

THE DYNAMICS OF MUSLIM INTERPRETATION OF JIHAD VERSES: BETWEEN MORALITY AND MILITARY

Dri Santoso

IAIN Metro Lampung

email: drisantoso25@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The article questions the general assumptions in interpreting the Jihad verses as justifications for intolerant actions among religious organizations and transnational movements in Indonesia. It is due to a misunderstanding of the verses of the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet about Jihad without regard to its meaning and historical context. In the use of the Qur'an, especially in the revelation of the first Meccan revelations, the main emphasis is on the meaning of peaceful Jihad as an individual effort for self-improvement. It shows that the verses of Jihad have not connoted military action so far. However, in the second year after the Hijrah, permission for military movement or war was granted when the Muslim community in Medina. The interpretation of the verses of Jihad in the next period changed. The interpretation of Jihad for specific groups as justification for acts of violence contradicts the basic meaning of the verses of Jihad. This shows that the verse of Jihad faces the dynamics of interpretation for a group of Muslims both in terms of justification and contextualization. This article questions the idea that the interpretation of Jihad is inherently a military confrontation rather than a moral struggle. This study also confirms that religious authority influences the dynamics in interpreting religious texts as the interpretation of jihad verses.*

الملخص: يشكك هذا المقال في الافتراضات العامة في تفسير آيات الجهاد على أنها مبررات لأعمال غير متسامحة بين المنظمات الدينية والحركات عبر الوطنية في إندونيسيا. وذلك بسبب سوء فهم آيات القرآن والحديث النبوي عن الجهاد بغض النظر عن معناه وسياقه التاريخي. في استخدام القرآن، لا سيما في نزول الوحي المكي الأول، ينصب التركيز الأساسي

على معنى الجهاد السلمي كجهد فردي لتحسين الذات. وهذا يدل على أنه حتى الآن من الواضح أن آيات الجهاد لم تدل على العمل العسكري. ومع ذلك ، في السنة الثانية بعد الهجرة ، تم منح الإذن بالحركة العسكرية أو الحرب عندما تم منح الجالية المسلمة في المدينة المنورة. تغير تفسير آيات الجهاد في الفترة المقبلة. إن تفسير الجهاد لدى بعض الجماعات على أنه تبرير لأعمال العنف مخالف للمعنى الأساسي لآيات الجهاد. وهذا يدل على أن آية الجهاد تواجه ديناميكيات التفسير لمجموعة من المسلمين من حيث التبرير والسياق. يشكك هذا المقال في فكرة أن تفسير الجهاد هو بطبيعته مواجهة عسكرية وليس صراعاً أخلاقياً. تؤكد هذه الدراسة أيضاً أن المرجع الديني يؤثر على ديناميكيات تفسير النصوص الدينية كتفسير لآيات الجهاد.

Abstrak: *Artikel ini mempersoalkan asumsi umum dalam menafsirkan ayat-ayat Jihad sebagai pembenaran atas tindakan intoleran di kalangan organisasi keagamaan dan gerakan transnasional di Indonesia. Hal ini disebabkan oleh kesalahpahaman terhadap ayat-ayat al-Qur'an dan hadis Nabi tentang jihad tanpa memperhatikan makna dan konteks sejarahnya. Dalam penggunaan al-Qur'an, khususnya dalam turunnya wahyu pertama Mekah, penekanan utama pada makna jihad yang damai sebagai upaya yang dilakukan individu untuk perbaikan diri. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa selama ini ayat-ayat jihad jelas tidak berkonotasi dengan tindakan militer. Namun pada tahun kedua setelah Hijrah, izin gerakan militer atau berperang diberikan ketika komunitas muslim di Madinah. Tafsir ayat-ayat Jihad pada periode selanjutnya mengalami perubahan. Penafsiran jihad bagi kelompok tertentu sebagai pembenaran atas tindakan kekerasan justru bertentangan dengan makna mendasar dari ayat-ayat Jihad. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa ayat Jihad menghadapi dinamika penafsiran bagi sekelompok muslim baik dalam upaya justifikasi maupun kontekstualisasi. Artikel ini mempertanyakan gagasan bahwa interpretasi Jihad secara inheren adalah konfrontasi militer daripada perjuangan moral. Penelitian ini juga menegaskan bahwa otoritas agama mempengaruhi terjadinya dinamika dalam penafsiran teks-teks agama sebagai penafsiran ayat-ayat jihad.*

Keywords: jihad, interpretation, justification, authority.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of religious radicalism often arises with the narrative of violence against other groups based on the understanding of *Jihad*.¹ The understanding of *Jihad* becomes the reference of certain Islamic groups to impose the ideology and political systems through the formalities of religion (Islamic State). This religious formality is transformed into a movement with a significant agenda of change to the order of the State as the radicalists purpose and precisely at the level of praxis causing the conflict. In the context of modernity, it can not be denied that fanatical, intolerant, and exclusive attitudes are perceived as triggers of religious radicalism. In Indonesia, the phenomenon of religious radicalism is strengthened at the level of understanding and action. Even openly in the name of religion, violence is perpetrated against opposing groups. Violence leads to the physical organs and the attempts of coercion of understanding, which then leads to *takfirisme* or pagan labeling for other groups.²

The term of jihad is often interpreted with some degree of sensationalized polemic. It has become, to some extent, divorced from its significance as a Qur'anic term. Therefore to deal with the subject based on the Qur'an alone, as a term which forms an essential theme in the Qur'an, based on analysis of the text of the Qur'an itself. In particular, this analysis will not ignore the historical context crucial in understanding any text. The picture that emerges from this approach will differ from that held by many, both Muslims and non-Muslims, who have arrived at a perception of the meaning of jihad which differs from that found in the Quran. Indeed it is clear that there are those in both East and West who hold the same views on this emotive subject, views which run counter to what is found in the Qur'an.³ Some Muslims do acts of violence often refer to the verses of Jihad in the Qur'an and the hadith as legitimacy and basis of the actions. As a mercy to the universe, the Qur'an recognizes diversity of beliefs. Nevertheless, affectionate action and acts of violence are also common. Once again, it is validated by the arguments of the verses

¹ Noor Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction," *Journal of Law and Religion* 3, no. 2 (1985): 381–97.

