

## WORLD POLITICS IN THE LIGHT OF THE WAR ON TERROR

MUHAMMAD AHMED QADRI

Department of Political Science university of Karachi, Karachi Pakistan

### ABSTRACT

The author of this research paper would like to disseminate the exact term of Jihad and its related components. After September 11, 2001, the Jihadi groups emerged and influenced the world through their theoretical and practical approaches. The Muslim Ummah (Muslim Nation) is confused on how to address the Jihadi movement. Some of the Scholars internationally refuse to accept the religio-political concept of Jihadi groups, but others have delightfully accepted the idea of jihad with non-Muslims due to non-Muslim worlds, negative campaigns, and involvement in the Muslim world. The research paper is an impartial analysis of World Politics with reference to the active religio-political groups.

**KEYWORDS:** Jihad's, War on Terror, Extremist Groups, World Politics

### INTRODUCTION

With the world now so rapidly advancing, information is passed from one place to another faster than ever before and is much more easily accessible. Unfortunately, it is not always the factual information that is spread. It is interesting and dangerous just how much and how easily misinformation circulates and one such misrepresentation is the Islamic concept of Jihad. Add to that, the fact that people have taken to the likes of CNN and FOX News to be their most credible sources without actually taking the time to research the topic themselves. Even though the information is at their fingers, they somehow never find the time or the desire to learn the truth about the common misunderstood topics of today's time, and as a result stay stuck in a fabrication of the truth. Little is it realized that the concepts thought to be understood sometimes turn out to be the exact opposite of what has been seen, heard, and learned about. Thus it is high time that the curtain of ignorance is removed and steps are taken to move forward with the correct information about the real concept of Jihad. Al Mufradat defines Jihad as: "A religious war with those who are unbelievers in the mission of Muhammad."<sup>1</sup> In western societies, the term Jihad is often translated as "Holy War."

A famous, world renowned scholar describes the term of Jihad and various kinds of political issues linked to it in the society. He says, "in connection with the discussion of the concepts of political resistance, civil war, disorder, and rebellion, one may raise the question as to what is the relationship between these concepts and the theory of Jihad in Islam. If the Quranic term of Jihad is taken in its restrictive sense of fighting against infidels, then it has no relevance to the internal political conflicts of the Ummah. But in its broader meaning it does include the idea of a collective effort of the community to preserve, promote and propagate Islamic values within the community itself. In this sense, perhaps, *al-khuruj* (political resistance) against tyranny, despotism, and corrupt rulers might be considered as a form of Jihad."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Imam Raghīb Isfahani, *Al Mufradat-ul-Quran*, Darun Nashra, Egypt, 1979, p.212

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dr. Manzooruddin Ahmed, *Islamic Political System in the Modern Age: Theory and Practice*, Royal Book Company, Karachi, 1983, pp.39-40

To understand Jihad one must understand Islam. There are two legislative sources in Islam and both are held to the highest of importance in the religion. The Quran, which are the commandments from God, is the first source and it is believed by Muslims to be the direct word of the Almighty God. Secondly is the Hadith, which are the commandments of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Both of these are in Arabic, hence the terminologies are in Arabic. Both these sources have drawn the attention of Muslim jurists to make state laws based on the parameters defined by these two primary sources.

## BACKGROUND OF JIHAD

The Arabic meaning of the word "Jihad," which comes from the word "Jahadah," means to struggle or strive. It means that the collective efforts of the Muslim Ummah to stand up against insurgency or corruption. Such action, which is supported by the common consensus of the Ulema, is called Jihad. According to Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of World Religions, "Jihad" appears forty-one times in the Quran and frequently in the idiomatic expression "striving in the way of God."<sup>3</sup> Even in today's Arab world, jihad is a term for a struggle for any cause, violent or peaceful, religious or secular.

