

## Radical Imports

The historian Faisal Devji makes the point that global jihad is placed in 'the genealogy of something called global Islam' with its ancestry traced to Middle Eastern movements of the modern period. However, jihad takes place in Chechnya, Pakistan, India, and the Philippines so it is also the other way round with Arab fighters returning from such places founding new jihad movements. The Taliban, including Mulla Omar, used local and mystical (*Ṣūfī*) themes.<sup>1</sup> This chapter traces the history of jihad in Pakistan from the Middle East. However, Devji's point that there are local inputs into jihad movements is well taken and the next chapter is devoted to them. As for the genesis of certain ideas in the Middle East, there is no denying this though, here too, it will be pointed out, there were South Asian intellectual inputs. This chapter then looks at ideas from the Middle East justifying acts of violence by non-state actors under the umbrella term of jihad. Perhaps the major radical idea about jihad which has been imported from the Middle East is that it is incumbent upon individual Muslims and non-state actors to fight against their rulers if the latter fail to implement Islamic rule.<sup>2</sup> To understand the birth of this idea, it may be useful to look at the political situation of the Middle East during the colonial era.

According to Francois Burgat, the Arab response to colonialism is divisible into three phases. In the first phase, the endogenous culture was used to resist the coloniser and an intellectual response, based on reformism with appeal to Islam, was adduced. In the second, which continued from independence till the 1990s, the indigenous elites in power were critiqued for being like the Western ones they had replaced. Moreover, despite the sloganeering about freedom and rights, these elites were highly repressive. In the third phase, the Islamist rebellion, fed on internal coercion and legitimised by the Israeli violence against Palestinians, the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Bosnia, and the attacks on Muslim lands such as Afghanistan etc., used the diction of jihad.<sup>3</sup>

The Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*), were born under these circumstances. They were dubbed as neo-Kharijites in a bid to discredit them in religious terms by the Egyptian government.<sup>4</sup> Their role in Egyptian politics is discussed at length by Kenny in his book entitled *Muslim Rebels*.<sup>5</sup> But Islamist radicalism is not confined to Egypt and in this chapter we will see how the ideas of some of its theoreticians, mostly from Egypt but also from some other Arab countries, came to influence South Asia in general and Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular.

Out of these thinkers, let us first look at Ḥasan Aḥmad 'Abdur Raḥmān Muḥammad al-Bannā (1906–1949) and Sayyid Quṭb (1906–1966). Both were perhaps the most influential theoreticians of political Islam in the modern world outside of South Asia. Bannā's biographical details, the conditions of Egypt during the development of his ideas, and the ideas themselves have been elaborated upon by many scholars.<sup>6</sup> He was born in 1906 and eventually became a school teacher. The Muslim Brotherhood was formed in 1928 or 1929 and soon his preaching started influencing people. He was one of the earliest politically oriented Islamists with the belief that he could bring about a form of governance consistent with Islam. Bannā's views about jihad evolved and he modified them according to circumstances. In the 1930s, he said 'that Muslims should honor non-believers and should not fight them, unless they wage religious war on the believers.'<sup>7</sup> Later, he responded to the foreign occupation of Egypt with 9:29—the verse about fighting the 'People of the Book'—interpreting it to mean fighting imperialism. However, he was still cautious because of the law banning paramilitary organisations since he stipulated that Muslims were to 'act justly in wars against infidels.'<sup>8</sup> Thus, at that time he did not suggest that the only solution to the woes of Egypt, or Muslims, was war as his five tracts originally called *Majmū'āt risā'il al-imām al-shahīd Ḥasan al-Bannā*, indicate.<sup>9</sup> At that time, the waves of nationalism and Arabism were sweeping the world. Bannā condemned both on the grounds that they were the 'revival of the customs of a pagan age',<sup>10</sup> thus anticipating Mawdūdī and Quṭb's ideas of *jāhilīyyah* which were to become so prominent in radical Islamist thought later. Another idea which became common in this kind of thinking was the use of force to impose Islam on the world. Bannā declared that Muslims were 'chosen' for this purpose and called them 'monks by night and knights by day'.<sup>11</sup> In order to give an interpretation of jihad which allows aggressive warfare, he begins by attacking Muslims who gave an 'allegorical interpretation' or avoided this duty on other grounds.<sup>12</sup> He also argues that the hadith that fighting is the lesser jihad while self-improvement is the greater

one is weak and, hence, one cannot hide behind it to evade the duty of fighting (for details of this hadith see Annexure C).<sup>13</sup> In the tract on 'Jihād',<sup>14</sup> he gives his detailed views on the subject. He supports them with Qur'anic verses, thirty-one *ahādīth*, and extracts from the four traditional schools of Islamic law. He quotes from a book of legal opinion called *Maj-ma' al-anhar fī sharḥi multaqa'l-abḥur* (the collection of rivers to explain the forum of sailing) with approval:

