

# Understanding Islamic Militancy

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# Egypt 1928

- 1928 Muslim Brotherhood was created in Egypt by a school teacher Hassan al-Banna.
  - Started with Sufi teachings: Philosophical, mystical and inner directed school of Islamic thought.
  - He intended the Brotherhood to be a youth organization aimed at moral and social reform
- Moral regeneration would be a stepping stone to Islamizing the state and society.
  - A grassroots or bottom up approach. Still favored by most Islamic movements.
  - Logo: “a Salafiya message, a Sunni way, and a Sufi truth.”
    - Salafiya – Rightful Predecessors, using ultra orthodox Wahhabi Muslim theology dominate and exported from Saudi Arabia

# Egypt

- The Muslim Brotherhood:
  - By the end of World War II, the Brotherhood had evolved to carrying out attacks against the British Protectorate (1882-1951)
  - Aggressively campaigned against social and political injustice.
  - It had become the largest opposition political party in Egypt.
  - 1948 it joined Palestinians with the war against Israel.
    - Included in its ranks future Presidents of Egypt
      - Gamal Nassar and Anwar Sadat

# Egypt “1948”

- Some in the Muslim Brotherhood had developed a “secret apparatus” as an underground violent paramilitary wing of its organization.
- The Egyptian Government decided the Brotherhood had gone too far and banned the organization, accusing it of killing its Prime Minister.

# USA 40's & 50's

- Israel was recognized by the USA in 1948, by the Truman administration as a country.
  - Creating a highly negative view of the USA throughout the Arab world
- Eisenhower: (1958) Allied with secular Arab states to counter balance “godless communism.” During the the cold war the USA promoted Islamism in the Arab world to neutralize Marxism

# Mr. Sayyid Qutb in the USA: 1948-1950

- Mr. Qutb a school teacher and writer was visiting the USA from Egypt.
- He stayed for two years and wrote a popular book “The America I have Seen” giving a scathing review of American culture.
  - American culture has little to offer in the scope of world history and the future of human societies.
  - A land filled with “pleasures that acknowledge no limit or moral restraint”
- The book is still popular today in the Middle East.
- Did he have an “Ax to Grind” due to the recognition of Israel?
- Also, wrote on why Islam is the religion of the future.

# “The America I have Seen” by Qutb:

- “the American dream is nothing less than a plot against the Kingdom of God”
  - Moral depravity, ramped greed and materialism
  - Sons and daughters abandoning their families
  - Everything is For Sale including the soul itself
  - All-consuming destroying everything in its path
  - Progress that destroys all human values, the very basis of morality is lost

# “The America I have Seen” by Qutb

- Americans believe in science alone
- Their obsession with technology comes at a high cost, namely their hearts and souls
- Talk only of ...“dollars, movie stars, and cars.”
- Their display of women’s bodies shows their animalistic primitiveness.
- Chapter: “A Hot Night at the Church”
  - ministers perform at the altar like “merchants, showmen, or actors” a part of the moral corruption worshipping power of freedom, not religion and God.

# “The America I have Seen” by Qutb

- “An Islamic nation is morally superior to the West and the USA.”
- Muslims should “not to be deceived by America and Western propaganda about progress and civilization.”
- “We are facing a brutal form of intellectual and ideological colonization.” ... “We must not let America colonize us mentally.”
- The choice is between materialism and Islam

# The Seeds of Al Jihad

- Qutb's book outlined the barbarity of the "American man" obsessed with materialism
- The goal is to purge Islamic society of all western influences
- Islam is seen as a complete way of life superior to western immorality.
- Armed Jihadists are God's instruments, foot soldiers in an epic struggle for Islam (submission to God's will)

Note: Jihad has two meanings it can also mean internal struggle of moral striving. Al Jihad is an armed struggle

# Some Perspective

Before we cast Judgement let's think about:

- Conservative Christian Reactions to
  - Women's Rights / Changes in fashion
  - New Age Music - Jazz and Rock and Roll (1920's & 50's)
  - Counter Culture of the 1960's and 70s
- Imagine conservatives having to deal with all these cultural shifts coming all-at-once from a dominate foreign culture.
  - What would have been the reaction?
  - If Al Jihad existed in Christianity would it have been referenced?
  - Armed Jihad is a built in demonic construction within the Muslim religion. Not justifiable in Christ.

