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ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS CURRICULA AND TERRORISM
A CASE STUDY OF THE AZHERITE SCHOOLS IN EGYPT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
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November 2008

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the connection between Islamic religious education and terrorism. It looks at the curricula of the Azherite religious schools in Egypt. It examines how the curricula view the three themes of Jihad which are offensive Jihad, defensive Jihad, and Jihad for the purification of the soul in addition to the relations of Muslims with non-Muslims. Books which are used by violent jihadist groups for membership acquisition and cadre training are also studied for Jihad themes and relations with non-Muslims.

The analysis shows that the curricula are, generally speaking, a peaceful one in its principal direction, since it obviously calls for defensive Jihad and not offensive Jihad. Often, it deals with important concepts of Jihad within the confines of such subjects as the Jihad for the purification of the soul [the Greater Jihad]. Some textbooks included lessons on "Peace in Islam" and advocated the fact that peace is the origin in Islamic Shari'a and war is the exception and it is fought only for defensive reasons. This orientation in the curricula very much coincides with the themes of conflict resolution. The comparison between the Azherite schools' textbooks and the books used by violent jihadist groups for membership acquisition and cadre training shows that they are in total contrast in relation to how they view the topic of Jihad and relationship with non-Muslims.

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Introduction

Fighting terrorism became the first priority for the United States' foreign policy after the events of September 11, 2001. This fight included several fronts: the political, security, economic, and educational. Of course the importance of implementing actions in these four fronts depended on the priorities that decision makers in the United States gave to each one of the four components during any given time.

In the political arena, actions taken included demanding Middle Eastern and Arab countries to implement important political reforms that would lead to more democratic societies and larger popular participation in the decision making process in these countries. The security front included a direct action for mutual cooperation in operational matters with Middle Eastern governments with the aim of hunting all those whom America thought of as having any connections to the Al Qa'ida network and an indirect approach in the form of cooperation in security-intelligence information sharing between the intelligence agencies of the United States and the aforementioned countries. As for the economic front, action here was pursued in the form of tracking financial institutions accused of having relations with, or were related to, Islamic institutions at odds with American policy. This action went as far as asking some Middle Eastern countries to finance military operations that the United States deemed necessary to implement in its war against terror. The last front is a complex one and has a cultural-religious

dimension to it. It is at the crux of the Arab-Islamic identity. It is best defined as the United States' demand from Arab and Islamic countries to amend and modify their religious educational curricula and programs.¹

American official interest in religious education in Middle Eastern schools was a direct result of the September 11 events, since it was proven that a number of Al Qa'ida operatives had been politically indoctrinated while studying in these schools and their extremist religious curricula. Those who call for reforming educational curricula argue that history of wars and conflicts proves that education can be used to promote hatred, division, and hostility. They argue that education in Germany under the Third Reich is but an example that substantiates this claim. The Nazi education system was designed to prepare a generation of German youth that was equipped for military service and ideologically prepared to make the needed sacrifices. The Nazis made major changes in the curriculum at German schools after seizing power. Throughout every vein of education there would be an undertone of the racial ideology of the Nazis, as well as the need for Lebensraum. Hatred of the Jews and other so-called sub humans was the main theme in all courses, even math. Problem solving included word problems with questions about ammunition or the cost of maintaining an insane asylum.² They also bring forth the testimonies of people like Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi

¹ Ibrahim Alnajar et al., "Islamic movements: Definition and Activities," In: *Directory of Islamic movements in the World* [Daleel Al Harakaat Al Islamiyya Fi Al 'Alam], ed. Diaan Rashwan, (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Research, 2006) p. 88

² Historical Boys' Clothing. 2002. *Nazi Education* [on-line]; available from; <http://histclo.com/schun/country/ger/era/tr/nazi-ed.html>; Internet; accessed 25 May 2008

Foreign Minister, who said that in their review of the textbooks in Saudi Arabia after the September 11 events they found that five percent of what was being taught was actually abhorrent to US.³

This American interest in changing religious curricula in the Middle East was met with an opposition that doubted the honesty of its goals and considered it an unwarranted interference that aimed at distorting the image of Islam. Some even considered that one of the most important elements of solving this problem would be by disparaging extremist ideas that were adopted by Al Qa'ida and other similar organizations by “deepening Islamic understanding” and not by canceling, marginalizing, or fighting it, because such a thing would be an impossibility in itself and was going to be met with a very strong wave of opposition and struggle. This thinking furthermore assessed that the deepening of Islamic learning must be delivered by moderate Muslim thinkers and jurists [Fuqaha' (pl.), Faqih (sing.)] who have the popularity and are aware of the times. Moreover, this line of thinking also advocated that such a change must not come from the outside [the West in general] in terms of veiled demands for changing religious curricula, because people would look negatively at any such demand and thus all reforming

³ CBS News. 2002. *Saudi Schools teaching Hate?* [on-line]; available from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/09/06/60minutes/printable521056.shtml>; Internet; accessed 28 May 2008.

movements would be defeated, which in turn would be for the benefit of extremist religious organizations.⁴

When 15 of the 19 suicide hijackers who attacked America on 9/11 were discovered to be young Saudi nationals, Americans began asking questions about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, not only whether Saudi money supported terrorism, but also whether its educational system was teaching young people to view Americans as enemies, and was propagating intolerance towards others.⁵

So started the pressures on Saudi Arabia to change its educational curricula, which the American government thought had a direct effect on terror and hate against Americans. Taking on the persona of President George W. Bush in an open letter to Sheik Salih al-Sheikh, the Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs, Thomas Friedman wrote:

“The American people ... have come to fear that your schools and the thousands of Islamic schools your government and charities are financing around the world, are teaching that non-Muslims are inferior to Muslims and must be converted or confronted ... In a wired world ... we need you to interpret Islam in ways that sanctify religious tolerance and the peaceful spread of faith ... [because] in the age of globalization, how we each educate our kids is a strategic issue ... On Sept. 11 we learned that another country’s faulty education ... can destroy.”⁶

⁴ Ibrahim Alnajar et al., “Islamic movements: Definition and Activities,” In: *Directory of Islamic movements in the World* [Daleel Al Harakaat Al Islamiyya Fi Al ‘Alam], ed. Diah Rashwan, (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Research, 2006) p. 80

⁵ Freedom House. 2006. *Saudi Arabia’s Curriculum of Intolerance* [on-line]. Washington DC: Center for Religious Freedom And Institute for Gulf Affairs; available from <http://www.gulfinstitute.org>; Accessed 3 March 2007.

⁶ Thomas Friedman, Dear Saudi Arabia. *The New York Times*. Issue of 12 December 2001.

The Saudi people themselves have been among those most concerned about Saudi Arabia's educational system. One of the most detailed and useful analyses, was a study conducted in 2003 by former Saudi judge Sheikh Abd Al-Aziz Al-Qassem and Saudi author and journalist Ibrahim Al-Sakran, which examined three curricula for Saudi middle and high schools – a general curriculum on Islamic traditions [Al-Hadith], a curriculum on matters of belief [Al-Fiqh]. The study noted that the Kingdom's religious studies curriculum “encourages violence toward others; and misguides the pupils into believing that in order to safeguard their own religion, they must violently repress and even physically eliminate the ‘other’”.⁷

In his study *Education and Indoctrination in the Muslim world*, Andrew Coulson, examined religious education in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia. He concluded that religious schools [Madrasas] arm their students with an ideology that justifies and endorses violence against all who fall short of Islamist ideal.⁸

In his book *Hatred's Kingdom*, Dore Gold argues that for those who accepted and internalized the messages presented in the Saudi curriculum, the leap to what bin Ladin was saying at the time was not very great. According to him, religious and educational elements of the Saudi establishment were

⁷ Freedom House. 2006. *Saudi Arabia's Curriculum of Intolerance* [on-line]. Washington DC: Center for Religious Freedom And Institute for Gulf Affairs; available from <http://www.gulfinstitute.org>; Accessed 7 August 2008.

⁸ Andrew Coulson, “Education and Indoctrination in the Muslim World: Is there a Problem? What we do about it?,” *Policy Analysis* 511 (March 2004), p.4

consistently putting forward the key components of bin Ladin's religious justification for attacking America:

- (1) There was no basis for interfaith dialogue with religions based on blasphemy, polytheism, or heresy. The Christian world was still engaging in the crusades against Islam.
- (2) Christians and Jews were infidels (*Kufar*) or even polytheists (*mushrikun*) and therefore not protected peoples but rather in perpetual conflict with Islam.
- (3) It was permissible (in the words of an official Saudi Ministry of Education textbook) "to demolish, burn, or destroy the bastions of the *Kufar*".⁹

Mohamed Cherfi, a former minister of education in Tunisia, wrote in the New York Times:

Osama bin Ladin, like the 15 Saudis who participated in the criminal operations of September 11, seems to have been the pure product of Saudi schooling. While Saudi Arabia is officially a moderate state allied with America, it also has been one of the main supporters of Islamic fundamentalism because of its financing of schools following the intransigent Wahhabi doctrine. Saudi-backed Madrasas in Pakistan and Afghanistan have played a significant role in the strengthening of radical Islam in those countries.¹⁰

A report issued in 2006 by the Center for Religious Freedom which evaluated a dozen of school textbook in Saudi Arabia concluded that the Saudi

⁹ Dore Gold, *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism*. (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2003) , p. 183

¹⁰ Mohamed Cherfi. Reaching the Next Muslim Generation. *The New York Times*. Issue of 12 March 2002.

public school religious curricula continues to propagate an ideology of hate toward the “unbeliever”, that is, Christians, Jews, Shiites, Sufis, Sunni Muslims who do not follow Wahabi doctrine, Hindus, atheists and others. This ideology is introduced in a religion textbook in the first grade and reinforced and developed in following years of public education system culminating in the twelfth grade, where a text instructs students that it is a religious obligation to wage militant Jihad against infidels in order to “spread the faith”.¹¹

This is where the American side committed its first mistake; Saudi Arabia was and is not the country where one can measure the connection between terror and the country’s educational curricula, even if the latter contained elements that formulated hate against America and Americans. The reason for this is that extremist Islamic movements as a phenomenon in the Arab World emerged first in Egypt for reasons that had no direct relation to the religious curricula that is taught in religious educational institutions. Its roots were historical, political, and social. Therefore, the whole project of uprooting terrorism by demanding reforms of the religious curricula in Saudi Arabia (or even Pakistan for example) would be a futile attempt at fighting the root causes of the phenomenon of armed terrorism and extremist organizations in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Egypt has always been and remains the center for religious radiance and the propagation of civilization in the Middle East and the Islamic World in

¹¹ Freedom House. 2006. *Saudi Arabia’s Curriculum of Intolerance* [on-line]. Washington DC: Center for Religious Freedom And Institute for Gulf Affairs; available from <http://www.gulfinstitute.org>; Accessed 7 August 2008.

general. It was there that the first flickers of religious awakening appeared at the end of the nineteenth century. This happened through the work and effort of people such as Jamal Ul Din Al Afghani and his student, cleric [Imam] Muhammad Abdu. It was in Egypt that the first Islamic organization calling for the implementation of the Islamic law [Shari'a] to the detriment of secular government emerged in 1928. . This was the credo of the Muslim Brotherhood [Al Ikhwan Al Muslimin] that was founded by Hassan Al Banna.¹²

It was through the struggle that the Nasserite government unleashed against the Muslim Brotherhood and which ended with the imprisonment of the leaders of the organization that the embryos of jihadist movements were formed. They then advocated the use of armed struggle to destroy the secular government and install a new one based on the tenets of Shari 'a.

It was Egypt too that led all Arab struggle against Israel from 1948 and on, until the October War of 1973. It was for this reason that Arabs in general looked at Egypt as their leader in the formulation of Arab intellectual thought and civilization. Islamic jihadist movements were not an exception to this point of view. Salih Sariyya, the leader of the Military Arts Organization [Tanzim Al Fanniyya Al Askariyya], his organization was one of the first to penetrate the Egyptian army with the aim of destroying secular governments in Egypt and other Arab countries by the use of armed struggle, a Palestinian by birth and a Jordanian by citizenship. His thought revolved around the idea that "... the liberation of

¹² Abdul Rahim Ali, *Egypt and the Muslim World* [Misr Wa Al Alam Al Islami], (Cairo: New Horizons Bookstore[Maktabat Al Afaq Al Jadida],1986), p.18

Palestine could be achieved only by institutionalizing Islam in the biggest and the most populous of the Arab countries, Egypt. If the Egyptian people moved forward, all other Arabs would follow suit to uproot the ruling secular regimes.”¹³ So uttered also Muhammad Salem Al Rahhal, an Arab of Jordanian origins and one of the first symbols of jihadist movements in Egypt, who kept on advocating that “Egypt is the largest Arab country and as such the Islamic movement there should take a leading role in the Arab World.”¹⁴

On the other hand, Dr. Ayman Al Zawahiri , the leader of the Jihad Organization in Egypt at the time, [Tanzim Al Jihad] wrote an essay in *The Jihadists’ Digest* [Nashrat Al Mujahidun] published by the Jihad Organization, where he stated that “... Jerusalem’s case [Meaning the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict] will not be settled and it will not be conquered until the battle is settled first in Cairo, and it is conquered first.”¹⁵

After the Egyptian Jihad Organization, headed by Ayman Al Zawahiri, disavowed itself from the tenets of the book *The Neglected Duty* [Al Faridah Al Gha’iba], authored by Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, which advocated that “...the near enemy must be dealt with before the far enemy” [meaning that Jihad in the Arab world is more important than transferring the fight into the West] and Zawahiri’s alliance with Usama Bin Laden in the beginning of 1998, and their

¹³ Muntasar Al Zayyat, *The Islamist Groups: A Look from Within* [Al Jamaat Al Islamiyya: Ru’iya Min Al Dakhil], (Cairo: Dar Misr Al Mahrusa, 2005), p. 105.

¹⁴ Ibid., 104.

¹⁵ Ibid., 117.

formulation of the dictum of fighting the far enemy first by founding the Al Qa'ida ,Egyptian cadres played the most important roles in the new organization since they possessed the expertise in the field of Islamic movements. It is said that Usama Bin Ladin didn't possess any organizational expertise to bring people around him when he went to Afghanistan and that it was Al Zawahiri who taught him that through his vast knowledge and experience in organizational matters.¹⁶

It is for those reasons that this study would rather dwell on the religious curricula in the Azherite schools of Egypt, since they are the largest schools in Egypt and the Arab World and since Egypt was the country where the phenomenon of violent Islamic groups emerged.

By linking hatred, incitement, and murder, to school textbooks - rather than, say, to dreadful repressive regimes or to family background, social and economic structure, the public sphere more generally, or the self-interest of local political leaders, some claims are being made about the content of school textbooks and curricula. These claims are, broadly speaking, that Islamic textbooks preach exclusion and violence against non-Muslims. It is the aim of this study to test the validity of those claims and to examine if the curricula are directly linked to terrorism.

Terrorism is an extremely complex and multifaceted phenomenon whose sources are many, complex, and often unpredictable. It is at least partly a reaction

¹⁶ Ibrahim Alnajar et al., "Islamic movements: Definition and Activities," In: *Directory of Islamic movements in the World* [Daleel Al Harakaat Al Islamiyya Fi Al 'Alam], ed. Diaan Rashwan, (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Research, 2006) p. 144.

to the particular political, economic, and historical context within which potential terrorists exist.¹⁷ Unlike counter-terrorism and national security studies which focus on short term policies, militarized responses, the introduction of exceptional legislative measures, and the preemptive intelligence collection to fighting terrorism, conflict resolution as a field of study seeks to investigate the root causes of the phenomenon and hence offering a better understanding and a long term solutions.

Hersey and Hauss argued that the response to September 11 and terrorism in general has to go much farther and address the root causes of terrorism. If we do, we can significantly reduce, but not eliminate, the support for terrorism. If, however, we rely primarily on military and other traditional approaches to national security, we could reduce the threat of terrorist attacks in the short or medium term. However, we would do little to reduce the likelihood that new and perhaps more lethal forms of terrorism will emerge in the future.¹⁸ In his discussion of the challenges of terror, John Paul Lederach- a well known conflict resolution expert- advised that we should always seek to understand the root of the anger, hatred and frustration which make people commit such a horrible act like that of September 11. Lederach argues that explanations that those who committed the attacks are

¹⁷ Martha Crenshaw, “ Introduction: Thoughts on Relating Terrorism to Historical Context,” In: *Terrorism in Context*, ed. Martha Crenshaw (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995) p.3-7.

¹⁸ Matthew Hersey and Charlis Hauss. 2002. *Addressing Root Causes of Terrorism* [on-line]; available from <http://classweb.gmu.edu/chuss/search/terrorism.html>; Internet; accessed 6 August 2008.

brainwashed by a perverted leader who holds some kind of magical power over them is an escapist simplification that will inevitably lead us to very wrong-headed responses. According to him, anger of this sort, what we could call generational, identity-based anger, is constructed over time through a combination of historical events, a deep sense of threat to identity, and direct experiences of sustained exclusion.¹⁹ Other advocates of the root causes approach propel that politically oppressed and economically deprived people are more prone to violent and terrorist behavior.²⁰

Conflict resolution is also concerned with issues of peace making and peaceful solutions for conflicts and wars. There is no doubt that terrorism had become a major threat to international peace and security after the events of September 11. It claimed and continues to claim lives of thousands of innocent people and it threatens peace and stability of the international community. On the other hand, just as terrorists use religious texts to justify their actions and to promote conflicts, religion can be a wonderful path to resolving conflict, provided its teachings about humanity, compassion, forgiveness and respect for individual and communities are fostered by listening and speaking in a spirit of openness.

It can be argued that the examination of root causes- an investigation traditionally identified with conflict resolution studies- is undoubtedly enriching the field of terrorism by adding depth and greater regard for the socio-historical

¹⁹ John Paul Lederach 2001. *The Challenge of Terror: A Traveling Essay*. [on-line]; available from <http://www.mediate.com/pfriendly.cfm?id=735>; Internet; accessed 29 August 2008.

²⁰ Muhammed Zafar, *Violence, Terrorism and Teaching of Islam*. (Pakistan: Higher Education Commission, 2007), p.27.

context of the conflicts. By examining Islamic religious education as a root cause of terrorism, this study follows suit on the perspective of conflict resolution which calls for a more comprehensive and deep approach that investigates a range of political, social, and economic motives behind the phenomenon of terrorism.

Methodology

This study is based on the textbooks for Islamic law [Shari'a] and Language curriculum published by the Azherite Institutes Sector and used by the Azherite schools during the academic year 2006-2007 at the Azherite schools' preparatory and secondary levels. The textbooks were obtained by me through the official channels of Al-Azhar during a visit to Egypt in the winter of 2007 for the purposes of the study. I have obtained and reviewed all thirteen textbooks assigned to students in the preparatory and secondary levels which contained subjects related to Jihad and treatment of non-Muslims. The textbooks are written in Arabic language; I have translated all the sections covering the purposes of this study as well as all Arabic sources and references. The original copies of the textbooks cited in this study are held with me. It is noteworthy to point out that students are not required to memorize the lessons of the Islamic law [Shari'a] and language curriculum. They are only required to memorize certain parts of the Holy Qur'an in every level of study.

