

**THE CONCEPT OF PEACE AND JUSTICE IN ISLAM**

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**Introduction**

*And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:63).*

We are living in a world where there could obviously be more peace. Muslims do realize this fact more than most people, as the peace of many Muslim countries in various parts of the globe has been tragically disrupted: Palestine, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and other locales. Similarly, we are living in a world where there could be more justice. We read almost daily of kidnappings and assassinations in various parts of the world where terrorist groups, military forces, or intelligence services, oftentimes in summary fashion, declare victims guilty and then proceed to execute them. Unfortunately, such unprincipled political behavior has become increasingly common in both the foreign and domestic policies of notorious countries, causing untold damages to their images and credibility on international levels.

The two issues of this topic, peace and justice, are always joined in slogans we hear from many activists, “No Justice, No Peace!”<sup>1</sup> This linkage is logical, as justice must be considered one of the indispensable prerequisites of any lasting peace. This article, therefore, intends to

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<sup>1</sup> This slogan has been particularly popularized by the New York-based activist Rev. Al Sharpton and his followers.

briefly look at the ideas of peace and justice in Islam and attempt a synthesis of justice and peace through a detailed study of Islamic (Quranic) theory of war and peace, while exploring their deeper significances in the life of a modern Muslim.

### **A.1. Peace**

In the Arabic language, the word peace is derived from the radicals S-LM. There are four closely related terms that can be derived from this root (origin): *Salam*, *Salamah*, *Silm*, and *Salm*. Raghīb al-Isfahani says in his lexicon of Qur'anic terms, “*As-Salm* and *as-Salamah* mean freedom from any external or internal ruination.”<sup>2</sup> Based on that, true peace will only exist in Paradise, for only there will there be perpetuity with no end, complete satisfaction with no need, perfect honor with no humiliation, and perfect health with no disease. In this regard, God is known as *As-Salam*, because He alone is described as being totally free from any defects or flaws.<sup>3</sup> This understanding of true peace being a reality associated with a transformed world is also understood in both Jewish and Christian theology.<sup>4</sup>

At the international level and interstate relations, we can consider peaceful relations between nations as a condition where violence, a state inevitably involving both internal and external ruination, is absent. In this sense, war can be viewed as an aberrational state. The aberrational nature of war is made clearer if we consider that murder, the ultimate consequence of war, is considered an innovation that destroyed the peace formerly existing among the human family. Comparatively, within the prophetic traditions of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions, “No soul is killed unjustly, except that the elder son of Adam

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<sup>2</sup> Raghīb al-Isfahani, *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al Ma'rifa, no date), 239.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Isfahani, 239.

<sup>4</sup> See The Holy Bible, Isaiah, 9:6-7; and John 14:27.

(Cain) shares in the stain of the crime. That is because he was the first to innovate murder [in the human family].”<sup>5</sup>

At the individual level, Islam views peace as an absence of the ruinations of the heart. One free from such ruinations will succeed, when he/she meets his/her Lord. Therefore, he/ she will enter safely into the Abode of Peace (*Dar as-Salam*): [On] the day no amount of wealth or children will be of any benefit. [The only one benefited] will be one who comes before God with a sound (*salim*) heart. [Quran 26:89]. The expression derived from these meanings portrays Islam as “a religion of peace” since it provides a path for the human being to enter Paradise (*Dar as-Salam*), and there he/she will know true peace.

For Muslim scholars, peace has meanings wider than those mentioned above. One of the loftier objectives of Islamic religion is to introduce into the world an ethos that facilitates the spreading of peace at every level. Personal relations with fellow Muslims should begin with the implementation of the Prophetic order: “Spread peace between you all.”<sup>6</sup> This order is so pressing that the Prophet Mohammed advised its indiscriminate implementation as he described to his followers one of the best forms of Islam, “Extend the greeting of peace, to those you know and those you know not.”<sup>7</sup> In this regard, “You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I indicate to you something that will surely lead to your mutual love? Spread the greeting and spirit of peace between yourselves.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn Hajar al-, Asgalani, *Fath al-Bari*, 13:369, no. 7321.

<sup>6</sup> This Hadith is related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmidhi in their collections. Quoted in anNawawi, *Riyaz as-Salihin*, 289-290. The full text of the Prophetic Tradition follows: A man asked the Prophet “Which Islam is best?” He replied, “That you provide food, and extend the greeting of peace, to those you know and those you know not.”

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit., Ibn Hajar al-, Asgalani, *Fath al-Bari*, 11: 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> This is the full narration of the Prophetic tradition mentioned in note no.4 above.

Based on Quranic revelations, all relations in the family, community, with the state and country should also be characterized by peace...because *peace is best*. [Quran 4:128] Similarly, on international level, relations with nations must be based on God's command: If they (the enemies are) incline towards peace, then you should similarly incline, and place your trust in God [Quran 8:61], with the eschatological implication that Jesus „will return the world to a state of peace“(*Yurji ' as-Salim*) after his appearance at the end of time.<sup>9</sup>

### A.1.2. Justice

The theory of Quranic peace is intrinsically and absolutely interconnected with the concept of justice. Scholastic arrogance notwithstanding, one cannot explore the project of peace separately from the project of justice nor embrace and explore peace without ultimate justice in Islam either.

Islamic lexicographers define justice, variously, as „to rule based on that contained in the Book of God (*Quran*), and the tradition (*Sunna*) of His Messenger; and refraining from ruling based on empty opinion. “It is also defined as „extending inherent rights [to their possessors] equitably.”<sup>10</sup> This latter definition emphasizes the importance of equity as an essential aspect of distributive justice.

The concept of justice is one of the essential pillars in the maintenance of both the natural and social orders. God has established the scale; therefore, do not transgress in the scale [of justice]. Undertake the measuring with justice and do not cheat concerning the scale [55:7-8].

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<sup>9</sup> This meaning is narrated in prophetic traditions that are related by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Ibn Majah. See for example, Fath al-Bari, 6:599-600. The above quote is the version of Ibn Majah. Al-Bukhari's version mentions that Jesus will “put an end to war.”

<sup>10</sup> These and other definitions of justice are mentioned in Salih b. ,Abdullah b. Humayd, Nadra anNa'im fi Makarim Akhlaq ar-Rasul al-Karim (Jeddah: Dar al-Wasila, 2000), 7: 2792.

Muslim scholars are of the view that justice is one of the underpinnings of the order that has been established by God of which reality is ipso facto a foundation of a healthy social order: O, You who believe! Be upright for God, witnesses to justice; and do not let your hatred of a people move you to a position where you are unjust. Be just, that is closer to piety. Be mindful of God! Verily God is well informed concerning all that you do. [Quran 4:135].

According to Imam al-Qurtubi, discussing the relationship between two words that are usually translated as justice (*al-Adl*), and distributive justice (*al-Qist*), “Justice is the basis of all human relations and a foundation of Islamic rule.”<sup>11</sup> This is illustrative of the meaning conveyed by Quran 57: Verily, we have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and we have revealed unto them the Scripture and the Balance in order that they lead people with justice... [Quran 57:25].

Imam al-Mawardi has summarized the social implications of distributive justice thus: One of the things that reforms worldly affairs is the principle of distributive justice. It facilitates amicable relations between people, engenders obedience to the Divine Law, and brings about the prosperity of countries. It is the basis of a thriving economy, strong families, and stable government. Nothing devastates the land nor corrupts the mind as quickly as tyranny. That is because there are no acceptable limits [to regulate tyranny].<sup>12</sup>

For this reason, Ibn Taymiyya sees the responsibilities of Islamic government emanating from a single verse in the Qur’an; God enjoins that you deliver the Trusts to their rightful possessors. And when you rule over [or judge between] people, that you do so with justice... [Quran 4:58]<sup>13</sup> “Surely the most beloved of people with God and the closest to Him on the Day of Resurrection will be a just leader. And the

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<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Ibn Humayd, *Nadr al-Na'im*, 8:3153.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Ibn Humayd, *Nadr al-Na'im*, 7:2793.

<sup>13</sup> See Ahmad b. Taymiyya, *As-Siyasa Ash-Shar'iyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq alJadida, 1983), 4-5.

most hated of people and the furthest removed from Him will be a tyrannical leader.”<sup>14</sup> A guided ruler (leader) should clear himself from even an inadvertent association with oppressive, unjust acts or tyrannical ruler. Prophet Mohammed is reported to have said: You bring your disputes to me for adjudication; perhaps one of you is less eloquent than another, and I rule against the wronged party on the basis of what I have heard. Therefore, if I inadvertently grant one of you something owed to his brother do not take it, for I am granting him something that constitutes a piece of Hellfire<sup>15</sup>: Verily, God sets forth parables for you, and He directs admonition towards you in order that hearts will be quickened. Surely, the hearts are dead until God quickens them. Justice has signs and portents. As for its signs, they are shyness, generosity, humility, and gentleness. As for its portents, they are embodied in mercy. He has [likewise] made for every affair a gate, and He has made that gate accessible by providing a key. The gate of justice is a deep consideration of consequences, and its key is otherworldliness. Consideration of consequences ultimately involves remembering death and preparing for it by freely parting from one’s wealth. Otherworldliness involves dealing justly with everyone and being satisfied with what suffices. If one is not satisfied with what suffices him, no abundance will ever enrich him.<sup>16</sup>

Much of this discussion has focused on *distributive justice*. However, the Qur’an also places great emphasis on *commutative justice*: Do not be moved by partiality to discriminate in meting out divinely legislated punishments. [Quran 24:2] Prophet Mohammed mentioned that one of the reasons behind the ruination of a nation is a lack of commutative justice.<sup>17</sup> In this context according to a hadith, he mentioned that if his

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<sup>14</sup> At-Tirmidhi, no. 1329.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Hajar al-, Asgalani, Fath al-Bari, 5:354.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in ibn Humayd, Nadra an-Na’im, 7:2811.

<sup>17</sup> This concept is mentioned at the beginning of the tradition where a lady from Bani Makhzum, one of the most aristocratic Arab tribes, stole something and the companions were moved to intervene for a lessening of her punishment. The Prophet responded, “O people! Those before you

very daughter were to steal, he would not hesitate to punish her to the full extent of the law.<sup>18</sup>

Concretely, can these notions of peace and justice be applied to some obvious contexts that enslaved efforts of modern Islamic scholars? Western scholars and their mass media are anxious to read explicit correlation and application of justice towards peace in the sensitive areas of the modern expectations: war, terror, Islamophobia, gender equity, etc.

### **B.1.1. Historico-Explanatory Approaches to Qur'anic Hermeneutics**

*Civilization* is an allegorical interactive computer game series created by Sid Meier in 1991; a turn-based strategy game in which the player attempts to build an empire to stand the test of time. In this game, active research in technology and culture unlocks new potentials, to enable competing leaders pursue their own agendas based on their perceived (historical) traits by establishing civilization from Stone Age to the Information Age: wage war, conduct diplomacy, advance culture, and go head-to-head with history's greatest leaders as the player attempts to build the greatest civilization ever known. This analogy will help in understanding the clash between Christianity and Islam, between western and oriental civilization – the march of Civilization -.

From the conquest of Spain in the early 8th century to the siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Turks in 1683, Islam represented a strategic threat to the existence of Christendom. Islam's achievement in all scientific and intellectual fields during its heyday in the Middle Ages

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were ruined in that if a noble person among them stole something, they left him alone. On the other hand, if a lower class person stole something, they punished him!" See this narration in its entirety in *Abi Zakariyya Yahya b. Sharaf an-Nawawi, al-minhaj: Sharh Sahih Muslim* (Beirut: Dar atMa'rifa, 1419 AH/1998 CE), 11:186-187, no. 4386.

<sup>18</sup> An-Nawawi, *Al-Minhaj*, 11:186-187, no. 4386.

caused a reaction in the West that considered Islam as cruel, evil, and uncivilized. Although (“holy”) war is defined most broadly as any religious justification for engaging in war, it does not necessarily presume a connection of military activity to religious purposes, though it is often the case. The particular expressions of holy war found in the Islamic world tend to be referred to in the West as jihād.

While there is no evidence to date that the indigenous inhabitants of Arabia knew of holy war prior to Islam, holy war ideas and behaviors appear already among Muslims during the first generation. It is therefore necessary to focus on why and how such a seemingly radical development took place. Basing the hypothesis on evidence from the Quran and early Islamic literary sources, it is important to locate the origin of Islamic holy war and trace its evolution as a response to the changes (challenges) affecting the new community of Muslims in its transition from ancient Arabian culture to the religious civilization of Islam.

### **B.1.2. Violence and Jihad in Islam: From the War of Words to the Clashes of Definitions**

As already mentioned, the term *jihad* is based on the ideas of ‘effort’, ‘striving’, or ‘exerting oneself’. Out of 6236 verses in the Qur’an, approximately 41 mention jihad and its derivatives, thus accentuating its polysemy and multiple uses. It should be pointed out that the most occurrences of the word jihad appear in Sura 9, which the jihadist movements largely use in support of their (violent) actions. However, the general sense of a lifelong discipline to be adopted was much more found in the 14 verses revealed according to Islamic tradition in Mecca.

In the Medina verses, however, the sense of fighting is more marked. The textual meanings of jihad in the Qur’an include various efforts that





jihad are not clearly related to the issue of war and violence. The technical word used for fighting is *qital*.<sup>21</sup>

This observation contradicts the spreading and popular conception of jihad in the West, where the term has crystallized to mean military offenses against ‘unbelievers’ and is almost exclusively identified as such. The prevalence of this concept is not due to Western imagination. It is largely due to Islamist movements that proclaim jihad as a legitimate war against all who do not share their worldview, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The word itself appeared in the 1980s, during the Afghanistan War, and gained momentum at the turn of the 21st century, after the September 11 attacks, to denote various forms of Islamist acts of violence. In short, the term has become more of an identity vector than a value of self-discipline and rigor.

The warfare-related concept of jihad that has spread throughout the 20th century conflates political and religious issues, though the religious value of jihad is somewhat independent of its political weight.<sup>22</sup> These two, almost opposite, interpretations of jihad - the military approach and the self-building and discipline approach - are rooted in Islamic jurisprudential tradition. The approach to jihad of Shafii jurist, Sulayman ibn Muhammad al-Bujayrimi (d. 1221/1806), was *qital fisabilillah* (fighting in the path of God). On the other hand, the Hanafite, Abu Bakr ‘Ala’ al-Din al-Kasani (d. 587/1191), defined it as *jihad fi sabil allah* (striving in the way or path of God), emphasizing a more general notion of jihad rather than physical combat, but without explaining against whom and under what circumstances (al-Kasani 1972, p. 97).

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<sup>21</sup> *Qital* does not incorporate the range of meanings found in jihad. Linguistically, it is less extensive as it is specifically reserved for war in the Qur’an. We counted 171 verses in which the word *qital* appears. We counted approximately 10 verses where the word *harb* means war. <sup>22</sup> Mirbagheri, S. M. Farid. 2012. *War and Peace in Islam, a Critique of Islamic/its Political Discourses*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

For the proponents of militant jihadism, the ideological foundations (not necessarily justice or peace) lend legitimacy to jihad as a struggle. The Sunni theologian, Ibn Tahir al-Baghdadi (d. 429/1037), interpreted jihad as ‘the struggle against the enemies of Islam until they convert to Islam’ (Babadžanov 2007). This interpretation is widespread among Islamist militia groups who advocate military action against non-Muslims, and, occasionally, against some Muslims. It is ideologically built to promote a fanatically subjective weltanschauung. However, this article of writing is aimed, not to define religion in terms of what is believed by the religious, but in terms of how they believe. What is relevant is how some Muslims, their clerics and scholars interpret their representation of Islam and its teachings.

The concept of jihad, constructed over the last century, has been driven away from its original meaning to now be regarded as an arbitrary symbol of sacred actions to be performed against others. The way jihad functions nowadays reinforces, rather indiscriminately, a system of literal interpretation of those Quranic verses focused on war and qital. Nevertheless, for some Muslim scholars schooled in scape-goat mechanism, the idea that religion tends to promote violence is part of the conventional wisdom of Western societies (Cavanaugh 2009). Violence dispels justice and peace, and it functions in different contexts of power struggles, thus not belonging exclusively to religious fields. The myth of religious violence tends to construct the figure of the religious ‘other’ and to persistently contrast jihadism and the rational, peace-making subject (Cavanaugh 2009).

### **B.1.3. Jihad: From Polysemy to Semantic Indeterminacy and Over interpretation**

The post-Islamic period of the *Nahdah* was dominated by an unprecedented confusion about the nature of some terms, particularly their meaning and their relationship to Islam. Again, a typical example

of such confusion is the term *jihad*, which has been closely associated to military actions for the past 20 years, needs to be reassessed in the light of an era marked by disenchantment and a crisis of values.

The multiplication of terms to ambiguously describe the Islamic subject (partly ascribed to interpretative meaning attached to Quranic terms) and its relation to violence spontaneously marks the end of the Islamic matrix as a meta-narrative for the rational believer. In this sense, metanarrative means Islamic norms, the set of values and feelings whose meanings are sensitive to contextual variations. They are, in fact, indeterminate or ‘floating’ meanings that the human mind helps to construct or reconstruct into significations that reflect processes of hybridization, interpretation, and adaptation.<sup>22</sup> *Jihad* is an example of these indeterminate concepts, and is now an obscure term at the heart of Arab-Muslim reality and tradition.

#### **B.1.4. Jihad in the Qur’an and the Islamic Tradition**

The term *jihad* holds an interesting place in the Qur’an, particularly in Medinan Suras. The creation of *jihad* as a concept implies the realization of the objectives of *sharī‘a* in terms of the creation and preservation of emerging Islamic state. The term *jihad* is mentioned in 41 instances in the Qur’an. Most occurrences are linguistically related to the exercise of effort, *juhd* (al-Kasani 1972), and the deployment of energy (10 times), in relation to the path of God (13 times), or in the context of combat.

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<sup>22</sup> In the Pakistani context, the former president of the republic, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, promoted an increased Islamization of the army, which was expressed in the ideological training of officers, in the adoption of a new army motto: “Iman, Taqwa, Jihad-fi-Sabilillah: Faith, piety and fighting in the path of God”. Zia foreworded the book written by brigadier general S. K. Malik, published in 1979 on *The Quranic Concept of War*. According to S.K. Malik, the Qur’an places the doctrine of war and its theory on the side of God. In matters of fighting, the principles and commandments are directly dictated by God. See Malik ([1979] 1986).

Besides the four kinds of jihad (See DeLong-Bas 2004)<sup>23</sup> presented in the 41 verses, the general use of the term is divided into three categories: jihad by words, jihad by power, and jihad by good deeds. These categories have given way to various interpretations over the centuries as they have been extracted from the Qur'an and "distorted" into violent and legitimate acts. Furthermore, the Qur'an articulates the notions of jihad and patience (*ṣabr*) as the two values that build the believer's life on earth. In the Qur'an, *ṣabr* is, thus, inevitably tied to jihad, and this is broadly construed as the ongoing human struggle on earth (Afsaruddin 2013). In addition to the notion of *ṣabr*, *al-jihad* also articulates the notion of *islah*. The duty of *al-jihad* is to purify what has been made corrupt (*fasad*).

The conflicting notion between pure and the impure ideas of jihad is at the heart of radical Islamist thought. Its enactment does not allow for adaptability or coexistence, but rather a jihadist commitment that can end in death. The latter is even desired because the death of a jihadist would be made sacred (*shahid*). Death is the pendant to militant and warlike jihad. In his famous public law treatise, entitled *al-Siyāsa al-šar'iyya fī iṣlāḥ al-rā'i wa-l-ra'iyya*,<sup>24</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) as well, defined jihad as involving all kinds of cults, in all its internal and external forms. For him, the individual or community participating in jihad is caught between two pleasant consequences: either victory and triumph, or martyrdom and paradise. The death of the martyr is not considered a common death; it is instead a passage to eternal life where they remain 'alive with their Lord' (Qur'an, 3:169).

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<sup>23</sup> Besides these four types of jihad, Natana J. DeLong-Bas Jihad evoked, in her study, other types, including educational jihad (*jihad al-tarbiyyah*; educational jihad can be attributed in general terms to the actions of various movements of Islamic tendency whose action focuses on schools and education.

<sup>24</sup> The book of governance according to the shari'a.

Al-jihad, as a philosophy of action, a permanent and continuous struggle, at all levels -body, soul, mind -and as a behavior and discipline, can be seen as opposed to inertia, idleness and absence of energy. It is supposed to be a permanent battle that may result in a state of martyrdom. It is, according to Euben (2002), an action linked to death because the importance of continuing to exert oneself until the end is underlined. This conception of jihad contradicts the ideas of al-Hallâj (d. 309/922), Suhrawardî (d. 586/1191), ibn al-‘Arabî (d. 638/1240), Jalâl al-Dîn al-Rûmî (d. 672/1273), and other Sufis who opted for the struggle against the ego to reach out (*fana*’), for the disappearance into God, to join the ‘Supreme Being’. This spiritual or mystical interpretation of jihad (Sufism) is relatively new, only emerging after the period of great conquests and the stability of the empire, where the individual’s effort to deepen their religion was required.

In the Qur’anic text, it is very clear that jihad has several distinct levels and qualities. The word is associated with the soul (jihad al-nafs), or to be purified with money (al-jihad bi al-mal), to fight one’s desires (jihad al-shahwat) to better control them, etc. The words for war—harb and qital—are devoid of these meanings and their associations. Only the idea of confronting an enemy is put forward but again, under conditions that the Qur’an specifies in the verses concerned with the conflict with the enemy. Generally speaking, in the majority of the 41 verses where the word jihad appears, the meaning relates to lifestyle ethics, while the actual confrontation with the enemy, the techniques of fighting, bravery and courage are rather associated with the notion of war. The latter revives in the Arab imagination a daily life that they had always known in the pre-Islamic period. By reactivating this imagery, Islam displaces the meaning of the word harb to one that now goes beyond the selfish interests of one tribe or clan to the broad interest of (an Islamic) community.

Semantically, the primary meaning of the term in the Arabic language derives from the idea of the effort to be deployed to cope with internal and external difficulties or to resist something. Whether it is inner jihad, referring to the jihad of the soul, or outer jihad, referring to that of an enemy, this primary meaning emphasizes, above all, the deployment of an inner energy to guard against any harm or threat that could be apprehended as corrupting the body and the soul.

In Ibn Manz'ûr's dictionary, *Lisân al-'Arab*, jihad is defined as the use of one's power and strength, both verbally and physically, against the enemy and for God. While jihad is about saying and doing, al-Jurjânî saw in jihad 'the act of inviting the other to follow True Religion' (AlJurjani 1994, p. 159). As for A-Isfahani (2002), jihad falls into three categories: the fight against the external enemy, the fight against Satan, and the fight against oneself (p. 30). These three aspects of al-jihad form one meaning, as presented in verse 78 of surah al-haj and verse 41 of surah At-Tawbah.

In the Islamic tradition, all of these meanings relate to the idea of aljihad al-akbar - the great jihad - which, even though it appears in the Qur'an only once, opens up various possibilities of interpretation. The al-jihad al-Asghar (the lesser jihad), which some interpretations have described as the meaning of war against the unbelievers, is not reflected as such in the Qur'an. Indeed, the Qur'an does not use the term jihad for war, but instead uses qital or harb (Qur'an, 2:190). Meanwhile, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy highlighted the meaning of al-jihad in its general sense: to make every legitimate effort to uphold the word of God, to communicate the message of Islam by all means, and to spread justice, security, and mercy in human societies.

### **B.1.5. Jihad: From Manipulations to Instrumentalizations and Excessive Interpretations**

Beyond the semantic shifts taking place in the discursive field related to the concept of al-jihad, the notion and its meanings are intertwined with the circumstances related to space and the development of Islamic predication. From Mecca to Medina, the notion of al-jihad did not have the same conceptions. From this point of view, Asma Afsaruddin's work highlighted the dynamic dimension of the notion to infer the meanings that the aforementioned periods specifically thrust upon it. Before permission to fight against the unbelievers was given (Qur'an, 22:39), the verses containing an injunction for al-jihad rather assumed the meaning of a spiritual jihad in which war and its violence against the other are not formally encouraged. While al-jihad at the time of the Prophet intensified self-connection for the purpose of spiritual and moral elevation, it later led to a counterbalance in the absence of the prophetic charisma, and the caliphs made al-jihad a legitimate principle of warfare motivation.

In the year AH 2, the Prophet and his companions were authorized to take up arms after being driven from their homes and having all their property confiscated. The divine authorization to fight the aggressors is expressed through the noun *qital* (fighting). However, this verse marks a historical prerequisite and leaves the field open for possible instrumentalization of weapons through al-jihad. Thus, Islam allows war, but only under certain conditions and according to certain rules.

The verse 'Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors'<sup>25</sup> (Qur'an, 2:190) forms the basis of al-jihad, which binds the required ethical attitude and

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<sup>25</sup> This verse was revealed as the circumstances of the 'Peace of Hudaibiyah' in 628, between the Prophet and Quraysh.



determination in the war action so as not to leave the aggressor the choice of winning the war. However, this verse is not a declaration of war against the unbelievers, but against the aggressors. It is a moral stance against the oppressors, whether Muslims, non-Muslims or unbelievers, and against injustice. From this perspective, the mechanism of al-jihad does not seem to involve the question of faith, hence the obligatory nature of al-jihad to repel oppression (*ẓulm*) by the means available to Muslims. Consequently, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong (al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf wa-n-nahy 'ani-l-munkar) is both an individual (farḍ al-'ayn) and collective (farḍ kifāya) duty and is a form of al-jihad in Islamic jurisprudence.

The transformation of the notion of jihad into solely the instrument of war in the name of God has certainly required doctrinal efforts and political support. Although beyond its polysemy, its doctrinal content has always been subject to religio-political circumstances. The jurisprudential effort has been based on the conversion of so-called fighting verses (Qur'an, 9:5) into legal justifications for al-jihad, while political support has ensured that these jurisprudential choices have been transformed into legitimate violence to wage, far more often, intra-Muslim community wars on the grounds that their faith would not be in conformity with the pseudo-Islamic sharia.

The historical dimension of the term jihad highlights the excessive interpretations, displacements, and manipulations that legal reasoning and political implication endeavored to use to shape the meaning of the notion according to low temporal and selfish wish fulfillment. Furthermore, since the disappearance of its great ideologists (See Maududi 2017; Qutb 2005), the concept has been an empty shell and no doctrinal renewal has been proposed. As theory, jihad has been in a state of permanent drift for past years, subject to dangerous and, often, extravagant manipulations.

### **B.1.6. Islam and Violence: A War of Words and Definitions**

Several types of violence have been identified. Their definitions are often contradictory, elusive, and subject to different contexts and times. It is very difficult to measure violence, since its perception depends largely on the cultural, political, and economic contexts where it takes place. The link between Islam and violence, however, is nowadays seen in some Western circles as self-evident (See Lewis 2003). For the last 20 years, jihad in the Western imagination has represented the brutal nature of the morality of some Muslims, aimed at bloodshed. Some argue that there is a culture in Islam that permanently opposes democracy and the West (See Cousin and Vitale 2014). These perceptions are often established through swift readings of Qur'anic verses and Islamic tradition, which are perceived as incentives for a holy jihad against non-Muslims.

Among Muslims themselves, the opposition crystallizes an irremediable gap between a traditionalist view that considers the Qur'anic text a timeless reference for all Muslims, and a modernist vision that considers the Qur'anic phenomenon to be a historical event whose content corresponds to the political, social, and economic situations of the time. The war among Muslims belonging to each point of view is not expected to end, since, in terms of discourse, we are now witnessing the resurgence of words such as apostasy, expiation, and jihad, which stigmatize the modernist camp and dumps, brutally, most efforts undertaken by Muslims to inculcate justice and peace into the world polity.

### **B.1.7. Violence and Islam, What Does the Islamic Tradition Say?**

Islam's real or supposed link to violence is a subject that is intertwined more than ever in ideological circles where two essentialist discourses

confront each other in a continuous and unproductive dialogue. For some, Islam is fundamentally violent, aggressive, or even totalitarian, and the proponents of this vision ground their arguments on the recent terrorist attacks targeted at both Muslim and non-Muslim citizens in various parts of the world. The proponents of the jihadist ideology advocate armed jihad to fight the polytheists until they say, ‘there is no god but Allah’.<sup>27</sup> Armed jihad is to be carried out until all lands are liberated from unbelievers and when all unbelievers submit to the rule of Islam (Khattabi and Liebesny 1955, pp. 16–17, as cited in Simbar 2008, p. 58). By contrast, for others, it is a form of spirituality and a message of peace. From the latter perspective, the reasons for violence in Islam may be exogenous: political (e.g., the Israeli–Arab conflict), cultural (e.g., rebellion against Western cultural colonialism) (Hentsch 1988),<sup>28</sup> or even social (e.g., globalization, alienation, and poverty) (Bar 2004). However, the difficult question to be addressed is whether the Islamic tradition carries within it the seeds of violence and a narrative of extremism.

Whoever maintains that it is not Islam as such that justifies violence must know that he or she stands in direct opposition to the prevailing reading of the founding texts, a reading which objectively had its

<sup>27</sup> Abu Musab al-Suri’s influential book, *Call for Global Islamic Resistance*, is nevertheless an exceptional example. In 1600 pages, the author analyzed his intellectual achievements and theories of jihad in the light of his personal experience and influences. The theory of jihad adopts the method of renewal in the work of jihadism and ‘the ideology of the Islamic awakening movement’ (p. 881). The book is widely disseminated in the jihadist milieu for its analytical value. Abu Musab al-Suri theorized the strategies of individual jihadism by developing, in page 1356, the three schools of jihadism:

- School of Movement Organizations.
- School of open confrontation.
- School of Individual Jihad and Small Cell Terrorism.

According to Brynjar Lia, Abu Musab al-Suri’s work is the first to offer teachings on the noncentral global jihad. His is the best point of view among ‘jihad’ ideologues and strategists, as his work and analyses are both systematic and comprehensive. According to Brynjar Lia, his honesty and self-criticism are typical of jihadist circles. See Lia (2008).

<sup>28</sup> In *L'Orient Imaginaire*, Thierry Hentsch analyses the paradigmatic change that occurred 200 years before 2001, with Bonaparte's 1798 expedition to Egypt marking a major turning point in East–West relations in the Mediterranean. This expedition was an abrupt manifestation of a longterm process of change. It was a military and cultural shock, injecting Western history and science into the heart of Mediterranean Islam (Hentsch 1988).

reasons in the first centuries of the history of Islam, but which continues to have followers until today, despite the radical changes and even upheavals in the position and impact of Muslims in the world. (Charfi 2003, p. 10)

The theme of violence in the Qur'an is an interesting case study since many studies raise this issue through lexicons that convey extremely wide, yet specific, semantic fields. The different situations that involve violence are specified in the Qur'anic text with precise terminology and refer to situations that imply violence as self-defense against acts of aggression (Qur'an, 22:39–40, 42:39–43, 5:2, 5:8). The latter are described in the Qur'an through words such as *ẓulm*, (injustice, tyranny), *tuġyan*, (outrage), *batṣh* (physical violence), and '*tidā*' (legal abuse). They refer to illegitimate actions and provide very precise information on the nature and the degree of the act of violence that is committed. Those categories that refer to violence as '*unf*', whether in the meaning of qital, harb, jihad, or nafar,<sup>26</sup> have been defined in the Qur'an and the ḥadīth<sup>27</sup> and conceptualized by theologians and Muslim philosophers from medieval times through to the present day. If harb and qital allude to what is commonly known as war, then jihad describes a much wider precept, only one component of which points in the direction of violence (Mirbagheri 2012). Verily, jihad generally involves

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<sup>26</sup> These four words have appeared in the Qur'an in different proportions and in different contexts to refer to war situations, with linguistic nuances that we did not choose to include in this work exhaustively. Jihad appears in 41 verses, in the sense of jihad with weapons (Qur'an, 4:95), jihad with words (Qur'an, 25:52), and jihad in the sense of work and effort (Qur'an, 29:6). The word qital appears in 171 verses, in the sense of killing and war (Qur'an, 2:191) and swearing (Qur'an, 74:21). Harb appears in 10 verses, in the sense of war (Qur'an, 47:4), violation of Shariah and corruption, fasad, on earth (Qur'an, 5:33). Nafar, appears in 18 verses, with several meanings, including preparing for jihad (Qur'an, 9:38). The difference between these four terms also lies in the motivations, aims, means, and objectives of war.

<sup>27</sup> This is a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Qur'an.

all aspects of an individual's effort and life in society in its various aspects: intellectual, social, political, and economic.

From Al-Farabi (d. 339/950) to Averroes (d. 595/1198) and Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406), wars and conflicts have been distinguished from the phenomenon of violence, because they were considered to be political power struggles. In this context, jihad, which is often loosely used to translate all these nuances related to violence, has two meanings: the first is moral—equivalent to self-perfection. The second is physical, as it is related to a defensive action directed against the invader or the occupier. However, both meanings are based on the lifelong effort, energy, and self-discipline that Muslims must deploy, either to purify themselves or to defend their religion in the event of a threat. It is very important, however, to stress that the second meaning - whether directly or indirectly related to the notion of war - does not put forward the act of fighting or killing as much as self-discipline, with the aim of generating (through effort) the good deed. It is a perspective that clearly distinguishes jihad from war in the Arabic and the Qur'anic meanings of *harb* and *qital*, as Islam permits only jihad and not *harb* (Mohammad 1985, p. 4). An approach to warfare regulated by the Qur'an has been instituted through a variety of verses that impose rules and limitation to jihad.<sup>28</sup> As peace and *sulh* are regarded as the general rule, the Qur'an surrounds the action of war with a form of exceptionality. Specific laws and rules to safeguard against acts of indiscriminate violence and "war crimes" have progressively reinforced the exceptionality of war.<sup>29</sup> It is precisely in this sense that the notion of jihad in the Qur'an develops a meaning that would reflect the defensive action of Muslim fighters and their exemplary attitude during the war. Accordingly, jihad goes beyond the action of violent and material warfare; the notion also aims to completely change the purpose of war and its ultimate perspective.

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<sup>28</sup> Though, according to Majid Khadduri, throughout the history of Islam, fighting between Muslim rulers and contending parties was as continuous as between Islam and its external enemies (Khadduri 1955, pp. 65–66. Cited by Mirbagheri 2012, p. 133).

<sup>29</sup> 'Fight in the cause of Allah 'only' against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah does not like transgressors' (Qur'an, 2: 190); 'If you retaliate, then let it be equivalent to what you have suffered. But if you patiently endure, it is certainly best for those who are patient' (Qur'an, 16:126).

From this point of view, the war in the Qur'an is proclaimed for nonreligious reasons, meaning that it is not intended to impose conversions to Islam, 'Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood' (Qur'an 2:256). Paradoxically, the verse 'Kill them where you arrest them, and drive them out from where they drove you out' (Qur'an 2:191) shifts the violent and gratuitous act of war on the defensive line to sustain the survival of the young Muslim community of the time.

In the Islamic context, Muslim theologians of the Middle Ages considered the issue of violence within a specific paradigm that interrelated a community spirituality, a political project, and a military strategy. The objective was to determine whether it was possible to organize the exercise of a central power in order to guarantee peaceful coexistence (ṣalaḥ)<sup>30</sup> within the Islamic community, without transforming power into illegitimate violence ('unf).<sup>34</sup> In this context, the concept of legitimate violence emerges out of rules and regulations.<sup>31</sup> The goals of the actions are directly linked to two dogmas: order and reconciliation (islah) in conformity with Islamic law.<sup>32</sup> In other words, an ethical framework must accompany an act of power to counter illegitimate violence and corruption (fasad). The Qur'anic vision is, thus, held between these two poles of tension - islah and fasad - and any exaggeration on one side can tip the life of the community on the other side to cause disorder or discord (fitna). Discord leads to strife and violence, from which Muslims must seek protection.

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<sup>30</sup> ṣalaḥ means goodness and righteousness. Is'lahiḥa comes from the same root, meaning reformation and betterment, and it has also the meaning of restoration and improvement. 'So fulfill the measure and weight and do not deprive people of their due and cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. That is better for you, if you should be believers' (Qur'an 7:85).<sup>34</sup> Ikechukwu Mike Nduka. 1998. *Al-'Asabiyya: A Conflicting Socio-religious Factor in the Modern Times?* Altenberge Germany: Oros Verlag. pg 12ff.

<sup>31</sup> 'in Islam war is waged to establish supremacy of the Lord only when every other argument has failed to convince those who reject His will and work against the very purpose of the creation of mankind'.

<sup>32</sup> 'And cause not corruption (fasad) upon the earth after its reformation (is'lahiḥa). And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good' (Qur'an, 7:56).

### B.1.8. Authority and Legitimate Violence

Obedience to authority is an act that establishes stability in society. The state can, therefore, exist only on the basis that those who are dominated must submit to the authority asserted by the rulers. Without detailing the nature of this obedience, Ibn Khaldun<sup>33</sup> found the legitimacy of the ruler's authority on political norms to be accepted by the masses, who will submit to these laws. A dynasty that does not establish its policy on such norms will not be able to successfully entrench its power (Ibn Khaldun 1958). The force of an army can be misdirected when a sovereign's authority is no longer respected.<sup>34</sup> This is a situation that reflects the fragile equilibrium between power, legitimate violence and order.

Al-Ghazâlî (d. 505/1111) proposed the idea that there must be a laudable hierarchy (tasalsul al-harami) (Al-Ghazâlî 1964) involving the king, his

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<sup>33</sup> 'In relation to the catastrophe that the Arab and Islamic world is experiencing today, we discover that the analyses of the famous 14th century historian Ibn Khaldun are not entirely behind us. They cast light on our present. The medieval historian, certainly existentially pessimistic, tells us about states that last for a maximum of three human generations. Yet we see, before our eyes, the collapse of states built in the 1950s. Such is the case of Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya. The historian invents a notion of 'the sharp edge' to signal the tyrannical reign that must be avoided. He calls on the prince to reign in the right measure, to avoid excess, not to reign by brandishing the sharp sword. In short, Ibn Khaldun advises the prince to avoid tyranny because it is tyranny that generates irreparable evils leading to the destruction of states'. Abdelwahab Meddeb, Cultures d'Islam, <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/cultures-dislam/ibn-khaldoun-et-la-violence> (accessed on 13 December 2020).

<sup>34</sup> 'Quoting Aristotle's Book on Politics, on the theme of authority, Ibn Khaldun comments that the author 'arranged his statement in a remarkable circle that he discussed at length. It runs as follows: "The world is a garden the fence of which is the dynasty. The dynasty is an authority through which life is given to proper behavior. Proper behavior is a policy directed by the ruler. The ruler is an institution supported by the soldiers. The soldiers are helpers who are maintained by money. Money is sustenance brought together by the subjects. The subjects are servants who are protected by justice. Justice is something familiar, and through it, the world persists. The world is a garden ...", and then it begins again from the beginning. These are eight sentences of political wisdom. They are connected, the end of each one leading into the beginning of the next. They are held together in a circle with no definite beginning or end. (The author) was proud of what he had hit upon and made much of the significance of the sentences'. Ibn Khaldun, Abū Zayd 'Abd ar-Rahmān. 1958. *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 2nd ed. Translated by Franz Rosenthal. Princeton: Princeton University Press, <https://delong.typepad.com/files/muquaddimah.pdf> (accessed on 2 March 2021).

army, and his subjects - a hierarchy in which the king is clear-sighted and dominant, the army is strong and obedient, and the subjects are weak and docile. Should this hierarchy be disrupted - particularly in a case where the prince suffers the heaviest political defeats, voices of protest would use religious legitimacy to wage a war against the ruling power (Al-Jubūrī 2011, p. 220). Al-Ghazali's concept of *social stability* stemmed from his ultimate concern of worldly order (isalh) and security.<sup>35</sup> This concept is in line with the Khaldunian analysis of the strength shift from the prince to the rebels—mainly when the latter uses religious faith and the *fasad* argument<sup>40</sup> to unite and gain support among the population.<sup>36</sup> Violence, in Ibn Khaldun's analysis, is a reaction against the central power when 'laws are (enforced) by means of punishment, they completely destroy fortitude, because the use of punishment against someone who cannot defend himself generates in that person a feeling of humiliation that, no doubt, must break his fortitude'.<sup>37</sup>

Authority does not mean despotism. Through his analysis, Ibn Khaldun advised rulers to avoid excess and injustice, which are religious aspects of *zulm* and *fasad* that the Qur'an denounces in various verses. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun considered tyranny to lead to the inexorable breakdown of the civilized world ('umran). The falling apart of 'umran—the stage that comes after the birth of the civilization and its consolidation—is a degeneration that, through a new *da'wa*, gives to the peripheral minority the opportunity to promote unity, discipline, equality, and justice. Ibn Khaldun was very much aware of the

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<sup>35</sup> 'The imam is necessary because religious order is necessary, and because religious order involves worldly order, that is to say, security of life, livelihood, dwelling, and so on' (Hourani 1983). <sup>40</sup> The argument of *fasad* has gone through the epochs and centuries as a Qur'anic notion transformed into a political argument.

<sup>36</sup> In medieval Arab-Muslim thought, the term political Islam has no existence. Political reason, however, was considered and analyzed in order to establish the matrix of political power and its constituents.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn Khaldun, 1958, p. 29; Available online: <https://delong.typepad.com/files/muquaddimah.pdf> (accessed on 1 November 2021); Nduka 1998, p. 95.



influential role that religious personalities (wali) could play in rallying tribesmen around original Islamic values and qualities that would enable them eventually to establish a new state and kingship. This solidarity, which Ibn Khaldun named *'asabiyya*, is fundamentally based on religious ties, forcefully bringing about tribal cohesion, organization, and capacity to rule out the now old, central power (Nduka, I.M. (1998), *Al-'Asabiyya. A Conflicting Socio-Religious Factor in the Modern Times?* Oros Verlag Altenberge).

When people (who have a religious coloring) come to have the (right) insight into their affairs, nothing can withstand them, because their outlook is one and their objective one of common accord... (On the other hand,) the members of the dynasty they attack may be many times as numerous as they. But their purposes differ, in as much as they are false purposes, and (the people of the worldly dynasty) come to abandon each other, since they are afraid of death. Therefore, they do not offer resistance to (the people with a religious coloring), even if they themselves are more numerous. They are overpowered by them and quickly wiped out, as a result of the luxury and humbleness existing among them, as we have mentioned before (Ibn Khaldun 1958, p. 22). From a tyrannous and zealous group, the promoters of the new da'wa turn into legitimate conquerors and advocates of a new order, *islah*. Religious faith, which is the basis of the new da'wa, emerges as a potent factor, capable of stimulating the unification of a large group that may usher, through violence, the birth of a new civilization. From violence to politics but, this time, the illegitimate violence is transformed into legitimate force and justice.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> In consideration with Hobbes' philosophy, the concept of da'wa is a form of justice that must be obeyed, as justice is defined by obedience. After the settlement of the state, those elements that constitute the da'wa turn to laws that need to be obeyed. 'It is once a Republic is established (and not before) that they are indeed laws, as they are then the commandments of the Republic, and that

### **B.1.9. X-Raying Ibn Khaldun. The Da'wa: From Proselytism to Coercion**

Ibn Khaldun showed the politico-religious nexus as properly constitutive of the revolutionary founding act of a new sovereignty (*mulk*). The latter takes place at the crossroads, on the one hand, of the *esprit de corps*, of the organic solidarity of antagonistic groups (*'asabiyya*), and, on the other hand, of the religious call (*da'wa*), which designates and objectifies the 'internalized forms of belief' (Labica 1965, p. 199). When *da'wa* is deliberately constructed upon religious content and confused with military *jihad* and *qital*, it becomes a deadly and effective weapon. From 'upon you is only the [duty of] notification, and upon Us is the account' (Qur'an, 13:40), a peaceful invitation to join the path of God, the *da'wa* becomes a coercive force capable of structuring the spirit of solidarity (*'asabiyya*) of the community receiving the invitation. In this respect, the instrumentalization of religion helps to shape, structure, and legitimize violence, even rendering it necessary. In other words, the encounter and interaction between religion and violence is a source of theocratic aberrations. Agreeably, the political pattern developed by Ibn Khaldun is inevitably limited to his place and time, however, the concept of the *da'wa* used by some groups in today's Arab-Muslim societies is an efficient means to bring forth the wrongdoings and immorality that characterize the 'urbanites'. People in these areas are depicted by the promoters of the new *da'wa* as having abandoned their faith to indulge in improper manners, pleasures which (in Ibn Khaldun's philosophy) are the result of reprehensible luxury. Luxury and the undeniable decline of morality in the highest social ranks call forth the revenge of history (Weber 1950). There is a paradox in the Khaldunian theory of the decline of

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consequently they are also the civil laws: it is in effect the sovereign power that compels men to obey them' (Hobbes 1999).

civilizations that, as their peak is reached, they become more fragile and weakened.

When civilizations leave behind the violence that provided the basis for their establishment in the past, they break down to the point that they collapse into the hands of a marginalized minority (See Bozarslan 2014). The effectiveness of the power takeover lies in the success of a new *da'wa* that pleads for a just cause that becomes legitimate in the eyes of the majority. One explanation for this paradox lies in the fact that the *'asabiyya*—the foundation on which power (*mulk*) rests and rises—withers away because, according to the cyclical vision of Ibn Khaldun, the luxurious lifestyle of the dominant tribes becomes more urbanized and, consequently, moves further away from natural life and faith. In this case, the *da'wa* stands as legitimate and lawful instrument.

The *da'wa* is undoubtedly the Khaldunian concept most closely linked to today's claim of some jihadist movements, when they justify their violent actions via religious legitimacy as a way to counter evil—which could, in this case, be luxury that weakens faith and drives a civilization to its decline. It would seem that Ibn Khaldun wanted to use the religious connotation of the term *da'wa* to turn it into an analytical tool for the various power legitimating mechanisms and conquests. *Da'wa*, which derives from the verb *da'a*, means 'to invite' and 'to join'. It is an Islamic concept and a Qur'anic term that literally means urging people to do good to eschew bad and warning of shari'a violations.<sup>39</sup>

Being an instrument of a power conquest, *da'wa* acts as a contract, a symbolic resource, and a central element in calling Muslims to the way of God, hence its misleading connection with the notion of jihad. In Islam, the concept of *da'wa* is based on good behavior and avoidance of violence, rudeness, and provocation: 'Invite to the way of your Lord

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<sup>39</sup> Qur'an, 3:159, 41:33, 3:110, 3:104, 16:125.

with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best' (Qur'an, 16:125). Beyond the meaning of 'invitation', the Arabic word underlines the 'invitation to join the path of God or to spread the good word'.<sup>40</sup> In this perspective, the preacher, da'ia, is not a mujahid, as there is no requirement to achieve results. Islamic movements have confused the realization of da'wa's mission, by connecting its success to the achievement of a concrete result, which could be the establishment of a new dynasty.

When da'wa is deliberately constructed upon religious content and confused with military jihad and qital, it becomes a deadly and effective weapon. From 'upon you is only the [duty of] notification, and upon Us is the account' (Qur'an, 13:40), a peaceful invitation to join the path of God, the da'wa becomes a coercive force capable of structuring the spirit of solidarity ('asabiyya) of the community receiving the invitation. In this respect, the instrumentalization of religion helps to shape, structure, and legitimize violence, even rendering it necessary.

*'Da'wa al wahhabiyya'* is a historically recent example that illustrates the effectiveness of a pact sealed between a da'ya—Ibn 'Abd alWahhab—and Mohammed Ibn Saud, the forerunner of the Saudi dynasty between 1744 and 1745. Besides being a movement claiming to be part of the Sunni Hanbali Islam, the Wahhabi da'wa invites people to restore the real meaning of 'tawhid' (oneness of God or monotheism) and to disregard and deconstruct so-called traditional disciplines and practices that evolved in Islamic history, such as theology and jurisprudence, and the traditions of visiting tombs and shrines of venerated individuals. Though the da'wa claims to be non-political,<sup>41</sup> its

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<sup>40</sup> See Al Banna (1974), *Mudhakirat al-daw'a wa dayia* (Memoirs of the Preaching and the Preacher), Beirut, Al-Maktab al-Islami, 3rd edition. This book is considered as the key to getting to the heart of Al Banna's sensibility, his message, and his movement. See Maréchal (2009).

<sup>41</sup> This type of jihad can be compared to the one explained by Natana J. Delong-Bas as missionary jihad (jihad al da'wah). Delong-Bas added, 'Rather than proclaiming the responsibility of Muslims

proponents could easily provide the foundation for political jihadi action when tawhid is violated (Moussalli 2009).

Several Qur'anic verses insist on the fact that the da'wa concerns the position of the one who invites without injunction or violence.<sup>42</sup>

However, the articulation of da'wa and jihad results in violence in the name of Islam for some criminal groups<sup>43</sup> that have made it the ideal goal for which to strive. As for those who receive the da'wa, we may say that a kind of coercion is cast upon them. The violence, in this case, is a soft violence: invisible, unrecognized as such, and chosen as much as it is subdued. It is the violence of trust, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gift, debt, gratitude, and piety—all the virtues in a word that dignifies the morality of honour (Bourdieu 1980).

As a symbolic power, the da'wa is at the heart of a disciplinary approach that establishes the intimate link between religious beliefs, political cause, and self-sacrifice. From this perspective, the violence that may result from this articulation can be measured in terms of the influence that the da'wa may have on the believers. When it is based purely on religious faith, it stands as a symbolic coercion, capable of hiding the face of violence since it stands as a legitimate call for a just—and, possibly, a holy—cause.

However, on the basis of his observations, Ibn Khaldun's analysis of power shifts the concept of da'wa from its usual illocutionary force

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to fight permanently and continuously against ungodliness and evil in this world and consider all non-Wahhabis as unbelievers, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's writings reveal a worldview in which education and dialogue play a more important role in winning converts and establishing justice than does violence' (DeLong-Bas 2004).

<sup>42</sup> Qur'an, 88:22, 13:40, 2:172.

<sup>43</sup> The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat or Islamic State's West Africa Province, formerly known as Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihad, have completely amalgamated da'wa and militant jihad in their constitution.

organized around a religious content to confer on it a symbolic load and a force endowed with an unprecedented utopian projection (Garrush 2017). The symbolic force of the da'wa consists of mobilizing the values and beliefs of people while urging them to appropriate the cause.

Da'wa turns into a powerful cause from which the believer cannot escape. However, its strength and its legitimacy need a universal cause that erects its proponents as sacrificial actors of a historical or divine mission (Bozarslan 2016, as cited in Garrush 2017). It is, without doubt, a symbolic violence, which consists of transforming an illusion into an effective mobilizing reality. Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a contemporary theorist of the Salafist jihadist movement, positioned jihad alongside da'wa, and *islah*. In an idealistic, radical and ambiguous vision,<sup>44</sup> al-Maqdisi aimed at establishing a pure Islamic state whose laws can only be those set forth by God in the Qur'an. The author thus theorized a 'liberating' conception of jihad to free Muslims from the tyranny and oppression of some Arab political regimes.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) looked at the conceptual meanings of symbolic violence, which, according to him, is founded on the loyalty that the dominated concede to the dominant. The relationship of domination enforces a coercive basis which raises the loyalty of the dominated by transforming it into a faith (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

However, faith in this context does not necessarily have a religious foundation. Ibn Khaldun adopted the same approach to da'wa, from which he removed the religious rhetoric to emphasize the principle of legitimate symbolic coercion (Garrush 2017). Symbolic power, in

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<sup>44</sup> See Al-Maqdissi (1970). Al-Maqdisi distanced himself from DAECH following the burning to death of the Jordanian soldier Muath al-Kasabeh in 2015. He considers their legal jihad as being violent and murderous. See his interview given to the Roya channel on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFh6gMKSGmA> (accessed on 2 March 2021).

Bourdieu's analysis, has a form of violence "as it is accomplished in and through a defined relationship that creates belief in the legitimacy of words and the people who utter them, and it operates only to the extent that those who are subjected to it recognize those who exercise it"(Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 123). Being authentically rationalist, Ibn Khaldun defined da'wa as a secular concept, thus operating a displacement that clearly delineated the boundary between God and the human world. This clearly shows that there are other da'wa than religious ones and that the religious foundations are neither the only source of power nor of violence (Garrush 2017).

### **B.10. The Narrative of War in Islam**

We have seen that the two terms *harb* and *qital* appeared in the Quran with nuances that make *harb* an aspect of fight closer to the one we find in war. Concentrating on *qital*, the idea of killing is overemphasized with the verb *qatala*, which clearly means killing and slaying. The phrase '*qotila fi al-harb*' means 'he was killed in a war'. In comparison with *jihad*, *harb* and *qital* do not necessarily put forward the idea of a war for God, as only the *jihad* is carried out in the path of God (*fi sabil allah*). To some extent, *jihad* carries out the idea of a legitimate war ordered by God under specific rules, restrictions, and responsibilities.

The paradigm of war in the Qur'an operates a break with the pre-Islamic practice of war. Other objectives are now established for the Muslim fighter, who now must fight for a different objective from the one to which he was accustomed. The war in the Qur'an is not about material benefits, it is a means to reach God. The transformation establishes, in the psychology of the *mujaheddin*, a discipline for self-edification, so that the word of God is propagated and heard by all humankind.

The word *harb* played an esteemed role in everyday Bedouin life, while Arab poetry followed the rhythm of wars to the extent that poets had a role in battles no less important than that of the knights and warriors of Muharibun.

Ayyâm al-‘Arab (Days of the Arabs) (Chams Eddin 2002), are narratives taken from classical works and Arabic poetry that account for wars and battles that were fought in the pre-Islamic period among Arabian tribes and that are remembered through oral tradition. The word *al-harb* appears in the narratives as a pre-Islamic term used by Bedouins in their daily lives and culture.

At the time, poetry could provoke and ignite war on many occasions, so much so that tribes that did not experience war cannot claim to have a true poetic tradition. Amr bin Ma’adi Yakrib (d. 40–41/642), Dorayd bin Al Summah (c. 6th), Abdullah ibn Rawaha ibn Tha’labah (d.8/629), Amir ibn al-Tufayl (d. 9/630), Hassan ibn Thabit (d. 35–40/660), and many others were knights and poets of war who lived in the pre-Islamic period, but some of them embraced Islam and became the poets who accompanied the Prophet and his companions to battles. The poetry of Antarah ibn Shaddad (d. 608 AD) was almost entirely turned towards the event of war, the value of courage, and chaste love (Sharf Addin 1997).<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> An example from a poem of Antarah ibn Shaddad: *‘And surely I recollected you, even when the lances were drinking my blood, and bright swords of Indian make were dripping with my blood. I wished to kiss the swords, for verily they shone as bright as the flash of the foretooth of your smiling mouth. If you lower your veil over yourself in front of me, of what use will it be? For, verily, I am expert in capturing the mailed horseman. Praise me for the qualities which you know I possess, for, verily, when I am not ill-treated, I am gentle to associate with. And if I am ill-treated, then, verily, my tyranny is severe, very bitter is the taste of it, as the taste of the colocynth’.* (Sharf Addin 1997).



### **B.11. No War without Peace**

The Arabs in pre-Islamic times had the habit and reputation of being warlike people. Before Islam, their battles were centered on the material and fleeting aspects of this world, sometimes waging wars over sheep and camel pastures or clashing over water resources and wells. Conflicts could easily arise between two members of rival tribes and last for several generations. Qur'anic verses focusing on the category of war brought about important transformations in the issue of war, both in terms of its objectives and means, as well as its strategies and tactics.

Far from thinking of the Qur'an as a book of war, the verses focusing on war in general (jihad, qital, etc.) institute a new and binding paradigm regarding the legitimacy of war and its necessity. Similarly, the Qur'an introduces the category of peace and reconciliation to end conflicts that were considered unnecessary. A single cause of war and struggle was established with universal values. War is made legitimate to support the word of God and of his messenger, to protect the weak, and to resist against those who drive Muslims out of their territories and homes. It is a new paradigm of warfare that Arabs did not know previously. Nevertheless, the paradigm of peace (sulh and ṣalaḥ), in all its aspects, plays a pivotal role in the Qur'anic text as they bring under tension the opposite axis, that of fasad.<sup>46</sup>

When the war intensified and the combatants became exhausted, the warring parties would aspire to a truce that could be transformed into peace. Again, the ancient Arabic narrative recorded sulh, or reconciliation between tribes, as a major event, as it sometimes brought an end to a long conflict that may have lasted many years. Tribal chiefs played a significant role in all steps involved in declaring war against another tribe or declaring peace and reconciliation. The Arabs had their

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<sup>46</sup> 'and Allah knows the corrupter from the amender' (Qur'an, 2:220).

customs to signify and propose the truce to the other side. Likewise, poetry could play an essential role in terms of advice for peace and reconciliation. There were no poets, on the one hand, pushing for war, while those on the other side called for peace. The same poets would have an influence on both situations through very sophisticated poetic styles and compositions, such as *madh*, *hija'*, *nasab*, and *ritha'*.<sup>47</sup> The *mu'allaqa*<sup>48</sup> of Zuhayr Ibn Abî Sulmâ (d. 609) is a praise addressed to the two chiefs of the Banû Murra, who paid blood money to the 'Abs to end the War of Dâhis and Ghabra between 'Abs and Dhubyân Tarafa (d. 569).

Ṣalaḥ and its derivatives, such as *sulh* (peace), *salih* (benevolence), and *islah* (reconciliation),<sup>49</sup> are notions that result in a war settlement between Muslims and non-believers and peace between Muslims and non-believers: 'There is no good in much of their private counsels, except for him who advocates charity, or kindness, or reconciliation between people. Whoever does that, seeking God's approval, We will give him a great compensation' (Qur'an, 4:114). The issue of reconciliation (Qur'an, 2:220; 2: 224; 2:277; 4:35; 49:9) is used in three contexts: reconciliation between two groups of believers (Qur'an, 41:9–10), reconciliation between two believers (Qur'an, 4:14; 4:128), and reconciliation between an individual and a group of believers (Qur'an, 24:28). Peace, reconciliation, and doing good in the Qur'an aim at a holistic state of order concerning all aspects of life and conduct. Holistic peace 'would be born out of a tranquil order that pervades all dimensions in life: social, economic, cultural and political, domestically as well as internationally' (Mirbagheri 2012, p. 87).

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<sup>47</sup> Panegyric, invective, love elegy, and lamentation. See Meisami (2003).

<sup>48</sup> The suspended poems are odes where Arab life, before Muhammad, is portrayed with great charm and precision. The odes are said at the Ukaz fair, a literary and commercial gathering near Mecca, where poets from the various tribes would publicly perform their verses, and the most valuable were inscribed with gold letters and hung on the walls of the Ka'ba.

<sup>49</sup> The term 'peace' and its derivatives are mentioned in the Qur'an more than 200 times.

With the emergence of the legal tradition in the eighth century, and the intense activity of exegesis and interpretation, warfare was strongly codified and theorized (Abbès 2014). From this point of view, Islam manifests no moral reluctance to use weapons on behalf of the Muslim community, not to convert by force the unbelievers, but to extend the territory of ‘dar al-Islam’.<sup>50</sup> The conception of the army that permeates the theoretical and narrative sources of the Arabs is first understood lexically as a gathering of warriors whose purpose is to wage war, a destructive phenomenon without equal that seeks to destroy the established corrupted order. It is, therefore, not surprising that the three main terms used by Arab authors to describe an army have negative connotations.<sup>51</sup>

Qur’anic verses advocating *qital* (war) become progressively more important as the *da’wa* progresses. Muhammad, as the leader of a community that had been chased from its original territory and home, must lead several battles under divine injunctions (Qur’an, 9:5, 2:216, 12:78). Obviously, unless Muslims are still under the threat of being chased from their homes, then these passages have no contemporary relevance and only take on meaning in the light of the particular context in which they were revealed.

Surah 2, verse 216: ‘Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not’, imposes *qital* on Muslims in a tone that suggests the exceptional nature of the act of war. In addition, when a war does not take place,— as in the Battle of the Trench (627), which was not very bloody because the fighting did not take place, the Qur’an expresses a

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<sup>50</sup> Dar al-Islam, the house/zone of Islam has been.

<sup>51</sup> In Arabic, *Jund* refers to the idea of harshness and doughtiness, while *jayš* refers to the idea of agitation and hurricane and ‘*askar*’ refers to violence. See Buresi and Zouache (2014).

form of satisfaction at the fact that the qital did not take place: ‘And Allah repelled those who disbelieved, in their rage, not having obtained any good. And sufficient was Allah for the believers in battle, and ever is Allah Powerful and Exalted in Might’ (Qur’an, 33:25).

### **B.1.12. Justification of War in Islam and Quranic Citations to War, Justice and Peace**

Generally speaking, the conditions of warfare in the Qur’an are explained in verses that reveal three broad reasons to impose war on Muslims. The first reason is to fight back the aggression of those who attack them, and the Qur’an says, ‘Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors’ (2:190). For those who do not surrender, Surah 4, verse 91 states that it is the duty of Muslims to pursue the qital: You will find others who wish to obtain security from you and [to] obtain security from their people. Every time they are returned to [the influence of] disbelief, they fall back into it. So if they do not withdraw from you or offer you peace or restrain their hands, then seize them and kill them wherever you overtake them. And those—We have made for you against them a clear authorization.

(Qur’an, 4:91) The second reason is to protect the most vulnerable through qital; according to the Qur’an (4:75), fighting to save the life of the most vulnerable people is an obligation. And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, ‘Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper?’.

(Qur’an, 4:75) The third reason is to prevent sedition and discord (fitna): ‘And fight them until there is no fitnah and [until] the religion, all of it,

is for Allah. And if they cease—then indeed, Allah is Seeing of what they do’ (Qur’an, 8:39).

Over the centuries, *fitna* and the need to preserve the unity of the Islamic religion and community has become even more important because the Muslim memory remains deeply marked by the schism between Sunnis and Shiites. At the very beginning of Islam, discord divided the al ummah al Islamiya (the Islamic community), provoking deep trauma that has led jurists to confirm the principle of the use of weapons to preserve the unity of Muslims as being just and authorized. It then became very easy to proclaim any war aimed at ending dissension in the Muslim community to be legitimate. Legal theory offers an absolutist vision of power and any form of rebellion and political opposition potentially opens the way to armed repression.

Jurists invoke a Qur’anic passage that condemns all forms of sedition: And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (Qur’an, 49:9).

In the 10th and 11th centuries, when a change in the meaning of jihad was revealed to be concerned more with the struggle against one’s ego, even if the criteria for a just war were met, war did not seem to be desirable. In the tradition of the Mirrors for Princes, war was described as a disease and it was emphasized that political means were preferable.<sup>52</sup> However, diplomacy did not prohibit the use of cunning

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<sup>52</sup> The Islamic tradition, in both classical and contemporary manifestations, suggests that the idea of religion as a *causis belli* provides a way to limit the occasion and the damage of war. In short, the Islamic tradition suggests that ‘holy war’ is not the equivalent of ‘total war’, any more than ‘just war’ always means ‘limited war’ (Kelsay 2007).

and ploys—anything that contributes to the achievement of political goals without the use of violence is a positive thing.

This approach is based, in particular, on Kalila wa Dimna's tales, which were translated into Arabic by Ibn Muqaffa' (d. 142/759) in the eighth century. The main principle is illustrated in the tale 'Owls and Crows', the moral of which is that the saving of human lives must always be targeted.<sup>53</sup> However, while in the *Mirrors for Princes*, war must, therefore, remain a state of exception in relation to peace and security, the legal tradition, on the other hand, is much less explicit on the subject and appears to have a much more straightforward relationship with the use of force. In this conception, just war is equally defensive and offensive. Founded during the glorious era of conquests, the legal framework of the jihad includes an assumed belligerent dimension.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the discussion so far is supposed to have made it clear that peace and justice are comprehensive concepts with deep implications and the Muslim have to be people committed to peace and justice. They must clearly illustrate to the world that Islam is indeed the religion of peace. However, such striving for peace must never allow being unjust, nor should it allow passive acceptance of injustices: Be you upright supporters of justice... [4:135]

Reflecting on Peace, justice and war (violence) - components, instruments, and faces -, allows one to examine its evolution from

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<sup>53</sup> According to the philosopher Al-Fārābī (872–950), who lived at a time when the central power, the caliphate, was divided into emirates and states that were claiming to be independent, armed violence must not be an end in itself—it is only justified as long as injustice and persecution continue. Maintaining war for war is the supreme vice according to the philosopher (Mahdi 2000, p. 193).

illegitimate to legitimate tools of power and authority. Liberal Islamic exegetes are convinced that groups in Islam like the al-Qaida and other terror groups also quote Qur'anic verses (components and instruments of peace and justice) very selectively and very cleverly to mislead young Muslim generations. There is great need to refute their point of view which is political and not at all religious, spiritual and moral as advocated by Qur'an. Young Islamic scholars and intellectuals should study the Qur'an and Sunna in totality and develop Islamic theory of war and peace.

Violence is a form of support that may allow some religious claims to take power before transforming themselves into institutionalized and sustainable regimes. The question is how to make this power permanent and legitimate. Ibn Khaldun's analysis of the cyclical life of governments suggests that peripheral movements can take over the centre of power and become legitimate authorities. They may even grant another actor the right to use violence without losing its monopoly. The monopoly on violence can also be jeopardized by peripheral movements, unless the established regime wields violence both legitimately and centrally. It would be too easy to deal with religion as a matrix to generate violence without dissecting the paradoxical links between power and violence.

The question of power is truly at the heart of the economy of violence. There is a primary violence that arises as a legitimate power, against which a counter-power organizes with the objective of taking the place of the established power. This cyclical dialectic condemns us to a life with and of violence. The Khaldunian model that we have insisted on does not separate the political and religious issues. In other words, the model establishes continuity between these two registers that are at the centre of the question of power and its takeover. For Ibn Khaldun, the institution of a state displaces violence from the peripheral sphere to the

centre, thus making violence legitimate. The mechanism of this displacement is not religious, but it relies on religious (moral) concepts – peace and justice -, to achieve entirely secular ends.

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