JOHN A. TURNER

RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY AND THE ROOTS OF THE GLOBAL JIHAD

SALAFI JIHADISM AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER

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Salafi Jihadism and International Order

John A. Turner
Independent Scholar, USA

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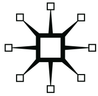

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2014 978-1-137-40956-0

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First published 2014 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978-1-349-48873-5 ISBN 978-1-137-40957-7 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9781137409577

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

To John A. Turner Jr., Janet Turner and Lana
Thank you for all you have done

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Introduction

The events of 11 September 2001 prompted perplexing questions. For some the attacks may have appeared to uncover a heretofore obscure threat to the security of the Western world. Perhaps it was the scale of the event and the mass casualties which resulted, or the failure of the US government to protect its citizens, that caused such shocking surprise. Questions were posed that encapsulated the crux of the issue: Why did this happen? Why do they hate us? What do they want? Possibly, and reasonably so, these questions resulted from a lack of understanding of what Salafi Jihadism is, what the goals of its adherents are and how these are prevented from being realised. Islamic brands of terrorism were not unknown before 2001. The assassination of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, the bombing of the US Marine barracks in Lebanon, the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, as well as a number of other violent events had raised perplexing questions since the 1970s. The Iranian Revolution, though a different breed of Islamism, brought significant world attention to the power and potency of political Islamic movements. However, Islamic brands of terrorism, and Islamism in general, were often cobbled together under the banner of Islamic fundamentalism. Salafists, Khomeinists, Islamists, Wahabists and even those participating in nationalist causes were often portrayed as indistinguishable. This had the effect of confusing the varieties of political Islam which made it difficult for many to understand why Islamic political violence had travelled so far beyond the confines of the Islamic sphere. Killing a president of Egypt, attacking American soldiers in Lebanon or even taking embassy workers hostage in Iran was one thing, but attacking civilians an ocean apart from the troubles of the Middle East was quite another. Bernard Lewis, a noted Middle East scholar, framed the question in terms of 'Muslim Rage', which echoed the manner in which the

problem was understood by many.[1] What were the roots of this 'rage' and why had it come to be directed against the West in the form of international 'terror' organisations?

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, experts and non-experts alike began to offer definitive answers to a variety of questions that, in essence, were reflective of a single query. Why had Salafi Jihadism come to be in conflict with the US? Islamic terrorism was certainly not a new phenomenon, even on US soil. Al-Qaeda was no less known to many in academia and government professions as well as others. Yet, the litany of answers related to the central question remained diverse. It is reasonable to understand this debate, as the answer no doubt differs depending on how the question is approached. Looking at the individual jihadist or the al-Qaeda organisation exclusively renders one kind of understanding, while taking the problem from a structural position or one related to particular kinds of foreign policies and events of the twentieth century produce quite another. Observing civilisations in their totality, looking to the nature of religion, culture and societies presents yet another. Conceivably, then, the answer to why this happened could be elaborated upon almost indefinitely. However, if the problem is addressed in its totality, that is, looking to the contemporary and the historical, observing how the international system operates, how US power is employed and the manner in which certain elements of the Islamic tradition intersect with those variables, a more nuanced answer to the question may be possible.

Many of those who endeavour to find explanations for the rise of the Global Jihad look to contemporary issues that emerged in the twentieth century.[2] This approach is not entirely invalid. Existing explanations focus either on very specific issues of the modern era or timeless metanarratives. Contemporary issues that are commonly cited include undemocratic rule in the Middle East, the Israeli state, unequal economic practices, US foreign policy and globalisation. The most prevalent metanarrative that has been proposed focuses on inevitable confrontations between competing cultures, religions and civilisations based on realities that have existed for centuries.[3] Beyond these metanarratives and contemporary assumptions regarding causation, however, are the often marginalised historical roots. Casting aside the notion that there is anything inherently 'rage'-filled about Islam, the question must still be addressed in part by investigating Muslim history and Islamic theology. Salafi Jihadism is more than the corpus of a contemporary movement with narrowly defined objectives and ideology. It is informed by a specific Islamic political thought that has deep roots and is influenced by Islamic history. Equally, though, Salafi

Jihadism is also a counter to the nature of the international system. In essence there are two evolving forces, the glacial consolidation of an international system and the long-standing Islamic experiment to unite the Muslim peoples under a leadership that is legitimised through religious credentials. Both of these forces have evolved over the course of time taking different forms and facing continuous challenges as world events unfold. The twenty-first century is the time period in which these opposing forces have most destructively collided.

This book endeavours to observe where the historical objectives of the Salafi Jihadists intersect with the contemporary character of the international system. The conflict between the Salafi Jihadists and the US is relatively modern, not least because US hegemony is relatively contemporary. The conflict is related to historical conceptualisations regarding statehood, legitimacy and sovereignty that are present in Islamic social and theological thought. The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire following World War One resulted in the end of nearly 13 centuries of Islamic empires and, possibly more significantly, the end of the institution of the caliphate. The end of Ottoman authority not only resulted in a new kind of political order through the division of the region into nation states by colonial powers, but also weakened the possibility of religiously sanctioned governance. This particular historical moment remains significant in the collective Muslim consciousness, as it marked the moment where distinct obstacles to the notions of unity and legitimacy emerged.

Legitimacy to rule in the Islamic world has historically been highly contentious. Competing powers sought to unify the Muslim community under a particularly ambitious actor who could articulate the right to rule in Islamic terms. There has been consistent competition over who should lead the community of believers, a desire for its unity and appeals to religion to justify political power since the time of Muhammad. However, the struggles between competing Islamic entities vying for power remained largely contained within the Islamic world and its periphery until the latter portion of the twentieth century. What has changed in the contemporary is not the proliferation of violent competition for power, but rather the locus of this conflict. The development of the international system privileges state sovereignty and is in part maintained by the unprecedented power of a hegemonic actor. This has made a politically unified Muslim community legitimised by God's sovereignty a distant possibility. The creation of artificial modern states by outside powers and the consolidation of the international system brought political struggles indigenous to the Middle East into the international

sphere, and thus influenced the rise of contemporary Salafi Jihadism. Further, as the US plays a significant role in preserving the international system, it becomes a necessary target for Salafi Jihadists. As the structures of the international system have become increasingly rigid and efforts within the Islamist world for legitimacy and unity have failed, the conflict has moved beyond the Islamic sphere to engulf the maintainers of the status quo.

There are a number of offerings from countless scholars, pundits, journalists, politicians and others who seek to understand why the Salafi Jihadists have targeted the West and the US in particular. These claims should not be dismissed out of hand as they do play a role, particularly in conceptualising what drives the recruitment of foot soldiers to the cause. These notions are, however, limited as they are caught in temporal, individual and geographical contexts that limit their ability to speak to the issue as a whole. This book attempts to demystify the phenomenon by observing it holistically as something related to the international and rooted both in history and the modern period.

The subject of the Global Jihad is one that is highly charged in political, academic and lay circles. It is difficult for the researcher to engage in a project of understanding it without bias. However, by positioning the Global Jihad as something that is part of the tectonic movement of world politics it can be understood, as best as possible, without these highly charged emotions in much the same way that historians have sought to look at events in the past out of the shadow of living memory to search for causes and reasons. What is clearly discernible as a focal point of concern for Salafi Jihadists is the political division of the Muslim peoples and the absence of religiously sanctioned governance. The division of the Middle East into separate political entities significantly hampered the long-standing unification and legitimacy project. The watershed event of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the dissolving of the caliphate in 1924 had a significant effect on the emergence of the specific breed of international Islamist terrorism directed against the West that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century. The contemporary Salafi Jihadist movements are similar to preceding Arab-Muslim imperialist contenders in that, broadly speaking, they work to the same ends – unity and legitimacy.

The end of colonisation resulted in a rapid movement to reunify the Middle East under the banner of Pan-Arabism. However, Pan-Arabism failed and, in so doing, failed to quell religious voices that demanded not only unity but rule by God's authority. The Middle East came to represent an anarchic state system reflective of the norms of Westphalian

sovereignty.[4] It is this very resignation to state centric norms that allowed Salafi Jihadists to challenge leaders in the Islamic world and maintainers of the status quo in the West with a particular discourse of unity and religious legitimacy derived from their ideological understanding of Islam and Islamic history.

Chapter 1 of this book identifies the key arguments for the rise of the Global Jihad. These arguments provide limited answers to a question that is more extensive and complex. These suggestions confine the origins of Salafi Jihadism and the conflict with the US into a temporal geographical fixed position while ignoring the larger transhistorical nature of the question. In opposition to this, framing the question as a metanarrative in terms of a clash of civilisations, gives too much credence to the notion of unified civilisations – Islamic or Western – and rejects the role of ideology. These accounts can be understood to be valid on a micro-level but appear limited when trying to grapple with the larger question. These explanations warrant merit but cannot account for the phenomenon as a whole. Where any number of these proposals may shed certain light on the motivations of individual agents or groups and have a role to play in the Global Jihad, they do not account for Salafi Jihadism in general and the historical currents that have led to this particular crossroad in history.

Chapter 2 highlights the significance of historical and ideational factors in conceptualising Salafi Jihadism and the objectives of jihadist organizations. Building upon the argument that contemporary factors do not explain the phenomenon in totality, Islamic history and religious ideology are observed in the context of playing a significant role in driving Salafi Jihadism. Contemporary factors do, however, also have a role to play but not in exclusion. The contemporary order inhibits the legitimacy and unity project from continuing and US hegemony is a significant part of this system. In this, the legitimacy and unity project informed by Islamic history and religious ideology has advanced over time alongside the emerging international order. However, in the contemporary they are incompatible due to the near total consolidation of the system. This forces Salafi Jihadists to move beyond the confines of the Islamic sphere to challenge the benefactors of international order.

Chapter 3 focuses on concepts of the state as an organising principle in international politics, looking at Islamic concepts of legitimacy, sovereignty and statehood, while making connections with Western concepts and attempting to observe where they intersect and where they differ. It is essential to conceptualise Islamic views on what the state is, who may claim to govern it legitimately and what the Islamic concepts of

territorial space are. This chapter further demonstrates that there is a long Islamic tradition of statehood that, in many ways, is in contrast to, but is not in all aspects entirely alien to, Western concepts. Islamic thinking in regard to the state, as applied by the Salafi Jihadists, recognises ontologically different concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy and territoriality regarding political organisation, than that which has come to characterise the contemporary international system. Al-Qaeda's drive for the recreation of a transnational caliphate is based in this historical Islamic thinking. Simply, the current international order is an obstacle to this realisation.

Chapter 4 deals with Islamic concepts of international politics. There is a significant quantity of literature devoted to the study of Islam as a factor within international politics. However, these resources view Islam, and religion in general, as a factor to be understood in the context of existing International Relations (IR) theories, not as an approach on its own. Islam is a non-Westphalian discourse in that it does not recognise multiple sovereigns or the division of the Muslim peoples. It is derived ontologically from extra-rational agency. Islamic concepts of international relations do not endeavour to understand the international through an investigation of observable or causal forces. The primary sources for inquiry within Islam have already been revealed through the Quran and the sayings and deeds of the Prophet (Sunnah). It is argued that Islam contains theories of international politics and is not simply a subject of study within the discipline of IR. This chapter identifies theoretical traditions within the Islamic paradigm.

This framework for analysis better conceptualises theoretically how Salafi Jihadism functions within the study of IR and aids in alleviating some of the tensions and inadequacies that can be found in the study of Salafi Jihadism. Significantly more work needs to be done on this, as there is a poverty of literature on the subject. The confines of this work, however, do not allow for a comprehensive observation of this subject that would be a valuable contribution to international theorising. However, what is produced here gives insights into these ideas and is a valuable tool for this research. It demonstrates how Islamic thinking on international politics has influenced the Salafi Jihadist world view and allowed them to form their own Islamic theory of international relations based on the Islamic tradition.

Chapter 5 works from the origins of Islam to the end of Islamic political authority with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the end of the caliphate in 1924. It demonstrates that there is a long historical struggle for unity in the Middle East and that religion is an integral part of

political order as it serves as a necessary legitimising agent. Salafi Jihadism, in general, is part of a long existing struggle to unify the Islamic world under a legitimate authority. Challengers for power have been the norm. This chapter demonstrates that, during the period of the caliphates, there was no consensus on legitimate rule. However, religion always played a vital role in attempts to solidify legitimacy by the ruling elite. This supports the argument presented here that contemporary answers born of the realities of the twentieth century only partially explain the current situation between Salafi Jihadists, the US and the West in general. The Salafi Jihadists are contemporary actors in a long historical narrative that cannot be conceptualised exclusively in terms of twentieth-century political realities. This chapter starts from the beginning of Islamic expansion and empires with Muhammad's successors, the Rightly Guided Caliphs (Rashidun), to the Umayyad Dynasty, following through to the Abbasids and Ottomans. It also considers some of the other proclaimed caliphates and imperial aspirants and argues that there has always been a need to make claims for legitimacy in religious terms. An Islamic state leader was as much a practitioner of state politics as a proclaimed protector of a religious faith and tradition. The Salafi Jihadist narrative attempts to reassert this in the age of nation states where legitimacy is increasingly moving in the opposite direction, away from religious legitimacy and towards nationalist legitimacy.

Chapter 6 investigates the period following the end of Ottoman authority. After the collapse of Ottoman authority and the ensuing creation of Middle Eastern nation states there has been an increased escalation in conflict over regional order in the form of unification and legitimacy. The first phase following the dissolution of the caliphate was defined by the various attempts at secular unity and legitimacy in the form of Pan-Arab movements. The failure of Pan-Arab aspirants to successfully unify the region has led to the general resignation of Arab political leaders to accept the status quo nation state system. Al-Qaeda represents the current challenger for Middle Eastern order: its ideology rejects the division of the Islamic, particularly Arab, world into separate political entities and thus rejects the current international order and seeks to challenge that order. Continued attempts at constructing some form of Middle Eastern political unity since the dissolution of the caliphate highlights the argument that the sovereign nation state is problematic. The Pan-Arab period demonstrated that unification projects have been plagued by self-interest, a reality that was evident during the period of caliphates as well. Yet, there remains a need for a discourse on unity and legitimacy that the Salafi Jihadists attempt to provide.

Chapter 7 defines what the components of the al-Qaeda ideology are, chart its intellectual evolution by looking at Islamic scholars over time and analyse the evolution of the al-Qaeda ideology from the guiding doctrine of an organisation into an ideology in and of itself. What this demonstrates is that al-Qaeda is more than an international organisation, it is also an ideology. Just as there were Nazis (agents) and Nazism (ideology), al-Qaeda, equally, can sustain its roles as an organisation with observable agency and an ideological brand that inspires other jihadists. The second assertion is that this ideology is not simply a piece of propaganda created entirely by the contemporary ideologues, but a well-thought-out doctrine which draws upon a respected lineage of Islamic thinking. Al-Qaeda as an ideology provides foundations for those who wish to pursue the Salafi Jihadist project of creating the new 'golden age' in the form of a contemporary caliphate.

While Chapter 7 is dedicated to the theoretical concept of al-Qaeda as an ideological umbrella under which other Salafi Jihadist organisations gather, Chapter 8 seeks to further support this argument with empirical evidence by investigating al-Qaeda's constituents, those organisations which it has co-opted into the Global Jihad. While tending to local grievances, these organisations can aid in altering the battlefield, eliminating the obstacle of the hegemon which will undermine the status quo international system. The concepts described by the al-Qaeda ideologues that seek to challenge the status quo of the international system are easily adopted by Salafi Jihadist groups in disparate parts of the world, as these are amenable to both local and global objectives. Al-Qaeda works to draw upon the disruptive power of local jihads and incorporate them into the broader Global Jihad in what is termed hegemonic disruption.

This chapter also investigates al-Qaeda's affiliates, allies and those it inspires, as well as its competitors. Its closest constituent organisations are its affiliates that have taken on the al-Qaeda name and have strong links with the central organisation: al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and al-Qaeda in Iraq. It also looks at those organisations that have maintained their own specific identity but still cooperate with al-Qaeda central on the global and local stage under the brand of Salafi Jihadism. Finally, it deals with organisations that act as competitors but still maintain the objective of building a global caliphate and resistance to the West, particularly the US.

Chapter 9 conceptualises the contemporary condition of the international system and how it is related to the conflict between Salafi Jihadism and the US. This final chapter demonstrates the central argument of this

work. The US is an actor which maintains a hegemonic position that assists in keeping the international system – characterised by nation states – in place; this severely limits the possibility of the realisation of the unity and legitimacy project. It is the position that the US maintains as a hegemonic actor that puts it into conflict with a force that envisions an alternative order. It will be further argued that it is not relevant which hegemonic power helps to keep the status quo in place, as any actor that restricts the possibility of unification is an obstacle to the Salafi Jihadist goals.

This book seeks to conceptualise Salafi Jihadism by looking to transhistorical and contemporary factors, crediting both outside forces and internal dynamics for influencing its ideology and operation methods, as well as its growth and popularity. It is argued here that, to conceptualise Salafi Jihadism, it is necessary to consider the incompatibility between the contemporary international order – characterised by state sovereignty and hegemony – and the desire of some Muslims for unity and legitimacy. It is imperative to take account of both transhistorical and contemporary factors as well as extra-rational beliefs, because ahistorical approaches and those that seek mono-causal explanations for political violence suffer distinct limitations.[5] The international system is an obstacle to a particular kind of order envisioned by the Salafi Jihadists. The US as a hegemonic actor helping to maintain the status quo system finds itself as a significant belligerent in this conflict.[6] It is an obstacle to those who envision an order that does not conform to the norms of the international system.

1
Prominent Debates on the Proliferation of Salafi Jihadism

This book addresses the controversial topic of terrorism. The term is understood here absent of any normative connotations, but rather as politically motivated asymmetrical violence. In particular, this work investigates Salafi Jihadism, a specific brand of terrorism that is related to Sunni Islam. This kind of political violence has been known by various terms, including Islamic terrorism, Islamist terrorism or even Islamic fascism. However, none of these accurately articulates the appropriate meaning. The most suitable term for the phenomenon under investigation here is Salafi Jihadism, understood as representative of those who take a position that could be said to embody a 'respect for the sacred texts in their most literal form and an absolute commitment to jihad'.[1] In the simplest terms, Salafi Jihadism is a religio-political ideology based on a fundamentalist conceptualisation of Islam that informs the actions of organisations like al-Qaeda. It contains a broadly defined format for a political order that unifies the Islamic peoples and governs them by a legitimate religious authority. It promotes violence in all its forms as a means for achieving this objective. The origins and ideological background of Salafi Jihadism will be further detailed in subsequent chapters.

In the years following 9/11, IR scholars, political scientists, experts on Islam and the Middle East, the foreign policy community, governments and essentially every person in the Western world sought to understand the events that had taken place. This evolved into an inevitable attempt to explain the rationale of the jihadists or to discover, as Bernard Lewis noted over a decade before, 'the Roots of Muslim Rage'.[2] Copious volumes of literature began to emerge and grow exponentially in the ensuing months, with theories and proposals as to what the motivations for the strikes were and what al-Qaeda, the organisation believed to be responsible, was intent upon accomplishing. More simply, why had this group

of Islamic militants come to be in conflict with the US? Discussions on Salafi Jihadism, particularly in the US, had largely been marginalised outside of the realm of scholarship and the intelligence community despite its consistent appearance in the form of political violence and publications.[3] Post-9/11 theories have ranged from ludicrous conspiratorial assertions of CIA and Jewish plots to beliefs concerning the wrath of divine judgment, perpetuated by both Muslim and Christian fundamentalists. A number of mainstream theories took hold in the immediate aftermath of the event that have continued to affect the ways in which scholars attempt to conceptualise Salafi Jihadism and these are to be addressed here specifically.

Notable Middle East scholar Fred Halliday argued that the emergence of Islamist movements which are hostile to the West and the US are not the result of some trans-historic phenomenon of which Islam is a part. Rather, he insisted, it is the result of particular contemporary social and economic conditions people face.[4] However, Edward Said maintained that civilisations and identities cannot be removed from currents and counter currents of history.[5] Said's assessment would appear warranted.

Samuel Huntington perceived a transhistoric notion of civilisational identity as the cause of friction between the Islamic and Western worlds in his well-known work *Clash of Civilizations*,[6] and, in 2002, he declared an end to ideologies, proclaiming they had been replaced by ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic loyalties.[7] Other scholarship looks to more contemporary issues such as globalisation and the challenge of modernity. Numerous scholars claim that globalisation is the root of suspicion and loathing of the West.[8] Eqbal Ahmed echoed these economic and sociological claims in 'Profile of the Religious Right', contending that religio-political movements in the Middle East are often the result of societies moving from the traditional/agrarian to the urban/capitalist.[9]

In 1970, Ted Gurr proposed a theory of 'relative depravation' that linked political uprisings to purely economic circumstances.[10] Gurr's work specifically focused on nineteenth-century rebellions in the Western world but, arguably, many of the conclusions he made could also be offered as explanations for the rise of Islamist extremist violence in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This notion has captured the minds of many scholars attempting to unravel the mystery of Salafi Jihadism. Muhammad Hafez refutes Gurr's claims, looking to causes beyond severe poverty and other suggestions derived from ideas based on conceptions of psychological alienation or unfulfilled modernity. He concludes that the Islamic world must be conceptualised as unique and that grand narratives, which may apply in other parts of the world, are

not sufficient in analysing the Muslim world. He argues that extremism is, instead, a reaction to iron-fisted, predatory state aggression from the ruling elites that forces Islamists to react defensively.[11]

Perceptions of American imperial ambitions and Western intrusion in the Middle East, from the medieval Crusades to the present, are commonly cited as a source of conflict, most notably in the discourse of the Islamists themselves. There is a US-directed globalisation that is reminiscent of a new 'Manifest Destiny' which emerges as a brutal hegemonic order. Jihad, then, is the only credible alternative to this globalist injustice.[12] Mark Hubbard complements these claims in stating that the failure to build a modern identity in the Middle East, free from external influences, is the source of friction.[13] G. John Ikenberry refutes these imperial assertions describing an American liberal grand strategy that is not imperialism but, instead, an American-led democratic order that has no historical precedent.[14] The dissenting position asserts that it is precisely this American insistence on a one-size-fits-all notion of democracy that is, in part, what drives extremists' actions.[15] In addition to these claims are notions of otherness and exclusion described as Islamic Orientalism. This is argued to have discursive parallels with Islamism itself, preventing understanding and interaction with the other,[16] causing Muslims to be caught in their own otherness and forced to devise strategies of resistance.[17]

US support for Israel is often cited as a significant grievance with US policy. A poll conducted by the Pew Institute found that 60 per cent of those surveyed in Lebanon and Jordan believed that Israeli interests influence US policy. Respondents identified Israel and the US as the states which most severely threaten their security. Up to 85 per cent of respondents cited Israel as the chief external threat and 72 per cent, the US.[18] Shilby Telhami, in 'What Arab Opinion Thinks of You', made the point that the Arab-Israeli conflict has become the prism through which the Arab world conceptualises international events. In Telhami's survey (conducted in Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE), respondents were asked which elements of al-Qaeda they were sympathetic to. To this question 30 per cent chose the answer 'stands up to the US', while only 20 per cent chose the answer 'stands up for Muslim causes such as the Palestinians'.[19] This would appear to indicate that the Palestinian–Israeli conflict may not be the only prism through which the Arab world conceptualises international affairs.

These attempts at providing rather limited answers to broad and complex questions are problematic; they limit the origins of Salafi Jihadism to a temporal geographical fixed position, while ignoring the broad

transhistorical and geographical tapestry of the question. Many of these explanations warrant merit but cannot stand alone. Where any number of these proposals may shed a certain light on the motivations of agents at the individual or even community level, they fail to paint a picture that can explain the problem in its entirety. As E. H. Carr notes, in attempting to establish causation it is necessary to 'simplify the multiplicity of answers to subordinate one answer to another and to introduce some order and unity into the chaos of happenings and the chaos of specific causes'.[20] To engage with the phenomenon of Salafi Jihadism, a broader perspective drawing upon the long, rich and complex history of Islam and the Middle East is required. The Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict may do well in explaining why Palestinians, who sustain attacks from the Israeli Defense Forces and live in the squalor of refugee camps, sympathise with al-Qaeda's message and join its ranks, but it still leaves lingering questions, such as why, then, does Hamas not join forces with al-Qaeda? Poverty and destitution in the slums of Cairo and tough-fisted, long-surviving regimes may add illumination to the same in a local context, but it does not explain why some of the 9/11 hijackers, despite being educated, economically affluent men, chose to give up their lives for al-Qaeda's cause.

This chapter attempts to dispel many of the long-standing assumptions regarding the nature of the conflict between Salafi Jihadism and the US. The contention set out here argues that the conflict with the Salafi Jihadists is a result of the US maintaining a status quo hegemonic position that is instrumental in ensuring the survival of Middle Eastern nation-states be they theocratic, democratic or authoritarian. It is not debated that al-Qaeda's war with the US, from a tactical perspective, is born out of the political realities of the twentieth century, related to US hegemony. However, it is argued that this is a continuation of a long-running struggle that the US – as a hegemonic power that helps to maintain the status quo order – has become involved in. The previously mentioned assumptions assert that the issue is related to something intrinsic in the nature of the US in terms of values or policy, or something that can be related to contemporary events and perspectives, imagined or real, of Western power in the last 100 years: the Israeli state, modernity, globalisation, poverty, conflicts over values or a clash of civilisations. It is argued throughout this book that this is not the case. Though each of these themes is a part of the wider conflict and do have roles to play in the rise of late-twentieth-century international 'terrorism', none of these explanations on its own provides a satisfactory response. Walid Phares astutely assesses the post-9/11 Western understanding of

Salafi Jihadism. 'Even intelligence estimates five years after 9/11, still link the rise of Jihadism to poverty and global attitudes instead of seeing it as a result of mass mobilisation by jihadist ideologues and movements. Jihadists are mobilising radicalised Muslims not on the grounds of America's image, but to follow the injunction of Allah.'[21] The rise of Salafi Jihadism is rooted in a centuries-old struggle for order and power in the Middle East of which al-Qaeda is only the most contemporary contender. Al-Qaeda uses its Salafi Jihadist ideology to justify its cause and claims to legitimacy. Issues of poverty and global attitudes that Phares describes are only a part of the larger issue.

Globalisation, US foreign policy, support for authoritarian regimes, the state of Israel, economic hardship and differing cultural values and perceptions, all have a role to play in regard to the issue of Salafi Jihadist 'terrorism' directed at the US. They provide pieces of the puzzle but cannot be observed in isolation. Understanding the roots of Salafi Jihadism requires, as Frank Louis Rusciano notes, 'a global perspective without necessarily negating other explanations'.[22] This chapter will demonstrate that the previous explanations are insufficient and suggest an alternative explanation within which these ideas work. The contemporary crisis is related to an ongoing struggle for dominance in the Middle East. Al-Qaeda is the most recent contender for that power. The remainder of this chapter will analyse the various popular explanations for the rise of Salafi Jihadism and the conflict with the US: globalisation and modernity, a clash of civilisations, US values, economic disenfranchisement, US support for tyrannical regimes and the Israeli state.

The 9/11 attacks have inspired two particular points of view as to the cause of events.[23] From one perspective it is a clash of civilisations between Islam and the West and is a backlash from a culture that feels marginalised in world affairs.[24] From another perspective it is the product of misguided US policies and support for Israel that are the source of the conflict between Salafi Jihadists and the US.[25] Neither of these approaches represent anything new, nor do they constitute attempts to eliminate Islam as a factor on the emergence of 'terrorism' in the twentieth century by portraying regional affairs as no more than simply a by-product of world politics, disregarding the possibility that indigenous factors have a role to play. Halliday succinctly states that 'the problem with much of the analysis of the modern world is not that it is false but the idea that it is novel'.[26] This book attempts to observe both contemporary and transhistorical factors, arguing that the origins of Salafi Jihadism are in part a result of indigenous Islamic power struggles that, following the collapse of the Ottoman imperial order, has been thrust onto the world

at large. With the failure of Arab nationalism and Pan-Islamism to unite the Arab world and the following consolidation of sovereign nation-states in the twentieth century, the struggle for unity and legitimacy has been dealt a heavy blow.

1.1 Globalisation and modernity

Globalisation and the issue of contending with elements of modernity are thought by many scholars and analysts to be the root cause of Salafi Jihadist 'terrorism' in the latter portion of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. George Caffentzis adamantly states, 'September 11 can be traced back to the economic and social crisis that has developed in North Africa, the Middle East and West Asia in the aftermath of the Gulf War (1991) and prior to it the accelerating process of globalisation starting in the late 1970s'.[27] Hoffman,[28] along with Chase-Dunn and Boswell,[29] also point to globalisation and modernity as significant factors, where Jurgensmeyer notes that Islamic 'terrorism' is a defensive reaction to the globalisation process that takes on a religious character.[30] Tilly suggests that parallels can be seen with nineteenth-century European collective violence that was a reaction to increasing modernisation.[31] In view of the turmoil that engulfed the Middle East during the 1970s and early 1980s, this assertion appears plausible: the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat (1981), the Lebanese civil war (from 1975), the Iranian Islamic Revolution (1979), the Grand Mosque seizure in Saudi Arabia (1979) and the US Marine barracks bombing (1983).

This line of logic is not uncommon, linking the appearance of the sudden rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the subsequent anti-Americanism and targeting of the US by Islamist 'terror' groups. The fallacy here is both a logical and an historical one. Globalisation may be accelerating human interaction at an unprecedented rate but it is not in any sense new, nor should it be understood as something which is inevitable.[32] Cultures have been interacting, cross-fertilising, trading, integrating, dominating and influencing each other for centuries in various forms under numerous hegemonic actors. The logical fallacy is, however, somewhat more problematic, working from the position of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (if then, therefore, because of it). It assumes that because B (in this case Salafi Jihadist 'terrorism') follows A (increased speed of globalisation), A must be the cause of B. This line of logic disregards historical influences and imposes a Western-centric concept of causation and international politics on the question; it assumes that events in the Orient are somehow the result of conditions in the Occident. Globalisation, in the

guise of the neoliberal capitalist world order led by the US, causes disenfranchisement, social unrest and cultural deterioration; it must then be at the root of 'Muslim rage'. A deeper investigation into the historical and political processes of the Middle East and Islam may, however, demonstrate otherwise. Globalisation is only one piece of the puzzle. This acceleration of political, social and economic interaction has been at work for centuries.

Benjamin Barber argues in his famous work *Jihad vs. McWorld* that jihadists are those who detest modernity and enlightenment virtues and reject democracy, tolerance and diversity.[33] Barber describes jihad as a response to the lack of spirituality and the trivialisation of values that accompany globalisation.[34] Steger concurs, suggesting that al-Qaeda's ideology rejects globalism as it is secular and materialistic by nature, linked to the capitalist world order that marginalises spiritual values.[35] This is not entirely false, but it must also be observed from a position that takes account of the historical struggles for power in the Middle East. Viewing al-Qaeda as a political actor, the institutionalisation of sharia to depose the condition of 'jahiliya' (ignorance of God's will) is, in practice, part of a mechanism for taking and maintaining power that utilises the notion of God's sovereignty to legitimise its claims. Al-Qaeda provides a discourse laden with a sentiment that rejects modernity yet, simultaneously, international 'terror' networks have been facilitated by the very processes they claim to reject.[36] Al-Qaeda spokesmen themselves have admitted that 50 per cent of their operational strategy is conducted through the media.[37] Cheap international travel, media, instant communication and the Internet, the very backbone of globalisation, are elements that have benefited the al-Qaeda network.[38] Without the forces of globalisation al-Qaeda would have never been able to sufficiently communicate its message and gather constituents.

Salafi Jihadists challenge globalisation with an alluring anti-hegemonic discourse.[39] This counter-discourse appeals to those who feel disenfranchised by the current state of affairs in some parts of the Middle East and, indeed, the world. This does not, however, demonstrate that globalisation is the cause of international 'terrorism' and the emergence of Salafi Jihadism. It is, rather, a tool, both a material resource and an ideological one. McDonald's restaurants, high-rise hotels, Western films and materialism in general are portrayed as corrupting the Muslim people, while al-Qaeda agents use the Internet, air travel and the media, including their own As-Sahab group,[40] as indispensable resources. In this sense al-Qaeda has made dual use of the process itself, utilising the elements of modernity it finds beneficial and demonising other elements in its

discourse to garner support from those who are marginalised and do not benefit from the contemporary world order. The problem arises in the fact that it is not only the Islamic or necessarily non-Western world in which the neoliberal world order has brought economic disenfranchisement and the erosion of traditional value systems. These problems exist globally. Therefore, as a single issue it cannot be determined to be the root cause of the rise of Salafi Jihadism. Al-Qaeda's message is a broad narrative which attempts to find support by offering different messages to different audiences. Al-Qaeda's anti-globalisation rhetoric appeals to those who suffer spiritually or materially either from globalisation or conditions of modernity but, paradoxically, this message is distributed through the technological advancements that globalisation has allowed to spread throughout the world. Globalisation, then, has been a facilitator of Salafi Jihadist 'terrorism'.[41] It is not, however, a causal factor on its own.

1.2 Clash of civilisations

Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis is an important component regarding the issues that are central to Salafi Jihadism. Huntington argued in 1993, 'it is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.'[42] Whether Huntington's ideas accurately conceptualise the emerging trends in global politics, identifying the future potential fractures and points of conflict in the post-Cold War order, remains highly debatable. Huntington received significant criticism from notable scholars portraying his work as a simplistic attempt to grapple with broad complex problems, or nothing more than ramblings that were of limited academic value. However, despite the numerous critics of the work and the volumes that have been written since the article was first published in 1993 denouncing Huntington's thesis, it remains an important piece of literature in the study of international politics and to scholars concerned with issues of religion and conflict.

It is argued here that Huntington's concept of civilisations when first published did not necessarily represent anything novel. It was, however, sensationalist in suggesting that conflict between civilisations is inevitable in a future where ideology and materialism will no longer be the premier sources of conflicts. Phares argues that despite historical conflict between civilisations these conflicts are not, as Huntington suggests, inevitable but rather subject to particular political realities.[43]

The culturalist approach is, as Olivier Roy argues, 'persuasive' to many in the Western world. He continues, this is 'appealing to Orientalists, social scientists, politicians, newspapers, leaders, writers, strongly pro-Israeli academics and the person in the street'.[44] This approach is also shared, he argues, by the Salafi Jihadists. Phares observed that the unexpected endorsers of the theory of civilisations have been the jihadists themselves.[45]

Osama Bin Laden ,when asked directly during an interview in 2001 what his perspective on the clash of civilizations thesis was, affirmed it seemed to be a valid concept:

> **Interviewer**: What is your comment on what Samuel Huntington and others say about the inevitability of the clash of civilisations? Your repetition of the words Crusade and Crusades indicates that you support the inevitability of the clash of civilisations.
>
> **Bin Laden**: I say there is no doubt about that. It is clearly established in the book and the Sunnah. No faithful Muslim can deny these facts. Whether it is said or not, what counts to us is what exists in the book and Sunnah of our Prophet, may peace and blessings of God be upon him. But the Jews and the US have come out with a fib to make simple Muslims believe it (co-existing civilisations). Unfortunately, the rulers of the region and many others believed the call for peace and world peace. This is a baseless fib.[46]

The clash of civilizations argument, however, is based upon a questionable ontology. It is not in any sense inevitable but, rather, is continually reified by both Orientalists and Occidentalists to serve particular political interests in a given period of time.[47] In attempting to provide convincing proof that the clash between Islam and the West has always existed and is inevitable, the agents of the idea have managed to construct an historical conspiracy.[48] Although Bin Laden may have claimed to perceive an inevitable clash of civilisations, it is more accurate to argue that he was an agent of creating such a phenomenon as opposed to simply an actor working within one. The end of the Cold War made evident a new division in the struggle for world order: the jihadists who wanted to ignite a clash of civilisations and the Western democracies who did not.[49] For the Islamists the teleological journey for Islam has not ended; hence, for there to be any 'end of history' Islamic society must continue forward along the historical axis.[50] The nation-state, therefore, a product of Western political organisation, is not the final form of

political organisation for the Muslim world and must be challenged, as the caliphate is the appropriate form of Muslim political organisation. The clash of civilisations discourse is essential to both the Salafi Jihadists and the US political elite. It is laden with diametrically opposed concepts of 'good' and 'evil', 'us and them' and serves to articulate the views of both camps.[51] This kind of absolute dichotomy has continued to gain momentum in the post-9/11 period and has helped to fuel the belief in an intensifying clash of civilisations. Even so, many political figures in the West have attempted to ensure that the 'War on Terror' is not about the West and Islam, but rather a dispute between the world order driven towards democratisation and those who wish to obstruct or even obliterate the present world system. These concepts, however, allow for Salafi Jihadists to bolster their appeal and gain recruits.

George W. Bush's 'Axis of Evil' speech demonstrated the impermiability of the ideological fault lines between 'good' and 'evil'.[52] Additionally, Salafi Jihadist writings make similar statements, although using the Islamic concept of the Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam as the concrete dividing line between what is 'good' and what constitutes 'evil'. Both the Salafi Jihadists and the West have employed a securitisation discourse where the actors are able to enforce the idea upon their audience that something of value is under threat. The objects under threat can be abstract principles, such as freedom or a religion itself.[53]

There is a subjective imaginary construct that influences the way in which the Western world and the Islamic world conceptualise the other. Salafi Jihadists use the imagery of the Crusades and past struggles in the Islamic world to illustrate the threatening nature of the Western other. It is a powerful tool for Salafi Jihadists as these images resonate in the contemporary with many Muslims. The creation of a tradition like that – of an inevitable clash between competing cultures – is a process of ritualising and formalising, using the past as a point of reference.[54]

The US and the West are not ideologically monolithic and neither is Islam.[55] Without discounting the notion that civilisations exist or denying historical or potential future conflicts that have a civilisational orientation, the idea that these clashes are either inevitable or capable of consuming entire cultures seems implausible. Thus, the idea that there is a natural tendency for civilisations to clash is played upon by those with strategies and interests that benefit from spreading such beliefs about the nature of civilisations in the international system. The social and cultural differences between various parts of the Muslim world are significantly greater than the differences they may have with those who

do not share their religion but are of the same nationality.[56] In spite of there being a concept of a single Muslim community (umma), Muslims from Turkey to the Arab world, Southeast and Central Asia have a different political culture.[57] This indicates that the idea of a civilisation acting in unison would be a difficult claim to make. Indeed, there is a danger that the persistent use of the term 'civilisation' will only lead to the eventual underestimation of the variety that exists within this concept and the reality that great change has occurred and will continue to occur over time.[58]

Huntington's thesis reduced the primacy of the role of ideas in post-Cold War conflicts and, instead, privileged -culture. Ideology, however, has not been cast aside. What the Salafi Jihadists have done, rather, is attempt to fuse ideology with a civilisational identity, using religion in such a way that the Islamic world becomes synonymous with Salafi Jihadism andthe al-Qaeda ideologues, the spokespersons and vanguard of the Muslim people. Chapter 7 will deal with these issues in greater detail. The validity of Huntington's concept lies less in an accurate prediction of future conflicts but, rather, as a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the actors use these concepts and the images they conjure to justify their means and garner support. There may have been no real clash of civilizations in 1993, but there are those in the post-Cold War era who are attempting to create one.

