2 Doctrine and schools

Everywhere you look into its lands, there are Mujahidin saying:
NO SURRENDER.
And in every side of its hills there are men saying Allahu Akbar,
NO PERSECUTION.
We have planted its lands with our heads held high so it grows into glory
and blooms.

The Base, Jihadist Forum Administrator

In his book, Millat Ibrahim (The Religion of Abraham), the global Jihadist scholar
Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, calls on Muslims around the world to live by the
doctrine of al-Wala wal-Bara.1 Although there is no precise English translation
for this phrase, it roughly means two things. First, that Muslims must have
unquestioning loyalty towards God: a Muslim ought to be loyal and loving to all
that is in accordance with God’s law, or Sharia. Second, Muslims ought to reject
and disavow all that contradicts Sharia, especially polytheism, democracy and
those who advance such “deviant” ideologies.

This “loyalty and disavowal” concept is a central doctrine for most adherents of
the Jihadist ideology. Al-Qaida’s number two, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, wrote a
book entitled Al-Wala wal-Bara.2 The popular Jamaican-born firebrand Abdullah
Faisal recorded a 94-minute audio lecture exclusively on the topic.3 The emir
of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Umar al-Baghda di, heralded the concept in a 2007 audio
address.4 The popular al-Qaida commander in Afghanistan, Abu Yahya al-Libi,
has repeatedly discussed the concept in his public lectures. And internet Jihadists
obess about the ways in which they can better apply al-Wala wal-Bara in their
daily lives. In fact, the “loyalty and disavowal” concept is one of the five doctrinal
legs upon which today’s Jihadist movement stands. The other four doctrines are:
Tawhid (unity of God), Aqidah (creed), Takfir (excommunication) and Jihad
(struggling). It is this particularly explosive cocktail of ultra-conservative doctrinal
elements, mixed with a flair for waging spectacularly catastrophic acts of violence,
that separates Jihadists from the other schools of Salafism, even the most hardline
of them.

Salafism

Jihadism cannot be extricated from the religious and ideological context from
which it emerged: Salafism. This first appeared in Egypt at the turn of the twentieth
century as an intellectual reformist movement. The ideology was meant to push
Muslims forward to blaze a progressive path of their own, steering away from the
pressure being placed on Islamic society by Westernism. The solution could be
found, as is usually the case in Islamic fundamentalist movements, only through
a puritanical return to Islam. But it was not the Islam of one’s parents or teachers,
which was a doctrine of stagnation. The Egyptian youth needed to discover Islam
for themselves, which the promoters of Salafism believed could be done only
through a return to the foundations of the religion: the Quran, the Hadith (oral
reporting of the Prophet’s life and teachings and the record of how they were
transmitted) and the Sunnah (a “manner of life” including that which the Prophet
Muhammad did, that which he enjoined, and that which was not forbidden by him
when done in his presence). The volumes of interpretation and discussion about
the various dimensions of Islam recorded over centuries could be generally
disregarded: the true Islam could be found by anyone; they needed only to consult
the doctrine and teachings themselves. As successive generations of young, well-
educated Egyptian elites wrestled with crystallizing this infant ideology, its
progressive, liberal elements would be quickly stripped away. What remained was
an ideology propagated by Egypt’s most educated and disenchanted youth who
Demanded a purer, more comprehensively Islamic society.

The Egyptian Islamic activist Hasan al-Banna and his followers provided a means
for Egyptian youth to channel this collective anger in the 1920s by establishing the
Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, or Ikhwan, movement.5 Until his death in 1949, Banna
helped the Muslim Brotherhood work toward restoring the Islamic Caliphate, defending
against the further encroachment of Western culture and preparing for war against the
apostate Arab regimes. By the 1950s, the Ikhwan had established an international
infrastructure for communicating, mobilizing, recruiting and fundraising. It would
also gain its most well-known spokesman, Sayyid Qutb. An educated Egyptian
government official well versed in English literature and culture, Qutb had the
opportunity to visit and study in the United States from 1949 to 1950. He came away
from the experience believing that America was nothing short of a hotbed of perversion,
crime and exploitation. It was a culture, he argued, that was inherently subservient to
Islam. He also concluded that Arab leaders who claimed to practice Islam faithfully
while allowing tidal waves of godless secularism, exploitative capitalism and the
pervasive, barbaric Western culture to drown their countrymen and women must be
cursed. The challenge must be met forcefully, he argued, by a vanguard of Muslims
who believe in the Quran and the Hadith and follow the Sunnah. Qutb further expounded
in his writings during the 1950s and early 1960s that most Muslims at the time
were totally unaware that their religion was being assaulted before their eyes. Islam,
due to a combination of ignorance and denial, had allegedly reached a state of
darkness that it had not seen since pagan times, before God had revealed the Quran to
the Prophet.
Qutb’s philosophy can be summarized in four general points:

1. The social and political system prevailing in both the Islamic and the non-Islamic world is pagan.
2. It is the duty of a true Muslim to revive Islam and change paganism through preaching religion and Jihad.
3. Transforming the society of paganism into a real Islamic state is the task of the committed “vanguards” of Muslims.
4. The ultimate goal of committed Muslims is to establish Ḥakīmiyya—that is, rule by God’s canons on earth—to eliminate vice, suffering and oppression.6

In June 1952 Egypt’s pro-Western government was dislodged by a domestic nationalist movement led by Gamal Abdel Nasser. Although the Ikhwan had initially supported the coup, thinking that Nasser would move Egypt’s domestic policies more in line with Islamic law, they were soon disappointed. Nasser’s nationalism was not that of Islam, but of secular pan-Arabism: an ideology that merely provided another obstacle to unifying the Ummah, or global community of believers in Islam, in their struggle to purify their religion.

In October 1954 Nasser was speaking to a large crowd in the Egyptian city of Alexandria when a series of gunshots sounded. Although the shooter, Mahmoud Abd al-Latif, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, missed his mark, the incident gave Nasser both the incentive and the political cover to crack down on a variety of opposition groups, particularly communists and Ikhwans. He jailed hundreds of Egyptians, including Sayyid Qutb, under the pretense of a variety of offenses. During his imprisonment, Qutb brought his own thinking to fruition in his books In the Shade of the Qur'an and the short political manifesto Milestones.7 Although he would write a number of other works, these two pieces became the must-have writings on the challenges to, and possible solutions for, re-establishing a dominant Islam.

With Qutb’s death in August of 1966, followers of this the reinvigorated Ikhwan would flee the challenges of operating in the hostile domestic Egyptian environment for lands more tolerant of their conservative interpretation of Islam. No country would welcome them with more open arms than Saudi Arabia. Led by Sayyid Qutb’s brother, Muhammad, and Manna al-Qattan, a generation of Ikhnaw would resect in the kingdom, where the ultra-conservative Wahhabism Islam dominated. Over the next several decades, these Egyptian youth would fill the ranks of Saudi Arabia’s schools, hospitals and law firms, and serve to hybridize in many unpredictable ways with Saudi Wahabism, leaving a confusing hodgepodge of schools, branches and doctrines under the single label of “Salafism.” This became the new term for those once considered “Wahabi,” in large part because the latter term is derogatory, implying that followers of this interpretation of Islam follow the teachings of a man, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, not those of God. So Salafism provided a much more appealing label for Saudi Wahabis.

The influence of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood experience cannot be overstated. As Salafism evolved from the 1960s to the 1990s, some of its key leadership would actively draw on the principles and organizational lessons they had learned from the first half of the century in Egypt. Other Salafists, particularly hardliners, would begin to reject the Muslim Brotherhood model as being too tolerant of deviant beliefs. The Brotherhood, which had advocated fielding candidates in elections and generally encouraged political engagement rather than violent measures, did not fully appreciate, the hardliners argued, just how dire the situation had become for Muslims.

From its new base in Saudi Arabia, the various flavors of Salafism began to spread across the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. It also had a significant impact in Europe and North America. A Salafist is a Muslim who rejects traditional religious authority in favor of a narrow body of teaching, including the Quran, and the literal model established by the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers in the Ḥadith. Most Salafists reject many dimensions of modernity and generally disavow those rulers who do not strictly implement Islamic law, or Sharia.

It is from the Salafist intellectual tradition, hybridized with the ultra-conservative Saudi Wahabist interpretation of Islam, that the Jihadists find their religious authority, intellectual guidance and, ironically, largest competition. Salafists of all stripes generally believe that propagators of ideologies challenging their ability to implement Sharia—including, but not limited to, capitalism, socialism, nationalism, Hinduism, Buddhism, liberalism, pan-Arabism, Zionism and secularism—are inherently threats to God’s law and therefore must be at least resisted and at best eliminated. While most Jihadists embrace these tenets of the Salafist doctrine, they differ from more mainstream Salafists in terms of how to operationalize it, specifically with regards to religious warfare. Whereas most Salafists recognize the use of violence in the attempt to apply Sharia within an Islamic land, Jihadists have placed violence at their core, shifting an important but not central tenet of Islam to the heart of their ideology. The Jihadist ideology is, however, firmly situated in the complex historical framework of Salafism. The latter word itself derives from the Arabic root salaf, which literally translates as “pious forefathers.” More specifically, the term refers to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad and the generation of Muslims who followed.