² Arik Dwijayanto, "Peran Barisan Ansor Serbaguna (Banser) Dalam Menangkal Radikalisme," *Farabi (e-Journal)* 16, no. 2 (2019): 127–46.

³ M A S Abdel Haleem, "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 12, no. 1–2 (2010): 147–66.

of the Qur'an and tradition of The Prophet.⁴ From those description, this article intends to tear down verses of the Qur'an which are often used as the basis and justification radicalism in the name of religion (Islam), especially the verses of jihad and war.

JIHAD IN THE QURANIC USAGE

Jihad derives from the arabic, signifying intense struggle or effort. It has the connotations a moral struggle within one's own self. It thus carries the hermeneutical meaning of a moral endeavour directed towards one's own improvement or self- elevation on a moral plane which Muslim jurists of eminence have been quoted as calling *Jihad Akbar* or bigger jihad. On the other hand, preparations and participation for defence against an armed conflict due to foreign aggression have been known as *Qitaal* or *Jihad Asghar*.⁵ The word of Jihad, occurs in the Qur'an a total of 35 times, in fifteen suras - four Mecca and eleven Medina In this sense it occurs in Q. 25:52, instructing the Prophet, so do not give in to the disbelievers: strive hard against them with this [Qur'an] (*jahidhum bihi jihadan kabiran*). In addition to this verbal jihad, there is also *jihad bi-amwalihim* ('using one's wealth to support a cause') as found in Q. 8:72, Q. 9:20, 41 and 86, which is normally used in a wider context than to denote military jihad, even in a sura which is alluding to a situation where actual fighting is taking place. Jihad is also used twice in the Qur'an (Q. 29:8 and Q. 31:15) to indicate the efforts exercised by pagan parents to convert their children from Islam back to paganism. There is also another jihad that has nothing to do with fighting (Q. 9:73).Q. 22:78; Q. 25:52; Q. 29:69; Q. 66:9): in Q. 66:9, Prophet, strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites (*jahidi'l-kuffara wa'l-munafiqin*). The word jihad occurs in the context of a warning to the Prophet's own wives, whose divulgence of a private conversation was disapproved of, that they should not be like the unbelievers or hypocrites against whom he must strive. This particular has been grossly misunderstood and mistranslated. For example, in his translation of the Qur'an, Dawood translates the phrase *jahidi'l-kuffar wa'l-munafiqin* in both Q. 66:9 and Q. 9:73 as Prophet, make war on the unbelievers and the

⁴ Dede Rodin, "Islam Dan Radikalisme: Telaah Ayat-Ayat Kekerasan Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Addin* 10, no. 1 (2016).

⁵ Manzar Zaidi, "A Taxonomy of Jihad," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 2009, 21–34.

hypocrites, ignoring the historical context and the Qur'anic teachings as a whole the Prophet had no authority from the Qur'anic revelation to make actual militant war on the hypocrites.⁶

In its Qur'anic usage, especially in the early Makkah revelations, the emphasis was mainly on the peaceful meaning of *jihad*, on the effort that an individual made for self-improvement or to persuade others to promote the cause of Islam.⁷ Jihad means struggle of exertion of one's power in Allah's path against that which is evil; goal is to destroy evil, to spread belief in Allah and to make His words supreme in this world. During his years in Mecca the Prophet's political power was not strong, yet he was exhorted to propagate message of Islam against the prevalent idolatry and paganism. In the period obviously Jihad meant only the propagation.⁸

The verses dealing with fighting or war known as Jihad must be mentioned in the Holy Quran S-XI: 191-195. This verse belongs to the Medina period. By this time Muslims had become a political community through their development of the city state of Medina under Muhammad, their leader (Imam). Their concern in this period was primarily with their right to practice their faith without persecution from the pagans of Mecca. The verse tells the Muslims that forcible prevention of religious practice amounts to declaration of war on Islam and exhorts Muslims to meet the challenge with valor. The points out that these two verses on Jihad attest to the fundamental principles of self defense against aggression and make war morally justifiable. This defense political and spiritual freedom is enjoined upon Muslims and must be accorded to Jews and Christians who fall under Muslim polity.⁹

The Quran correspond temporally with the Prophet's stay in Mecca and subsequent migration or hijrat to Medina. Islam was in its nascent phase in the former, and the verses stress a moral struggle. In

⁶ Haleem, "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis"; David Cook, "Understanding Jihad," in *Understanding Jihad* (University of California Press, 2015).

⁷ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Issues in the Understanding of Jihād and Ijtihād," *Islamic Studies* 41, no. 4 (2002): 617–34.

⁸ Jonathan Matusitz, "Jihad: A Description," in *Global Jihad in Muslim and Non-Muslim Contexts* (Springer, 2020), 29–57.