1.3 Culture and values

On 11 September 2001, US President George W. Bush issued the following statement in relation to the attacks of that day, 'today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts'.[59] He further argued for this assessment in a speech to a joint session of Congress ten days later. 'Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.'[60] Some scholars concurred with the President's assessment. Magnus Ranstorp writes that Salafi Jihadists harbour a, 'vehement rejection of Western Culture',[61] while Barber notes that they detest 'freedom, democracy and diversity'.[62]

The import of Western culture and values into the Islamic world has been cited as a major source of inspiration for Salafi Jihadist rage against

the West. The fear of cultural contamination is given credence as a driving force of the Salafi Jihadist movement and violent attacks against the West. As Roy observes, 'the liberal perspective endorses the view that radical Islam is a reaction against Western political and cultural encroachments'.[63] The issue, however, is that of causation. The Islamic world is not the only sphere of humanity struggling with issues of identity and morality in the contemporary era. The effects of capitalism and modernity are nearly global. What then makes the Islamic world unique in the spread of global 'terrorism' and how can this be linked to culture and values? The decadence of the West, that Salafi Jihadists speak of, is linked to homosexuality, pornography, sexual freedom and individuality, which are common themes in most religions and not specific to Islam. Evangelical ministers in the West can be found preaching the same message. In this sense, can culture be seen to be the cause of the rise of Salafi Jihadist violence against the West in the late twentieth century? Sayid Qutb spoke of these same issues and was evidently appalled by certain aspects of the West, particularly loose sexual morals. Though Qutb was a primary contributor to what has become the Salafi Jihadist ideology, this issue alone does not explain the rise of the modern movement and is only a part of the larger puzzle.

Salafi Jihadism is in essence not a reaction to Western culture, but an attempt at deculturalisation.[64] The divide is between believers and non-believers whatever cultural background they come from.[65] Fundamentalism[66] is a mechanism by which to engage in re-universalising a religion by disentangling the belief system from cultural identity and recasting the religion into a universal code of norms.[67] In an effort to make the religion pure, the fundamentalists have defined it as a closed absolute set of norms and values that can be separated from the surrounding culture that is seen as corrupt (jahili). In the absence of the jahili society the Salafi Jihadists may reshape social order to suit their ends.

There are indeed those in the Islamic world, and indeed around the world, who are simply opposed to the culture and values of the West. However, it is not only the secularism, 'loose morals' and pluralism of the West that are problematic for the Salafi Jihadists, it is culture in itself. The process of deculturalisation, as was seen under the Taliban's rule over Afghanistan, is a necessary step in the long-term goal of creating the global caliphate. Religion can be used as a marker in times of deculturalisation.[68] The Salafi Jihadists determine what constitutes this religion and use it as a mechanism for taking power free from the challenges of culture itself.

1.4 The Jewish state

'There will be no world without terrorism for as long as the Palestinian-Israeli dispute is unresolved. It is by far the biggest trigger of rage against the US', argues Ali Mazrui.[69]

This is a common sentiment among a number of academics, citizens of the Middle East and those who see the conflict between the West and Salafi Jihadism as founded on the long-standing conflict between the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish state. The Zionist conspiracy to influence American policy towards Israel is seen by some as a driving force for US action in the Middle East and a primary concern in its 'War on Terror', or as an issue that works within US domestic politics.

From the function of domestic policy and the work of the Jewish lobby to conspiracies to control the Middle East with the aid of the US, the Jews and the Israeli state are seen as the catalyst for Salafi Jihadist violence directed against the US. Dissatisfaction with the situation of the Palestinian people, a distrust and indeed hatred of Jewish people and an outright rejection of the legitimacy of the Israeli state among many in the Middle East cannot be denied. A cursory examination of jihadist rhetoric, particularly of al-Qaeda, would reveal just such sentiments. Considering the volumes of literature dedicated to Israel by such ideologues as Ayman al-Zawahiri, one could observe that this is the central issue to the question this work is concerned with. However, as Phares observes, 'No other conflict better served the long-term objectives of the Pan-Arabist-Salafist-Khumeinist trio than the multiple wars between Israel and the Arabs in general, and the Palestinians in particular. This half-century's ethnic and territorial dispute was used, abused and stretched by ideological agendas far beyond the question of the specific legal and political rights of the Palestinians.'[70] From the perspective that Phares presents, the existence of Israel and the condition of Palestine gives the Salafi Jihadists and other messianic aspirants a grievance to point to gain support for their various agendas.

The Palestine-Israel issue is only part of the larger problem. Jihadist rhetoric directed at Israel, and the Jews in general, may be more of a recruiting tool than grounds to suggest that the conflict between Salafi Jihadism and the US can be explained in the simple terms of the Palestinian conflict. This is not to suggest that this is not a piece of the more complex puzzle. The rejection of the Israeli state by the Salafi Jihadists and the support Israel receives from the US is not the sole catalyst for the conflict between the US and Salafi Jihadists. It is just another piece of the larger

question. As has been previously argued, one of the driving factors in this conflict is the American hegemonic position that ensures the status quo system of nation-states remains intact. The Israeli state is yet another obstacle to the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the Middle East. The US is seen as a maintainer of the status quo by guaranteeing the existence of Israel and by aiding in maintaining Israel's sovereignty. Thus, this particular issue is only a part of the problem, not the cause of it. It is not a hatred of the Jews per se that drives Salafi Jihadist anger, but the geo-political obstacle Israel presents. In addition, as previously discussed, it benefits the Salafi Jihadist ideologues to highlight this issue to bolster both their own credentials as the legitimate vanguard of Muslim grievances, but also to earn material and human support for the Salafi Jihadist project. Further, this follows neatly with the Salafi Jihadist appeal to history, the need to construct an historical narrative that legitimises their aspirations as well as galvanises and motivates their supporters. The appeal to history and a strong historical consciousness is significant to the Middle East and, thus, central to the strategies of the Salafi Jihadists. Additionally, the ability to create an enemy trickster that is the cause for many ills, is a powerful tool in the arsenal of the Salafi Jihadists.

It is worth noting that the regional reaction to the establishment of the Jewish state was primarily an Arab concern rather than a Muslim one.[71] The struggle against the Jewish state became the responsibility of the Arab states on the Israeli periphery rather than the Muslim world as a whole.[72] This is just another case of the Salafi Jihadists picking up the torch from the Pan-Arabists, who mobilised the rejection of Israel as a key legitimising agent for Nasserism and Ba'athism. For the most part this is still very much the case. Though it is argued here that the Salafi Jihadist struggle is first about taking power in the Arab world, their attempt to obtain Islamic credentials and ally themselves with other jihadists around the world requires them to paint the struggle not as an Arab-Israeli struggle, but as a Muslim-Jewish struggle. Unlike the Pan-Arabists, the Salafi Jihadists adopt a strong historicist and theological attitude towards the creation of the Israeli state.[73]

Many commentators and scholars, and indeed the Salafi Jihadists themselves, have noted the American political process of support by successive US administrations for Israel. For these critics the relationship between Israel and the US is directly influenced and, at times, controlled by the Jewish Congressional Lobby.[74] US policy towards Israel, argue Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, is derived almost exclusively from domestic American politics and special interests.[75] The idea here is that the connection between the two states is dictated by a powerful influence

upon the US Congress that drives the US to protect and support Israel even when its actions directly contravene US interests. The US has allowed its ally a virtual free hand in its dealings with Palestine and ignored Israel's proliferation of nuclear weapons.

These are but a few examples cited to demonstrate that the Jewish Lobby is effectively manipulating the US Congress in favour of Israel's interests. A strong assumption regarding the US-Israeli 'special relationship' is based on a common religious ancestry and a mutual commitment to democracy. This theme fits well within the clash of civilisations paradigm, pitting the West against Islam. The perpetuation of these beliefs is a powerful tool for Salafi Jihadist propaganda but, in terms of geo-politics, it is a difficult claim to justify. As Pierre Guerlain asserts, 'client states and their leaders always exploit their relationships with their powerful allies to achieve their own goals'.[76] This is not unusual in the case of US foreign policy and numerous examples can be noted of states that were permitted to act in a manner which would appear contrary to professed American values, while still receiving generous aid, particularly in the Middle East. Ethnic and religious explanations for US foreign policy behaviour, or reasoning based on the influence of the powerful Israel lobby, are not sufficient to explain what Guerlain refers to as 'the totality of US foreign policy in the Middle East'.[77]

If relations between the US and Israel can be explained in geo-political terms, then so too can the Salafi Jihadist obsession with Israel be conceptualised in this manner. For the Salafi Jihadists Israel is problematic in the sense that it is viewed as an enforcer for the West, weakening and dividing the Arab states.[78] The Salafi Jihadist stance on Palestine can also be explained in geo-political terms. As Phares argues, 'to Islamists every land that was conquered during the Fatah under a legitimate authority cannot be reverted back to the infidels. Zionism is attempting to take back a land that has been duly Islamized'.[79] This is sufficient cause in and of itself to reject the existence of the Jewish state. Israel, then, is an obstacle to the rebirth of the caliphate as it not only occupies territorial space which the caliphate would claim, but it also poses a strategic problem as it serves as a Western agent that stifles regional efforts for unity. The Salafi Jihadist narrative argues that if a war of attrition can be waged against the US then, ultimately, the collapse of Israel will be imminent.[80]

Beyond the realities of geo-politics, however, there is another significant element surrounding the question of Palestine and Israel. The Palestinian cause has predominantly been a nationalist as opposed to a religious struggle. Where the Salafi Jihadist position is drenched in

religious ideology, the Palestinian objectives are more tangible. This has resulted in a split between the Palestine resistance groups, notably Hamas, and the al-Qaeda leadership. Palestine is a coveted cause for the Salafi Jihadists as it provides a wealth of currency in terms of legitimacy. It has the potential to be a unifying factor among disenfranchised Muslims. The vanguard of this cause will not only be afforded significant public space and credence, but can link the broader Salafi Jihadist cause to the Palestinian national struggle. Arab nationalists, monarchists, secularists and Islamists have all attempted to employ the Palestinian issue in search of legitimacy.[81] Al-Qaeda is no different and has adopted an historicist theological approach to justify its claim in an attempt to overshadow organisations like Hamas. Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, an al-Qaeda propagandist, observes: 'We remark that there is no prohibition on the existence of Hamas or whomever on the right path that seeks to elevate Allah's word. There is good in Palestine and elsewhere but our criticism of the so-called Hamas is because it has delayed the big Holy War in Palestine and distorted the fundamentals of the religion which can never be argued or renounced for political gains.'[82] Peace in Palestine would be a disastrous blow for al-Qaeda, depriving it of valuable propaganda, the opportunity to be the champion of a highly visible cause and deepening Muslim disenchantment with the West, which is crucial to the organisation's continued relevance.

Al-Zawahiri has made clear that any movement by Hamas towards a peaceful settlement with Israel would greatly disappoint the al-Qaeda leadership.[83] From this it is evident that al-Qaeda is positioning itself as an alternative to Hamas. Shishani points out, 'when the Palestinian nation comes to the conclusion that neither Hamas nor Islamic Jihad have managed to improve the conditions, it will turn to the most radical of all, to al-Qaeda'.[84] This is precisely the strategy that al-Qaeda is employing. The assertion here is that the existence of Israel and the plight of the Palestinians is not in and of itself a catalyst for the Salafi Jihadist war with the US, but that it is only a piece of the larger issue regarding the obstacles that the state represents. Israel, then, is both an obstacle and an opportunity for the al-Qaeda cause.

1.5 US foreign policy, democracy and authoritarian regimes

Although US foreign policy and Israel are clearly linked, there is a separate issue regarding its foreign policy which has been often cited as a cause for the Salafi Jihadist conflict with the US. As American support for

Middle Eastern regimes often threatens as much as maintains regional stability, American policymakers find themselves in a difficult position. On the one hand is the ever present need for regional stability. On the other there is America's role as a self proclaimed 'leader of the free world' demanding democratic participation for all of humanity. These two imperatives are often in conflict with regard to US foreign policy behaviour in the Middle East and, indeed, throughout the world.

Support for Saddam Hussein's regime, particularly during the Iran-Iraq war, as well as support for Mubarak's Egypt before 2011, Pahlavi's Iran and grudging support for the al-Saud regime in Saudi Arabia has, without question, undermined US credibility in the region as a benign hegemon and the vanguard of liberal democracy. The US, which was once cast in opposition to European imperialism and even admired by Islamists such as Sayid Qutb for its opposition to tyranny and colonialism, is now described as a tyrannical imperial power by the Salafi Jihadists. The realities of international politics, the need for a stable Middle East and the decline of European power in favour of the US, leaves the US in the difficult position of attempting to maintain its values and simultaneously manage its interests and the status quo global order. From this, it can be argued, that the brief moment of admiration and credibility that the US may have enjoyed amongst the general population of the Middle East has been in overall decline since the end of the World War Two. Muhammad Hafez claims, in *Why Muslims Rebel*, that the Islamic world must be conceptualised as unique and grand narratives that may apply in other parts of the world are not sufficient in analysing the Muslim world. He argues that extremism is a reaction to iron-fisted, predatory state aggression from the ruling elites that force Islamists to react defensively.[85] While this may have some credibility, the Middle East is not the only region of the world governed by undemocratic regimes that subdue organisations which challenge the authority of the governing elite.

In 2000, 50 per cent of Lebanese held a favourable opinion of the US, which was similar to the 52 per cent in Turkey;[86] in Egypt, 30 per cent of those surveyed were favourable towards the US in 2000.[87] By 2007, support in Turkey fell as low as nine per cent. A 2010 Pew Institute Global Attitudes Survey reveals that the US is now particularly unpopular in Middle Eastern countries, with only 17 per cent of those surveyed in Egypt and Turkey and 21 per cent in Jordan holding a favourable opinion.[88] In Lebanon, in 2010, 25 per cent of Shi'ites surveyed held a favourable opinion of America, which differentiated sharply with 64 per cent of Sunnis.[89] What this helps to demonstrate is that public opinion

fluctuates significantly over relatively short periods of time, leading to the possibility that there are numerous factors which may affect public opinion at any given time. Hence, it is difficult to demonstrate that authoritarianism and US support for those in power can exclusively lay claim to the reason for anti-Americanism in the Middle East, much less the emergence of the conflict between Salafi Jihadists and the US.

Al-Qaeda is involved in a conflict over power in the Middle East. The struggle for al-Qaeda ideologues is to wrest power from the ruling elite not only through violence, but also by presenting themselves as worthy successors to the Prophet. As Michael Scott Doran observes, 'the United States is also a participant in that war because whether it realises it or not its policies affect the fortunes of the various belligerents'.[90] By attempting to polarise the umma against the regional regimes and the US, casting the former as un-Islamic without legitimacy to rule and the latter as its benefactor, the al-Qaeda ideologues are working to strategic ends.[91]

There are dissenting opinions from those who conceptualise the rise of 'terrorism' exclusively within the context of US support for authoritarian regimes and, it is not disputed here, that in part the negative reputation that the US has earned in parts of the Middle East is due to this. Yet, this does not necessarily account for the rise of Salafi Jihadism. Rather, it is an issue that Salafi Jihadists can point to as a grievance and use to aid in the recruitment of al-Qaeda foot soldiers. Mathew Crosston may be correct in assuming that 'hypocrisy of our own (American) professed foreign policy creates new generations of terrorists'.[92] However, it is not the cause of the conflict between Salafi Jihadists and the US. Authoritarian regimes are indeed problematic for America's image and drive some towards the Salafi Jihadist cause, but it cannot be understood in isolation. The re-establishment of the Islamic caliphate ruled by a legitimate religious authority is the central goal of al-Qaeda. The US and the global status quo order it has helped to sustain are where the US and Salafi Jihadism intersect. As al-Zawahiri adamantly states, 'it is clear that the Jewish Crusader Alliance led by the United States will not allow any Islamic force to reach power in any of the Muslim countries, it will mobilise all of its power to hit and remove it from power'.[93] Bin Laden in his *Letter to the American People* further explains, 'the removal of these (Middle Eastern) governments is an obligation upon us and a necessary step to free the umma, to make sharia the supreme law and to regain Palestine, and our fight against these governments is not separate from you'.[94]

The language the al-Qaeda leaders employ is of significance. Bin Laden spoke of imposing sharia in these areas of concern, where al-Zawahiri observes that the infidels will not allow an Islamic government to take

power. It is not the authoritarian regimes that the al-Qaeda ideologues object to, but rather the nation-state and any government which they deem to be un-Islamic and, therefore, not dedicated to the unification of the Muslim peoples. Objections to US foreign policy in regard to its support for undemocratic regimes is not unique to the Muslim world, and can be observed to have occurred historically in various corners of the world at large, most notably in Latin America. Where al-Qaeda may try to wed Middle Eastern opposition to the regimes in Damascus, Cairo, Amman and elsewhere in the Middle East, its central concern is not the authoritarian regimes. Any regime, whether democratic or otherwise, which is not in line with their ideology is an obstacle. Therefore, challenging the US is not dependant on the existence of regimes but dependant on US support for any government that is not sufficiently Islamic or that strives to maintain the status quo regional order characterised by nation-states.

Tariq Ramadan observes that 'the intrinsic dynamics and the trends within political Islam are not known, so we put all the people in the same box. It's just to justify the rhetoric of the dictators for years and accepted by the West that if it's not us the dictators then it is going to be them, the violent extremists'.[95] Fear of political Islam has indeed been a factor historically in Western reluctance to upset the Middle Eastern order, even at the expense of its own espoused values. This message is turned on its head by the al-Qaeda ideologues, who insist that if they – the vanguard of Islam – do not rule the Middle East, then, it will be left to the dictatorships which are the instruments of the West. As the validity of these assertions begin to weaken due to uprisings in the region, it is possible that violent Islamism will be dealt a heavy blow, not by the West but by the people of the Middle East themselves. Bruce Riedel insists, 'if there is a springtime freedom in the Arab and Islamic worlds one loser is Osama Bin Laden and his gang'.[96]

The Salafi Jihadists, however, put their own interpretation on the fall of the Arab regimes in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, attempting to portray this as the first step towards realising their aims. Although the revolutions have no connection to jihadism, this has not deterred the Salafi Jihadists from portraying events through the Salafi Jihadist lens for the consumption of their own constituents. The spring 2011 edition of *Inspire* entitled the *Tsunami of Change*, a publication produced by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, dedicated the bulk of its pages to current events in the Arab world.[97] It argues that tyrannical rulers are the most significant barrier to freeing al-Aqsa.[98] Yahlya Ibrahim insists that 'now that the friends of America are being mopped out one after the other, our

aspirations are great that the path between us and al-Aqsa is clearing up'.[99] They are quick to point out that the prospect of freedom in the region has no bearing on the fate of Salafi Jihadism: 'The West believes that the revolts are bad for al-Qaeda. This is not the case.'[100] They portray the West as equally tyrannical as the Arab regimes, citing the banning of Salafi Jihadist books and Internet sites asking, 'why would the granting of freedoms be bad for al Qaeda?'[101]

The al-Qaeda ideologues are attempting to do as they have previously done, to portray themselves as not just the vanguard of a movement but as leaders of the Muslim world. Which form of political Islam comes to gain the strongest appeal in the future will depend, in part, on whether or not political Islam is afforded a legitimate place in the governments of the future. Al-Qaeda will no doubt continue its condemnation of the West as an imperial actor that is intent upon manipulating internal Muslim affairs, whatever the result.

There is much to suggest that al-Qaeda will attempt to profit from the developing situation in the region. They were quick to praise the revolutionaries and make links between the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat and the deposing of Hosni Mubarak.[102] Al-Zawahiri would appear to be suggesting that al-Qaeda should be credited with creating the conditions that allowed the Arab Spring to take place as he states:

> If the Arab peoples are liberated from the chains of fear and horror, who has won and who has lost? The American-allied media claims that al-Qaeda's methodology in confronting the (Arab) regimes has failed, but that media pretentiously forgets that Al-Qaeda and most of the jihadist current have continued their efforts for more than a decade and a half, mostly setting aside confronting these regimes, but focusing on attacking the head of international crime, and this methodology, and especially after the attack of September 11, has caused direct American orders to have lost grasp of these regimes on their people. That helped in causing a popular, cumulative movement and mobilization that led to the explosion of the popular volcano, which is the point that Shaykh Osama bin Laden, may Allah have mercy on him, used to assure. He used to assure that as much as we increase pressure on today's madness, America that will lead to weakening it, and subsequently weakening its cooperatives. So whose policy has really won and whose has lost? [103]

They were also quick to chastise those who promote the middle way of Islam, like the al-Wasat party in Egypt. Shaykh Abu Yahya al-Libi, an

al-Qaeda columnist, sternly warns against supporting parties like al-Wasat. 'Among the greatest ways which they use to conceal their deviation and to propagate their error is their claim of affiliation to the middle way, moderation and balance. They have coined meanings for these words which they become content with. Their meaning's source is their thoughts. Their meaning's structure is fabrication and compromise. Its essence and pulp is gladdening the West with what pleases it.'[104] They attempt to discredit moderate Islamist political aspirants like al-Wasat through a discourse which presents them as compromisers who have deviated from the true path of Islam which they, Salafi Jihadists, represent. In this, 'moderate Islam' is no more legitimate than the apostates they intend to replace.

Riedel observes that 'the victory of the masses and civil disobedience strikes at the very heart of the al Qaeda narrative that proclaims change can only come to the Islamic world through violence and terror, through the Global Jihad'.[105] This may prove to be valid. However, the absence of authoritarian regimes supported by the US will not end the conflict between the US and Salafi Jihadism. The US is still an obstacle to Salafi Jihadist objectives as a maintainer of the status quo. Even an Islamic government in the Middle East, that does not fit the strict parameters established by the al-Qaeda ideologues, will be promoted as the near enemy.

1.6 Economic disenfranchisement

There have been numerous attempts to relate the emergence of Salafi Jihadism to poor economic conditions and the gross divide between rich and poor in the Middle East. It is not disputed that there are, indeed, individuals who join al-Qaeda's ranks as a result of deep frustration with their economic prospects and a feeling of blame towards the West for ensuring that the structural constraints that permit poverty to continue remain in place. Can this, however, be understood as sufficient cause for the emergence of Salafi Jihadism and its conflict with the US?

Gurr argues, in *Why Men Rebel*, for a theory of relative deprivation. He notes that 'men are quick to aspire beyond their social means and quick to anger when those means prove inadequate, but slow to accept their limitations'.[106] This suggests that limits on upward social-economic mobility may be the cause of mass political violence. The 'rooted in poverty' hypothesis demonstrates a conceptualisation of political violence as driven by socio-economic desperation.[107] However, as the data presented in a 2006 study conducted by James A. Piazza demonstrates, 'contrary to

popular opinion no significant relationship between any of the measures of economic development and terrorism can be determined'.[108]

The World in Figures 2010 published by *The Economist* indicates that the countries with the poorest living standards are not major concerns in the 'War on Terror'. Burundi, Congo, Liberia, Guinea and Ethiopia have the lowest GDP per individual in the world.[109] The 9/11 hijackers were largely from affluent backgrounds living in comfortable conditions. At the individual level there are certainly those who feel economic deprivation and this drives them to join Salafi Jihadist organisations. However, poverty on its own does not serve particularly well as an explanation for the cause of the current impasse. Saudi Arabia, which has been a significant exporter of Salafi Jihadist ideas and is the country of origin for many who join the Salafi Jihadist cause, cannot be considered a poor country. Bin Laden himself did not come from a condition of poverty, nor did most of al-Qaeda's most influential figures. Salafi Jihadism must be understood in another way. A study by Alan Krueger and Jikata Maleckova finds no direct correlation between poverty and 'terrorism' in general.[110] Additionally, as Von Hippel generalises, 'if poverty really were the root cause of terrorism, more terrorists would come from sub-Saharan Africa and so far this is not the case'.[111] Esposito and Mogahed observe that 67 per cent of those who claim to be radicalised have had secondary or higher education, and that the politically radicalised tend to be more affluent than those who see themselves as moderate.[112] Despite the rhetoric of the al-Qaeda ideologues, indicating that the West has deprived the region of economic success, poverty and hardship are not exclusive to the Islamic world. However, instability and economic deprivation are dynamic components of the al-Qaeda narrative that places the current condition of the economically disenfranchised concretely within the imperial narrative that characterises the West, and indeed the international order, as oppressive and anti-Islamic.

1.7 Why not the rest?

A significant question that must be asked is: Why don't issues of globalisation, US foreign policy, cultural imperialism and poverty incite the same kind of reactions in other parts of the world? Each of these issues has had adverse effects on the populations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Attempts to build unifying political blocs to resist the present world structure have been unsuccessful and pursued with very little fervour or violence directed at the hegemon. No Pan-African, Asian or Latin American transnational 'terror' networks of non-Islamic origin

have emerged to challenge these issues at a global scale. In the quest to win allies, Western policy makers have attempted to distance the 'War on Terror' from Islam itself. In addition, academic scholarship often treads lightly around these issues. But it must be acknowledged that Islam, whatever the poverty of the Salafi Jihadist interpretation may be in the eyes of Muslims and Westerners alike, is a significant factor. Beyond the spiritual aspects of the faith, Islam provides a discourse for political organisation. The ability to construct an ideology that inspires global 'terrorism' out of a religious base to counter the prevailing world order is something unique to Islam and the Salafi Jihadists. It has been able to infectiously transcend borders, ethnicity and class with its appeal to the unity of believers and the search for religiously sanctioned governance.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that many of the mainstream concepts that attempt to offer explanations for the emergence of Salafi Jihadism in the twentieth century are somewhat narrow in scope. While they contain elements of truth, these are at best only partial. The concepts are limited to events and conditions of the contemporary age; many are also ahistorical and such ahistorical approaches limit the viability of the analysis. The Israeli state, modernity, globalisation, poverty, US foreign policy, values, and the concept of the clash of civilisations, do have a role to play within the conflict between Salafi Jihadists and the US. In addition, they may well help to explain why some individuals join al-Qaeda's cause, and they are significant in the rhetoric used by the Salafi Jihadist ideologues to exploit particular conditions, fears and resentment. It sends a message to individuals that will motivate them to support al-Qaeda and the objectives of the ideology. However, they are not in themselves sufficient explanations for the phenomenon; this requires a longer historical vision and a critical look at the exclusively Western-centric reading of international politics. The contemporary organising principles of the international system are an obstacle to the realisation of Salafi Jihadist objectives. While all the issues touched upon in this chapter are of significance, they ignore the systemic issue of order and the historical realities.

2
Historical and Ideological Challenges

The struggle to unify the Islamic peoples under religiously sanctified governance by various competing actors has existed since the death of the Prophet Muhammad. No other individual could contain in the same corpus both religious and temporal authority. These religious political challenges to establish a state that exemplified Islamic principles and could be governed by an ordained official had largely been contained within the Islamic world until the contemporary era. The rise and fall of the major caliphates, competing minor dynasties and self-proclaimed individuals was part of the ebb and flow of the Islamic political experience. The twentieth century, however, resulted in the end of the last caliphate, that is, the last political order that spoke to the Islamic legitimacy and unity project, as well as the rise of a different kind of world order. Disparate peoples were colonised and decolonised and sovereign states were formed on the ruins of former empires. A new world order was formed after World War Two and, following the last great empire, the Soviet Union, nation-state sovereignty defined international relations. This order was underwritten by the last remaining superpower, the US, an order that the great powers such as China, Russia, India, Japan and the EU largely observe. In this, the Islamic drive for unity and legitimacy was nearly extinguished. The obstacles provided by the international order and its powerful adherents were unsurpassable. This has had the result of projecting the order and legitimacy project out of the Islamic sphere into the world at large.

Salafi Jihadists, and indeed many Islamists, seek to establish a supranational state governed by a legitimate religious authority, a caliphate. This is not a novel idea that is unique to the arguments made in this

book. Nor is the reality that the US, as a result of its hegemonic position and proactive maintenance of the status quo international system, puts itself in direct opposition to the ambitions of Salafi Jihadists. However, the discourse in which these arguments have largely been presented often detaches the contemporary crisis from historical and ideational factors. In this, the Salafi Jihadist challenge to the international order is conceptualised through the lens of exclusively contemporary issues and without due consideration to the importance of ideas. This has the unfortunate effect of relegating religious ideology and historical political objectives to a position of limited importance.

It is not only material forces that are of significance when observing Salafi Jihadism. As Cornelia Beyer further explains, ideas are equally of value and have a role to play:

> One may regard the material and the ideational as quite distinct, they are, however, closely related and partly independent. Material factors have fundamentally shaped human affairs from the beginning of our existence. While historically life has been constrained by material natural conditions such as water, mountains, deserts and so forth, ideas (in particular norms) also have constrained power on individuals, societies and states. For material change to occur ideas have to be expressed in creative or destructive action. Humans therefore act as creators of ideas and as mediators between ideas and the material. Regarded by realists as material facets (population) and in constructivism as bearers of ideas (agents) humans operate in both dimensions, able to transform the ideational into material and vice-versa.[1]

To understand Salafi Jihadism it is valid to take a historically based approach. As Colin Wight insists, 'a problematic issue of terrorism research post 9/11 is an almost complete lack of historical awareness'.[2] What is required is 'a more historically grounded understanding as opposed to the dominant presentism'.[3]

This chapter serves to introduce a central theme of the book. Challenges to US hegemony and the international order are numerous, however, the Salafi Jihadist challenge has a specific nature related to Islamic history and a specific ideology. Particular aspects of US hegemony and the international system are incompatible with these historical and ideological understandings. This chapter takes account of the value of understanding historical processes and ideological factors that shape how Salafi Jihadists view the world, understand their place in it, and engage with challenges to their idealised political vision.

2.1 The relevance of history and ideas

John Huizinga insisted that 'historical thinking is always teleological'.[4] That is, when thinking in broad historical terms a trajectory appears, the drive to get from one place to the other. This is no doubt the case in regard to the al-Qaeda ideologues. Conceptualising history is important in this context not least of all because it is indeed important to Islam and, additionally, as it is employed by the Salafi Jihadists to proclaim the legitimacy of their ideology and to justify their objectives. Islam is a teleological concept that seeks to establish a just order on earth through the blueprint provided in the Quran and Sunnah. Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, a leading contemporary Islamic scholar, asserts that the 'building up of a proper community life on earth is a supreme religious imperative'.[5] This suggests that Islam is purpose driven. Islamic history, then, is marked by consistent attempts at establishing God's order, creating the 'just' and 'good' society.[6] The desire to build an idealised society is not exclusive to the Muslim tradition, nor is it something which is the creation of the Salafi Jihadists within Islam. As Imam Rauf notes, 'at a collective level, all Muslims have a dream they will someday live in a society that governs itself like the Prophet's did in Medina from 622 to his death in 632. This is the Muslim's equivalent of the Biblical kingdom of God and Muslims have always had a strong desire to find ways to re-establish the basis of such a society.'[7] There have clearly been varying interpretations as to in what manner this is to be done.

The al-Qaeda ideology is deeply rooted in historical Islamic thought, most significantly since the rise of Salafism in the nineteenth century. David McLellan suggests that 'ideology is the most elusive concept in all of social science'.[8] Indeed, it is difficult to formulate an agreed-upon definition as to what exactly ideology is. Michael Freeden, a highly regarded theorist on the subject, regards the study of ideology as 'most profitably recognised as the study of political thought'.[9] Meaning that ideologies are all around us and individuals are constantly engaged with them. In which case, they are not necessarily laden with negative connotations. In the broadest terms an ideology may or may not be illusionary obscuring truth, as some Marxists suggest. Ideologies may not necessarily represent anything outside of the ideology itself.[10] In the first instance this is not altogether important if we want to understand what political thinking an ideology represents. Sargent provides a useful definition of ideology as a 'system of values and beliefs regarding the various institutions and processes of society'.[11] *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* defines ideology as 'any wide ranging system of beliefs, ways

of thought and categories that provide the foundations of programmes of political and social actions'.[12] Hence, ideology is, as Freeden observed, essentially all things political attached to specific values, norms, beliefs, symbols and institutions.

Marxists view ideologies to provide a singular account of the political world.[13] Those who construct them are engaged in the manufacturing of history and claim universal validity[14] that arise out of the need for a simplified marketable account of reality and the desire for control and power over others.[15] Where these claims could arguably be applied to the Salafi Jihadist ideology, the problem is that, from the Marxist perspective, ideologies are secular and obscure reality that once dispensed with will reveal the truth. Salafi Jihadism is derived not from secular concepts, but rather from notions of extra-rational agency that move beyond the material and are claimed to possess a cosmic origin. Salafi Jihadism is further complicated by the fact that Islam, in general, has difficulty in permitting a distinction between the secular and spiritual spheres of life. Both Salafi Jihadism and Islam share the same starting point of knowledge: the Quran and Sunnah. Religions and ideologies are, however, analytically separable. Where religion seeks to increase the value of the individual through group participation, ideology seeks to increase group benefit through individual participation.[16] Even so, as the Salafi Jihadist ideology is distinct from Islam, it also differs from ordinary political ideologies.[17] However, as in this case, religion and political ideology have been intertwined, such that Salafi Jihadism contains elements of both religion and a political ideology. Yet, a political ideology can be counterpart to a religious belief system.[18] Salafi Jihadists use religious words, symbols and values that distinctly political ideologies tend to avoid. Enemies are described by the Salafi Jihadists in religious terms. The strategy and the goals are described through religious means and acts of violence are legitimised through an interpretation of religious texts.[19] Salafi Jihadism is then best termed a religio-political ideology or, as David Philpott terms it, a political theology. A concept he warns that IR theorists are often loath to account for. He notes, 'If International Relations scholars are to understand the violence of September 11, then they must come to understand how religious movements like radical Islamic revivalism, acting on their political theology challenge the Westphalian synthesis, the fundamental authority structure of the international order.'[20]

The Salafi Jihadist objective is that of building a particular kind of idealised community and the modern nation-state, the international system and the hegemon are obstacles to this vision. Historical interpretation is

indispensable in the formation of this ideology and, therefore, necessary for al-Qaeda's cause. It is argued here that this goal for al-Qaeda is primarily, if understood in realist terms, a quest for obtaining power to pursue specific ends. An understanding of the history of Islamic thought and the Middle East itself are, therefore, vital components in conceptualising the question which has been presented here.

Ibn Khaldun asserted over seven centuries ago that history could be likened to a philosophy, noting that 'the inner meaning of history involves speculation and an attempt to get at the truth, subtle explanations of the cause of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events'.[21] This highlights the importance of history in understanding contemporary questions and how understandings of history influence the way in which particular groups and actors view the contemporary world. For Hegel history was brought to an end in the contemporary as opposed to projecting it into the future, in much the way Francis Fukuyama prematurely declared the evolution of human society complete and challenges to liberal democratic capitalism exhausted nearly two centuries later.[22] Hegel understood a process of ongoing evolution in the past and yet denied such to the future.[23] The al-Qaeda ideologues have turned this on its head, insisting that the end of history, human evolution towards the 'good' and 'just' society, has already in fact been achieved centuries ago and, since that time, has been in a continual decline into a corrupt society. The future must be modelled on the past to turn the course of history in reverse towards the idealised society. For this vast undertaking it is necessary for the Salafi Jihadists not to know history or to understand it, but rather to own it.

E. H. Carr argued that in the relativist understanding of historical experience one understanding is as good as the other, or that every interpretation is truth in its own particular time and place. It is the sense of progress on its own that allows for us to order and interpret the events of the past.[24] The Salafi Jihadists would agree, positing their interpretation as the only divinely sanctioned version. For Carr history moves forward, for the Salafi Jihadists it must move backward. Reform happens in one of two opposing ways in regard to history, constructively or critically, where learning from the past is either incorporated or discarded.[25] The Salafi Jihadists, it is argued, take a middle approach, which is to employ history for their own ideological purposes, using it to legitimise the ideology they promote.

The role of religion and ideas must not be understood in terms of limited importance, nor can events in the Middle East simply be understood as an extension of the politics of the West. Further to this, history

must be taken seriously when investigating the question this book proposes. Historical understandings will represent an integral and indispensable portion of this work, as it is argued that conceptualising the contemporary situation cannot be a project which ignores historical trends and perceptions, and the role these play in the creation of ideology.

2.2 The international order, hegemony and nation-states

In simple terms, the international order can be viewed from three broad perspectives: Hobbesian, Kantian or Lockean. The world view of Thomas Hobbes presents the human condition as one in which survival is always in question and security is rarely present. Hobbes solemnly observed: 'Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man; the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them with all. In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.'[26]

This may be the most accurate view of the Salafi Jihadist position. More liberally-minded thinkers may see the world from the perspective of Emmanuel Kant, where humans are driven towards a cooperative international society. The current international order, from the position of this book, is situated somewhere in between the Hobbesian state of nature and the Kantian model of international society, more in line with the views of John Locke and rivalled cooperation.[27] The international order is giving way to greater cooperation, particularly among powerful states, more reflective of what Hedley Bull[28] understood as a kind of international society where states may choose to make the anarchic structure less hazardous as Wendt observed.[29]

The state, as the defining feature of the international system and the problems it presents to the ambitions of jihadists, is therefore an important point of focus. Post-structuralists may argue against the primacy of the state in IR and, indeed, rightly point out that notions of the state, sovereignty and war deserve questioning. However, the modern

nation-state is still the most powerful manifestation of sovereignty and characterises the international system. The primacy of state is, however, challenged, not only by international organisations, institutions and processes of globalisation, but also by alternative concepts of order and sovereignty rooted in religion, manifested in the actions of non-state actors, among whom are the Salafi Jihadists.

Many of the proposed answers to the central question asked here have attached the problem to contemporary issues, such as the unequal distribution of wealth among and within states, globalisation, modernity, despotic regimes, Western values, US foreign policy and the Arab-Israeli conflict, or argue for a determinist conception of competing civilisations and cultures. However, much of this literature is deeply rooted within the framework of Western-centric thinking, ignoring how some elements of the Muslim world view international politics, concepts of the international, sovereignty, war, territoriality and legitimacy. The US, by playing a premier role in the construction of and the continued maintenance of the status quo international system defined by nation-states, sets itself at odds with attempts to create a supranational caliphate. It is without question that the state and the international order are what the Salafi Jihadists are in fact challenging. Further, the efforts of the US and its allies to preserve this order makes them the agents that support the structure and, therefore, targets of the Salafi Jihadist project.

The integrity of states and the international system, however, is undoubtedly challenged by numerous actors, yet the state remains the most powerful manifestation of sovereignty. The international system as it is today is not as it has always been and, further, it is debatable that it will remain static in its present condition. Yet, as states choose to cooperate, they also choose to keep in place the mechanisms that preserve the status quo, the international system defined by the sovereignty of the state. Great powers seek to either alter or maintain the international system.[30] In the present time, it appears, they work to maintain the status quo.

Challenges to the current order and the states that define it come not only from the processes of globalisation, increasingly porous borders and actors that are not geographically bound, but equally from those who are fundamentally opposed to the very order that defines the modern world. International order and the maintenance of the status quo system are objectives of states that benefit from the contemporary order. The desire to maintain the status quo is not necessarily a universal objective, but rather an established norm. Internationalism and the maintenance of

the status quo are both cloaked in a hegemonic imperialism which will be unlikely to appeal to all.[31]

This international system, managed by a hegemonic power, does not appeal to all and its structure, order and foundations are challenged by those who envision a different order. States, while still the most powerful actors in the international system, are not exclusive, and the concept of the state itself and its legitimacy is questioned by the Salafi Jihadists. There has been, particularly since the end of the Cold War, an emerging international society in which states have chosen to temper the dangers of anarchy. Great powers have a vested interest in maintaining the present neo-liberal order.

