Allies in Fighting Scourge of Terrorism”, are identified. With these accusations, it is clear that the “Islamic State” seeks to cut any possibility of interchange between Islam and the West (Islamic State: 2016: 8-9).

The distortions of the ahistorical imitation of the period of the Companions of Muhammad (*salaf*) is evident in the effort of the Islamic State to reintroduce slavery, which has been forced on Yazidi women, for which the case is discussed at length in issue no.

4 of *Dabiq* magazine. The article explains that after careful study, it was determined that the Yazidi were disbelievers following Magian beliefs. On the basis of the legal category into which the Yazidis fall, Ibn Taymiyya holds that they can be enslaved as the Companions enslaved apostate women during the Wars of Apostasy (Islamic State: 2014: 15).

The centrality of *takfir* to the “Islamic State” is portrayed in broad sweeping almost mythological terms in the article, “The Extinction of the Grayzone” in *Dabiq*, Issue 7, explaining how the gray zone between Islam and apostasy has been withering away since 9/11 and the rise of the “Islamic State”. Firstly, this has been through exposing the movements, “scholars” and apostate leaders who have rushed to support Bush’s war against Islam. Secondly, the “Islamic State” “has brought the gray zone to the brink of permanent extinction” since the revival of an entity representing Islam, “now, a stance of “neutrality” or “independence” would doom him” (Islamic State: 2015: 54). The gray zone is a clear metaphor for the space for dialectical mediation whose demise with the establishment of the “Islamic State” under divine rule is considered inevitable.

Conclusion

The Jihadi-Salafi Islamist movement seeks a return to a pristine state of Islam, which is believed to be a precondition for the revival of Islamic civilization. Between the dichotomy of the ignorant state of *jahiliyya* and the immediacy of divine rule under *shari’a* there can be no intermediation for the simple reason that man must follow the laws of God manifested in *shari’a* if he is to be in harmony with the universe and so be free. Since *shari’a* necessarily encompasses the laws of the universe, without which man is lost, it follows that the only possibility is to establish *shari’a* and to fight with jihad those who resist.

Such a set of deductions as above are only valid, however, through the absolute and universal axioms represented by the principle of *tawhid*, the state of unity whereby all contradictions are solved through Islam by immediate submission to the divine. Since all plurality must be removed in the pursuit of this unitary and totalizing state, there must consequently be a suspension of the dialectic. However, the more vigorously this ideal is sought, the more sources of opposition are found to the accomplishment of the end state resulting in a gradual extension of the sphere of violence.

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