⁹ I A Alani Seriki, "The Interpretation of Jihad in Islam," *Journal of Philosophy and Culture* 2, no. 2 (2005): 110–17; Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction."

the latter, Medina was taking on the form of a chieftaincy to become a nation state, which was being threatened by violent extrinsic forces. Greater emphasis on moral struggle and stress on self-improvement during the earlier phase signifying *Jihad-e-Akbar* are ascribed to the Meccan phase. Clear instructions for *Qitaal* or *Jihad-e-Asghar*, in the event of an armed assault on the part of the enemy, mostly relate to the second post-hijra period in the city state of Medina. Thus some of the Medinite verses speak of armed struggle in relatively unambiguous paradigms, Those of the believers, who stay home, other than the disabled, are not equal to those who strive in the path of God with their goods and persons. God has placed those who struggle with their goods and persons on a higher level than those who stay at home.¹⁰

The Qur'an's discussion of the themes of military jihad and fighting does not include detailed descriptions of the battlefield or how the battle was managed. This is not the intention, rather the Qur'an seeks to draw lessons from reference to past events. Orders to carry out military jihad and fight are also relatively few. There are some references to war tactics but, in contrast, there is plenty of material on justification, urging the Muslims to fight and providing persuasion and dissuasion. Again it is important to distinguish ayas relating to tactics and persuasion from those relating to the causes of war. Such a lack of distinction leads to misunderstanding and confusion.¹¹

In addition to the Quran, the subject of Jihad is covered in the Hadith. Hadith means a narration or report telling what the Prophet said, did, and approved or disapproved. Hadith, therefore, is a main source of Sunna; i.e., the tradition or practices laid down by the Prophet. One such collection of Hadith, that of Imam Bukhari, treats various aspects of Jihad. The term of Jihad as seen above means exertion or struggle. However, this struggle or exertion is not limited to the battlefield. Muslim jurists have spelled out four ways

¹⁰ Douglas E Streusand, "What Does Jihad Mean?," *Middle East Quarterly*, 1997; Zaidi, "A Taxonomy of Jihad."

¹¹ Mun'im Sirry, "Who Are Those in Authority? Early Muslim Exegesis of the Qur'anic Ul u'l-Amr. Religions 12: 483" (s Note: MDPI stays neutral concerning jurisdictional claims in published ..., 2021); Haleem, "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis."

to perform the Jihad obligation. These are: 1) by heart, 2) by tongue, 3) by the mind, and 4) by the sword.¹²

Referring to a hadith according to which the Prophet said upon his return from the battle of Tabuk: “We returned from a minor jihad to a greater jihad” (*raja’na min al-jihad al-asghar ila’l jihad al-akhbar*). This is the “greater jihad of striving against the capricious desires of the self”. It is clearly that the nature of jihad related with morality or non military. The non-military meaning of jihad is self-evident in another hadith in which the Prophet is also reported to have said: “The mujahid is the who wages a struggle against himself (*al-mujahidu man jahada nafsahu*)”. According to yet another hadith: “The best form of jihad is to tell a word of truth (*kalimatu haqqin*) to an unjust ruler.” Jihad against the self” in the first hadith is described as the struggle to subjugate the temptation to sin within oneself, the constant striving to obtain the pleasure of God. This is the foundation of all jihad, for fighting an external enemy would not be possible without a successful engagement in this inner jihad. Similar meaning in a hadith that al-Bukhari has recorded, a young man asked the Prophet. “Should I join the jihad?” In response, the Prophet then asked him: “Do you have parents?” and when the man said “Yes”, the Prophet told him: “Then strive by serving them”.¹³

Jihad is categorized as a collective as opposed to individual duty. It raises the question of who declares the Call of Jihad, i.e., the public or the government. In its classical interpretation it was left to the Imam or Caliph who was the head of Muslim polity to declare Jihad. Jihad under Islam is also a religious act and hence subject to the rules spelled out by the Prophet and his successor Caliphs. The Prophet upon appointing a commander over an army would instruct him to fear God (Allah) in relation to himself and the treatment of the soldiers. Then he would say: “*Fight in the name of God (Allah) and in the path of God (Allah); do not cheat, do not break trust, do not mutilate, do not kill minors.*” Abu Bakr, the successor of the Prophets

¹² Saleh Hasanzadeh and Ali Abedi Renani, “A Peaceful Interpretation of Jihad in the Qur’an,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2021, 1–20; Mohammad, “The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction.”

¹³ Umar Sheikh Tahir, “The Concept of Jihad in Islamic Texts: An Analytical Study of Violence between Mainstream Scholars and Extremists,” *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur’an and Hadith Studies* 15, no. 1 (2017): 48–72; Kamali, “Issues in the Understanding of Jihād and Ijtihād.”

and Umar, the second Caliph, gave similar messages to the men undertaking a mission.¹⁴

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR UNDERSTANDING JIHAD

There is a specific historical background of Jihad to which the Qur'anic verses are responding, and which serve to contextualize the verses on jihad that permission to fight was given in the second year following the Hijra, when the new community had been founded in Medina.¹⁵ According to the traditional historical accounts, while in Mecca the Muslim community was small, oppressed, and on two occasions groups of them were forced to emigrate to Abyssinia for protection. Faced with escalating persecution, Muslims began to flee to Yathrib, leaving homes and possessions behind. Sensing that the situation would get out of their control, the Meccans plotted to kill the Prophet (Q. 8:30). Under cover of darkness, he then also fled to Yathrib. Having settled there in the thirteenth year of the Islamic mission, the situation changed and the Muslim community began to feel safe. Early in the Medinan period, ayas ordered the believers to show restraint and, as in Mecca, stick to their prayers and almsgiving (Q. 4:77; Q. 2:109). Nevertheless, as became apparent from developments that followed within five years, their Meccan adversaries were not going to leave the Muslims in peace in their new home, and it is against this background, in the second year AH, that permission was given for Muslims to defend themselves.¹⁶

After the Prophet, Abu Bakr became the first Caliph and head of the State. He soon faced tribal uprisings in violation of the Prophet's pact the tribes had entered into. The uprising in some cases was political and in others religious. Abu Bakr launched what is known as riddah (apostacy) war. Apostacy in Islam is analogous to treason

¹⁴ Sri Mulyati, "The Meaning of Jihad: Textual and Contextual Interpretations," *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 27, no. 1 (2019): 419–24.