A defining feature of the international system is hegemony. It is conceded that hegemony is an imprecise concept[32] and there is no single historical model for hegemony. Rather, hegemony has emerged differently in various historical settings,[33] yet we need not dispense with the concept. P. J. Taylor gives the following account: 'Hegemony can be traced back to the classical Greek term hegemonia. This was used in two distinctive ways. First, it could mean the dominance and supremacy of one political group over others and so was little different from the idea of empire. A second, more subtle usage, identified the hegemon as leader in the sense of a guide, the political group 'who does things first and, therefore, shows the way for others. The latter implies much more than coercive political power and has led to the widespread modern use of the term.'[34]

Antonio Gramsci took the concept of hegemony as coercion somewhat further. For Gramsci, hegemony was not simply domination by force but by consent given to the political and ideological leadership.[35] Robert Cox argued that 'hegemony is a structure of values and understandings about the nature of order that permeates a whole system of states and non-state entities'.[36] Cronin and Mendelsohn observe that it is the dominant role of a systemic leader that is one of the main institutions of the international system.[37] Hegemony requires the material power of the hegemon, but also requires that other actors see this as the natural order of things. Other states are willing to consent to the hegemon's status as long as they view it as serving the cause of international stability, which benefits the individual interests of the subordinate states.[38] The US exhibits its hegemonic status by maintaining a particular liberal world order through both hard and soft power mechanisms, employed both unilaterally and multilaterally through institutions and allies. A defining feature of this order is the nation-state system and the concept of sovereignty for states. It seems clear, however, that the hegemony the US exhibits cannot be understood absolutely in material terms.

Hegemony in this case, however, is not simply primacy based upon a material advantage, as it is attached to some kind of social legitimacy.[39] Therefore, it is as Clark asserts, 'an institutionalised practise of special rights and responsibilities conferred on a state with the resources to lead'.[40] Hence, the US is a hegemon in the sense that it helps to maintain the status quo world order. A definitive part of this hegemony is the territorial sovereignty of nation-states, even if the US itself is at times willing to disregard these norms.

US hegemony can be challenged not only by great power states but, additionally, by non-state actors. Transnational actors can seek to create instability at the national or sub-national level, undermining US hegemony and pulling these areas out of the 'hegemonic orbit'.[41] Non-state actors engaged in an ideological conflict have a role to play in the power relationships of the international system.[42]

Some state theorists argue that states will seek to balance unipolarity. However, following the Cold War, this failed to occur, causing theorists to adapt their position. Some argued that balancing will at some point begin against concentrations of power, though this may not be immediate as a result of the overwhelming US advantage, but would, nonetheless, inevitably occur. Christopher Layne observed, 'I argue that the unipolar moment is just that, a geopolitical interlude that will give way to multi-polarity between 2000 and 2010.'[43] Hass concurred, 'it must be said at the outset that American economic and military advantages while great, are neither unqualified nor permanent'.[44] Pape suggested that states would seek a kind of soft balancing, preserving their own interests without either bandwagoning or challenging the hegemon directly.[45] Others concluded that, at least for some period of time, unipolarity would remain stable, as it is not in the interest of powerful states to challenge the status quo. The US has, in large part, successfully managed to remain free from powerful state challenges. It is engaged in the dual task of protecting its own interests and a project of order-building that invites powerful states to work within the status quo.[46] The hegemonic disruption model argues that, at least in the short term, it is in fact not great powers that challenge US dominance, but non-state actors who seek to disrupt its hegemony. Actors who are fundamentally dissatisfied with the status quo and the constraints it presents to their general objectives may attempt to challenge the hegemon with an alternative concept of order derived from a particular ideological position that contrasts with the neoliberal world order. Further attention will be given to hegemonic disruption in Chapter 9.

2.3 Conclusion

Increasingly, throughout the twentieth century, hegemony became less a matter of superior material power capabilities and more an act of consent. The hegemon is afforded its status as long as competing states benefit from the hegemonic structure. In this the hegemon presides over an idea – an idea as to how the international system should function, how it should be governed and the rules and features that maintain it. Rival ideologies that stem from alternative historical and ontological perspectives will inevitably challenge it to greater or lesser degrees of success. Hegemony is, in part, successful as it is somewhat flexible to a greater extent. Within the US hegemonic orbit, it exists not only in democracies but theocracies, dictatorships and a range of political organisations. Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian majority states co-exist. China, Russia and other former adversaries of the West work within and compete over the privileges of the system within the broad frame of the established rules. What the system cannot, however, assimilate is Salafi Jihadism, a religious ideology that seeks not to compete within the system but to destroy it.

The system despite its flexible nature does rely on certain principles, the most pressing of which is the sovereignty of states. Hence, a Salafist state could exist within the system but, the unity project and the prospect for legitimate rule for the whole of the Islamic umma, under the prescription of the Salafi Jihadist, cannot. To accurately conceptualise the Salafi Jihadist movement it is necessary to juxtapose the Salafi Jihadist ideology and historical teleology alongside the contemporary international system. In this, it is observed, that two historical processes have come into conflict, resulting in the contemporary crisis.

3
The Islamic State

Max Weber argued that 'only the Occident knows the state in the modern sense, with a constitution, specialised officialdom and the concept of citizenship. Beginnings of this in antiquity and in the Orient were never able to fully develop.'[1] Weber's perception of the non-Western pre-modern world suggests a lack of sophistication in forms of political organisation prior to the development of nation-states. However, this may not be an entirely valid assumption. The nation-state exists as the most contemporary and powerful manifestation of the concept of sovereignty and political order. The nation-state is not, however, unchallenged. Historians suspect that the first 'states' began to form in Mesopotamia around 3500 BCE, created by the Sumerian civilisation. Despite the structure of these states looking dramatically different from the modern state, this still suggests the beginnings of a political order.[2] Indeed, as Bernard Lewis observes, 'the bureaucratic state is probably older in the Middle East than anywhere else in the world'.[3] Ideas regarding sovereignty, the state and legitimacy are intimately linked. They are relevant in attempting to conceptualise both the contemporary international system, which has its basis in the Western tradition, as well as the Salafi Jihadist notion of order based on the Islamic tradition.

In the contemporary international system the concept of sovereignty is a source of significant debate. It is difficult, as Hideaki Shinoda contends, 'to find a political notion more controversial than sovereignty'.[4] It is a perplexing task, as Brian Nelson observes, to comprehend in one definition the actual variety of states that have emerged over historical time. At the same time it is impossible to discuss the state without some understanding of its major characteristics.[5] Kenneth Waltz suggested that sovereignty is a 'bothersome concept'.[6] It is indeed the case that modern scholars of politics have struggled to define the notion in the

manner in which Hobbes, Bodin and Rousseau professed to confidently do in their own time. It is, nonetheless, of significant concern to international relations.[7]

The idea of the state is tied to a concept of sovereignty and legitimacy. However, how far sovereignty extends in both a social and geographical sense, and to whom legitimacy is given, is the crux of the debate between those who advocate the international system characterised by nation-states and those who adhere to Islamic concepts of political organisation. Stephen Krasner provides four meanings of the term sovereignty: (1) Westphalian, referring to the exclusion of other actors from the internal affairs of the state; (2) Interdependent sovereignty, the ability to control cross border movements; (3) International legal sovereignty, recognition by other states of a state's domestic sovereignty; (4) Internal sovereignty, the ability for internal authorities to maintain control.[8] However, these considerations give rise to significant questions: (1) Is the state as it is understood in the early-twenty-first century the only applicable notion of the concept of sovereignty? (2) Has the teleological Western-driven process, from tribal organisation to nation-state organisation, been completed with no challenge from previously established ideas of political organisation?

The idea of sovereignty has come to be rather confused in the discourse of international politics, particularly in relation to the Middle East in the twentieth century.[9] Challenges to the integrity and sustainability of the contemporary state are often discussed in the context of globalisation, technological advances, weak and failing states, and the reality of porous borders. However, in the Middle East, the nation-state, since its inception, has also been challenged on ideological grounds. In the Muslim Middle East notes Trudy Jacobsen, 'two understandings of the term sovereignty have developed in parallel with each other'.[10] One based on the nation-state model of sovereign states and the other rooted in Islamic concepts of political order. The European example was imported under colonial rule and replaced Islamic empires that had existed in various forms since the seventh century. There has been significant confusion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that has arisen from differences in the Western meaning of sovereignty and the state and the complex Islamic understanding of the phenomenon. This has had an impact on the rise of Salafi Jihadism and its conflict with the US and the West.

Since the beginning of the wars of religion in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the process of nation-state building has continued to be distributed throughout the world. It is, indeed,

deeply problematic, as conceptualisations of sovereignty are normative as opposed to empirical.[11] Any discussion on sovereignty and, thereby, the state and legitimacy, requires grappling with concerns such as: (1) Are there practical and normative limits to sovereignty? (2) Where is it located? (3) What is the relationship between state sovereignty and civil society?[12]

Jacobsen insists that Islamic international 'terrorists' are not seeking to obtain sovereignty for themselves but, rather, they are 'seeking the destruction of sovereignty'.[13] Additionally, as Andreas Pickel argues, 'a world system composed of sovereign nation-states is itself the source of many problems of order'.[14] Both assertions warrant merit. However, it is not necessarily the destruction of sovereignty that Salafi Jihadists seek but, rather, an alternate concept that pre-dates the contemporary international system. Although sovereign nation-states are indeed problematic in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world, it is the maintenance of the status quo world system by the US that has brought it into conflict with Salafi Jihadism and its most powerful manifestation, al-Qaeda. Sovereignty, then, is not simply an abstract concept but a manner of speaking about the world and acting in it.[15] It is both theory and practice, a method of establishing clarity and order in an incoherent world.[16] What can be observed by comparing Islamic concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy and the state with the Western model of political organisation is that there is a long tradition within the Islamic sphere that contrasts with, but is not in all aspects entirely alien to, Western concepts, as both are rooted in some concept of legitimacy. Al-Qaeda's quest for a trans-national caliphate is based in this historical Islamic thinking. The current international order is an obstacle to this realisation. Al-Qaeda's ideology is a mechanism for taking power and it draws upon an Islamic concept of the state as the idealised form of political order in the Middle East and Muslim world.

3.1 Sovereignty in the West

The Western understanding of sovereignty, that is the basis for an international system defined by nation-states, has its origins in the work of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes and French thinker Jean Bodin.[17] Historians may disagree as to when exactly sovereignty, as understood in the West, came to be an established part of political life but it is closely related to the economic and social experiences of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[18] Bodin defines sovereignty in *Republique*, one of the earliest Western works on the subject, as the

'absolute and perpetual power of the commonwealth'.[19] For Bodin there is no contradiction between absolute secular power and divine and natural law. God's authority, then, lies not outside a theory of sovereignty but at the very centre of it. For centuries European kings were understood to be the embodiment of God's will on earth or, as Bodin writes, 'his lieutenants for commanding men on earth'.[20] Contempt for one's sovereign prince was considered contempt towards God of whom the king was the earthly representative.[21]

For Hobbes sovereignty is absolute and embodied in a single individual, as the failings of the sovereignty of one person is less than the shortcomings of the few or the many, as in democratic or aristocratic forms of government.[22] Individuals have inherent impulses towards aggression and self-interest. The human condition, as ascribed by Hobbes, is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'.[23] Thus, security for Hobbes is the greatest concern for society and absolute sovereignty under any circumstance is preferable to civil war and disorder. Humanity lives in the 'state of nature', a war of all against all, where 'everyone has a right to everything, even one another's bodies'.[24] The function of sovereignty and the state is to control the most basic instincts of humans, creating a condition of security, as no individual can be trusted to respect the security of others. In the state of nature a Leviathan is required to ensure stability and enforce peace, thereby controlling the state of nature. From this condition of the state of nature, characterised by uncertainty and danger, there must arise the condition of government through the form of a compact. In this, the individuals cede the sovereignty available to them in the state of nature to another power in the interest of peace and security for all.[25] The model Hobbes establishes is scientific, observing that the world is in fact chaotic. Humans have base animalistic tendencies and seek to maximise their power in their own interests at the expense of others. In the state of nature security is impossible because contracts between individuals cannot be guaranteed in the absence of an absolute sovereign.

Rousseau, Montesquieu and Spinoza argue, in contrast to Hobbes, that the state of nature is a fiction constructed from an assumption that individuals in nature possess all of the characteristics and habits that they acquire through social interaction, but without any kind of societal constraints. As they would encounter each other seldom in the state of nature, possessing neither pride, envy nor greed obtained through social interaction, no one would attack another without provocation for fear of weakness.[26] As Montesquieu observed, 'when man enters society he ceases to fear and war commences'.[27] However, even in disputing Hobbes' assumptions, similar conclusions regarding the causes of war

can still be reached. As Rousseau suggests, war occurs because 'there is nothing to prevent it'.[28] Some form of governing must exist to control the human drive towards power. However, if the sovereignty of the king is derived from natural law and God, what is the legitimacy of a sovereign who fails to comply with these imperatives?[29] For John Locke sovereignty is brought into question in this case. Locke notes, 'it is a mistake to think that the supreme or legislative power of any commonwealth can do what it will to dispose of the estates of the subject arbitrarily or take any part of them at pleasure'.[30] The state, then, is charged with protecting life, liberty and estates in a context that limits are imposed on its legitimate authority. Through this Locke has restored the natural law that Hobbes has disregarded.[31]

The Western nation-state and concepts of governing derive from these early works of Hobbes, Rousseau, Locke and Kant. They are based on rationalist scientific reasoning, ultimately detaching the human from the divine, giving sovereignty an earthly rather than cosmic dimension. Legitimacy to rule is based on a social contract derived from this kind of rationalist observation. In the feudal European world the church and Christian community were fixed eternal entities. Earthy kingdoms were temporal and subject to change.[32] Hence, there were no discernible boundaries between inside and outside.[33] Rather, there was a cosmopolitan patchwork of authorities which overlapped.[34] Here are the beginnings of the idea of a nation-state and a detachment from cosmic and earthly manifestations of legitimacy. The sovereign now was held to account by a different form of legitimacy based on arrangements between the governed and the governing, as opposed to absolute appeals to divinity. But, equally, these concepts contested the overlapping authorities of the medieval era. Despite the obvious return or acceleration of overlapping sovereignty in the modern period, through the processes of globalisation, sovereignty, the state and legitimacy in the West still contain an historical logic that emerges from this time.[35] The history of sovereignty, as Camilleri and Falk observe, parallels the evolution of the modern nation-state and is reflective of the evolving relationship between state and civil society, political authority and community.[36]

The state is, at the present time, the most powerful manifestation of sovereignty in the international system, even in the face of the processes of globalisation and positive attempts to pool sovereignty by some states. A defining feature of the international system is that the world is divided into sovereign units, even though there are overlapping sovereigns and allegiances. The state is tied directly to some notion of legitimacy. Equally, so too is hegemony. This legitimacy is derived from

Western notions of sovereignty and contrasts ontologically with Islamic concepts. Hence, the legitimacy on which the status quo international system rests, the states that define it and the hegemonic power that seeks to maintain it, remain illegitimate for the Salafi Jihadists.

3.2 Islamic sovereignty

There has been a great deal of discussion on the decline of the nation-state and the subject of sovereignty in general, particularly in the post Cold War period. Shinoda observes that 'despite the polemic about whether sovereignty is becoming obsolete or not, the fact is that viewed from one angle sovereignty seems to be eroding, from another it is still standing'.[37] Copious volumes of literature have been dedicated to predicting the ultimate demise of the nation-state and speculation on what it is that will replace it, most notably the literature dedicated to cosmopolitan ideas of world government that would eliminate borders, quell conflicts and deal with the complex problems of the twenty-first century.[38] However, predicting the decline of the state is still in essence a Western-oriented project, ignoring previous, existing and still competing notions of sovereignty and political organisation that are not derived from the Western experience.

Historically, for most civilisations, sovereignty has not been a defining feature of political life but, rather, political order emerged in the form of tribalism or city states or in a flexible radiant nature like that of China.[39] This may lend credence to Weber's assumption that the state is a concept historically unknown outside of the Western world. However, if the basis of the state relies upon concepts of sovereignty, legal structures and notions of territoriality, then it would seem that Islam does contain a viable idea about what the state is. Islamic concepts of the state are not universal, neither are Islamic concepts of engaging with the international relations, as the next chapter will further clarify. However, Islam does contain the components for a state; sovereignty (caliphate), law (sharia) and territoriality (umma). The nature of these components is a source of dispute for Islamic thinkers, yet the components exist without question.

The concept of a political order based on just social organisation, as prescribed by Islamic norms, has been the goal of various Muslim communities since the origins of Islam itself.[40] Prescriptions for how this order is to function can be found in both the Quran and Sunnah, with the first manifestation of an Islamic state developing during the time of Muhammad and instituted through the *Constitution of Medina* in 622 CE.

This document established a political order to supersede that of the tribal authorities of Medina and begin the establishment of a larger community, the umma. This Medinan period, a time when revelation and political power first became intertwined in Islam, served as the model for future attempts to bring about the desired Islamic society and build a supra-tribal, now supranational, political order.[41] It could be argued that though any sustainable Islamic political order that unified the Muslim people never fully developed after this Medinan period, there have, however, been continuous efforts to do so from that time to the contemporary era.

Islam is as much a guide for living the righteous life as it is a guide for the creation of a just society. It is a call for a unified political order on earth based upon God's sovereignty. However, despite the universalist message of Islam and the call for political unity, concepts of how to bring about this political order and precisely what form it should take have not been without variation and debate among Islamic scholars. Such debates have been ongoing since the formation of the Medinan state and the time of the Prophet. The historical evidence would suggest that there is not one single accepted model for state and religious institutions in Islam but, instead, several competing ones.[42]

Just as there are competing concepts of how Islam is to engage the international, so too are there differing methods in which the Islamic political order is to be created. Islamic thinkers have dealt with similar themes that Western philosophers and state builders have, attempting to provide a blueprint for political order. Most pressingly: who is to rule, over what they will rule and what mechanisms are to be employed in solidifying that rule. There may well be no viable compromise between those who argue for an absolutist variety of secular nation-state sovereignty that demands the separation of religious institutions from politics and those who insist upon an Islamic sovereignty, but similar key questions are still being asked by both. For Islam sovereignty lies in God. It is God's sovereignty and not the privy of earthly beings to assert. Thus, legitimacy is framed in a religious context. Ontologically sovereignty in Islam is derived from above, therefore, the law is indivisible from the extra-rational. The basis of Islamic sovereignty rests upon the core Islamic premise of 'tawhid' (the unity of God), from which all other Islamic ideas regarding the state must be derived.[43] This concept is given greater attention in the next chapter.

The *Constitution of Medina*, despite the primacy of religious assumptions regarding the state informing its framework, did not establish an authoritarian regime and could be likened to a social contract between

the ruler and the ruled, not dramatically different from the concepts offered by Western philosophers. However, this worked within the framework of belief and the law as established by God through Muhammad, such that sovereignty emanates from the divine as opposed to natural law. The Prophet, as Muqtedar Khan explains, 'demonstrated a democratic spirit quite unlike the authoritarian tendencies of those who claim to imitate him today'.[44] Freely-given consent was unproblematic in the early Muslim state; however, the purely secular was inconceivable. The final authority rested with God and political decisions were required to be based on the holy texts.

The *Constitution of Medina* opens with, 'In the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful. This document is from Muhammad to the Prophet, governing relations between the believers and Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib, and those who followed them and joined them and laboured with them.'[45] This would indicate that joining the community and being subject to its laws was in fact a choice rather than an act of pure conquest. The other monotheists, specifically the Jews, are offered similar standing with the Muslims. As the constitution states, 'To the Jew who follows us belongs help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided.' However, there is a clear distinction in class between those who believe in one God and the pagans: 'No polytheist shall take the property of a person of Quraysh under his protection, nor shall he intervene against a believer.'[46] Equality, therefore, has a price of admission.

The state requires three basic structural characteristics: sovereignty embodied in a centralised government, coercive law and territoriality.[47] The Islamic concept of the state clearly demonstrates these, although ontologically diverse from the nation-state concept. Sovereignty is cosmic, derived from God and held by some earthly authority such as a caliph. The government is centralised in the beginning in the form of the Prophet and, later, in the corpus of the caliphs. Law emerges from the Quran and Sunnah in the form of sharia. Territoriality is, however, somewhat more problematic, as the following pages further explain.

3.2.1 Specialised officialdom: The caliphate

The Quran obliges the community to obey the rule of a legitimate authority. It requires that a ruler's authority be derived from God and a government that is imbued in righteousness must be regarded to maintain order.[48] The Quran states, 'Oh ye who believe, obey Allah and obey the messenger and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ

anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and his messenger. If ye do believe in Allah and the last day, that is the best way and best in result.'[49]

The caliphate, as the organising principle of Islamic political order, existed in many forms since the time of the Prophet, most notably under the leadership of the Umayyads, Abbasids and Ottomans. The Islamic state or caliphate is embodied within the person of the caliph, deriving authority to rule from the sovereignty of God, acting as a successor to the Prophet.

Following the death of the Prophet his close associate Abu Bakr took responsibility for the leadership of the Muslim community. Following Abu Bakr in order of succession were Umar ibn al-Kittab, Uthman ibn Affan and Ali ibn Abi Talib. Collectively, in Sunni Islam, they are known as the Rightly Guided Caliphs, all having been companions of the Prophet and his family. It is this 'golden age' that Salafists refer to as the moment of true Islam. Since this period the leadership of the Islamic world has been highly contestable. Yet, for over 1300 years the caliphate was in existence, though fractured by competing claims over the rightful leadership of the community.

Two polar types of leadership have followed since Islam's origins. The first is a totality model based on the Prophet during the Medinan period, where political and religious leadership was embodied in a single person. The opposing model has been that of the complete separation of religious and political authority.[50] In reality, most regimes were ruled from a position between these polar extremes, failing to achieve the complete convergence of the Medinan model yet still striving to achieve Islamic legitimacy.[51] The caliphs managed to preserve their self constructed image as servants of God and custodians of Sunni Islam but, in reality, were rarely more than political rulers in practice.[52] Following the assassination of Ali, the last of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the prospects of maintaining complete religious and political authority in one individual became untenable.[53] However, the Umayyads who followed worked diligently to maintain that their authority was an extension of that of the Prophet, despite acting largely, as the caliphs that would follow them, as monarchical in function.[54]

The convergence model based on the ideals of the Prophet was never successfully achieved, nor has it been feasible to do so, as no other individual could enjoy the religious and political authority of Muhammad.[55] Hence, every caliph and political leader since this time has been required to negotiate and mediate the constant tension between religion and politics, as no ruler has been afforded the support of the entire

community in the way the Prophet and the early caliphs were able to achieve. Fierce competition for this role and competing claims have been a common theme throughout Islamic history. The central questions have been asked for centuries.

Therefore, the position of caliph was never safe or uncontested since the time of the Prophet and the four Rightly Guided Caliphs who followed Muhammad. This was also the root of sectarian strife. The Sunni-Shi'ite sectarian divide is rooted in a question of succession following the death of Muhammad. The Shi'ites believed that as a relative of the Prophet, Ali, Muhammad's cousin, should lead the community, while the Sunnis as the majority chose Abu Bakr, a companion of the Prophet. This divide has grown substantially wider over time and still plagues the politics of the Middle East and the Islamic world.

The ruling caliphs were incapable of functioning without the consent of their subjects, which rested in large part on upholding Islamic orthodoxy as defined by the Ulema.[56] In turn, the religious elite of the Ulema could not survive without protection from foreign forces, the insurance of domestic tranquility and the endowments provided by the caliphs.[57] It is the maintenance of this relationship, even though at times severely strained, between the political and religious leadership which helped to ensure the long-standing institution of the caliphate. This relationship can as well be observed in modern times, particularly in the relationship between the former rulers of Egypt and the Ulema of al-Azhar.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following World War One, when the caliphate was abolished, the office of the caliph was left as little more than a spiritual post having lost any authority over territory or Muslim populations.[58] For Islamic thinkers like Rashid Rida this was unproblematic, as the office of the caliph could be easily transitioned from a position of power to one of spiritual leadership headed by someone of strong moral and scholarly credentials.[59] This effective secularisation of the former Ottoman territories and the end of over 1300 years of Islamic imperialism, however, was of significant concern to many in the Islamic world and, as this book argues, is an integral part of the modern conflict between the West and Salafi Jihadism.

Contrary to Weber the caliphate does represent a specialised officialdom and was a core part of Islamic political organisation for over 1300 years. Although the authority of the caliphs was consistently contested and it failed to meet the high standards set by the example of the Medinan period, its termination was a traumatic convulsive moment for Islamic civilisation at the beginning of the twentieth century. This was made less unpalatable as its termination was often perceived as a Western plot.

Whatever the idealised myth of the early days of Islam and the romantic view of the caliphate as the only legitimate form of governance for the Islamic people, its imagery is a valuable tool in the al-Qaeda ideological arsenal. By claiming to endeavour not only to restore such an institution but to appeal, as Salafists have historically done, to the pristine Medinan period, al-Qaeda has tapped into a very real and effective idea of Islamic state organisation.

3.2.2 Coercive law: Sharia

The Quran does not provide a comprehensive set of easily definable legal codes. Like other religious traditions law has been adapted from the sacred texts and, in the case of Islam, law is based on the Quran as well as the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah). Sharia can simply be understood as God's will for humanity, an Islamic law derived from the Quran and Sunnah and developed through the long history of Islamic jurisprudence. It is God's divine plan for humanity that should guide the community of believers.[60] Like other legal systems sharia deals with what is mandatory, forbidden and permitted for the community.[61] Covering areas that are spiritual, commercial, social and political, sharia defines what the righteous life is and what obligations (uqud) are required of the community. This is summed up briefly in the words of the Quran, 'O ye who believe fulfil all obligations.'[62] The Quran is a prescription for how to please God containing only a few specific commands, for example, regarding marriage and the distribution of property. Primarily, it is an expression of general principles and guidance on how humans should treat each other.[63] Reflection by the early Muslim community produced the five pillars of Islam: (1) The Shahada or oral testimony of faith, 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet'; (2) Ritual prayers five times per day; (3) Charity, the giving of alms; (4) Performing the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca once during one's lifetime; (5) Observance of fast during the daylight hours in the month of Ramadan. In addition to this is the performing of jihad, the struggle in the path of God, which has various and contentious interpretations. Some Salafi Jihadists have referred to this as the sixth pillar of Islam derived from the work of the influential medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyya.[64]

For the literalists the Quran and Sunnah contain all the guidance that is required for human existence without further interpretation. However, for the Umayyad caliphs, who were forced to deal with a great number of practical legal issues that were not specifically mentioned in the Quran and to justify their legitimacy to rule in Islamic terms, legal

scholars were needed to interpret the Quran and Sunnah for the state.[65] During this period legal interpretations differed according to geographical location as influenced by particular local interpretations and the influence of indigenous norms. This resulted in scholars holding no unified view on the interpretation of law.[66] However, with the ascent of the Abbasid caliphate came a more centralised and bureaucratic state authority in need of a religious authority to codify law, in part to entrench their rule over the Islamic Empire.[67]

Classical sharia is the corpus of Islamic rules, principles and judicial cases which were compiled during Islam's formative years in the first two centuries following the Prophet.[68] Sharia is derived from the Quran and Sunnah as the premier textual sources. Later, 'qiyas', a method of analogical reasoning to deal with matters not specifically detailed by the *Quran* and Sunnah, was incorporated. Additionally, 'ijma', the consensus of the Islamic community on a point of the law was included.[69] Scholars continued to develop Islamic law until the tenth century when the Ulema declared the doors of 'ijtihad' (personal endeavour) to be closed, insisting that sharia had been finalised and that interpretation was no longer necessary or indeed possible.[70] This, however, in practice did not occur, as scholars have continued into the present to challenge the authority of the Ulema be it from a moderate, secular or the Salafi Jihadist position.

Sharia, like Islam itself, has not been historically monolithic. It has been interpreted over time and implemented in various fashions to suit particular conditions in specific times and geographical locations. In this sense there is not one sharia but many.[71] In practicality sharia has never existed as a normative legal system on its own but has, instead, been a part of a pluralistic legal structure in which it has been attached to other normative systems of law and governance.[72] Sharia, then, is adapted to fit the geographical and temporal space in which it is employed. All forms of sharia, however, are derived from the classical sharia. In practice this is largely unproblematic, as the concept of 'siyasa' (policy) allows rulers to apply the law as they see fit as long as this does not violate the fundamental sharia itself.[73] Thus, sharia is the basis for the creation of law as opposed to a set of legal codes in and of itself.

Historically, this has allowed a great deal of flexibility in the interpretation and application of law in the Islamic world. Where the classical sharia must serve as the basis for law, it is distinctly varied and contains an evolutionary element, allowing for a broad spectrum of differing applications. As Nelson suggests, 'pre-state societies regulate themselves through gens, clans or other kin structures of social articulation'.[74] This

would indeed be the case for pre-Islamic Arabia, a reality that still has significant implications for the contemporary Middle East, divided into nation-states.[75] One of the challenges faced by the early Muslims was bridging the divide between the competing and often warring tribes of Arabia. Islam, as a religious faith and a foundation for political order, provided a discourse which could transcend tribal, ethnic and cultural loyalties. Sharia, therefore, provides the system of law that regulates the community in the broadest sense, binds it together and provides a mechanism for legitimate rule through its application.

There are a variety of competing views on how sharia should be applied and it can emerge as something quite different, depending upon where and when it is applied. In the contemporary, sharia varies depending on the state that is employing it.[76] State officials have often attempted to shape Islamic law in their own image for their own ends. The long history of the caliphate would suggest that this is not a new phenomenon. Observing the differing applications of sharia, between staunch traditionalist countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran compared with more moderate applications like that of Jordan, demonstrates that there cannot be said to be one sharia but, rather, varying sharias. Just as political leaders during the age of the caliphates, as well as modern leaders of Middle Eastern nation-states, mobilise their vision of sharia for political ends, so too do Salafi Jihadists who have constructed a vision of history that supports their chosen conceptualisation of Islamic law that portrays them as the vanguard of true Islam. This lends to them religious legitimacy that has been sought by political leaders since the time of Rightly Guided Caliphs.

3.2.3 Islamic territoriality and the umma

The Islamic state framework clearly demonstrates a concept of coercive law in the form of sharia and provides for a mechanism of leadership in the form of the caliph. Neither of these concepts are dramatically different from the forms of Western political hierarchy and law that have developed in the years following the Peace of Westphalia. The possible exception to this is that Islamic concepts of legitimate leadership and law are developed from an alternative ontology that privileges cosmic sources rather than rationalist ideas. However, in regard to territoriality, such as the geographical space that the state occupies and the boundaries between it and other sovereign authorities, it is rather more problematic. It demonstrates where the Islamic ideal of the state becomes disconnected from the nation-state model, leading ultimately to an incompatibility between the Islamic notion of territory and that based on the sovereignty of nation-states.

The umma is understood as a brotherhood where words such as race, nation, community and people do not quite articulate the meaning which is intended. The Quran makes several references to this including: 'Verily this is a Brotherhood; of yours is a single brotherhood.'[77] 'Verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single brotherhood and I am your Lord and cherisher therefore fear me and no other.'[78] 'The believers are but a single brotherhood so make peace and reconciliation between your two brothers and fear Allah that we may receive mercy.'[79]

From this description individuals of varying temperament, virtues and of differing language, race, geographical location, time and history are united in the service of God.[80] The Islamic conceptualisation of territorial space is intimately connected to the long-standing tradition of the umma, and divorcing it from this notion is difficult. Traditionalist Islamic thinkers regard the umma philosophically as a distinction between believers and non-believers. Practically, however, it was as well a political term distinguishing between the borders of the Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam, demarcating the geographical extent of Muslim rule and where it encountered distinctly foreign powers.[81] The rule of the caliph was always flexible, as the direct control of the office over extended territories was never total. Hence, there were often overlapping sovereignties paying homage to the caliph as a leader of the community of believers in a spiritual if not always political sense. Thus the umma, united in absolute political cohesion, was never the case following Ali and the swift expansion of the Islamic Empire.

The umma, however, as moderate thinkers suggest, is not political at all, but rather a transnational spiritual concept operating aloof to power politics and nation-states. It is a sense of community and belonging without political ambition. Hence, the divide, as described in this chapter, between those who separate matters of personal faith from politics and those who understand these two as inseparable. Abu Sulayman chastises both contemporary Islamic and Western understandings on the subject, 'Muslim writers down to the present have associated power and growth with a central political structure of the Muslim umma. Their thinking is marked partly by their lack of understanding of the complex issue of power in the world of politics and the complex model of the Prophet and his traditions concerning rebellion and belligerency. Most writers following Western theory also seem unable to conceive of a position between anarchy and central political authority.'[82]

This notion of flexible sovereignty does not sit well within the discourse of contemporary IR scholars, nor does it resonate with the Salafi Jihadists and their model of state control which imitates the complete political

and religious authority of Muhammad and the Rightly Guided Caliphs. While the position between anarchy and political authority was certainly conceivable during the long period of caliphates, it is no longer a reality in the twenty-first century. The umma has been separated into self-interested nation-states from Morocco to Pakistan and Indonesia. From this position there exist only two prospects for the umma. The first being the complete convergence model of the Islamic world ruled under a single caliphate, which would in course require world subjugation to Islam. Alternatively, the umma can be understood as a spiritual concept of unity, a community in the service of God devoid of ambitions of political unity.

3.3 Al-Qaeda and the Islamic state

The words of Bin Laden would indicate that the construction of an Islamic order is primary among the objectives of Salafi Jihadist organisations. It is also clear that the US is viewed as a distinct obstacle to this aim. The following statements from Bin Laden in 1998 and 2001 illustrate this argument:

> If the Americans' aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews' petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. The best proof of this is their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighbouring Arab state, and their endeavour to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Sudan into paper state-lets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the Peninsula.[83]

> Today every member of the Muslim world agrees that all the Muslim countries of the world having geographical boundaries on the basis of nationality, geography, religious discord, colour and race should be merged into one Muslim state where men do not rule. There should be one caliph for the whole of those whose capital should be Mecca. There should be one currency and defence for this state and the Holy *Quran* should be its constitution. The name that is proposed for this vast state is Global Muslim State.[84]

It is this idealised vision of Islamic governance that the Salafi Jihadists claim to aspire to. By taking Islam back to its 'golden age' the mistakes made

since that time can be washed away, and a new Islamic and eventually world order can emerge governed by the Salafi Jihadist interpretation of sharia. It should be administered by a caliph in the territory that once encompassed the height of Islamic expansion across the Middle East and North Africa from Andalusia to India and, in time, beyond. The current world order, therefore, is an obstacle to this realisation, and the US as a powerful actor that helps to ensure the status quo system of nation-states is the enemy of those who intend to establish the lost caliphate.

Salafi Jihadists understand sovereignty within the context of power and authority, which is not disconnected from religious imperatives and legitimacy within a borderless domain of the community of believers.[85] Jihadists advocate the application of sharia in its most basic sense, ignoring the evolution of ideas regarding Islamic law and the regional and cultural spins that have contributed to the application of sharia over time. Despite an ontological position in contrast to Western concepts of law, sharia is still not entirely alien to law as applied in much of the West. In this sense it is not dramatically different from the influence of the Judeo-Christian moral tradition on Western law. The caliph in the role of a leader, both religious and political, was only achieved by Muhammad. However, the claim of the caliphs to legitimacy is still not terribly indistinct from the rule of kings in the not very distant Western past, those who claimed their authority to be derived from God. It could even be suggested that a European king sat above the law in a manner that the caliphs never could.

The notion of a community that transcends territory, race, culture and all other forms of identity as a political element, is a significantly contrasting notion to that of the nation-state and puts the idea of an Islamic state, as understood by Salafi Jihadists, in stark opposition to the contemporary world order. Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Iran claim to be Islamic states. However, they seek to realise Islamic order in contrast to their medieval predecessors.[86] They are, therefore, still understood by the Salafi Jihadists as illegitimate, as they have largely accepted the status quo of territorial boundaries and denied the puritanical understanding of the umma. Islam, in the Salafi Jihadist vision, is opposed to territorial divisions in the form of geo-political units or nation-states; the only boundary is that of faith.

3.4 Conclusion

The idea of the state from Islamic sources has existed since the time of the Prophet and the drafting of the *Constitution of Medina*. There are

similarities between the notions that characterise the Western nation-state and those which provide the framework for Islamic ideas of the state. Some Islamists would argue that the nation-state and Islam are not necessarily incompatible and there exists a clear distinction between an Islamic state and a religious state. It is possible for a secular government to exist in conjunction with Islam. The state in the modern sense is the development of a lengthy political process, an historical evolution from diverse, unequal and overlapping sovereignties that has, in reality, only recently been resolved. In the Islamic world the collapse of Ottoman authority brought rapid change in the political organising principles of the region. As long as there existed an Islamic caliphate, these issues could, to some degree, be reconciled. However, in the absence of a potential legitimate unifying actor, this becomes more difficult. Salafi Jihadists draw on particular concepts of Islamic thinking regarding the state, its legitimacy, legal structures and territoriality that are in conflict with the standing international order. To conceptualise Salafi Jihadism and the current impasse with the US and the West it is necessary to understand Islamic concepts regarding the complex issues of the state, sovereignty and legitimacy. It is possible for Islam and the nation-state to co-exist as can be observed from non-traditional liberal Islamic thinkers. However, the Salafi Jihadist concept of political organisation is in opposition to this structure and works within the traditional model of the state, sovereignty and legitimacy of the early period of Islam, during the time of Muhammad and the Rightly Guided Caliphs, seeking to restore an imagined 'golden age'.

The state, in the Western or Islamic sense, is based on notions of legitimacy, sovereignty and territoriality. However, the ideas that inform the international system differ starkly from the Islamic interpretation presented by the Salafi Jihadists. The dividing up of the umma among various sovereigns is problematic, and sovereignty, that derives its legitimacy from anything other than religious sources, cannot be viewed as legitimate. This chapter has presented the concepts that underpin Islamic notions of political organisation; the state, sovereignty, law and territoriality. This is necessary to investigate how Islamic theorists view international relations, which the next chapter will engage with. Further, both Islamic concepts of the state and the international are integral in understanding al-Qaeda's ideology and how the Salafi Jihadist notion of political organisation comes into conflict with the contemporary international system, which the US as a hegemonic power helps to maintain.

4
An Islamic Paradigm of International Relations

Scholars of IR have not afforded much credence to the value of Islam as a factor in international affairs that can stand on its own, much less the value of a religious faith in the context of IR theory. Despite significant alterations and the overall broadening of the parameters of IR theory, the idea of an extra-rational system of belief containing a distinct set of theoretical principles on the international is still met with scepticism. Western-centric thinking has conditioned scholars to give limited space to the study of religion as a significant factor in international affairs. Working within a discipline that is deeply Anglo-centric, it is not difficult to understand why there is little consideration of Islam as a theory in itself. This persists despite the insistence of its adherents that Islam contains guidance to the structure of a political order.[1] This is evidenced in the Quran and Sunnah, and scholars of Islam have not only constructed visions of domestic political order, but also a corpus of rich and diverse theories on international relations. Considering the evident importance of Islam at the very least as a variable in international affairs, the idea that Islam may contain within it theories of international relations must be considered.

There is a large contribution of literature devoted to the study of Islam within IR, a field that has grown exponentially since 2001. The bulk of these resources, however, only investigate Islam as a factor to be understood in relation to existing theoretical approaches of IR, thereby neglecting what is unique about Islam. Scholars have tended to reduce religion to simply playing a monolithic role that is at best merely a part of power politics, or a tool of persuasion. Louise Fawcett asserts that religion must be critically taken into account in IR theorising. Yet, it is not necessary to reject previously established theories or to disregarding research methods developed in the twentieth century.[2] It is possible for

alternative non-Western-centric concepts of international relations to exist, as has been discussed most prominently in the collaborative work by Buzan and Acharya, *Non-Western International Relations Theory*.[3] It is, of course, neither necessary nor practical to detach the research from orthodox IR and this chapter seeks not only to uncover Islamic theories, but to articulate them within the field of IR. Indeed, though ontologically distinct, Islamic IR theories can be categorised in the broad sense in which orthodox IR theory is categorised – in that there are approaches which take a more suspect view of human nature, those that are informed by a more liberal perspective and those which are primarily transformative as opposed to descriptive.