Since the hybridization of Salafism and Saudi Wahabism, the Salafist movement has gained significant traction worldwide through the financial backing of Saudi Arabia. Saudi oil revenue empowered the kingdom to push its version of Wahabist-influenced Salafism aggressively over other forms of Sunni Islam through the establishment of mosques, schools, charities and youth centers. Contemporary discussions of Salafism are generally misleading, however, because the term has acquired such eclectic meanings. In its most basic form, it refers to a manhaj, or method, of consulting the fundamentla texts of Islam. In its more popular understanding, it is a movement, or a collection of like-minded believers who are held together by a common puritanical understanding of Islam, all of whom apply the Salafist methodology to their religion. The problem is that today, given the term’s loose definition, any number of groups embrace it to describe themselves, which further blurs the meaning. This lack of specificity has significantly increased the difficulty that Western policy-makers have had in recent years drawing lines in the sand between friend and foe.
Arabic-speaking Jihadists have sought to clarify this variegated and often opaque world of Salafism to show how they are distinct from one another. As a result, they tend to be among the most astute observers of doctrinal similarities and differences among Salafists. Jihadist thinkers may divide the Salafist movement into anything from three to eight sub-schools of thought. Although these schools may be analytically distinct, they are still dynamic, overlapping and messy in reality. The fluid nature of this schema has been generally too problematic to gain popular appeal in the West. It is in the interplay between these various sub-schools, however, that the key for long-term success against the Jihadist movement might lie.

A popular article among hardline Salafists, written by a Canadian thinker, Dr. Tariq Abdulhafeez, outlines eight branches of the Salafist movement:

- Establishment Salafists;
- Madkhali (or Jami) Salafists;
- Albanian Salafists;
- Scientific Salafists;
- Salafist Ikhwan (Muslim Brotherhood);
- Sururis;
- Qutubis;
- Global Jihadists.

This is by no means scientific. Nor is it a comprehensive breakdown. In fact, many of the labels used in this list are considered derogatory by those who fall into those categories and, therefore, are dismissed out of hand. The categories are, at best, fluid, dynamic and only rough approximations of the personalities and issues that divide the movement. However, they are significantly more nuanced than the categories currently used by Western policymakers, analysts, and law enforcement agencies to discuss Establishment Salafists, Global Jihadists and those in between.

Each of these branches of Salafist thought look to different religious figures and texts for legitimacy and intellectual guidance. Their different religious interpretations have dramatic implications for the political, social, and economic behavior of their adherents. Can a "good" Muslim listen to music? Should a "good" Muslim boycott companies who do business with Israel? Is it acceptable for a "good" Muslim to fight to overthrow a Muslim government when that government fails to implement Sharia comprehensively? Each Salafist subset gives its followers slightly different answers and religious justifications to these and a variety of other questions. But the categorization provides nothing more than a rough topography of the Salafist terrain in order to help observers speak in more nuanced terms about the ideology.

Establishment Salafists

The first branch of Salafism is often referred to as Establishment Salafism. Adherents to this sub-school are obedient to the Saudi government. They serve as the official ulama, or religious guides, whom the Saudi state backs with money, resources and a platform. The most prominent clerics in this category are Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Ibn Al-Muhammad Ibn Sa'd al-Ryalman Ibn Baz (or Sheikh Bin Baz, as he is more commonly known) and Sheikh Bin Al-Utaym. To those who fit this category, the term "Establishment" seems derisive, given its connotations of being stagnant and out of date. For those who employ the phrase, however, that is precisely the image they see. Some also refer to followers of this group as "Bazis," as a slight against those who are viewed as blindly following Sheikh Bin Baz.

Sheikh Bin Baz was born in 1910 in the Saudi city of Riyadh. He is said to have memorized the Quran by the age of 11. At 16, he contracted an eye infection which left him completely blind by the age of 20. Nevertheless, he continued studying Islam under some of the most prominent conservative thinkers of his time, most of whom were teaching in Saudi universities. One of his most well-known teachers was the Mauritanian Muhammad as-Shanqiti (a name that frequently appears in the writings of a variety of Salafist shaikhs), who died in 1973 after a career of scholarship.

In the 1940s, Bin Baz openly issued a fatwa, making it a crime against Islam for any Muslim living in the Persian Gulf region to hire a non-Muslim. The Saudi government wasted little time imprisoning him for contradicting an established government policy of allowing the employment of non-Muslims. Thereafter, Bin Baz would dedicate his life to scholarship and teaching in line with the state's official Salafist interpretation. For his obedience, he would be rewarded with positions on senior Islamic councils and committees, serve as the chairman for international Salafist gatherings and publish books and fatwas for the next 50 years that millions would follow.

In the wake of the 1991 Gulf War, when the Saudi government invited American military forces into the kingdom, Bin Baz lost significant support from the more hardline branches of Salafism, particularly the Jihadists, for not condemning the decision. As the government cracked down on other Salafist activists who were criticizing the regime for allowing non-Muslim forces into an Islamic land, Bin Baz published a fatwa declaring the decision allowable and religiously legitimate. This was not the first time he had published such a supportive fatwa: in November of 1979, during the siege of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, he had issued a fatwa authorizing the use of French special forces to aid the Saudis in rescuing the hostages and capturing the rebels. Similarly, this earlier religious edict had left him with few friends in the Jihadist community.

Bin Baz became the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia in 1993. While holding that position, he tried to walk the tightrope of providing religious legitimacy to the Saudi royal family, a regime cast by Muslims of all stripes as often conducting itself in a less than religious fashion, while lobbying for Salafist reforms within Saudi society. The contradictions continued as his support for the Oslo Peace Accord between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Israeli government served as another breaking point between him and many of his more conservative followers. As Israel was, for many Salafists, the single most pressing issue of the day, Bin Baz's tacit acceptance of its continued existence was viewed as outright apostasy by some. But given the love and respect that most Salafists held for him, even his staunchest critics trod lightly in their critiques.
When Bin Baz died in 1999, he was still the Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, chairman of the Committee of Senior Ulama (religious scholars) and chairman of the Department of Scientific Research and Ijma’ (guidance). The Saudi government held a state funeral in his honor and millions of Muslims around the world mourned the loss. Another guiding light among the Establishment Salafists is Shaikh Ibn al-Uthaymin. Born in 1925 in Unayzah, in the Qasim region of Saudi Arabia, Uthaymin studied under Bin Baz and several of the latter’s former teachers, including the legendary Shaikh Shihabi. He went on to mentor students from Saudi Arabia and across the Islamic world who came to study with him, issued numerous fatwa and preached in the Masjid al-Haram mosque in Mecca for over 35 years. By his death in 2004, he was hailed as one of the world’s pre-eminent experts in fiqh, or Islamic jurisprudence, having written over 50 books on the topic.

The Establishment Salafists, guided by the writings and fatwa issued by Bin Baz and Uthaymin, generally believe in the Tawhid Al-Ibadah (unity of worship) as it was argued for by early conservative thinkers, including Ibn Abi al-Wahab and the medieval Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyyah. Establishment Salafists say that they consider those who rule with anything other than Sharia to be sinners. They believe that not applying Sharia is the major act of disbelief, which necessitates that other Muslims must declare Tafriq (excommunication) on those leaders.

Critics of this school, including Jihadists as well as a number of other more conservative Salafist subgroups, argue that Bin Baz and Uthaymin were misled by the Saudi government, which claims that the Saudi constitution adheres to the Quran and Sunnah. To the contrary, the Jihadists argue, the laws that govern day-to-day behavior within the kingdom generally follow a secular law model. As a result of their allegiance to their host governments, Establishment Salafists almost never name any of the Arab regimes or individual rulers as kafir (unbelievers), and they tend to approve of the state apparatus, although they will acknowledge that these regimes do not govern in accordance with Sharia. Establishment Salafist shaikhs are willing to overlook such sins in order to maintain their religious credentials. And while they may disagree with democracy as a system of governance on the grounds that it is not Islamic in principle, they usually do not openly oppose the participation of Muslims in the democratic process.

Establishment Salafists emphasize the more theoretical and internal application of Jihad over the practical use of violence. Al-Qa’ida’s Usama Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri have both written scathing criticisms of Bin Baz’s fatwa and his toleration of religious laxity. But, as is the tradition, both Bin Laden and Zawahiri pay their due deference to the Shaikh before and after slamming him in their formal writings.

Saudi Arabia’s current chief cleric, the Grand Mufti, is Shaikh Abdulaziz al-Sheikh. A graduate of the Imam al-Dawah Institute from the Faculty of Sharia, he is known for his conservative positions on Islamic issues as well as his unswerving support for the Saudi ruling regime. Since 2001, he has issued numerous fatwa condemning terrorism and Jihadist ideology. Recently, he warned Muslim youth to beware of elements that were teaching lessons of “fake Jihad” in order to misguide the average Muslim. Like his predecessors, he is viewed by most hardline Salafists as a complete sell-out and a pawn of the Saudi regime.

**Makhduli Salafists**

Makhduli, or Jamii, Salafists follow the religious teachings of the Yemeni Shaikh Rabi al-Makhduli and the Ethiopian Shaikh Muhammad Aman Ibn Ali Jami. Each term, although derisive because it associates the followers of this school with humans as opposed to God, is a convenient way to characterize the ideological differences of the group vis-à-vis other Salafist subgroups. Both Makhduli and Jami were educated in Saudi Arabia. Other important, but lesser-known, ideologues of the group include Muhammad Al-Banna of Egypt and Ali Al-Halabi of Jordan.