¹⁵ Hayati Aydin, "Jihad in Islam," *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 2, no. 2 (2012): 7–15; Muhammad Iqbal Rafsanjani, "Konsep Jihad Dalam Al-Qur'an; Komparasi Tafsir Klasik Dan Tafsir Kontemporer," *Dirosat: Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2021): 1–6.

¹⁶ Tahir, "The Concept of Jihad in Islamic Texts: An Analytical Study of Violence between Mainstream Scholars and Extremists"; Haleem, "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis."

because the society is based on the religious ideals of the Quran. Anyone renouncing the faith while remaining within the Islamic polity is equivalent to one who is a traitor. Thus, the concept of Jihad was expanded to include fighting apostasy again. In addition, the doctrine was also applied to suppress rebellion by Muslims against the ruling Imam. Thus, besides its original meaning, the principle of Jihad now included two additions, i.e., 1) Jihad against Apostasy and 2) Jihad against rebellion by Muslims against the ruling Imam.¹⁷

When the Muslims moved from Mecca to Medina, military jihad as the State's business, the community effectively became a state responsible for its own protection. The Prophet became the head of State. It is made clear in the Qur'an that it is the head of State who initiates jihad.¹⁸ The Prophet is asked to urge the believers to fight (Q. 8:65). He permits some not to fight (Q. 9:54-5) and he excludes some people from going (Q. 9:83). It is he who orders preparations to be made (Q. 9:92-3). He goes out leading the army (Q. 3:121 and Q. 8:5). He decides on peace and the end of hostilities (Q. 8:61). He decides on the distribution of battle gains (Q. 8:1). Believers who are able-bodied (Q. 4:95; Q. 9:91-2; and Q. 48:17) are expected to hear and obey the head of State (Q. 24:51) and to go out to battle with him, unless given permission not to do so (Q. 9:44). The head of State (or his appointee) assigns them where to stand in the battlefield (Q. 3:121). The Prophet decided and declared war, and he decided on cessation of hostilities. He is addressed in Q. 8:61-2, if they [the enemy] incline to peace, you [Prophet] must also incline towards it and put your trust in God. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing, and if they intend to deceive you, God is enough for you. The head of State decides on taking captives: ... later you can release them by grace or ransom (Q. 47:4). It is not up to any individual Muslim to take up the tasks assigned to the head of State. Nowhere in the Qur'an do we find permission to do so.¹⁹

¹⁷ Gabriele Marranci, *Jihad Beyond Islam* (Berg Publishers, 2006); Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction."

¹⁸ Ali Mostfa, "Violence and Jihad in Islam: From the War of Words to the Clashes of Definitions," *Religions* 12, no. 11 (2021): 966.

¹⁹ Michael Bonner, "Jihad in Islamic History," in *Jihad in Islamic History* (Princeton University Press, 2008); Haleem, "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis."

One further observation regarding Jihad and the development of the doctrine during the Umayyads and the Abbasid era is important to discuss. With the expansion of Islam over three continents; i.e. Europe, Africa, and Asia, another juristic concept developed which divided the world between *Darul Islam* (Muslim territory) and *Darul Harb* (Enemy Territory). However, with this expansion which moved the Muslim domain beyond its capacity to govern, the need for waging active Jihad against non-Islamic is considered a priority. Therefore, active Jihad was dormant in this period replaced by struggle through nonviolent means. Ibn Khaldun believes that the relaxation of active Jihad reflects the nation's transition from a warlike to a civilized stage.²⁰

During Ibn-Taymia's period two major Muslim powers, the Mamluks and Mongols, were at war. Ibn Taymia lived under the Mamluks. Islamic scholars' issue was the right to revolt against Muslim rulers, specifically the Mongols. If this right were established, a call for Jihad could be issued by Mamluks to encourage Muslim warriors to join the army to oppose the Mongols. Ibn-Taymia has supplied the answer. He held that the prohibition against revolt applies if two conditions are met: 1) the ruler is Muslim and 2) he applies Sharia. Since the Mongols did not apply Sharia they did not meet both conditions. He ruled, therefore, that Jihad against the Mongols is legitimate. Thus, Jihad came to include the right to revolt against a Muslim ruler if he violated Sharia from the fourteenth century. The sixteenth century was another major period of Muslim power exemplified by three major empires: the Ottomans, Safavids, and the Moghals. However, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the picture changed with European colonialism posing a new threat. One after another, the Muslim areas came under the political control of advancing European armies. Religious scholars suddenly found themselves faced by two simultaneous challenges. One was the threat of non-Muslim political control and the other was religious decay within the society. These scholars faced the internal challenge

²⁰ Kumar Ramakrishna, "Delegitimizing Global Jihadi Ideology in Southeast Asia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International And Strategic Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2005): 343–69; Tariq Rahman, *Interpretations of Jihad in South Asia: An Intellectual History* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2020); Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction."

by *Ijtihad* (reinterpretation) of the Sharia and external challenge was met by pursuing active Jihad against colonizing powers.²¹