This chapter will first demonstrate that Islamic concepts of the international contain unique features by looking at the ontological foundations that are ubiquitous in Islamic international theories. Indeed, this particular ontological position from the Islamic perspective is what makes it distinct and in need of investigation. Second, the varying schools within the Islamic tradition will be identified and it will be demonstrated how they, in some ways, are reflective of Classical orthodox theories.

The course of international history has helped to shape how IR theory has developed. This has also been the case with Islamic concepts of the international. Although Islamic theories claim divine inspiration and are based on the holy texts, they, like Western IR theories, are affected by events of the human experience and are formulated by human agents. It is possible to see, then, that ideas about human nature and methodological approaches to theory are affected by perspective. Islamic theory possesses numerous yet similar variants to orthodox theory. Hence, there is Islamic realism, Islamic liberalism, revolutionary Islamic thought and Islamic concepts of structuralism and post-structuralism. This list is by no means exhaustive.

The subject of Islamic international theories would be, on its own, a profitable subject of study, one that could not be concluded within the limits of this chapter. It is, however, certainly deserving of further inquiry. This serves as a short yet important introduction. The Salafi Jihadist ideology, that defines organisations like al-Qaeda, is informed by Islamic international theory. Through conceptualising these theoretical approaches, greater insight is given to the organisation, its world view, strategic orientation, as well as the views held by other non-violent Islamists and some Muslims. It further supports the central argument of this book, that the legitimacy and unity project within Islam that Salafi Jihadists seek to actualise is a core part of the crisis between the jihadists and the West.

4.1 In search of Islamic international relations

The literature on Islamic IR is distinctly limited. Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman in *Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations* opens the debate on the subject and lays the foundations for an exclusively Islamic concept of the international.[4] He himself admits that, even among modern Islamic scholars, significant work on international relations has been limited. Sulayman identified a general framework for Islamic theories. The task here is to move his assertions a step further by identifying various schools within Islamic international thinking, demonstrating their parallels with orthodox IR thought and discussing the evolution of Islamic theories through the great Islamic debates. It is not possible here to account for the entire arena of Islamic international political thought. However, there are distinctly Islamic concepts of the international, and this has relevance to the rise of Salafi Jihadism and its challenge to the international system.

Islamic theories are not concerned with the relations between states, as this concept of boundaries proves arbitrary within Islam. Rather, Islam focuses on issues of world order that concentrate on the relations between the Muslim and the non-Muslim spheres. The idea that Islam possesses a theory of international relations may be intellectually uncomfortable, as it is dependent upon abstract concepts such as the umma and 'assabiya', as well as an ontology derived from extra-rational agency. The umma is understood as the whole of the Muslim community that takes no account of political or geographical boundaries, ethnic identity or linguistic differences. Assabiya is what binds this community together, the concept of the feeling of kinship held by Muslims, relying upon a conviction of belief. These are the primary components that constitute Islamic concepts of world order, and provide it with a perspective that is unique. Islam can potentially be a universal system of values and thereby form the basis for a common identity. Differences that exist between states and governments in the Islamic world, therefore, become secondary for Islamic theorists.[5] The diminished value of the concept of the nation-state allows for an alternative Islamic concept of order and for an alternative model of what represents the boundaries of the inside and the outside, or the Islamic and the non-Islamic. In Islamic theory (Dar al-Islam) represent the inside, the Realm of Islam. The outside is (Dar al-Harb), the Realm of War. The world exists in a dichotomy, two opposing world orders that, according to traditionalist Islamic thinkers, are in perpetual conflict. From this perspective, laws governing society are primarily normative as opposed to prescriptive. Where the concept

of law governing nations from a Western understanding consists of a body of rules, Islamic law is designed for both moral education and legal enforcement.[6] Thus far Islam, however, has been ineffective in building a unified political bloc, particularly since the disbanding of the Ottoman Empire in 1924.[7]

The utility of arguing for investigating Islamic theories of international relations is that it is necessary to understand the Islamic world on its own terms and not exclusively as an extension of Western politics. Indeed, a purely Western-centric reading of international affairs in relation to the Islamic world is impoverished. An Islamic theory of international relations is needed alongside orthodox concepts to understand the role Islam plays in international affairs.

4.2 Three Islamic theoretical traditions: Classical, Reformist, Revolutionary

Islamic theoretical traditions share an agreed ontology based on the belief in one God (tawhid) and the same starting point of inquiry, the Quran and Sunnah. Where they differ, however, is on issues of methodology. Without undermining the unique specificity of Islamic theories, the Classical and Reformist traditions share similarities with the concepts of realism and liberalism, particularly regarding human nature and security. The most contemporary third school of thought is Revolutionary in character and conceivably could be conceptualised as postmodern as it is transformative in nature, seeking to break from the religious elite and pursue a revised world order. Islamic thought regarding the international has been forged in reaction to particular historical periods, which Farhang Rajaee calls phases or debates.[8] Orthodox IR theory has produced a series of debates where the ontological and epistemological foundations held by one tradition are challenged by other traditions, as well as by those working within a tradition. This often forces a conscious re-examination of an approach to reassert or create an entirely new position. Islamic debates, however, work from a single ontological position relying on the same sources. What this results in is that any evolution in theory does not stretch far from its original form. Even the Revolutionary tradition, which demands action to complement theorising, arises from the Classical world view and Reformist methodology.

Three distinct theoretical approaches to international politics can be identified when investigating Islamic thought. The first is a traditional or Classical school, which in many ways mirrors Classical realist concepts regarding power, anarchy, war and the state of nature.[9] The second,

a Reformist or non-traditional school, that contains less rigid concepts of cooperation and security, engages with modernity, accepts the temporal existence of nation-states in Islamic lands and provides a discourse for a durable peace with non-Muslims.[10] Finally, a Revolutionary school termed Salafi Jihadist, which serves to underscore the ideology of international organisations engaged in 'terrorism'. This is a product of both the Classical and Reformist schools, taking on the Classical school's Hobbesian concept of the state of nature and the Reformist school's approach to ijtihad.

Three key concepts are present in all Islamic international theory. First is the concept of the state and sovereignty. From the Islamic perspective states do not work within a system of sovereigns, but rather constitute one indivisible Muslim umma bound by assabiya. Second, the Islamic theoretical world view contains a conception of inside/outside. Inside is the domain of Islam (Dar al-Islam) and the outside is the realm of the other (Dar al-Harb). Finally, all Islamic approaches have a shared ontology, the belief in the one God. The starting point for knowledge is derived from the divine sources of the Quran and the example of the Prophet in the Sunnah.

The competing theoretical approaches are unable to find common ground in engaging with these concepts – their ontology is unified but their methods differ. None accept the Westphalian approach to sovereignty, however: what role should the state play in governance, should it be obliterated, tolerated or accommodated. There is, no doubt, agreement that a concept of Islamic and non-Islamic space exists which defines the boundary between the domestic and where the international begins.[11] Defining the boundaries of this, however, and how they are to be engaged differs distinctly. The Quran and Sunnah are the only sources from which any foundational knowledge can be obtained. Yet, how are these interpreted, who is permitted to do so and to what extent?[12] Though Islamic theoretical traditions share some similarities with orthodox IR theories, they cannot be comfortably pigeonholed into existing spaces as their ontological foundations are alien to IR thought. As this is the case, Islam must be regarded not only as a subject to be examined exclusively through the lens of existing IR theories, but as a paradigm of international theory in its own right.

4.3 The Classical approach

The Classical approach can be conceptualised through the lens of the Hobbesian state of nature, reflective of realist theoretical assertions. The Hobbesian thesis perceives a world defined by insecurity, a condition

that results in a persistent existential struggle. As each actor is consistently seeking to maximise its power over the other, only temporary conditions of peace are possible. Islamic traditionalists arrive at rather similar conclusions. The Classical approach was formulated during what Farhang Rajaee terms the first Islamic debate during Islam's formative years.[13] This early period was defined by conquest and defence where Muslims perceived themselves as threatened first by other Arab tribes in Islam's infancy and then, increasingly, by regional powers as Islamic territory expanded. This era of persistent struggle infused a particular Hobbesian character into the thinking of Islamic scholars. They viewed the world as existing in a state of jahiliya, where humans were ignorant of God's will, a condition that Islam seeks to alleviate. Until the whole of humanity has submitted to Islam and is guided by Islamic law, peace and security are in constant jeopardy. Accordingly, non-believers must be viewed with suspicion.

The central feature of the Classical approach is jihad. Note that the concept of jihad is complex and disputed, taking on a variety of meanings and interpretations. It is literally defined as a struggle, which can either be the greater jihad to better one's community and one's self seeking a closer relationship with God or, more applicable to the Classical view, the lesser jihad of holy war.[14] As observed above, the world is divided into two contrasting realms, the external Dar al-Harb (the Realm of War) and the internal Dar al-Islam (the Realm of Islam). Here a very distinct concept of foreign relations, as defined by the constant struggle for survival, is evident. In the Classical perspective this is a literal physical construction of the world. The Dar al-Islam comprises the geographical space under Islamic control where the rights of Muslims are observed. The world beyond this, the Dar al-Harb, is the space under the dominion of the non-believers hostile to Islam and its objectives. This domain is not just considered a threat to the security of the community, in much the manner a Classical realist theorist might conceptualise the condition of anarchy to be a threat to states in the international system, but it is considered a space which can be justifiably conquered in the name of spreading the religion under the appropriate conditions.[15] Islam is not simply a spiritual concept but a political order that must advance until the world falls under its banner. For a considerable period this concept of the outside and inside defined Islamic foreign relations and, in some cases, still does today.[16]

The Quran and Sunnah, as with all Islamic political thought, serve as the point of origin for inquiry. The Classical approach is entrenched in

a point in time, the text is literal and the interpretation of these texts, to adapt to conditions of modernity, is perceived as heretical. The Classicalists are thus, religious fundamentalists. The word of God is perfect in its original form, remaining timeless and unaltered. As some proponents claim, Islam is a complete guide to life encompassing matters that are economic, social, political and international. The Quran and Sunnah are perfect guides to the proper understanding of all realms of social life. Further, the need for human interference in what has been divinely given is unnecessary.

Islamic international relations theories are non-Western discourses and thereby contain concepts of sovereignty and the state that differ from the Westphalian approach, as was discussed in the previous chapter. For traditionalists the umma, or the community of believers, is indivisibly bound by the all encompassing assabiya. Muslims must not be ruled by non-Muslims, nor is more than one sovereign permissible. Sovereignty is God's and manifests itself in earthly form in one who is divinely chosen. The concept of the umma, of course, did not in practicality eliminate tribal authority, but rather superseded it with the belief in God and sovereignty on Earth vested in a new Leviathan.[17] Order begins with the caliph and is diffused into smaller parochial units through a form of flexible sovereignty. The state may be the most powerful manifestation of sovereignty in the contemporary international system, however, in the Islamic world it has never attained the absolute claims of the Western-style nation-state.[18]

The nation-state, as understood through the Westphalian discourse, demands that citizens identify themselves collectively as a national cultural group in a defined geographical space. The Islamic notion of sovereignty remains significantly more dynastic, as the Islamic world collectively has not been united under one absolute sovereign since the time of the Prophet. Islamic civilisations have always been fragmented into minor states or managed by mercenary armies loyal to patrimonial dynasties or dispersed through competing caliphates.[19] This allows for a somewhat more fluid, hierarchical and ambiguous concept of sovereignty than that which defines the contemporary international system. Claims of world order, the image of the caliphate and the persistent struggle by some for a unified Islamic state, have yet to be removed from the intersubjectivity of Islam. The state, though the focus of power, is in fact an intermediary between the telos of the Islamic peoples and a unified Islamic community.[20] Classical thinkers have been criticised for clinging to static outdated concepts of foreign affairs, yet, they remain influential in modern Islamic thought.[21] Classical thought is

often caught in a particular time period, binding it to a particular position that is difficult to alter. This makes the cornerstone of traditional Islamic international theory, the concept of jihad, the starting point for all foreign relations, as the world is defined by aggressive forces that present a persistent existential threat to the umma and the spread of Islam, which is a divine imperative.[22]

4.4 The Reformists

Classical Islamic theory held a monopoly over Islamic international political thinking until relatively recently. From the time of the Prophet through the periods of the caliphates it defined the norm for understanding the international. Of course, this Hobbesian approach was prevalent throughout the world. Reformative thought is a product of the second Islamic debate beginning in the late nineteenth century. After 12 centuries the changing nature of the Islamic world spawned new thinking that is influential not only among modern reformers but also shares roots with the modern revolutionaries. Breaking with the Classicalists, the Reformists are influenced by Salafism. The etymology of Salafism is the term Salaf, referring to righteous predecessors, specifically the four immediate successors to the Prophet Muhammad, the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Salafism is a method that advocates looking to the early period of Islam for guidance on how to approach the modern world and to re-establish the prominent role of Islam, which appeared to be in sharp decline as the power of Europe was on the rise. It derives from thinkers such as Jamal al-din al-Afghani (1838–1897) who, during the second Islamic debate, asserted an intermediate position between the rejectionist that sought to shun modernity and the West, clinging to Classical thought, and the modernists who sought to fully incorporate Western ideals scuttling Islam's prominent role in political and social affairs.[23]

Classical and Reformist Islamic international relations theories can be perceived as oppositional visions of human nature. The Classical perceives a Hobbesian account of the state of nature where humanity is dangerously self interested, lost without the guidance of Islam and in need of conquest. The Reformist view of the world holds to an understanding of human nature reflective of a Lockean perspective. Still conscious of a world where insecurity is common, the Reform notion allows for potential cooperation and peaceful co-existence between the Islamic and non-Islamic spheres. The Islamic world, as the Reformists understand it, is no longer capable of supporting both universalism and

transnationalism, as the conditions of international relations have prevented this.[24] This concession means there must be an acute revision of the traditionalist concepts of Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam to salvage Islam from irrelevance by either stagnation or conquest. It aims to reinvigorate Islamic society by readjusting the hardline approach that is no longer sustainable. There is the possibility of alternate inter-subjective worlds coexisting without one asserting its hegemony upon the other through claims of superior culture and traditions.[25] Reformists argue that the Classical concept of the divided world and the perpetual jihad is a product of a particular time in history, incompatible with the contemporary world.[26] They argue for a third way which relaxes the perpetual dichotomy, the concept of the Dar al-Ahd (Realm of Treaties), a principle regarding the possibility of peace with the other.[27]

Reformists take a middle path in confronting Westphalian sovereignty. The state is no more challenging than a previous form of political organisation as, in essence, it is not as relevant as the Classical thinkers imagine. The umma is not just a physical entity, but also a metaphysical concept; borders do not diminish its significance. They claim, despite protest from those wedded to tradition, that they are not advocating surrendering Muslim principles. It is not a betrayal of the faith to be both modern and Muslim. What emerges is a double-faceted concept of sovereignty. They concede that they must accept the *raison d'état*, but also insist that the state must adhere to Islamic principles and hold to an eternal consciousness of assabiya. They can accommodate the state but, equally, as has always been the demand in Islamic societies, those who govern and the political apparatus which they support must respect Islamic norms. The condition of the Islamic world divided into nation-states is, for the Reformists at least, temporarily acceptable and does not require the destruction of the system by means of jihad. Rather, the Muslim peoples can work within the system to unify the umma over time by non-violent means.[28]

The Reformists take their greatest departure from the Classical thinkers on methodological differences in interpretation. Both concur that the Quran and Sunnah are the basis for all societal structures and regard these as divinely inspired. The opposing methods of interpretation, however, are centred on their application of 'ijtihad'. Ijtihad is a controversial concept within Islam. Defined literally as striving, exerting, juristically it is an effort to make deduction in matters of law in cases to which no rule already exists. As Wael B. Hallaq defines it, 'The exertion of mental energy in the search for a legal opinion to the extent that the faculties of the jurist become incompatible with further effort. Ijtihad is

the maximum effort by the jurist to master and apply meaning from the holy texts.[29] It is, then, an act of personal reasoning, but whose reason? To whom is authority given to apply this practice? What are the boundaries of this reason? To these questions no consensus has been reached. Sometime around the end of the tenth century, the Ulema metaphorically closed the 'gates of ijtihad', as traditionalist scholars had concluded that Islamic law had been sufficiently detailed and all essential questions regarding positive law had been answered.[30] Scholars should rely now purely on 'taqlid' (unquestioning imitation), the uncritical and unqualified obedience to established religious orthodoxy found in the fiqh.[31]

The Reformists make what for the Classical thinkers must have been startling claims. The Classicalist observe the legitimacy of the Ulema, the class of religious elite established during the time of the Abbasids, to be the spiritual leader of Islamic society and serve as arbiters of law. The Ulema claimed interpretation has ended and reliance on jurisprudence was the only method of dealing with matters that confronted Islam. Reformists claimed that not only should the 'gates of ijtihad' be reopened and interpretation begin anew to deal with matter modernity had brought to Islam and no tenth century thinker could have foreseen, but that interpretation not be limited to some learned class. This had the effect of opening Islam to freelancing. The Reformists have used this to bypass the Ulema in an effort to bring Islam into the modern. The Salafi Jihadists have used the same method in an attempt to return Islam to its perceived origins.

Modern thinkers who are reflective of the Reformist position are the neo-Islamists who became prominent in Egypt in the late 1970s. They are representatives of contemporary non-traditionalist thought. Among the most noted of the contemporary neo-Islamists are Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Tariq al-Bishri. Influenced in particular by the work of Jamal al-din al-Afghani (1838–1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), their approach to international politics is centred on the concept of wasatiya (middle way).[32] Al-Afghani, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, sought a way to mediate between those who desired the absolute rejection of all things Western and those who would adopt Western values at the expense of all that is Islamic. Abduh aimed to bring about reform in the Muslim world through interpretation of texts by means of reason and restore the role of Islamic civilisation through a message of universal peace.[33]

The neo-Islamist 'middle way' approach argues for the establishment of a new fiqh (jurisprudence) that can welcome change as well as preserve the traditional culture.[34] It is, in essence, a way of reconciling Islam

with modernity and staving off any clash of universalisms by offering a concept not of competing universalisms but, rather, coexisting ones.[35] It is the idea that ijtihad can be applicable and amenable to deal with the global age.[36] The neo-Islamists should not be confused as being pro-Western. They advocate the defence of their peoples in the face of what they perceive as neo-imperialist aspirations of the West, particularly the US, and argue for the right of Muslim peoples to shape their future within the higher purpose of Islam.[37] The neo-Islamists' contribution to Islamic international theory is a rejection of the traditionalist Hobbesian approach to the Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam. The notion that these must be set in violent opposition does not, for the new Islamists, necessarily hold true in the contemporary age. The possibility and indeed necessity for cooperation between the Muslim and non-Muslim world must be conceivable if order is to be achieved and maintained.

Reformists who make these arguments are careful not to be seen as marginalising Islam. They believe that engagement with modernity is necessary and, yet, the Islamic world is not suited for Western-style modernity. What they suggest is needed is an Islamic modernity that is capable of taking from the West what is seen to be valid, without permitting the Islamic world to mirror or to be subjugated by the West in such a manner as to weaken or eliminate Islamic identity. In terms of international relations, they view cooperation as a reasonable possibility and that Islam's interests are not always served by confrontation.

4.5 The third and fourth debates and the emergence of the Salafi Jihadist School

Through the Great Debates IR theory has evolved resulting in reconstructed or novel theoretical perspectives as new ontological and epistemological challenges emerge. The changing nature of world politics has driven this process resulting in a rich and diverse discipline. Islamic international political theories have undergone the same transformation responding to events and theological challenges. From its early beginning following World War One, continuing through World War Two, the Cold War and finally the contemporary period characterised by US hegemony, globalisation and post-9/11 international politics, IR theory has been subject to intense change over the course of a short period of time. Islamic theorising with regard to the international has developed in a somewhat similar manner, although through a significantly longer historical trajectory. As was discussed in previous sections, the first Islamic debate was a product of Islam's formative years

characterised by persistent conflict. As the followers of Muhammad's movement faced an existential struggle for survival and then engaged in a period of rapid exponential expansion, particular attitudes were entrenched in the minds of Islamic scholars. Religion was intimately connected to war and survival. Much like Hobbes, who observed an insecure world laden with violence and an eternal existential struggle which defines the human experience, so too did the Classical thinkers of Islamic international relations.

The second Islamic debate began in the middle of the nineteenth century as European power, culture and ideas increasingly encroached upon the Islamic realm, inflicting insecurity and a feeling of cultural, spiritual and material decline. Scholars challenged the long-sustained Classical approach by asserting that the Islamic world was no longer capable of maintaining a position of transnationalism and universalism. They advocated the re-opening of the 'gates of ijtihad' to find a method for preserving and advancing Islam during a period of rapid change. The experience of colonialism, however, spurred a split amongst the Reformists. Using the concept of a liberated ijtihad, free from the limitations imposed upon Islam by the Ulema, twentieth century thinkers such as Sayid Qutb, Hassan Al-Banna and Maulana Maududi engaged in Islam's third debate. As was previously asserted, concepts of the international developed by Islamic theorists are products of the world in which they live.

The first traditionalist theories were forged in Islam's Hobbesian origins, the second debate and the rise of non-traditional thinking was the product of a crisis of identity resulting from encounters with Europe and a feeling of stagnation in the Islamic world. The third debate represented a split in the Reformist school with contrasting notions of the manner in which to employ ijtihad to deal with the complexities of the colonial experience and the erosion of identity in the post-Ottoman period. How, then, is the contemporary period of the early twenty-first century to be understood? The late twentieth century marked the beginnings of the fourth debate that may speak more to a struggle for the Muslim world to define itself than for the Islamic world to verify its role in the international system. Yet, the non-Muslim sphere in an increasingly globalised world that makes boundaries difficult to locate is not excluded from this conversation. Indeed, it is at the centre of it.

The nineteenth century Salafist thinkers envisioned an idealised Islamic world, striving to model the contemporary world by looking to the example of the Prophet in search of an authentic Islam.[38] Islam was perfect in its origins, but has been corrupted over the centuries by un-Islamic influences. The two major strands within the Islamic

international relations discipline of classicism and reformism share broad similarities to realism and liberalism respectively. This does not diminish their unique qualities, but serves as a useful point of reference. Salafi Jihadism, however, is a Revolutionary political theory. A utopian conception infused with an Islamic hyperrealism and universalism that is in direct opposition to the neo-liberal order that characterises the international system. Its origins are found in Salafi and Reformist thought coupled with Classical concepts of a Hobbesian world that must be challenged through jihad. It contains Classicalism's millennial and confrontational beliefs regarding international relations and the Reformist notion of the practices of ijtihad. However, it is the method of its use that divides the non-traditionalists between the Reformist and Salafi Jihadist camps throughout the third debate. Ijtihad for the Reformists is a method of engaging with modernity and the West without being consumed by them. For the Salafi Jihadists it is a means by which to take Islam back to a blank slate and start anew to build an idealised Islamic state, using jihad as a tool. In this they can undo the damage done to Islamic society from foreign influence and internal corruption that has occurred over the last 14 centuries.

Looking to the inspirational works of Sayid Qutb they assert that Muslims have lost their way and Islam has been altered to the point of only existing in the minds of those who propose to wage jihad.[39] Conflict, then, is not just a matter of survival, but the only tool for achieving peace. There can be no peace without a global Islamic political order (al-siyasi al-Islami), as brought about through the reestablishment of the caliphate, governed through monarchy in the form of a caliph.[40]

The Salafi Jihadist doctrine is cemented on the understanding of a world defined by dichotomy, Muslim and infidel. Reformists assert that the notion of the divided world was constructed by the scholars of the Hanafi School of Islamic jurisprudence,[41] in the absence of textual support in the Quran or Sunnah, to justify political action in a particular time period. They conceive the world as a singular entity, where Muslims can exist as a community of believers despite geographical boundaries, and this concept is only descriptive of the condition of the world in times of conflict.[42] The Salafi Jihadist world view is more in line with the Classical perception of the divided world where jihad is a necessity. They seek to underscore Islamic universalism, free from external influences.[43] Dialogue and compromise are not tools they employ. Neither can they accept the division of the Islamic world. Islamic states and nationalist movements are incompatible with their universalistic philosophy. When the first Salafi Jihadist organisations began to form in the 1920s it

was with these principles in mind. Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim brotherhood, rejected any notion of a Muslim nation-state like Turkey.[44] The movement was to be total and uncompromising. In the contemporary world this kind of thinking is demonstrated through the works of the al-Qaeda ideologue Ayman al-Zawahiri, where he chastised the Palestinian Hamas for engaging in a nationalist struggle as opposed to the Global Jihad.[45]

The assassination of Anwar al-Sadat and the changes that were imposed by his successor Hosni Mubarak mark the beginnings of the fourth debate and resulted in a split in the Salafi Jihadist position. The crackdown instituted by Mubarak forced the most radical Islamists to flee, leaving their comrades the choice to flee, be destroyed or join the fold of the political status quo. Some were willing to work within the existing system to bring about change. Those who did not flee to form the origins of al-Qaeda, quickly became a political entity speaking of social justice and economics, engaging in a dialogue with the people and the existing powers to bring about the kind of change they advocate. For the Salafi Jihadist School activities of this kind are in essence diplomacy and will not serve as successful tactics for re-establishing the caliphate. Institutions such as the Muslim Brotherhood are viewed to be insufficiently radical, having compromised the fundamentalist position. There is no need to advocate social justice or economic concerns at this stage, as these are matters that are unrelated to the primary duty of Muslims in a world not ruled by true Muslims.[46] For the Salafi Jihadists there is no place for compromise in a conflict over competing universalisms, Islam and Western liberalism. The objective is absolute and non-negotiable, even at the expense of the ideology or Islam itself. It is, then, quite basic in its assertions. It is a utopian vision set against a Hobbesian state of nature, which allows for no compromise with those who would challenge its divine universalism, even at a cost to its own survival.[47]

4.6 Al-Qaeda and Islamic theory

Al-Qaeda is the very embodiment of the Salafi Jihadist School of international relations. Both al-Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood are influenced by the works of Sayid Qutb. However, al-Qaeda is the extreme application of Qutb's thinking. The theorists, who serve as the ideological mentors to the organisation, have their origins within the Muslim Brotherhood, most notably al-Zawahiri and Abdullah Azzam. These figures regard the Muslim Brotherhood as not sufficiently radicalised to bring about the objectives of traditionalist Islamic thinking. Al-Qaeda

is a byproduct of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Arab fighters migrated to fight a holy war against the Soviet Union on behalf of Afghanistan and Islam and were given the now popularised identity of the Mujahedeen. From their success in expelling the Soviet Union from Afghanistan they drew grandiose, somewhat delusional, conclusions regarding the abilities of a small group of lightly-armed fighters to challenge powerful states and change the existing world order. It is here that the organisation began to take shape under the guidance of Azzam and Bin Laden.

Al-Qaeda and its ideological masters are the keystone for the Salafi Jihadist brand of international political theory. They serve as the organisation that has actualised this school of Islamic international relations thinking into practice. They demonstrate the fearless nature of this kind of thought, as well as their global agenda and ensuing belief that they can affect change in world politics. Where they have undoubtedly changed, to some extent, the current political order, they have failed to make significant progress towards their ultimate goal of establishing a new caliphate. This, however, is unlikely to be the focal point of their legacy or their greatest contribution to the Salafi Jihadist School. Al-Qaeda, as the greatest practitioners of Salafi Jihadism to date, has had a powerful influence in spreading this ideology and will continue to influence how this brand of international political theory develops and is practised in the years to come.

4.7 Conclusion

In 1966 J. Harris Proctor claimed that Islam as a subject of inquiry within the study of international politics had little if any relevance. However in spite of such claims that are reflective of a trend in IR, Islam has clearly been demonstrated to be a valuable point of investigation in light of events over the course of the last half century. Islam, as a relevant political concept, may be novel for the discipline of IR, but in the Islamic world this is not the case. Islam is more than a factor that influences political events worthy of study by those who take interest in the Middle East and international affairs, it is as much a theory of the international on its own. Western-centric discourses on the study of international politics are only one tool of analysis and cannot be dispensed with. An ontological position believed to be divinely inspired may be out of place in the traditional understandings of orthodox political theory, yet, this does not render such an approach invalid. To conceptualise the most perplexing questions regarding global 'terrorism', theorists need

an understanding of how international relations are perceived from the perspective of Islamic scholars.

Islamic theories, like IR theories are products of their time. The convulsive events of the twentieth century have significant ramifications for both. In this, parallel theories have developed, Islamic and Western, in reaction to unfolding events. Demonstrating the importance of Islamic theories of the international is not a project of constructing an 'other'. Nor is it an attempt to demonstrate Islam's otherness. Rather, it is recognition that alternative concepts of the international exist and that they inform action. Islamic theories of international relations cannot be uncritically joined to orthodox IR theory. They can, however, serve as a useful tool in attempting to understand Islamic actors whose motivations, strategies and perceptions, are often not neatly encapsulated by orthodox IR theories.

This book is an investigation at two levels. On the one side the international system, on the other, the long process of Islamic history and the drive towards unification and legitimacy. It is an observation of the intersection of these competing universalisms in a particular historical period, the contemporary era. To ultimately understand why Salafi Jihadism has come into conflict with the West and the US in particular, an understanding of Islamic concepts of the international is indispensable.

5
The Struggle for Unity and Legitimacy in the Imperial Age

A long view into the historical processes of the Islamic, particularly Arab, world is required to conceptualise the current tensions between the Salafi Jihadists and the West. There has been a consistent struggle to unify the various parts of the Islamic lands using religion as a legitimising agent, and a struggle for who should control that realm since Islamic empires began to expand rapidly after the time of the Prophet. From the Islamic imperial caliphates to the contemporary jihadists, there has been a struggle for dominance in the Islamic world by actors that seek to fuse politics and religion together in the corpus of a governing elite. Even the 'secular' Pan-Arabists made appeals to religious faith, symbols and rhetoric. In this, there has been a cyclical process where one aspirant to power challenges the legitimacy of another seeking to replace it.

Albert Hourani, appealing to Ibn Khaldun's concept of assabiya, observes that this continues into the Ottoman period. He notes, 'in a sense the formation of the Ottoman style was one more example of the process which had taken place many times in the history of the Muslim peoples, the challenge to established dynasties by military force from the nomadic peoples'.[1] What is evident is a consistent attempt at some form of unification and a struggle over who can and who legitimately should oversee the leadership of the community, which is presented within the context of religion. The nation-state is firmly in place throughout the region and is a significant stumbling block for those who continue to appeal to a unified Islamic and, particularly, Arab order. The drive for unification continues as a long-existing historical struggle that is an integral component of the questions this book seeks to answer.

This chapter demonstrates that there is a long historical struggle for unity in the Middle East, and Islam has been employed as a legitimising agent for those who seek to act as successful unifiers since the time of

the Prophet. Salafi Jihadism in general is part of a long existing struggle to unify the Islamic world. Attempts to challenge for power within the Islamic world have been the norm. However, it is the current structure of international system defined by nation-states, created in the aftermath of the collapse of Ottoman authority and the failure of regional Pan-Arabism, that have brought these indigenous struggles into the international arena with the emergence of Salafi Jihadist organisations. Even during the period of the caliphates there was no consensus on who should rule, but religion always played a role in attempts to solidify legitimacy by the ruling elite. Therefore, causational factors which are products of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries only partially explain the current impasse between the Salafi Jihadists and the United States. The Salafi Jihadists are only the most contemporary players in a long historical experience that cannot be explained in terms of exclusively contemporary realities.

Salafi Jihadism and its most powerful manifestation al-Qaeda are just the current trend in a struggle that has been ongoing for over 13 centuries. In relation to al-Qaeda, its former figurehead Bin Laden and chief ideologue al-Zawahiri and their quest for power, it is noted by Gerges that 'they are not the first and will not be the last'.[2]

Chapter 7, on al-Qaeda's ideology, will further demonstrate the appeal to history in creating a coherent marketable ideology. This is necessary for manufacturing legitimacy to rule or, in this case, to be the vanguard of a movement that intends to rule. The objectives of this chapter are twofold. First, to demonstrate that this has always been the case. The need to justify the leadership of any particular power has been historically based, at least cosmetically, on religion and appeals to Islamic symbols and rhetoric as well as enlisting elements of the religious elite. Second, there has been a consistent struggle for order and unity throughout Arab history. Formal institutions of unification came to an end in 1924 with the collapse of the Ottoman Caliphate. This is a watershed moment where those who struggled for Arab/Islamic unity began to focus outward as well as inward.

This chapter opens with the origins of Islamic expansion and empire building from the Rashidun and Umayyads, following through to the Abbasids and Ottomans, also taking into account other proclaimed caliphates and imperial aspirants. The imperial caliphs were at all times in need of religious justification for legitimacy to rule. As an imperial leader an individual was as much a practitioner of state bureaucracy as a protector of a religious faith and tradition. As has been previously noted,

no individual after the Prophet was able to adequately fill this dual role based on the model of complete convergence. Nonetheless, this was a reality of historical Islamic imperial rule and is evoked in the discourse of the Salafi Jihadists today. As no one could claim the legitimacy held by Muhammad himself, appeals to emulate him and his companions have been a necessary part of governing in the Islamic world. The Salafi Jihadist discourse attempts to reassert this in the age of nation-states, where legitimacy is moving away from religious legitimacy towards a nationalist-based legitimacy. It is al-Qaeda's quest to reverse this trend that has been on the ascent in the last nine decades and, in particular, in the post-Pan-Arab period.

Who should be afforded political authority, how should this be exercised and in what manner should whoever is to rule be chosen? If they rule unjustly can they be deposed? In essence, who is to be the leader of the umma both spiritually and politically? These questions began to arise as a result of the dissensions and conflicts that arose during the first century of Islam, questions that were answered in light of the events of that period.[3] Religious authority did not end with the death of the Prophet Muhammad; rather, it was transferred to the caliph as God's representative authority on earth.[4] Whoever was to rule politically was in need of religious authority as well as material power capabilities. In this, the interaction between learned religious scholars and the caliphs became, during the Middle Ages until the end of the Ottoman Empire, of significant importance in defining who could legitimately claim lawful leadership.

The early period of the Abbasid dynasty witnessed the rise to prominence of a religious scholarly elite known as the Ulema. Some scholars have argued that during this period the relationship between religious scholars and the caliphs became increasingly formalised, in essence, determining how politics and religion would intersect. As Akbarazadeh and Saeed observe, 'the separation of din (religion) and darwa (government) began in the early Abbasid period and was formalised under subsequent caliphs, but this effective separation was by no means absolute'.[5]

Salafi Jihadists, who aspire to rule in the contemporary, differ from their predecessors, the Islamic caliphs. They do not seek to employ the services of the Ulema. Salafi Jihadists are able to move around this stumbling block and claim that the right to rule is based not on the credentials given by the Islamic intellectual elite, but rather by emulation of the Prophet and the example set by the early Muslims. This is seen by

Akbarazadeh and Saeed as something rather novel. They assert that 'the challenge of political Islam (as the guiding principle even the blueprint for government which may also be called Islamism) to secular models of government and the legitimacy of irreligious rule is essentially a new phenomenon, although it is presented by its exponents as a continuation of a long tradition in Islamic political thought'.[6] However, politics and religion, it is argued here, have always been interconnected, and religion has always been a powerful and necessary tool for legitimacy. What could be said to be novel, in regard to Salafi Jihadism, is an attempt to unify earthly and extra-rational sovereignty, which has not existed in the corpus of one individual since the time of the Prophet. To argue that there is not a long tradition of basing legitimacy on religion lacks merit. State and religious authorities have always been intimately connected, something that contemporary leaders find difficult to achieve. To suggest that Islam and politics are not in some sense co-dependent, and that this is not a significant element of the tradition of the Islamic world, would seem without merit as well. The Salafi Jihadists through their own ijtihad have attempted to discredit the Ulema as a legitimate religious authority, and portray their endorsement of any political leader as illegitimate.

5.1 The emergence of empire

Religion has consistently been a tool for legitimising and maintaining the existing order in the Islamic world. As Halim Baraka asserts, 'rulers throughout Arab history have used religion to discourage rebellion and dissent on behalf of the unity of the umma and safeguard against external threats'.[7] Conflicting claims to legitimacy have been consistent in Islamic history as Islam has often been treated not just as a religious faith, but as an ideology used to achieve and maintain power. As Humphreys observes, in relation to Islamic history, 'whenever the established order is threatened internally or externally the spokesman for this order must explain why things are. Equally, dissidents must say what is wrong and how to change it.'[8] Immediately following Muhammad competing aspirants for the leadership of the Islamic community began to emerge; for example, the Abbasid, Shi'ite, Carmathian, Fatamid, Almoravid, Almohad, Safavid, etc.[9] The spread of Islam among the subject peoples did not result in greater religious unity, and the stronger Islam itself grew the more difficult it was for rulers to achieve unity.[10]

Following the death of the Prophet four caliphs ruled the Islamic realm until 750 CE: Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Kittab, Uthman ibn Affan,

Ali ibn Abi Talib. Known as the Rashidun, or Rightly Guided Caliphs, their legitimacy to govern was based on their association with the Prophet himself. This 'golden age' is viewed by Salafi Jihadists as Islam's pristine moment and, it is argued, that since that time Islam has been increasingly corrupted. Hence, it is necessary to attempt to emulate this brief period to restore Islam to its place of prominence. The death of Muhammad resulted in a revolt. Where the Arab tribes were willing to accept the legitimacy to rule of a divine Prophet, the rule of a caliph as a mortal king was far less palatable. The revolt prompted Abu Bakr to launch a series of military campaigns to suppress the revolt known as the Ridda Wars or the Wars of Apostasy. During the Wars of Apostasy, however, religion was still a defining factor. Of the six major centres of the revolt, four of the leaders of the movement offered competing claims to being prophets themselves.[11]

The Umayyad dynasty that followed the Rightly Guided Caliphs changed the nature of the Islamic political process from one based on electoral consensus to a caliphate governed by dynastic rule.[12] The Umayyads inherited Islam's early and rapid expansion out of Arabia into the greater Middle East, which forced the dynasty to face issues of administration not previously dealt with by the Rashidun. The rapid expansion of the empire worked against the ability of the Umayyad's to claim legitimacy. The territory over which they governed contained a majority population that was neither Muslim nor Arab. Further complicating matters, they chose to move their capital to Damascus, which had a pre-existing Islamic identity and indigenous institutions of political structure. This was not the case in regard to the Islamic strongholds further east.[13] As a result, the Umayyad caliphs were never able to establish their legitimacy to rule in religious terms,[14] leaving them vulnerable to competing challengers for power.