Arab states have generally viewed the Makhduli Salafists as palatable, much like the Establishment Salafists, given their endorsement of secular and democratic forms of government and their unflinching support for local Arab regimes. With Saudi backing, the Makhdulis have firmly entrenched themselves globally, operating out of most Western countries. They have also gone online, so Muslims anywhere around the world can download Makhduli’s teachings. In Saudi Arabia, members of the group are more commonly referred to as “Jamii,” and are known for their hostility to any political tendency that opposes the authorities. This stance stems from the Salafist principle of listening and obeying religious authority. Makhduli’s writings address a broad swath of other Islamic issues, but he is best known for his resistance to the use of Tafriq (excommunication) of other Muslims, a practice that is frequently employed by more hardline Salafists, particularly Jihadists. Makhduli wrote on the issue:

> Of the matters that makes apparent their error and uncovers their misguidance is that it is said to them: "When can it be judged against a Muslim who testifies that there is none which has the right to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger and who prays that he has apostatized from his religion? Is one instance [of ruling by other than what Allah has revealed] enough? Or is it necessary for him to announce that he has become an apostate?"

Much of his thinking has been influenced by the teaching of a closely related branch of Salafism, known as Alban Salafism (see below). However, Makhduli adopted more extreme positions than Al-bani in his teachings. When Al-bani declared his support for two hardline clerics, Safar al-Hawali and Salman Al-Awdah, Makhduli’s followers felt dismayed and confused. (Again, though, it is important to note that this taxonomy is nothing more than an analytical attempt to instil some order into what appears to be a chaotic mess of ideas and personalities.)

Makhduli came from the al-Madakalah tribe, from the Jizan Province of southern Saudi Arabia. He was born in al-Jaradiyah, a small village to the west of Samiah,
in 1931. At the age of eight, he began studying the Quran under the tutelage of Shayban al-Arishi, al-Qadhi Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Jabir al-Madhkhali and Muhammad Ibn Hussain Makki from the town of Sibya. He would go on to study at the madrasa in Samitah under Shaikh Nasir Khalafah Taish Mubaki, the regarded student of well-known Salafist Shaiikh al-Qarawi. He learned the Hadith under other notable Salafist shaikhs, including Ahmad Ibn Yahiya an-Najmi, and he studied Islamic doctrine under Shaikh Muhammad Aman al-Jami. In 1960, he graduated from the educational institute in Samitah and joined the Faculty of Sharia in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, before moving the next year to the Islamic University of Medina. Once there, he studied under some of the leading Salafist figures in the world, learning Islamic doctrine under Shaikh bin Da’az, the Hadith under Shaikh al-Albani and tafsir (Quranic exegesis) and usul al-fiqh (research methodology) under Shaikh as-Shanqiti.

Madskhali has been a highly problematic figure for Jihadists operating in Saudi Arabia because of his mass popularity, particularly among the young. His messages have proved accessible and digestible for audiences of all ages. And with the backing of the Saudi government, he has been able to exploit technology fully, allowing him much broader reach than most clerics. He also enlisted the support of a national network of disciples who promoted his works while quietly keeping watch over the maneuvers of his competitor shaikhs, particularly the Jihadists.

Many hardliners condemn Madskhali Salafists for their criticism of Sayyid Qutb. To Madskhali and his followers, Qutb's teachings make him an apostate. Madskhali feel Qutb's interpretations of the Quran—compiled in his multi-volume set In the Shade of the Quran—profoundly misguided. Because of these vocal criticisms of Qutb and their rejection of violence, Jihadists have cast Madskhali as sell-outs and even as muriji ‘ah (snitches).

Followers of Madskhali Salafism generally allow for the rule of secular law in Islamic countries, justifying it as an “action” as opposed to an Aqidah, or Islamic creed concerned with matters of dogma and doctrine. Publicly referring to the ruling regimes of Arab states as legitimate and therefore calling for Muslims in those states to obey their respective governments, particularly the Saudi royal family, Madskhali Salafists tend to allow the implementation of democratic rule in Islamic states, although they advocate that Salafists remain apolitical in their daily affairs. They argue that the simple fact that the regime has political power proves God’s desire for them to possess such ruling authority. And they are willing to designate those who oppose these governments as Khawarij (those who go out”—referring to an early Islamic sect who are seen by many Muslims to have left mainstream Islam). It is obligatory, Madskhali Salafists argue, for Muslims to report individuals who deviate from these principles to the authorities.

Followers of Madskhali, who tend to be foreign residents of Saudi Arabia, Saudia from Jizan, and Kuwaitis, Jordanians and Yemenis, successfully humiliated the more hardline Jihadist clerics during the 1990s, particularly in Saudi Arabia. The words they used to greatest effect against radical Islamists, argues al-Qaida, included:

- "Jihadi": Anyone who believes that Jihad is a purely individual duty to fight.
- "Ta’ifini": Anyone who excommunicates Arab rulers or Muslims.
- "Khariji": Anyone who says it is permissible to overthrow Arab rulers.
- "Khariji Bandit": Anyone who actively seeks to overthrow Arab rulers.
- "Qutub": Anyone who reveres, quotes or even positively mentions Sayyid Qutb.
- "One Who Reviles the Scholars": Anyone who criticizes the Arab religious scholars who support the ruling Arab governments.
- "Hizbi": Anyone who participates in an anti-establishment activist group.
- "Dirty Groundhog": [A traitor to one's religion, used specifically against Saudi hardline cleric Shaikh Hamoud bin Uqla as-Shuaybi in the 1990s.]
- "Rabid Dogs": [A generic label for extremists.]
- "The Dog": [Referring specifically to Usama Bin Laden.]
- "Perennial Defender of Innovators": [An attack against extremists for rejecting centuries of accepted historical teachings and interpretations of Islam.]
- "Betrayor of the Salafi Way": [Used to attack hardline clerics who step outside the bounds of mainstream Islamic conservatism.]

Albani Salafists

A third subset of Salafism, generally referred to as “Albani Salafism,” earned its name for its followers’ intellectual mentor, Shaikh Nasir al-Deen al-Albani. He was born in the city of Ashkodera, then capital of Albania, in 1914. His father, al-Haj Nooh Najjaatee al-Albani, had completed Islamic legal studies in Istanbul, Turkey, and returned to Albania before moving his family to Damascus, Syria. There, Albani engaged in classical Islamic studies, learning the Quran, Arabic linguistics and Islamic law, particularly the school of Islamic jurisprudence known as Hanafism.

By the age of 20, he was specializing in the Hadith, having been influenced by articles in Al-Manar magazine, which had been edited by the early Salafist Rashid Rida. Albani made an early name for himself by transcribing a massive tome by the renowned Hadith scholar Hafiz al-Iraqi. For books on Hanafism that he was not able to find in his home, he would visit the famous Damascus library, al-Maktabah at-Thahiriyah. Albani’s extensive studies in the library reportedly convinced the librarians to grant him a private room. They even gave him his own key for after-hours access. It is widely understood within the Salafist community that Albani’s deep study of the Hadith led him to turn away from standard interpretations and look instead to the model of the Salaf, the pious predecessors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Being a Salafist, Albani soon found himself at odds with some of the local shaikhs, as well as with the local Sufi imams, all of whom publicly began to oppose his preaching. In Syria’s mainstream religious establishment circles, Albani became just another “Wahabi deviant.” Not everyone shunned him, however. Some leading conservative shaikhs, including Bahjatul Baljar, Abdul-Fattah and
Tawfiq al-Barzah, encouraged him to press onward, no matter how uncomfortable he became. Albani began teaching two classes each week, which were attended by both students and other lecturers. In class, he taught agidah (creed), fiqh (jurisprudence), usul (fundamental beliefs), and the Hadith. He also began organizing monthly journeys to various cities throughout Syria and Jordan.

After a number of his works appeared in print, he was invited to teach Hadith studies in the new University in Medina, Saudi Arabia, from 1961 to 1963, where he also served as a member of the university board. He then visited various countries for da'wah (proselytizing) and to give lectures, including Qatar, Egypt, Kuwait, the Emirates, Spain, and England. He would become known as the pre-eminent scholar of the Hadith in recent Islamic history, publishing over one hundred books on the topic, and mentoring some of today's leading Salafist shaikhs.  

Unsurprisingly, Albani came under intense scrutiny from Jihadist-minded Salafists as a result of some of his views. However, as an authoritative voice in the modern Salafist movement, much like Shaikh Bin Baz or Shaikh Uthaymin, Jihadists have to show deference to him even while chastising him and his legacy. Nevertheless, a number of high-profile Jihadist thinkers are clearly critical of Albani's positions with regard to the issuance of Takfir. The Jihadist cleric Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, for example, wrote:

And with relation to the mentioned Shuyookh [distinguished shaikhs] not performing Takfir [excommunication] on the Tawaghit [disbelivers]—what is apparent is that it was an incorrect jihād [Islamic interpretation] from them. We do not make permissible making Takfir on them for merely this mistake of theirs. And whoever says other than this regarding our position—then they have fabricated a lie against us.