Al-Azhar plays an important role in disseminating education throughout the Muslim world. In the year 2003 the number of teachers sent from Al-Azhar to

Islamic countries reached 5380 teachers and there were approximately 7200 international students representing 75 countries enrolled at Al-Azhar in Egypt.²¹

Al-Azhar also has educational missions in many countries in the world including Palestine, South Africa, Malaysia and Indonesia. Those missions adopt the same curriculum and textbooks which are used in Egypt.²²

The impact of Al-Azhar's textbooks is not restricted to Egypt since its educational missions, teachers, and preachers are present in almost all the Muslim countries. It is for this reason that I chose to study the religious textbooks of Al-Azhar since they are the largest religious schools in the Muslim world and since the phenomenon of the militant Islamic groups has first emerged in Egypt.

This study is an attempt to reach an answer to the question of the connection between Islamic religious curricula and terrorism. The first chapter defines what the textbook is, its importance as an educational tool and the role that textbooks play in molding the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of students. The second chapter discusses the Egyptian jihadist groups and the books they used for membership acquisition. The aim of this chapter is to look at the means and methods used by these groups for membership acquisition and cadre training and most importantly the places that they use to spread their message. It is also important to examine an array of influential leaders of the Islamic groups and see

²¹ Ahmed Hashim, Interview with the Chancellor of Al-Azhar. *Islamic World Magazine*. Issue 1810. 15 September 2003.

²² Egypt State Information Service. 2008 *Al-Azhar* [on-line]. Cairo: Government of Egypt; available from <http://www.sis-gov-eg/Ar/Arts&culture/azhar/0713000000000001.htm>; Internet; accessed 9 August 2008.

if they attended religious schools and which books have impacted them most. This chapter examines the content of two important books used by the jihadist groups and discussed how they view the concepts of offensive Jihad, defensive Jihad, and how they view the treatment of non Muslims. The core of the study is the third chapter, which deals with the lessons on Jihad and the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in the curricula of the Azherite religious schools.

The main purpose of analysis of these textbooks is to look at how they present the lessons on Jihad and the relationship with non-Muslims. Do they advocate offensive Jihad which aims at invading non-Muslims countries as well as changing governments by force of arms? Or do they call for defensive Jihad which is a legitimate defense war? Do they also include the concept of the Jihad for the purification of the soul or the “greatest Jihad” which is the struggle against the self, in which we suppress our own base desires, purify our selves, and then rise, to contemplation of higher truth? Do they call for equality and peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims? Or are they calling for the persecution of them? Thus, the themes covered in the analysis include defensive Jihad, offensive Jihad, Jihad of the soul, and treatment of the non-Muslims.

This study does not purport to be a general survey of all aspects of the Azherite curriculum. Nor is it a comprehensive review of the entire contents of the available textbooks. The focus is primarily on lessons about Jihad and the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. The texts are not studied for

their content on other important issues, such as woman, family rules, prayer, dealings, and punishment.

CHAPTER 1

THE POWER OF THE TEXTBOOK

This chapter will look at the importance and the functions of the textbooks and the role which schoolbooks play in molding the beliefs, identities, and actions of students.

Textbook: Definition and Importance

A textbook is a teaching, learning and working tool used to support teaching and learning processes in schools. In the strict sense, a textbook might be a book, a booklet or a collection of pages, systematically constructed for learning and teaching purposes.²³ From a theoretical perspective, the schoolbook is a product of, and a factor in, social interaction processes; a working and learning tool; and one element of today's multimedia learning contexts.²⁴ Schoolbooks are perceived to have prime importance because they translate general educational goals and curricular directives into concrete and specific learning activities. Schoolbooks have social functions on the one hand, and pedagogical functions on the other. Social functions of schoolbooks consist of standardizing learning contents according to the prevailing public order; certifying that school learning and teaching conforms with the general aims of the public learning and education;

²³ Stephen Heyneman, "The Role of Textbooks in a Modern System of Education," In: *Textbooks and Quality Learning For All: Some lessons learned from international experiences*, ed. Cecilia Braslavsky and Katia Halil, (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), p. 128.

²⁴ Ibid

maintaining the standards of knowledge and abilities as defined by curricula and other norm-setting rules and institutions; guaranteeing equal opportunity in public education; supporting general educational and political aims and social values; defining what contents are part of specific society's culture.²⁵

The pedagogical functions of school textbooks consist of representing, structuring, and controlling school knowledge by systematically reviewing the various learning steps or sequences; supporting and facilitating learning processes in schools; using textbooks as a working tool and as a medium for transmitting knowledge.²⁶ Textbooks are at the heart of educational enterprise, as they offer students a rich array of new and potentially interesting facts, and open the door for a world of fantastic experience.²⁷

Concerning the relevance and functions of school textbooks in the educational process, some scholars argue that textbooks are the most important medium of instruction and the primary vehicles for delivering content knowledge, for determining in large measure what goes on in class, and for assessing what students do and do not learn. Others, on the other hand, argue that the assumptions characterized above have increasingly become dubious and unrealistic: school textbooks as a medium of learning and teaching in schools- both in Northern and Southern countries- are not of such central importance. In

²⁵ Ibid., 129.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Marlyn Chambliss and Robert Calfee, *Textbook For Learning: Nurturing Children's Minds*. (USA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998), p. 7.

Northern countries, electronic media have begun to crowd out textbooks. In Southern countries, school textbooks continue to be unavailable for many students, while traditional mass media are having an increasing influence on the pupils' processes of socialization.²⁸

Textbook as a Social Construct

The symbolism of the textbook is well established in the English language and its use as a label which describes various forms of social meaning and behavior is deeply imbedded within the way in which it is employed in a variety of contexts. Metaphors include 'It was a textbook operation', 'it was a textbook takeoff' and 'it was all done by the textbook'. Such usages share a common characteristics in the manner in which the word 'textbook' is used to define and convey a sequence of actions which do not deviate from agreed and regulated procedures and in the manner in which it is expected that conduct will follow sets of rules in the journey towards the completion of a task. In certain arenas of social life not following textbook procedures is likely to have serious consequences; that, after all, is what a textbook procedures is all about, avoiding mistakes and the potential 'error judgment' that can emerge through un-coordinated individual action.²⁹

²⁸ Stephen Heyneman, "The Role of Textbooks in a Modern System of Education," In: *Textbooks and Quality Learning For All: Some lessons learned from international experiences*, ed. Cecilia Braslavsky and Katia Halil, (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), p. 130.

²⁹ Keith Crawford, *The Role and Purpose of Textbooks*. (UK: Edge Hill College of Higher Education, 2000), p. 1.

That much is obvious when it comes to learning how to land a plane, conduct a medical operation etc. but the issue of textbooks becomes far more problematic and riddled with contradiction when it comes to the assimilation of knowledge which is mediated through school textbooks. This is because textbooks are cultural artifacts and in their production and their use inside classrooms confront a range of issues to do with ideology, politics and values which in themselves function at a variety of different levels of power, status and influence. Embedded in textbooks are narratives and stories that nation states choose to tell about themselves and which, it has been decided, offer a core of cultural knowledge which future generations are expected to both assimilate and support; to think about the content of textbooks and how they are authored, published and used is to think about the purpose of schooling.³⁰

School textbooks are crucial organs in the process of constructing legitimized ideologies and beliefs and are a reflection of the history, knowledge and values considered important by powerful groups in society. In many nations debates over the content and format of school textbooks are sites of considerable educational and political conflict. Evidence from national education systems across the globe strongly suggest that the manufacture of textbook content is the result of competition between powerful groups who see it as being central in the

³⁰ Ibid., 2.

creation of collective national memory designed to meet specific cultural, economic, ideological and social imperatives.³¹

School textbooks are based upon the cultural, ideological and political power of the dominant groups and they tend to enforce and reinforce cultural homogeneity through the promotion of shared attitudes and the construction of shared historical memories. The construction of textbook knowledge is an intensely political activity and debates, controversies and tensions over the construction of school textbooks involve a struggle over manufacture and control of popular memory. School textbooks are one vehicle through which attempts can be made to disseminate and reinforce dominant cultural forms.³²

School textbooks are social constructions. During their process of manufacture, authors and publishers inevitably find themselves including and excluding the expectations of competing interested parties concerning what constitutes legitimate curriculum knowledge. Although they are authored by individuals, textbooks present broader cultural ‘messages’ and in terms of their social function have been said to bear similarities to government policy documents.³³

³¹ Ibid., 1

³² Ibid.

³³ Suzanne De Castell, Allan Luke, and Cameron Luke, “Beyond Criticism: The Authority of the School Textbook,” In: *Language, Authority, and Criticism: Readings on the School Textbook*, ed. Suzanne De Castell, Allan Luke, Cameron Luke (London/Philadelphia: Flammer Press 1989), p.28.

Functions of the Textbook

Textbooks can transform children's minds. We often think of textbooks as repositories of information to be pushed into students' skulls, rather than as resources that provide opportunities for exploration and enjoyment. Educators agree that the textbook has a power to influence what children know, can do, and value. Bill Honig, a former Superintendent for Public Instruction in California, relied heavily on textbook policies as a lever for changing schools, and influence children's values, knowledge, and skills – a strategy that has been adopted in many other states. Nor are state superintendents the only ones who believe in the power of the printed word. Special-interest groups and concerned parent groups routinely picket, pack, and address school board hearings to protest the content of to-be-adopted textbooks. Ethnic minorities worry about materials that may negatively affect how students view their group. Parents with strong religious beliefs have asked courts to excuse their children from exposure to books that go against their conviction. An assumption driving these activities is the belief that a child's mind is malleable, and that textbooks have the power to affect minds – for better or worse.³⁴

³⁴ Marlyn Chambliss and Robert Calfee, *Textbooks for Learning: Nurturing Children's Minds*. (USA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998), p. 3.

The school textbook assumes numerous functions. First, it normally provides the child with one of his first contacts with the printed word and the book. This is particularly important and significant in developing countries where the school textbook is very often the first book in the home and it is one of the first, if not the first, source of reading matter.³⁵ Reading remains the principal key to the world of knowledge, and the book, able to transmit and diffuse knowledge through print is at the center of modern civilization. The school textbook presents to the pupil the knowledge to be acquired, and does so in a structured manner adapted to the level of his intellectual development. It is the pupil's principal source of information on the subject being studied.³⁶

In addition to the body of knowledge conveyed therein, the school textbook also transmits values and attempts to influence attitudes. Although much research has been done into the 'hidden messages' contained in a textbook, little is known about the mechanisms – if they do in fact – by which textbooks effectively influence the attitudes of their readers beyond arousing transitory sentiments. The textbook is primarily a working instrument for the pupil, above all an aid to individual study. It is, moreover, an instrument perfectly adaptable to every individual's own rhythm. With the aid of the textbook, the pupil recapitulates, assimilates and further internalizes what he has learnt in class. The

³⁵ John Birchfield, "Portfolio Pedagogy: Probing the Potentialities of the Nontextbook" In: *School Textbooks and Lifelong Education: An Analysis of Schoolbooks from Three Countries*. ed. Charles, Hummel, (Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education, 1988), p.15

³⁶ Ibid.

textbook can also ask him questions and induce him to supplement the information it contains. More important still is that a good textbook encourages the pupil to think – it stimulates critical reflection.³⁷

In his discussion of the learning experiences and development of aptitudes, Roger Seguin argues that the acquisition of knowledge by means of textbooks' summaries and explanations by the teachers will not suffice to develop pupils' skills and new behavioral attitudes. Pupils must, therefore, carry out experiments or activities to strengthen the effectiveness of instruction, which are, in any case, an important component of learning.³⁸

The precise nature and extent of the influence of the textbook on the student's attitudes and actions is difficult to ascertain. Toronto and Essa, in their examination of the curriculum of Islamic education in Egypt's public schools, assert the fact that the degree to which the Egyptian government actually succeeds in shaping personal and national identity through religious education is difficult to determine. They notice that government efforts throughout modern Egyptian history to make religion an adjunct of state ideology have given rise to public distrust and apathy toward national religious institutions, including the apparatus for teaching Islamic education in the schools. This sense of cynicism and the fact that grades for religion classes have no bearing on college entrance requirements

³⁷ Ibid., 17.

³⁸ Roger Seguin, 1989, *The Elaboration of School Textbooks: Methodological Guide* [on-line]. UNESCO: Division of Educational Sciences, Content and Methods of Education, available from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/55_16.pdf; Internet; accessed 21 July 2008.

combine to minimize the impact of these textbooks in shaping public values and attitudes. Moreover, they state:

It must be kept in mind that Islamic education classes represent only a small part of the religious socialization that a student experience in Egypt. Even if a student seriously studies the religion textbooks in school, the effect of this exposure is often attenuated by other powerful factors that shape religious identity: daily discourse with teachers, friends, and family; activities sponsored by local mosques, social service agencies, and youth organizations; and ideas encountered in electronic and print media (cassettes, videos, religious magazines and newspapers, Friday sermons, internet sites, and computer software) that are widely disseminated and consumed in Egypt.³⁹

This example shows that the Ministry of Education in Egypt, despite its jurisdiction over the structure and content of the national school curriculum and textbooks, couldn't exclude the powerful influence of the 'hidden curriculum' that shape the religious identity and impact the attitudes, ideas, and values of the students.

Contrary to Toronto's and Essa's findings, Ozlem Atlan in his study of the Turkish religious curriculum found that even as students disparaged their teachers and religion courses, their views on religious subjects appeared to coincide with those contained in the textbooks.⁴⁰ When asked to give a personal definition of being a good Muslim, for example, one student limited it to being a

³⁹ James A. Toronto and Muhammad S. Eissa, "Egypt: Promoting Tolerance and Defending Against Islam," In *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor A. Doumato and Gregory Starret (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2007), p. 47-48.

⁴⁰ Gregory Starret and Eleanor A. Doumato, "Textbook, Islam, Nation building, and the Question of Violence," In *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor A. Doumato and Gregory Starret (London: Lynne Rienner Publications Inc., 2007), p. 22.

good person, another talked about belief in God, not categorizing himself as a Muslim because he didn't adhere to the rituals and tenets of Islam. An informant who described himself as a religious person said he believed in the necessity of carrying out the five pillars of Islam, yet admitted he did not follow them, which he rationalized by differentiating between sins that had an impact on other people and those that involved only him and God. The latter, he argued, could be forgiven. So again the definition of Muslim was some form of "good person". In another example, secularism was favored by all students interviewed, who used almost identical phrases that they said were their personal thoughts but that had a striking resemblance to what the textbooks have been saying all along. It was especially remarkable to see that all who were asked to define secularism used the phrase, frequently repeated in all sorts of textbook contexts, "separation of mundane affairs from religious affairs".⁴¹

The extent to which textbooks influence attitudes and actions also depends on how the written texts are received by the students. There is a need to be careful about assuming that what is written in textbooks is either taught or learned. A number of critical ethnographies of school and classroom have shown that written texts are subject to a multiplicity of readings and that the manner in which a text is received can vary. Within the context of practice, teacher and pupil responses to textbooks can offer the potential to be different

⁴¹Ozlem Altan, "Turkey: Sanctifying a Secular State," In *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor A. Doumato and Gregory Starret (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2007), p. 211.

from that intended by authors, material can be re-structured, re-interpreted and can reject part, or all, of what is said to constitute official knowledge. This perspective acknowledges that written texts are subject to a multiplicity of readings and meanings and that the manner in which a text is received varies significantly.⁴² The above point is best illustrated by Lynn Davies in her book *Education Against Extremism* where she states that:

An important educational area is the translation of commands in sacred or other texts into action, for much depends on language and whether scriptural exhortations are to be seen as metaphors or as instruction booklet. When at my primary school we all sang “Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war” I don’t think we actually took it literally. Nor did it condition my life or make me belligerent – not in the name of Christ anyway. The assumption is that deep down we knew it was an analogy, as much as any ‘battle’ – against dirt, or indolence, or head lice.⁴³

Davies’ statement shows that the manner in which a text is interpreted can vary. The literal interpretation of the text, specifically sacred texts, and the translation of the belief into further actions could lead to devastating results. In the Bible, the children of Israel are commanded by God to massacre the Amalekites, an indigenous Canaanite tribe, along with their women, children and flocks. One would assume that this would now be seen in its historical context. Yet for fundamentalist militants such as Rabbi Yisrael Hess, formerly the campus rabbi of Tel Aviv’s Bar-Ilan University, the Amalekites of scripture are assimilated to

⁴² Keith Crawford, *The Role and Purpose of Textbooks*. (UK: Edge Hill College of Higher Education 2000) p. 3

⁴³ Lynn Davies, *Education Against Extremism*. (UK: Trentham Books 2008), p. 22- 23.

contemporary Palestinian Arabs. An Article entitled “The Commandment of Genocide in Torah’ ends with the chilling words: “The day will yet come when we will all be called to fulfill the commandment of the divinely ordained war to destroy Amelak”.⁴⁴

Attitudes and actions of students are also impacted by teachers who may deviate from the textbooks and force-feed the pupils with issues that have nothing to do with them. A report on religious education and the role played by teachers in promoting extremism in Saudi Arabia concluded that:

Some teachers brainwashed pupils and taught them excommunicating (Takfir) and hatred of non-Muslims and even called for harming them when possible .Criminal deeds are result of criminal thoughts. Teachers must understand the great difference between a teacher and a Mufti. They must teach pupils, in the best possible way, what is in the curricula, without issuing religious ruling (Fatwa) and without deviating from the curriculum and force-feeding the pupils with issues that have nothing to do with them. There is evidence that some teachers and officials in Education ministry are promoting extremism.⁴⁵

Starrett and Doumato in their comment on the religion courses in some Muslim countries argue that the extent to which textbooks influence attitudes and actions is also shaped by the bureaucratic organization of religious instruction. In most countries, religion classes are required but are usually irrelevant to students’ grade point average (GPA), to their graduation requirements, and to their chances

⁴⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁵ Yousf Hamad, 2004 *Problems of Youth: What is desirable and what Exists*. [on-line]; available from <http://www.freemuslims.org>; Internet; accessed 1 January 2006.

for career or college entrance and this is why both students and teachers often belittle such courses as trivial, pointless, and unimportant.⁴⁶

An important note from Starret and Doumato's study is that exposure to textbooks is clearly not equal to influence. According to them:

If it were, we'd have to wonder why Saudi Arabia has produced a generation polarized between radical conservatives, including jihadis, and risk-taking liberals, all of whom read the same books in school, and why Iran has produced a generation of dissidents chafing under clerical rule, as well as a voting public that elected an arch-conservative as president.⁴⁷

It is, therefore, acceptable to argue that there is no automatic and direct chain of causality between a text and its impact on student attitude and achievement. Modern studies on the pupils' use of textbook and on the effectiveness of textbooks are rare because:

- of differentiated individual preferences for teaching concepts and styles;
- many curricula maintain that the knowledge, skill and attitude dimensions of learning should be embodied in some combination in each discipline and each learning step, which makes it difficult to measure teaching effectiveness as a single factor;

⁴⁶ Gregory Starret and Eleanor A. Doumato, "Textbook, Islam, Nation building, and the Question of Violence," In *Teaching Islam: Textbooks and Religion in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor A. Doumato and Gregory Starret (London: Lynne Rienner Publications Inc., 2007), p. 22.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

- learning involves the interaction between a book and a reader, but the result depends on the reader's prior qualifications and on his or her particular learning strategies.⁴⁸

According to Heyneman, textbooks and ancillary materials will remain an instrument of extraordinary power. They may, in fact, be the most effective of educational technologies yet invented, and there is no reason to imagine a modern educational system where textbooks do not play a central role. However, textbooks will continue to have both constructive and destructive characteristics. When utilized professionally, textbooks can be the cognitive cement behind a fully literate society. When misused, however, they can be responsible for antiquated ideologies. Worse, they can be used as instruments to inflame sectarian passion, threaten a nation's social cohesion and, on occasion lay the intellectual foundations for civil wars. Therefore, textbooks are not of educational concern only; they constitute a legitimate concern within the context of regional and international security.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Egil Johnson, *Textbooks in the Kaleidoscope: A critical survey of literature and research on educational texts*. (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1993) p. 221.