# Egypt in the 70's

- By 1970 the Brotherhood tried to become a legitimate opposition political party renouncing violence.
  - But was still banned from political participation under both Anwar Sadat and his successor Hosni Mubarak.
- Al Jihad, the armed struggle, began and was led by Kamal el-Said Habib
- 1970's this organization planted the seeds for armed jihad throughout Muslim lands.
- Considered themselves "Warriors for God"
- Goal: Decapitate Egypt's secular state.
- Assassinated Anwar Sadat in 1981
- After sometime Kamal cooled his rhetoric.

# Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood - 70's

- Egypt's prisons and torture chambers were effective incubators for generations of activists
- Egypt's politics and failure to produce economic prosperity left many college educated young males without jobs or hope of economic agency / meaningful employment.
- Many turned to Islam to give their lives perceived meaning and purpose

# Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood - 70's

- It was the secularization and Westernization of *Arab* society that became the organization's primary concern.
  - The west is importing a morally depraved culture.
- However, Arab societies can't bury their heads in the sand or turn back the clock
  - Seductive influences of modernization, Westernization, and new knowledge, are unavoidable.

# Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood - 70's

- More than a socio-economic or political scheme.
- It is seen as a spiritual and moral quest to halt, not merely to moderate, the secularization / Westernization of society.
- Their aim is to please God, the West cannot understand, as it is blinded by materialism
- It is the emptiness of secular progress represented by western prosperity that set them on their spiritual quest.

# Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood - 70's

- Though downplaying Socio-economic factors, much of the early rhetoric used Marxist language,
  - Oppression of Muslims to foreign masters
  - Injustice (Palestinian struggle/propped up dictators)
  - Hopelessness of secular society
- “Our very identity, religion and culture are threatened by secular influences”
- Islam is seen as the only alternative from Godless Communism and Western debauchery.

# The Beginning of Al Jihad

- Kamal cooled overtime but others insisted on violence.
- Al Qaeda also called itself “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders”
- Their struggle was for the Islam’s existence “This struggle will not end unless one opponent defeats or annihilates the other”
- “the war is between Islam and the Christian west” and “nobody can be neutral”
- This is “eternal revolution” against all enemies of Islam both external and internal.
- These views are the philosophical foundation of modern Jihadist

# The Beginning of Al Jihad

- Armed Jihad can be seen as a Manichean struggle believing human history is shaped by an epic struggle of all good against all evil.
- Fighting to bring God's kingdom to earth.
- There is Islam and Islamic way of living and then there is Satan's ever present evil forming cells of corruption (internal and external enemies) and debauchery in democratic secular politics.

# The Beginning of Al Jihad

- Debauchery of women's rights?
  - “empowering women violates the most fundamental codes of Islamic morality”
  - Women could only be empowered to be over other women, a woman can never be in charge of a man
  - Religious Muslim purity serves an agenda aimed at preserving and justifying unjust traditional power structures.
  - ie: the power of men to treat women as property.

# Lebanon's Civil War

- In the 1970's Lebanon fell apart.
- Once peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims broke into violence.
- Christians had most of the power (6 to 5 in parliament by law) and wealth within Lebanon before the war.
- Christian fundamentalists and extremists became militants and were brutal during the civil war, they pillaged and killed in the name of the cross.

# Lebanon's Civil War

- Muslim's perceived "the ummah (Muslim community) did nothing while Muslims were being persecuted by the crusaders and Zionists"
- "The predicament of our Muslim brethren in Lebanon remind us of the need for an Islamic army to defend the ummah and to replace pro-western secular Arab regimes with God's law"
- Thus Christian militancy in Lebanon fueled the violent Jihadist movement.