Another prominent Jihadist cleric, Shaikh Abu Qatada, agreed with Maqdisi, saying that, "Shaikh Nasir [al-Albani] opposes us, but we do not do Takf ir upon him; may Allah save us from being Khawarij." The core tenets of Albani Salafism are close to, but subtly different from, the Establishment Salafist school, particularly with regards to their respective perspectives on Arab rulers. Establishment Salafists generally believe that current Arab governments in the Middle East ought to be viewed as legitimate but as wrong-headed in their failure to apply Sharia comprehensively. While Albani Salafists may publicly declare that rulers of those governments are sinning Muslims, even though they should not be considered apostates or unbelievers. Albani Salafists also advocate maintaining the status quo rather than calling for an Islamic uprising against Arab rulers. To them, living well under a Muslim regime, even if it is not under Sharia, is better than risking social chaos in an attempt to overthrow that regime. They tend to be optimistic about their ability to improve the laws and constitution of those states by gradually introducing more elements of Sharia into society. Importantly, they reject the ideas of Sayyid Qutb, particularly in respect to Qutb’s thoughts on jahiliyyah (ignorance). They do not call him a kuff, or unbeliever, however. Finally, they consider Jihad primarily an abstract, spiritual activity rather than a physical one, feeling that violence waged in the name of Jihad causes more harm than good and that those who do so, even against invaders, are Khawarij.

One of Albani’s most vigorous advocates is the website Salafi Publications. This publishes most of Albani’s writings, praises his contribution to Islam and the Salafist community and aggressively defends his reputation against all of his critics. Salafis publications.com has been involved in a widely publicized dispute over the legitimacy of scholars like Albani with another website, Salafi Publications Refutations. Consider one article written by the staff at Salafi Publications Refutations (SPR) that sheds light on the debate between the various schools. The authors from SPR acknowledge that Albani has done much for advancing Islam in the areas of the Hadith and Fiqh. They applaud him for dedicating his life to the guidance of others, teaching Islam and refuting the innovators from the groups of misguidance and error. And they rightly acknowledge that a number of Muslims, mostly non-Salafis, have criticized him posthumously. His large body of follower, SPR argues, have been unable to discriminate between hostile criticism from non-Salafis and friendly criticism from Salafis, with the result that these people have taken it upon themselves to blindly defend the noble Shaikh from every and all censure... But when these people create a movement centered around the Shaikh’s errors in Kufr and Tafseer, and denounce those who oppose these mistakes and when certain individuals attempt to refute these concepts, they openly show their hatred and spite towards those who differ with the Shaikh. And this would be acceptable too except that they have even gone to the length of removing the label of Salafist and Sunnī from those who have dared to utter words of counsel and reform in this regard... But when these individuals go to even further lengths of evil slander and lies upon us, then we see that it is incumbent upon us to point out their deception, evil and mischief.

Although much of Shaikh Albani’s work is cited as authoritative by global Jihadists, his followers are curiously despised by the Jihadist community as they represent a major threat to Jihadists: in short, followers of Albani adopt very similar doctrinal positions to those of Jihadists but have very different recommendations about how to apply those doctrines. Making matters worse for Jihadists, Albani’s followers tend to be one of the most active Salafist subsets in terms of spreading their teachings, particularly on the internet.

The now “reformed” Jihadist cleric Shaikh Abd al-Qadr Ibn Abd Al-Aziz (Dr. Fadl) also wrote a response to this opinion in a letter entitled The Mainstay or Preparing Provisions for Jihad. In it, he claims that Albani’s definition of Jihad as being forgiveness, education and prayer is grievously wrong. Albani, he argues, is wrapped in evil and is not suitable to be a shaikh. He also expresses the extreme view that today’s leaders throughout the Muslim world are not Muslims at all. By accepting this position, Abd al-Qadir puts himself at odds with Albani and most
mainstream Salafists. For Abd al-Qadir, however, fighting apostates and those who support them is a duty more urgent than fighting Jews, who would not have rooted themselves in Palestine if it were not for these Muslim leaders.

**Scientific Salafists**

Scientific, or Academic, Salafists earn their name from the highly rational methods they employ to discuss and implement their version of Salafism. Adherents to this approach are regularly featured in Arab newspapers and on television because they tend to be among the most vocal on social and political issues. In Kuwait, for example, they consistently enter candidates for elections. And in Algerian public schools they openly teach their scientific version of Salafism. Important figures in the group, which has its own party called Hizb al-Ummah (Nation’s Party), include Shaikh Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq, Abdul Razak al-Shaygi, Dr. Sajid al-Mutairi and Dr. Hamid Ali.

Scientific Salafist doctrine generally emphasizes viewing most Islamic ruling regimes today as sinners, but not as apostates. Proponents openly concede that these regimes violate the strenuous demands of Islam, but they see most of their actions as minor transgressions. The fact that these rulers have not implemented *Sharia* law is, for Scientific Salafists, an undeniable sin, but it is not grounds to excommunicate them or to declare them to be disbelievers.

One stronghold of Scientific Salafism is Kuwait. Islamic political movements have recently been targeting the information and education ministers in an attempt to move the country’s policies toward conservative Salafist doctrine. Dr. Walid al-Tabtaba’i, a member of the Kuwaiti parliament who generally rejects female suffrage, has been at the forefront of these efforts. But even in Kuwait, Scientific Salafists continue to face challenges familiar to most hardline Salafist movements across the Middle East. On January 29, 2005, for instance, Scientific Salafist leaders held a press conference announcing the establishment of their party in order to confirm the right of political pluralism and the transfer of power through peaceful means, as well as their adherence to *Sharia* and their rejection of all forms of foreign occupation. Three days later, in response to this pronouncement, the Kuwaiti public prosecutor’s office charged nine of the Salafist leaders with plotting to overthrow the government and violating association and press laws, crimes which carried a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison. They were released on $1,026 bail after a ten-hour interrogation. The case never came to trial.

Given that no Middle Eastern government has established a functioning *Sharia* system, Scientific Salafists accept the process of democratic participation in secular government. They do so not because they see it as being compatible with *Sharia*, but because, given the current state of affairs, it is the most rational way to achieve what is in the public interest. Democracy provides the proponents of this approach with a chance to proselytize openly through campaigns, and, more importantly, to exert control over the governance of their states. It therefore allows them to set their regimes on a trajectory toward the implementation of *Sharia*.

This version of Salafism, as opposed to some of the other subsets, generally respects the teachings of Sayyid Qutb, although Scientific Salafists tend to differ from him on theological grounds as well as disagreeing with his characterization of modern society as being in an age of *jahiliyyah*, or ignorance. Although Scientific Salafists embrace the concept of Jihad as an integral part of Islam, they are careful to interpret it as being more spiritual in nature than physical: they clearly advocate avoiding physical confrontation with powers numerically and qualitatively stronger than they are, as to fight them would simply be irrational. However, these Salafists are no supporters of recent American actions in the Middle East. Dr. Sajid Abdali, former chairman of the Political Bureau of the Scientific Salafist Movement, who has been active in the Kuwaiti national political machinery, for instance, has remarked: “The Scientific Salafi Movement has said it opposes the US presence in the region and in Iraq... Therefore, we object to the Kuwaiti government facilities for the American troops in Iraq. Yes, we are opposed to this presence, but we do not call for violence.”

When pushed by the London-based Arabic newspaper *al-Sharq al-Awsat* on whether he thought that such a call for resistance paved the way for young people to engage in fighting and military action in Iraq, he answered: “No, and we affirm the legitimacy of Jihad in Iraq. However, we do not call on people directly to go to Iraq, although there are scholars and religious scholars who take this view.”

Another bastion of Scientific Salafism is Algeria. Young Algerians who had studied in Saudi Arabia carried the Salafist movement back with them during the 1980s. Even though their leader Abdelmalek Ramdani has since fled to Saudi Arabia after receiving death threats, Scientific Salafists in Algeria have continued to mobilize the government by means of challenging the way that Islam is practiced by pressuring mosques and local imams to move toward more conservative doctrine. In 2006, during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, for instance, a controversy erupted regarding mosques which did not adhere to the time for the end of daily fasting set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. “Some muezzins are signaling the end of the day’s fast ten minutes before the time set by law,” said Boubadellah Ghalamallah, the Minister of Religious Affairs, whose ministry runs mosques and is in charge of all their expenditures, including imams’ salaries. The ministry has also warned the Algerian public of the infiltration of mosques by the Scientific Salafist movement, with Ghalamallah declaring that the country is going through a severe cultural and religious crisis. Other new trends observed in some mosques include the use of loudspeakers at full volume and the reciting of Wahabi-style prayers during the month of Ramadan. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is clearly concerned by this gradual infiltration and has given instructions to help mosques guard against the movement’s efforts to take them over. According to the Algerian daily newspaper *El Khabar*, police have also opened a nationwide investigation into the Salafists’ spread across the country.
Salafi Ikhwan (Muslim Brotherhood)

The Muslim Brotherhood has become well known to most observers of Middle Eastern politics. Since its inception in the 1920s under the direction of its founder, the Egyptian Hassan al-Banna, it has morphed into a multifaceted and disjointed political movement that looks different in each local instantiation. Well-known leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood include Dr. Isam Al-Bashir of Sudan, Omar Al-Ashqar of Jordan, and Al-Shaik Abu-Majid Al-Zindani of Yemen.

This school holds views similar to those of the Establishment scholars about prioritizing spiritual struggle over physical struggle with regard to Jihad. Although they condemn Arab governments for their complicity in aiding the Zionist–Crusader conspiracy, and for failing to implement Sharia, they stop short of declaring the rulers kaffar, at least publicly. Given the situation in which Muslims find themselves, followers of this subset argue, there is a tacit consensus that participation in the political democratic process is acceptable because it allows rightly guided believers to exert some influence in restoring Islamic rule to their lands.