⁴⁹ Stephen Heyneman, "The Role of Textbooks in a Modern System of Education," In: *Textbooks and Quality Learning For All: Some lessons learned from international experiences*, ed. Cecilia Braslavsky and Katia Halil, (Paris: UNESCO, 2006), p. 36.

CHAPTER 2

JIHAD AND JIHADIST GROUPS IN EGYPT

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the Egyptian jihadist groups and the educational curricula they use for membership acquisition. The common denominator of all Egyptian jihadist movements is based on the books of Sayyid Qutb, which he wrote while in prison. Qutb's writings were replete with ideas of excommunication [Takfir] and Jihad against the oppressive Egyptian regime, which, in his opinion, were based on the pre Muslim, heathen, and hence, blasphemous old religion of the Arabs [Jahiliyya]. Groups like The Liberation Party [Hizb Ul Tahrir], excommunication and immigration group [Jamaat Al Takfir Wa Al Hijra] based on the famous migration of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Madina when his new group of converts to Islam was harassed in the former city. In this context Hijra means that a true Muslim distances himself/herself from the Jahiliyya society of the secular regimes, The Organization of Those who Are saved from Fire, i.e. Hell, [Tanzim Al Najun Min Al Nar], Al Shawqiyyun, Youth of Muhammad [Shabab Muhammad] Al Tawqif Wa Al Tabyin, The Sure About Victory [Al Wasiqun Min Al Nasr], as well as the

Jihad Organization and Al Jamaa Al Islamiyya, the biggest of these organizations in Egypt.⁵⁰

Egyptian Jihadist Groups

The Jihad Organization [Tanzim Aljihad], this group didn't appear as a unified organization until the end of 1980 or the beginning of 1981, when engineer/Islamic advocate Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, author of *The Neglected Duty* [Al Faridah Al Gha'iba] united several small groups that had been in operation since the beginning of the 1970s, based on the teachings he formulated in his book. Small but disunited jihadist Islamic organizations had mushroomed in different parts of Egypt since the 1960's. The first of these was formed in 1967. One of its first members was none other than Ayman Al Zawahiri, who three decades later, assumed the leadership of the united jihadist front in Egypt.⁵¹

The Jihad Organization distinguished itself by its extreme secrecy as well as its penetration of the most sensitive governmental institutions and especially the army. It sought and executed operations against the symbols of the government. It also developed a highly organized and armed military infrastructure. It was through the joint efforts of the Jihad and Islamic Groups that

⁵⁰ Kamal Musa, *The Muslim Brotherhood: When, How, and Why?* [Al Ikhwan Al Muslimun: Mata Kayf Wa Limaza] (Khartoum: The Azamite Oriented Research Institute's Commission, 2007), p. 88.

⁵¹ Ibrahim Alnajar et al., "Islamic movements: Definition and Activities," In: *Directory of Islamic movements in the World* [Daleel Al Harakaat Al Islamiyya Fi Al 'Alam], ed. Diaa Rashwan, (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Research, 2006) p. 135.

the assassination of President Anwar Al Sadat was accomplished. The aftermath of the assassination saw the court trials of several of the leaders of both groups in a publicized case that was nicknamed “The Grand Jihadist Case.”⁵²

The Islamic Group [Aljamaa Alislamiyya], this is the biggest and most propagated Islamist movement, especially in Egypt’s rural areas of Al Sa’eed. It was seeded and nourished in the University of Asyut and was then branched into the other universities. The group advocated the commanding of good and the forbidding of evil deed [Al ‘Amr Bi Al Maaruf Wa Al Nahi an Al Munkar] and attacked the leftist student associations and Copts [Egyptian Christian sect]. Its members used machetes, knives, and iron chains. It continued to spread and to take control of the villages and hamlets of southern Egypt [Al Sa’eed] by taking over the most important propaganda tool in those places, namely the pulpits of the mosques. The movement then started to be active in the poorest sectors in the capital city of Cairo. The clerical leader [Mufti] of the group is Dr. Umar Abdul Rahman, who was an official of the Shari’a law interpretation and implementation. He also was the one who wrote a religious decree/jurisprudence interpretation that can be considered as law in Islamic societies [Fatwa] that permitted the killing of a ruler who changes God’s laws. He also advocated Jihad against oppressive leaders in the same fatwa. It was this Fatwa that sealed the fate of President Anwar Sadat. The Islamic Group is different from the Jihad Group in

⁵² Kamal Musa, *The Muslim Brotherhood: When, How, and Why?* [Al Ikhwan Al Muslimun: Mata Kayf Wa Limaza] (Khartoum: The Azamite Oriented Research Institute’s Commission, 2007), p. 90.

that it concentrates more on propagating of the mission and popularizing it, rather than concentrating on complete secrecy.⁵³

Uzma Anzar, in his seminal study regarding religious education in some Muslim countries points that Madrassas in general are, at least, not perceived to be playing any noticeable role in politics. The Muslim Brotherhood political movement in Egypt, which is considered to be a terrorist group by the Egyptian government, is not rooted in the Madrassa system of Egypt. It began as a political movement on secular university campuses, which over the years has used Islam to generate wider support. Most of the Muslim Brotherhood have studied abroad and in secular universities. While Al Azhar University is considered to be a conservative institution, there is no evidence that its schools are the “breeding grounds” for Islamic radicals.⁵⁴

We can now look into the writings of the leaders of the jihadist movements in order to test the validity of Anzar’s statement. Muntasar Alzayyat, esquire and a leading ex figure of the Islamic Group, points in his aforementioned work (*The Islamic Groups: A Look from Within*) that the educational curriculum that Sheikh Abdullah Al Samawi—a leading pillar of the jihadist movement in Egypt—advocated to recruit members for his cause was considered as an initiation rite for the recruits. In this regard, Alzayyat says:

⁵³ Ibid., 95.

⁵⁴Uzma Anzar, 2003, *Islamic Education: A brief history of Madrassas with Comments on Curricula and Pedagogical Practices* [on-line]; available from <http://www.institute-for-afghan-studies.org>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2006.

We used to prepare secret educational meetings in the homes in Aswan. We used to study and educate ourselves in reading the Qur'an and how to recite its verses and the sayings [Hadiths] of the prophet. We used to read these educational materials from Riad Al Saliheen's book. Thus, the initiation of the members was completed through these educational meetings, which were organized on the model that the Muslim Brotherhood used. Samawi taught us in the same way he was taught when he was a young recruit with the Muslim Brotherhood; it consisted first and foremost of learning how to perfectly read the Qur'an and the intonations of the language of the book, and then to read Al Qurtubi's book, *Final Judgment Day* [Dar Al Akhera], and afterwards to read Ibn Kathir's interpretation of Qur'an [Tafsir Ibn Kathir], to read Al Showkani's *The Jurisprudence of Jihad* [Fiqh Ul Jihad], and finally to read Sayyid Qutb's famous book *Milestones* [Maalem Fi Al Tareeq]. This was the educational curriculum to become a member in Abdullah Al Samawi's organization.⁵⁵

Most often, the jihadist groups read some books and assumed some teachings from it, without going through the trouble of asking legitimate entities to explain those books and extract religious ruling [Fatwas] from them. Zayyat says that in some instances members of these groups took positions and read books without passing them through the leadership of their particular organizations. They were thus acting without the consent of our leaders and without any direction. We ourselves assumed the role of cleric sheikhs. We read the forefathers [Salafist from Salaf] volumes of Ibn Kathir, and Sheikh Ul Islam, Ibn Teymiyya and his student, Ibn Al Qayyim.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Muntasar Al Zayyat, *The Islamct Groups: A Look from Within* [Al Jamaat Al Islamiyya: Ru'iya Min Al Dakhil], (Cairo: Dar Misr Al Mahrusa, 2005), p.47-48.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 73.

The members of the jihadist groups did not get their religious education at the religious schools. In fact, the mosque was the place where they were indoctrinated through very violent jihadist curricula .Al Zayyat also points out that the neighborhood mosques were under the control of Sadat's Islamist opponents, who held their meetings in groups within the walls of these mosques in most Egyptian provinces, where they used to read the *Fiqh Al Sunna*, *Riyad Al Saliheen*, *Al Nawawi*, and the *Interpretation of Qur'an* by Ibn Kathir.⁵⁷

As for the engineer Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, who is the leader [Amir] of the Jihad Group and the main planner of President Sadat's assassination, as well as the author of the book *The Neglected Duty* [Al Faridah Al Gha'iba], he started his preaching from the small Umar Bin Abdul Aziz Mosque, which was situated at the lower level of the apartment building where he lived. He also taught from Al Shawkani's book *The Jurisprudence of Jihad for the Sake of Islam* [Fiqh Al Jihad Fi Sabil Al Islam], and the books of Sayyid Qutb, especially the latter's *Milestones* as well as the Fatwas of Ibn Teymiyya and the two volumes, *The Curriculum of Islamic Coup D'état* [Manhaj Al Inqilab Al Islami] and the *Ruling in the Islamic State* [Al Hakimiyya Fi Al Daawla Al Islamiyya] authored by Abi Al Aa'la Al Mawdudi.⁵⁸

The sit-ins that the Islamic Group organized during the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan were, in fact, an important venue for the study of jihadist

⁵⁷ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 94.

jurisprudence. Dr. Umar Abdul Rahman, the Mufti of the jihadist groups, lectured members who attended these educational meetings in the mosques at night and away from eyes of the government's security personnel.⁵⁹ Tawfiq Hamid, a former member of the Islamic Group, was a medical student at Cairo University in the late 1970s when he joined the group. Hamid says that the Islamic Group built a small prayer room in the medical school that later developed into a mosque with associated library. The mosque was behind the physiology and biochemistry departments, and leaders of the Islamic Group came there daily before science classes to lecture members on Islam.⁶⁰

All the leaders and members of the Jihad organization learned and were educated at mosques affiliated to Al-Gamiyya Al-Shariyya and Ansar- As-Sunnah group. The organization based its education curricula on Salafi approach which is a very conservative and literal approach. It obligated its members to attend the classes given by skeikh Mohamed Khalil Harras at Qawla mosque in Abdeen neighborhood. Moreover, the early courses of study of Jihad organization included two books by Sayyid Qutb: *In the Shadows of Qur'an* and *Milestones*. The classes given in these mosques constituted the meeting place of Jihad

⁵⁹ Ibid., 116.

⁶⁰ Tawfiq Hamid, 2007. *The Development of a Jihadist's Mind* [on-line]; available from http://www.futureofmuslimworld.com/research/pubID.63/pub_detail.asp ; Internet; accessed 4 June 2008.

members and the most significant field at that time for proselytization [Da'wah] and the activities of recruitment to the group.⁶¹

The members' houses and university campuses beside mosques were the places used by the jihadist groups for the propagation of religious education that aimed at teaching members and recruits the jihadist ideas and the legitimacy of violence, which these groups advocate. The leaders of Islamist groups lectured in these places and held meetings which lasted for several days.

Aside from the books included in the curricula of cadre education within these Islamic societies, the leaders also penned internal letters and circulars every time they were compelled to issue certain religious ruling [Fatwa]. This task was given to the Commissions of Legal Control, which also conducted the research necessary for a particular Fatwa that had to be published. A good example in this regard is the Fatwa that the Jihad Group issued to legitimize suicidal operations. It put forth a research paper titled "Self Sacrificial Operations from a Legal Perspective." It is interesting to note that the organization reached some very important rules, which were later adopted and even modified by Al Qai'da and its satellites, thus constituting the basis of a theoretical and legal framework that constituted the reasoning for most of their actions.⁶²

⁶¹ Abdel-Mon'em Moneeb, 2002, *History of the Jihad Group in Egypt* [on-line]; available from <http://www.islamonline.net> ; Internet; accessed 7 June 2008.

⁶² Ibrahim Alnajar et al., "Islamic movements: Definition and Activities," In: *Directory of Islamic movements in the World* [Daleel Al Harakaat Al Islamiyya Fi Al 'Alam], ed. Diaan Rashwan, (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Research, 2006) p.144.

Dr. Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian national who is considered to be the spiritual father of the Arab jihadists in Afghanistan, and a mentor to Usama Bin Laden himself, was educated at Cairo University in Egypt. He wrote about the sources that had motivated him and gave the impetus for the formation of his jihadist ideology. In this regard he says: “In reality I have not been impressed by authors who had written about Islamic thought, in as much as I have been impressed by the writings of Sayyid Qutb. I have to announce with the help of God the Almighty, that his [Qutb’s] writings opened up my chest and my heart to absorb all of his teachings. Qutb directed me intellectually, while Ibn Teymiyya did the same to me in the realm of ideology, Ibn Al Qayyim spiritually, and Al Nawawi in jurisprudence. These four thinkers were the most important in my formation and they have had a deep influence in my life.”⁶³

Azzam continues by saying that Qutb met his maker [died as a martyr] and left behind a huge heritage in Islamic thought that is the bread and butter of new jihadist generations. He explained and simplified meanings that were absent from many minds for a long period of time. Moreover, he clarified the meaning and the vocabulary of oppression, Jahiliyya, sovereignty [Al Hakimiyya], worship which is performed not only by praying and adoring but also by obeying [Al Ubudiyya], and attribute of divinity [Al Uluhiyya]. Through his honest and unwavering stance he also clarified the meanings of freeing oneself from that which is displeasing to

⁶³ Abdullah Azzam, *The Giant of Islamic Thought: The Martyr Sayyid Qutb*, [Umlaq Al Fikr Al Islami: Al Shaheed Sayyid Qutb]. (Peshawar, Pakistan: The Center of Al Shaheed Azzam, 1989) P. 3.

God and disowning the disbeliever, i.e. Kafirs [Al Baraa] and loyalty to God and love and closeness to the believers [Al Walaa], oneness of God [Al Tawheed], reliance on God [Al Tawakkul Ala Allah], and being afraid of his judgment [Al Khishya Minhu], and asking for his help [Al Iltijaa' Ilayhi]. Those jihadists went to and fought in Afghanistan know very well how deep Qutb's teachings are in Islamic Jihad and on their generation. The most indicative uttering in this regard is what Azzam says: "Some would not ask you for clothing even if they are naked, food if they are hungry, weapons even if they are unarmed, but they would definitely ask you for the books of Sayyid Qutb."⁶⁴

Attorney Hani Al Siba'i, an ex-member of the Jihad Organization, said that he once asked the following question to Dr. Ayman Al Zawahiri, the founder of the Egyptian Jihad Organization and the second in command within Al Qa'ida: "What moved you to form your group, even though you were still a student in the Al Maadi Secondary School?" Al Zawahiri replied that he was first moved by reading the books of Sayyid Qutb. He added that he was further moved by the clarity of Qutb's writings and the way by which he dissected the existing reality. Al Zawahiri described Qutb as the public coroner doctor, who dissects the body carefully, at length, and with utmost professionalism, as if he knows its [the body's] most minute details.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁵ Hani Al Siba'i, Hani Al Siba'i Tells the Story of the Jihad Organization [Hani Al Siba'i Wa Qissat Jamaat Al Jihad]. *Al Hayat newspaper*. London, issues 14409-14412, September 1 through September 4, 2002.

Fathi Al Shiqaqi, the Palestinian who founded and led the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Organization and the author of the book *Sacrifice* which justified the suicidal operations, was a medical student at Zagazig University in Egypt during the 1970's when he joined forces with some fellow colleagues at the faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Medicine, and Faculty of Science at his university to form the organization. Al Shiqaqi was inclined to the Pan-Arabism movement until a friend of his gave him Sayyid Qutb's *Milestones*.⁶⁶

Rabih Kabeer, a physicist and the former chief of the executive body of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front abroad, in telling his story says: "At the beginning of my life I was influenced by the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood. I read the books of Hassan Al-Banna, however, Sayyid Qutb had a particular impact on me and I still keep his books *In the Shadows of Qur'an* and *Milestones* in my private library."⁶⁷

In his book titled *Knights Under the Banner of the Prophet* Zawahiri says that:

Qutb stressed the importance of the oneness of God as ruler and deity [Tawheed] so much that he went on writing that the battle between Islam and its enemies is in essence dogmatic. He also explained that the issue of Tawheed relates to who is

⁶⁶ Samih Khalaf, *Islamic Jihad Organization and AlQuds Brigades: Construction, Composition, Vision, and Strategy*, [Harakat Aljihad Alislami Wa Saraya Al quds: Albinaa Wa Altakween Wa Alruiaa Wa Alistratigeyya]. (Cairo: Wahaba Bookstore, 2006), p.5

⁶⁷ Rabih Kabeer, 2008, *Special Visit* [Ziyarra Khasa] Aljazeera TV. [on-line]; available from, <http://aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/EDECAB51-4366-ACEE-4EAAA8B4D7A.htm> ; Internet; accessed 6 June 2008.

the real ruler of the world. Is it God and his Laws, or earthly rulers and their material principles?⁶⁸

Ismail Al Shareef, son of Dr. Sayyid Imam Abdul Aziz Al Shareef, the ex Amir of the Jihad Organization and the most revered Faqih within the Islamist groups, and author of the book titled *Mainstay in Preparing for Jihad* [Al Umda Fi I'dad Al Udda], which is treated as a constitutional document by Alqai'da, referring to his father's life says:

University education was a turning point in the life of my father. It oriented him toward religiosity and being bound by more religious motivations. He organized a library of religious books. This was the beginning of his concentration on reading religious writings. And since he was an outstanding student at the medical faculty, he received many monetary grants and stipends, which he used to buy more religious books that he read parallel to his academic studies. He used to attend the meetings of the first jihadist groups in Egypt with his classmates in 1968. Some of the most famous speakers in these meetings were none others than Dr. Ayman Al Zawahiri and Dr. Amin Al Dumeyri. Qutb and Sheikh Ul Islam Ibn Teymiyya have had the most important influence on these students. Ibn Teymiyya was quoted more often than others during his discussions.⁶⁹

When the judge asked Lieutenant Khalid Al Islambuli, the assassin of President Sadat, during his trial if Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, the mastermind of the assassination plan, really did give him some special books to read, he answered: "Yes. He used to advise me to read Ibn Teymiyya's books,

⁶⁸ Ayman Al Zawahiri, 2001, *Knights Under the Banner of the Prophet* [Fursan Tahta Rayat Al Nabi] [on-line]; available from <http://www.daawa-info.net> ; Internet; accessed 27 February 2007.

⁶⁹ Ismail Sayyid Imam, A dialogue. *Al Jarida Magazine*, Issue 152, Monday December 26, 2007, Cairo.

Abi Al Ala Al Mawdudi's book *Jihad for the sake of God* [Al Jihad Fi Sabeel Allah], and Al Shawkani's "Nayl Al Awtar."⁷⁰

It can be assumed then that Anzar's conclusion about the emergence of the violent groups is correct and that the religious books incorporated into the curricula of education within the jihadist groups and which were used in homes, mosques, and university meetings, brought forth the generation of Ayman Al Zawahiri, and the generation of Lieutenant Khalid Al Islambuli. This route was to continue until it reached its apex in jihadist violence with the generation of engineer Muhammad Atta and his comrades, who surprised the world with their attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. At this juncture we will look at two of the books that violent jihadist groups use for internal education purposes.