Jihad, itself, is a wide range subject which requires a lot of resources and support by the Muslim Ummah. The Muslim scholars do not allow Jihad without any justification. They consider the environment and situation of the state. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his (PBUH) vicegerents fully justified Jihad because there were multiple reasons to fight against non-Muslims. The jihad cannot be justified by an individual or a few people unless there is a reason and ijma (common consensus) on the issue of fighting against the infidels. In this condition, it becomes mandatory. In other words, it was not necessary for all as long as some people from the Ummah were engaged in the Jihad Movement. In the territory that is run by the caliph, Jihad cannot be performed because such territory would be considered Dar-al-Islam (Islamic Territory), and the remaining areas, which are at war with the Muslims, will be known as Dar-al-Harb (Enemy Territory). We see such examples during the period of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) when the war took place between Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as in other examples, like the tribes and areas with which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) had entered into treaty relations were called Dar-ul-Sulh (Peaceful Territory).

The literature on jihad further reveals that the inclusion of the Prophet (PBUH) in such holy wars is called Maghazi (Historical Records of Prophetic Wars). Furthermore, it says that there were two types of wars in which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was busy:

- The Maghazi Wars or Ghazawat: wars which were led by the Prophet (PBUH).
- Saraya Wars: wars in which he (PBUH) did not personally go, but some nominated commanders performed their duty of Jihad.<sup>4</sup>

There are various types of Jihad and each has its own meaning of a type of struggle towards or for something:

### Jihaad-Bil-Maal

Jihaad-bil-Maal is the struggle by means of wealth. This is to spend one's wealth with the desire to help in a humanitarian cause or a charitable cause. To spread religious awareness, or in the way of God is also Jihaad-bil-Maal. The

<sup>3</sup> Doniger, Wendy. *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of World Religions*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1999. Print.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn-e-Hisham, *Seerat Ibn-e-Hisham*, Dar-ut-Turas, Berut, Vol 1, 1952, p.161

weapon of this kind of Jihaad is wealth.

### Jihaad-Bil-Lisaan

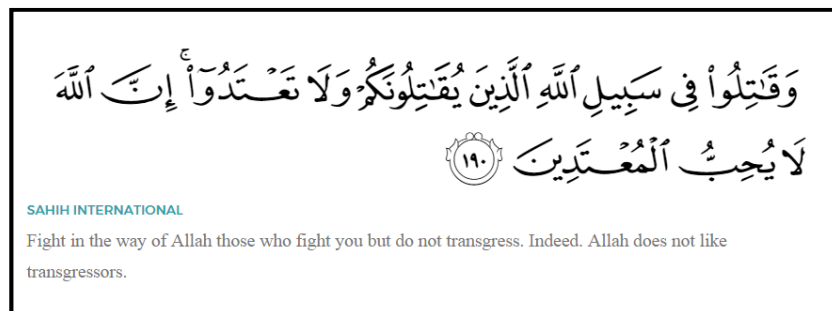
Jihaad-bil-Lisaan: In Arabic “Lisaan” means “tongue” so Jihaad-bil-Lisaan is the struggle by the tongue; meaning to engage in a civil dialogue by way of the tongue. Persuading people to adopt the right path and dissuading them from evil by talking to them. Encouragement towards good acts by communicating to them is also included in this kind of Jihad. For this Jihad, the tongue is the weapon.

### Jihaad-Bil-Qalam

Jihaad-bil-Qalam is the struggle by the means of the pen. It is the intellectual struggle and stimulation. Using the pen to spread Islamic awareness is the purpose of this Jihad. In this kind of Jihad, the pen is the weapon.<sup>5</sup>

### Jihaad-Bis-Saif

“Saif” means sword, and Jihaad-bis-Saif is the struggle that is done on enemy borders with force, might, and technology. This is the kind of Jihad in which a person’s weapon is ammunition in warfare. Note, however, that this kind of Jihad does not, in any way, mean that a Muslim is permitted to attack another human being except and unless in the situation of self-defense. In the Quran, it states:<sup>6</sup>



Therefore fighting with the intention of simply killing or harming others is not accepted in Islam without the justification that you are in danger. This verse is binding upon the Muslims because it is one that allows war for Allah, not for self interest or expansion of power.