The Umayyad caliphs that followed the Rashidun no longer felt obligated to consult the companions, as those who had actually known the Prophet had begun to die. Previously, it had been necessary to do so or risk dissent and a crisis of legitimacy from those who would side with the opinion of the companions. Additionally, the Ulema had yet to be formed, which in the future would serve as an institutionalised form of religious legitimacy.[15] The result was a dynasty that was vulnerable to constant challenges on religious grounds that it had little means to fend off, even though it still continued in practice to uphold religious law and traditions.[16] Critics, however, maintained that the Umayyad's ruled over a kingdom, as opposed to a caliphate that could be understood to be sanctioned by Islam.[17]

5.2 The Abbasid dynasty and its competitors

The Abbasids that followed the Umayyads were more successful at articulating the relationship between political power and religious legitimacy, aided by the development of sharia and religious scholars. Their prestige as rulers was further supported not just by the successful development of religious feeling, but also by the contradictory material luxury and opulence of the caliphs.[18] Even during the height of Abbasid rule, power was in many ways limited to the urbanised areas. Control in the central regions lay in the hands of local dynasties who continued to support the authority of the caliph.[19] Relations between the ruler and the remote countryside were too distant to require expression in terms of religion. However, the caliph's power was accepted, providing it remained distant from local affairs.[20]

By the end of the reign of the al-Mansur in 775, Abbasid rule was firmly established and the empire unified, with the exception of Umayyad-controlled Spain.[21] However, in the tenth century the Abbasid Caliphate began to be challenged by competing claims. In 932 the Buyids occupied the Abbasid Capital of Baghdad. Although they did not recognise the religious authority of the caliph, they made no attempt to remove the caliph from Baghdad out of fear the caliph would settle elsewhere and become a potentially dangerous element that could aid in supporting challengers.[22] The concept of an Islamic world united by religion had by this time been established; however, in geopolitical terms, the community remained distinctly fractured. It is observed by Hourani 'that to keep so many countries with different traditions and interests under a single empire for so long had been a remarkable achievement. It scarcely could have been done without the force of religious conviction.'[23] However, it was this very emergence of rival forces claiming the title of caliph that required defining what this meant in political terms.[24]

The Fatimids originated in Tunisia in 910, spreading over time through Egypt, Syria and western Arabia, establishing their capital in Cairo, and lasting until 1171. Ubaydullah, based on his claim of lineage from Fatima and Ali ibn Abi Talib,[25] proclaimed himself to be the caliph.[26] The Fatimids were eventually defeated in 1169. Their territory was left under the control of the Muslim Crusade leader Salah al-Din, who terminated the Fatimid entity in 1171, returning it to Sunni control.[27] The Fatimids were replaced by the Ayyubid dynasty that maintained control over Egypt until 1252, Syria until 1260 and Arabia until 1229.[28] The Cordoba Caliphate was formed by a resurgence of the Umayyads in Andalusia, but it was not until 929 that it was declared a caliphate. Eventually, this

Umayyad holdout began to fracture into competing powers and was consumed by the Christian states advancing southward. The Abbasid Capital of Baghdad eventually succumbed to Mongol aggression in 1258.

It was under Abbasid control that the relationship between the Ulema and the caliph was synthesised, and the justifications for a caliphate were clearly articulated. From the time of the Abbasids, sharia was largely accepted by the Islamic community and upheld by its rulers.[29] The rulers exercised a political power without which the core structures of society and empire could not be maintained, nor could the traditional institutions of law and learning survive.[30] However, power needed to be linked to a religious authority to provide legitimacy, and this increasingly became the role the Ulema played.

Though Shi'ite scholars came to differing conclusions regarding the role and legitimacy of a caliph, the Sunni Ulema had consolidated around a belief that the caliph was the head of the community, but was, however, neither infallible nor an interpreter of religious faith. It was the learned Ulema who were the guardians of the faith which bound the umma.[31] Until the end of the Abbasid period a balance between differing authorities was successfully maintained, provided the caliph met with religious conditions set by the Ulema.[32] A structural relationship was now in place, with the Ulema maintaining religious authority and the caliphs acting as leaders of the community blessed with religious acceptance.[33]

5.3 The Ottoman dynasty

In the thirteenth century the Turko-Persian Seljuk state began to disintegrate with a number of independent principalities forming in Anatolia. One of these was the Ottoman state that within a century would become an Islamic empire.[34] The Ottomans were strong proponents of Islam and viewed it as the source of their sovereignty.[35] The jihad against the Byzantines provided the Sultans with the necessary religious credentials to justify their rule in Islamic terms. However, the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258 put an end to the system of the caliphate as it was understood at the time, resulting in a distancing between religious and political authorities.

As the Ottoman state grew into an imperial power, it began to be challenged by the Shi'ite Safavids who claimed to be the descendants of Ali. The Safavid dynasty was founded in 1501 by Shah Ismail Safavi, lasting until 1736; at the height of its power, it was comprised of the lands of modern Iran, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Armenia, Turkmenistan, portions of Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan.[36] The religious

legitimacy of the Safavid Empire was based on Shi'ism and posed a challenge to the political and religious authority of the Sunni Sultans.[37] On the basis of their Shi'ite foundations, the Safavids were able to co-opt those who did not subscribe to the legitimacy of Sunni governing classes.[38] Shah Ismail Safavi is believed by some historians to have falsified his family history, which was of Sunni origin, for political purposes. This allowed him to claim direct lineage to the Prophet and oppose the Ottoman claims of legitimacy. *The Cambridge History of Islam* observes, 'their fundamental object in claiming Shi'ite origins was to differentiate themselves from the Ottomans and enable them to enlist the sympathies of heterodox elements'.[39] By appealing to Shi'ism the Safavids were able to attack not just the Ottoman claims to be pious Islamic leaders, but to attack the very foundations of their legitimacy without which the Ottoman claim to represent the interests of Islam itself could be nullified. Much like the Shi'ite Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979, the Safavids were not working to use religion within the dominant Sunni paradigm, but were attempting to assert their legitimacy outside of it.

The Ottoman Sultans occasionally made allusions to the idea of a caliph; however, the title did not carry with it the previously held claims to a universal authority that other caliphs had sought. Rather, it acknowledged that the power of the Sultan was greater than that of a local ruler.[40] The Sultan was portrayed as the defender of Islam and the guardian of the holy places.[41] The appeal to universalism was on the decline, though the employment of religion as a tool of legitimacy remained in place. One manner in which this was achieved was through the organisation of an annual pilgrimage to Mecca which demonstrated Ottoman religious qualifications in the Islamic world.[42] Yet, more significantly, it was the closer union between the institutions that preserved religious faith and law with the ruler.[43] The Ottomans created an official state Ulema which played a significant role in imperial administration,[44] allowing the Sultan to issue decrees and orders through the intermediary voice of the religious elite.[45] By making the Ulema a part of the bureaucratic function of the government, the Ottomans were able to bridge the divide between the realities of governing an empire and religious theory. Consequently, this integration resulted in the hampering of the spiritual development of Islam as an entity independent of government oversight.[46]

Where the concept of a caliph had been largely silent during the Ottoman period, political realities of the nineteenth century resulted in a renewed resurgence of claims to divine rule. Hourani explains, 'The claim of the Sultan to be caliph had not hitherto been put forward with much emphasis, except in the sense that any powerful Muslim ruler

could be called caliph. From the middle of the nineteenth century, however, it began to be pressed more systematically, both a rallying cry to Muslims in the empire and outside to gather around the Ottoman throne and a warning to European states which had millions of Muslim subjects.'[47]

Claims to an all-encompassing leadership over the Muslim community had declined to some extent, but its re-emergence in the middle of the nineteenth century has continued to the present day. In 1839 an Ottoman decree reflected the resurgence of Islam as a legitimising agent of political order:

> All the world knows that since the first days of the Ottoman state the lofty principles the *Kuran* and the rules of sharia were always perfectly preserved. Our mighty sultanate reached the highest degree of strength and power and all its subjects of ease and prosperity. But in the last one hundred and fifty years, because of a succession of difficult and diverse causes the sacred sharia was not obeyed nor were the beneficent regulations followed; consequently its former strength and prosperity have changed into weakness and poverty. It is evident that countries not governed by sharia cannot survive. Full of confidence in the help of the Most High and certain of the support of our Prophet we deem it necessary and important from now on to introduce new legislation in order to achieve the effective administration of the Ottoman government and provinces.[48]

This was reflective of the renewed interest in using religion for political purposes. Although, at times, during the Ottoman period religion as a legitimising agent was taken for granted by co-opting the Ulema and the drive towards unity more limited, it was reinvigorated during the nineteenth century. The convulsive moment of the collapse of Ottoman authority put the possibility of unification and the maintenance of God's sovereignty in serious doubt, an event which has cast a shadow over the West's Islamic relations and in Middle East politics to the present day.

5.4 Conclusion

Political legitimacy has consistently been expressed in religious terms in the Islamic, particularly Arab, world. Although this has been expressed subtly in times of peace and more assertively in times of crisis, it has nonetheless been the most crucial element of political justification throughout the history of the Middle East. There has, however, been

very little consensus on who possesses such legitimacy. There have been, historically, several claimants at any given time either coexisting, competing or in conflict.[49] Not since the early days of Islam have Muslims been unified politically, and not since Muhammad himself has there been any consensus on who should have the right to rule. However, this cyclical process of competition based around legitimacy and unity has persisted into the present. Thus, it is evident that the underlying tension between religious and political authority continues to remain problematic even in the contemporary era. Unity and absolute consensus on legitimacy have never, since the origins of Islam, been achieved. Therefore, those who seek power through a unification discourse and through appeals to religious legitimacy in the contemporary look to the early days of Islam and co-opt history as a tool for achieving these goals. As Tom Corn notes in relation to the caliphate, 'though calls for its restoration have practically never ceased since 1924, the two main obstacles have been, on the one hand the theological incompatibility of the conceptions of a renovated caliphate and on the other hand the political rivalries among rulers and states for the spiritual leadership of the Muslim world'.[50] In essence, this has always been the case. The implementation of nation-states in the Middle East, however, in the post-colonial era, has entrenched these rivalries in new ways that further limits or indeed ensures the impossibility of the unification of the Islamic or Arab world.

6
The Struggle for Order in the Twentieth Century

The search for a new status quo in the Middle East began in the immediate aftermath of the Ottoman collapse. The imposition of nation-states in the region by Western colonial powers was, and still is, extremely problematic. In contrast to Europe, states in the Middle East did not develop through a long protracted process. This helps to account for the legitimacy crisis faced by the Middle Eastern state that requires regimes to employ a number of tactics, a mix of iron fisted rule and appeals to Islam as an agent of legitimacy, even in states that in effect function in a secular fashion. The previous chapter discussed the Islamic imperial age from the time of Muhammad to the end of Islamic empires in the early twentieth century. It observed the struggles and competition during this period to unify the Islamic peoples and for leaders to justify their rule in religious terms. This chapter looks at the crisis that followed the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the division of the region into nation-states. It observes the failed attempts of political Islam and Pan-Arabism to unify the region and successfully legitimise their projects. In the absence of an effective discourse on unity and legitimacy, the Salafi Jihadists seek to address these issues.

Challenges to the ruling elites in the Middle East in the form of Islamist movements are not a new phenomenon. However, the failure of twentieth century attempts, most prominently Pan-Arabism and Pan-Islamism, along with the continuing tendency of states to resign to the new realities of a region split into nation-states acting in their own – as opposed to Arab or Muslim – interests, have been major contributing factors to the rise of Salafi Jihadism and al-Qaeda. The Middle East has been plagued by two contradictory forces in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries: state interests and messianic missions. Contemporary unification movements have by all accounts failed, and

this failure can be attributed to the fact that such movements have historically been led by a particular actor that sought to form Middle Eastern order in the image of and under the leadership of that actor. The result of this has been twofold. One, states have largely accepted the status quo and abandoned unification projects in favour of pursuing state interests. Two, this acceptance of the status quo has been a significant factor in the transcendence of Islamism, which questions the order and leadership of the Muslim world, into Salafi Jihadism, which acts globally through violent means to achieve the goal of acting as a successful legitimate agent of unification.

6.1 Legitimacy to rule

For over 1300 years, from the time of Muhammad in the seventh century, Muslim rulers in the Middle East based their right to rule on God's sovereignty. A ruler, however, required both the practical ability to tend to the matters of state and the ability to appeal to Islamic symbols, rhetoric, law and sense of community. Karl Marx observed that religion can be employed as a powerful tool for maintaining social control.[1] Emmanuel Kant further insisted that religion was a form of social control that could not be obtained by a leader from the use of violence or other strategies. Religion can drive individuals to act in such a way as to benefit what is in the interest of those who govern. Religion is a source of legitimacy.[2] A spiritual bond was observed to exist between the ruler and the ruled during the time of the imperial caliphs. This social contract between the Sultan and his subjects was part of the source of accepting his legitimacy.[3] As Karateke appropriately observes, the caliphs were viewed by their subjects 'as guided by divine will and receiving God's direct assistance. Such an image of a ruler was not uncommon in pre-modern societies. It did not disappear entirely with the advent of the modern world.'[4] Karateke makes a rather important point. Even the 'secular' rulers of the Arab world, past and present, have appealed to Islam for legitimacy. Hatina Meir argues, in regard to a modern Middle Eastern state, 'while the effective entrenchment of the Egyptian state guaranteed stability it did not free the political elite from the constant need to exercise caution in its treatment of the Islamic element of society deeply tied to tradition'.[5]

State formation in the region intensified the debate between the traditionalists and the modernists regarding the role of religion in society. Leaders, such as Egyptian President Gamal abd al-Nasser, attempted to prioritise Arab identity over Islamic identity. However, with the failure

of Pan-Arab ambitions and the consolidation of nation-states in the post-Ottoman era, these debates which were once confined within localised arenas have been thrust out into the world at large. The inability of regional political elites to successfully position themselves as competent in satisfying the needs of the populace, not only in material and social terms but also in a spiritual capacity, weakens their legitimacy. It is a failing that al-Qaeda is attempting to exploit.

6.2 Replacing the Ottoman order: Pan-Arabism and the search for legitimacy

The end of Islamic imperial institutions of governance in the Middle East in the early twentieth century eventually gave rise to self-interested territorially bound nation-states.[6] It was only following the disintegration of the Ottoman imperial order that it was possible for a new regional order to be established in the form of a nation-state system.[7] The end of the Sultan's reign did not directly result in this, but it did provide the opportunity for this particular kind of order to be established.[8] The resignation of Arab leaders to the reality of the nation-state system, which in essence respected the integral sovereignty of its neighbours, did not take place until after the various attempts at regional integration had burned themselves out. Even though the Ottoman collapse prompted greater intervention by European powers in the region that could have conceivably resulted in greater cooperation between states, leaders nonetheless gravitated towards a stance of rivalry and suspicion of each other that continues into the present.[9] As James Mayall explains, 'during this period of Pan-Arab aspirations power politics still remained prevalent and reinforced the rational realist view of statecraft. Indeed, state nationalism began to erode any real feeling of solidarity among the various states.'[10] Equally, the Arab peoples themselves began to identify more significantly with the state than the notion of a collective Arab identity.

With the exception of the United Arab Republic, which was comprised of the brief union between Egypt and Syria from 1958 to 1961, official attempts at Pan-Arab unity have failed. After the height of the Pan-Arab era, led by Egypt's Gamal abd al-Nasser, states in the Middle East by the late 1960s had largely accepted the realities of the sovereignty of nation-states. In this, they began to privilege state interests to Arab or Muslim interests. Some Pan-Arab aspirants, however, remained committed. Saddam Hussein's war to annex Kuwait and Muammar Gaddafi's weak effort to act as the vanguard of the Arab unification cause in the 1980s represented the last Arab national efforts to unify the region. The acceptance of the sovereignty

of the nation-state by regional leaders, however, occurred at different times and was not a uniform process. Where Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia resigned to tend to their own affairs relatively early on, Jordan, Iraq and Libya came to these realisations later.[11] Iran, though having little appeal throughout the broader Arab world, still uses the concept of Pan-Islamism as a foreign policy tool and a legitimising agent for internal purposes. Its bid to be a regional leader, however, was short-lived, hampered by the sectarian divide between Shi'ite and Sunni and the ethnic divide between Arabs and the majority Persian population of Iran.

The Middle East is not dramatically different from other nation-state subsystems in this case. Although the boundaries were established by imperial powers in an artificial fashion, states still grew into self-interested units. The fact that power politics remained intact during the age of Arab nationalism gives clues to its failure. Lawson proposes, 'how the coming of nationalism interacts with the emergence and consolidation of anarchic states remains an untheorised and a rarely explored area of inquiry in the literature on International Relations'.[12] Further to this, how does this failure to secure Arab unity and the emergence of the nation-state affect the emergence of Salafi Jihadism in the late twentieth century? The fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire and the new realities of power politics played by nation-states led to a decline in the classical conception of the Islamic world view defined by the dichotomy of Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam. Many countries in the region replaced the concept of an umma tied to a strong religious identity with a secular idea of the people rooted in national citizenship. This was the basis of Pan-Arabism, as exemplified by the most prominent Pan-Arab movements Nasserism and Ba'athism.[13] The ousting of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991, by a coalition of Arab and non-Arab states, was the death knell of the Pan-Arab cause and would effectively incapacitate the last Arab state capable of striving for regional unity.[14]

The Arab world is characterised by a high degree of linguistic, religious, cultural and ethnic homogeneity.[15] This sense of kinship along with the notion of a larger community, which is arguably stronger in the Middle East than elsewhere in the world, was still not significant enough for leaders to put aside state interests for the common regional good. The nation-states of the region, however artificial, still demonstrated behaviour easily recognisable through a classical realist lens defined by self-help and self-interest. In part, the failure of the Pan-Arab cause was self-interest. Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi experiments with Ba'athism and Nasserism demonstrated that each state sought to engage with the Pan-Arab project, but under the hegemony of a specific state. As such,

Egypt imagined a united Arab world led by Egypt, and Iraq, Syria and other states imagined an Arab unity characterised by their own hegemony. Despite the occasional genuine effort to further the collective interests of the Arab peoples as a whole, the general line of thinking in each of the Arab capitals increasingly shifted to the objective of increasing the power, wealth and prestige of each state, as opposed to expending large sums of blood and treasure on regional unification projects.[16] The absence of a discourse on unity and legitimacy created a vacuum that the Salafi Jihadists are attempting to fill.

6.3 Egypt: Gamal abd al-Nasser and Anwar al-Sadat

Egypt under Gamal abd al-Nasser represented the strongest claim by an Arab government to achieve regional leadership in the aftermath of World War Two. Pan-Arabism was more than a utopian idea, it was also a policy. As Michael Doran observes, 'state interests made Pan-Arabism attractive to leaders in Cairo. The view of history that emphasises social and cultural roots cannot make sense of the puzzling pattern of Egyptian foreign policy.'[17] Self-interest cloaked in the dogma of Pan-Arabism, however, came to Egypt before al-Nasser's reign, as demonstrated by Egyptian behaviour following the 1948 war with Israel. Egypt fought against Israel in 1948 in order to maintain its hegemonic position in the Middle East.[18] At the conclusion of hostilities, in negotiating the terms of peace, Egypt abandoned its Pan-Arab principles by requiring its allied belligerents to refrain from negotiations with Israel until Egypt had concluded its armistice. This was a tactic designed to secure the best conditions for the Egyptian state.[19]

Al-Nasser claimed that he did not see himself as the leader of the greater Arab world. Rather, he believed 'the Arab peoples feel that what we do in Egypt reflects their collective hopes and aspirations'.[20] Pan-Arabism, as practised by al-Nasser, however, could be easily understood in realist terms, as Pan-Arabism was a tool to promote al-Nasser's objectives for Egypt.[21] Arab unification for al-Nasser, much like the perspective held by other self-professed Pan-Arab leaders, was a union to be dominated by a given nation-state with that state's interests privileged above the Arab cause.

The Egyptian attempt to use the Arab League to promote its leadership over the Pan-Arab cause was designed to weaken the hegemonic ambitions of Jordan and Iraq, leading to the formation of two regional blocs. Doran describes these as the Turko-Hashemite Entente (Iraq, Jordan, Turkey) and the Triangle Alliance (Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia).[22] Using this

alliance Cairo could challenge British military power and counter Iraqi and Jordanian designs on Syria.[23] Without the British as the provider of security, the balance of power in the region would strongly work in the favour of Egypt and its allies, and against Jordan and Iraq. Egypt would then have a free hand to transform the state system in the Middle East in a way that suited its interests and under its leadership.[24] When Iraq attempted to annex Kuwait after its independence in 1961, citing historical Iraqi claims to Kuwaiti territory from the Ottoman period under the guise of Pan-Arabism to gain regional support, all attempts were stifled by Egypt. Al-Nasser could not allow Egypt's strongest regional rival to steal its legitimacy by taking from Egypt the torch of the Pan-Arab cause.[25] If Arab nationalism was, as al-Nasser argued, the ideological identification of all Arab peoples, then, Egypt had a right to intrude into the affairs of states not acting in accordance with Pan-Arab principles.[26]

Lawson affirms that, in the eyes of al-Nasser, the relationship between nation-state sovereignty and Pan-Arabism rested on the idea that any real step towards Arab unity needed to be grounded in self-determination.[27] Al-Nasser oversaw the height of the Pan-Arab campaign. He won the respect and admiration of fellow Pan-Arabists and engineered a vision to capture the imagination of the Arab world. However, he did this to capitalise on the concept he championed for the benefit of Egyptian interests.[28] The 1967 Arab war with Israel proved disastrous for the Arab allies, and represented the beginning of the end of Egypt's Pan-Arab hegemonic ambitions.

The October War of 1973 further demonstrated the limits of Arab cooperation and the futility of Pan-Arabism, in the light of the preference of states to act consistently to advance their own interests. Anwar al-Sadat, who took power after the death of al-Nasser, moved in short order towards an Egypt-first position after being shunned by Egypt's Arab neighbours for signing the Camp David Peace Accords in 1978.[29] The agreement made Egypt the most powerful, and the first, Arab state to make peace with the Israeli state. Al-Sadat was not motivated by a long and lasting peace, but by a desire to change Egypt's role in the Middle East by breaking from Pan-Arab ideals and seeking to promote the interests of the Egyptian state.[30]

6.4 Syria and Iraq: Ba'athism

The ideology of the Ba'ath party, that became prominent in Syria and Iraq, is primarily an Arab nationalist concept. Ba'athism prescribes three goals: (1) the unification of the existing Arab states into a greater

political entity; (2) freedom from foreign influences and hegemonic forces; (3) socialism.[31] Like Nasserism it is rooted in the concept of the oneness of the Arab peoples. It perceives a glorious past and a duty for the Arab peoples to fulfil a significant role in the future.[32] Hence, the foreign policies of both Syria and Iraq have historically been deeply rooted in this concept, though from different national perspectives.

Syrian foreign policy has been shaped by the division of Greater Syria into four fragmented units: Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.[33] The restoration of Arab unity and overcoming the imposed fragmentation of the region by imperial powers has been the official basis of Ba'athist ideology.[34] Syria has traditionally thought of itself as the 'beating heart of Arabism', giving it a vision of Pan-Arabism to be understood as Arab unification under Syrian hegemony.[35] Though Syria briefly ceded its sovereignty during the union with Egypt, its foreign policy actions remained rooted in state interests. This insistence on prioritising its own ends, and the claim to special rights in the Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria), inevitably put Syrian interests in conflict with that of other Arab powers, serving to weaken Arab solidarity.[36] As Raymond Hinnebush argues, 'what after all can be the substance of an Arabist policy which supports Iran against the other Arab states and attacks Palestinian resistance, the very expression of the Arab cause?'[37]

Al-Husri argues that it was because of the colonial aspirations of Britain and France that the Arab world was divided into nation-states. He further maintains that these powers continued to manipulate Arab affairs after independence, and that this was the lone obstacle to Arab unification.[38] However, the legacy of Pan-Arabism characterised by competing state interests would appear to refute these claims. In the case of Syria's bid to be an Arab bloc leader, its ambitions were hampered from the very beginning of independence from France by political conditions near its own borders in Lebanon.

The Syrians and the Lebanese that supported the Pan-Arab objectives found themselves in immediate opposition to the Lebanese nationalists.[39] At the heart of the Lebanese nationalist movement is the Maronite Christian community. Even among the supporters of Arab nationalism divergent and conflicting interests plagued bilateral relations between the two Levant states.[40] Unable to find a solution to the issue of unification, Lebanon and to a greater extent Syria, employed various tactics such as economic pressure, blockades and border closures to force an agreement.[41] Lebanese Christian fears of being consumed by a Muslim/Arab dominated Greater Syria or an Arab Union continue to have significant influence over Syro-Lebanese relations in the present.[42]

Syria, likely as a result of its weaker position in the Arab world compared to Egypt and Iraq, had limited expectations of its ability to act as a successful regional hegemon. Syrian limitations were made evident after the 1967 defeat in the Six Day War with Israel. Years of disappointment with the various experiments for unity and the increased understanding of the costs of such experiments made Pan-Arabism even less attractive to Syria. The 1967 defeat hurried Hafiz al-Assad's accession to power, a leader who looked to exchange Syria's messianic revisionism with more tangible goals of the defence of the Syrian state, the reacquisition of Greater Syria and improving its status in the Arab world.[43]

The legacy of Saddam Hussein may well be that he presided over the last secular attempt at Arab unification. He was viewed by many Arab leaders and Western powers to be an immediate threat to Saudi Arabia and regional security with the 1990 invasion of the Gulf Emirate of Kuwait. Hussein was positioning Iraq to further enforce its hegemonic position in the eastern Arab world.[44] Iraq perceived not only the unification of the Arab world as a priority, but in addition the promotion of the interests of the Arab populations living in non-Arab states.[45] It is in this way that Iraqi foreign policy differed from that of Syria. Where Syria's prime concern was the consolidation of Greater Syria, Saddam Hussein's ambitions were much greater. In a 1975 speech Hussein announced, 'in brief we want Iraq to play a leading role in the area and especially in the Arab homeland. We want Iraq to play a leading role in the consolidation of an anti-imperialist policy at the international level.'[46]

As Hussein began to position Iraq to challenge for dominance and leadership in the region it was dealt a heavy blow. The Islamic Revolution in Iran brought another contender into power. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's regime would spark an eight-year-long war with Iraq resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and at great material cost. As Ahman Yousef Ahmad notes, 'it is perhaps an ironic twist of history that Iraq had to divert its resources, political and material, to the war situation just when all other conditions seemed favourable for it to play such a leading role'.[47] Iraq, however, was not yet finished with its quest for Arab unity. In Egypt, like Syria, the failure of previous unity movements served to weaken Hussein's adventurous campaign of 1990. In the Gulf States as well, the ruthlessness of the Iraqi invasion presented Iraq as an immediate security threat to its neighbours. This combination of previous failures and fear of the Iraqi regime resulted in a greater identification with individual state units and state interests, as opposed to the Pan-Arab cause.[48] Iraq was unable to successfully mobilise support from poor Arab countries against the

wealthier states of the Persian Gulf, despite appealing to the sentiment that Arab oil wealth should benefit the region in a more egalitarian manner. The war proved to be damaging for Hussein's regime. Egypt and Syria's failure to fall in line with Iraq, and US resolve to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait, weakened Iraqi military strength and freedom of action. This was the death knell of the Pan-Arab cause.

6.5 Pan-Islamism: Iran

Although the variety of Pan-Islamism that took root in Iran in the 1980s bears limited significance to the emergence of Salafi Jihadist 'terror' organisations, it is nonetheless an important moment in Middle Eastern history and worthy of note. The Iranian bid to serve as a Middle Eastern hegemon was unlikely to succeed from the start. In the aftermath of the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the return of Khomeini, who had been exiled from the country in 1965 by the regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi, Iran began a campaign to unify the Middle East under its hegemony. Counting on support from the majority Shi'ite population in Iraq that had long been oppressed by Saddam Hussein's Sunni regime, Khomeini called for the Shi'ites in Iraq to rise up against their oppressors. This provocative move, in part, led to one the twentieth century's most devastating conflicts, the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), which severely damaged Iraq's ability to challenge for regional hegemony.

Iran suffered a distinct handicap in its quest for regional hegemony. It is an almost entirely Persian Shi'ite state with only a small Arab Sunni population. The unification envisaged by the Iranian regime was based not upon Arab solidarity but religious solidarity. Where appeals to Islamic unity are not unique to the Iranian revolution, the legitimacy of a Shi'ite-led order in the larger Arab world did not resonate well. With the exception of Syria and Yemen, Middle Eastern Arab states supported Iraq during the eight-year conflict with Iran. However, despite these setbacks, the Iranian leaders that followed have not ceased to seek to influence regional affairs. Support for the Shi'ite Hezbollah group and al-Assad's regime in Syria exemplifies Iranian resolve.

Iran has attempted to frame its role in the region in terms of defiance of the West, especially the US and Great Britain, and a virulent denunciation of Israel. Iran perceives Middle Eastern unity in religions rather than ethnic/national terms. However, the realities of the historic conflicts between Persia and the Arabs and, more significantly, the religious divide between Sunni and Shi'ite, have resulted in the failure of the Iranian vision.

6.6 The rise and fall of Political Islam and the next contender

Islamist movements in the Middle East have long been in conflict with the ruling regimes of the region, challenging their legitimacy to govern. However, from the 1950s through the 1970s Pan-Arabism captured the imagination of many in the Middle East. Its ultimate failure was demonstrated by the events of the Six Day War, Anwar al-Sadat's signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and Iraq's failed attempt at regional hegemony. The laying aside of the Pan-Arab project represented an opening in the discourse on unity and legitimacy for Islamists who had been challenging the authority of Middle Eastern regimes since the Ottoman collapse. Despite the fervour of the Islamist movements of the 1970s and 1980s, they began to lose ground as a legitimate revolutionary force. This left them with a choice to either work within the political process of the nation-state or evolve into something quite different.[49] The premier reason, as Olivier Roy argues, for the weakening of Islamist movements, was that they have been in part secularised by the political process, where political logic has trumped religious logic.[50] Most Muslim Brotherhood groups began to work within the legal framework of the state, except where they were prevented from doing so.[51] The state, as Gilles Kepel claims, 'effectively defeated all the various attempts of Islamist militants to confront the regime directly'.[52]

Political Islamic movements began to demonstrate their futility with the assassination of al-Sadat. Not only did the state which al-Nasser founded survived, but so did al-Sadat's regime, with many of the chief lieutenants remaining in place.[53] The neo-fundamentalist movements, of which the Salafi Jihadists can be counted among, spread in part because the Islamist movements of the 1980s ceased to be a force for revolutionary change.[54] What had been lost with the failure of Pan-Islamism was an Islamic discourse on religious legitimacy and unity,[55] much as the failure of Pan-Arabism brought an end to the Arab unification discourse. In the early 1990s there was a dramatic shift in the nature of Islamic political violence. What had formerly been associated with Islamist movements was now the tool of neo-fundamentalist groups such as al-Qaeda.

The demise of the Pan-Arab project beginning in the 1970s, followed by the failure of Iraq to take advantage of its superior position as a regional leader, resulted in a lack of a viable unifying actor and an absence of a discourse on unity. Arab leaders no longer sought a single Arab state and grudgingly began to accept the existence of Israel. The

great Islamist challenge from Shi'ite Iran has been largely unsuccessful. Iran represents a challenge to regional stability, but has not the capacity to serve as a force challenging for regional hegemony. It appeared for a moment in the last decade of the twentieth century that, much as Francis Fukuyama had predicted in *The End of History*,[56] rival ideologies had run their course. Liberalism had defeated nationalism, fascism and communism, leaving no other contenders to challenge its dominance.

As previously observed, the end of the Ottoman Empire did not directly bring about the rise of nationalist movements. However, the end of the Sultan's rule did provide an opportunity for such movements to come about. In much the same manner the end of Pan-Arabism did not necessitate the rise of Sunni Pan-Islamism; it did, however, provide a vacuum in the ideological discourse on Middle Eastern unity and an absence of any actor to carry on the cause. Al-Qaeda has attempted to fill that vacuum.

The struggles of the 1990s in Egypt to quell Islamists attempting to wrest power from the regime and establish an Islamic state, indirectly led to the events of 9/11.[57] The result of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's crackdown on radical Islamists forced them from the region, just as Bin Laden had been exiled from Saudi Arabia in the prelude to the US invasion of Iraq. This moment of Hijra led to the creation of al-Qaeda. The Hijra references Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 where he sought to consolidate the Muslim community. This symbolic moment has been employed by the al-Qaeda ideologues in making historical comparisons with the early Muslims and the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. This historical moment transformed Islamists, with local agendas of change in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, into an international organisation with a broader Pan-Islamic agenda. New tactics of targeting the far enemy to weaken the near enemy began to be practised, as opposed to directly challenging the regional elites. What began as a local challenge to state power has become a challenge to the current international order, which, as a result of the end of a state sanctuary, now uses local forces with local grievances under the banner of the al-Qaeda ideology in an effort to achieve a broader aim, the restoration of the lost caliphate.[58]

The invasion of Afghanistan and the removal of the Taliban from power dramatically changed the nature of al-Qaeda and resulted in the decentralisation of the organisation, but it did not mean the end of al-Qaeda or its ability to maintain a strategy. Al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda's ideological chief, spells out al-Qaeda's two-phased strategy in his work *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*.[59] The first phase would cause

disruption in the greater Middle East, forcing the US to abandon support for Israel and the ruling Arab regimes, allowing for the creation of an Islamic state in Egypt. In the second phase, the restored caliphate would be used as a springboard from which to launch the Global Jihad against the West.[60] If al-Nasser's defiance of the West during the 1956 Suez Crisis was the virtual birthmark of Pan-Arabism, then the events of 11 September 2001 have served a similar purpose for Salafi Jihadism.[61]

Al-Qaeda looks to constituent groups as part of its strategy. Local entities take on the al-Qaeda brand name, commonly to deal with local grievances, and though the understanding of exactly how to achieve the broader al-Qaeda aims remains questionable, there is nonetheless a definable al-Qaeda ideology with a clear objective of bringing the Islamic world and the Middle East, in particular, under its hegemony. Al-Qaeda has conscripted numerous local movements with local grievances and issues into its Global Jihad.[62] Often seemingly unrelated causes are brought under the al-Qaeda umbrella, grievances that predate the Global Jihad by decades or even centuries and have little to do with Pan-Islamic objectives.[63] Chechen separatism, for example, existed long before the influence of the Salafi Jihadists in the Caucasus.[64] Al-Qaeda routinely draws upon disaffected socio-economic groups for the recruitment of foot soldiers and draws its leadership from the alienated radicalised elite.[65] This occurs not just in the Islamic world, but as well from the disaffected globally. In this, they intend to capitalise on the ultimate failure of the nation-states, Pan-Arab movements and Political Islam to effectively deal with the grievances of the people.

The reform movements within Islam began largely in the nineteenth century. However, these seem not to have come to the attention of Western policy makers until the late 1970s, and were not taken with any degree of urgency until the beginning of the twenty-first century. The West and its Cold War adversaries gave significant attention to the Palestinian cause and the various Arab wars with Israel, as well as the conflict in Afghanistan in the 1980s. However, they took little note of Islamism or international 'terrorism' until the overthrow of Shah Reza Pahlavi during the Iranian Islamic Revolution.

As Kilcullen argues, 'the study of terrorism as an academic discipline emerged in the 1970s in response to the growing phenomenon of international terrorism. Before then terrorism was seen primarily as a component within localised insurgencies.'[66] The Iranian Islamic Revolution, partly because of the efforts of Iraq during the first Persian Gulf War but also because of its Shi'ite theology, never seriously threatened to dominate the region. Additionally, although Iranian foreign policy is steeped

in anti-Western and anti-Israeli rhetoric actualised in the form of aid to Hezbollah, the fact that it is a Shi'ite state diminishes its credibility no matter how staunchly it opposes Israel and the West.

Sunni Islamism began to demonstrate its significance during the same period. Where there had been decades of scholarly debate and attempts to challenge the ruling elite of the region, it was not until the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat in 1981 that the Sunni version of Islamism appeared to be real in the Western mind. Pan-Arabism had so profoundly dominated Arab scholarship and politics since the independence of the Arab states that alternative dialogues had little place in the Arab political sphere. However, as Pan-Arab movements began to fade, the opportunity opened for an alternative to the secular discourse on unity to take place in the form of Salafi Jihadism.

The killing fields of the Salafi Jihadist conflict may be in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Africa, but the ideological origins, masterminds and objectives are distinctly Middle Eastern. Bin Laden is of Saudi origin, al-Zawahiri is Egyptian, and many of the Mujahedeen who fought the Soviets and now the West are Arab. As Benjamin Schwartz observes, 'personnel, money and ideology have always been centred in Arabia, in this the strategic limitations of the Afghan campaign become apparent. Only in this context does it become clear that the Afghanistan mission was necessary, but hardly sufficient to address the root of the threat.'[67] Afghanistan, for al-Qaeda and its allies, was more about opportunity than it was about a final objective, a front that spread into Iraq after the 2003 US-led invasion.

In the absence of a viable actor and sufficiently strong leadership to unite the Arab-Islamic world, it is left to al-Qaeda to take on this project with great enthusiasm. Al-Qaeda, then, in essence, is engaged in a messianic mission that firmly rejects the status quo world order and provides an alternative Islamic discourse to challenge its legitimacy and bring converts to the cause. By rejecting the nation-state and, therefore, the disunification of Muslim peoples, al-Qaeda's ideologues are challenging the legitimacy of the ruling elite and their ability to successfully represent the Islamic peoples. There is an attempt to construct an order that differs distinctly from the status quo.[68]

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that after the collapse of Ottoman authority and the ensuing creation of the Middle Eastern states there has been an increased escalation in the conflict over regional

order. The first phase was an attempt at secular Pan-Arab unification and a brief Shi'ite challenge for power from Iran. The failure of Pan-Arabism, the weakness of the Shi'ite Pan-Islamic challenge and the co-option of revolutionary political Islamist movements into the mainstream political realm by the regimes, have led to the realities of the status quo nation-state system. Al-Qaeda represents the current great challenge to create an alternative Middle Eastern order. It rejects the division of the Islamic, particularly Arab, world into separate nation-states. It challenges the current international order and seeks to change that order. The failure of the unity movements has been an opportunity for al-Qaeda.

These continued attempts at constructing some form of Middle Eastern unification, since the dissolution of the caliphate, demonstrates that the sovereign nation-state is extremely problematic in the region. Even though Pan-Arabism demonstrated the problem of unification coming down to local interests, something that was as well evident during the rule of the caliphs, there is still continued room and indeed a need for a discourse on unity. The absence of any genuine discussion on unity by either the Islamists or the secularists and the religious elite's (Ulema) lack of authority to confer legitimacy upon those who rule have led to a vacuum in the unity/legitimacy discussion that al-Qaeda has exploited.

7
The Rise of Salafi Jihadism and the Al-Qaeda Ideology

Following World War Two and into the later part of the Cold War, scholars of international affairs began to suspect that ideological differences would no longer remain a driving force for conflict. Ideologies have not, however, ceased to have a place in contemporary international politics. Olivier Roy posited that al-Qaeda is a 'brand name', a central ideological point of focus that other Islamist militants look to drawing inspiration and validation, as opposed to simply an international terror organisation with clear objectives, membership and hierarchical leadership.[1] Al-Qaeda itself is an ideology that claims to be the vanguard of Salafi Jihadism and seeks to represent Islam in totality.

This chapter will define what the components of this ideology are, observe its intellectual evolution by looking at successive scholars over time, and analyse its transition from the guiding doctrine of an organisation into an ideology that inspires converts to its cause. In doing so it is demonstrated that al-Qaeda is more than an organisation, it is in itself an ideology. Further, this ideology is not simply a carelessly composed piece of propaganda created entirely by the contemporary leadership, but a well-thought-out doctrine which draws upon a respected lineage of Islamic thinking. The ideologues have constructed a doctrine which presents al-Qaeda as not only the vanguard of Salafi Jihadism, but also an institution that can complete the legitimacy and unification project.

The conflict between Salafi Jihadists and the US has less to do with orthodox rationalisations such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, encroaching unfulfilled modernity, economic disenfranchisement, globalisation, US foreign policy or a clash of civilisations. It is, rather, related to the struggle for dominance that has been ongoing for centuries within the Islamic and, particularly, Arab world. How, then, does the

branding and franchising of al-Qaeda fit into this concept? The attempt to galvanise Islamic society is not a novel objective. It was for long the goal of imperial aspirants until Kemal Ataturk dissolved the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924, in favour of the creation of a Turkish nation-state. The idea of unity, a community of believers, is a central tenet of the Islamic faith, made evident in political practice through the drafting of the *Constitution of Medina* in 622 CE. The Islamic world was never united under one absolute sovereign. Islamic civilisation was always fragmented into minor states or managed by mercenary armies loyal to the patrimonial dynasties.[2] The termination of the Ottoman Empire, the process of European colonisation of a large portion of the Islamic world and the subsequent decolonisation resulted in the creation of Western-style states in the Middle East. In this, the illusion of Islamic unity appeared to break down. Although unity in the Islamic world may never have existed if looked at through the lens of a Western concept of sovereignty, the end of the Ottoman Empire made these divisions indisputably evident.