Egyptian Jihadist Texts

Milestones [Maalem Fi Al Tariq] by Sayyid Qutb is considered to be the most dangerous document that constituted the jihadist thought in Egypt and the Islamic world during the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of this century. Qutb wrote the book in 1965 during his incarceration by the Nasserite regime, which culminated in his execution in 1966, after he was accused of leading a faction that planned to overthrow the existing regime by force. Qutb advocated fundamental ideas in his book, which later became the dynamic engine

⁷⁰ Muntasar Al Zayyat, *The Islamist Groups: A Look from Within* [Al Jamaat Al Islamiyya: Ru'ya Min Al Dakhil], (Cairo: Dar Misr Al Mahrusa, 2005), p. 174.

in the formation of violent jihadist groups. The ideas Qutb advocated were related to the Jahiliyya of the society, the Hakimiyya of God, and offensive jihad that aimed at freeing the people through violent revolution, and purifying Islam and its ideology.

The existence of the Muslim nation, according to Qutb, has been a bygone issue for centuries. The Muslim nation was not a land in which Islam dwelt. It was not even a people whose ancestors lived under an Islamic system during an epoch of history. The Islamic nation is a group of people whose life, imagination, social order, rules, values, and arbitrations were regulated by an Islamic curriculum. The nation with these characteristics had been demolished ever since ruling with God's Shari'a was taken away. Therefore, it is an urgent necessity to re-establish that nation, so that Islam can once again perform its expected role in leading humankind.⁷¹

The whole world lives today in Jahiliyya, away from their original values, from which the constituents of life and rules are derived. Materialism and scientific invention only add to Jahiliyya. This new Jahiliyya is founded on the principle of attacking God's dominance on earth and deforming the principles of his Godliness, from which his dominance is derived. It gives authority to people rather than God, in the name of new social inventions such as justice and the rule

⁷¹ Sayyid Qutb, 1965 *Milestones* [Maalim Fi Al Tariq] . [on-line]; available from <http://www.daawa-info.net> ; Internet; accessed 29 March 2008.

of law, without giving regard to God's laws, when God has not allowed such a divergence from his path.⁷²

Today we live in a Jahiliyya that is similar to, or even worse, than that which predated Islam and coexisted with it during the latter's heyday. Jahiliyya is all around us. Peoples' imagination and their dogmas, traditions, customs, laws, the sources of their civilization, their arts, literature, and even a lot of what is considered as Islamic civilization, doctrines, philosophy, and thought is the work of Jahiliyya. Therefore, the real values of Islam will not be reintegrated in our society and its thinking, like it happened during the first age we accepted Islam, until this Jahiliyya is uprooted.⁷³

Qutb then announces that there are only two kinds of societies: an Islamic society and a Jahiliyya society. The Islamic society is the one where Islam is implemented through its dogmas, worship of God, Shari' a, and human behavior. The Jahiliyya society is the one where Islam is not implemented and its dogmas, ideologies, rules, imaginations, and human behavior are not considered. The Islamic society is not a place where people calling themselves Muslims reside, where in reality God's Shari' a is not the rule, even if its constituents prayed, fasted, and did his pilgrimage [Hajj].⁷⁴

This way, Qutb prepares the background for the jihadist to come out of society and its ruling elites. The first to isolate themselves from this society would

⁷² Ibid., 3.

⁷³ Ibid., 7.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 44.

become the vanguard, a group that has the Qur'anic knowledge and will amalgamate into the true Islamic society. Qutb tells this vanguard that their first aim is to change the reality of this society. Their goal is to change the foundations of this Jahiliyya society. This reality collides principally with the Islamic program and imagination. It is a system that leads them to piety. He asserts that the first move is to rise above this Jahiliyya society and its values and not to give in to our values and imaginations so that a modus vivendi can be reached with it. He states that they are on divergent routes with it. If we are put in a situation where we have to coexist with it, we will lose our program and our way.⁷⁵

The means to achieve this essential change, in Qutb's view, is offensive jihad that aims at the formation of God's kingdom on earth, the destruction of the kingdom of humans, taking authority back from those who had taken it by force and returning it to God the almighty. This can't happen by words alone, because those who had attained authority over people and taken it from God are not ready to give it back through words.⁷⁶ Since the supreme goal of Islam is the reconstitution of God's rule on earth, Jihad becomes a necessity because right and wrong can't coexist on this earth. Moreover, when Islam announces its rule and frees people from slavery, they will then fight those who have enslaved them. Thus the battle will continue until God is victorious.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 23.

Qutb asserts that Islam is an announcement for the complete freedom of humans from slavery. It aims at destroying the regimes set forth by the ruling elites and returning it back to God. Therefore, any definition of Islamic Jihad as a defensive war against regular enemies is to belittle it and the religion that stands behind it and also its real role on earth. Those who attempt to defend the concept of Jihad by interpreting it in the narrow sense of the current concept of defensive war, and who do research to prove that the battles fought in Jihad were all for the defense of the homeland of Islam – some of them considering the homeland of Islam to be just the Arabian peninsula – against the aggression of neighboring powers, they lack understanding of the nature of Islam and its primary aim. Such an attempt is nothing but a product of a mind defeated by the present difficult conditions and by the attacks of the treacherous orientalist on Jihad.⁷⁸

In his systematic effort to prove that offensive Jihad is the origin of Islamic Jihad, Qutb asks the following questions: Can anyone say that if Abu Bakr, Omar or Osman [The three successors of the prophet] had been satisfied that the Roman and Persian powers were not going to attack the Arabian peninsula, they would not have striven to spread the message of Islam throughout the world? How could the message of Islam have spread when it faced such material obstacles as the political system of the state, the socio-economic system based on races and classes, and behind all these, the military power of the government?⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 27.

Islam, according to Qutb, is not a theory that works on suppositions. It is a program rooted in reality. Therefore, it is imperative that a new society based on the cognizance of the oneness of God must emerge, and this new society must accept the rule of God on earth. Any other formula of authority is refused. When this society becomes a fact, it will have a real life that needs to be organized and legislated. Only then will Islam assume its real role of organizing and legislating in accordance with the rule of God, and rejecting any other kind of existence.⁸⁰

The Neglected Duty [Al Faridah Al Gha'iba] was written in 1979 by engineer Muhammad Abdul Salam Faraj, the ideologist of the Jihad Organization that assassinated President Sadat and initiated a wave of terrorist acts against Egyptian state symbols, one of the most important books that jihadist movements used for its membership drives for Jihad, the excommunication [Takfir] of the ruling elites, and to change the regime by force. The book includes a series of Fatwas taken from Ibn Teymiyya's book of Fatwas. It also contains exegesis of Qur'anic verses about battle and the Hadith of the prophet that incited Muslims to battle infidels [Kuffar, from the singular kafir]. The book's inclination to support itself on Ibn Teymiyya's Fatwas can be explained by Faraj's conviction that Muslims today are living in a period that is similar to that of the Tatar invasions [the period witnessed by Ibn Teymiyya, who wrote his Fatwas accordingly]. Rhetorically speaking, the neglected duty is Jihad. It is the duty that Muslim thinkers ignore today, even though they know that it's the only way to reinvigorate Islam. They

⁸⁰ Ibid., 14.

know that the oppressors of this world can only be exterminated through the sword, since the prophet himself says: "...I was sent with the sword so that God is worshiped without any equal. He [God] made my livelihood into my spear, and brought shame and disgrace to those who went against my orders. Whoever acts like these scoundrels is one of them." In explaining this Hadith, Ibn Rajab says that the prophet's uttering of "...I was sent with the sword" means that God sent him with the sword so that he could announce monotheism [Al Tawheed]. Those who did not adhere to monotheism and the Qur'an through peaceful and logical means of conviction [Al Hijja Wa Al Bayan] would be wiped by the sword. The Prophet talked to the oppressors in Mecca by saying: "...Listen to me O the people of Quraysh [the Prophet's own tribe]. Those of you who won't follow Muhammad by their own will be slaughtered." It is clear then that the prophet's saying "...will be slaughtered" did show his people the right way to God in the heart of Mecca and while being surrounded by their pagan, infidel priests.⁸¹

Faraj considers the formation of the Islamic state as a duty that all Muslims should follow, since God has said in the Qur'an that "You shall rule among them in accordance with God's revelations to you" [to the Prophet, meaning the Qur'an. Surat Al Ma'ida, verse 49]. God also says: "... Those who do not rule in accordance with god's revelations are the disbelievers." [Surat Al Ma'ida, verse 44]. Faraj then states that Muslims don't live in a Muslim state today, and are not governed by Muslim laws, but rather by laws that infidels had

⁸¹ Mohammad Faraj, 1979 *The Neglected Duty* [Al Fareeda Al Gha'iba] , [on-line]; available from <http://www.alkalema.net> ; Internet; accessed 14 October 2007.

brought forth and forced Muslims to abide by them. After the Caliphate was abolished in 1924 and the uprooting of Islamic law [Shari'a] and replacing it with infidel laws, the Muslims were in a situation like when they were ruled by the Tatars according to the Tatar's codex of law [Yasa], which was first codified under Djengiz Khan, who brought together several codexes and created his own laws. The Tatars were thus considered infidels that had to be fought until they returned to the laws of God and his prophet.⁸² And since the rulers of Muslims today resemble the Tatars and are considered to be outside the realm of Islamic law [Shari'a], therefore, Muslims must not help them [rulers], since Islam condones robbing them of their money and makes it a duty of Islam to fight them with the Qur'an and the Sunna. God says in the Qur'an Fight them so that there is no commotion or distress [Fitna] and all of religion returns to God [Surat Al Anfal, verse 39]."⁸³

Faraj then decides that one remains an infidel even though he pronounces the first two of a Muslim's testimonials [Shahadah] but does not carry the banner of jihad. Moreover, it is permitted to kill those who work with or for existing governments, because by doing so they defend infidel governments. Those who die while performing their duties toward such governments will die as infidels,

⁸² Ibid., 3.

⁸³ Ibid., 6.

unless they were forced to do so, in which case they will be resurrected in accordance with their true feelings.⁸⁴

Faraj totally rejects the idea that jihad in Islam is a defensive phenomenon. He insists that Islam was propagated by the sword and that the prophet, when asked about Jihad for the sake of God said: “He who fought so that God’s word remains the highest is a true follower of God, because it is a duty for Muslims to raise their swords against rulers who cover what’s right and uncover what’s wrong. Otherwise justice will not be served and it will not reach the people.⁸⁵ The author of *The Neglected Duty* brings forth the verse of the sword, which is God’s word: “When the months that forbid you from fighting [These months are Zu Al Hijja, Zu Alka’ida, Rajab and Muharram] end, kill the infidels wherever you find them. Follow their movements closely and surround them” [Surat Al Taubah, verse 5]. Faraj then resorts to Ibn Kathir help in his explanation of this verse by stating that God, through this verse, made it clear that nothing, not even kindness, humanity, peoples’ dignity can force Muslims not to kill infidel enemies.⁸⁶

Faraj finally insists that it is because Muslims had abandoned Jihad they are living in shame and their unity is compromised. He also says that there is no

⁸⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 16.

other way for Muslims, but to commit themselves to the duty of Jihad, the neglected duty that they had forgotten for a long time.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Ibid., 20.

CHAPTER 3

Religious Education in Egypt

This chapter will analyze the Shari'a and Language curriculum at the Azherite schools' preparatory and secondary levels, in accordance with the curriculum adopted for the 2006-2007 academic year. The focus will be on lessons on Jihad and battle, and relations of Muslims with non-Muslims in order to test the credibility of pretensions advocating that such curricula incites hatred and animosity toward non-Muslims and are thus regarded as the main reason that direct the Muslim youth and students to adhere to fundamentalist ideas regarding non-Muslims in the context of violent jihadist groups that conduct an unwavering war against the United States and ruling regimes in the Arab and Islamic world.

What is Jihad?

Jihad, like other words taken from a religious context, has a long history and a complex set of meanings. Conventionally it is translated as "holy war", but this definition, associated with the medieval Crusades, is usually rejected by Muslims as too narrowly Christian. In Arabic, the word's literal meaning is "striving" or "exerting oneself," with the implication, on the basis of its usage in the Qur'an, "with regard to one's religion".⁸⁸ Some people maintain that Jihad does not mean "holy war." Rather, it refers to a central and broad Islamic concept

⁸⁸David Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, (California: University of California Press, 2005), p. 1

that includes the struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in the battlefield for self defense, or fighting against tyranny or oppression.⁸⁹ The new edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam defines Jihad as “In law, according to general doctrine and in historical tradition, the Jihad consists of military action with the object of the expansion of Islam and, if need be, of its defense.”⁹⁰ However, the precise nature of Jihad, the conditions which initiate it, the nature of the enemy and whether it is offensive or defensive or both are difficult to determine. Daniel Pipes argues that:

Jihad is “holy war.” Or, more precisely: it means the legal, compulsory, communal effort to expand the territories ruled by Muslims at the expense of territories ruled by non-Muslims. The purpose of Jihad, in other words, is not directly to spread the Islamic faith but to extend sovereign Muslim power (faith, of course, often follows the flag). Jihad is thus unabashedly offensive in nature, with the eventual goal of achieving Muslim domination over the entire globe.⁹¹

The offensive Jihad is a collective duty of the community of Muslims to pursue the infidels into their own land, to call upon them to accept Islam and to fight them if they don’t accept. It can only be implemented under the command of Islamic ruler – the Caliph- who appoints believers to guard the borders and sends out an army at least once (sometimes twice) a year.⁹² Offensive Jihad takes place

⁸⁹ Douglas Streusand, What does Jihad Mean?, *Middle East Quarterly*. September 1997.

⁹⁰ *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. Peri Bearman et al., (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2006), p. 875.

⁹¹ Daniel Pipes, What is Jihad?, *New York Post*. 31 December 2002.

⁹² Shmuel Bar, *Jihad Ideology in Light of Contemporary Fatwas*, (Washington DC: Hudson Institute, 2006) p. 8

when Muslims launch an offensive attack. If this attack is on the non-Muslims [Kuffar] who have previously received the message of Islam, then to call them towards Islam before commencement of the attack is considered preferable. However, if the message of Islam has not reached them, then the non-Muslims will be invited towards Islam. If they reject Islam, then they will have to pay a special tax [Jizya]. If they refuse to submit to the payment of Jizya then the Muslims are to fight against them. The offensive Jihad is a duty that if performed by some (a sufficient number), the obligation falls from the rest [Fardh Kiffayah].

The defensive Jihad, on the other hand, is a compulsory duty on every Muslim to perform [Fardh Ayn] in defense of Muslim lands when the infidels prepare to attack them or when they attack and occupy them or when Muslims come into proximity of infidels on the battle field. The explanation of fardh Ayn is that every person will go for Jihad to such an extent that the son will march forth without the permission of his father, the wife without the permission of her husband, the debtor without the permission of the creditor. The Jihad becomes fardh, firstly upon all the Muslims in the area being attacked. If the Muslims are not sufficient or they do not fulfill this Jihad, then it is obligatory upon the Muslims in the next town or country to assist.

Most accounts of Jihad agree that it has both an internal and an external aspect. The external Jihad is an activity in the world, involving physical combat against real enemies in real time. The internal Jihad, sometimes called the “greater

Jihad,” is a struggle against the self, in which we suppress our own base desires, purify ourselves, and then rise, to contemplation of higher truth.⁹³

In general, there are three common approaches to Jihad in Islam. First, the radical approach which sees Jihad as only a military (physical) conflict between the Muslims and the infidels [Kafirs]. This approach is deeply embedded in orthodox Islamic interpretations and traditions. Its definition of Jihad as solely a military struggle is based on:

- (1) The duty to emulate the Prophet and his companions; the Prophet “strove” in military Jihad most of his later life and therefore it is worthy of a Muslim to imitate his behavior.
- (2) The explicit statements in the Qur’an that “Fighting is enjoined on you and it is an object of dislike to you and there may be that you dislike a thing and it is good for you ... Allah knows best.” And, “Fight them until there is no more distress [Fitna] and the religion will be for Allah alone.” These verses are interpreted as a clear command to fight in a Jihad, whenever possible.
- (3) Disapproving of the authenticity of the Hadith on “the lesser Jihad” and the “greater Jihad.”⁹⁴

⁹³Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006). p. 13

The second approach defines Jihad as a struggle against the heresy [Kufr] in general, and not a military struggle against the heretics [Kufar]. This approach tends to emphasize the spiritual interpretation of Jihad and its implementation only through proselytization [Daw'a], and to play down its military connotations. This approach bases its argument on the following:

- (1) The verse in the Qur'an which calls to Jihad against the disbelievers and the hypocrites [Munafiqin]; since the hypocrites are Muslims, and Muslims cannot wage a military Jihad against another Muslim, it is constructed to mean that the Jihad in this case cannot be in the form of war [Qital].
- (2) A historic argument that the only way to spread Islam in the time of the Prophet was through the sword. Today, however, there are many other ways to spread Islam, through da'wa – via the mass media, internet etc. An extreme example of this argument is that the concept of Jihad was relevant in the 7th century and is not relevant in the modern times.
- (3) A practical argument based on the relative weakness of the Muslims and the harm that will be caused to Muslim nation [Umma] if it wages a military Jihad against the rest of the world.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Shamuel Bar, *Jihad Ideology in Light of Contemporary Fatwas*, (Washington DC: Hudson Institute, 2006) p. 8

⁹⁵ Ibid.

The last approach relies on the linguistic analysis of the word Jihad (strive), to divest it from its military connotation. According to this approach, Jihad is “self exertion” of a Muslim to discipline his own soul, to improve one’s faith and to combat his own evil inclination. To support this definition, a hadith is quoted, according to which the Prophet greeted soldiers on their return from war and told them that now they have returned from the “lesser Jihad” to the “greater Jihad” against one’s evil inclination.⁹⁶

Azherite Schools

The Azhar Al Shareef in Egypt is considered one of the biggest and oldest centers of religious education in the Middle East and the Islamic world. It started its mission in the year 975 AD and passed through several formations before it reached the condition in which it is today. The pre-university educational levels in the Azherite schools include the primary level which spans over six years, the preparatory level (three years), and the secondary level (three years). The schools have two directional curricula: Literary and Scientific. This means that aside from the teaching of Shari’a and language, students are also exposed to math, geography, history, chemistry, physics, and foreign Languages. After completing the secondary level, students attend one of the Shari’a colleges at Al Azhar University. Graduates of these colleges work as prayer leaders [Imams] and preachers in mosques or teachers at the primary schools. On the other hand, those who choose the scientific option attend Al Azhar University and study scientific

⁹⁶ Ibid., 7.

disciplines. Azherite schools are not restricted to Cairo; they are found in all regions and provinces of Egypt. The number of Azherite schools is estimated at 8,772 in the academic year (2006-2007), with classes in the various levels having reached 46,633 nationwide, and a total student body of 1,772, 800.⁹⁷

Al Azhar's primary education spans over a six-year period. Students enter at age six. They have to study and memorize 18 sections of the Qur'an, in addition to their Islamic upbringing, Arabic language and handwriting. The preparatory level spans over 3 years. Here students learn and memorize seven additional sections of the Qur'an and are introduced to Islamic Fiqh, Tawheed, the prophet's life, reading, writing and grammar. Secondary education also spans over three years. Students learn and memorize five more sections of the Qur'an, continue being educated in Fiqh, Qur'anic commentary and explanation, the Hadith, grammar, Tawheed, and literature.⁹⁸

In the following pages we will analyze the Shari'a and Language textbooks at the Azherite schools' preparatory and secondary levels, in accordance with the curriculum adopted for the 2006-2007 academic year. The focus will be on lessons on Jihad and battle, and relations of Muslims with non-Muslims in order to test the credibility of pretensions advocating that such curricula incites hatred and animosity toward non-Muslims. The objective of the analysis is to search for the three themes of Jihad: offensive Jihad, defensive

⁹⁷ The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics. 2007. *Yearbook - 2007*, Cairo: Government of Egypt.

⁹⁸ Muhammad Tantawi, Lucid Words about the Curricula of Al Azhar [Kalimaat Waadiha 'An Manahij Al Azhar Al Shareef], *Al Ahram Newspaper*, Cairo, 5 May 1998.

Jihad, and Jihad for the purification of the soul in addition to the lessons on the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims as they are presented in the textbooks. The thirteen textbooks under our purview are arranged by their date of publication – oldest to newest, each one evaluated for common themes: Jihad and relations with non-Muslims. An overview and analysis is provided for each text.

Lessons on Jihad and Relations with non-Muslims

The Book of the Murabaa Garden with an Explanation of Important Themes and a Summation of Persuasion [Kitab Al Rawd Al Murabaa Bisharh Zad Al Mustanqaa Mukhtasar Al Mukannaa]. By Sharaf Ul Din Abi Al Naja Musa. 477 pp. Published in 1622.

Overview. This is the book that has been decided for the course on Islamic jurisprudence for students of Hanbali School of Jurisprudence [Madh'hab Hanbali] in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades of Azherite schools. The book is written in a difficult and complex Arabic which is often not used in contemporary times. The purpose of the book is to teach students the religious views of the Hanbali School of Jurisprudence in matters related to topics such as prayer, marriage, alms, fasting, etc. The book contains thirty chapters dealing with the following themes: Purity, Prayer, Funerals, Alms (Al Zakat), Fasting, Pilgrimages, Jihad, Selling, Charity, Commandments, Religious Rights, Ownership of Slaves, Marriage, Divorce, Devolution, Clothing, Swearing, The Book of Numbers [in the Old Testament of the Bible], Expenditures, Criminal Acts, Dowries, Borders, Foods, Hunting, Faith, Sacrifice, Justice, Acceptance (of

God), and Deciding. As to the weight that each theme occupies it becomes apparent from the number of pages devoted to it in the aforementioned textbook.

The pages on Jihad constitute 1.25% of the total number of pages.

Murabaa Garden: Table of Contents

<i>SUBJECT</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PAGES</i>
Purity	35
Prayer	71
Funerals	15
Alms [Al Zakat]	19
Fasting	13
Pilgrimage	29
Jihad	6
Selling	92
Charity	10
Commandments	7
Religious Rites	20
Ownership	2
Marriage	28
Divorce	20
Separation	2
Clothing	3
Swearing	3
The Book of Numbers	7
Breast Feeding	2
Expenditures [Alimony]	9
Sins	8
Blood Money	10
Sexual Affairs	13
Food	2
Hunting	2
Faith	1
Covenants	7
Justice and Punishment	9
Testimony	6

Jihad. According to the book, Jihad, in Arabic language, is defined as “...The source of jahad [to exert effort] it is legally defined as combating/fighting Kafirs.”⁹⁹ Jihad is a duty that must be fulfilled. If it is practiced by some believers and it is enough then that’s acceptable, otherwise all believers would have been considered as sinned. Furthermore, those who want to practice it must be examined to see if they can practice it. The best volunteer is he who can also pay his own expenses for Jihad. Moreover, the volunteer must fight if there is a battle, or his country is attacked while he is in the duty of Jihad. A volunteer must even obey his Imam if the latter needs him for this duty. God says: ‘When you meet an enemy, be firm, and call upon Allah in remembrance much; that you may prosper.’ God also says ‘What’s the matter with you? When you are asked to go forth in the cause of Allah, you cling heavily to the earth.’ Moreover, if men are called to Jihad none should be late without an important excuse.’ The duty for Jihad is for forty days. The Prophet announced that: ‘The call for Jihad duty [Al Rabat] is for forty days],’ which was told to us by Abu Al Sheikh in the ‘Book of Recompense.’ Jihad is called upon to strengthen Muslims. The least amount one can be called to this duty is for an hour and the best are those Muslims that defy the enemy in the hardest of positions. Still, a true Muslim must ask for his parent’s permission to go for Jihad and must go to battle after they [parents] bless

⁹⁹ Sharaf Ul Din Musa, *The Book of the Murbaa Garden with an Explanation of Important Themes and a Summation of Persuasion*, [Al Rawd Al Murabaa Bisharh Zad Al Mustanqaa Mukhtasar Al Mukannaa] (Cairo: The Egyptian Company for Publishing and Distribution, 1978) p. 92.

him, as is said by Al Turmuzy. However, the blessing of the parents is not considered a condition for Jihad if Muslims were attacked by the enemy. Also, if one is burdened with a debt to another Muslim he must first ask permission from the debtor to satisfy the call of Jihad.¹⁰⁰

In the case of Jihad, an Imam must ensure that his army of men is prepared. He then orders those who are not ready or do not have the proper horse to fall back. He must also seek those who are afraid and make them fall back too. The Imam must also be wise enough to make those who are not true to their heart or those who might create commotion in the ranks to fall behind. He must then tell his men all the information that he has gathered about the enemy through his scouts. This he does as soon as the army is in enemy territory. This is told to us by Abu Dawud, which he has taken from a Hadith of Habib Bin Muslima, who said: 'I saw the Prophet leading his army.' The soldiers must be loyal to their leader and to God, since the Prophet has said: 'Obey God and obey his Prophet and those who are in the position of leading you.' Soldiers can't attack without the order of their leader, unless they are attacked without such an order being given to them, in which case they can attack without such orders.¹⁰¹

As to the laws that govern Jihad, spoils of war, tax on people [Jizia] and tax on agricultural land [Kharaj] [both taxes levied on non Muslims] the book says that it is possible to imprison Kafirs in a home and to throw them with a

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 93.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 95.

catapult [Manjaniq], even if that causes the death of a youngster. However, the killing of a boy, a woman, a monk, or an old or a blind man is forbidden, because they did not have any idea in the battle and they did not battle the Muslims. And if one of the Kafir parents of an underage boy becomes a Muslim, then he [underage boy] is considered a Muslim and is even allowed to take part of the booty that was gathered in the land that he lives in. As to what concerns the division of the booty, that is solved by Umar's saying that 'the booty belongs to those who were in the battle and were eyewitnesses when the booty was taken. Here Umar speaks about the division of the booty and says that the Imam of the army must take out one fifth of the booty and divide it into five parts: 1) One part for God and 2) another to his prophet. 3) another part to Bani Hashim and Bani Abdul Muttalib [Family of the prophet] to be divided among their rich and poor. 4) another part for orphans and 5) another for the poor. As to the rest of the booty, it is four fifths in value, is divided among the soldiers according to the following formula: a decided part for the foot soldier and three times that portion to a knight [one portion for him and two portions for his horse]. However, those knights that do not mount an Arabian mare are given only one portion. Ibn Al Munzir speaks thus about the division of the spoils of war: 'The Prophet said that the Imam must divide his army into two and let each carry the spoils of war it collected to the lands of Islam.' On the other hand, Ibn Jabir says that 'if Muslims attack a land belonging non Muslims and occupy it, the inhabitants there are brought under Muslim rule and must pay taxes [Kharaj, Jizya, etc.] from then on an annual basis, as did Umar

[the second Caliph] after the prophet] when he occupied greater Syria [Bilad Ul Sham], Iraq, and Egypt. The Kharaj and Jizya are taxes that must be levied in accordance with the times and the economic situation in the occupied territories. Also, they might change in accordance to the number of Muslims who start inhabiting those lands. However, what Umar did in this regard remain as a principle and must be obeyed.¹⁰²

If the Zimmi breaks the Zimma contract that his Muslim rulers put upon him and refuses to pay the Jizya, or if he fights us [Muslims], kills a Muslim, adulterates and prostitutes, spies on Muslims or protects a spy, and speaks shamefully about God or his prophet, then the accord with him is null [but not with his women and children], and the Imam can deal with him as a prisoner of war and can even enslave him. However, if he then repents and accepts Islam, he cannot be killed.¹⁰³

The book defines the transgressors [Bughat pl. sing. Baghi] as those who defect, wreak havoc and up rise against the Imam. When a group of people have problems with the rule of the Imam, the Imam must ask them what issues of his rule they consider as rude and tyrannical. If it comes out that there are really issues that the Imam had not noticed and he corrects his ways, they must return to be ruled under Islam. However, if they still continue in their defiance then these Bughat must be battled. They cannot be punished by fire or by being thrown by a

¹⁰² Ibid., 95.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 100.

catapult, so that neither they nor their offspring are wiped out. Those of them that are taken as prisoners of war must be imprisoned so that they cannot declare war again.

Muslims and non-Muslims Relations: The “Other” in Muslim society according to the textbook “Al Rawd Al Murabaa” is divided into three categories. These are the people of the book [Jews and Christians], non Christians and Jews, and the apostate.

The relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book is arranged through the contract of Ahl Ul Zimma [non-Muslim subjects of an Islamic state]. The chapter on this contract is titled “Ahl Ul Zimma and Laws Governing them.” Zimma contract offers a guarantee and security and protection to the People of the Book on the condition that they pay a special tax imposed upon them [Jizya] and accept the laws that govern their societies and their forbearers. On this subject God has said “until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued”. There can’t be a contract or it is not desirable to conclude one with people other than Zoroastrians [fire worshipers, an old Persian religion] who, it is said, had a book that was sublimated and thus they became known through it and “since the prophet accepted the Jizya from the Zoroastrians and the inhabitants of Hagar,” about whom Bukhari speaks by quoting Abdul Rahman Bin Auf, as well as all the sects existing within the Jews and Christians. It is also said that whoever follows them [the latter] and accepts one or the other as did the people of Samara [A Christian city in Mesopotamia], the Europeans, and the

Sab'iaa [a religion whose followers still live in today's Iraq and worship John the Baptist], since God mentions them as "those who got the [Holy] Book before you [Muslims]. Moreover, the aforementioned contract can only be signed by a Muslim ruler [Imam] or his agent, because it is signed for eternity. This contract implies payment of tax every year in lieu of killing them and as a reason for giving them the opportunity of living among Muslims. Women, children, the mentally impaired, blind and old people, hermaphrodites, slaves, the poor who can't afford it are exempt from it. The tax is also due on ex-slaves. When they pay the tax it must be accepted and their killing as well as dispossessing them of their own money or harming them in any way is forbidden [Haram in Arabic], unless they live in the "House of War" [Dar Al Harb in Arabic, meaning geographic areas not yet under Muslim rule]. Converts to Islam are exempt from the Jizya. They [People of the Book] must be humiliated and they must feel subdued when they hand in the tax, and sending it is not acceptable.¹⁰⁴

It is the duty of the Imam to take them under his protection in such matters that Islam has legislated such as safety of the self, fortune, honor and dignity. They must also be advised that there are limits to be respected and no forbidden such as prostitution and drinking wine can be tolerated. In other words, the contract for the preservation of the Ahl Ul Zimma must be met by both sides and must conform to Islamic laws. In this regard Ibn Umar tells: "The prophet brought in two Jews who had undermined the law and he ordered them to be stoned." And

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 101.

since the non-Muslims must be distinguished from Muslims, so it is that they must not be buried in Muslim cemeteries. Further, they are not allowed to have a headdress like the one Muslims wear. They must not use bathrooms used by Muslims. They cannot mount horses, but rather donkeys and mules that have no mounting pieces attached. They cannot sit down with Muslims in meetings and it is forbidden for Muslims to serve them or to greet them with ‘Peace...’ or ask them about how they are in any social environment. They are also forbidden from building new churches or from buying any place of prayer in our lands. They also cannot rebuild their destroyed churches even if the churches were destroyed by wronging them. They cannot build homes that rise higher than those of the Muslims and if such a case appears that building must be destroyed. They must not show their wine and pork. They cannot overtly read their [holy] book in a high pitch even during burial ceremonies. They cannot show food during the month of Muslim fasting [Ramadan]. And if they are entitled to any tribute or dividends in their lands that is allowed for them.¹⁰⁵

The book also mentions some other laws that explain the way Ahl Ul Kitab participate in Muslim society. One such rule clarifies their participation in the prayer for rain [Al Istisqa] where the book says that “the Ahl Ul Zimma are allowed to go out alone, without Muslims with them, to meet in some place for rain prayer.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 102.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 103.

As to what concerns the issue of the marriage of a Muslim to a woman, there is a difference if the woman is a Muslim or not. In this regard, the book says: “The Muslim woman deserves inheritance in case her husband dies, and alimony in case she is divorced by her husband. However, if the wife is a Zummiyya [feminine for Zimmi, from Ahl Ul Zimma] she deserves only alimony and not any inheritance, because she is a foreigner and can remarry.”¹⁰⁷

The Muslim husband of a Zummiyya can obstruct her from drinking all that might make her drunk. However, she should be allowed to fast and to go to the church or synagogue to pray.¹⁰⁸

As to what concerns the washing of the dead, the book indicates that “each of the spouses should wash the other, unless if the wife is a Zummiyya.”¹⁰⁹

And if a Zummiyya who is pregnant from a Muslim dies, her husband, if possible, should bury her being alone, by placing her body on its left side, with the back of the body oriented toward the direction that Muslims orient themselves for prayer [Al Qibla] which was first in Jerusalem, but after the Prophet’s Hijra to Al Medina it became the Kaaba.¹¹⁰

From among the rules and laws that govern non-Muslims is what is stated in the section on crimes. The third condition of equality between the killer and his

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 104.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 105.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 106.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 107.

victim implies equal punishment requires that the killer and his victim must be equal in terms of religion, freedom, and slavery. This also implies that a Muslim whether free or slave must not be killed for non Muslim. A Muslim is not punished by death for killing a Kafir. This was told by Al Bukhari and Abu Dawud who both mention that a free person is not punished by death for killing a slave, which is also mentioned in a Hadith by Ahmad on Ali who, on the other hand, also stresses that a free person is not punished by death for killing a slave. Thus, a free person is not punished by death for killing despicable person, or a slave owner for killing a slave of his. A slave is punished by death for killing a slave even if the value attached to each of them is different. ¹¹¹ In the section on equitable retribution [Qesas] the book mentions that it must also be noted that there is no death punishment for a Muslim killing a Kafir, a free person killing a slave, a father killing his own son. These are cases where both parties are not equal before the law. ¹¹²

As to what concerns the blood money [Diyya] of a non-Muslim, the book says that their [non-Muslims] blood money is half that of a Muslim. Amru Bin Shu'aib presents this as something that has come to him from his father who had gotten it from his father: The prophet decided that the mind of a member of Ahl Ul Kitab is half of a Muslim's mind. On the other hand, "the blood money of a pagan or Zoroastrian is worth 800 Dirham [Arabic monetary instrument]." Also, it

¹¹¹ Ibid., 109.

¹¹² Ibid., 110.

is said, that Umar, Usman, and Ibn Mas'ud said: "that the blood money of the women of Ahl Ul Kitab, pagans, and Zoroastrians is half that of a [their] males, as is the case with Muslim women."¹¹³

Concerning the issue of cutting the hand of thieves, the book says that there are six conditions for cutting the hand of a thief, one of which is that: the stolen money must be of pure origin because it is not forbidden to steal the money of a warlike person. Also, no hand-cutting is involved for the thievery of an amusement tool, or something forbidden like wine, a cross, a pot or any container filled with wine. Also no hand cutting is involved for thievery of water or any container filled with water.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, only Muslims are qualified to act as witnesses in courts. Thus, a Kafir could not be a witness in a court even in a case solely involving a Kafir, unless he is there to be a witness for the will of a Muslim or a Kafir. In such a case, the testimony of two Zimmis would suffice, if there are no others to be witnesses thereof.¹¹⁵ As for those who were apt to take over the position of a judge, only Muslims are allowed to be considered, "because Islam is a condition of justice."¹¹⁶

The section, "Funerals" mentions that it is forbidden for a Muslim to wash a Kafir, carry him/her or to cloth him/her [Kufn, Kafn (v.) is the white cloth that

¹¹³ Ibid., 112.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 113.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 115.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 117.

Muslims use in burial ceremonies instead of a coffin], or even to follow such a procession. ¹¹⁷As to the issue of visiting a burial site, the book says that “a Kafir’s burial site can be visited [by Muslims].” ¹¹⁸Moreover, if the dead didn’t possess enough money to be paid for his Kafn it should be paid by his guardian. And even if the husband can afford his wife’s Kafn and burial expenses, he is not obligated to do that, since the marriage is dissolved with her death, because by definition he is obligated only if he can enjoy or get pleasure out of her. And since that enjoyment or pleasure was cut short because of the wife’s death, therefore he is not obligated. Finally, if a dead person needs to be buried, then the expenses can come out of the ruler’s coffers [Beyt Ul mal] if he was a Muslim, or, in the case of a non Muslim, from other Muslims who know that he could not have paid for such expenses. ¹¹⁹

The marriage of non-Muslims is regulated by the same rules governing the marriage of a Muslim. The same applies also to issues such as the health of the woman, her divorce, chastity, adultery and prostitution, dowry, alimony, and separation. Moreover, Zimmis are forbidden to marry those women who are forbidden for Muslims. However, they have the right to decide what to do with one who has spoiled the woman and the marriage if they have such laws that govern this aspect. If there is no law in their religion that governs this aspect then they also have the right in not to pursue the matter, because they didn’t come to us

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 121.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 125.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 126.

for advice. The Prophet took the Jizya from a Zoroastrian who left his wife; he did not object to the remarriage of the Zoroastrian, even though he knew that they, unlike Muslims, allow marrying a woman that is considered unsuitable in Islam. Therefore, if they come to a Muslim for such a marriage, Muslims conclude it in accordance with Islamic laws by asking both the man and the woman to answer the question if they both agree to it. This happens in the presence of a sponsoring person [usually the father or a close relative to the bride] and in the presence of two witnesses. God has said: “If you judge among the people, you shall judge equitably.” If it so happens that this married couple later become Muslim, then their previous marriage is considered legal, continuous, and binding, as long as it had met the conditions of acceptance from both parties, sponsored by a trustworthy member of the community, and witnessed by two credible witnesses. It must be noted, however, that other aspects must be checked (such as if the dowry is not paid) with things that are forbidden in Islam such as pork and wine. In such a case the dowry must be changed, since no Muslim woman can accept a dowry that is not legal according to Muslim laws.¹²⁰

Concerning the issue of the foundling the book says: “He is a Muslim if he lives in a Muslim territory, even if there are Zimmis in that territory. However, if he lives in a non Muslim territory, where no Muslims live, then he is considered a Kafir.”¹²¹

¹²⁰ Ibid., 127.

¹²¹ Ibid., 132.

The sponsor is a very important element of a marriage. No marriage can be binding without his presence. However, a kafir cannot act as a sponsor to a Muslim woman, and a Christian cannot act as one for a Zoroastrian woman, since they are not from the same creed, unless she is a mother of a Kafir son, or a Kafir mother to a Muslim son. The Imam acts as a sponsor in marrying those Zummiyya's who do not have sponsors. ¹²²It is also forbidden for a Kafir to marry a Muslim woman, ¹²³or a Muslim man [even if he is a slave] to marry a Kafir woman. ¹²⁴

The book describes the apostate as someone turning away from his religion [i.e. Islam].” God says: “Turn not in flight, for surely you turn back as losers.” A Muslim becomes a Kafir by his words and deeds, or if he suspects God, his judgments, godliness, oneness, characteristics, prophets [all those mentioned in the Qur'an]. God also is angry toward those who swear at him, his prophets, all other prophets, or those who proclaim prophecy. Those become Kafirs. Also, he who denies forbidding prostitution, adultery, and alcohol [like wine] becomes a Kafir. Moreover, he who rules other Muslims but does not apply Muslim law [Shari'a] is considered a Kafir too. ¹²⁵

¹²² Ibid., 133.

¹²³ Ibid., 175.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 176.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 178.

As to the laws governing those who defect from Islam the book states that according to Umar, he who defects from God and Islam for three days, is imprisoned, fed bread and his thirst is quenched by water, so that he realizes his sin and comes back to Islam, if he/she comes to his/her senses [according to Malik] he/she must be forgiven, but if he/she does not, he/she must be killed by the sword and not by fire, since the Prophet says:” He who defects from his religion kill him by the sword and not by fire, which is the punishment of God.” This punishment of death is carried by the Imam or his agent [according to Al Bukhari and Abi Dawud]. He who swears at God and his Prophet are not forgiven on this earth. Forgiveness is also not granted to those who adhere superficially to Islam but continue to be Kafirs at heart. In fact such people must be killed, because they are not true believers and the evil in their mind and soul is revealed. Even in such cases the three day grace period applies, as is passed down by the Hadith of Ibn Mas’ud, which states: “The Prophet entered a church and saw that a Jew was reading to them from the Torah. But when he spoke about the characteristics of the Prophet and his people, he said ‘There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet [the Shahadah]’, and the Prophet was pleased with him and he said: ‘Protect your brother.’ According to Ahmad, he who speaks foul against Islam and his Prophet must be dealt with according to the law of God. He who wants to join Islam must do so through the Shahadah. And if a Kafir says: I am a Muslim, or I believe in Islam, he becomes a Muslim. And if a Kafir says that Muhammad is the prophet of God, however he does not announce the complete

Shahadah, he will not be considered a Muslim, until he announces the complete Shahadah, especially what concerns the oneness of God. The apostate is not allowed to spend or deal with his fortune. However, if he returns to Islam, he is able to regain his fortune and to pay debts and to spend on his and his family's expenses from his fortune. However, if he keeps on defying he must be killed. Moreover, a witch who flies on a broom is considered a Kafir. However, a priest, astronomer, diviner, or a fortune-teller, are not considered in this category.¹²⁶

Analysis. The portion that the book devotes to Jihad is one of the least in the number of pages. The book gives much more value to lessons on purity, pilgrimage, prayer, and religious rites and ceremonies. Contrary to current international laws and conventions that are built on equality and forbidding of discrimination that is based on race, ethnicity, religion, sex, political or non political opinions and views, it can be said that according to this book the best legal condition is given to the male Muslim to the detriment of a non-Muslim [Zimmi or Kafir]. This leads us to state that the curriculum this book follows creates a sectarian atmosphere, which robs non-Muslims from many of their rights. There are many examples about this in the book, such as the laws governing Jizya and Kharaj, marriage, the testimony in courts [Shahadah], etc. Christians and Jews [Ahl Ul Zimma] have better rights and fewer obligations than people who are not monotheist. The book brings forth a multitude of laws governing slaves and slavery, thus giving weight to a historical period in Islam

¹²⁶ Ibid. 179.

that has long since gone into oblivion. Thus we can say that this portion of the book is useful only for historical purposes and nothing more. The book also contradicts international conventions and covenants and even some modern Intellectual technique through which a judgment is made independently of case law or past precedent [Islamic Ijtihad] regarding basic individual freedoms, such as choosing one's faith or religion. This was demonstrated in the section about apostates and their repentance. The details and the specifics of Jihad, spoils of war, and Jizya and Kharaj which the book entertains are contrary to the spirit of the times we live in. It reflects only the situations that were in force pertaining to the historical epoch the book was written in. Thus, we can easily denote them as historical Fiqh. Even though the book deals with many details about Jihad and the relations of Muslims with non-Muslims, it does not give a clear explanation about the wisdom behind such laws that it espouses. In accordance with the themes of Jihad, the book does not state clearly which theme it advocates, however, one can learn from the details it gives that it talks about offensive Jihad and defensive Jihad. Teaching students' jurisprudence of laws that are at least 400 years old without any review or modernization of the material build in them a tendency toward the old ways where nothing could be changed or modernized. This is a negative aspect, since instead of growing young minds on modern notions; the book does the exact opposite. This also underestimates their creative minds, which is the most important thing that Muslim societies need today in order to keep pace with the world. The complex vocabulary that the book uses in general,

and especially for the sections about Jihad and non Muslims are not in use today. This makes it even harder—if not impossible-- for students to understand the meaning of these sections and compare them with today's reality. Consequently, even the best students will just memorize and recite them without understanding what they are saying.

The Book of Mubdi's Fath That's Explained By Zubaydi's Summary [Kitab Fath Al Mubdi Bisharh Mukhtasar Al Zubaydi]. By Abdullah Al Sharqawi. 343 pp. Published in 1801.

Overview. This is the book that is used for teaching the prophet's sayings [Hadiths]. It is intended for the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades and is divided into three books. The Hadiths are divided into 42 subjects. The subjects included in the book are dry ablution, prayer, times of prayer, funerals, pilgrimage, fasting, wrongs, freeing of slaves, testimonies, virtues, good manners, education, reciting, alms, the lesser pilgrimage, hunting, business, agriculture, sickness, food, menstruation, medicine, the creation, Jihad, borrowing, the commandments, interpreting the Qur'an, the merits of Qur'an, equitable retribution, blood money, expressing oneself, partnerships, grants, conditions, marriage, excusing oneself, rules, Islamic monotheism, inspiration, faith, water ablution, and washing for purity. The purpose of the book is to teach students the teachings of the prophet and his deeds in religious issues that have not come out in detail in the Qur'an. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is

also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject. The Hadiths on Jihad occupy 3.49 % of the total number of pages. [See the contents of the book below]:

The book of Mubdi: Table of Contents

<i>SUBJECT</i>	<i>NUMBER OF HADITH</i>
Dry Ablution	1
Prayer	16
Times of Prayer	8
Funerals	6
Pilgrimage	2
Fasting	8
Wrongs	3
Freeing of Slaves	1
Testimonies	1
Virtues	4
Good Manners	7
Education	2
Reciting	10
Alms	6
The Lesser Pilgrimage	2
Hunting	1
Business	7
Agriculture	1
Sickness	2
Food	2
Menstruation	2
Medicine	3
The Creation	15
Jihad	6
Borrowing	2
The Commandments	1
Interpreting the Qur'an	9
The Merits of Qur'an	4
Equitable Retribution	2
Blood Money	2

Expressing Oneself	2
Partnerships	1
Grants	1
Conditions	1
Marriage	4
Excusing Oneself	3
Rules	1
Islamic Monotheism	3
Inspiration	1
Faith	16
Water Ablution	3
Washing for purity	1

It must be noted that the number of Hadiths for each subjects denotes the weight that the author has given to that subject.

Jihad. There are five Hadiths about Jihad in the book. Four of them are in the second part and one in the third part. In the first Hadith about jihad it is said “...that Abi Hurira said: A man came to the prophet and said: Show me a work that is equivalent to Jihad. He [the prophet] said: I can’t find it. If a Mujahid comes out [for Jihad] are you able to enter your mosque for prayer and not languish, and then fast and don’t eat when the daily fasting is over? The man answered him: Who can do that?”¹²⁷ The explanation of this Hadith is that a man came to the prophet and asked him to show him a work that is equal to Jihad and the prophet told him he couldn’t find a deed that is equal to Jihad and then he added that if a Mujahid comes out [for Jihad] are you able to enter your mosque

¹²⁷ Abdullah Al Sharqawi, *The Book of Mubdi’s Fath That’s Explained By Zubaydi’s Summary*, [Al Ahadith Al Mukhtara Min Fath Al Mubdi Bisharh Mukhtasar Al Zubaydi](Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector,2007), p. 81.

for prayer and not languish, and then fast and don't eat when the daily fasting is over? The man answered him: Nobody can do that ¹²⁸

In the second Hadith Abu Musa says: "A man came to the prophet and asked: The man fights for the spoils of war. Another is fighting to be remembered, while a third is fighting for his own courage and prestige. Which one of them is fighting for God? The prophet answered: He who fights for God so that God's word is honored." ¹²⁹

The book explains that a man came to the prophet and asked: The man fights for the spoils of war. Another is fighting to be remembered, while a third is fighting for his own courage and prestige. Which one of them is fighting for God? The prophet answered: He who fights for Tawheed so that God's word is honored, and not the ones' who fought for their own purposes. ¹³⁰

The third Hadith about Jihad is brought by Abu Hurira, where he says: "The Prophet said: whoever equipped, in full faith in God and his promise, a horse for jihad in the path of God, will find his balance on the day of judgment tipped in his favor by the weight of the food and water that it (the horse) ate or drank and its urine and dung." ¹³¹ On the other hand, the Hadith that Sahl Bin Sa'idi tells is as follows: "The prophet of God said: Giving a day for the sake of

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 82.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 84.

God [in Jihad] is better than the entire world and whatever is over it. The trace of one's whip in paradise is better than the entire world and whatever is over it. And going to Jihad or coming back from it is better than the entire world and whatever is over it.”¹³²

The explanation of this Hadith is that coming out for Jihad and fighting to protect Muslim lands is better than the luxuries of the whole world, which are timely, as opposed to the eternity of the Garden of Eden [Al Janna in Islam]. Moreover, the whip that is used to mount the horse and it's rider to Jihad is better on Judgment Day than owning the whole world. And finally, a man walking for Jihad the whole day from dusk until dawn is still better than the entire world and whatever is over it.¹³³

The fifth Hadith about Jihad is also brought by Abu Hurira, where he says: “The prophet of God said [to his enemies]: I was sent to you all. I became victorious by instituting fear into your hearts. And while I was asleep the coffers of the world and their keys were put in my hands.”¹³⁴ The explanation of this Hadith is that the word all denotes words and laws. The prophet usually spoke scantily. Thus there were lots of meanings in so few words. What he [the prophet] wanted to say was that he was able to be victorious on his enemies by instilling fear amongst them. And since his God had promised him the treasures of Khosro [the famous Persian king] and Cesar [Julius Cesar], that promise was given after

¹³² Ibid., 85.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 86.

the prophet's death, when Muslims conquered many lands and confiscated their treasures.¹³⁵

Muslims and non-Muslims Relations. In the Hadith told by Abdullah Bin Amru the Prophet says: "He who kills one who is in accord with us [Muslims] will not know the real odor of the Garden of Eden. Thus, he must wait for forty years to be able to do that."¹³⁶ The book explains this Hadith by stating that he who unjustly kills a Zimmi will not be able to know the real odor of the Garden of Eden as other believers, who have not committed such a crime, know. The forty years period denotes the section of one's life, where he is able to mature and repent for his previous sins. The general meaning of the Hadith is that the killing of a Zimmi is considered a faithful sin that forbids one from entering heaven.¹³⁷

Analysis: The three themes of Jihad: offensive Jihad, defensive Jihad, and Jihad for the purification of the soul are not mentioned directly in the book; however, the Hadiths speak about the merits of Jihad in general. The book gives more weight to the Prophet's Hadiths about faith, prayer, and the Story of Creation, while it devotes much less weight [in terms of number of pages] to the Hadiths on Jihad and relations with non-Muslims. The Hadiths about Jihad do not incite attacks against infidels [Kuffar pl. of Kafir] and Christians and Jews [Ahl Ul Zimma]. It must be noted that in one Hadith the Prophet states that a Muslim

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 77.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

who unjustly kills a Christian or Jew [Zimmi] will not enter Heaven. The book does not advocate forcing non Muslims to adhere to Islam and the Qur'an. There is nothing inciting hatred toward non-Muslims in the Hadiths about Jihad.

Book of Selected Islamic Monotheism [Tawheed] Lessons [Kitab Al Mukhtar Min Al Tawheed Lil Saff Al Thani Idadi]. By Hussien Abd Al Rahman Mekki. 67 pp. Published in 1956.

Overview. This is the book that is decided for the teaching of Islamic Monotheism [Tawheed] to students in eighth grade. The purpose of the book is to teach students issues of Islamic beliefs. It contains 21 lessons which deal with issues pertaining to faith, Islam, Prophecy, God's messengers, Prophets' miracles, Prophet Mohamed's message, etc. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject. The book does not include a lesson on Jihad. It includes one lesson on the prophets sent by God and what Muslims should know about them. The lesson occupies 5.97 % of the total number of pages.

Muslims and non-Muslims Relations. The lesson explains that God loved humans and thus sent several Messengers and prophets to lead them to piety and righteousness. A Messenger of God is defined as a free person and a son of Adam, whom God favored by revealing unto him his prophecy, so that he, out of his free will, announces His [God's] teachings to the people. Thus there is a

differentiation between prophets and messengers of God, since the latter are more special to God. This also means that every messenger of God is a prophet. However, prophets are not necessarily messengers of God.¹³⁸

The book states that Muslims must believe in all the prophets and the messengers of God, because believing in them is a basis of faith. He who does not believe in them is a Kafir, since God said: The messenger of God believed in what was revealed to him by his God. All believers have faith in God, His angels, His [holy] books and His messengers and, therefore, must believe in His messengers equally and without any distinction among them [Surat Al Baqara, verse 285].¹³⁹

The book also states that the prophet said that faith means that you have to believe in God, His angels, His [holy] books and his messengers. Therefore, one must generally believe that God sent messengers and prophets and only He knows their exact number. Moreover, Muslims must believe in the twenty five messengers and prophets that are mentioned in the Qur'an: Our Lord Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, Issa [Jesus], Noah, Adam, Idris, Judas, Shu'ayb, Zu Al Kafil, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, Ayyub, Joseph, Haroun, Zachary, Yahya, Elias, Isma'il, Alisah, Younis and Lot. He who rejects some sins [becomes a Kafir].¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Hussein Mekki, *Book of Selected Tawheed Lessons*, [Kitab Al Mukhtar Min Al Tawheed], (Cairo : Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p. 35.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 36.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 37.

The book also mentions that the strongest among them are five. They are: Our Lord Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Noah, since these five had to bear more than the others.¹⁴¹

The book also mentions that we must have faith that God enabled his messengers and prophets to do miracles. He also made them immune from denigration. Moreover, he revealed to some of them holy books that brought hope and light. Therefore Muslims must believe in the revealed Holy Books, which are the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an.¹⁴²

Analysis. The book does not contain a lesson on Jihad and therefore does not include the three Jihad themes: offensive Jihad, defensive Jihad, and Jihad for the purification of the soul. In terms of acknowledging religions other than Islam, the lesson dictates that as part of a Muslims faith, he/she must believe in God's prophets and messengers and their heavenly books. Not believing in these will bring a Muslim outside of Islam. Stressing that a Muslim must believe in Jesus and his Christian religion, as well as the prophets of the Jewish people and their religion and the Bible and the Torah as books that were revealed by God to his prophets, is at the crux of Islamic religion. This is considered as a good basis for rapprochement between these religions. The curriculum this book follows does not create a sectarian atmosphere since it acknowledges religions other than Islam.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 38.

The Book of Selected Texts from the Qur'an [Kitab Al Nusus Al Mukhtara Min Al Qur'an Al Karim]. By Minshawi Aboud and Ismail Surur. 150 pp. Published in 1963.

Overview. This is the book that is decided for students in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades and is divided into three books. It contains 52 lessons, which explain and comment on Qur'anic verses. The purpose of the book is to teach students how the Qur'an views issues of relations with non-Muslims, issues of life and death, and lessons learned from stories of ancient nations. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject. The book contains four lessons on the subject of Jihad and relations with non-Muslims. These lessons occupy 4 % of the total number of pages.

Jihad. In the first part of the book, which is used by the seventh grade and under the heading "Exhilarating Jihad for the sake of God" the book comments on the following verses. God says: "...Let those who prefer everlasting life and despise this worldly existence to fight for my sake. Those will really get what they really desire." He also says: "... And why should you not fight in the cause of God and those who, being sick, are ill-treated and oppressed? - Men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our God rescue us from this village whose people are

oppressors; and raise for us from the one who will protect; and raise for us from the one who will help.[Surat Al Nisaa', verses 73-76].”¹⁴³

In the fore-mentioned verse, God orders his true believers to come out to Jihad for His sake. He states that he, who sells this ending world, sells it for the prize of eternity in Heaven. God then scorns those who are able to come out to Jihad and who do not, when Meccans were hurting Muslims and oppressing the weak and the poor. God finally states that he who fights for His sake is the true believer, while he who fights for Satan's sake is a great sinner. God then tells His followers that they will be victorious against their enemies. ¹⁴⁴

In the second lesson of the same part and under the heading “Rewarding the Mujahidin and their characteristics,” the following verses are explained. God said: “...God bought the lives and fortunes of the believers; for theirs in return is paradise: they fight in His cause, and slay and they are slain: a promise binding on him in truth, in the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an: and who is more faithful to His covenant than God. Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded: that is the achievement supreme. Those that turn to God in repentance; that serve Him; and praise Him; that wander in devotion to the cause of God; that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer; that enjoin good and forbid evil; and observe the limits set by God. [Surat Al Tawba, verses 111-112]. This means that God accepted what true believers gave of their earthly possessions for the sake of

¹⁴³ Minshawi Aboud and Ismail Al Dusuqi, *The Book of Selected Texts From the Qur'an*, [Kitab Al Nusus Al Mukhtara Min Al Qur'an Al Karim],(Cairo :Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p. 11.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 12.

heaven. He also told them that this fight is a continuing one and that He had indicated it in his previous books, such as the Torah, and the Bible.¹⁴⁵

In the third part of the book which is used by the ninth grade and in the lesson titled “The Importance of Worshiping God and Going to Jihad for His sake” God tells: “...O You who believe, bow down, prostrate your selves, and adore your God; and do good; that you may prosper.”¹⁴⁶ The explanation of this verse is that God orders Muslims to do what they can possibly do for the sake of God with their fortunes, selves; tongues. This is an all-encompassing statement in that it includes the idea of fighting the enemies of Islam and Satan with all possible means. Moreover, it calls upon Muslims to exercise Jihad to stay away from bad deeds and the forbidden. The goal is always to praise God and to do good deeds and to bring those who are in the shadow of God to his light.¹⁴⁷

Muslims and non-Muslims Relations. In the second part of the book which is used by the eighth grade and under the heading “The Relations of Muslims With Non-Muslims” God said: “...God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for your faith, nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loves those who are just. God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for your faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support others in driving you out, from turning to them for

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 27.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 52.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

friendship and protection. It is such as turn to them in these circumstances, that do wrong. [Surat Al Mumtahina, verses 8-9].”¹⁴⁸

The meaning of the verses is that Islam is the religion of friendship and peace. At the same time, it is the religion of honor and justice. These two verses explain to Muslims what their relations should be toward non Muslims. Those who don't show them any animosity and don't fight them are considered peaceful and must be dealt with accordingly. On the other hand, however, the Kuffar who fight Muslims and oppress them, God orders Muslims to deal with them accordingly.¹⁴⁹

Analysis. The lessons on Jihad and relationship of Muslims with non-Muslims occupy a very limited portion in the book. The book does not advocate offensive Jihad; it considers all humans as brothers and is not inclined to forcing a non-Muslim to become a Muslim. The book focuses on the theme of defensive Jihad. According to the book, Muslims are only required to wage Jihad against those who fight them. On the other hand, those who do not oppress Muslims or fight them are considered peaceful and must be dealt with accordingly. The theme of Jihad for the purification of the soul is not mentioned in the book. The book does not contradict international conventions on human rights and basic individual freedoms because it does not state that those who do not adhere to Islam would be wiped by the sword.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 49.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 50.

The Reading Book [Kitab Al Mutalaa' Wa Al Nusus]. By Zaki Ali, Abd Al Hakim Na Na, Abd Al Hameed Rajab, and Abd Ul Sami Al Sunbati. 202 pp. Published in 1976.

Overview. This is a reading and a literature book that is decided for the eighth grade. It contains Sixty-nine lessons, most of them are literary in nature including poems, merits of reading, generosity, the pyramids and the sphinx, the seen of the full moon, how nations develop, honor, a mother's advise to her son, etc. The purpose of the book is to instill Islamic virtues in the hearts of students, to teach them to preserve the values and ethics of Islam, and to deepen their understanding of the Islamic culture through articles, stories, wisdom, and proverbs. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject .There is only one three-page subject about Jihad with the heading "The Greater Jihad" which occupies 1.48 % of the total number of pages. The book does not include lesson on relations with non-Muslims.

Jihad. Greater Jihad means the jihad for the purification of the soul. The lesson indicates a Hadith of the prophet where he says: "There are three issues that require piety and faith: Having good manners when living among people,

God fearing attitude toward the forbidden, and a mind to be used against ignorance.”¹⁵⁰

The book explains that the characteristics of the faithful are important to continue one’s journey in faith and piety. If he follows these characteristics one will strengthen his/her faith and lead a better life. The first of these characteristics is good manners, which attracts people toward the faithful. This will lead people to interact with the faithful and want to know him better and be affected by him/her, because they see a role model in him/her for them to emulate. The second characteristic is to fear God so that one is not attracted to sin, the forbidden, and criminal activity. The third characteristic is having a strong and unshakable mind so that one can think for himself/herself and doesn’t get affected by the idiocy of the ignorant.¹⁵¹

However, these are not characteristics that can be easily acquired and maintained. They are the product of a long-term cure, which heal the soul. Moreover, the cure process in itself is a form of Jihad that builds a good character. The prophet indicated this when he said: “The Jihad of the soul is greater and more difficult than Jihad against the enemies. After returning from battle, he [the prophet] also said this to his companions: You returned from the Lesser Jihad to the Greater Jihad. He then explained to them that the Greater Jihad is the battle to purify the soul, because Jihad against enemies—however arduous it may be—is

¹⁵⁰Zaki Ali et al., *The Reading Book*, [Al Mutalaa’ Wa Al Nusus], (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p. 128.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

only temporary and belongs to a certain time and place, while Greater Jihad, that is the Jihad to purify the soul, is present at all times and in all places, since the soul is always affected by its desires.”¹⁵² At the end of the lesson, the book asks the student to answer the following questions:

Why is the Jihad of the soul greater and more difficult than Jihad against enemies? What are the means of the Jihad of the soul?

Analysis. The Jihad lesson focuses on the theme of Jihad for the purification of the soul. The book does not talk about offensive Jihad or defensive Jihad. It quotes a Hadith of the Prophet where the latter considers the Jihad for the souls greater and more difficult than Jihad toward enemies. This is a very important indication, because it brings Jihad away from its traditional understanding of battle. Our societies are in dire need of understanding this aspect of Jihad, especially in the modern age we live in. The book does not call for offensive Jihad which aims at attacking non-Muslims and forcing them to convert to Islam.

The Reading Book [Kitab Al Mutalaa’ Wa Al Nusus]. By Zaki Ali, Abd Al Hakeem Na Na, Abd Al Hameed Rajab, and Abd Al Sami Mohamed. 157 pp. Published 1976.

Overview. This is book which has been decided for the twelfth grade. It contains 32 lessons. Lessons include humor, advice, judges and justice, merits and demerits of debates, merits of poetry, some contemporary issues, birthday of the Prophet, asceticism, the eloquence of the Qur’an, etc. The purpose of the book is

¹⁵² Ibid. 129.

to teach students to preserve the values and ethics of Islam and to deepen their understanding of the Islamic culture through articles, stories, wisdom, and proverbs. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject. The book includes one lesson about Jihad and another about the legality of battle. Both lessons occupy 12 pages in the book which constitute 7.64 % of the total number of pages.

Jihad. The book defines Jihad as “...derived from the word Jahed, from Jahd, meaning to exert effort this implies that a Mujahid [he who performs Jihad] has to put all his effort into the process. It includes battling enemies and Kafirs for the victory of Islam.”¹⁵³ According to the lesson there are four kinds of Jihad. The first form is the Jihad of the soul against the devil, which can be achieved by fighting the passions of the soul and imprisoning them. This is what the prophet alluded to after the Tubuk Battle, when he said to his companions: “We returned from the Lesser Jihad to undertake the Greater Jihad.”¹⁵⁴

The second form is to battle Kafirs. This can be achieved through the body, fortune, the hand, the tongue, and the heart. He who can't bear arms let him work with his hands and serve the soldiers. If one has money and cannot fight, let him give his money to buy arms. He, who is excused and has no money, let him

¹⁵³ Zaki Ali et al., *The Reading Book [Al Mutalaa]*, (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p. 60.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

fight with his tongue to incriminate the Kafirs. He, who can't do any of the above, let him do anything positive at his workplace, so that he helps his society. ¹⁵⁵

This second form of Jihad can be either: Fardh 'Ayn, meaning that a Muslim must fight if his country and family are attacked by Kafirs and his Imam calls upon him to fight. Even women must participate in this Jihad. She can go out to fight this kind of war without permission from her husband. The Qura'n has said in this regard: "Go you forth, whether equipped lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle with your money and your lives in the cause of God. That is the best for you if you only knew." [Surat Al Tawba, verse 41]."

However, if the enemies are in their country and the Imam does not call for Jihad then Jihad becomes a Fardh Kifaya, meaning that only volunteers will undertake it. ¹⁵⁶The third kind of Jihad is Jihad Al Bughat [fighting against those who want to inflame the situation within Muslim territories from inside by inciting Fitna or spying on Muslim armies or hiding spies, etc.]¹⁵⁷

The fourth kind of Jihad is battling against those who follow their passions, these are people who have not come openly against the ruler, but they bring decadence into Muslim society. They spoil the innocence of the young and encourage them to leave their good characteristics behind and to follow their bodily pleasures. These must be fought by each and every Muslim according to his/her ability. The Prophet says: "He who sees a forbidden thing within society

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 61.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 62.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 63.

he must fight it with his own hands. If he is unable to do so, then let him fight it with his tongue and his heart. Otherwise decadence will weaken the faith of the people.”¹⁵⁸

The book implies that the prophet himself was not a transgressor [Baghi sing. of Bughat] who wanted to mislead people. “...His message did not intend to usurp others’ property or to oppress them in order to enlarge the domain of Islam. He went on talking to people about Islam and how God had sent it to them through him. This happened secretly in the very middle of Mecca and continued on for three full years. When the Mecca’s leadership [The Quraysh Tribe of which the prophet Muhammad was a member] knew this it showed animosity to Muhammad and his new religion. . When Mecca’s elite saw that the prophet was unshakable in his stance, they decided to fight Islam and to torture the “turncoats” who had converted to Islam. Their fight was rigorous and they burned Muslims alive, massacred them and took their fortunes from them. They even went as far as to announce Muhammad as an erratic person. Thus, Muslims were obliged to migrate to Ethiopia.”¹⁵⁹

However, when all these measures did not bear fruit, and the rulers of Mecca were almost in despair, they came up with a new strategy. They tried to lure Muhammad with worldly fortunes. They sent people to him who promised him leadership and riches. Yet when the Prophet ignored them, they resorted to

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 64.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 66.

cause famine upon him and his followers. Muslims were thus forced to endure two years of famine and were only saved by eating grass and leaves and getting a little help from the people of the mountains.¹⁶⁰

Mohammad's defiance necessitated that Quraysh come together to kill him and his followers. They were once again unsuccessful. However, the Prophet was forced to leave to Al Medina. All his companions migrated with him. Only sick and unable Muslims remained in Mecca. These were dealt with severely by Quraysh. In Medina Muhammad joined his companions and those Muslims that were already settled there. He even signed a treaty of peaceful coexistence with the Jewish tribes in Medina. Thus Muslims started to get stronger. They now knew that the only way to deal with Quraysh and Mecca was by fighting [Jihad] against those who brutalized them and confiscated their money and property. It was under these circumstances that the Qur'anic verse stating that: "To those against whom war is made, permission is given to fight, because they are wronged; god is most powerful for their aid."¹⁶¹

God also overtly encouraged Muslims to fight Quraysh when He said: "Fight in the cause of God those who fight you. However, don't be aggressors, because God doesn't love aggressors. And kill them wherever you catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out; for tumult is worse than slaughter; but fight them not the biggest Muslim Mosque in the heart of Mecca

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 67.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 70.

[Masjid Al Haram], unless they first fight you there; but if they fight you, kill them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith. But if they cease, God is most forgiving, most merciful. And fight them on until there is no more tumult, and there prevail justice and faith in God. But if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression. [Surat Al Baqara, verses 190-193].”¹⁶²

The decision was to fight Quraysh and not the other Arab tribes. However, when other Arab tribes joined forces with Quraysh, God ordered to fight all infidels. God said: Fight all infidels as they fight you and know that God is with the believers. [Surat Al Tawba, verse 36].¹⁶³ The situation continued until the Jews of Al Medina betrayed the accord they had signed with the Muslims and joined forces with Quraysh and their cohorts and even tried to treacherously assassinate Muhammad. God’s prophet ordered his men to fight the Jews and he considered his previous accord with them as null and void. God says: If you had an accord with them and they turned their back on that agreement, then they are not a worthy and righteous people. Either fight them and scatter their remnants so that they always remember the price of their treachery, or always keep an eye on them because God doesn’t love traitors [Surat Al Anfal, verses 56-58].¹⁶⁴

Analysis. In as much as the Jihad lesson emphasizes the theme of the Jihad for the purification of the soul, it brings forth yet another kind of Jihad, which is

¹⁶² Ibid., 71.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

explained by fighting the transgressors [Bughat]. The reason for this kind of Jihad is to disavow those who come out against the ruler or the Imam and thus create a distress [Fitna], which weakens Islam and the society and makes it prone to invasions from outside. Muslims must fight these decadent people in terms of Jihad of Fard 'Ayn, since it involves the safety and security of the Islamic state and its people. The Jihad for the soul and the Jihad against decadent people by money, the hand, the tongue and the heart is not in reality an offensive Jihad. At its core is the notion of change by all possible ways. The book does not mention the theme of offensive Jihad; however, it mentions the theme of defensive Jihad. The lesson on the legality of fighting clarifies the periods where the jurisprudence of Jihad was instituted. It starts with the period of defending Muslims and not attacking other people. This notion of Jihad must be viewed within its historical context, when the religion was at its infancy and was to be protected at all cost. Moreover, it must not be explained as a notion of fighting non-Muslims in any place and time.

The Simplified Jurisprudence [The Book of Al Fiqh Al Muyassar]. By Dr. Mohamed Sayyid Tantawi. 291 pp. No publication date.

Overview. This is the book that has been decided for the students in eighth grade. The book contains five major sections: Dealings in Islam; Family rules in Islam; Punishment in Shari'a; Rules of Inheritance in Shari'a; Jihad in Shari'a. The book contains a number of questions after each section. The purpose

of the book is to teach students lessons of jurisprudence that every Muslim needs to know such as the lessons on dealings, family rules, punishment, etc. in a simple way. The language in which the book is written is straightforward and flexible. It is also contemporary, what makes it easier for the student to understand and comprehend the subject. The importance the book gives to each section [in terms of the number of pages devoted for each] is as follows:

The Simplified Fiqh: Table of Contents

<i>SUBJECT</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PAGES</i>
Family rules in Islam	101
Dealings in Islam	85
Punishment in Shari'a	56
Rules of Inheritance in Shari'a	35
Jihad in Shari'a	14

The Jihad section pages constitute 4.81% of the total number of the book pages. The section on Jihad and relations with non-Muslims contains six primary subjects: Introduction to Jihad; Laws Governing Jihad; Evidence Supporting the Legality of Jihad; The Merits of Jihad; The Wisdom and Legality of Jihad; and Peace in Islam

Jihad. The word Jihad in the Arabic language is derived from effort [Juhd] in terms of the difficulties and effort in achieving something. When it is said 'jahada fulan jihadan wa mujahada' it means that he used all his effort and possibilities in order to be able to gain his livelihood, or to excel over others. In the Shari'a Jihad means to spend one's money and effort to uplift God's word, and to defend the religion, the self, position, country, and all other aspects of life

to be defended against the oppressors and for the benefit of the Mazlumin [those who are wronged against].¹⁶⁵

Jihad is the duty of every able Muslim to perform jihad in terms of 1) duty for all and 2) duty for some. The first case is exemplified in a scenario when an enemy attacks the country and the ruler called upon all Muslims to arms in order to defend themselves and their country. In this case each Muslim within the community prepares himself to defend his religion, country, and freedom by using all his abilities. The second is exemplified by the scenario that when such an attack takes place some Muslims do what is demanded of them in the first duty, while some do other important things if a country is already able to produce an army to defend the land against the enemy and is able to make it withdraw in defeat. This is what God points to when he says: "... Nor should the believers all go forth together: if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them- that thus they may learn to guard themselves. [Surat Al Tawba, verse 122]. The meaning of this verse is that not all believers should go out to battle if some of them are enough to defeat the enemy. In such a case, the righteous could divide into groups. One group would continue its education and teach others in religion or even other venues such as medicine, agriculture,

¹⁶⁵ Muhammad Tantawi, *The Simplified Fiqh [Al Fiqh Al Muyassar]*, (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2005), p. 255.

industry, or other, which are important and no nation would go forward without learning them and excelling over other nations in them. ¹⁶⁶

One of the first evidences regarding the legality of Jihad comes in the form of a Qur'anic verse, where God says: 'Allah (God) will defend those who believe, Allah loveth not any that is a traitor to faith, or show ingratitude. [verse 38]. To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged, Allah is most powerful for their aid. [verse 39]. Those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, (no cause) except that they say, "our Lord is Allah... Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogue, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid his (cause):- for Allah is full of strength, exalted in might, (able to enforce his will) [Surat Al Hajj, verse 40]."

The meaning of these verses is that God, through his power and beneficence, defends his righteous and observant followers and dislikes those who are traitors by nature and betray his blessings. It is for this reason, then, that God permits his true followers who were wronged and unjustly ousted from their homes and lands by their infidel enemies, to be victorious in their battle against evil. God's way is to put his true followers in constant battle

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 256.

against the forces of evil. Even if the forces of evil were at one point able to destroy the homes and the worship places of his true Muslim followers and non Muslims, he will at the end empower his true and just followers because he is stronger than the strongest and more worthy of love than the most lovable. The prophet and his followers did remain in Mecca for thirteen years during which they were exposed to all kinds of humility, indignation, and even torture and torment by the elites of Mecca and were even forced to flee from their homes. Therefore, the fact is that these three verses were revealed to the prophet after his Hijra [forceful emigration] from Mecca to Medina with his companions was to become the real reason behind the formation of the first Muslim army that the prophet undertook. He thus formed his army from amongst his true followers who were, like him, ousted from Mecca and thus settled in Medina. The prophet's aim was to bring together all those who had lost their lands, homes and fortunes, so that they could now defend their religion, freedom, and their physical selves. Thus the first action that this new army undertook, the Badr battle, which took place on the seventeenth day of the month of Ramadan during the second year of the Hijra, was the first and

most glorious victory for the sake of God, since the army of the believers achieved a great victory in the name of God upon their enemies.¹⁶⁷

There are scores of Qur'anic verses and Hadith about the merits of jihad for the sake of God. An illustrative one runs as follows: 'O those who believe, do you want me [the prophet] to lead you to a business that will save you from a painful ordeal' [Surat Al Saff [The Ranks], verse 10] It follows: 'You believe in God and his prophet and you struggle [tujahidun] for the sake of God with your selves and fortunes. Your humbleness is good for you, if you really know what is meant.' [Surat Al Saff [The Ranks], verse 11]. Moreover: 'O believers, God bought your selves and your fortunes from you by giving you the Garden of Eden, so that you fight and die for it. This is God's right and it is so written in the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an. Those who had sold their possessions to God are to be rejoiced, because that is the greatest of successes" [Surat Al Tawba [Repentance], verse 111]. As to what concerns the Hadith that are pertinent in this regard, they can be exemplified by the following: 'Do you want me to speak to you about the best of humans? It is he who mounts his horse and struggles [yujahid] for God's sake." Or such as in the case of a second Hadith when the prophet was asked about who was the best human? He answered: 'The best human is he who believes and struggles for God's sake with his self and fortune.' In yet a third Hadith the prophet says: 'There are one hundred ranks in the Garden of Eden, which God has formulated for those who struggle [yujahidon] for his sake. The

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 258.

difference between two such ranks is the distance between heaven and earth. If you are there ask God about the Firdaws and he will tell you that it is the highest of the garden's ranks." Moreover, those who are martyred [Shaheed sing., Shuhada' pl.] for the sake of keeping God's word above all others, They must be content and honored with what God says about them in the Qur'an: 'Don't ever consider those martyred for the cause of God as dead, since they are living with God [Al Umran, verse 169], and they are joyous for what God gave them out of his generosity. They enjoy all that God provides for them and they are not sad but await those who will follow them on the same path' [Al Umran, verse 170], since they are living in God's grace and he never leaves his believers without due compensation' [Al Umran, verse 171].¹⁶⁸

Muslims and non-Muslims Relations. Jihad in Islam was not legislated to attack those who live in peace, rob them of their fortunes, deprive them of their dignity, usurp their lands, oppress their freedoms, or to humiliate them. No, Jihad was not legislated in Islam for any of the above unjust reasons. It was legislated to defend the people against aggressors, to right the wrongs committed against those who were maltreated, to glorify the word of God, and to fight infidels and those who lost their Godly ways. God says: 'Fight for God's sake against those who are fighting you. However, don't become aggressors, because God doesn't love aggressors' [Surat Al Baqara [The Cow], verse 190]. This means that you have to fight to glorify justice against those who attack you first. However, don't attack

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 260

the peaceful or Muslims, because God doesn't love aggressors but despises and hates them.¹⁶⁹

That God legalized Jihad in Islam to glorify Justice and to defend peoples' dignity, fortune, and country against all enemies can be derived from the following:

1. Islamic Shari'a considers all humans as brothers. They were derived from a single father and mother and God brought them forth so that they can know each other, work with each other in leading pious and not evil lives. God says in this regard: "...O humans, I have created you as males and females and formed peoples and tribes amongst you so that you can know each other. Know that the best among you are those who are the purest and that God knows what is in your hearts" [Surat Al Hujarat, verse 13].
2. Islam does not force anybody to become a Muslim, because religious doctrines cannot be forced, and also because such a move would not create real believers but rather traitors and liars. God says: "...No force can be exerted on a human in announcing his religion, because that has to be done in a mature way and not by deception" [Surat Al Baqara, verse 256].
3. Islam instructs its followers to work and to live piously with each other and the followers of other religions, as long as the latter have not harmed or attacked us [Muslims]. God says: "...God does not allow you to fight those who haven't harmed you, attacked you, and dispersed you from your

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 261.

homes and lands. You have to consider them as innocent and to help them, because God loves those who help others [Surat Al Mumtahina, verse 8], however, God obliges you to fight those who fight you for the sake of your religion, or disperse you from your homes and lands, because those are the tyrants” [Surat Al Mumtahina, verse 9].

4. Islamic Shari’a has fully acknowledged the rights of a human being and his dignity. Thus, it forbids any intrusion on his self, honor, or fortune, regardless of being a Muslim or not, as long as a human has not committed a punishable act. God says: “...I was generous with humans and gave them authority for what is on land and in the sea. I gave them all food and chose to consider them above all my other creations” [Surat Al Israa’. Verse 70]. Human here means all humans regardless of his religion, sex, race, creed, language, or country. God was generous to all humans as long as a human does not oppress another human or the latter’s rights.
5. Islamic Shari’a obliges its followers to be peaceful with those who are peaceful with them and to pull their weapons only in the face of tyrants and oppressors. God says: “...If they follow peace follow it too and put your faith in God, because he listens and knows everything” [Surat Al anfal, verse 61]. God also says: “...Why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill treated and oppressed? - Men, women, and children, whose cry is: “Our Lord! Rescue us from this village, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who

will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help. [Surat Al Nisaa' [Women], verse 75].¹⁷⁰

Islamic Shari'a honors verbal and written agreements that are attained between Muslims and non-Muslims and orders its followers that if there is a truce or accord between them and their enemies or a contract for peaceful coexistence with individuals, Muslims must respect and honor their word, because such are the characteristics of God, his prophets, and all pious people. God says: "He who honors his word [promise] is from God's fabric" [Surat Al Tawba, verse 111]. He also says regarding his prophet Abraham [Ibrahim in Arabic] "Ibrahim who honored his word" [Surat Al Najm [The Star], verse 37]. In complimenting those who remain true to their word God says: "Let us remember those who had the backbone [Surat Al Raad, [The Thunder] verse 19] and who always respected and honored their word and never rejected a treaty or constitution" [Surat Al Raad, verse 20]. God also says: "If a Gentile became your neighbor, be a good neighbor to him, so that he also heeds to God's word. Tell him also that he is safe, because they are a people who don't know" [Surat Al Tawba, verse 6]. The important thing is that according to Islamic Shari'a Muslims make peace with those who want to peacefully coexist with them. It only orders its followers to fight those who attack their doctrines, countries, honor, dignity, freedom, and fortunes. In a Hadith the prophet says: "He who dies for his fortune, religion, and family is a martyr." Peace is the origin in Islamic Shari'a, while war, which the Shari'a

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 262.

condones only in special circumstances, is for the defense of religion, country, the self, fortune, honor, freedom, human dignity, the wronged, justice to prevail, evil to be defeated, peace and tranquility to be spread, and for people to help each other and live pious lives. How can peace, coexistence, and helping each other not be fundamental principles in Islam when peace is a name and an adjective used for God in many Qur'anic verses, such as: 'He is the God that there is no other except him. He is the sacred king, the peaceful, the believer, the omnipresent, the loved, and the great. Praise be to him for all that we have' [Surat Al Hushr, verse 23]¹⁷¹. It is also noteworthy that as with other monotheistic religions, Muslims greet each other with the word peace [Salam], which is the real knot that ties a human with his fellow humans. Thus, when greeting a Muslim or a non-Muslim, a Muslim says "May Peace and God's Blessings Be upon You." In the Hadith the Prophet says: "God made the word 'peace' the greeting of our people and a safe haven for non-Muslims" [Christians and Jews, Ahl Ul Zimma]. It is the duty of every Muslim, while praying, to say peace upon his prophet, to himself, and to all God-loving believers. Thus, he says: "Peace be upon you O prophet and may God's blessings be upon you. He then ends his prayer by uttering the same "Peace be upon us and you and God's blessings be upon you" unto his right and left sides." Peace and safety are also the greetings by which God will address his followers on Judgment Day. God says: "On that they my greeting to them will be Peace and I will prepare a good place for them" [Surat Al Ahzab, verse 44]. So

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 263.

will the angels address the believers with the word peace on that day by saying: “Peace be upon you for being so patient. You now deserve to be in God’s home” [Surat Al Raad, verse 24]. Thus we find that peace, safety, and content are the basis of Islamic Shari’a. Moreover, the word Islam in itself is a derivative of Peace [Salam]. We end our analysis of peace in Islam here by reciting the following prayer: “God you are peace and peace is from you. Peace will always return to you. Greet us O lord with peace and uproot from among us hatred, aversion, and animosity.”¹⁷²

At the end of the lesson on Jihad, the book asks the students to answer the following questions:

- 1- Define Jihad and name its laws and evidence of its legality.
- 2- What is the wisdom and legal base of Jihad?
- 3- Islam advocates peace. So when does it advocate Jihad?¹⁷³

Analysis. The Jihad section contains the least number of pages in the book. There is a significant difference in the number of pages between Jihad section and the two major sections about Family Law and Dealings in Islam. The wisdom behind the legality of Jihad clarifies that the book is inclined toward the idea that defensive Jihad is the base and this principle is strengthened by several examples derived from Qur’anic verses and prophet’s Hadiths. Aside from the fact that

¹⁷² Ibid., 264.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 267.

Jihad is a defensive tool in Islam, it is also the exception to the rule and has no base whatsoever in a Muslim's relations with non-Muslims, which is governed by peace. The book does not mention the theme of offensive Jihad and Jihad for the purification of the soul. The book recognizes the basic individual freedoms such as choosing one's faith or religion since it states that Islam does not force anybody to become a Muslim. The Jihad section does not refer to Jihad as a means to change regimes that do not rule according to Islamic Shari'a.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the lessons on Jihad and relations between Muslims and non-Muslims as they are presented in the Shari'a and language curriculum of the Azherite preparatory and secondary schools in the academic year 2006-2007. The objective of the analysis was to search for the three Jihad themes: offensive Jihad, defensive Jihad, and Jihad for the purification of the soul. Our analysis of the content of the Azherite schools textbooks shows that the theme of offensive Jihad which means invading non-Muslim territories and forcing non-Muslims to convert to Islam and using violence to change existing governments has never been mentioned directly in the lessons of Jihad; however, textbooks have directly advocated defensive Jihad and Jihad for the purification of the soul. With regard to lessons on the relationship with non-Muslims, all textbooks advocated peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims except one textbook which contained teachings that are inconsistent with the spirit of the times we live in and jeopardize the basic principles of equality and human rights. In the

following chapter we will shed further light on the results of our analysis of the textbooks that we examined in this chapter.

Conclusion

By surveying the contents of the scholastic curricula in Azherite schools and regarding the subject of Jihad and the principles that govern the relations of Muslims with non-Muslims and by reviewing the ties—if any—with extremist jihadist groups who incite hate and animosity toward the United States of America, we can conclude by stating the following:

1. We have analyzed the thirteen textbooks from the Islamic law [Shari'a] and language curriculum for the preparatory and secondary levels which included lessons on Jihad and relations with non-Muslims. Jihad themes which are studied included the concepts of offensive Jihad which means invading non-Muslim territories and forcing non-Muslims to convert to Islam and using violence to change existing governments, and the concept of defensive Jihad, which means defending Muslim territories against external aggression, in addition to the concept of Jihad for the purification of the soul or the greater Jihad. We also analyzed how textbooks deal with the issue of the relationship with non-Muslims. We found that none of the textbooks advocated offensive Jihad. Textbooks asserted the historical fact that Jihad was instituted to defend Muslims against aggression and not to attack others. The notion of Jihad must be viewed within its historical

context, when the religion was at its infancy and was to be protected at all cost. Moreover, it must not be explained as a notion of fighting those who are against Islam at any interval and place. On the issue of treatment of non-Muslims we found that the book *Murabaa Garden* advocated a sectarian approach that discriminates against non-Muslims. However, we should take into account that this book was written in the seventeenth century and it reflects the situation which prevailed at that time. Even if the *Murabaa Garden's* approach to Islam is sometimes ultra-conservative, literalist, legalist, and sectarian, it is definitely not revolutionary, radical, or militant. The rest of the textbooks which were authored more recently stated that Islam does not forcibly compel anyone to convert, and that Muslims relations with non-Muslims are governed by peace. They assert the fact that Islamic Shari'a considers all humans as brothers and it has fully acknowledged the rights of the human beings and their dignity. Thus, it can be said that the curricula are, generally speaking, a peaceful one in its principal direction, since it obviously calls for defensive Jihad and not offensive Jihad. Often, it deals with important concepts of Jihad within the confines of such subjects as the Jihad for the purification of the soul [the Greater Jihad]. Some textbooks included lessons on "Peace in Islam" and advocated the fact that peace is the origin in Islamic Shari'a and war is the exception and it is fought only for defensive reasons. This orientation in the curricula very much coincides with the themes of conflict resolution.

One of the most important findings of cross-cultural conflict resolution research is that religion is a perennial and perhaps inevitable factor in both conflict and conflict resolution. It is deeply implicated in individual and social conception of peace. To transform the conflicts besetting the world today, we need to uncover the conceptions of peace within our diverse religious traditions, while seeking the common ground and this is what most of the reviewed textbooks advocate.

2. The content of the Azherite schools textbooks do not espouse offensive Jihad, toppling and excommunicating [Takfiring] of rulers and regimes as well as coming into open rebellion against them. The Azherite curricula do not contain such skewed philosophies as are present in the books which constitute the core curricula of the extreme jihadist groups. On the other hand, books which are used by the violent Islamic movements for membership acquisition and cadre education totally reject the idea of defensive Jihad and insist that Jihad in Islam is only offensive. They advocate the use of violence for the establishment of the Islamic state in which non-Muslims do not enjoy the same status as Muslims. Faraj, the author of *The Neglected Duty*, totally rejects the idea that Jihad in Islam is a defensive phenomenon. He insists that Islam was propagated by the sword and that God, made it clear that nothing, not even kindness, humanity, peoples' dignity can force Muslims not to kill infidel enemies.

Sayyid Qutb, the author of *Milestones*, advocates the idea that the whole world is living in state of ignorance [Jahiliyya] and that the supreme goal of Islam is to change the foundation of this Jahiliyya society. The means to achieve this essential change, in Qutb's view, is offensive Jihad that aims at the formation of God's kingdom on earth, the destruction of the kingdom of humans, taking authority back from those who had taken it by force and returning it to God the almighty. According to him, Jihad is not only a necessity but also an endless process because right and wrong can't coexist on this earth. Therefore, any definition of Islamic jihad as a defensive war against regular enemies is to belittle it and the religion that stands behind it and also its real role on earth. Qutb asserts that those who attempt to defend the concept of Jihad by interpreting it in the narrow sense of the current concept of defensive war, and who claim that the battles fought in Jihad were all for the defense of the homeland of Islam – some of them considering the homeland of Islam to be just the Arabian peninsula – against aggression of neighboring powers, they lack understanding of the nature of Islam and its primary aim. This notion of offensive jihad which aims at destroying existing regimes and fighting non-Muslims until God's kingdom is instituted on earth is at odds with what the Azherite textbooks are advocating. For example, the *Simplified Jurisprudence* textbook states that Jihad in Islam was not legislated to attack those who live in peace, rob them of their fortunes, deprive them of

their dignity, usurp their lands, oppress their freedoms, or to humiliate them. Jihad was not legislated in Islam for any of the above unjust reasons. It was legislated to defend the people against aggressors, to right the wrongs committed against those who were maltreated, to glorify the word of God, and to fight infidels and those who lost their Godly ways. God says: ‘Fight for God’s sake against those who are fighting you. However, don’t become aggressors, because God doesn’t love aggressors’ [Surat Al Baqara [The Cow], verse 190]. This means that you have to fight to glorify justice against those who attack you first. However, don’t attack the peaceful or Muslims, because God doesn’t love aggressors but despises and hates them. Our analysis of the content of the Azherite schools textbooks shows that the theme of offensive Jihad has never been mentioned directly in the lessons of Jihad; however, the textbooks have directly advocated defensive Jihad and Jihad for the purification of the soul. Moreover, all textbooks –except one which has been authored four centuries ago - advocated peaceful coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims and acknowledgement of religions other than Islam. One textbook stated that he who unjustly kills a Christian or a Jew will not be able to know the real odor of the Garden of Eden as other believers, who have not committed such a crime, know.¹⁷⁴ Islamic Shari’a, according to

¹⁷⁴ Abdullah Al Sharqawi, *The Book of Mubdi’s Fath That’s Explained By Zubaydi’s Summary*, [Al Ahadith Al Mukhtara Min Fath Al Mubdi Bisharh Mukhtasar Al Zubaydi] (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p.77.

one textbook, obliges its followers to be peaceful with those who are peaceful with them and to pull their weapons only in the face of tyrants and oppressors. God says: “...If they follow peace follow it too and put your faith in God, because he listens and knows everything” [Surat Al anfal, verse 61].¹⁷⁵ Another textbook asserts that Islam is the religion of friendship and peace. At the same time, it is the religion of honor and justice. According to the book, those who don’t show Muslims animosity and don’t fight them are considered peaceful and must be dealt with accordingly. On the other hand, however, non-Muslims who fight Muslims and oppress them, God orders Muslims to deal with them accordingly.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, we conclude that the comparison between the Azherite schools’ textbooks and the books used by militant Islamic groups for membership acquisition and cadre training shows that they are in total contrast in relation to how they view the topic of Jihad and relationship with non-Muslims.

3. When we discussed the power of the textbooks in the educational process, we indicated that textbooks are the most important medium of instruction and the primary vehicle for delivering content knowledge. Textbooks also transmit values and attempt to influence behavior and they have both

¹⁷⁵ Muhammad Tantawi, *The Simplified Fiqh* [Al Fiqh Al Muyassar], (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2005), p.262.

¹⁷⁶ Minshawi Aboud and Ismail Al Dusuqi, *The Book of Selected Texts from the Qur’an*, [Kitab Al Nusus Al Mukhtara Min Al Qur’an Al Karim], (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p50.

constructive and destructive characteristics. When utilized professionally, textbooks can be the cognitive cement behind a fully literate society. When misused, however, they can be responsible for antiquated ideologies. Worse, they can be used as instruments to inflame sectarian passion, threaten a nation's social cohesion, or jeopardize international security. The Azherite textbooks which we analyzed tend to strengthen the constructive role of the textbook since they advocate defensive Jihad and peaceful coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims. Books used by the violent jihadist groups, on the other hand, exemplify the destructive role played by the textbooks as they advocate offensive Jihad and the use of violence and hence threatening international peace and security.

4. In our discussion of the extent to which books influence attitudes and actions we acknowledged that written texts are subject to multiplicity of readings and meanings and that the manner in which a text is received varies significantly. We also mentioned that the literal interpretation of the text, specifically sacred text, and the translation of belief into actions could lead to devastating results. The reason for this is that literal interpretation of the text often gives so little appreciation for the historical context in which the text was produced. When texts are taken out of context, it is easy to fall prey to malicious and mischievous interpretations. This is exactly what the author of *The Neglected Duty* did when he

interpreted the Prophet's Hadith to the people of Mecca when he said to them "... Listen to me O the people of Quraysh [the Prophet's own tribe]. Those of you who won't follow Muhammad by their own will be slaughtered." and also when he explained the Qur'anic verse "When the months that forbid you from fighting end. Kill the infidels wherever you find them. Follow their movement closely and surround them." . His interpretation of the abovementioned Hadith and verse is that God made it clear that nothing, not even kindness, humanity, people's dignity can force Muslims not to kill infidel enemies. Obviously, if we avoided the literal interpretation and read the Hadith and the verse in the historical context in which they were produced we will understand that the rules of both of them are not universal, they address the infidels of Mecca in the time of the prophet and must not be explained as a call for fighting non-Muslims at any interval and place. A Christian extremist would also quote Biblical verses "out of context" to prove that the Bible is advocating the use of violence. For example, the Bible says "Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known man by lying with him. But all the young girls who have not known man by lying with him keep alive for your selves all the virgins." (Numbers 31:17-18). Another verse from the New Testament says," think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." (Matthew 10:34). Unlike the literal interpretations of sacred texts made by the

militant jihadsit ideologues, textbooks of the Azherite schools tend to incorporate the historical context into their interpretation of the texts. One textbook mentioned that the notion of Jihad must be viewed within its historical context, when the religion was at its infancy and was to be protected at all cost. Moreover, it must not be explained as a notion of fighting those who are against Islam at any interval and place.¹⁷⁷

5. The subjects of Jihad and relations between Muslims and non-Muslims occupy a very limited section in the Islamic law [Shari'a] and language textbooks that we reviewed. They constitute 3.37 % of the total number of pages and 2.89 % of the total subjects and lessons taught. This means that students who are in the age group 12 to 18 years old have very limited exposure to Jihad themes in general .The greater weight in the textbooks is devoted to such subjects as laws governing the family, procedures, prayer, faith, and dealings in Islam etc.

6. The oldest of the books under our purview was written some four hundred years ago. The most recent one was published thirty years ago. This means that the books were in use as textbooks long before the current phenomenon of terror or terrorism and animosity toward the United States existed. Therefore, there is no tangible reason to tie the observed curricula

¹⁷⁷ Zaki Ali et al., *The Reading Book* [Al Mutalaa], (Cairo: Azherite Institutes Sector, 2007), p. 70-71.

with terrorism per se. In this regard we can bring forth the same question that Mumtaz Ahmad implored in his seminal study of religious schools [Madrasas] in Pakistan, where he says:

If Madrasas education is the only or main cause of Islamic militancy, radicalism, and anti-Americanism, why did these tendencies not manifest themselves before the 1990s? The curriculum of Madrasas has remained the same for about 150 years.¹⁷⁸

7. There is enough evidence that Egyptian jihadist Groups have emerged on secular university campuses and in particular at the University of Cairo and University of Asyut and that a significant number of its members have not attended religious schools and are educated in fields such as engineering, medicine, and law (e.g. AlZawahri, Faraj, Sayyid Imam, etc). This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Bergen and Pandey¹⁷⁹ who carefully examined a sample of 79 terrorists responsible for five of the worst anti-Western terrorist attacks in recent memory. These were the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, the Africa embassy bombings in 1998, The September 11 attacks, The Bali nightclub bombings in 2002, and the London bombings on July 7, 2005. Their study revealed that only in rare cases were Madrassas graduates involved. All of those credited

¹⁷⁸ Mumtaz Ahmed, *Madrasa Education in Pakistan and Bangladesh*, 1998, [on-line]; available from <http://www.institute-for-afghan-studies.org>. ; Internet; accessed 15 January 2006.

¹⁷⁹ Peter Bergen and Swati Pandi, The Madrassa Scapegoat. *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2006.

with masterminding the five terrorist attacks had university degrees, and none of them had attended a Madrassa. Within the entire sample, only 11 percent of the terrorists have attended Madrassas. (For about one-fifth of the terrorists educational background could not be determined by examining the public record.), Yet more than half of the group assessed attended a university, making them as well educated as the average American: whereas 54 percent were found to have had some college education or to have graduated from university, only 52 percent of Americans can claim similar academic credentials. Two of sample had doctoral degrees, and two others had begun working toward their doctorates. Significantly, they found that, of those who did attend college and/or, graduate schools 48 percent attended schools in the West, and 58 percent attained scientific or technical degrees. Engineering was the most popular subject studied by the terrorists in the sample, followed by medicine.

Finally, there are two limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed regarding this study. The first limitation concerns the real interaction between the student, the textbook, and the teacher in the classroom. This study should have investigated the outcome of the interaction between the three components of the educational process in a real classroom setting. The second limitation has to do with the comparison between the Azherite textbooks and the books used by the

violent jihadist groups regarding age differences, settings where books are taught, and who teaches them.

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