One of the key theoreticians of the group was Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood member Muhammad Qutb, who also influences other Salafist subsets, including the Qutubis. In his book 'Understandings that Must be Corrected he argued:

We must bear in mind the requirements of “there is no god but God,” as the first generation understood them, as being taught by God to His Messenger ... The first requirement is the unity of the deity and the divinity, and the unity of the names and the characteristics (that is, the unity of belief). The second requirement is the unity of worship of God alone, with no partners (that is, the unity of worship). The third requirement is the arbitration of God’s law alone, with all other systems of law excluded.28

By not applying Islamic law comprehensively, and by implementing elements of Western-style capitalism, by inviting Western companies into Islamic lands and by allowing Western soldiers to build bases in their countries, Arab rulers are violating nearly every principle of Islam. Secular rule, no matter how one spins it, is a major problem for this group. They know from experience, however, that issuance of Talif against these regimes, or anything that smacks of it, invariably leads to their imprisonment.

Sururis

The Sururi Salafists are named for their clerical inspiration, Muhammad Surur Bin Nayif Zayn al-Abidin. The Sururi approach to Salafism was developed by those Salafists who saw Surur’s massive global sway, resonant propaganda network and highly organized mobilizing structures as a threat to their recruiting and fundraising efforts. Surur had been an early member of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, which had become increasingly radical in its thinking and violent in its actions. He was also a staunch proponent of Sayyid Qutb’s writing on the state of jahiliyah, or ignorance, in which Islam was allegedly currently stuck. Following a series of Syrian government crackdowns against the Brotherhood in the 1950s and 1960s, Surur relocated to the burgeoning hub of conservative Salafist thought in Saudi Arabia, the town of Buraidah. He taught and preached at Buraidah College, which is affiliated with Imam Muhammad Bin-Sa’ud Islamic University. Among his students were individuals who would rise to prominence in Saudi conservative Islamist activism, most notably Salman al-Awdah. There is little doubt that Surur’s Ikhwani tendencies hybridized with hardline Saudi Salafism during this time.

In his early years living and teaching in Saudi Arabia, Surur sought preemptively to mitigate any backlash he would receive from the domestic Islamists as a result of his teachings by using the same slogan as most Saudi hardliners: “Doctrine First.” This indicated the priority of theology and doctrine over matters of jurisprudence. Surur and his followers, however, quietly continued to expand their organization and influence across Saudi Arabia, particularly during the rise of the “Islamic Awakening” movement. He saw this grassroots push among the kingdom’s conservatives as an opportunity to cast his doctrinal net wider. It was also during this time, however, that the split between the senior members of the Sururis and the Jamis occurred. By the 1990s, Surur himself, Safar al-Hawai, Salman al-Awdah and a number of Awakening clerics were adopting an openly confrontational stance against the Saadi regime. As the state mustered its own religious soldiers, such as Madkhali and Jami, Surur and his followers leaned further toward the oppositionists.29

Followers of Surur’s work generally feel the concept of Tawhid (God’s unity as reflected in both worship and daily life) is a priority. Strong belief in pure Tawhid often leads one to reject democracy and representative or participatory forms of government. Because of this preoccupation with Tawhid in theory and practice, the group tends to be remarkably well attuned to social and political issues. School curricula, laws regulating commerce and a variety of other seemingly mundane matters are also priorities. Importantly, however, adherents are not near-sighted: their concern is almost always global in scope. They feel that from New York to London, to Mostar to Algiers, to Lahore to Manila, Muslims are under attack. This global conspiracy, they generally argue, is being perpetrated by a coalition of Jews and Christians (spearheaded by the United States, Britain, and Israel), but it is also being tacitly supported by Arab regimes.

One Sururi follower who spoke with the London-based Arab newspaper Al-Sharg al-Awsat noted, “What is more important than the Sururi organization is the ‘Sururi ideology.’ It is the ideology that dominates the majority of the Awakening addresses in the country through audiotapes, sermons, lectures, and books and ‘practically’ moulds the majority into the Sururi methods and thinking.” For this follower, the most important issue for Sururis is “the method.”

Surur and his followers quietly continued to develop their uniquely styled Salafist–Brotherhood hybrid ideology after moving from Buraidah to Kuwait and
then to the United Kingdom, where Surur established the Sunnah Study Centre in his Birmingham home neighborhood. Through the center, Surur began to publish the *Al-Sunnah* magazine, which he used to codify his teachings and his ultra-conservative, yet pragmatically mitigated, political stances on a variety of issues. He also used the magazine to mobilize Muslims around the world, much like the Ikhwani movement had done. The magazine gained even wider appeal in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War when conservative Salafist activism began to erupt into violence, particularly in Buraidah.

It was also roughly during this time that the name “Sururis” (or “Sururiyyan” for the “procrastinators”) to describe the adherents of this particular method, which was best articulated by Sururi, emerged from competing subsets of Salafism as a way to marginalize the group politically, socially and religiously. As one observer of Sururi Salafism has argued,

> The Sururis have taken from Ibn Taymiyah his strict Salafi stance toward those who contradict the Sunnah from the other groups and sects, such as the Shiites. Therefore, they have drawn the “ideological content” from Ibn Taymiyah. As for Sayyid Qutb, they have taken from him his “revolutionary attitude” and completely believe his opinion.

By 2004, Surur had resided in Great Britain for nearly 20 years but in that year he relocated to Jordan. His supporters claimed on their Centre for Islamic Studies website ([www.alsunnah.org](http://www.alsunnah.org)) that he was not leaving Birmingham to reconcile with the Syrian government but rather to ensure that his supporters in their schools in Oman were being well supported. With respect to Surur’s position on those who had joined al-Qaeda and similarly violent Islamic groups, the statement said, “These young men are not enemies of the Shaikh and he does not see them as such. He will treat them as a father deals with children who have gone astray. He will always implore God to guide them and that they return to the path of righteousness."[32]

**Qutubis**

Closely related to the Sururis are the ‘Qutubi Salafists’—a derogatory term for an eclectic group who follow the teachings of Sayyid Qutb and those who generally advocate his principles. Adherents of this school may follow a Salafist manhaj, or method of looking to the foundations of Islam for guidance, but many other Salafists see little common ground between the Qutubis and themselves, more often linking them to the thinking of the hardline elements of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood. For softer Salafists, particularly the Establishment subset, the Qutubis are unacceptably radical in both their thinking and their organization. For the Jihadists, however, Qutubis are viewed as accommodationist and weak because they do not demand violent solutions. This makes them, in Jihadist eyes, even worse than some of the more liberal subsets, because they offer an alternative for youth who might otherwise have been tempted to throw in their lot with the Jihadists.

Traditionally lumped into this category are Sayyid Qutb himself, Abu Al-Ala Al-Maududi of Pakistan, Muhaddith Ahmad Shafik of Egypt, Mahmoud Shaker of Egypt, Mufid of Saudi Arabia Imran Muhamed Ibrahim, and Scholar of *Tafsir* Abdi al-Rahman Al-Dawsari of Saudi Arabia. More contemporary scholars generally associated with the group include Mohammad Qutb, Abdel Majid Al-Shazli of Egypt and Shaikh Gazi Al-Tuwbah of Kuwait. Whether these thinkers accept this designation is another question. Nevertheless, their works are most often cited by this school to justify their doctrine and activities.

The group’s primary agenda is to unify the global ummah, to promote the doctrine of *Tawhid*, and to work toward the re-Islamization of society through the replacement of phony Muslim Arab regimes and by stopping the influx of secularism, capitalism and Western culture into the Islamic world. Scholars supporting this subset have generally been very vocal in condemning those governments who adopt legal systems other than *Sharia*, particularly the Saudi regime. These thinkers openly declare that Arab and Muslim governments are secular and therefore stand beyond the Islamic pale. Historically, they have not hesitated to label any Muslim political officials who participate in legislating secular laws *kuffar*. Qutubis generally ground their arguments in the Quran, *Sunnah* (or model of the Prophet) and specific *tafsir* (or interpretations of the Quran), particularly those written by Sayyid and Mohammad Qutb. Furthermore, Qutubis are comfortable publicly admonishing Muslims who commit major Islamic violations with the label of disbeliever.

Hardline Qutubis strongly oppose participation in the democratic process on both theoretical and practical grounds; democracy is allegedly un-Islamic in its nature and participation in secular parliaments has not provided any benefit to Muslims. Qutubis recognize the potential danger of average Muslims, not educated in the foundational texts of Islamic theology, judging one another as *kuffar*, but they argue that they only advocate such a judgment when the accused has committed a major crime against Islam. For Qutubis, Jihad in its violent form is a viable solution for righting the wrongs of today’s Islam. They do, however, identify a number of important religious stipulations for the use of violence. Adherents generally believe that Jihad should be defined as to prepare fully for struggle in whatever form is necessary, meaning economically and spiritually as well as militantly.

**Global Jihadists**

In many ways, today’s Jihadist movement is the most successful self-fulfilling prophecy the world has ever seen. For, while Osama Bin Laden from 1996 to 1998 hailed a “world Islamic front for jihad against the Jews and Crusaders,” at that time there really was little more than a small band of well-funded and highly organized peripatetic bullies stirring up trouble and justifying it in Islam. But the more that Bin Laden and his followers kept proclaiming their existence, the more people began to believe it, and the more it became true.