JIHAD FOR JUSTIFICATIONS

By the turn of the twentieth century another group of intellectuals appeared on the scene. Chief among them was Muhammad Iqbal followed by Hassan-al-Banna, Maududi and Qutb. Each of them confronted the internal and external decline of Muslim society and the loss of Muslim lands to foreign occupation. Their responses to the crisis required a reinterpretation Sharia and the doctrine of Jihad.²² It is the divine law or Sharia which makes a Muslim society Islamic. According to Maududi, the absence of Sharia rules in Muslim societies relegates these societies to the status of pre-Islamicpagan polytheistic Mecca-a period described as Jahiliya (dark age) backdrop against which Prophet Muhammad launched the mission. Hence, the present day context is a New Jahiliy Prophet pursuing his Jihad against Jahilya, the Muslims believethey should do the same wherever they are faced with New Jahilya. Syed Qutb, another outstanding scholar and Hassan-al-Banna as the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in adopted Maududi's interpretation. Through the network of scholars the idea is dominant in Muslim minds. Thus, Ibn Taymia's revolt against Muslim rulers in societies continues with an intellectual power supplied by an of major Muslim thinkers from different Muslim lands. Maududi's thesis received further support with the success of Shiite Islam under the leadership of Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini truly outstanding Islamic scholar and powerful political leader.²³

It is relevant to note that the word "considered judgment" (hukm) is relevant. This carries "juridical decree" (fatwa). Since a fatwa can only laden is most certainly not. He is circumventing juridical decree by substitution with an analogy. Islamic message is the way the Quran is quoted rhetoric. Thus in both the verses of the Quran them are in context. The conclusion to the first is there can be no

²¹ Thomas K Gugler, "Jihad, Da'wa and Hijra: Islamic Missionary Movements in Europe," 2009; Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction."

²² Mohammad, "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction"; Matusitz, "Jihad: A Description"; Cook, "Understanding Jihad."

²³ Thomas Hegghammer, "The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad," *International Security* 35, no. 3 (2010): 53–94.

[further] hostility, except towards second: "if they desist, then God sees all that they Thus, the verses seem to espouse leniency message which is being conveyed by incorporation context. The Quran, the supreme divine Islamic authority, does not condone terrorism if studied extensively. Then how do Jihadis get religious sanction for their actions? The authority of the extremist form of jihad may be sought from a distortion of fatwas, by misreporting a hadiths or by relying on the works of certain scholars. It is pertinent to grasp some understanding of the dynamics of these contextual parameters to comprehend how distortions are made by deviant thinking.²⁴

In the name of Jihad for justification on October 2002, bomb blasts that obliterated two packed nightclubs in Bali and killed 202 mainly Australian tourists, riveted international attention on the threat of radical Islamist terrorism in Southeast Asia. In an ominous echo of previous bombings in the Middle East, Chechnya, and elsewhere, the tactic of suicide bombing was employed in the attacks. Worryingly, moreover, Bali was not the only attack. Throughout 2003, a series of smaller blasts rocked the southern Philippines and Indonesia, culminating in the 5 August 2003 car bombing of the American-owned JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta.²⁵ Another eleven people were killed and about 150 injured this time. Indonesian police investigations quickly uncovered the role of yet another suicide bomber. Ominously, it was revealed that had the suicide bomber not detonated his bomb prematurely, he might have killed 200 people in the Marriott. Both the Bali and Jakarta Marriott attacks were the work of the shadowy radical Islamist terror network Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). The global media lost little time in declaring that the JI and its putative patron, the global jihadis network Al-Qaeda, had together "turned Southeast Asia into a terrorist haven". Even the arrest of the Indonesian Riduan Isamudin, alias Hambali, the operational commander of the JI, in Thailand on 11 August 2003, did not appear to calm jitters. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage declared publicly that a general threat existed.²⁶

²⁴ Sirry, "Who Are Those in Authority? Early Muslim Exegesis of the Qur'anic Ul u'l-Amr. Religions 12: 483"; Zaidi, "A Taxonomy of Jihad."

²⁵ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Laskar Jihad," in *Laskar Jihad* (Cornell University Press, 2018).

²⁶ Ramakrishna, "Delegitimizing Global Jihadi Ideology in Southeast Asia"; Zulkarnain Haron and Nordin Hussin, "A Study of the Salafi Jihadist Doctrine and

It was supported with a survey of Muslim students (FOSIS 2005) found that 83% were unhappy with British foreign policy, principally in Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, and the alliance with the U.S.-all areas in which Muslims are perceived to be the victims of Western aggression and persecution. Within such a widespread sea of discontent, the presence of a small minority who may countenance the articulation of that discontent through violent means is eminently plausible. For these putative latent radicals, any new perceived provocation, such as the occupation of Iraq, or the lurid excesses witnessed at Guantanamo Bay or Abu Ghraib, may serve as a *casus belli* that sanctions the recourse to jihadism. The International Institute of Strategic Studies (2004) in its Strategic Survey 2003/4 reported that the Iraq conflict had resulted in an acceleration of recruitment with up to 1,000 foreign jihadists having infiltrated Iraq, highlighting the role of political events in the incubation and catalysis of radicalism.²⁷

The Jihad interpretation as war is invariably justified on higher moral grounds. The post 9/11 invasion of Afghanistan was no exception. As the world public was being prepared for war against the Taliban, the liberation of Muslim women and the fight against terrorism became intertwined. The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women, Muslim women have specific and well-documented problems of patriarchal oppression to overcome, more often disguised with a pseudo-religious gloss. However, these challenges have been made immeasurably more difficult by the war on terror. Muslim communities now feel demonized, under constant attack and ridicule to an unprecedented degree. In this climate the instinctive reaction is to adopt a defensive stance and emphasize only positive aspects of Muslim faith and culture. Space for self-criticism is restricted for the fear that washing one's dirty laundry in public will succour those already fueling Islamophobic hostility.²⁸

On other hand women and jihad much emerging scholarship on women who explicitly consider themselves as enacting jihad

the Interpretation of Jihad by Al Jama'ah Al Islamiyah," *KEMANUSIAAN: The Asian Journal of Humanities* 20, no. 2 (2013).