### Jihaad-Bin-Nafs

Jihaad-bin-Nafs is most important in Tasawwuf. This is called purification of heart and mind, or the fight against one’s self. The special science of fighting against one’s own nafs is called, nafs-e-lawwama, and is considered the most difficult in our personality. The scholars of Tasawwuf address the nafs as something that cannot be neglected. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also trained the Ashab-e-Sufa for a great cause. He (PBUH) was very much attentive to the people who had no home or shelter in Madina. They remained nearby the home of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and their main purpose of stay in Madina was to learn Jihad-bin-Nafs. This jihad perfected their ability to face any kind of life

<sup>5</sup> These three definitions can be studied in the books of Tasawwuf like, *Sir-rul-Asrar* and *Al-Fatah-ur-Rabbani*, by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (R.A.)

<sup>6</sup> Holy Quran, Al-Baqarah, 2:190

problems and never complain about such difficulties. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) loved them dearly because he (PBUH) knew that they were the people with pure hearts and minds who would spread Islam in the world with sincerity and devotion.

### **Jihad in the Contemporary World**

In today's world many changes and challenges can be observed regarding the economy, political interaction, socio-political group activities, and activation of anomic groups and interest-articulated groups. All these groups may have their own justification and theoretical approaches to achieve their goals by various fair or unfair means, but the most important thing during attainment is their approach or to the world and method of communication. It has been noticed that during the decade of 2000, many groups have emerged claiming themselves to be protectors of religion and culture. Out of these groups, we see: Al-Qaida, the Taliban, and ISIS. All these groups believe that they are serving Islam and protecting Islamic conventions throughout the world, while in reality, there are serious injunctions against them by the Muslim Scholars that their steps, in the name of Jihad, are illegal, unjustified, and extremist. Apart from all these, in the following lines we will see the formation of these groups and their approaches towards jihad which may help to understand their method of operation and their aims.

The ideology of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1791) has eroded the Islamic psyche from within. His view is the root cause for extremism practiced by those who claim to adhere to the Islamic faith.<sup>7</sup> The name of his sect, Wahhabism, is the modern deviance from traditional Islam and espouses the idea of a break from Islam's past millennium of Islamic spiritual legacy and intellectual scholarship, with a misleading idea of a "return" to the basic sources of Islamic Law – the Holy Quran and the Hadeeth of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Tracing back the history of Arabia, the facts come before us that the Wahabi movement moved into various parts of the Arabia but began from Najd. Najd was the town of the birthplace of Abdul Wahab Najdi.

In conjunction with the Wahabi ideology, the oppression that Muslims experienced in the post-colonial era has brought onslaught from without, creating fertile ground for some groups to lash out in the form of extremists of the types of the Taliban and Al-Qaida.

Although the linguistic meaning of the word is very noble: rooted in the word "Talib" – or a seeker of knowledge; the militia group Taliban has done tremendous disservice to the name of Islam, with their oppressive treatment of women and harboring Osama bin Laden of the Al-Qaeda network. The Taliban came into power in 1996 after Afghanistan's civil war.<sup>8</sup> Women were one of the most victimized by the Taliban because they were no longer allowed to hold jobs, go to school, or walk outside without being covered from head to toe. The Taliban called this Islamic Law. Many other violations were committed against innocent civilians as the Taliban struggled to maintain control. Women were not the only ones abused by the Taliban. Many men suffered, were taken prisoner, killed or they disappeared for actions such as for wearing a beard of insufficient length or being of a different ethnicity or political background. The Taliban remained in power until 2001, when they were ousted by the US and Afghani Opposition forces in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York.