Efforts by imperial contenders to rebuild the discarded caliphate order began almost immediately in the aftermath of the Ottoman collapse and the ensuing post-Ottoman state order. The nation-state as a form of political order in the Middle East has been under sustained attack since the moment of its creation.[3] The failure of secular Pan-Arabism during the 1950s–1980s to usher in a renewed political order and unite the Middle East encouraged Islamic revivalists to forge a new Arab-Islamic identity using religion as a legitimising agent. Islamist movements were able to take the already inherent anti-Western anti-American sentiment resulting from colonial intrusion, utilised by the secular leadership, and transform this into a religious nationalism, as opposed to a secular nationalism that was the dominant discourse for most of the twentieth century.

Al-Qaeda as an organisation lacks the succinct command and control of its operatives, in the manner that it did prior to the allied invasion of Afghanistan. It is, however, likely an even more powerful force as an ideology. As an ideology al-Qaeda can achieve a kind of immortality. It becomes a myth and a legend. Future generations of jihadists can take up positions as ideologues further evolving its concepts, as previous Salafist thinkers have, continuing to inspire future foot soldiers for the cause. As al-Qaeda becomes less and less of a tangible entity, it becomes increasingly more difficult to combat. Al-Qaeda as an ideology provides legitimacy and theological foundations for those who wish to pursue the objective of creating a new 'golden age'

in the form of a contemporary caliphate, as well as any number of local objectives directly or indirectly linked to this overarching concept. It is, therefore, necessary to conceptualise what the al-Qaeda ideology is, the historical process of Islamic thinking that led to its creation, and what its implications for international politics are.

7.1 Al-Qaeda's ideological structure

The al-Qaeda ideology is constructed around four defining concepts: Salafism, jihad, Hijra and jahiliya. This can be conceptualised as the problem, the methodology, the preparation and the action, which will bring about the solution. The problem that Islam, and indeed the world, faces is jahiliya, or the corruption of society. It is an allusion to the condition of the people of Arabia prior to Muhammad's revelation from God. Salafism and its puritanical concepts of looking back to an uncorrupted Islam in the time of the Prophet is the methodological approach to alleviate the condition of jahiliya. Jihad is the action that will bring an end to jahiliya and, therefore, bring about the solution, which is subjugation to God through the establishment of a new caliphate, encompassing the territory acquired at the height of the Islamic conquests. Hijra is the preparation that must be made for jihad. Only by first fleeing from the condition of jahiliya and making preparations for jihad can this be actualised.

Modern Salafist thinking emerged most prominently in the nineteenth century works of Jamal al-din al-Afghani (1838–1897). The Salafist doctrine is centred around the concept of looking back to a prior historical period in an effort to understand how the contemporary world should be ordered in accordance with Islamic principles. What follows, from al-Afghani, is an evolutionary intellectual process over the next century and a half to the present day through a number of thinkers who have helped to shape what has become the contemporary Salafi Jihadist doctrine, which is the foundation for the al-Qaeda ideology and Salafi Jihadism in general. The term Salafism derives from the Arabic word Salaf, referring to righteous predecessors, specifically the immediate successors to the Prophet. It, like many Islamic revivalist concepts, is concerned with an idealised Islamic world that can be a model for the contemporary world by looking to the time of the Prophet and seeking out the original Islam.[4]

Al-Afghani lived in a time of cultural and existential crisis in the Islamic world. Not only were he and his contemporaries facing Western intrusion in the form of imperialism but, equally disorienting, a perceived humiliation by many Muslims in the face of Western advances

in science, culture and technology. An admirer of Western rationalism, and believing that Islam was not irreconcilable with Western reasoning,[5] al-Afghani sought to answer this perplexing question. How could Islam, which had so long reigned as a dominant civilisation, producing a wealth of literary, scientific, medical and cultural achievements, guided by God, have fallen so far behind the West after extensive periods of such exceptional dominance? Al-Afghani resurrected the idea that the reason for the decline of Islamic civilisation in the face of Western advances and dominance was the result of Muslims having strayed from the path of true Islam. If a spiritual revival could be achieved, then, the Islamic world which once had been superior to the West could find the capabilities of competing with and surpassing the West as it had done centuries before.[6]

From the nineteenth-century reformers to the contemporary jihadists there has been a progression of this kind of Salafist thinking that seeks to look to Islam's earliest beginnings to find solutions for shaping modern Islamic society. Islam, it is argued by Salafists, was perfect at the time of the Prophet, and since that time there has been a consistent straying from the original condition. Islam, as a complete social, political and economic system, provided all the tools necessary for society to function. It is this departure from the true Islam that has resulted in the decline of Islamic civilisation. By looking back to the past it is possible to put Islam on the path to renewal, and return Islamic society to its rightful dominant position.[7] To reach this end, al-Afghani scrutinised the nature of Islamic society itself, to find methods of reforming it so as to emulate the earliest Islamic period. He concluded that it was possible to emulate Western achievements without allowing Islamic norms to be consumed by the decadent aspects of Western Civilisation. In the twentieth century, however, jihad and the absolute rejection of Western norms have been advocated by the Salafi Jihadists as the appropriate methodological approach for reviving Islamic civilisation.

Jihad is literally translated as the Arabic word for struggle or effort, specifically, a struggle in the path of God. The Quran contains 114 'suras' (chapters) which contain in total 6,234 'ayas' (verses). Of these, 28 ayas make reference to jihad, the term being mentioned specifically in 41 instances.[8] Jihad is a highly contested concept within Islam and is of a rich and complex nature, such that its meaning, justification and appropriate application have been a source of debate amongst Islamic scholars throughout the centuries.[9] The doctrine of jihad is not based on a single authoritative interpretation. Like much of Islamic political thought the concept of jihad is the product of diverse authorities interpreting and

applying the concept to specific situations over a broad tapestry of time and space.[10] Hence, it emerges in varying situations as something quite different depending upon who is making the ruling or interpretation. It is evident from this that jihad contains a somewhat vague and broad definition. The term, then, seems encapsulated in an inescapable tautology, as it is understood as what Muslims say it is.

Considering the broad complexity of meaning associated with the term and its popular usage in contemporary Salafi Jihadist discourse, it has become a deeply contested and controversial concept, both within and outside of the Islamic theological circles, both among the Islamic religious establishment and also its detractors.[11] Jihad can be conceptualised as both a personal as well as a collective effort in the path of Allah. It is a personal endeavour to seek God's will, resist temptation and strive to be a better Muslim, or a collective effort to better ones community, as well as defend it or expand it by means of war.

Jihad, as a concept, has a lesser and greater component. The greater jihad is that of the self, the struggle to become a more pious Muslim.[12] The lesser jihad represents warfare, and is foremost in the mind of contemporary, particularly Western, society. It must be reiterated that the early days of Islam were characterised by a struggle for survival. Islam's Hobbesian origins have significant influence upon how jihad is conceptualised by Salafi Jihadists. The lesser jihad can be as much offensive as defensive. The offensive jihad is justified by the spread of the faith, as characterised by the periods of Islamic conquest particularly during the Umayyad caliphate, and defensive in the face of non-Muslim aggression as characterised by the Crusades. The Quran states:

> To those against whom war is made, permission is given to fight because they are wronged, and verily Allah is most powerful for their aid. They are those have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right. For no cause except they say our lord is Allah. Did Allah not check one set of peoples by means of another, there would have surely been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure? Allah will certainly aid those who aid his cause, for verily Allah is full of strength, exalted in might able to enforce his will.[13]
>
> Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits, for Allah does not love transgressors.[14]

P. L. Heck observes that 'the Umayyad logic of state had profound and lasting effects on the Islamic conception of jihad. Jihad became

itself conceived of as a tool in the service of territorial expansion, rather than a religious struggle at the level of devotion to God's cause.'[15] Islamic scholars argued that since the Quran was revealed to Muhammad in stages throughout his life, and therefore at different stages in the development of the umma, that Quranic revelations may have been revealed at different times to address particular needs, thus, giving the concept of jihad temporal flexibility. As this is the case, some revelations refer to only specific historical events.[16] Sura 2 verse 106 and Sura 16 verse 101 are supportive of this claim: 'None of our revelations do we abrogate or cause to be forgotten. But we substitute something better or similar. Don't you know that Allah has power over all things.'[17] 'When we substitute one revelation for another and Allah knows best what he reveals in stages. They say you are but a forger, but most of them do not understand.'[18]

Verses 9:29 and 9:5 of the Quran demonstrate the offensive concept of the lesser jihad and lend to its justification on the basis of spreading the faith. 'Fight those who believe not in God nor the last day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and his apostle, nor hold the religion of truth even if they are the people of the book, until they pay tax with willing submission and feel themselves subdued.'[19] 'When the sacred months have passed slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush.'[20]

From this, the Ulema could provide medieval kings with the legitimacy they needed to acquire territory by force with religious sanction. The legal declaration of jihad is dependent upon a religious ruling, a 'fatwa', issued by someone in authority with legal expertise, such as a 'mufti'. In this, jihad can be legitimised or have its legitimacy challenged.[21] However, as Esposito observes, who can declare jihad and what constitutes a legal action and not an unholy act of war, would 'like beauty be determined by the eye of the beholder'.[22] In addition to justification for conflict, the Quran makes provisions as to how such conflict should be conducted, an Islamic *jus in bello*.[23] Who is to fight and who is exempt: 'no blame is there on the blind, nor is there blame in the lame, nor on one ill'.[24] 'There is no blame on those who are infirm, or ill, or find no resources to spend. If they are sincere to Allah and his messenger no ground can there be against such as do right; and Allah is oft forgiving and most merciful.'[25] When hostilities should end: 'But if they cease Allah is oft forgiving and most merciful.'[26] The treatment of prisoners: 'Therefore, when you meet the unbelievers in fight smite at their necks, at length when you have thoroughly subdued them, bind

and bond firmly. Thereafter, is the time for either generosity or ransom.'[27] A concern with proportionality: 'Whoever transgresses against you respond in kind.'[28] Provisions for peacemaking: 'If your enemy inclines toward peace then you to should seek peace and put your trust in God.'[29]

The Sunnah refers to the way of the Prophet, the manner in which he lived. 'Hadiths' are the records of this, documenting his words and deeds, Problematically these began to grow exponentially, seemingly out of control, with sayings and deeds being attributed to the Prophet by individuals seeking to resolve personal issues.[30] Twenty years after the Prophet, Muslims had published an agreed upon version of the Quran but had failed to prevent the creation of new unreliable Hadiths.[31] In an attempt at resolution Muslim scholars sought guidance in the Quran. Al-Bukhari and al-Hajjaj published the two most reliable and agreed upon collections of Hadiths, Sahih al-Bukhari[32] and Sahih Muslim[33] respectively. These were accepted to be genuinely committed to a portrayal of the Prophet's exact words and actions.[34]

Most Muslims accept the notion of jihad as a dual concept, the greater jihad (al-jihad al-akhbar) and the lesser (jihad al-asghar).[35] The greater jihad refers to the struggle to be a better Muslim, which contains no violent implications. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi writes of a Hadith which tells the tale of the Prophet returning from a raiding party. In this excerpt Muhammad is reported to have said, 'you have come forth in the best way of coming forth. You have come from the smaller jihad to the greater jihad.' They said, 'and what is the greater jihad'. He replied, 'the striving of God's servants against their idle desires'.[36] This was understood as the jihad against oneself.[37]

War as an activity sanctioned purely for the purposes of defence was problematic for Muslim rulers who were inspired by notions of territorial conquest. This contradiction soon became evident during the eighth century, a period of significant Islamic expansion.[38] Muslim rulers sought out Islamic scholars to find theological justification for provocative action. This strategy is practised in the contemporary by Salafi Jihadists who characterise 'terrorist' actions as a response to a perceived injustice, rather than acts of outright aggression. Following the events of 9/11 Bin Laden stated, 'in my view, if an enemy occupies a Muslim territory and uses common people as a human shield, then it is permitted to attack that enemy'.[39] He continues, 'America and its allies are massacring us in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir and Iraq. The Muslims have the right to attack America in reprisal. The 9/11 attacks were not targeted at women and children. The real targets were America's icons of military and economic power.'[40] Bin Laden's rhetoric

had a tendency to shift focus over time to suit particular geopolitical conditions. Where Bin Laden first scorned the West for its military presence in Saudi Arabia in 1998,[41] later speeches focus on Iraq and Afghanistan.[42] More recently there has been an attempt to ally al-Qaeda to the Palestinian cause, as the broader Islamic world is sympathetic to this particular issue.[43] Bin Laden stated in January 2010 following the attempted bombing of a US flight to Detroit on Christmas day 2009, 'America will never dream of living in peace unless we live in it in Palestine. It is unfair that you enjoy a safe life while our brothers in Gaza suffer greatly.'[44] This is reflective of changes in the political climate and is an attempt to gain legitimacy and support.[45] This rhetoric may be, as David Axelrod suggests, 'the same hollow justifications for the mass slaughter of innocents that we've heard before'.[46] However, there is something of significance here. Al-Qaeda's rhetoric must change as world events change, as the ability to open up new markets for 'terror' is the key to its continued relevance.

The concept of Jihad is influenced beyond the Quran and Sunnah. It is equally a product of political factors over time. The tradition of Islamic jurisprudence, the concept and long tradition of the umma, the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire and more recent events such as the colonial experience, have all helped to shape the meaning of jihad. In the contemporary these issues have played a role in the shifting of the focus of jihad towards that of holy war by the Salafi Jihadist ideologues.[47] Abdullah Azzam, one of the leading Afghan Arabs and founder of the Office of Services, the organisation that preceded al-Qaeda, succinctly describes how the Salafi Jihadists understand the concept of jihad: 'Jihad and the rifle alone, no negotiations, no conferences, no dialogues.'[48] Azzam fled Palestine, as others such as Bin Laden fled the Middle East, not only to fight the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan, but to have the opportunity to train fighters for the future jihad. They fled the Middle East to make Hijra.

The Hijra is more than an event from Islamic antiquity. For the Salafi Jihadists it is an operational practice. Such great importance has been placed upon the Hijra of 622 CE that the Islamic calendar known as the Hijri begins not with the birth of the Prophet, or any other significant event of Islamic history, but rather in the year of the Hijra. This is the year of Muhammad's migration with his followers from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina).[49] In the summer of 622, around seventy of Muhammad's followers left Mecca for the city of Yathrib, 275 miles to the north. They were joined several months later, on September 24 of that year, by Muhammed himself and his closest associate Abu Bakr.[50] This migration

was deemed necessary by the believers to escape the corrupt condition of Arab society[51] which was, from the perspective of Muhammad and his followers, existing in a state of jahiliya.[52] Only after the Hijra could a 'true' Islamic community successfully be developed.[53]

Beyond serving as a physical exodus, the Hijra was also a spiritual one. It allowed the believers to escape their pre-existing tribal identities and replace them with an Islamic identity tied to the concept of a community, or the umma.[54] As Firestone notes, 'war and revenge could, therefore, be motivated more out of a sense of common identity through the brotherhood of believers, the super tribe of Islam'.[55] The effort that the tribes had previously afforded to kinship feuds were now given spirituality and externalised on to the non-believing other. This had the effect of enhancing the strength of the group, solidifying its internal sense of kinship and faith.[56]

Several ends were served by the Muslim community making the Hijra in 622.[57] First, it was a practical existential move for pure survival, necessitated by the hostility Muslims had met with in Mecca. It also allowed Muhammad to articulate Islam as not only a religious faith, but also political power in the form of a 'state' through the Constitution of Medina. Yet, of even greater significance, it forged an Islamic identity and incubated what Ibn Khaldun would later refer to as assabiya, group feeling in the corpus of one indivisible community of believers, the umma. This has substantial implications in regard to the contemporary al-Qaeda ideology.

Osama Bin Laden portrayed his followers as if they were re-enacting the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina.[58] Just as Muhammad had been forced to flee his native town of Mecca, so that he would be able to escape the moral and spiritual corruption of that society, so too were Bin Laden and his followers forced to flee the Arab world in search of a place of refuge to prepare to perform God's will.[59] Describing al-Qaeda's activities in this manner is an intentional allusion to the time of the Prophet.[60] It describes the battle against the infidel as something from Islamic antiquity. The act of pronouncing their own societies as jahili and fleeing to foreign lands, where they can work to establish a base to train and someday return and liberate their homeland, are more than just a tactical necessity. It is an appeal to Islam's glorious past to invoke support and garner legitimacy. Hijra, although a practical component of the al-Qaeda operational model, contains an important historical and spiritual context that makes the concept a defining element of the al-Qaeda ideology. Bin Laden observed, 'we left our country on jihad in the path of Allah, and it is for the sake of

Allah, praise and glory be upon Him, that we made this blessed Hijra to facilitate the institutionalisation of sharia'.[61]

The waging of jihad comes after the Hijra has been completed and the community has become sufficiently strong. This is a jihad to liberate the Muslim world, and eventually the world at large, from the condition of jahiliya, restoring God's sovereignty on Earth. The term jahiliya was first used by the Prophet to refer to pre-Islamic Arabia.[62] It is conceptualised as a condition of ignorance that the Arab peoples lived in prior to God's revelation to Muhammad. Though jahiliya in pre-medieval times was regarded as only a period in history and a vision of the nature of that period of history, it has since been resurrected to be understood, in the eyes of contemporary Salafi Jihadists, as the condition of modern Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This must be changed by bringing the world into line with God's will through the waging of jihad. It is a significant piece of the al-Qaeda ideology as it defines, though in a rather broad sense, what it is they seek to alter.

The Salafist thinkers argue that the return to the condition of jahiliya began shortly after the time of the Prophet and the succeeding Rightly Guided Caliphs (622–661). Sayid Qutb revived this concept working from the thinking of Ibn Taymiyya. In Taymiyya's mind it was the Mongol invaders who were jahili, for Qutb it was the West and the apostate regimes of the Middle East.[63] Qutb reinterpreted the concept of jahiliya to refer to the imperialist non-Muslim West and the tyrannical Middle Eastern secular regimes. In this, he was able to conceptually rework the traditional ideas of a world divided into two conflicting spheres, the Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam.

Salafist thinkers are heavily reliant on the past for meaning and guidance.[64] Al-Qaeda uses this imagery to give its narrative credence in the broader Islamic world by drawing on the historical jahiliya. In addition, it provides for the concept of the corrupt, godless, threatening other, which is to be challenged. Like other twentieth-century ideologies it provides the 'us and them' dynamic, painted in terms of 'good' and 'evil' in a righteous existential struggle.

7.2 Reformative Islamic thought

Al-Qaeda's principal ideological doctrine is not the product of a single historical event or the creation of a single individual. It is, rather, an evolutionary philosophical ascent dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century. It has been forged over the last century and a half by a number of prominent scholars and self-appointed religious experts to

not only be the founding doctrine for an international organisation with a broad range of political aims, but an ideology in and of itself. Further, it has become the umbrella under which numerous organisations and individuals sharing the beliefs of al-Qaeda gather.

As previously established, Salafism, jihad, the state of jahiliya and the Hijra, are the four key defining components of the al-Qaeda ideology. Each of these concepts, as well as serving the practical function of defining the objectives and modus operandi of al-Qaeda, serve another critical end. These themes often resonate well with the concept of history that some Muslims share, and are an attempt to demonstrate the legitimacy of al-Qaeda's philosophy by making clear allusions to the early Islamic period and tapping into the collective Muslim consciousness. Each of these has gone through a philosophical evolution as interpreted and reinterpreted by thinkers from al-Afghani in the nineteenth century up to the contemporary al-Qaeda ideologues such as al-Zawahiri, often drawing upon the medieval works of such thinkers as Taymiyya.

As a scholar of the Hanbali School of Islamic jurisprudence working in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Taymiyya lived in a time of intense external pressure on the Islamic world.[65] It was during an era in which the Mongol Dynasty threatened the existence of the Abbasid Caliphate. Taymiyya, as a traditional thinker, observed a strict methodological approach with the Quran and Sunnah as the only true sources of knowledge. His approach to Islamic scholarship and statecraft sought to draw guidance from the past and look at Islam in its most basic and elemental form.[66] Taymiyya introduced the concept of the new jahiliya,[67] positioned the importance of jihad as equal to the five pillars of Islam[68] and argued for the restoration of the caliphate in a new historical setting.[69] It was Taymiyya's refusal to accept the subordination of religion to politics and regard them as intrinsically linked that resonates with the contemporary Salafi Jihadists.[70] He placed the concept of jihad at the centre of Islamic practice,[71] as a duty to overthrow the forces of the new jahiliya which he understood as the return to the state of pre-Islamic ignorance.[72] Taymiyya's thoughts regarding jahiliya, apostasy, jihad and legitimate rule have re-emerged in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. His work was profoundly influential on contemporary Islamic political thinkers. He is a stoic icon and foundational contributor to Salafi Jihadist thinkers such as Salam Faraj, Sayid Qutb, Maulana Maududi and Ayman al-Zawahiri, whose works serve as the basis for what has become the al-Qaeda ideology.[73]

The path to al-Qaeda's ideology begins with Jamal al-din al-Afghani. His philosophy reopens the door for ijtihad, considered closed by the Ulema.

Ijtihad is necessary, he argues, to deal with the contemporary crisis of the decline in prosperity and power of the Islamic civilisation.[74] To his mind, it was the spiritual and moral decline of the umma that was to blame for this continued fall from prominence.[75] While travelling the Islamic realm calling for reform to defend against and drive away the West, he was simultaneously an admirer of Western rationalism, technology and scientific advances.[76] Islam and Western rationalism were not incompatible he asserted. It was possible to selectively incorporate Western concepts,[77] while seeking to reform the umma by looking through the Salafist lens back to the time of the Prophet for guidance and employing ijtihad to adapt these teachings to modern times. Al-Afghani's effort was to bridge the gap between the outright secular modernist and the traditionalist, to save the Islamic world from its relegated position as a civilisation which was no longer influential in the way it had previously been.[78] Al-Afghani's call for ijtihad was a dynamic departure from the teachings of the traditional religious elite, and represented a direct challenge to their ecumenical authority.[79]

Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida synthesised al-Afghani's work in the early twentieth century.[80] Abduh, like al-Afghani, was a modernist who advocated ijtihad, the Salafist method and an incorporation of Western rationalism.[81] His followers, however, would take his teachings in two divergent directions. Some would inspire the reformists and the neo-Islamists who would seek a middle path. However, on the opposite side of the paradigm was Rida who took Abduh's teachings in the direction that would eventually set the foundations for what would become the al-Qaeda ideology.[82] Rashid Rida continued to work with the Salafist model employed by al-Afghani, looking back to the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs for direction. However, he took al-Afghani's reasoning a radical step further, insisting that only an Islamic world completely absent of Western influences could escape the colonial noose and the condition of jahiliya.[83] Rida took his quest to Egypt and resurrected Taymiyya's concept of the new jahiliya, applying it to his own time. Using the Quran to legitimise his condemnation, the ruling secular authorities were deemed apostate in the same manner the Mongols had been in Taymiyya's time.[84]

Kemal Ataturk's decision to terminate the caliphate following the Ottoman collapse in 1924 and tend to the business of building a secular nation-state in Turkey had a profound influence on the rise of Salafi Jihadism. With the end of the caliphate came the end of the illusion of Islamic unity, and deeply damaged the prominent concept of the umma. Hassan al-Banna, unable to reconcile himself with the extinction of the

caliphate, established the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood) in 1928.[85] In 1926 Muslim leaders came to al-Azhar in Cairo to discuss re-establishing the institution of the caliphate in the absence of Turkish leadership. Incapable of finding a method by which to do so, they declared that without the institution of the caliphate Muslims could not live as Muslims properly should. Al-Banna was deeply angered by the decision of the Ulema. He additionally rejected the concept of a Muslim nation-state like that of Turkey.[86] The objective of the Muslim Brotherhood was to restore God's sovereignty promoting a government that operated 'on the basis of Muslim values and norms'.[87] The organisation's original motto sums up its position: 'God is our objective, the *Quran* is our constitution, the Prophet is our leader, struggle is our way, and death for the sake of Allah is the highest of our aspirations.'[88]

Al-Banna's position rejected the distinction between the lesser and greater jihad,[89] promoted the idea of the new jahiliya that manifested itself in the form of the secular apostate governments and championed ijtihad.[90] However, the Muslim Brotherhood was never able to construct a coherent model for taking power.[91] It would, however, continue to be a breeding ground for radical Islamic thought in the decades following its founding, producing one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century, Sayid Qutb.

Maulana Maududi, founder of Jamaat i-Islami, provided the link for the transition between Hassan al-Banna's vague methodological approach to establishing an Islamic state and the sophisticated ideology of Sayid Qutb. Employing the Salafist tradition he built upon the concept of the new jahiliya.[92] Maududi's new jahiliya, however, went somewhat further. He observed that Muslims had essentially overthrown God's sovereignty and imposed secular legal structures.[93] Islam, Maududi declared, 'is a revolutionary ideology'.[94] It is a religion that 'seeks to alter the social order of the entire world and rebuild it in conformity with its own tenets and ideals'.[95]

Sayid Qutb is arguably the most essential contributor to what is the al-Qaeda ideology. Qutb, who at one time admired the US, took a different approach after a brief period of living in the US in the service of the Egyptian government. He observed America and the West, in general, as decadent, sinful and corrupt.[96] Qutb returned to Egypt after his stay in the US and joined the Muslim Brotherhood, becoming a prominent intellectual filling the vacuum created by the death of Hassan al-Banna.[97] Qutb was able to fuse together the core elements of radical Islamic Salafi thought.[98] Using Maududi as the bridge he transformed al-Banna's simplistic and methodologically weak concept of escaping the jahili society

into a revolutionary call to arms.[99] Qutb purged Islamic discourse of its spiritual content and transformed a religion into a dogmatic social, economic and political blueprint.[100] Drawing upon his predecessors and the Salafi methodology he was able to extract the concepts of Hijra, jahiliya and jihad out of their simply spiritual context into core elements of a political ideology with a definitive goal.

As Qutb understood jahiliya it had no temporal or geographical distinction, but had existed universally within and without the Islamic world since not long after the time of Muhammad. It is an ubiquitous aspect of the human condition.[101] Qutb passionately argued to Muslims that 'everything around us is jahiliya, people's perceptions and beliefs, habits and customs, the sources of their culture, arts, literature and their laws and legislations. Much of what we think of as Islamic culture, Islamic sources or Islamic philosophy, is in fact jahiliya.'[102] More damning than Maududi's assessment, it is an infectious condition that had no temporal or physical boundaries. It was the usurpation of God's sovereignty which was to blame for this unenviable condition of modern humanity. Qutb's work represents a blueprint for revolution. In essence, Qutb believed that a revolution would bring into being a new reality that previously existed only in the minds of the revolutionaries.[103] It would manifest itself in the form of a new caliphate ruled not by human law, but by God's law.

Like many who are radicalised, Qutb experienced a profound moment of conversion. For him, however, it was less the result of political events (domestic or international), but rather it was based upon a moral objection to a particular culture and its perceived effects upon his own. What Qutb succeeds in doing is defining in the contemporary the character of the Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam relationship, most specifically by comparing the US and Egypt. In his discussions of his experiences in America he resembled more a Christian evangelist of the era than an Islamic militant. It was American obsession with materialism, individual freedoms and open sexuality which seems to have been most objectionable. He writes with disdain for example, 'the American girl is well acquainted with her body's seductive capacity, she knows seductiveness lies in the round breasts, the full buttocks, and in the shapely thighs, sleek legs and she shows all this and does not hide it'.[104]

Qutb provided the intellectual framework for modern Salafi Jihadist ideologues who wish to articulate their arguments regarding targeting the West not just in material, political and economic terms, but in such a manner as to construct such arguments within the language of resistance to oppression in cultural terms as well. It is not only the bombs, guns and economic power of the hegemon that oppresses the Islamic

world they can argue, but also its culture that leads its people astray by enabling the condition of jahiliya to remain. Much like the concept of the 'Great Satan', as popularised by Ayatollah Khomeini, the West and its values tempt pious Muslims away from righteous living. It is, however, argued here, that this is a tool to gain legitimacy and support, and is not in itself the primary cause of Salafi Jihadist grievances.

Muhammad abd al-Salam Faraj led the organisation Jamaat al-Jihad that, on 6 October 1981, assassinated Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat. Faraj was highly critical of the Muslim Brotherhood for attempting to work within the Egyptian political process for gradual change, rather than forcing change through the sword of jihad. Faraj, like Qutb, attempted to rob Islam of its spiritual facet and in this delegitimise the authority of the Ulema. Faraj argued that the Muslim leaders of the seventh and eighth centuries, who conquered the world from Spain to India, were not great Islamic scholars and that the elite of al-Azhar had not been able to spare Egypt the humiliation of capitulation with European colonial powers.[105] For Faraj there could be no compromise. It was his belief that killing the Pharaoh, as he referred to al-Sadat, would spark an Islamic revolution in Egypt.[106] The assassination of Anwar al-Sadat by Faraj's organisation changed the nature of the Islamist struggle. The ensuing crackdown which followed on Islamist organisations hindered operations in the region and forced jihadists like Azzam to look abroad for sanctuary. It is at this moment that the jihad began to evolve into a global rather than regional phenomenon.

Infamously known as the Godfather of Jihad, Dr Abdullah Yusuf Azzam helped to found the al-Qaeda network in the 1980s, originally known as the Maktab al-Khidamat (Office of Services) or Bayt al-Anser (House of Auxiliaries).[107] He summarises what al-Qaeda is to be: 'Every principle needs a vanguard to carry it forward and, while focusing its way into society, puts up with heavy tasks and enormous sacrifices. There is no ideology, neither earthly nor heavenly, that does not require a vanguard that gives everything it possesses in order to achieve victory for this ideology. It carries the flag all along the sheer endless and difficult path until it reaches its destination in the reality of life, since Allah has destined that it should make it and manifests itself. This vanguard constitutes al-Qaeda al-Sulhah for the expected society.'[108]

His legacy is that of transferring a struggle that had largely been limited to the Middle East into what would become a global political phenomenon with consequences for the security of the world at large. Azzam was neither a theorist nor a theologian. His goal was not to establish an Islamic state in Afghanistan but, rather, he saw the Soviet occupation as

an opportunity. It was, for him, the model of an Islamic resistance. It was here that a vanguard for the umma could be established.[109]

Azzam was originally associated with the Palestinian struggle. However, he observed that this had become increasingly nationalist losing its religious elements. Jihad was to be in the service of the umma as a whole, not just a specific territorial element of it.[110] With the Saudi Arabian and Pakistani elite eager to export domestic radicals and bolster their religious credentials, and the US sensing an opportunity to embarrass the Soviet Union, the fields of Afghanistan were fertile for the sowing of Salafi Jihadism. After Azzam died under mysterious circumstances in 1989, Bin Laden took control of the organisation. Azzam appeared to have lacked any clear vision of how to direct the organisation. Marrying Bin Laden's financial resources and vision for the Global Jihad with al-Zawahiri's theological respectability, the second version of al-Qaeda was formed.[111] Despite being the most notable contemporary Salafi Jihadist and having become the face of 'terrorism' itself, Bin Laden was a minor figure in the intellectual evolution of the Salafi Jihadist ideology. Rather, it is al-Zawahiri who is responsible for forging the al-Qaeda ideology. Azzam transformed a mixed group of jihadists, working with national movements, into a unified international force during the Soviet Afghan War.[112] It is, however, al-Zawahiri who crafted the ideology for this force.

Al-Zawahiri's *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*[113] is the al-Qaeda manifesto, outlining in great length and detail the organisation's objectives, strategies and ideology. Al-Zawahiri's theoretical approach is deeply rooted and, in many ways, mimics that of Sayid Qutb. The concepts of jihad, jahiliya, a basis in Salafist doctrine and a staunch defence of the physical Hijra, are all integral parts of al-Zawahiri's thinking. Al-Zawahiri's primary contribution to the al-Qaeda ideology is a method of drawing Islamist struggles away from their localised dimension. The discourse of many of these struggles is laden with Western concepts such as socialism and nationalism, the Palestinian struggle being a specific example. Al-Zawahiri takes these local struggles and places them firmly within the transnational concept, linking those local objectives to that of the objectives of the Global Jihad.[114] Nationalism, socialism and secular movements deviate from the path of true Islam. As such, jihadist movements must be liberated of such 'Western' notions of political resistance. All movements should be conceived of as a single struggle for the liberation of the umma, shunning particular nationalistic tendencies.

Disparate Islamist groups have long viewed their struggles in domestic terms and accommodated no interference by other organisations beyond moral support.[115] Al-Zawahiri would still appear to accommodate loyalties

to Egypt as Bin Laden did for Arabia, as their discourse would demonstrate. However, the willingness of al-Zawahiri to give up his leadership position in Egyptian Islamic Jihad to join al-Qaeda, and the ability to form an ideological argument to convince the reluctant leaderships of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and al-Qaeda to merge under one international banner, was the pivotal moment in bringing jihad to the global stage.[116] This synthesised the al-Qaeda ideology and was the beginnings of al-Qaeda as an ideology. Further, this ideology has been utilised to convince numerous Salafi Jihadist organisations to join al-Qaeda. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the al-Qaeda ideologues have reduced the grievances of Salafi Jihadists in general to the least common denominator. The objective is unity and religiously sanctioned leadership. The US and the international system must be challenged to alter the status quo so that these objectives can be achieved.

7.3 Al-Qaeda as ideology

Since the allied invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, which resulted in the fall of the Taliban regime, al-Qaeda has been in effect a stateless entity lacking the pre-invasion command and control of its operations which were possible under the protection of their Taliban hosts. The relationship of socio-religious movements like al-Qaeda to the nation-state, and therefore the public sphere, is somewhat ambivalent and does not fit neatly into the straitjacket of traditional political categories such as reformist, revolutionary, conservative or reactionary.[117] They seek to create a collective identity and interact within the public sphere without taking the form of a nation-state.[118] The al-Qaeda ideology has been described as conservative, millenarian, Wahhabi, Pan-Islamic, apocalyptic, conspiratorial, neo-fundamentalist and counter-hegemonic.[119] It is, however, best described as Salafi Jihadist, combining elements of what Giles Kepel refers to as 'respect for the sacred texts in their most literal form and an absolute commitment to jihad'.[120]

Al-Qaeda's narrative has found an audience across the Islamic world with those seeking coherent explanations for the plight of their co-religionists in areas characterised by conflict, poverty, struggle and tyranny.[121] The concepts of the state of jahiliya, jihad, the Hijra and a feeling of collective identity, what Ibn Khaldun termed assabiya manifested in the concept of the umma, are all present in the al-Qaeda doctrine. These themes take ancient traditions that people can easily recognise and transfer them into the modern in a way that many can readily identify. Ideology, be it of a national or religious connotation, claims to return to the past, but in reality is a modern creation borrowing from history for modern ends.[122]

Al-Qaeda's ends are political change, a rejection of the status quo and the implementation of a new order based on unity and religious legitimacy. How this is to be done and what form is it to take are not yet clearly described, but a restructuring of the status quo is the first step in the process. The al-Qaeda leadership see themselves and their followers as the vanguard of an international Islamic movement committed to ending Western interference in the Islamic world, the removal of Middle Eastern regimes and the implementation of a new order based on sharia, eventually uniting all sectors of the umma.[123]

Al-Qaeda's message is heard both within and without the Islamic world, particularly where the process of political dialogue is rigidly closed. What has resulted from this are disparate groups donning the al-Qaeda garb, accepting the basic tenets of the organisation's ideological and operational structure, ascribing to the Global Jihad and, in practice, often attempting to affect their own particular reality. In doing this they adopt the well-respected universally recognised name, al-Qaeda. This is not to imply that al-Qaeda no longer acts as an organisation; it is only to suggest it has also evolved into taking on the role of an ideology, with many willing to act in its name without its direct control. This is, in many ways, not dissimilar to the continued existence of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Western political movements such as neo-Nazi or revolutionary communist organisations, long after the termination of the host such as Hitler's fascist regime or the Soviet Union. However, in the case of al-Qaeda, it is not the end of the founding institution leaving remnants in the form of minor organisations that in some form resemble it in appearance and practice but, rather, an evolution in the nature of the transnational actor.

Linking the local to the global is at the centre of al-Qaeda's strategy for continued relevance. Al-Qaeda's networks, chain of command, hierarchy and links were formed in Afghanistan at the local level and then transformed to the baseless transnational dimension.[124] Local struggles acquire international linkages and the 'terrorist' ideology spreads from its base.[125] Local groups with local interests obtain links with al-Qaeda headquarters and act in its name. These units may be well-organised or they may be only a disordered group or, possibly,even individuals. It is similar in many ways to the franchising of a business; the patrimonial organisation defines the concepts or, in this case, the ideology and lends the use of its name.[126] In essence, then, there is no international 'terrorism', but rather groups that operate without references to a specific nation-state and do not recognise borders.[127]

The removal of the Taliban from power forced al-Qaeda to adapt it strategies and transform itself into a 'franchising' ideology. The

elimination of the Iraqi Ba'athist regime opened up a fresh market for al-Qaeda's operations. It is indeed as an ideology that al-Qaeda may be at its most lethal. It is a name that has credibility amongst dissidents as any attack in its name re-enforces its appearance of being omnipresent, capable of striking anywhere. Its strength is its adaptability and appeal to the politically disenfranchised. It is an elusive hydra that can take on any local form to attend to any local grievance while being shrouded in the ideological dogma of Salafi Jihadism. In its ideological form al-Qaeda needs no territorial headquarters or host nation-state, which only helps to elevate its concepts and allows its leadership to evolve to the status of myth and legend. Conflicts are increasingly being fought not in the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan, but in the realm of cyber space where the ideology of al-Qaeda will continue to live on and influence radicals long after Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri have gone.

7.4 Conclusion

Ideology has a central role to play in the politics of the Salafi Jihadists. By analysing the al-Qaeda ideology, first by defining it and examining its core tenets, then, charting its intellectual evolution from the medieval to the modern, and finally observing its transformation from simply a doctrine for an international 'terror' organisation into al-Qaeda as an ideology itself, it has been demonstrated that the al-Qaeda ideology is not simply a haphazardly constructed piece of propaganda. The al-Qaeda ideologues have drawn upon an historical lineage of respected Islamic thinking, evolving from the medieval thought of Ibn Taymiyya to the origins of the Salafist movement in the nineteenth century with Jamal al-din al-Afghani and, finally, into the contemporary.

The ability to connect the past to the future to legitimise its cause has been a prominent factor in spreading the Salafi Jihadist message and challenging the West in a conflict of ideas that is reflective of competing universalisms. Further, it has been demonstrated that after the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan following the allied invasion, the nature of al-Qaeda began to evolve from simply a 'terrorist' organisation into an ideology. Lacking a territory to make Hijra, al-Qaeda was faced with an existential struggle. It was during this time that al-Qaeda emerged as not just an institution with a founding doctrine but, in fact, an ideology under which disparate groups could gather.