As staggering as it may seem, the global Jihadist movement in its current incarnation stepped out of its adolescence and into adulthood remarkably recently
(circa 2003), particularly in terms of its doctrinal maturity and social embeddedness. Before then, the global Jihadis: movement had crawled along as a loose amalgamation of schools, personalities, doctrines and individuals. It borrowed heavily, co-opted where it could, and claimed credit where it needed to. Despite Bin Laden's attempts to spin Al-Qaida as the vanguard of a globally united social movement as early as 1996, this was simply not the case. Planning and executing an operation, even one as catastrophic as 9/11, is one thing; creating a self-sustaining global movement is entirely another.

To a large degree, the Jihadist movement began as nothing more than a distillation of the most conservative and violent tendencies from the other seven categories of Salafism. It took these elements—their personalities, political stances and experiences—assembled them into an accessible and persuasive composite and began to market them as a new product. It would therefore be appropriate to view global Jihadism as a tremendously successful entrepreneurial initiative. From a corporate branding perspective, or the business of helping a corporation to create an enduring, emotional tie between itself and its consumers, al-Qaida provided a perfect vehicle to "sell" global Jihadism. Its brand was easy to remember, thanks in large part to its corporate spokesman, Usama Bin Laden. Like any public face of a brand, Bin Laden provides a single, memorable image that allows consumers to connect instantly with his product line. Many successful corporate spokesmen present a "folksy" image to their audience: it feels good to think about these people because it is easy to relate to their background, like a neighbor, grandfather, uncle or brother. If a company can persuade an audience to like its spokesman, that audience becomes more likely to purchase (and keep purchasing) the company's product. It was not global Jihadism per se that attracted people to the brand. It was the feelings of hope and admiration that a key demographic of Muslims felt when watching al-Qaida's chief spokesman hiking in the desert in videos or listening to his audio-taped lectures: Bin Laden became the face and personality of global Jihadism.

Besides having a likeable spokesman at its helm, however, al-Qaida had to demonstrate to its target audience—young Muslim men who were frustrated with a stagnant and politically correct Islam and disenchanted with the effect they believed capitalism and Western culture was having on their local culture—that al-Qaida was the solution, the organization that could turn the tides. If short, al-Qaida had to become the brand to beat. The attacks of 9/11 and the immediate global aftermath provided that legitimization. The organization proved that it was both willing and able to attack the most powerful country in the world on its home turf. It also gained affirmation of its position as public enemy number one when George W. Bush demanded that people choose sides: "You're either with us or against us, we mean it. There's no middle ground when it comes to freedom and terror."33

Since branding itself, the movement has been able to accomplish incredible feats and turn itself into a stand-alone social phenomenon that can organically adapt to environmental changes and mobilize support in a variety of social and political climates. Seven interlocking elements comprise today's global Jihadist movement:

1. A founding myth, which encompasses the history of the Prophet Muhammad and his "rightly guided followers," the deep body of medieval Islamic intellectualism that followed in that path and those contemporary Islamic thinkers who made it accessible to a modern Islam.
2. The core doctrines of Tawhid, Al-Wala Wal Bara', Jihad, Isqadah and Takfir that were clarified by the teachings, writings and lives of men like Muhammad Ibn abd al-Wahab, Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Maududi, Juhayman al-Utaybi and others.
3. The lessons learned from leaders trying to apply these teachings on the ground, including Marwan Hadid, Abdullah Azzam, Mullah Muhammad Umar, Usama Bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri, Khattab, Yusuf al-Ayri and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
5. The ever-expanding accessibility of information and education made possible by Jihadist propaganda groups, such as al-Saabab, al-Furqan, Sawt al-Jihad, al-Fajr, Global Islamic Media Front and others.
6. The hard-nosed strategic thinking provided by men like Abu Ubayd al-Qurashi, Abu Musab al-Suri, Abu Bakr Naji, Lewis Atiyatullah and a variety of others.
7. The increased grassroots investment of Muslims through engagement in study groups, internet forums and self-guided Jihadist curricula on every imaginable dimension of Jihad.

**Global Jihadist doctrine**

The modern global Jihadist movement has invented and propagated a compelling founding myth modeled on the experience of the Prophet Muhammad. That myth centers on the fact that Muhammad and his followers were obstructed from practicing their religion freely in Mecca and, facing impending doom from those who were ignorant about the monotheism of Islam, fled to Medina in order to escape certain oppression, imprisonment and even death, consolidate their strength, expand their base and return to Mecca to spread the word of God through the blades of their swords, and set up a system of governance completely in accordance with the teachings of Allah as revealed to Muhammad in the Quran.

**Aqidah**

Above all else, Jihadists are concerned with perfecting their Aqidah, or Islamic creed, so that they can be as closely aligned with God's teachings as possible. What makes matters complicated for Jihadists is that there is no single, agreed-upon Aqidah. The debate over what comprises the perfect Aqidah has inevitably caused a great deal of historical debate for Muslims of all stripes.

To declare that Allah is the Creator or the Provider is not enough to become Muslim, global Jihadists argue. A Muslim must aspire toward the Aqidah of Ahl
al-Sunnah, the ways in which the first generations of Muslims sought to reject ignorance (jahiliyyah) and deviance (shirk) and instead embraced the word of Allah and lived according to the tenets of Tawhid, or the belief in the unity of Allah. The Aqidah followed by most Jihadists was articulated by the medieval Islamic thinker Ibn Taymiyyah in his book Al-Aqidah al-Wastiyah. Ibn Taymiyyah described his reason for writing this Aqidah:

A Shafi’ite judge from Wasit [in Iraq] whose name is Radyi ad-Din al-Wasiti visited me on his way to Hajj [pilgrimage]. This Shaikh was a man of goodness and faith. He complained to me of the people’s situation in that country [i.e., Iraq] under the Tatare [Mongols] rule of ignorance, injustice, and loss of faith and knowledge . . . He asked me to write him an Aqidah as a reference to him and his family. But I declined, saying: Many creeds have been written. Refer to the scholars of the Sunnah. However, he persisted in his request, saying: I do not want any creed but one you write. So I wrote this one for him while I was sitting one afternoon.

Jihadist scholar Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi updated Ibn Taymiyyah’s work on Aqidah for the contemporary Jihadist movement. In some cases, Maqdisi quotes directly from Taymiyyah and other medieval scholars who had written on Aqidah. In his famous work on the topic, “This is Our Aqidah!,” Maqdisi reminds readers that previous scholars, such as Taymiyyah, would go to great lengths in expounding upon the issues of their times in order to refute the philosophies of any sects that had deviated from the true path.

For global Jihadists, Aqidah is a key element in learning the difference between right action and wrong action in the eyes of God. Ibn al-Qayyim, a student of Ibn Taymiyyah, argued in one of his well-known books, Zad al-Ma‘ad (Provisions of the Hereafter), that disbelief in Islam will eventually span the globe, leaving only a few Ghuraba (literally “strangers,” but when used by Jihadists it refers to the minority of Muslims who will gain eternal life in Paradise).

An important part of perfecting one’s Aqidah is identifying and publicly highlighting the behavior and beliefs from which one is trying to distance oneself. Jihadists divide the Islamic world into at least ten communities based on the Aqidah that they practice. Of these ten groups, most are considered deviant by Jihadists because of their corruption, disbelief, and hypocrisy.

- “The Apathetic” (Al-Zalamiyun): For Jihadists, those Muslims that fall into this category are living in spiritual darkness because they show little concern for the affairs of Muslims. They are politically and socially unaware of what is around them religiously and do not feel connected to the Jihadist operations in places like Iraq, Palestine, and Chechnya. Jihadists argue that this group of Muslims do not concern themselves with preparing to fight against apostate rulers or foreign occupiers of Muslim lands. They lump the religious group Jama’at al-Tablighi and the mainstream supporters of the Saudi government into this category.

- “The Propagators of Disbelief” (Al-Zanadiqah): Whereas Jihadists chastise the first group for failing in their Aqidah due to apathy, passivity and ignorance, this group is considered far worse. For Jihadists, Muslims who fall into this category are promoting disbelief, innovation and deviance couched in religious terminology and doctrine. They are the most evil of the Muslims, Jihadists argue. Current examples of this group include Salman Rushdie, whom Jihadists argue has attacked Islam using its most sacred texts and teachings. The Qadiyanis, also known as Mirza, Ahmad or Lahori, also fall into this category. They are a sect who do not believe that the Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet of Islam. Their founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908), claimed to be the Messiah. Jihadists, like many other Muslims, argue that this group does little but promote wrongful innovation and deviation cloaked in the religion of Islam.

- “The Deviant Nation of Islam”: Most Muslims, Jihadists argue, knowingly or unknowingly promote behaviors that are prohibited by Islam. In order to justify their failure to live a virtuous life and perfect their Aqidah, Jihadists say that these Muslims cloak themselves in the Quran and the Hadith. In this group, Jihadists tend to include the Nation of Islam and all government-sponsored Muslim organizations, such as the Muslim Council of Britain (the UK’s representative Muslim umbrella body with over four hundred affiliated national, regional and local organizations, mosques, charities, and schools). They also include Young Muslim associations and other scholars, such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Hamza Yusuf.