²⁷ Akil N Awan, "Antecedents of Islamic Political Radicalism among Muslim Communities in Europe," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41, no. 1 (2008): 13–17.

²⁸ Salma Yaqoob, "Muslim Women and War on Terror," *Feminist Review* 88, no. 1 (2008): 150–61.

has centred on the Middle East, where some women have been and in certain contexts still are engaged in militant resistance to colonizing or occupying non-Muslim forces. For example, many women participated actively in the Algerian war of liberation from the French, some fighting as armed combatants. Women affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, notably Zainab al-Ghazali, viewed themselves as conducting jihad against the regime of Gamal Nasser, which Islamists considered oppressive. Some Palestinian women's participation in suicide bombing has been understood as jihad both by the bombers themselves and by other Islamists. The Palestinian context is one of the few where women's jihad has received major attention, whether from scholars or journalists. According to Palestinian Islamic Resistance (a chapter of Hamas), every man and woman is obliged to conduct jihad, and the requirement for spousal consent is suspended wherever Muslim territory has been invaded. Hamas expands jihad to include all activities that aid the Islamist cause, including publication. In the Lebanese context, women engage in jihad in four distinct ways: (1) in association with the anti-Israeli Islamic resistance led by the Lebanese Shi'i political party Hizbullah; (2) by disciplining the 'baser desires of the self (a standard phrase in this context); (3) by participation in community service targeting socio-economic ills such as poverty; and (4) through 'gender jihad, efforts directed at establishing equity between men and women. Deeb's work on the Shi'i community in Lebanon is unique in its substantive exploration of women's discourses and practices.²⁹

REINTERPRETATION OF JIHAD

Firestone stated clearly and deeply on the traditional reading about Jihad and War in the Quranic usage.³⁰ The Quran has much to say about warring, and, at first sight, its views seem to be quite at variance from what we know of pre-Islamic Arabian views. The most often cited verses express a highly ideological approach to war. They are understood to command unlimited war against non-Muslims,

²⁹ Maimuna Huq, "Talking Jihad and Piety: Reformist Exertions among Islamist Women in Bangladesh," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (2009): S163–82.

³⁰ RUDOLPH PETERS, "REUVEN FIRESTONE, Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Pp. 206. \$25.00 Cloth.," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 4 (2002): 738–40.

enjoin the killing of idolaters, and refuse to offer peace until Islam is the hegemonic religion. However, the Quran's message on the topic is far from consistent. The verses on warring are numerous, amount to scores in number, and are spread out over more than a dozen chapters. The major challenge for understanding their meaning lies in the problem of verse relationships and the contexts of many pronouncements remain uncertain. For example, as noted above, it is difficult to know whether a verse is supposed to be read concerning the verses among which it is currently situated or whether it should be read independently. It is likely, given the relatively large collection of sometimes unrelated verses on warring in *suras* 2, 3, 8, and 9, for example, that individual statements on war, which had been separated from their context during the oral stage of the Quran, were inserted into larger sections treating the topic because of the obvious similarity of subject matter. The insertion of such verses sometimes confuses the meaning and relationship of the verses into which they had been inserted. Some Quranic statements may or may not even refer to war, depending on how one views their context, but are nevertheless considered by post-quranic tradition as articulating divine pronouncements on the subject. The many verses' sentiments, ideologies, concepts, and attitudes cover many positions.³¹

By using the methodologies developed in both the *asbab* and *naskh* materials as traditional reading of Quranic legislation on Jihad for justification of War arises four stage as follows³²:

1. Stage One: *Non Confrontation*

For instance, *sura* 16:125 does not relate to the following verse and must not be associated with the incident at Uhud. The actual message of 16:125, that verbal argument and not physical violence against Muhammad's detractors is called for, tends to have been largely disregarded. Despite the exegetes' claims that scholars consider it abrogated, not a single tradition is cited to this effect. In short, this verse, which prescribes a non militant approach to the spread of Islam, was not formally abrogated but rather ignored.

³¹ Rafsanjani, "Konsep Jihad Dalam Al-Qur'an; Komparasi Tafsir Klasik Dan Tafsir Kontemporer."

³² PETERS, "REUVEN FIRESTONE, Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Pp. 206. \$25.00 Cloth."

2. Stage Two: *Defensive Fighting*

Therefore, the verse (*sura* 2:190) is not considered by most exegetes to be an authorization for defensive fighting as is assumed by Rudolph Peters but, rather, a warning to refrain from exceeding the prohibition against fighting non combatants. As noted above, the relationship between 2:190 and al-Hudaybiyya suggested by Wahid does not make sense. If this verse has any relationship with al-Hudaybiyya, it would be as the platform of members of the community who would have pointed to it to urge Muhammad to refrain from engaging in an armed pilgrimage to Mecca. However, without additional evidence, we must remain as uncertain of its significance as the traditional Muslim exegetes.

3. Stage Three: *Initiating Attack Allowed but within the Ancient Strictures*

The verse of 2:191 remained in force based on the view that fighting may be allowed in the Sacred Precinct as a defensive measure but should be avoided if possible. This view, of course, was a logical response of those who were uninclined to liberalize the ancient taboo against fighting in the Sacred Precinct, even in the name of Islam. Nahhas points out that 2:191 is “one of the most difficult among the abrogating and abrogated verses” and that adherents of each view used *hadiths* from the canonical collections for support. However, both he and the encyclopedic commentary of Tabari cite only Mujahid as an authority for traditions claiming that the verse is not abrogated.