Professing to al-Qaeda's key concepts and with an adherence to its larger objectives, local groups began to act in its name, aiding in building its mythical stature and giving it the image of having far-reaching

capabilities. This metamorphosis of al-Qaeda into an ideology will ensure that it will have implications for international politics for some time. Like the Western ideologies of Nazism and Marxism Leninism, it will remain a reality and continue to be employed by those ascribing to its tenets and seeking to change their local, national or indeed the international order, long after its founders and chief ideologues have passed. As an ideology it is a tool for those who ascribe to this vision of an idealised 'golden age' of Islam and an idealised Islamic community that can be brought into existence through the waging of the Global Jihad. It professes the need for unity and legitimacy, and outlines the challenges to this goal. It shows that, in the contemporary, the obstacles to unity and legitimacy are the structure of the international system and the hegemonic actor that helps to maintain the status quo. It has been demonstrated that an understanding of the al-Qaeda ideology, its historical evolution and its emergence as an ideology in and of itself, is an integral part of conceptualising Salafi Jihadism and its war with the US and the West.

8
Glocalisation: Al-Qaeda and its Constituents

The Global Jihad has evolved and expanded significantly since its humble beginnings in the early twentieth century. Born from grass-roots movements challenging Arab leaders at the infancy of state formation in the wake of the collapse of Ottoman authority, through the rise and fall of Pan-Arabism and Political Islam, it has evolved into a vast loosely connected global network in the post-9/11 period. The Global Jihad is a movement without a clear centralised authority, practised in various geographical locations often independent of any central command, each group tending to its own affairs under al-Qaeda's broad ideological banner. The organisation has endeavoured to harness the power of local jihads in the service of a Global Jihad, encouraging individual groups to act in step with its global agenda, offering support technical and material, as well as ideological credentials and name recognition. Each organisation under the al-Qaeda banner, while tending to its own local matters, proclaims allegiance to the ideology of the Global Jihad that al-Qaeda claims to be the vanguard of. Roland Robertson refers to the notion of 'Glocalisation',[1] whereby affiliated 'terror' organisations can be understood to act and think locally as well as globally. They treat local grievances and global concerns as intimately linked, so that local problems can be marshalled as recruiting tools and propaganda weapons in the interest of the Global Jihad and its objectives.

Al-Qaeda has evolved from its confines in Central Asia into a global phenomenon by not only attempting to guide the Global Jihad but also by adapting its own strategies in reference to the realities it cannot control. As with any political entity, be it dictatorial, democratic, theocratic or international, it must seek to reach its ends not only by marketing its vision for the path to success, but also by adapting its envisioned path, accordingly, with the realities and local viewpoints of its constituents.

Al-Qaeda has evolved into an organisation which embraces and supports its constituent players, who tend to their own local affairs while still aiding the Global Jihad, serving varying functions in diverse geographical locations. The constituents take on the al-Qaeda garb, or ally themselves to al-Qaeda, in support of the central institution's global vision.

This chapter is an investigation of al-Qaeda's constituents, those which it has co-opted into the larger jihad. While serving local interests these organisations can aid in altering the battlefield, eliminating the obstacle of the hegemon, allowing over time the removal of the linchpin of nation-states in the Middle East and throughout the Islamic realm. The vision of the al-Qaeda ideologues, that seeks to challenge the status quo of the international system, is easily adopted by Salafi Jihadist groups, as it is agreeable to both local and global objectives. Through employing constituent players al-Qaeda can challenge US interests globally to the benefit of its primary objectives. Though these local conflicts may not always be directly related to the Global Jihad, they are beneficial in draining US and allied material, morale, credibility and political will to assist in maintaining the global order that is built upon the structure of sovereign nation-states. Al-Qaeda has successfully reduced the differences between the central organisation and the constituents by seeking the common ground on which they can all agree: Islamic unity and legitimate governance are the solutions for all ills. The contemporary international system and the hegemonic power are obstacles to this and must be challenged.

Al-Qaeda's closest constituent organisations are its affiliates that have taken its name directly, such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and al-Qaeda in Iraq, as well as Egyptian Islamic Jihad which has largely been consumed within the central institution. There are also organisations that have maintained their own identity while still cooperating on the global and local stage, as well as organisations composed of smaller units or even individuals who are inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology. Finally, there are organisations which act as competitors but still maintain the objective of Islamic unity and legitimacy.

Relations between al-Qaeda central and its partners have not always been smooth, particularly in regard to its more powerful counterparts. It was al-Zawahiri's moulding of a cohesively palatable ideology that aided in building al-Qaeda's reputation and persuaded others to join the cause. The significance of this is less al-Qaeda's ability to co-opt previously long established players, but its ability to spawn smaller players globally that act in its name and under its ideology and method. This has ensured its

longevity, in that it is no longer absolutely dependent on an individual icon or a group of core lieutenants. The death of Bin laden in May 2011 may have been a notable moment in the conflict between the Salafi Jihadists and the West, in particular for the US, but it does not signal the end of Salafi Jihadism, whatever the blow to jihadist morale or advantages in intelligence gathering may be.

Several commentators, particularly in the Middle East, have suggested that this momentous event signals the beginning of the end of al-Qaeda. A Saudi political analyst insisted that the 'elimination of the leader of the terrorist al-Qaeda organisation is a step towards supporting international efforts aimed at combating terrorism, dismantling its cells and wiping out the deviant thought behind it'.[2] In Iraq, state minister Ali al-Debbagh suggested that 'the end of this man (Bin Laden) will put an end to many terrorist acts in the world and will have a direct impact in Iraq, as it will demoralise al-Qaeda members in Iraq'.[3] Haidar al-Mullah concurs, adding that 'this is extremely important for the security of Iraq, because killing the head of al-Qaeda will eventually lead to the disappearance of al-Qaeda's force in Iraq and in the region'.[4] However, as previously established, al-Qaeda is an ideology, a loose connection of global units both large and small brought together by a single goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate and instilling sharia. The death of one, though iconic, figure is unlikely to result in the end of al-Qaeda, much less the Salafi Jihadist ideology. The organisation has demonstrated repeatedly its potential to adapt and its constituent players provide a vital component of the strategy to ensure al-Qaeda remains significant.

Philippe Errera suggests in *Three Circles of Threat*[5] that there are three forms which international 'terrorists' take. The first is al-Qaeda, a non-hierarchical institution with a strong central ideology containing non-negotiable demands of its opponents. The second are organisations that share the ideology and assert similar goals of the reinstituted caliphate, but remain more concretely tied to local conflicts. The third group are those that seem to emerge and disappear following an attack, bandwagoning under the al-Qaeda ideological umbrella.[6] These organisations have entirely autonomous leaderships and make their own operational choices regarding targets and methods, possibly having no real connection to a legitimate al-Qaeda member. The following pages are an investigation into al-Qaeda's associates as well as its competitors to demonstrate a common thread among them, the desire to establish an Islamic transnational state and the obstacles that the status quo global order and US hegemony present to this objective.

8.1 Al-Qaeda's global affiliates

The origins of the Global Jihad can be found in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. However, the Salafi Jihadist ideologues' first concern has always been, geographically speaking, focused on the Middle East and the Arab world in particular, with Afghanistan serving as a suitable opportunity for a place in which to make the Hijra, fight the infidel and gain strength. The strategy of the Global Jihad has moved in an alternate direction than that first envisioned by the Salafi Jihadist founders, morphing into more of an ideology as opposed to a command and control operation. Political change in the Middle East, however, still serves as the primary focus of al-Qaeda central.

Al-Qaeda's most powerful branches are located in the Middle East and North Africa, representing a shift in its focus following the decentralisation the organisation suffered after the invasion of Afghanistan and the new opportunities that emerged following the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. Several distinct al-Qaedas have come into being in the region, evolving from other local groups taking the al-Qaeda name and pledging allegiance to its ideology. Of specific interest to this book are al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ). It is the organisations located in the Arab world that are of the greatest significance here, as they are representative of al-Qaeda's first objective of creating an Islamic state in the region to eventually rebuild the caliphate encompassing the geographic boundaries of early imperial Islam.

Abdel Droukdal the leader of AQIM declared in 2008, 'our general goals are the same goals of al-Qaeda the mother'.[7] This is reflective of AQIM's transformation from a local organisation, with aims of toppling the leadership in Algeria, into an organisation with intentions to act locally as well as regionally and globally. Previously the organisation was known as The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat; however, it was confirmed as an al-Qaeda branch group by al-Zawahiri in an interview on 11 September 2006. Al-Zawahiri welcomed the group to the al-Qaeda family proclaiming, 'the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat has joined the al-Qaeda organisation. May this be a bone in the throat of American and French Crusaders and their allies, and sow fear in the hearts of the French traitors and sons of apostates.'[8] Upon the capture of French hostages in September 2010 the group deferred to al-Qaeda central, insisting that discussions for the release of the hostages would have to be 'negotiated with Bin Laden himself'.[9] AQIM made clear its commitment

to the strategy of the Global Jihad even before joining al-Qaeda, having targeted Russian and US contractors operating in Algeria.[10] The merger was based in part on al-Qaeda central's desire to launch the movement westward. With Moroccan, Libyan and Tunisian organisations having been deprived of their local base, North African Salafi Jihadists were drawn to the organisation as a means of joining the Global Jihad. In this AQIM offers al-Qaeda a means to recruit in the Maghreb.[11]

Since the 2006 merger the rhetoric from AQIM has been increasingly global and anti-Western, calling for jihad against the US, France and Spain, though its external operations have largely been limited to the Sahel region of Africa.[12] AQIM's predecessor The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat was formed in Algeria during the 1990s in response to a military coup that prevented an Islamist party from winning elections in 1992.[13] Since that time the organisation has become increasingly active outside of Algeria, primarily in the West African Sahel. In 2007 the group was responsible for the killing of four French tourists. In 2008 they claimed responsibility for the assassination of twelve Mauritanian soldiers, as well as the kidnapping of a United Nations envoy to Niger.[14] These attacks have been followed by numerous incidents since that time. Its membership is composed primarily of Algerians, but also of nationals from countries throughout the region, including those from Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria and Benin.[15] Although AQIM remains a largely regional threat, it is wedded to the global agenda and attempts to demonstrate its commitment to the broader jihad through its rhetoric and targeting of Westerners. Its greatest value to al-Qaeda central, however, may be as a recruiting post and clearing house for jihadists seeking to move on to Iraq or elsewhere on the larger jihadist battlefield.[16]

AQAP is based on the edge of the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen. A more attractive option as a base of operations for al-Qaeda than Saudi Arabia, Yemen is significantly more rural, isolated geographically from its neighbours, and contains an economically disenfranchised population with a central government that is viewed with suspicion. Despite President Ali Abdullah Saleh leaving office in February 2012 and increased US drone strikes on AQAP targets, the country remains fragile. Yemeni authorities have a limited ability to act unilaterally against internal threats. Additionally, the country suffers from decreasing oil revenues, population explosion, limited access to water and decreasing government revenues to counter its socio-economic concerns.[17] In this sense it has a great deal in common with al-Qaeda's original geographic location along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The present version of AQAP is an offshoot of a previously established al-Qaeda organisation based in Yemen, which was effectively destroyed by an intense counter 'terrorism' campaign by the Saudi security forces from 2003–2007. The Saudi initiative forced many of the organisation's members to flee to Yemen to avoid capture or execution. These refugee jihadists, however, laid the foundations for a re-emergence of al-Qaeda's presence on the Arabian Peninsula. On 24 January 2009 al-Qaeda's Saudi Arabian and Yemeni leaders merged to form AQAP, proclaiming their unity and allegiance to al-Qaeda central.[18] Overall, the organisation has demonstrated four distinct objectives: attack the US homeland, attack US and Western interests in Yemen, destabilise the government of Yemen and assassinate members of the Saudi royal family.[19] These actions are taken in the interest of its goals of vacating the Arabian Peninsula of non-Muslims and establishing a local Islamist emirate en route to the establishment of a global Islamic caliphate.[20] As the prominent AQAP leader Sayid al-Shehri asserted, 'we will tread their path until we establish the Islamic state, the prophetic caliphate, until we establish the laws of Allah, or until our blood mixes with theirs'.[21] Al-Awlaki confirmed the group's objective of creating an Islamic state, 'we seek to apply the rule of the Quran and make the word of Allah supreme over all other, and God willing we will strive to achieve these goals with all that we possess and we fight to the last man against whoever stands in our way'.[22] The group has been responsible for several 'terror' incidents both within and outside of the Middle East. In 2009 the organisation attempted to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Prince Muhammad bin Nayef, the head of Saudi Arabia's anti-'terror' unit, as well as killing four South Korean tourists in Yemen. The group has claimed responsibility for the attempt to detonate a bomb on a US flight to Detroit and plans to send package-explosives to locations within the US by means of air freight.

Although AQAP appears primarily interested in targeting the Yemeni government, it has demonstrated the capability and desire to target the US directly.[23] Al-Awlaki was representative of this trend. Born in New Mexico in the US, he was arrested in 2007 in Yemen for possible connections to the events of 9/11, and it was after his release that he began to openly advocate jihad against the US.[24] He is believed to have influenced Faisal Shahzad who failed to detonate a car bomb in Times Square, New York in 2010.[25] Additionally, he was connected with Umar Farouk Abdul Mutallab who attempted to ignite explosive chemicals aboard a US commercial flight in December of 2009.[26]

AQAP is representative of the hybrid nature of al-Qaeda itself, acting both locally and globally. This is a clear demonstration of the concept of

glocalisation. The far enemy/near enemy debate, as carried on between al-Qaeda central and its constituents, now appears to be blurred into a strategy that privileges both as opposed to one, necessarily, over the other. Rather, they choose to strike wherever and whenever opportunities are presented. The organisation is largely an entirely hybrid actor.[27] AQAP is believed to be relatively small in numbers, however, its significance may lie less in its strike capabilities and more in its utility as a voice for the Salafi Jihadist ideology.[28] The organisation is responsible for an English language magazine *Inspire* which contains stories regarding the individual experiences of jihadists, ideological discourse, perspectives on current events, dialogue with al-Qaeda leaders and instructions and advice for joining the Global Jihad, as well as contacts for contributing to the publication. What is clearly demonstrated in these publications is al-Qaeda's attempt to employ different ideas, myths and traditions to gain support by linking local issues to the central theme and objectives of the organisation.[29]

A feature article in *Inspire* attributed to al-Zawahiri demonstrates this hybrid mentality, describing the short- and long-term plans for the Global Jihad. Al-Zawahiri observes, 'the short term plan consists of targeting the Crusader Jewish interests, as everyone who attacks the umma must pay the price in our country and theirs, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Somalia and everywhere we are able to strike their interests'.[30] The long-term plan he describes in two parts, the first is to 'work to change these corrupt and corruptive regimes'. The second is 'to hurry to the fields of jihad for two reasons; the first is to defeat the enemies of the umma and repel the Zionist Crusade, and the second is for jihadi preparation and training to prepare for the next stage of jihad'.[31] He concludes by tying al-Qaeda's discourse on unity and religious legitimacy to an issue that resonates throughout the Muslim, particularly Arab, world. He observes that 'we must awaken in the hearts of the umma the spirit of resistance and jihad; confrontation of aggression, oppression and tyranny; firmness on truth and rejection of the culture of concession and methodology of backtracking which has led some to abandon the government of sharia and concede four fifths of Palestine'.[32] AQAP is serving as a significant media tool for spreading the Salafi Jihadist message to the world, as well as providing a base in Arabia from which to attack the al-Saud regime.

AQI, like al-Qaeda itself and a number of its constituents, is the product of the ambitions of more than one organisation that have merged under a single banner. Al-Qaeda was originally formed by Bin Laden, Abu Ubaidah al-Bahshiri and Abu Hafs, but in essence became an alliance

between Bin Laden's organisation and the Egyptian al-Zawahiri and his supporters. AQI as well was formed from a coalition of Salafi Jihadists, gathering members from Ansar al-Islam, Jaish Ansal al-Sunnah and al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad, in the wake of the US led invasion that removed Saddam Hussein's regime.[33] Al-Qaeda central and its constituents have not always shared the same strategic vision, as is demonstrated by the often strained relationship between the al-Qaeda ideologues and al-Qaeda in Iraq as led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi until 7 June 2006. Al-Zarqawi and al-Qaeda based their visions of jihad on differing conceptualisations of the 'enemy's centre of gravity'.[34] Ultimately, this resulted in disagreements between the two organisations on the manner in which the jihad in Iraq should be conducted.[35] They did, however, share a single long-term goal, the establishment of the caliphate as a single transnational Islamic state.[36] As al-Zawahiri observes in a letter to al-Zarqawi in 2005, 'if our intended goal in this age is the establishment of a caliphate in the manner of the Prophet and if we expect to establish a state predominantly according to how it appears to us in the heart of the Islamic world, then your efforts and sacrifices, God permitting, are a large step directly towards that goal'.[37]

Differences pertaining to methods of operation, however, were made less significant by the presence of the US forces in Iraq. As Fishman observes, 'al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda in Iraq held differing visions of jihad while working together'.[38] The case of AQI demonstrates al-Qaeda's willingness to cooperate with groups who differ in strategy and the prioritisation of particular short-term objectives to work for a grander long-term objective. This also demonstrates the value and appeal the al-Qaeda name has to Islamic militant groups that may prefer a strategy which differs from that which al-Qaeda dictates. Yet, they are willing to swear allegiance to the larger institution for the benefit of name recognition, recruiting, finance and support. These marriages of convenience are possible because of a single aim of Islamic unity and religiously legitimised governance, which the international system and the US are obstacles to. The US is positioned as a major obstacle to the broader objective of the Salafi Jihadists, but as well is an obstacle to the local objectives of constituent groups that stem from the same problem, a hegemon guaranteeing the existence of the status quo.

AQI is of particular interest because of its importance to the al-Qaeda cause. Iraq, located in the heart of the Middle East, as the former capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, is an important opportunity for al-Qaeda in its quest to establish an Islamic state in both strategic and propaganda terms. The union of these organisations demonstrates the larger appeal by

militant groups to al-Qaeda's goal and the problem that the contemporary international system represents. The organisation remains wedded to the al-Qaeda network and its ideological leader al-Zawahiri, even following the death of Bin Laden. In a statement released following the raid on Bin Laden's compound in Pakistan, an AQI spokesman declared the groups' allegiance to the al-Qaeda cause and confirmed its support for al-Zawahiri as the heir apparent. The spokesman observed, 'to our brothers in al-Qaeda, first among them Sheik Ayman al-Zawahiri and his brothers in the leadership of the organisation, may God reward you and grant you patience for this loss'.[39] AQI was severely weakened following US and Sunni efforts to challenge it in what is referred to as the Tribal Awakening. However, since the US withdrawal in 2011 the organisation has been resurgent, expanding operations into Syria. AQI served as an example of the possibilities that the strategy of cooption and a glocalisation has for al-Qaeda. However, after AQI rebranded itself as The Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS), refused orders to leave Syria and defer to the al-Qaeda group Jabhat al-Nusra, it was disassociated from al-Qaeda central in February 2014.

Egyptian Islamic Jihad was formed in the 1970s and was responsible for the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat in 1981, which was a landmark moment in the evolution of jihad into a global phenomenon. Originally the organisation was concerned with establishing an Islamic government in Egypt; however, in 1998 it began to coordinate its activities with al-Qaeda, formally merging in June 2001.[40] The group has been linked to a number of attacks in and outside of Egypt including the1993 assassination of Egyptian officials, the bombing of the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, the assassination attempt of Hosni Mubarak in Ethiopia in 1995, and the attempted bombing of the US Embassy in Albania in 1998.[41] Significantly, in regard to its role in the Global Jihad, EIJ has been linked to the 1998 US Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.[42]

Al-Zawahiri, a former member of EIJ, was brought into the al-Qaeda leadership's inner circle along with Muhammad Attef in an effort to combine the efforts of the two groups. EIJ began to receive significant funding from al-Qaeda following the 1998 fatwa issued by al-Qaeda detailing the group's grievances and forewarning of strikes against the US. According to a declassified document issued by the Australian Parliament, EIJ has both a domestic and international wing. The report notes that, 'The EIJ exists as two factions, the international and the domestic. The international faction, led by al-Qaeda deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri is largely subsumed within al-Qaeda and has the same goals

as that group. Terrorist activities by the EIJ international faction are likely credited to al-Qaeda rather than the EIJ. The domestic faction is mostly inactive due to successful, sustained actions by Egyptian authorities. The EIJ aims overthrow of the Egyptian Government and the establishment of an Islamic state. More broadly, the international branch has adopted the global jihadist goals of al-Qaeda.'[43] This is again evidence of the continued trend towards glocalisation and demonstrates the overall drive towards the creation of a transnational Islamic order that would serve to unify the Islamic world and provide legitimate governance. It also evidences al-Qaeda's willingness to employ both local and global strategies to achieve its aims.

8.2 Al-Qaeda's friends and allies

Al-Qaeda has numerous allies, both larger established organisations and smaller groups. They operate globally, yet are most active in Asia and Africa. Lashkar e-Taiba was responsible for the 2008 attack in Mumbai which killed 173 people. Jeemah Islamia, active in Southeast Asia and Indonesia, carried out the attack in Bali that resulted in 202 deaths. Boko Haram has carried out attacks in Nigeria. This is certainly not an exhaustive list. The number of established groups and self-proclaimed jihadists is constantly in flux. What they have in common, and what is of the greatest significance, is a desire to wage jihad locally and, where possible, serve as partners to al-Qaeda in its global mission in what has been referred to as glocalisation.

A prominent example of this glocalisation trend is the East African organisation al-Shabaab. In a 2008 video al-Shabaab in Somalia pledged its allegiance to al-Qaeda and the al-Qaeda ideology. Al-Zawahiri later praised the organisation's efforts. He observed, 'with Allah's help they (al-Shabaab) won't lay down their weapons until the state of Islam is set up, and they will perform jihad against the American made government in the same way they performed jihad against the Ethiopians and prior to them the warlords'.[44] In confirmation of this loyalty pledge to al-Qaeda central, al-Shabaab released a statement in 2010 claiming that they and al-Qaeda have agreed 'to connect the horn of Africa jihad to the one led by al-Qaeda and its leader Sheikh Osama Bin Laden'.[45]

Where the Somali organisation appears largely to direct its efforts within Somalia, it is still a potential constituent player in the Global Jihad. A US State Department Country Report states that 'al-Shabaab's leadership was supportive of al-Qaeda'.[46] Further, in regards to implications in the Global Jihad and threats to the West, Dennis Blair notes that

'we judge most al-Shabaab and East Africa based al-Qaeda members will remain focused on regional objectives in the near term. Nevertheless, East Africa based al-Qaeda leaders or al-Shabaab may elect to redirect to the homeland of some Westerners including North Americans now training and fighting in Somalia.'[47]

In July of 2010 al-Shabaab announced the launching of its own television news channel claiming that its purpose is 'to teach, to inform, and to incite'.[48] The rhetoric which is being produced has a distinct internationalist tone. The narrator of the video referred to the peacekeeping mission in Somalia as an 'American led Western cause', language that would likely appeal more to Global Jihadists than to Somalis themselves. In an attempt to dissuade Western political leaders from getting more involved in the region the narrator warns,

> And just like the Americans and the Ethiopians whose bodies have been dragged in the streets of Mogadishu, the charred bodies of your (Ugandan and Burundian) soldiers have now received a well deserved treatment, putting an end to the bright optimism that drove them here in the first place. The blackened bodies of your sons now serve as a spectacle to thousands of cheerful Muslims. Becoming aware of the mujahedeen's resolve to annihilate their soldiers one after the other, the disgraced African Crusaders began pleading for dialogue.[49]

Since al-Shabaab first began releasing statements in 2007, the focus of its rhetoric has changed from a local to a more global focus. In 2008 they stated their desire to establish 'the Islamic khilaafah from East to West after removing the occupier and killing the apostates'.[50] By 2009 this rhetoric shifted entirely from a strictly nationalist agenda to a global narrative. As Cody Curran observes, 'By early 2009 the group had successfully changed its narrative from that of a nationalistic struggle to one firmly grounded in broader Islamist principles, namely the establishment of sharia and the pursuit of a global caliphate. Over the course of 2009 and in 2010 waging Global Jihad moved to the forefront of al-Shabaab's stated goals.'[51]

This shift in focus is not uncommon for Salafi Jihadist organisations and would appear to be representative of a trend, particularly in North and sub-Saharan Africa. Al-Qaeda's allies have traditionally focused less on jihad as a global project and more on domestic concerns. However, al-Qaeda has successfully co-opted weaker organisations into the Global Jihad by crafting the message that change in a single nation-state will be ineffective and, at least in the Islamic world, it is precisely nation-states

which are problematic. Al-Qaeda has ideologically and operationally moved away from the near enemy/far enemy debate and employed a glocalised strategy. In creating a near/far consensus that has appeal throughout the world of Islamic militancy al-Qaeda is further trying to position itself as the vanguard of the Salafi Jihadist cause.

8.3 Global competitors: Same goal, different methods

It is important to note that al-Qaeda is not without competitors – organisations that differ in operational strategy and method, while still advocating the same goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate. Although al-Qaeda is the premier jihadist player, it would be presumptuous to maintain that al-Qaeda has achieved absolute dominance as the only ideological representative of the Salafist Islamist movement. Indeed, as Gerges notes, 'conventional wisdom has it that al-Qaeda's Global Jihad ideology is representative of all jihads, which is false; it represents a branch of a highly diverse and complex movement, one that has undergone dramatic shifts from localism to globalism and now appears to target internal and external enemies alike'.[52] What binds them together, however, is an agreed upon grand objective, the establishment of an Islamic political order.

Al-Qaeda has campaigned to be the vanguard of the Salafi Jihadist movement, having successfully marketed itself as a brand name and an ideology. Nevertheless, it is not the sole voice of those who advocate the caliphate with a global organisational presence. Hizb ut-Tahrir and Takfir wal Hijra are notable organisations that challenge al-Qaeda's claim to be the dominant actor which speaks for the Muslim umma and the struggle for its unification under a single leadership. Hizb ut-Tahrir claims to pursue non-violent means of achieving these objectives, where Takfir wal Hijra has adopted an approach that sacrifices strict Islamic teachings on conduct, providing this is in aid of the greater cause. These are not the only organisations that challenge al-Qaeda; they are, however, prominent. Despite the potential for cooperation and the cross-fertilisation of jihadist ideology, they occupy different distinct positions on the jihadist political map.

Takfir wal Hijra was founded by Shukri Mustapha, a disciple of Sayid Qutb in Egypt in the 1960s, as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood with the explicit aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate.[53] As the organisation's name indicates, Hijra is an integral part of its method of operation during a period of weakness. Mustapha observed, 'If the Jews or anyone else came, our movement ought not to fight in the ranks of the

Egyptian army, but on the contrary ought to flee to a secure position. In general, our line is to flee before the external and internal enemy alike, and not to resist him.'[54]

This method was emulated by the Mujahedeen and the Afghan Arabs who retreated from the regimes of the Middle East to wage jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan during the 1980s. Al-Zawahiri synthesised the ideas of Mustapha and Muhammad abd al-Faraj to create the al-Qaeda doctrine on Hijra, which is the paradigm supported by most Salafi Jihadists in the contemporary era. Takfir wal Hijra adherents have no moral objection to conforming to Western cultural norms to remain undetected. The violation of strict Islamic codes of behaviour such as the eating of pork or consumption of alcohol can be disregarded in the name of blending in and achieving the organisation's objectives.

Takfir wal Hijra has no central command structure and could be more effectively understood in ideological terms. Though it is suspected that it has connections with al-Qaeda, most notably with Takfir wal Hijra operatives, having provided support for the 11 March 2004 bombings in Madrid, it remains an independent institution.[55] Primarily, al-Qaeda and Takfir wal Hijra differ on which targets to prioritise. Though some that eventually joined al-Qaeda such as al-Zawahiri, as noted in his work *The Road to Jerusalem Passes Through Cairo*,[56] were firmly committed to the Takfiri practice of targeting the near enemy first (Arab Regimes), al-Qaeda's shift in the 1990s to privilege the far enemy (the West and Israel) created tensions between the two groups.[57] With the new trend towards a glocalised strategy the potential for further cooperation may increase.

Hizb ut-Tahrir claims to be a non-violent organisation, deferring violent jihad at least until a more suitable time. The group was founded in 1952 by Taqiuddin an-Nabhani with the explicit goal of rebuilding the lost caliphate. A map of the Hizb world vision indicates this caliphate would stretch through the Middle East and North Africa across Central Asia, Pakistan, India and into South East Asia and Indonesia, as well as encompassing parts of Spain and the Balkans.[58] The ideology and method set out by Nabhani in *The Islamic State*[59] and *The Economic System of Islam*[60] is rather comprehensive and specific, giving detailed plans of exactly what an Islamic state would be and how it would be governed. It gives consideration to economics and politics as well as social issues.

Where certain ideological similarities with al-Qaeda are obvious in the Hizb doctrine, and the desire to work for the transnational Islamic state is evident, the Hizb leadership claims to operate within established political structures and to act non-violently to achieve its aims. This would appear to be in contrast with al-Qaeda's doctrine summed up in the words of

Azzam, 'jihad and the rifle alone; no negotiations, no conferences, and no dialogues'.[61] However, Zeyno Baran notes, as other critics have, that Hizb ut-Tahrir acts as a 'conveyor belt' for those who eventually 'graduate' to al-Qaeda.[62] Individuals are often radicalised by Hizb ut-Tahrir's comprehensive ideology but seek to move beyond the parameters the institution has set to work within the legal political process. Frustration with the stagnant political process can be a catalyst for motivating individuals to join the Global Jihad and act violently in pursuit of its objectives, deeming politics as a Western 'kufar' undertaking that has no place in the Salafi Jihadist practice.

Ed Husain, a former member of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain, observes that 'Nabhani had designed a highly centralised state, controlling almost every area of life from the centre. He had detailed the role of the army, the function of the citizen, the purpose of the education system, the running of the economy, the minutiae relating to the life of the caliph.'[63] While al-Qaeda's ideologues have reached deep into Islamic history to justify the Global Jihad in the creation of an ideology, Nabhani was equally concerned with statecraft and the building of a functioning bureaucracy of the caliphate using the work of a thirteenth century Muslim scholar al-Mawaridi, who himself had detailed the political organisation for the Abbasid Empire.[64] Though Nabhani passed his work off as original, it was in fact adopted from al-Mawaridi, whose concepts could be traced back through the Umayyad system to that of the Byzantine and Persian systems. For Hussein this demonstrates that that there was no 'original Islamic political system'.[65] This could help to explain the reluctance of the al-Qaeda ideologues to deal with practical issues of social and economic organisation. Doing so could be understood to undermine the legitimacy they endeavour to create by appealing to strictly Salafi Islamic resources bypassing the holders of traditional religious authority, the Ulema.

In addition to this is the matter of strategy. Hizb ut-Tahrir advocates the targeting of the near enemy (Muslim rulers) as primary, as opposed to al-Qaeda's glocalised strategy. They argue that before the current state-based order can be replaced with an Islamic order, the rulers of Islamic lands must be replaced. Targeting the US directly is inefficient. However, the removal of these regimes in the Islamic world first will more readily facilitate the change they advocate and prepare the way for an Islamic state.[66] What this aims to highlight is that there are in fact competing Islamist narratives with competing methods and ideologies vying for space in the public discourse on how to achieve a renewed caliphate. Al-Qaeda is but one of these voices, it is, however, a powerful

well recognised one. Even so, differing ideological approaches and methods do not detract from the notion that there is a singular objective for which the Global Jihad is waged, the building of an Islamic political order based on unity and religious legitimacy.

8.4 The freelance jihadists

The evolution of al-Qaeda, and the changing nature of technology, has, to some extent, freed al-Qaeda from the need to be an organisation with a direct command and control apparatus. The cyber jihad has meant al-Qaeda's message is easily transmitted to individuals, in almost any geographical location, who don't necessarily speak Arabic and who may be of any socio-economic background. In effect, anyone can now be a jihadist without the need to travel to remote parts of the world to receive training and indoctrination. In the early days of the Afghanistan jihad in the 1980s this was not the case. In *Join the Caravan* by Abdullah Azzam, a key figure in the formation of al-Qaeda, are listed contact phone numbers and a mailing address at Peshawar University in Pakistan to aid aspiring jihadists attempting to join jihad.[67] Intelligence and security issues evidently prevent this from being a possibility in the present, but neither is it necessary. A cursory glance of the Salafi Jihadist literature, widely available on the Internet, gives clear advice on how to wage jihad at the individual level without the need to have direct contact with a legitimate member of the al-Qaeda organisation. Inspired jihadists are largely targeted outside of the Muslim world, communicating in English and appealing to technologically savvy individuals. In AQAP's English language journal *Inspire* appears an article entitled *How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom*.[68] This gives the reader instructions on making crude explosive devices using easily accessible materials.

This kind of marketing gives the Global Jihad an infinite pool of potential recruits. The third level of the Global Jihad, the individual, ensures that anyone can be al-Qaeda, anyone can be a jihadist. It allows al-Qaeda to achieve a mythical status as it can claim to be responsible for any individual action without actually having had direct communication with the individuals involved. Al-Qaeda's most dangerous legacy may be that its potential to inspire and cause damage is becoming exponentially greater even though its material and operational capabilities are diminishing. As Benjamin Davis notes, 'more than guns, bombs, or missiles, the internet is the most important tactical tool for terrorist groups today'.[69] Spectacular events like 9/11 may be increasingly difficult to coordinate and ultimately carry out, but access to

Salafi Jihadist material makes smaller, though lethal, operations of increasing significance. Operations at this level are more difficult to detect and prevent from coming to action.

8.5 Conclusion

Al-Qaeda has numerous affiliates and allies from several institutions globally; however, it is also connected loosely or directly to smaller groups of Salafi Jihadists and to individuals acting in its name. Within the confines of this book it would be impossible to give a detailed summary of all of al-Qaeda's believed constituents, or to give an account of the numerous Salafi Jihadist writers who have flooded the Internet and Islamists' book stores claiming al-Qaeda credentials and aspiring to its ambitions. The US Department of State lists 47 foreign 'terror' organisations.[70] The UK Home Office proscribes 46 international organisations under the Terrorism Act of 2000.[71] A complete observation of each organisation and the unquantifiable number of individual aspirants and smaller organisations would not be possible within the confines of this book. It is, however, possible to demonstrate that among the major players, al-Qaeda's affiliates, allies, competitors and those it inspires, there is agreement in regard to the end goal, the creation of an Islamic caliphate. The contemporary international system is an obstacle to this ultimate realisation, and the US and its allies, as actors that seek to maintain the status quo, put themselves at odds with the Salafi Jihadist mission.

Though this book has given substantial attention to al-Qaeda the organisation and al-Qaeda the ideology, it is broadly concerned with Salafi Jihadism in general. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate common themes amongst not just al-Qaeda and its closest constituents, but as well those groups and individuals to which it is allied, inspired and even those with which it is in competition, those who may share its objectives but disagree on strategy and theological matters. The search for Muslim unity and religiously legitimised governance, however, is what binds these organisations together.

Al-Qaeda has continued to evolve, particularly since the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. This evolution is not only necessary for its survival because of existential threats posed to it by those who seek its destruction, but is as well a necessary tactic to market itself as the vanguard of the Global Jihad, gain recruits and position itself as the defining ideological centre of the Salafi Jihadist movement. Just as any organisation is forced to evolve to achieve its ends, garner support and effectively market its ideas, al-Qaeda is doing the same. By locating the base

shared principles among militant organisations of significant strength or weaker institutions and as well individuals, it can wed its strategy to local and individual grievances while putting aside less significant issues in the path of achieving its ends. Unification of the Islamic world and its legitimate governance is the most basic tie that binds Salafi Jihadists. The contemporary international system and the nation-state concept of sovereignty that characterises it, are problematic. US hegemony must be disrupted to achieve the aims of Salafi Jihadists. By earning the support of constituents and successfully marketing its ideology, al-Qaeda can make the jihad a global enterprise and challenge the hegemon's ability and willingness to continue its active support of the status quo.

9
The International System and Salafi Jihadist Resistance

The Salafi Jihadist concept of political order stands in stark contrast to the concepts that define the contemporary international system. The idea that the Islamic community is divided among varying sovereign states and not governed by their ideological understanding of sharia, is deeply problematic. More pressing to the central question that this book addresses is how this system is maintained, such that by its very character it prevents unity and legitimacy of the Salafi Jihadist variety. In part, as it has been argued in the preceding chapters, it is hegemonic power and increasingly other great and emerging powers that help to maintain the status quo order. This chapter investigates how this order emerged and observes how it presents significant obstacles to the Salafi Jihadists' project that forces jihadists to develop international strategies to counter the international order.

Prior to the nineteenth century hegemonic power was dispersed, emerging from multiple competing centres. The structure of the international system was contested, with numerous actors seeking to exert influence over portions of it. Empires of varying sizes and material capabilities grew and contracted, challenging each other over geographical space and resources. Sovereignty was often flexible and borders porous. No international system as it is presently understood existed. There had yet to be developed a largely agreed upon idea of what the character of international should be. British imperialism, prior to, and American hegemony after World War Two, contributed to the making of an international order. This order more acutely defines and enforces the sovereignty of states than had been the case in previous eras. Equally, it permitted the emergence of a powerful hegemonic actor capable of underwriting the system and inviting others to participate in its management. All of which provide obstacles to the Salafi Jihadists' objectives.

This has had the effect of taking the conflict over unity and legitimate governance out of the Islamic sphere and into the world at large, as the locus of power has shifted to a more central position.

The modern international system is the result of a long historical process understood as developing in the seventeenth century with the creation of nation-states in Europe. However, it is only recently that the system of sovereign states has been consolidated in such an unambiguous fashion. It was only at the end of the Cold War that sovereignty emerged in practice as well as theory. In this contemporary order there is an apprehension of the violation of state sovereignty regardless of its character. It was only at this time that formal empires ceased to exist, creating a state system that was absent of imperial organisation which had begun to break down in the twentieth century. The US as a powerful hegemonic actor is instrumental in aiding the existence of the contemporary world order. Salafi Jihadism can be understood to be seeking to achieve an alternative world order based on its ideological understanding of Islam. These influential non-state actors clearly play a powerful role in international politics. They resist the state and the international system in general. Salafi Jihadists by their rhetoric and action demonstrate the primacy of the state and the international system along with US power as an obstacle to the Salafi Jihadist enterprise. Since the failure of Pan-Arabism to unify the Middle East in the twentieth century, there has been no credible discourse or assertion for unity in the Arab/Islamic world. Additionally, since the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, there has been no effective leadership qualified through religious legitimacy. The current international system is characterised, in part, by nation-state sovereignty and US hegemony. It is argued that this presents significant obstacles to Muslim unity and religiously sanctioned governance.

The current impasse between the US, its allies and Salafi Jihadism, has less to do with values, globalisation, Israel-Palestine, economic disenfranchisement, despotism or a particular foreign policy. Without taking an apologist position, that ignores the realities of these issues and the severe impact they have on the region, the rise of Salafi Jihadism is better understood as related to the realities of the international system that the US aids in maintaining. The contemporary order impedes long-standing attempts at Islamic, particularly Arab, unity and efforts to establish God's sovereignty in a manner that is more profound than in previous historical settings. There has been a long-standing search for unity in the Islamic, particularly Arab, world and a quest for legitimacy expressed in religious terms. Al-Qaeda has inherited the mantle of this drive and has effectively created an ideology for taking power and achieving this

through violent means. As was previously asserted, there are alternate Islamic concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy and indeed international politics, that do not necessarily correspond to Western IR approaches. Thus, the Jihadist concept of order differs from that of the contemporary Western understanding, and al-Qaeda's vision of order is derived from Islamic concepts of the international, sovereignty, statehood and legitimacy.