# Iran 1979

- While Lebanon was in the middle of a civil war, Iran had a revolution.
- Ayatollah Khomeini was the architect of Iran's transformation from a secular monarchy to an Islamic theocracy.
- Khomeini "We shall export our revolution to the whole world. Until the cry 'there is no God but God' resonates around the world"
- "Islam is a religion of militant individuals who are committed to truth and justice." .. "who desire freedom and independence." .."struggling against imperialism."

# Ayatollah Khomeini

- Very popular amongst Muslims worldwide
- He had tapped into growing fear and rage against America's foreign policy and cultural invasion / moral corruption.
- He created cultural, political, and religious resentment.
  - He offered images of Muslim children being turned into gamblers, prostitutes, drug addicts, and alcoholics.
  - As an alternative, he promoted Muslim dignity, sacrifice and defiance.

# Lebanon

- Throughout the 1980's Khomeini's soldiers of God helped Islamic clergy develop Lebanon's Hizzbollah into a jihadi headquarters
- Shiite militants pioneered suicide bombings to fight against Christian militias
- "They are depending on their good weapons. But they must know our people depend on good faith."

# Afghanistan 1980's

- Russia invaded Afghanistan.
- Many local volunteers rose up to defend their country and homeland.
- They began as a defense against foreign invaders to become a global jihad offensive.
- How did this happen?

# Afghanistan 1980s

- Russian were the provocateurs
- The USA and Saudi Arabia were the co-bankers (estimated \$10 billion)
  - A decade of promoting ideological rhetoric and recruitment for Islamic Al Jihad, and supplying arms.
  - Afghanistan created the first truly multi-national army of Islamic warriors
- In the 1980's thousands of Egyptian Islamists went to Afghanistan to help in the fight.
  - Gain combat experience and learn insurgency techniques in preparation to fight back home in Egypt.

# Saudi Arabia

- Through the 1980's and until the early 1990's Saudi Arabia was in complete harmony with Al Jihad and exported much puritanical ultra orthodox theological thought to Afghanistan.
  - Government media promoted glories of Al Jihad.
  - Al Jihad and Islamic pride was all over the kingdom
- Saudi's reasoned they could take credit for and harness the radical idealistic energy, then export it to barren faraway land, so much the better for homeland security.

# Saudi Arabia

- It all changed once the Saudi's government Islamic credentials were brought into question.
  - During the first Iraq war, it allowed US (non-Muslim) troops into the kingdom.
  - According to classical Islamic jurisprudence: Muslims are forbidden from seeking help from non-Muslim military forces, or allying with them.
  - Once the Al Jihad "Jeannie" was out of the bottle the Saudi's couldn't get it back inside.

# Saudi Arabia's Islam

- Wahhabism is a sect of Islam inspired by a 18<sup>th</sup> century cleric with last name of Wahhab.
- Wahhab worked to purify Islam and to wage Jihad (struggle) against all other forms of religion.
- Ultra Orthodox Wahhabi religious scholars have dominated Saudi religious schools for a century.
- They prefer to be called “Salifis” righteous predecessors.
  - Referring to the Muhammad and his companions.

# Saudi's Wahhabism

- Built in Heteronomy (top down religion, gives power to those who can claim religious authority)
- Koranic verse in which Allah says that one cannot be a true Muslim unless one holds Allah and his messenger Muhammad in higher esteem than his loved ones and his material possessions.
  - the good of the individual is subservient to the collective good of the ummah.
  - Philosophical existentialism cannot live within Islam because of Muhammad's historic words, thus a "heavy yoke" by design

# Saudi's Wahhabism

- Views any form of intellectualism, mysticism, or diversity within Islam as corruptive and un-Islamic.
- Wahhabism insists on all issues Muslims must refer to the original texts of the Koran and Sunnah (aka Hadith) as laid down by Muhammad (making him the highest authority of the divine/their only divine son).
  - Creates a relentless opposition to women's rights
  - Al Queda and ISIS represents an extreme offshoot of Wahhabi theology.