- “The Desirous, the Superstitious and the Innovators”: For Jihadists, those who fall into this category include, above all else, Sufi Muslims and those whom they believe worship things other than God and allow their human desires to guide their faith. These are Muslims, they argue, who resist submitting exclusively to Allah, and instead seek to tempt the Islamic world with their own misguided practices and beliefs. As well as Sufis, Jihadists include any mystical or revivalist trends of Islam in this category.

- “The Evidencers” (Ahl ul-Fiqq wa-t-Viyoon): This group refers almost exclusively to the non-practicing youth of Islamic backgrounds who live in and have embraced Western culture. Jihadists are particularly concerned by their support of night clubs, cinemas, clubs, theaters, universities and colleges, and by their open fraternization with non-Muslims of the opposite sex. They chastise them for listening to music, promiscuity, drinking alcohol, smoking, taking drugs and so on.

- “The False and Rotten Salafists” (As-Salafiyyat ut-Talafiyyah): This category refers to those Muslims who call themselves Salafists, study the Quran and the Hadith, and follow the general foundations of the Salafi tradition but resist the call to wage physical Jihad. Although their Aqidah is more closely aligned ideologically with that of the global Jihadist movement, their reticence to follow through with any meaningful action makes them, for Jihadists, as bad as any other deviant group. Nearly all Salafist tendencies outside of the Jihadist movement itself fall into this category.
The Arabic term Tawhid refers to the oneness and totality of God. In its contemporary usage, it refers to the need for unity across a number of different spheres. When understood as “unity of believers,” it means Muslims should seek to transcend legal and factional differences in order to overcome common enemies. When understood as “unity of belief,” it means Muslims should steer away from those who innovate (bid'ah) Islamic doctrine and instead return to the fundamentals as taught in the Quran, the Hadith and the Sunnah. When understood as “unity of worship,” it means Muslims must learn that they cannot live a true Islamic life as instructed by God if they are living under rules that are not in complete accordance with Sharia. This requirement means that Muslims cannot support non-Sharia systems of governance, particularly secular democracy, because it puts the laws of humans ahead of the laws of Allah. So God is the only legislator and the only one who should be consulted when resolving disputes. Democracy would amount to denying the oneness of Allah (shirk); and it is sinful under all circumstances, Jihadists argue, because Islam does not accept that the end justifies the means.

For Jihadists, Tawhid is the first and most important obligation in Islam. Believing in Allah does not make one Muslim, they argue, for a person can be authentic only if they worship and obey Allah exclusively. Therefore, for Jihadists, it is not enough for one to fulfill one or two conditions of Tawhid; every one of the conditions listed below must be fulfilled in order for one’s Tawhid to be valid.35

- **Pronouncement and assertion**: Jihadists believe that one cannot be a Muslim unless they verbally testify, “I have been ordered to fight people until they say [declare] Laa ilaaha illallah [there is none worthy of worship but Allah].”36
- **Certainty in their knowledge**: For Jihadists, a Muslim must gain knowledge about God’s unity in order to avoid committing shirk [sins] and consequently become a mushrik [a sinner]. Knowledge alone is not sufficient, however. Muslims must be certain in their heart that what they believe is the only truth.
- **Acceptance and submission**: After one becomes certain in one’s knowledge of God, one must fully accept what one testifies, setting all of one’s personal desires (hawaat) aside. Acceptance, Jihadists reason, leads to absolute submission in God’s law in all aspects of one’s life. One’s belief must seize one completely and one must live as God’s slave with no haraj (discontent).
- **Disavowing disbelief**: Those Muslims who fail to embrace the doctrine of Tawhid are liars in the eyes of Jihadists as they claim to be Muslims but they do not believe in their hearts. It is a condition of Tawhid, they argue, to disbelieve in false deities and religions, and to reject the people who do. One’s status as a Muslim is incomplete until one makes Takfir and disavows sinners and unbelievers.
- **Dying for belief**: It is pointless for one to fulfill all of the conditions of Tawhid and then die due to infidelity. In such a case, all of one’s deeds will be lost and the individual will be damned in the afterlife.

Takfir

Most simply, Takfir is the practice of declaring an individual a religious apostate, saying that they are no longer welcome in the community of believers in Islam. It is a highly problematic concept for Jihadists because, although it forms part of their critical doctrinal core, it is generally unpopular: mainstream Islam has no history or tradition of judging fellow Muslims “Muslim-ness.”

Therefore, Takfir is where the Jihadist movement is perhaps most doctrinally weak. Most Salafists stop short of declaring that fellow Muslims are unbelievers, accepting simply public disavowal due to an individual’s sins against God and Islam. But Jihadists, drawing on the writings of key figures like Tayimiyyah and Wahab, view Takfir as a religious mandate. Consider the book by Jihadist Shaikh...
Nasir bin Hamad al-Fahd entitled *Whoever Does Not Do Takfir of the Disbeliever is a Disbeliever*, a title that efficiently sums up his position on the matter. Fahd observes, "Whoever does not do Takfir of the disbeliever is then a disbeliever" is a well-known nullification, and is the third nullification of the nullifications of Islam, as mentioned by the Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahab, [quoting Wahab]: "The Third: Whoever does not do takfeer of the polytheists, doubted their disbeliever, or corrected their creed, disbelievers." For Fahd, there are two categories of disbeliever: "The Original Disbeliever," including Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and Confucianists. Muslims who do not do Takfir against these groups immediately, doubt their disbelief even for a moment, or try to correct their creed until to be considered a disbeliever himself because this is effectively a rejection of Sharia texts that mention the falsehood of all creeds other than Islam and the disbelief of all non-Muslims. The second category of disbelief for Fahd is "The Apostle from Islam," which includes anyone who converts from Islam to another religion, particularly Judaism or Christianity, or anyone who nullifies their "Muslim-ness" in their actions but still claims to be a faithful Muslim. This category includes those who fail to do Takfir against those whom they know first-hand to be disbelievers; those who fail to do Takfir against those about whom they have heard reports but have no first-hand experience; those who reject reports of someone being a disbeliever and therefore refuse to do Takfir against them; or those who simply reject the principle by which a person has been called a disbeliever by other Jihadists. For example, if a Muslim stops praying five times daily for a year, Jihadists would call them a disbeliever and demand that the community do Takfir on them. Not doing Takfir on them is grounds for someone to do Takfir on them. Anyone who rejects the notion that not praying five times a day for a year constitutes a nullifiable offense against Islam, and therefore is not grounds for doing Takfir, is also subject to being excommunicated.

Saudi Jihadist ideologue Yousef al-Ayiri noted that Jihadists "do not declare any Muslim a disbeliever for a sin he has committed, short of apostasy, until they ascertain that there is conviction." Rather, he suggests, "they declare as a disbeliever whoever utters words of disbelief or commits, or believes in, acts of disbelief, whether individually or collectively, so long as this is not done out of ignorance, misinterpretation, or coercion, which disqualify people from being declared disbelievers." Before ascertaining whether someone qualifies as a disbeliever, Ayiri clarifies, Jihadists first declare Takfir on the act in question. Once they can identify that there are grounds for declaring the person is a disbeliever, they do so.

Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi takes an even finer hand to the questions of Takfir in his book *This is Our Agiđah*. For: Maqdisi, blatant infidels, including Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and similar are without question to be shunned by Muslims. They have nothing to offer but religious temptation and impurity. However, with respect to those Muslims whom Jihadists believe have nullified their "Muslim-ness," Jihadists should not necessarily declare Takfir on "the Kuffar and the Mushrikun and apostates." Even disobedient believers, he argues, remain within the fold of Islam so long as they remain Muslims. Jihadists only declare...
Remembering Maqdisi's commentary on *Ta'ifir*, Jihadists would rather simply disavow a deviant Muslim than call them a disbeliever. They have therefore developed a loose framework for knowing when a Muslim needs to be pushed away:

- Imitating non-Muslims in dress, language, morality or eating indicates, for Jihadists, loving that which is against Islam, and therefore against God. If an imitator of these customs does not already love the culture of non-Muslims, Jihadists argue, such imitation invariably invests a person deeper into that culture and leads them down a deviant path.

- Living in the lands of non-Muslims (*Dar al-Nahr*) and not immediately moving back to the lands of the Muslims (*Dar al-Islam*) is enough to make a Muslim lose their way. This return to the holy land of Islam, or *Hijra*, is an obligation upon every Muslim, they argue. Residence in the land of non-Muslims invariably means that a Muslim will begin to feel friendship toward them.

- Muslims who aid or support non-Muslims in any way that injures other Muslims, be it military, economic or even speaking well of disbelievers and defending their honor borders on apostasy. It is grounds enough for mandatory dissociation with other Muslims, if not excommunication.

- Seeking aid, comfort or assistance from non-Muslims is also grounds for dissociation. In the hearts of non-Muslims, Jihadists argue, are feelings of hatred, betrayal, evil and subversion against Muslims: non-Muslims want to harm Muslims by any means possible and are eager to exploit the trust of any Muslim in order better to plot against them.

- Observing the holidays, festivities or celebrations of non-Muslims, merely congratulating them during those seasons or even being present at their celebrations is enough to necessitate immediate and mandatory disavowal by other Muslims.

- Asking forgiveness for non-Muslims, or praying for them in any way, or being compassionate or taking pity on them is totally disallowed.