Al-Qaida is Arabic for "the Foundation." This organization traces its roots to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Anwar Suleiman, *Tareekh-e-Wahabi*, Pakistan Book House, Lahore, 1991, p.72

<sup>8</sup> Abdul Hameed Jakkar, *Taliban Aur Hum*, Daily Nawa-e-Waqt, Karachi, 14 December 2014

in 1979. It is reported that the Taliban and Al-Qaida were founded by international agencies due to invasion of the USSR in Afghanistan. The Taliban and Al-Qaida actively played their political role as militant groups in Afghanistan. The international agencies were interested in limiting the role of the USSR in Afghanistan. The war between the United States and Afghanistan was fought by these two Muslim Militant groups.<sup>9</sup> When the USSR's time had ended, both of the groups were still active and politically very sound and strong. The Americans knew the political situation and international politics. They wanted to restrict the role of Al-Qaida and the Taliban through power politics and a war on terror. The basic conflict between Americans and these two organizations started when the September 11 incident took place in the United States of America and the American Government realized that it happened due to the Taliban and Al-Qaida. This situation became alarming for the world peace order, and finally, Al-Qaida and Taliban announced Jihad against the non-Muslim world.

The Crisis between the Muslim and non-Muslim world became very serious, on one hand, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other Muslim countries seriously thought about the war on terror within their countries, which may be considered a crusade. On the other hand, the non-Muslim world thought that the Muslim world and its extremist groups were active in India, USA, France, UK, and other countries. As a result, both powers became very much involved in fighting each other, which resulted in many casualties and other serious accidents.

Such actions by the Taliban and Al-Qaida are called Jihad (Holy War). This Jihad is continuing in the Muslim countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan which have become the field of the war in which suicide bombing, target killing, and kidnapping is now very common. The political instability of the government and an active participation of interest articulation groups, as well as, division among politicians of these countries, have made the situation more challenging and dangerous for the restoration of peace.<sup>10</sup> The Pakistan army has started a move against the extremist groups in Pakistan and has successfully demolished the targeted areas in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa, the former NWFP, a castle for the extremist groups. It seems an urgent requirement to settle the issue of terrorism which has seriously created repercussions in the world and promoted uncertainty and stereotypes among nations. No one is safe and no one is free to move around. Although, people living in various countries do not receive direct threats, the world is going through a transitional period which is seriously creating hurdles against the world economy and peace. The United Nations should work on establishing peace more so than what it has already done in the past.

## CONCLUSIONS

Concluding the above mentioned analysis, we must say that the world needs immediate relief from uncertain conditions and there must be a serious effort undertaken by the Western world and the Islamic world to address these issues. The Taliban and Al-Qaida may be contacted by the Muslim Countries in order to be brought to the table to dialogue and to involve them in an attempt to create a peace mission. Such a mission may be started with the help of Scholars and Politicians who are equally reliable for both the Taliban and Al-Qaida groups, as well as, the United Nations group. Although, it is very difficult to create such a dialogue and plan of action, ultimately both of them will have to be ready for the table talk and compromise on finding a peaceful solution that suits both parties and ensures the safety and security of humanity.

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<sup>9</sup> The Daily Jung, Karachi, 15 October 2015

<sup>10</sup> Mustafa Alvi, Aman Kay Raastey, Karachi Book House, 2004, p.61

It seems very difficult to cope with this situation, but it is not impossible. The major players of international politics must seriously consider how to minimize the problems of extremism. Afghanistan and Pakistan are directly affected. While in the Arab region, ISIS, and its supporters, militant Shia and Wahabi groups, are fighting with each other. Recently, the foreign relations between Iran and USA are remarkably established and both are trying to remove stereotypes and rebuild their foreign relations. Although, both these countries are involved in diplomatic deals, and neither trusts the other, it may be predicted that in the future America and Iran may work on putting an end to extremism for the sake of international peace, harmony, and good relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim world.

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