Salafi Jihadism cannot be understood in the same manner as the various movements which challenge the neo-liberal world order. It is derived from long historical trends and deep ideological roots based on divine concepts of extra-rational agency that cannot be said to be the case for contemporary movements that challenge the status quo. The US maintains a powerful hegemonic position that aids in keeping the international system, characterised by nation-state sovereignty, in place. This is a major obstacle to a project which seeks Muslim unity and religiously legitimised governance. These Islamic notions of order have a broad church of followers with varying origins and local grievances, but al-Qaeda has successfully reduced their differences to the lowest common denominator: (1) A unified Islamic community ruled by religiously sanctioned governance is the solution to all grievances, and (2) The US and the international system are major obstacles to that realisation. It would be irrelevant which hegemonic power is currently helping to keep the status quo in place. Whoever maintains the system is a possible target for Salafi Jihadist aggression. China, Russia and the European countries as powerful states have come under attack by Salafi Jihadists, yet, none has been the subject of the degree of ire and pride of place in the Salafi Jihadist rhetoric as has the US. The result of 9/11 has been a strengthened resolve of the US, in contrast to the Salafi Jihadist strategy, to preserve the status quo of existing states and the international order.[1] Indeed, the creation of an Islamist international has created a need for greater cooperation between powerful states in opposing a movement that threatens the current order. In this, it is evident that Salafi Jihadists will inevitably target any state that aids in maintaining the current order.

9.1 Constructing world order: From the World Wars and Cold War to the new world order and 9/11

The present international order is a result of two order building projects. The first, the creation of a nation-state system and the associated principles of sovereignty and legitimacy. The second, the construction of a liberal world order by the US and UK.[2] Building upon the liberal

principles established through the power of the British Empire, the US has aided in building an international order characterised by state sovereignty, and it is American power, both soft and hard, that has been essential in maintaining the existing status quo.[3] The nation-state system that was created in Europe has since encompassed the globe and self-determination along with mutual recognition of sovereignty among states has enforced the primacy of the state itself.[4] Despite the occasional violation of the norms of state sovereignty, the state remains the most agreed upon component of international order.[5] In the post-colonial period the state has been the compulsory model for independence and this has helped to shape the contemporary international system.[6]

However, what best characterises the US is the concept of an informal empire where the dominant power limits self-determination and forces states to act within the principles of the emerging world order.[7] The US in this context is a hegemon. It is recognised that hegemony may be defined by different qualities in various historical settings and that each case is unique. In the contemporary era this hegemony is characterised by a liberal world order and part of this order is the division of the world into nation-states. This order limits the freedom of action of both states and non-state actors. Salafi Jihadists who seek to establish an idealised unified Islamic state find the US, as a key provider of the status quo, to be an obstacle to this objective. The post-World War Two order is a consolidation of the nation-state system that has been organised under US dominance. It is this dominance or, as it is understood here, hegemony of the US in this period that has increasingly insisted on the maintenance of the status quo system of nation-states.

The US has sought to support and maintain the liberal world order since World War Two and is still engaged, if not more so since 9/11, in ensuring the continued existence of this system.[8] Following the World War Two, international order was provided by the cooperative efforts of the victorious powers, whereby they attempted to supervise and police the world.[9] However, the onset of the Cold War quickly changed the nature of international politics, dividing the world into two ideologically opposed camps, the capitalist West and the Communist East, and as well the non-aligned world. During this time the US proclaimed itself to be the 'leader of the free world' and a 'shining city on the hill' that inspired those to democracy and freedom. Beyond this politicised terminology, however, that attempted to provide a good versus evil discourse, the US was a hegemonic power that sought to counter the Soviet Union and communism, in general, aggressively with its own ideology that promoted a democratic liberal international order.

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in a dramatic unexpected shift in international politics. The bipolar structure that had been the defining feature of world politics for nearly half a century was swiftly reduced to a structure where the US emerged as the sole remaining superpower. Nye asked, 'if the old order has collapsed what will be the new distribution of power?'[10] For realist theorists of IR, two main ideas developed following the Cold War in response to this question. The first, that the US would withdraw from international engagement as its foreign policy makers could no longer demonstrate clear reasons for expending blood and treasure to act as a global securitising force.[11] The opposing view insisted that the ability of the US to influence world politics would be dramatically increased and that the international order would witness a unipolar moment where the US could act unrestrained in the absence of a balancing power. The unipolar moment was short lived. The US would still act, in the post-Cold War period, as a securitising force. However, the growth of other powers would require it to play the role of a leading actor within the system that invites other powers to play within the rules and aid in supporting the international order.

For some in the Middle East the demise of the Soviet Union represented the tragic loss of a powerful patron that could not be replaced by another state.[12] For others, however, it was a great victory over a powerful non-believer actor, which was a crucial moment in the long historical struggle between the Muslim believers led by the various caliphs and the non-believers led by imperial forces.[13] The end of the Cold War had significant effects on the evolving nature of the Global Jihad. First, inspiring the Mujahedeen Myth, and second, leaving the US as the lone superpower. A superpower that could effectively project its power globally, and more importantly unchallenged, in its efforts to preserve the liberal international order.

The Mujahedeen Myth suggests that a band of poorly equipped but determined fighters aided by God had expelled the powerful Soviet Union from occupied Afghanistan, and this had resulted in the ultimate demise of the Soviet Empire. The Soviet Union was viewed to be the stronger of the two superpowers in terms of fighting capabilities and political will for a protracted war. Therefore, if the Mujahedeen had defeated and ultimately caused the destruction of the Soviet Union, it followed logically that the defeat of the US could be achieved as well.[14] Bin Laden observed, 'Russia was the head of the Communist bloc. With the disintegration of Russia, Communism withered away in Eastern Europe. Similarly, if the United States is beheaded the Arab Kingdoms

will wither away. Americans are afraid of death. They are like mice. If Russia can be destroyed the United States can also be beheaded.'[15]

During the 1990s the Salafi Jihadist strategy began to shift. Groups prior to this had been largely nationally bound as opposed to international in their outlook, with specific grievances that could conceivably be negotiated.[16] Evidently, there were numerous instances of international 'terrorism' prior to the end of the Cold War, however, they were directed for the most part towards their immediate targets and had yet to establish a global strategy. Following the Soviet collapse, international Islamic 'terrorism' began to emerge as a significant global force. The change in the organisation of the international system shifted the strategic orientation of the Global Jihad. There were no longer two superpowers to play against each other. As previously mentioned, the situation in Afghanistan is significant, not just in the promotion of a myth but equally in geostrategic and material terms. Nearly a decade of fighting in Afghanistan created a network of trained and ideologically indoctrinated Salafi Jihadists who were now free to be redeployed elsewhere. The objectives of the Salafi Jihadists to build a formidable fighting force through the Hijra had been achieved.

The modern Middle East has been subject to four distinct eras in contemporary history.[17] The first era was that of the Ottomans ending after World War One and the collapse of the caliphate in 1924.[18] The second era was a period of colonisation with British and French management of the region, coming to an end after World War Two and the relinquishing of colonial control.[19] The third era was defined by the Cold War and Arab nationalism, ending abruptly with the collapse of the Soviet Union.[20] The fourth contemporary era is defined as the period of American influence and hegemony.[21] Salafi Jihadism which began to develop during the first era, in a response to increasing encounters with European powers, has changed the focus of its aggression in each of these stages. During the colonial period the message from the Salafists observed European powers as the obstacles to unity and religiously sanctioned governing. During the early part of the Cold War Salafi Jihadists focused more intently on the internal leadership of the states of the Middle East. Nasserism and the Pan-Arab discourse succeeded in limiting this aggression as it provided a concept of unity, though not legitimised through religious means. With the passing of Pan-Arabism Salafi Jihadism arose as a militant force employing the old anti-colonial discourse, not only in opposition to the superpowers, but against the indigenous leadership as well. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and continued failed efforts to remove the secular leaders of the Middle East,

Salafi Jihadism has followed with the times, attacking the guardians of the contemporary order that prevents both unification and the realisation of God's sovereignty.

9.2 Resisting world order

Much of the academic discourse regarding hegemony and resistance to the dominant hegemonic power is rooted in the study of political economy. Hegemonic stability theorists regard the US as maintaining a liberal economic world order based on largely agreed upon norms of economic practice and sovereignty.[22] A structure that is unappealing and exploitative to some, particularly in Global South. It is conceivable to become deeply engaged in the economic and critical aspects of the conflict between Salafi Jihadism and the US by suggesting that the major opposition to US hegemony, as presented by the Salafi Jihadists, is a resistance to unequal economic practices and the cultural and materialistic aspects that accompany the liberal international world order. This deprives the Islamic world of its spiritual compass and serves as a tool of oppression by the hegemonic power. These assertions cannot be entirely dismissed. Cultural imperialism and economic hardship exist around the various parts of the world but have not produced the unique response that characterises the Salafi Jihadist resistance to the international system and its hegemonic benefactor.

Salafi Jihadists object to the cultural contamination of the Islamic world and the economic practices that follow the liberal world order, but the resistance is less to a particular order that is described here as liberal, but rather, to any order that does not conform to their ideological understanding of Islam and prevents the emergence of such an Islamic order. Communism, as was clearly demonstrated in the origins of the Global Jihad in Afghanistan, was not acceptable as an alternative paradigm of international order. This is not just in reference to its economic principles, but more simply because the model did not fit with Salafi Jihadist prescriptions of order.

Theorists of International Political Economy (IPE) have done a great deal to advance research on counter-hegemonic movements that resist the liberal international order on the basis of unequal economic practices, and challenge the hegemonic power and the international order that it maintains. Along with this, the 'Mcdonaldisation' of non-Western countries and cultural imperialism are argued to disrupt societies and generate alienation from and corruption of indigenous cultural norms. These arguments are not without merit. However, Salafi Jihadism must

be conceptualised through a different lens than the other prevailing counter-hegemonic movements.

System-challenging groups reject the legitimacy of the international system and act to replace the sovereignty based system with an alternative organising principle.[23] Violent non-state actors challenge the international system primarily by rejecting the rules on which the international system is founded and those institutions that are active in maintaining order, which manifests as a rejection of the state as the premier political unit of the system.[24] Therefore, 'al-Qaeda poses a challenge to the sovereignty of specific states but it also challenges the international society as a whole'.[25] Steve Smith argues that the events of 9/11 demonstrated that states are no longer the key actors in international relations.[26] Though it is agreed that al-Qaeda is 'a very different kind of organisation to the state both in identity and structure', and that this structure is the 'antithesis of the hierarchical modern state',[27] it is still maintained that the state is the key actor in international relations.

Al-Qaeda is a powerful non-state actor, but its actions indicate quite the opposite of Smith's assertions. Al-Qaeda challenges the state overtly through an aggressive militant process, not ambiguously and organically in the way the processes of globalisation and transnational corporations and institutions do. The state is an obstacle to Salafi Jihadist objectives and they have spent significant energy attempting to subvert the integrity of the states in the Islamic world. It would, therefore, appear that even in the minds of the Salafi Jihadists the state is the key actor in international politics. It is not disputed that there are numerous varieties of powerful actors in the international system and the sovereignty of the state is increasingly challenged. They have not yet, however, superseded the state in terms of relevance.

The international system, characterised by nation-states, a hegemonic actor and great powers that help to preserve it, is a significant obstacle to the Salafi Jihadist project based on Muslim unity and religiously sanctioned governance. The entrenchment of this system prevents the construction of an Islamic order. Further to this, China, Russia, India, Brazil, Japan, the European Union and other great and emerging powers may struggle over the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a leading state within the system, but they do not seek to overturn the existing order.[28] They do not seek to change the rules of the game but, rather, labour to obtain more authority and leadership within it.[29] There have at times emerged ambitious rulers who pursue change outside of the established parameters; however, they often face a coalition of powers who prefer to maintain the status quo.[30] Similarly, Salafi Jihadists who

seek to challenge the status quo will face actors who are willing to work together in the interest of maintaining the international system.

Salafi Jihadists have evidently rejected the international order and asserted this resistance in religious terms, in search of a political agenda to change the existing order. It is resistance that in another historical or societal context could be expressed in secular terms.[31] The task of this book has been to demonstrate that Salafi Jihadist resistance is both unique and common. It is based on a desire to obtain power and unity by dismantling the nation-state system in the Middle East. However, it is unique in that it is the manifestation of Islamic history and ideology with particular concepts of order that the liberal international order cannot, as Ikenberry suggested, 'reconcile' with.[32]

9.3 Post-hegemonic challenges to world order

Since the 1980s scholars of IR have been debating American decline and its fading influence as a global power. This argument has yet to reach any consensus, with some scholars arguing that it is less that America is in decline but, rather, that others are on the ascent, and that the unipolar moment immediately following the Cold War and the demise of the bipolar system will result in a number of emerging great powers to rival the US.[33] Whether or not the US is in decline and in danger of losing its hegemonic position remains unresolved in the scholarship of IR and, in particular, IPE. However, what is without dispute is the growth of China and others such as Brazil and India, as well as the significance of Europe, Japan and South Korea. However, it is the position of the US as a dominant hegemonic actor and its influence globally, particularly in maintaining the status quo of the international system, that has resulted in the conflict with Salafi Jihadism. Further, this is less to do with anything specifically American, be it values or policy. It would, therefore, seem evident that if other powerful states began to spread their influence internationally and aid in maintaining the status quo, particularly in the Arab/Islamic world, then they too would come into conflict with Salafi Jihadism and find themselves as targets in al-Qaeda's broader global agenda.

Al Qaeda's affiliates have attacked the citizens of numerous countries who are visiting or working in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), citing reasons related to their country's assistance to the US in prosecuting its 'War on Terror' or their personal acts of aiding governments in the Islamic world they contend are illegitimate. In 2003, 41 people were killed in a series of attacks on Belgian, Spanish and Jewish sites in Casablanca.[34] In March of 2009 four South Korean tourists were killed

during an attack in Yemen.[35] Thirty-eight workers at a gas plant were killed during a hostage crisis in Algeria in January of 2013.[36] These are but a few of the many examples. Killing individuals within the MENA region speaks largely of opportunity than a particular stance towards a state. In the case of countries that would appear to be on the Islamic periphery with limited engagement with the politics of the region, but influential in the maintenance of the international system, the case of Japan and China provide insight.

Japan is not an emerging power and has since World War Two been a powerful economic actor in the international system. Japan had largely maintained a distance from the Islamic world and though it has, at least in theory, supported the 'War on Terror', its active participation has been cautious. Nevertheless, in 2010 Japan suffered its first attack by al-Qaeda affiliate the Brigades of Abdullah which detonated an explosive device on the hull of the M Star supertanker in the straits of Hormuz.[37] A statement released by the organisation noted that the attacks were designed to 'weaken the international blasphemous system that plundered the wealth of the Muslims'.[38] This would appear to be an obvious reference to Japan's role as a leading economic power. Prior to this, in 2003 after the invasion of Iraq, Japan came into the gaze of al-Qaeda. An operative named Abu Mohammed al-Ablaj issued a statement to the London based magazine al-Majallah: 'Our strikes will reach the heart of Tokyo. If they want to destroy their economic power and be trampled under the feet of the combatants of Allah, let them come to Iraq.'[39] Affiliation with the US, interference in the Islamic world and playing a leading role in the economic layer of the international order evidently have potential consequences.

The case of China is even more pressing. Not least significantly because not only is China an emerging power but it also has its own Muslim population. China is a rising star among great powers. However, China has historically been grouped with the downtrodden of the developing world that has suffered under Western Imperialism. Its role, however, is changing. China has maintained a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of other states for over 60 years. Yet, subnational and transnational threats along with China's increased interests abroad will undoubtedly challenge this policy of non-intervention, which is grounded substantially in a concept of world order that privileges state sovereignty.[40] With China's economic interests having grown exponentially on a global scale, significant Chinese economic investment has been made in Pakistan and Afghanistan, making the stability of those states critical to Chinese interests.[41] China has as well developed an interest in maintaining the

status quo order including support for regimes that Salafi Jihadists view as apostate. As China becomes increasingly engaged outside of its own borders, it is likely that the Salafi Jihadists will be forced to focus on Chinese foreign interests in much the way the US has been targeted.[42]

Bin Laden in a 1998 interview expressed the al-Qaeda position on China, which would appear to conceptualise China, like the Islamic world, as oppressed by the Western powers. Equally, however, he expressed a veiled warning: 'I often here about Chinese Muslims but since we have no direct connection with people in China and no member of our organisation comes from China, I don't have any detailed knowledge about them. The Chinese government is not fully aware of the US and Israel. These two countries also want to usurp the resources of China. So I would suggest the Chinese government be careful of the US and the West.'[43]

China would appear peripheral to the Global Jihad and indeed the broader Muslim world, with the exception of the Muslim minority in the northwest province of Xinjiang known to its Muslim inhabitants as East Turkestan. Al-Qaeda has traditionally refrained from targeting China, possibly as a strategic matter of not wishing to incur the wrath of another significant power. In parallel, China has endeavoured to pre-empt any attempt by al-Qaeda to direct the Global Jihad against Chinese interests by refraining from rhetorical confrontation with the Salafi Jihadists.

In 2006 a video entitled *Jihad in Eastern Turkestan* appeared on a UK based Islamic website with Uighur militants displaying weapons making threats to attack the enemy (China). The video expressed clear sympathies with al-Qaeda, containing images of the 9/11 attacks, demonstrating that these militants are drawing inspiration from al-Qaeda.[44] In 2008 the Turkistan Islamic Party announced its intentions to carry out jihad in China, and since has been responsible for the production of an online magazine similar to *Inspire* as produced by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. This Turkestan publication is written in Arabic which is not spoken in the region. This appears to be a tactic for the purpose of soliciting support from jihadist benefactors and positioning Xinjiang as a part of the Global Jihad.[45]

On July 5, 2009 riots erupted in the Xinjiang city of Urumqi between Muslims and ethnic Han Chinese, resulting in the deaths of 184 people.[46] The riots were followed by a crackdown from Chinese authorities to restore security. From the Salafi Jihadist perspective this was viewed as the brutal oppression of Muslim people. A Chinese official, however, attempted to ease the concerns of Muslims stating, 'measures that the

Chinese government takes to stop riots do not target any specific ethnic population but the violent crimes that aim to split China and mar the ethnic relationships. We hope Muslim compatriots will understand the truth.'[47]

During the same month the al-Qaeda affiliated group al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb expressed solidarity with the Chinese Muslims threatening to kill 50,000 Chinese workers in Algeria. Later, in October of 2009, al-Qaeda spokesmen Abu Yahya al-Libi condemned Chinese actions and invited the Muslims of Xinjiang to join the Global Jihad: 'There is no way to remove injustice and oppression without a true return to their religion and serious preparation for jihad in the path of God the almighty and carry weapons in the face of those Chinese invaders. It is the duty for Muslims to stand by their wounded and oppressed brothers in East Turkestan and support them with all they can.'[48]

Al-Libi, in a video entitled *East Turkestan the Forgotten Wound*, laid out the specific grievances al-Qaeda has with China in relation to Xinjiang: (1) Trying to dissolve Islamic identity in East Turkestan just as Europe did in Andalusia and the Jews are doing in Palestine; (2) Colonising Xinjiang with Han Chinese and aiding them with jobs, land and money; (3) Limiting the growth of Muslim populations with abortions and taxation; (4) Robbing the Muslims of natural resources; (5) The killing of 200,000 Muslims; (6) Separating Muslim women from their families by exporting them to work in factories in the east causing them to lose ties with their family and culture and turn to atheism or kill themselves.[49] The situation in China additionally caught the attention of al-Qaeda central with al-Zawahiri associating China with the traditional powers and linking it to the Global Jihad as a status quo maintenance actor. Al-Zawahiri stated: 'Respect for the principles of the United Nations basically means ruling by other than sharia and also means recognition of Israel's control of Palestine and Russia's control of Chechnya and indeed all of the Muslim Caucasus, and it means recognition of Spain's control over Ceuta and Melilla and China's control over East Turkestan, because all these states are members of the UN whose charter calls for respecting the unity and integrity of those territories.'[50] From this it can be observed that China is increasingly attracting attention from al-Qaeda and potentially could be observed as a target, as it behaves as other great powers which help to maintain the status quo.

Despite receiving limited attention, due to the killing of Bin Laden in Pakistan by US forces, the Turkistan Islamic Party released another video in May of 2011 entitled *Letter to the Chinese People*, expressing similar

grievances to those espoused by al-Libi.[51] This would seem to be a case of standard method of operation for al-Qaeda and its associates, linking a local plight to the Global Jihad, in what is referred to as 'glocalisaion'. Where al-Qaeda has been historically reluctant to engage with China, emerging realities of international politics will undoubtedly cause al-Qaeda to readjust its strategy. As China becomes more global and its interests spread, it too will become a target of al-Qaeda as it aids in maintaining the status quo.

Though the Xinjiang movement and an attack on a Japanese oil tanker at present cannot be compared to al-Qaeda's operations against the US and its allies, it demonstrates that any actor who plays a leading role in the international system, regardless of direct engagement with the core of the Islamic world, is a potential target. Not because it has offended the Salafi Jihadists directly but because they potentially stand, along with the US, Europe and to a lesser extent Russia, as obstacles to their objectives. It is not necessarily the values or the policies expressed by states that lead them into conflict with the jihadists, it is as much the role they play in the international system.

9.4 Conclusion

Two concepts of sovereignty have come to be contested in the twenty-first century, which has affected many around the world and has come to alter international relations. The first is the international order characterised by the sovereignty of individual states. Although the US and, to a lesser extent, other great and emerging powers assist in keeping this system in place, the notion of sovereignty and order that has increasingly been consolidated since World War Two has been the general consensus of the governing powers around the world. This system based on the early European model is not the result of a single grand event. Rather, it has evolved through the wars of religion in Europe, colonisation and decolonisation, the fall of empires, the World Wars, the Cold War and the post-Cold War period. This slow moving process has come to engulf the world at large.

In competition with this system is another notion of sovereignty rooted in the Islamic tradition. Salafi Jihadists envision an order based on the days of early Islam where the community of believers was unified in a single political entity and governed by a religiously sanctioned ruler.

The international system as it stands prevents the realisation of this Salafi Jihadist order. Its very nature ensures that there can be no unification of the Islamic, particularly Arab, world on which to impose an

Islamic political order based on Salafi Jihadist understandings of God's Sovereignty and Islamic practices.

Although there have been many assertions as to why Salafi Jihadism is in conflict with the US, an investigation of the contemporary world order and looking to historical and emerging orders detract from the notion that what Salafi Jihadists object to is anything that is particularly American, apart from its unprecedented power and a willingness to maintain the existing international order. Numerous factors undoubtedly have had an effect on the rise of Salafi Jihadism and its continued existence. It is not debated that Israel, modernity, US culture and foreign policy, and the process of globalisation serve as valuable tools in recruiting Salafi Jihadist foot soldiers. However, when the question is observed as a whole, rather than in specific geographical or temporal spaces, the Global Jihad can be understood at the systemic level.

Islamic concepts of the international, sovereignty, statehood and legitimacy vary. However, the Salafi Jihadist concept is in large part incompatible with the existing order. The Islamic concepts of the international that al-Qaeda have employed in the construction of its ideology do not conform to existing orthodox concepts of the international and the existing world order. Whatever the features of the current order in social, economic, cultural or material terms, the premier variable which prevents an Islamic order is the division of the Islamic world into nation-state units and the willingness of the hegemon, along with other powers, to maintain this system. As long as this is the case, unity and legitimate sovereignty, as prescribed by the Salafi Jihadist understanding, is impossible to establish.

At the present time the US remains the premier hegemonic power in the international system despite the prophecies of its decline. This has ensured that it has pride of place in the Salafi Jihadist war. Its power, willingness to assert it both in material and ideational terms and the willingness of great and secondary powers to operate within the confines of the system it underwrites, makes it a necessary target. However necessary US power may be to the maintenance of the international system, on its own the US is not necessarily the key variable over time. Hegemonic powers have preceded it and they will quite possibly follow it. It is, then, a combination of factors in a given context of time. The US is the leading hegemonic actor at a time when the international system is more consolidated than it has historically been, more agreed upon than it has been and, therefore, more capable of restricting the freedom of action of those who envision an alternative order. It is not exclusively about US policies or values but, rather, its particular position, and

willingness to play a role in a time period where the international system is defined as it is. In short, whoever maintains this order is engaged in the task of preventing the emergence of a transnational Islamic state, whether this is by design or simply as a side effect of the nature of international order. The US is at a crossroads in history where long-standing Islamic ideas regarding unity and legitimacy intersect with a system that the US aids in maintaining. This has stopped the long running process from continuing. If in the future other great powers become more substantially invested in maintaining the status quo, they will also find themselves in the position of encountering Salafi Jihadist resistance. It is not the character of the actor that is in question, but rather the position that actor, and increasingly actors, maintains that brings it into conflict with Salafi Jihadism.

Conclusions

The events of 11 September 2001 revealed the vulnerability of the US to non-traditional security threats. Islamic political violence had permeated the borders of the US previously, however, not in such an unprecedented manner. More pressing to international politics, it demonstrated that the Salafi Jihadist project could not be conceived of as contained within the Islamic world and its periphery. The historical debate regarding Islamic unity and religiously sanctioned governance entered the global stage as the international system in the post-World War Two period became increasingly consolidated, serving to further hamper the realisation of the Salafi Jihadist's objectives. The conflict is now directed globally, as the hegemonic powers that underwrite the international order are as problematic as the holders of power in the Islamic world. The events of 9/11 did not force the US to retreat from the world, abandon its Middle Eastern allies or cripple its financial institutions. It did not inspire Muslims to unite against the hegemonic power. The event was, however, paradigm altering, ushering in the War on Terror and reorganising the structure of international relations. The invasion disrupted al-Qaeda's command and control capabilities transforming it from a central organisation with a defined hierarchy into a phenomenon that can also be understood in ideological terms. The al-Qaeda ideologues attempt to present themselves as the vanguard of the global movement with connections of varying strength to jihadist groups around the world. They appeal to other like-minded individuals and groups to wed their local grievances to the Global Jihad in pursuit of unity and religiously sanctioned governance for all Muslims.

This book is centrally about causation: Why is there a Global Jihad? Why did the jihadists target the US? This book is not a prescription for challenging the Salafi Jihadists strategically or ideologically. It is, however,

a resource for those who do and those who take interest in these matters. The literature on the Global Jihad is exhaustive. Journalists, scholars, analysts and practitioners have produced a quantity of information that leaves Salafi Jihadism as a subject for debate. The evolutionary character of the Global Jihad further complicates the matter. Added to this, it is not only those who observe the Global Jihad abstractly and attempt to conceptualise it, but as well the Salafi Jihadists themselves and the political elite in the West and the Islamic world who have further muddied the scholastic waters. It has become, to an extent, a dialogue between the Salafi Jihadists and those who oppose it. Ideas like the Clash of Civilizations thesis, a product of Western academic scholarship, become a self-fulfilling prophecy, giving the Salafi Jihadists a language to explain their perceptions of events in a manner the West can understand. As the Global Jihad has grown increasingly global, winning converts and adversaries in areas that would not be considered Islamic or Arabic speaking, the scholarship continues to expand. This book aims to bring some clarity to the matter by looking at the problem in a holistic manner.

It is impossible to account with any degree of certainty as to why any given individual joins ranks with the Salafi Jihadists and becomes involved in the Global Jihad. Economic disenfranchisement, the effects of the processes of modernity and globalisation, sympathy for the plight of co-religionists who suffer politically and materially, disenchantment with the Israeli state, international policies and practices of the West, the perception of Western culture; all of these have a role to play and cannot be discounted in an investigation at the individual level. However, none of these explanations gives much insight into the larger problem, which requires a systemic investigation. Why any given individual joins a cause is often of little value in understanding the causation of events. It is historical trends, systemic pressures and viewing the international system holistically that can offer the most persuasive perspectives in understanding why Salafi Jihadism has come into conflict with the US.

The Global Jihad exists at a point in time. It has not always existed and will likely dissolve or be subject to a metamorphosis in the future. However, investigating historical trends and the structure of the current international system has something to offer in understanding why the current situation exists. This book has argued that the current international order is, in part, maintained by a willing hegemonic actor. The contemporary order, characterised by the sovereignty of nation-states, is disruptive to certain Islamic concepts of order grounded in Islamic

theology and alternative concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy and unity. The idea that Salafi Jihadists seek an Islamic state governed by their understanding of Islam is noted in the broader literature on the subject. This is often, however, taken as something that can only be related to the contemporary era and contemporary issues, absent from the context of history and ideology. The Salafi Jihadists do, however, speak of other concerns beyond the Islamic state that are of contemporary origin, and their list of grievances and issues has increased significantly since Bin Laden's fatwa in 1998. Jihadist ideologues focus increasingly on Palestine, Iraq and the Arab revolutions. Before his death, Bin Laden even offered his position on climate change and environmental security.[1] However, the premier objective is that the foundation of Jihadism is Muslim unity and religiously sanctioned leadership. The US and the international system must be challenged to alter the status quo so that these objectives can be achieved.

The end of the Ottoman Empire in 1924, resulting in the division of the Middle East into nation-states, was a convulsive moment for the Islamic world. The rapid move to divide the lands of the Middle East into nation-states still proves to be an issue that leaves unresolved concerns. For over 1300 years, prior to Kemal Ataturk's decision to disband the Ottoman caliphate in 1924, unification of the region under a single political and religious authority remained at least a distant possibility. The failure of Pan-Arabism and political Islam to come to terms with the crisis left a vacuum in the discourse on unity that has been increasingly filled by the Salafi Jihadists. Problematically, within the region itself, the states of the Middle East have largely resigned to the status quo, choosing to tend to the business of statecraft. Equally problematic, the structure of the international system has developed since the Ottoman collapse in such a way that nation-state sovereignty is the preferred model of political organisation. The US has increasingly grown to hegemonic status following World War Two and helps to maintain this kind of order. Jihad was largely waged within the Islamic world until the end of the twentieth century, aimed at toppling the ruling regimes, most notably in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Failing to disrupt the status quo, jihad was engineered into a global enterprise.

The Arab states have managed for several decades to fend off the Salafi Jihadists' challenge, forcing the Salafi Jihadists to take a global approach aimed at weakening the system itself by attacking the country they perceive as the chief benefactor of the international order. Increasingly, jihadists may move beyond the obsession with the US, as other actors intervene to ensure the maintenance of the status quo. The Global Jihad at

the most basic level is a dispute over order, with concepts of legitimacy, sovereignty and statehood that differ sharply from the contemporary structure. This kind of struggle is not new, and these kinds of discussions have been ongoing in the Islamic world for centuries. The development of a truly international system in the twentieth century, and its maintenance by a hegemonic actor with unprecedented power, along with other great powers that are willing to work within it, has brought these conflicts out of the Islamic world into the world at large.

Chapter 1 detailed the most widespread assertions regarding the origins of the Global Jihad, noting that these do indeed warrant merit but failed to engage with the subject in a holistic context. These discourses are often fashioned so as to suggest that the elimination of a specific variable such as economic disparity, foreign policies or processes of cultural and social alienation will have detrimental outcomes for not only jihadist capabilities to obtain recruits, inspire action and wind hearts and minds, but will eliminate the validity of the jihadist project in its entirety. This view, however, presents a narrow picture of the objectives and ideological orientation of the Global Jihad. Without dismissing such concerns as irrelevant, as they do have a substantial impact on people that may provide pathways to formulating jihadist sympathies, they do not offer sufficient evidence of causation of a phenomenon at the macro level.

Though the various proposals for the cause of the Global Jihad have a role to play, the issue is that of causation. It is indeed necessary, as E. H. Carr suggests, to 'simplify the multiplicity of answers, to subordinate one answer to another and to introduce some order and unity into the chaos of happenings and the chaos of specific causes.'[2] Altering economic and political practices that alienate some in the Islamic world will reduce the pool of resources from which the jihadists draw, but at the heart of the matter is an international system that cannot reconcile with or absorb the Salafi Jihadist conceptualisation of order.

In the contemporary international order there is an increasing harmony of interests among states and a growing international society as described by scholars of the English School. States are prepared to play the game of international politics and pay the price of admission to the community of states. This, however, is precisely the problem. The interests of the Salafi Jihadists do not fit with the interests of Islamic states, the international community or the West and the US. Crudely, the interests of the Salafi Jihadists have come into conflict with the global order and those who seek to ensure its sustainability. The Salafi Jihadists do not act within the confines of the international system, they work to undo and restructure it with an alternative concept of order, sovereignty, legitimacy and statehood.

This book has sought to make links between historical realities and perceptions and the contemporary international structure. Arguments that suggest there is an inevitable clash between competing cultures and civilisations prove unsustainable. Equally limited is the failing to take historical experience and ideology seriously by privileging exclusively contemporary concerns as the causation of events. Islam and the Middle East are not extensions of the Western political and social experience. Islam and the Islamic world need, at the least, to be considered on their own terms in ways that are not always clearly recognisable from the Western political perspective. Yet, there is a world system and this system privileges, recognises and promotes a particular kind of order. This form of political organisation does not fit the ideological religious paradigm set by the Salafi Jihadists. In this, it is necessary to locate a via medium between the past and the contemporary, as well as the Islamic and the Western, if Salafi Jihadism is to be accurately understood and the conflict between the Salafi Jihadists and the US is to be conceptualised. This book demonstrates how and why Salafi Jihadist organisations expanded in the twentieth century and why the conflict with the US and the West has become a core component of the Global Jihad. Observing these questions from a holistic perspective is an indispensible approach in uncovering the roots of causation. In doing so it is possible to effectively engage with the phenomenon of Salafi Jihadism by extracting it from its purely contemporary and localised dimensions that view it as a component in the tectonic movements of international politics.

Glossary

Allah: The one, referring to the one God of Islam.

al-Aqsa: The third holiest site in Sunni Islam, located in the old city of Jerusalem containing the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

Apostasy: Formal denunciation of religious faith by an individual

Assabiya: Term popularised by the fourteenth-century Tunisian sociologist Ibn Khaldun. It refers to social solidarity and group consciousness with a sense of shared purpose that defines the tribal Arab communities.

Ayas: The smallest units of the Quran, usually referred to as verses in English.

al-Azhar: Both a Mosque and a university it was founded in the tenth century in Cairo, Egypt. It is considered the foremost institution for Islamic Sunni scholarship.

Ba'ath: (also Ba'athist, Ba'athism) Meaning rebirth or renewal it refers to the Ba'ath nationalist party, most prominently located in Syria and Iraq, that promotes Arab nationalism and socialism.

Bilad al-Sham: Greater Syria. Historically it referred to a province established during the early Islamic empires encompassing the modern states of Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine. Politically, it was reborn in the twentieth century as a focal point of Hafez al-Assad's territorial ambitions.

Caliph: Leader of the caliphate

Dar al-Ahd: Non-Islamic lands with which Muslims have a temporary peace.

Dar al-Harb and Dar al-Islam: Most prominently this has been used to define a dichotomy between Muslim and non-Muslim territory. Dar al-Harb, literally the realm of war, is territory controlled by non-Muslims and Dar al-Islam, the realm of Islam, is territory under Muslim control.

Darwa: Government

Din: Religion

Fatwa: A legal ruling issued by someone with religious authority such as an Imam.

Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence

Hadith: The recorded words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad which are to serve as an example to the Muslim people. The most widely accepted collections of Hadiths were published by al-Bukhari and al-Hajjaj.

Hajj: One of the five pillars of Islam, the Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca that should be undertaken once in every Muslim's lifetime.

Hanafi: The Hanafi is one of the four primary schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence. Named after the eighth-century Iraqi scholar Abu Hanifa an-Nu'man, it is the oldest of the Sunni disciplines.

Hijra: In the summer of 622 CE around seventy of Muhammad's followers left Mecca for the city of Yathrib, 275 miles to the north. This was a necessary exodus to escape the hostile conditions the newly formed Muslim community faced from the tribes of Mecca.

Hijri: The Islamic calendar named after the Hijra of 622

Ijma: The consensus of the Islamic community on a point of the law

Ijtihad: The idea of legitimate religious endeavour in employing personal judgement to deal with matters not specifically detailed in the Quran and Sunnah, while using these sources as guidance. In the eleventh century the so-called 'gates of ijtihad' were closed by the Ulema, supposedly ending the practice. However, it was revived first by Ibn Taymiyya in the fourteenth century and later by the Salafist reformers.

Imam: A religious scholar

Infidel: Non-believer

Jihad: Translated as struggle it is a highly contested term both within and outside of Islam. It may refer to the lesser jihad (jihad al-asghar), generally understood as martial conflict for the physical defence of the community. It is also understood as the greater jihad (jihad al-akhbar) which is described as the jihad against the self, the struggle to become a better Muslim through self improvement.

Jahiliya: Ignorance of God's will. Historically this described the condition of the Arab peoples before Muhammad's revelation. This notion of the jahili society was revived by Ibn Taymiyya and later Sayid Qutb.

Khalifaa: (also caliphate) Refers to the Islamic empires from the time of Muhammad to the end of the Ottoman Empire. The Caliph who leads the caliphate is both a religious and political leader in an attempt to embody in one individual earthly and divine power.

Kufar: Non-believer, someone who denies belief in God

Maghreb: The predominantly Arab-inhabited North Africa

Mujahedeen: Holy warriors; a term popularised to describe those who participated in the expulsion of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in the 1980s. Now, it is a more generalised term describing the participants in the Global Jihad.

Qiyas: A method of analogical reasoning to deal with matters not specifically detailed by the Quran and Sunnah.

Quran: Translated as the recitation; it is the word of Allah as communicated through the Angel Jibra'il (Gabriel) to the Prophet Muhammad. It serves as the premier religious text for Muslims.

Quraysh: The dominant tribe of Mecca in the seventh century.

Ramadan: The ninth month of the Islamic calendar during which Muslim are to fast during the daylight hours as one of the five pillars of Islam.

Rashidun: The Rightly Guided Caliphs; the four Muslim leaders who succeeded Muhammad and ruled until 750; Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Kittab, Uthman ibn Affan, Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Ridda: Translated as apostasy; the death of Muhammad resulted in a revolt which prompted Abu Bakr to launch a series of military campaigns known as the Ridda Wars or the Wars of Apostasy.

Salaf: (also Salafism, Salafist, Salafi) Salaf is translated as righteous predecessor, referring to those who lived during the Rashidun. In the nineteenth century those who called themselves Salafists developed a methodology of looking to this time as an example of how to deal with the contemporary issues of the Islamic world.

Shahada: One of the five pillars of Islam, it is the oral testimony of faith: 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet'.

Sharia: Islamic law; the interpretation of sharia varies tremendously through time and place. However, sharia is based upon the Quran and Sunnah.

Shaykh: An honorific term referring to an elder leader.

Shi'ite: Shi'ite Ali, the Party of Ali. Representing around 15 per cent of Muslims it is a sect of Islam that disputes the succession of leadership after the Rashidun. Additionally, Shi'ites hold other distinct theological differences with the dominant Sunni sect.

Siyasa: Policy

al-Siyasi al Islami: Islamic political order; a government based on Islamic principles.

Sunnah: The words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad that are to serve as an example to Muslims. The Sunnah is recorded in the Hadiths.

Sunni: The dominant sect of Islam representing more than 80 per cent of Muslims.

Sura: Chapters of the Quran

Takfir: The practice of one Muslim accusing another of wilful apostasy.

Tawhid: The concept of monotheism in Islam that speaks of the oneness and uniqueness of God.

Ulema: A group of Islamic scholars who serve as the arbiters of Islamic law and theology; this became increasingly formalised under the various caliphs.

Umma: Community of believers, the concept of a single Islamic community. This notion has been interpreted as a literal territorial bound group with a singular leadership or a spiritual community bound by similar customs and beliefs.

Uqud: Obligations for maintaining membership in the community

Wahabi: A conservative branch of Sunni Islam rooted in Salafist thinking. It emerged in Saudi Arabia during the eighteenth century, founded by Muhammad ibn abd al-Wahab.

Wasatiya: The middle way. Reflective of the neo-Islamists it represents the medium between the traditionalist Islamic position and those who wish to engage with modernity and the non-Islamic world.

Yathrib: Medina

Notes

Introduction

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