4. Stage Four: *Unconditional Command to Fight All Unbelievers*

The revelation of 9:29 is associated with the raid on Tabuk in 630 (after Rajab 9 A.H.)¹²⁰. This verse is acknowledged as the first command specifically for fighting Scripturaries, and all acknowledge that Muhammad's decision to send a raiding party to fight the Byzantines occurred after having received 9:29. The Muslims had by this time subdued the Hijaz and were expanding, so the decision to move into Christian areas was an understandable next step. Nahhas cite *sura* 9:29 as abrogating virtually all verses calling for patience or forgiveness toward Scripturaries. It was also suggested that 9:29 even abrogated 9:5, although it is seen more as qualifying 9:5 in that the latter required the killing of idolaters (*mushrikun*) (a term which often includes Scripturaries), while 9:29

specifically excluded the killing of Scriptuaries if they paid the *jizya*. The commentators devote most of their interest to defining the difficult terms: *jizya*, *an yadin*, and *saghirun*, but the standard view of abrogation in relation to war is summed up by Nahhas in his discussion of this verse: "It is clear that some of the [verses] are abrogated, including [2:109] 'Forgive and be indulgent,' because the believers were in Mecca at the [early] time and were being beaten (*yudribuna*) and were released from fighting the idolaters. They were commanded to be forgiving and indulgent until God brought His command. God then brought His command and abrogated that." It may be observed from the exegesis of the nine verses examined here that the commentaries preserve little consistent tradition associated with the quranic ordinances on fighting but, rather, express differing views and faithfully cite contradictory traditions preserved from earlier periods.³³

It is difficult to avoid the traditional dating of revelations when we examine the war verses, but it is nevertheless necessary to do so in order to avoid being misled by old assumptions. Therefore, the verses to be studied below are examined without regard for traditional views of chronology except where indicated, and they are analyzed, on the whole, independent of the verses among which they are situated. This method sometimes creates a rather awkward situation in which verses seem to be taken entirely out of context, but it is necessary in order to avoid prejudging the analysis because of proximity to possibly unrelated verses or because of preconceived ideas of historical context based on late interpretations.³⁴ Rather than categorize verses according to where they fit in the traditional "evolutionary theory" of warring in the Quran, Firestone grouped them according to the following division:

1. Verses expressing nonmilitant means of propagating or defending the faith.
2. Verses expressing restrictions on fighting.
3. Verses express conflict between God's command and the reaction of Muhammad's followers.

³³ PETERS.

³⁴ S Abdullah Schleifer, "Understanding Jihad: Definition and Methodology," *Islamic Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1983): 117.

4. Verses strongly advocate war for God's religion.

The common thread in the group verses (Sura 6:106, Sura 15:94, Sura 16:125, Sura 50:39, Sura 2:109, Sura 5:13, Sura 29:46, Sura 42:15) is the restrictions on fighting expressed within them. These restrictions correspond closely to the old pre-Islamic cultural strictures applied to intertribal raids and wars, which Islam eventually repealed. The persistence of the old norms of engagement in war or raiding was a serious issue during the transition period to Islam, as may be understood from the repeated scriptural references, especially to limits on violence and to the Sacred Months. In some verses (2:194, 9:36), pre-Islamic restrictions are raised as a major question to be addressed, while in others (2:190, 2:217), the old rules seem to be referenced in order to stress the importance of their abrogation. Verses in which pre-Islamic restrictions are raised as legitimate questions are included in this category of restrictions on fighting, while those highly militant quranic expressions in which the old rules are mentioned only for rhetorical purposes are listed below in the category of verses strongly advocating war for God's religion.³⁵

This category holds the greatest number of verses, which of course suggests that the Muslim community was far from unified in its view on warring on behalf of religion and the religious community. As will become evident, the issues presented by these verses and the lacunae contained within them invited attempts by interpreters to suggest scenarios in which such verses would have been revealed. These explanations are of great interest for determining opinions and attitudes of later times, but little can be certain about their descriptions of purported incidents during the mission of Muhammad. Therefore, the quranic verses are taken to speak for themselves—and are themselves enough to reveal deep divisions within the Muslim community over the issues related to raiding and war.³⁶

Post-quranic writings consider the verses in this section to be abrogating verses, which have come to override earlier revelations with less-strident messages about war. These are the latest revelations according to the traditional Muslim understanding of the "evolutionary theory" of war in Islam, and as such they represent the

³⁵ Seriki, "The Interpretation of Jihad in Islam."

³⁶ Aqab M Malik, "Jihad," *Strategic Studies* 32, no. 2/3 (2012): 203–11.

most valid and timeless commands regarding war. Although we have shown that the traditional "evolutionary theory" cannot stand up to critical analysis, these verses nevertheless have been understood by most traditional Muslim legalists and religious policy makers to express the most important and eternal divine message with regard to war in the path of God. They carry the highest authority in all discussions of war and have been cited most often from the days of the earliest exegesis until the present. We have noted previously that they do not stand alone in the quranic presentation but must be read in conjunction with other revelations taking different positions on the issue so that we may understand the full range of thinking on war in the early formative period of Islam. Nevertheless, they have come to represent classic post-quranic thinking on holy war and serve as proof texts for codifying the legal traditions on war in all the legal schools of Islam.³⁷

The fourth categories of verses on conduct toward non-Muslims reveal some interesting patterns. The fourth category contains the classic militant quranic war verses calling for idolaters' destruction and non-Muslim monotheists' surrender. However, the first category shows how, contrary to the classical Muslim "evolutionary theory," non militant instructions appear to range from early Meccan through at least the early to middle Medinan periods. The second category demonstrates how, at least among certain Muslim factions, the traditional pre-Islamic Arabian restrictions on fighting remained of great importance and were hard to uproot. The third category shows how divided the Muslim community was over the command to wage war and suggests that different groups took opposing stands for various reasons.³⁸

CONCLUSION

From the above explanation, there is a clear distinction between jihad and war (*qital*) with acts of radicalism and terrorism. The Qur'an does not use the term jihad solely for war. To appoint war or battle, the Qur'an uses the word *qital*. The main purpose of jihad is human welfare and not warfare. So, jihad is absolute and infinite so jihad becomes

³⁷ Aydin, "Jihad in Islam."

³⁸ PETERS, "REUVEN FIRESTONE, Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Pp. 206. \$25.00 Cloth."

the duty of every Muslim throughout his life. The *qital* is conditional and temporal, limited by certain conditions and as the last endeavor after no other way except physical resistance. Jihad is good, while *qital* is not so. In addition, the implementation of *qital* must meet all very strict requirements. From the verses that have been examined, there appears to be no verse of jihad and war that connotes legalizing violence in solving every problem. Conversely, jihad and war are solely emphasized to increase worship, both vertical and horizontal. This is the starting point of misinterpretation of jihad and war, which was later used as a justification tool by some interpreters to express religious radicalism.

REFERENCES

- Awan, Akil N. "Antecedents of Islamic Political Radicalism among Muslim Communities in Europe." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41, no. 1 (2008): 13–17.
- Aydin, Hayati. "Jihad in Islam." *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 2, no. 2 (2012): 7–15.
- Bonner, Michael. "Jihad in Islamic History." In *Jihad in Islamic History*. Princeton university press, 2008.
- Cook, David. "Understanding Jihad." In *Understanding Jihad*. University of California Press, 2015.
- Dwijayanto, Arik. "Peran Barisan Ansor Serbaguna (Banser) Dalam Menangkal Radikalisme." *Farabi (e-Journal)* 16, no. 2 (2019): 127–46.
- Gugler, Thomas K. "Jihad, Da'wa and Hijra: Islamic Missionary Movements in Europe," 2009.
- Haleem, M A S Abdel. "Qur'anic 'Jihād': A Linguistic and Contextual Analysis." *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 12, no. 1–2 (2010): 147–66.
- Haron, Zulkarnain, and Nordin Hussin. "A Study of the Salafi Jihadist Doctrine and the Interpretation of Jihad by Al

- Jama'ah Al Islamiyah." *KEMANUSIAAN: The Asian Journal of Humanities* 20, no. 2 (2013).
- Hasan, Noorhaidi. "Laskar Jihad." In *Laskar Jihad*. Cornell University Press, 2018.
- Hasanzadeh, Saleh, and Ali Abedi Renani. "A Peaceful Interpretation of Jihad in the Qur'an." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2021, 1–20.
- Hegghammer, Thomas. "The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad." *International Security* 35, no. 3 (2010): 53–94.
- Huq, Maimuna. "Talking Jihad and Piety: Reformist Exertions among Islamist Women in Bangladesh." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15 (2009): S163–82.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. "Issues in the Understanding of Jihād and Ijtihād." *Islamic Studies* 41, no. 4 (2002): 617–34.
- Malik, Aqab M. "Jihad." *Strategic Studies* 32, no. 2/3 (2012): 203–11.
- Marranci, Gabriele. *Jihad Beyond Islam*. Berg Publishers, 2006.
- Matusitz, Jonathan. "Jihad: A Description." In *Global Jihad in Muslim and Non-Muslim Contexts*, 29–57. Springer, 2020.
- Mohammad, Noor. "The Doctrine of Jihad: An Introduction." *Journal of Law and Religion* 3, no. 2 (1985): 381–97.
- Mostfa, Ali. "Violence and Jihad in Islam: From the War of Words to the Clashes of Definitions." *Religions* 12, no. 11 (2021): 966.
- Mulyati, Sri. "The Meaning of Jihad: Textual and Contextual Interpretations." *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 27, no. 1 (2019): 419–24.
- PETERS, RUDOLPH. "REUVEN FIRESTONE, Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Pp. 206. \$25.00 Cloth." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34, no. 4 (2002): 738–40.

- Rafsanjani, Muhammad Iqbal. "Konsep Jihad Dalam Al-Qur'an; Komparasi Tafsir Klasik Dan Tafsir Kontemporer." *Dirosat: Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2021): 1–6.
- Rahman, Tariq. *Interpretations of Jihad in South Asia: An Intellectual History*. Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2020.
- Ramakrishna, Kumar. "Delegitimizing Global Jihadi Ideology in Southeast Asia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International And Strategic Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2005): 343–69.
- Rodin, Dede. "Islam Dan Radikalisme: Telaah Ayat-Ayat Kekerasan Dalam Al-Qur'an." *Jurnal Addin* 10, no. 1 (2016).
- Schleifer, S Abdullah. "Understanding Jihad: Definition and Methodology." *Islamic Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1983): 117.
- Seriki, I A Alani. "The Interpretation of Jihad in Islam." *Journal of Philosophy and Culture* 2, no. 2 (2005): 110–17.
- Sirry, Mun'im. "Who Are Those in Authority? Early Muslim Exegesis of the Qur'anic Ul u'l-Amr. Religions 12: 483." s Note: MDPI stays neutral about jurisdictional claims published ..., 2021.
- Streusand, Douglas E. "What Does Jihad Mean?" *Middle East Quarterly*, 1997.
- Tahir, Umar Sheikh. "The Concept of Jihad in Islamic Texts: An Analytical Study of Violence between Mainstream Scholars and Extremists." *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 15, no. 1 (2017): 48–72.
- Yaqoob, Salma. "Muslim Women and War on Terror." *Feminist Review* 88, no. 1 (2008): 150–61.
- Zaidi, Manzar. "A Taxonomy of Jihad." *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 2009, 21–34.