Once Muslims fully understand what they cannot do, particularly Muslims living in the West, with regard to non-Muslim cultures, Jihadists provide them with a rulebook for what they ought to do. First, they are to flee immediately from the lands of non-Muslims and return to a Muslim country. Next, they ought to help their fellow Muslims through donations of money, goods, their labor or even defending their honor. By feeling sympathy for other Muslims whenever harm comes to them, Jihadists believe they can help create a deeper awareness among Muslims and a broader recognition that Muslims around the world are bound to one another: success in London is a success for Iraqis; failure in Iraq is a failure for the Chechens. This is the foundation, they argue, of a global Jihadist revolution.

**Jihad**

Perhaps the most publicly recognized (but often misunderstood) of these doctrines is that of Jihad. By now, most people probably believe that they understand enough about the word to know that it leads to nothing good. *Tawhid*, *Aqidah*, *Ta'ifir* and *al-Wala wal-Bara* are esoteric concepts: they are the core building blocks of the Jihadist ideology of which most non-Muslims (and likely many Muslims) have probably never heard. The term Jihad, however, has become pervasive in the media and daily discourse. It usually appears in conversations about Usama Bin Laden, al-Qaeda and 9/11.40

What remains unclear is what motivates an individual to believe that they can kill in the name of God. Also, one question must be asked: “What is the real meaning of Jihad?” Unfortunately, there is no single definition: Jihad, to a large degree, is whatever Muslims make of it. This ambiguity really begins with the question of whose Islam is being discussed. Most mainstream Muslims who regularly practice their faith will argue that Jihad may have once meant conquering in the name of God. And many will concede that, although offensive Jihad is no longer appropriate or applicable to today’s world, Jihad (when understood as fighting) is still appropriate when Islam is attacked by outside forces.

Finding common ground in the debate about when Islam can be considered as “under attack” is the sticking point. For Jihadists, Islam has been perpetually under attack, beginning with the time of the Prophet, through the invasion of the Mongol hordes, Christan forces in the Crusades, European colonizers, the penetration of communist, socialist and Marxist thought into the Middle East, the establishment of a Jewish state in the form of Israel, to the globalization of Western market capitalism.

In order to defend their continuing violence in the eyes of broader Islam, Jihadists do a curious two-step maneuver: first, they try to prove that the doctrine of Jihad is inherently centered on fighting; and second, they attempt to demonstrate that terrorism is both a legitimate and a necessary form of fighting. With regard to the first point, throughout Islamic history, the meaning of Jihad has been discussed, contested and debated. The mainstream consensus is that it encompasses a wide range of activities, including fighting, but also physical, emotional and intellectual preparation for battle, providing support for those in battle, and even conducting one’s own internal spiritual battle in order to purify oneself religiously. For most Muslims who voluntarily choose to participate in all of the trappings of today’s fast-paced, globalizing society, defining Jihad as the application of force against those who stand in the way of one’s ability to practice one’s religion freely simply does not work. Jihad, whether by doctrine or by necessity, has to be concerned both with internal struggle than with external, physical struggle.

Global Jihadists argue that such thinking is a blatant misunderstanding of the concept: Jihad does not mean “any sort of struggle in the path of Allah.”41 They even argue that it is wrongly translated as “striving” or “struggling” by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Thinking that one is waging Jihad by conducting morning prayers, or by giving a lecture about Islam at a local community center is
misguided. For Jihadists, there are two meanings to every Islamic word: a Sharia meaning and a linguistic meaning. In its Sharia meaning, Jihad means al-Qital (physically fighting); when it is mentioned in its linguistic sense, it should be regarded as muqayyid (restricted) by other rules. Believing in the linguistic meaning of the term and doing activities other than fighting in the name of Jihad is much like arguing that one has successfully fulfilled one’s religious duty to zakat (purification of oneself by giving 2.5 percent of one’s annual savings to charity as an obligation) by taking a shower.

Out of frustration with what he saw as a generation of misguided Muslim youth, the Palestinian Jihadist Shabak Abdullah Azzam sought to clarify how “Jihad” could be both an Arabic word and a Sharia term during the 1980s. Azzam observed that it was taken from the Arabic, Jihād—Yajhād—Jihādan, referring to strength, power, hardship and taking something to the limit. For him, it linguistically derives from terms meaning to use one’s utmost personal ability and strength in order to obtain the beloved or to avert the hated. But in terms of its legal, or Sharia, meaning, Azzam pointed to the four major jurists of Islamic jurisprudence to prove his point. For the Hanafi school of Islamic law, “al-Jihād means to call the Kuffar [disbelievers] to the religion of truth and to fight them if they do not accept.” It means “to sacrifice one’s strength and energy in Fighting in the way of Allah ‘Azza wa-Jal with one’s life, property and the tongue and whatever besides.” For the Maliki school of Islamic law, Azzam argues that Jihad means that a Muslim should fight against a disbeliever who is not under oath or treaty with Muslims by attacking him. For the Sha’afi school, Azzam says, Jihad means “fighting in the way of Allah,” as well as “sacrificial striving in fighting the Kuffar.” And finally, according to the Hanbal school, Jihad means “fighting and to sacrifice all strength . . . to raise the Word of Allah.”

Once Jihadists prove beyond doubt, at least in their own minds, that the official meaning of Jihad can only be fighting, they have to clarify precisely what kind of fighting they mean: there is both Jihad al-Talab wal-Ibida’, or offensive Jihad, and Jihad ud-Defa’ or defensive Jihad. One of the more sophisticated discussions of these two concepts from a Jihadist perspective is by the Saudi ideologue, strategist and al-Qaida commander Youssef al-Ayiri. According to Ayiri, Jihad al-Talab wal-Ibida’ refers to the call made by Muslims to non-Muslims to convert to Islam. If non-Muslims resist this call, or reject Islamic authority over them, Ayiri argues, Islamic doctrine declares that Muslims have a collective obligation (Fard ‘il-Kifaya) to fight them and conquer them so that they do. Jihad by way of conquering, some argue, is a duty for individuals only when too few Muslims collectively stand and fight on Islam’s behalf. But for hardline Salafists, particularly Jihadists, offensive Jihad is an individual obligation for each Muslim (Fard ‘Ayn), in the same way that defensive Jihad is an individual duty.

Jihadists contend that Islamic scholars have differed over the question of whether there is a minimum time limit upon Muslims to perform offensive Jihad. Some Islamic scholars have argued that Muslims must go forth in at least one expedition every year to discharge the duty of Jihad (anything more frequent is above and beyond the minimum requirement). The evidence that Islamic forces have to prove that they have completed their mission is the jizya—a tax paid by non-Muslims to Muslims to avoid fighting with them. As it is not permitted in the Sunnah to take jizya more than once a year, and Jihad can effectively take the place of collecting jizya, Jihad too is required only once a year. More conservative scholars argue that, to the contrary, it is obligatory to wage Jihad against the enemy in their heartlands whenever possible. Fighting non-Muslims and going on expeditions against them whenever possible, according to Ayiri, perfectly suits the aims and objectives of fighting Jihad, which include removing corruption and spreading Islamic authority all over the world. The obligation of Jihad can only cease being mandatory when its true purpose is realized: “that being the complete control of the whole earth such that not a single hand-span is left which is not under Islamic rule or by struggling one’s utmost to accomplish this.”

Offensive Jihad should really only become an individual duty, Ayiri argues, in the following cases:

- When a legitimate Muslim leader calls on a specific person to fight.
- When a legitimate Muslim leader orders all the people of a particular town or region to fight.
- If non-Muslims take a Muslim prisoner, every Muslim must fight to release them.
- If a Muslim happens on a Muslim army engaged in combat, they are obligated to remain and fight.

Discussing Jihadism is complicated by the fact that there is no single doctrine or ideology: it is always in motion, driven by the various individuals who develop and promote it as well as due to the constantly changing environmental circumstances in which it evolves. Without understanding the various schools of Salafism, Western policy-makers cannot possibly identify those constituencies that may be useful allies in erecting a bulwark against the spread of the global Jihadist ideology. What becomes clear after assessing these schools of Salafism is that they vary with regard to their doctrinal positions across different issues. Any attempt to generalize about Salafism or even about the global Jihadist movement is likely to provide inaccurate conclusions.
Notes

1 Introduction

1 “Meeting of Sawt al-Jihad with the Commander Abdul-Aziz Al-Muqrin.” Translated by at-Tibyan Publications, October 2003.
3 This passage comes from a longer essay that appeared on a number of English-language Jihadist forums. The document from which this quotation was extracted came from: www.momeen.org/upload/5e257ed9b5.doc.
4 Bin Laden wrote his 1996 “Declaration of War” in August of that year. It was published in Al Quds Al Arabi, a London-based newspaper. This translated excerpt comes from the full-text translation released by the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights, which was posted on the internet in October 1996.
8 See “Bin Laden Allegedly Planned Turkey Attack,” Associated Press, December 17, 2003 for a good discussion of al-Qaida’s role in helping the cell plan and coordinate the attack.
10 This essay is widely available in English on multiple Jihadist bulletin boards. It is part of a larger compendium entitled Edu-caution: Muslim Children and the Schools of the Tawhidi.

2 Doctrine and schools

1 Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, Millat Ibrahim. Available at: www.tawhidi.ws/r/?i=1.
5 For further reading about the life of Hasan al-Banni, see Brynjar Lia’s The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement. Reading: