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UNDERSTANDING THE ISLAMIST

SSA [redacted]

Islamist Ideology: The Return to the Classical Sources

- ◉ Qur'an – eternal word of Allah
 - Mecca vs. Medina
- ◉ Example of Muhammad
 - Muhammad is the perfect model for all Muslims until the end of the world
 - ◉ Hadith
 - the sayings of the Prophet
 - ◉ Sunnah
 - the example of how the Prophet lived his life
- ◉ Arab Conquests
- ◉ Shari'a
 - Islam dominant in all facets of human life

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Islamist Core Beliefs = Absolutism

- ◉ One God – Allah
 - (Salafi vs. Sufi interpretations)
- ◉ One final prophet – Muhammad
 - (Orthodox Muslims vs. Ahmadiyya)
- ◉ One final revelation – the Qur'an
 - (Eternal.....not created)
- ◉ One law for all – the Shari'a
 - (Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) – development of different schools of law (Madhhab) and different interpretations)
- ◉ One perfect model – Muhammad
 - (Debates about authenticity of sources, i.e. the Hadith)
- ◉ One people of God – The Ummah (devout Muslims)
 - (Global identity vs. national, ethnic, local)

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

- ◉ Jahiliyya – Pre-Islamic period of ignorance, paganism and immorality in Arabia
 - Jahiliyya and Islam totally opposed and incompatible.
 - All contemporary societies, including Muslim ones, are judged to have returned to neo-pagan jahili state.
 - Paganism, must be fought and annihilated wherever it exists. All the world now neo-pagan.

Islamist Ideology - Key Terms

- ◉ KHALIFA = The Islamic Caliphate
 - Restoring the Caliphate is a Shari'a duty.
 - The Caliphate is the universal global Islamic state under Shari'a and under the lawful ruler, caliph.
 - It can be started in a specific Muslim state, preferably in the Arab Middle East.
 - It will then expand by jihad.

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

- ◉ Jihad
 - Military war to spread Islam as a religious duty and a political system
 - Defensive Jihads (defending Muslim lands)
 - ◉ Most conflicts defined as defensive Jihads.
 - ◉ Gives them Islamic legitimacy and access to funding, recruitment etc.
 - Offensive Jihads (expanding Islamic territory)
 - ◉ Moving towards a consolidated and empowered Islam.
- ◉ Jihad of the sword elevated by some to an obligatory status, the sixth pillar
- ◉ God-given method of fulfilling God's command for Muslims to win dominion and impose Shari'a

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

"You will not feel any peace or security in your lands until you stop interfering in our lands... As you kill us you will be killed. As you bomb us you will be bombed." "We will not leave this path until you leave our lands until you feel what we are feeling. This is revenge for the actions of the US in the Muslim lands and their accomplices such as the British and the Jews."

Extracts from the "martyrdom videos" of terror suspects in the UK, 14 April 2005

Targets for Jihad:

- Internal, Muslims
 - "Apostate" regimes in Muslim states
 - Sectarian, against Muslim heretics and apostates
- External, infidels
 - Non-Muslim states ruling Muslim communities and lands, "Bloody borders of Islam"
 - The West, especially the USA (the Great Satan) identified as great enemy of Islam
 - Israel and Jews

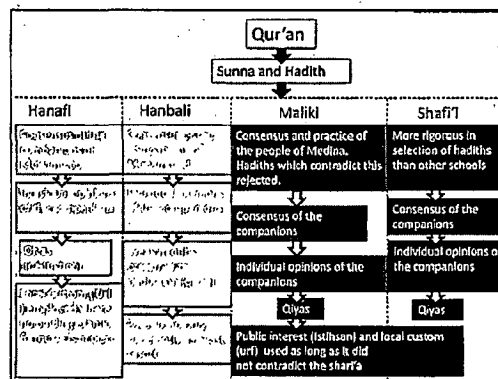
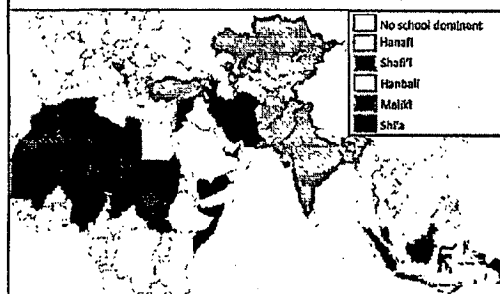
Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

SHARI'A

- Traditional "official" account of establishment of shari'a
 - Muhammad's words and actions (Sunnah) were perfectly preserved by the collection of Hadith.
 - This process seen as completely reliable.
 - Thus as the sources are divinely inspired, the system of shari'a which grew from them, also divinely inspired.

Shari'a

Where are schools of law dominant?



Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

Tawhid—A unitary and uniform vision of God, the universe and society

- One God, one people, one law
 - God's physical laws imposed on the universe.
 - God's religious law (Shari'a) imposed on society.
 - Man must be governed by Allah's laws, not his own (submission)

Hakimiyya (rabbaniyya) -God's sovereignty, implementing tawhid

- God's will revealed in Shari'a.
- Societies judged by implementation of Shari'a.
- No other authority can be recognized (submission).

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

Takfir—Judging jahiliyya (paganism) wherever it is found: Legal, official declaration of heresy and apostasy.

- Jahiliyya demands response of jihad
- "Bad" Muslims branded pagans, unbelievers, infidels and apostates, justifying Jihad against them.

Mufassala—Separation from evil and corrupt individuals, institutions, societies, regimes in both a spiritual and physical sense.

"All Muslims take heed, remove yourself from the grasp of the kufr before you are counted as one of them. Do not be content with your council houses and businesses and Western lifestyle."

Extract from the "martyrdom video" of terror suspect in the UK, 14 April 2005

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

- ◎ **DUNYAH** - Eternal spiritual realm
 - Used as a test – success leads to paradise; failure leads to hell
 - The abandonment of material existence
 - Your life on earth is temporary stage – don't get attached to its distractions – Allah created human beings to worship him
 - Temporal Existence vs. Divine Eternity
 - A key tool in convincing a recruit to engage in a suicide mission

".....I am paralyzed by fear of losing any aspect of Dunya."

Nidal Hassan seeking for guidance with regard to killing US soldiers is a member of the US Armed Forces

Islamist Ideology – Key Terms

- ◎ **Istishad & The Shaheed** –martyrdom and the martyr - dying for the faith
 - Glorification of martyrdom. Being killed in battle for the faith.
 - Renewed the Khariji and Assassin principle of suicide missions.
 - Suicide bombings redefined and legitimized as martyrdom, therefore permissible according to Shari'a.
 - Stress on immediate rewards in paradise.

In Sum: The Islamist Worldview

- ◎ **View of Islam as inherently political: unity of religion (*din*) and state (*dawlah*) -no dichotomy**
 - Islam aims at political dominance everywhere.
 - State is the best tool for implementing Shari'a.
 - Seek to gain power in state and then use its coercive power to enforce Shari'a.
 - Peace only possible under Islamic rule.
 - Qu'ran and Shari'a contain recipe for complete social and political system (*nizam*)
 - Islamists are united in their pan-Islamic view of the global *ummah* which is the focus of their loyalty.

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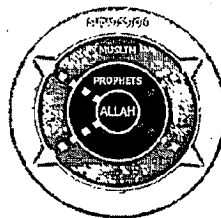
Conflict = Opportunity

- Many conflicts exist within Islam, and most commonly with regard to Islamist ideology
 - Tradition (Hadith, Sunnah) vs. Modernity (liberal reformers, rationalists, secularists)
 - Salafis (Wahabbis, Al Qaeda) vs. Progressives (Muslim Brotherhood)
 - Keeping our friends close, and our enemies closer
 - Law & Governance vs. Reason & Revelation
 - Different interpretations of Islam
 - Sunni vs. Shia vs. Sufi vs. Secular
 - Most Muslim sources of the FBI = Shites

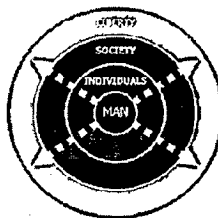
Conflict = Opportunity

- Law & Governance vs. Reason & Revelation
 - *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) system for establishing the roots and application of Islamic law.
 - Areas of controversy amongst schools:
 - The Interpretation of the Qur'an, especially as to abrogation and the occasions of revelation.
 - Acceptance and interpretation of *Hadith*: There is dispute about the authenticity of various *Hadith* and their interpretation.
 - Rationalist doctrines: there was much arguing between the schools on the validity and scope of application of the methods of consensus (*ijma*), analogy (*qiyas*), reasoning (*ra'y*) and interpretation (*ijtihad*).

EXTERNAL CONFLICT: ISLAMISM vs THE WEST



World view of Islamic reformist visionary



World view of Western secular humanist

Conflict = Opportunity

- Reason & Revelation
 - *Ijtihad* (Interpretation) —refers to individual reasoning in legal issues when there is no clear answer in the sources.
 - By the 9th and 10th centuries it was argued that all the questions had been answered and the gates of *ijtihad* were closed.
 - Instead of *ijtihad* imitation of judgments made by earlier scholars (*taqlid*).
 - In modern times liberal Muslims have claimed that the gates of *ijtihad* are reopened and any Muslim can engage in *ijtihad*.
 - Even some modern Islamists also argue that the gates of *ijtihad* are reopened
 - They claim that traditional Islamic scholars should be ignored and Muslims should go back to the sources.

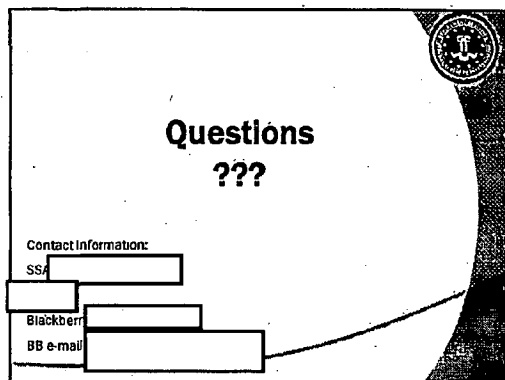
Conflict = Opportunity

- Liberal Islam
 - Liberal Islam is not new — Islam once had an intellectual Golden Age — thank the Greeks!
 - Islamic theology began during the reign of the last two rightly guided caliphs
 - Developed by *Ma'bad al-Juhani* (d. 699) and other scholars.
 - Influenced by the adoption of Greek philosophical ideas into Islamic context.
 - Introduction of logic, materialism and rationalistic ethics into Islamic thought.
 - Questions debated included freewill and whether the Qur'an was created or eternal.

Conflict = Opportunity

- Liberal Islam
 - Throughout the 20th Century some scholars have tried to reform Islamist theology so that it is more compatible with liberal thought.
 - Reform Islam by westernizing it and integrate secular separation of religion from state.
 - Rereinterpret Islam in line with secular liberal-humanist ideologies:
 - Human rights
 - Multiculturalism
 - Feminism
 - Liberal Muslims do not have a conflict between Americanism and Islam. These are the sources who believe Islam, and faith, is a personal issue, and are driven by an obligation to defeat extremism within Islam. This category of Muslim sources are the most valuable, because they will wear wires, testify, and engage in long term UCOs.

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