# Afghanistan 1990s

- After the Russian's were defeated in 1989, Afghanistan became a breeding ground for armed Jihad.
- Gave birth to a hardened and professional army of fighters who were fanatical about the business of Al Jihad
- Bin Laden realized that poorly equipped but dedicated men, armed with faith, could take on a better equipped enemy and win.

# Afghanistan 1990s

- Azzam a Palestinian who had a doctorate in "Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence" from the University of Cairo
  - Built a network that was scholarly, ideological and paramilitary helping globalize Islamic militancy.
  - He heavily influenced Osama Bin Laden
  - "Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues"
  - Funding in 1980's by the USA and Saudi Arabia

# Afghanistan 1990s

- Azzam's Al Jihadi camps were designed so that graduates can go anywhere in the world and effectively command battles.
- Rhetoric once used against Russians was conveniently modified to be used against the USA and western powers
- Osama bin Laden returned from Saudi Arabia after the first Iraq war, on a mission to expel US troops from Saudi Arabia, and wage war sighting an external enemy of Islam

# Afghanistan 1990s

- Zawahiri an Egyptian, went to Afghanistan to learn how to overthrow pro-Western Muslim governments, mainly in Egypt.
- Egyptians dominated early Al Qaeda ranks and were more focused on overthrowing Egyptian government and replacing it with an Islamic state.
- Osama bin Laden worked to transform Al Qaeda to include more Saudi Arabians and Yemenis to fight an expanded Jihad, bringing the fight to the enemy.
- Azzam, opposed expanding Jihad, focused on creating a mujahedeen into a rapid response force to help persecuted Muslims on Muslim lands.
  - Azzam was killed with Zawahiri being the main suspect.

# Afghanistan 2000

- Al Queda, took the direction given by Osama bin Laden and plotted to wage war against the United States of America.
- 1998 bombed US Embassies in Africa
- In year 2000, they bombed the USS Cole
- On Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 they successfully unleashed terrorist's attacks on US soil.

# Understanding the Growth

- Since the 1970's religious fervor in the Arab world has been fed by rage over economic, social, and political impotence.
- Many turned to Islam as a refuge from and a response to the seemingly unstoppable Westernization of their societies and oppressive political authoritarianism.
- The overwhelming number of Muslims are god-fearing citizens whose overriding goal is to take care of their families.
- There is little love between most pious Muslims and the Al Jihadists aka soldiers of God.

# The Great Satan?

Why is the USA is seen this way by Al Jihadists?

3 reasons why America is enemy #1

- Unholy alliance with Muslim rulers.
  - Muslim rulers aren't allowed to ally with non-Muslims
  - Loss of political, economic, and military independence
- America's Relationship with Israel
- America's global dominance.
  - economic, military, and especially cultural

# Israel

- Arabs felt American politicians had stabbed Palestinians in the back, sacrificing them to placate the powerful Jewish community believed to dominate American political life.
- American continued support of Israel demonstrates its hostile stance toward Muslims.

# American Media

- America media is reaching every corner of the world.
- It is being interpreted by jihadists as a means to undermine religious and parental authority over children, adolescence, and young adults.
- The exported western media bolsters Islamic arguments of American immorality and materialism

# Common Muslim Skeptical Views of 9/11 attacks

- No way Al-Queda could fool the CIA
- “our Religion forbids us to harm civilians”
- Many believed the Bush administration had a strategy to take over gas and oil resources in central Asia.
  - 9/11 was a part of GW Bush’s strategy.

# Muslims against 9/11 attacks

- Sept 27, 2001: Islamic Scholars issued a fatwa directing American Muslims to serve in the American military.
  - Even an outspoken conservative cleric Yusuf Qardawi endorsed the fatwa, though highly critical of American foreign policies.
  - Large numbers of endorsees showed that the larger Muslim community was not in agreement with Al Queda and Osama bin Laden's rhetoric.

# Muslim World View 9/11

- Continually look at injustice to Muslims and see hypocrisy of world / western opinions.
- “Why were all these voices of humanity and morality silent when Israel bombed Lebanese and Palestinian civilians?”
- “Where was American public opinion and conscience?”

# Continued Problems

- Economics of Jihad
  - Many young Muslims are disenfranchised, unemployed, alienated and living in ghettoized neighborhoods.
  - These Young Muslims get drawn into self-righteous puritanical Sunni Salafism (Wahhabism)
  - The urge to sacrifice everything when there doesn't seem to be hope to have much of anything in this world or become disillusioned with their participation within a Western lifestyle.

# Continued Problems: ISIS

## The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria ISIS

- A complete adoption of extreme Wahhabi theology and Al Jihadist violence
- Commit atrocities against all groups they encounter especially other Muslims who do not accept their version of Islam (at war with Afghani Taliban)
  - Decapitate, hang, blow-up, or shoot men of fighting age
  - Enslave and rape women and girls in conquered areas
- Continually find internal and external enemies to fight
- Find new recruits from disenfranchised and/or fanatical Muslims worldwide.

# Wait what are the numbers

source: [clarianproject.org](http://clarianproject.org) citing Pew Research

- Only a small minority are radical.
- Of 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, only .5 million are now a part of radical Islam or only 0.03% (numbers are growing)
- Islamists and Fundamentalist Muslims are about 283 million or about 17%
  - This 17% is where radical Islam finds new recruits.
  - This leaves 83% of Muslims who are NOT Islamists or Fundamentalists

# What's the differences in the 17%?

- Radical Violent Islam: .03% are the terrorists
- Islamists: Believe in the same things as Radicals but don't believe in violent political solutions.
  - They use democracy against itself in attempts to achieve Sharia Law and an Islamic State.
    - Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, CAIR in the USA
- Fundamentalists: Believe the same things as Radicals and Islamists but are not working to overthrow governments.
  - Killing of those who leave the religion, Sharia Law, etc.

# MUSLIMS POLLED Worldwide

source: [clarianproject.org](http://clarianproject.org) citing Pew Research

Believe honor killings can be justified

– 345 million or 22.1%

Support stoning of unfaithful spouses

– 289 million or 18.1%

Support whipping, cutting off hands, and stoning.

– 281 million or 17.6%

Believe apostates or people who leave the faith should be executed.

– 237 million or 14.8%

Note: this all is based on demonic elements within Islam and cannot be removed thanks to the religion's founder (Son)

# Western Muslims

source: [clarianproject.org](http://clarianproject.org) citing Pew Research

## Young Western Muslims 18-29 years old

- % who believe suicide bombings against civilians can be justified.
  - French Muslims: 42%
  - British Muslims: 35%
  - American Muslims: 26%

# Solutions?

- Kamal's cooled rhetoric: We, Muslim Brotherhood, are ready to meet America half way. USA politicians must...
  - respect our Muslim identity
  - stop propping up unjust Muslim rulers
  - cease support for Zionists
- Islam is more philosophically disposed to capitalism, especially private property, free trade, and wealth accumulation.
- However, ultimately the aim is still Islam for all.

# Solutions?

Not in the book

- Support the Reform of Islam: Protestant Islam?
  - Islam as one of many religions
  - Clerics and Imams would need to accept:
    - Koran doesn't supersede or abrogate all other religious views.
    - Muhammad is not the final authority of the divine over all other divine authorities.
  - Can it be done?
    - The above undermines the proselytizing Koranic message
    - Ultra Orthodox Wahhabism is strongly built on Islamic Holy texts and would be very difficult to dislodge.
    - Wahhabi's would view this as an internal enemy to fight rhetorically and violently if necessary

# Solutions?

## Not in the book

- Convert Muslims to Christianity?
  - How? What is the approach?
    - Use the Truth, God is Love. (not ...demonic )
    - Bible v. Koran? Hasn't worked thus far.
      - Good arguments in Paul's letters as Islam is another slave inducing religion like Judaism of old.
    - The Holy Trinity: as offered prior world religions class
  - Muslims face a threat of a death if they choose to leave the Muslim faith.
    - another built in demonic element of the religion

# Appreciation?

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# Sources

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[www.clarionproject.org](http://www.clarionproject.org)