It [*Jihād*] is initiated by us as a communal obligation, that is, it is obligatory on us to begin fighting with them [unbelievers] after transmitting the invitation (to embrace Islam), even if they do not fight against us. It is incumbent on the Imām to send a military expedition to the Dār al-Ḥarb every year one or two times, and it is incumbent on the subject populace to aid him.<sup>15</sup>

Later, in a combination of anti-colonial sentiment and the idiom of Islam, he says that in his time Muslims were ruled by non-Muslims, 'their lands have been trampled over, and their honor besmirched' because of which *jihād* has become 'an individual obligation' (*farḍul 'ayn*).<sup>16</sup> These two ideas—first, *jihad* is to ensure that God's sovereignty is acknowledged by the whole world; and, second, that in the modern age of Western ascendancy, *jihad* has become mandatory for all Muslims—are to be found in the works of all radical Muslim thinkers. Bannā, like most other modern Islamists, combines some themes of modernity—while vehemently condemning its secularism and individualism leading to sexual promiscuity—with his interpretation of Islam. For instance, he constructed '*waṭaniyya* (patriotism) and '*qawmiyya* (nationalism) as two Islamic virtues' defining them with reference to faith rather than geography.<sup>17</sup> This made defending Muslim lands a duty for all Muslims.

Bannā's thought was disseminated systematically even during his lifetime. As his style was journalistic, his prose was very accessible unlike that of the clerics which was full of jargon and allusions to learned works not known to the youth. Gudrun Krämer, one of the biographers of Bannā, tells us that his '*Risalat al-Jihād* was required reading for' the participants in the summer delegations (*ba'tha sayfiyya*).<sup>18</sup> In his speeches, he would emphasise that Islam was a struggle to establish piety and this, he suggested, meant struggle, including force, against the powers that be. His style was forceful with rhetorical questions such as the one he asked in 1938 when speaking to the student's section of the *Ikhwān*. He said: 'tell me, Brothers, if Islam is something other than

politics, society, economy and culture...'. The implied answer was that it was *jihad*.<sup>19</sup> The Brothers soon established contacts with the Free Officers and had a 'secret apparatus' which was meant to prepare the young members to use force.<sup>20</sup> On 8 December, the government dissolved the Brothers who were about 500,000 in number, out of which 40,000 were charged with violence.<sup>21</sup> Bannā was shot dead on 12 February 1949, but his message was carried on with fresh enthusiasm and much more erudition by Sayyid Quṭb.

Quṭb was born in a middle class family, his father being a farmer with enough land to live on comfortably. He became an inspector of schools and visited the United States in 1949 to study educational administration. Apparently his vitriolic animosity against the West was triggered off by seeing couples dancing and drinking.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the prevailing atmosphere of anti-colonial anger, especially directed against Israel and its Western supporters, obviously affected his thinking.<sup>23</sup> His idea of presenting Islam as an alternative to socialism and capitalism is inspired by anti-colonialism though the idiom of Islam makes it appear religious. According to scholars working on his thought, he was influenced by Mawdūdī whose writings had become available in the Arab world by 1951.<sup>24</sup> Quṭb mentions Mawdūdī in his exegesis of the Qur'an, quoting one of his speeches delivered in Lahore in 1939 which was translated into Arabic.<sup>25</sup> Quṭb's ideas, among which we will focus only on those which relate to radical Islamist interpretations of *jihad*, are given in several of his writings. The most relevant writings for us are his book *Ma'ālim fī al-ṭarīq* (1964) which has been translated as *Milestones*<sup>26</sup> (n.d.) and his exegesis of the Qur'an which he started writing in 1951. Though the book, being smaller and easier to read, has been more influential than the multi-volume exegesis, it is the exegesis which contains the most complete version of his ideas about *jihad*. This exegesis was revised and completed in jail from 1954 till 1964. The references here are to the English translation of the work.

Table 8.1

| Verse | Commentary by Sayyid Quṭb  | Interpretive device |
|-------|--|---------------------|
| 2:190 | Fight the aggressors but do not kill the non-combatants among them (Vol. 1, 210). Does not restrict the retaliation to those who stop fighting but only to women and children etc. | Semantic expansion  |



| Verse | Commentary by Sayyid Quṭb  | Interpretive device               |
|-------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2:191 | Any means of warfare can be used against those who infringe upon the Muslims' right of freedom of belief. War can only be stopped if they (the unbelievers) discontinue 'their denial of God and their rejection of His Message'. The word 'desist' (from continuing the war) has been taken as desist from their continued unbelief (Vol. 1, 209).                          | Semantic expansion                |
| 2:193 | Oppression ( <i>fitnah</i> ) must be fought with. The world must accept the political dominance of Islam. These order 'remain valid, and jihad is incumbent on Muslims until the end of time (Vol. 1, 213).  | Semantic expansion                |
| 8:39  | Muslims must continue fighting till the power of unbelievers is destroyed and they can no more deny God's Lordship over the whole universe' (Vol. 7, 120). This verse, as well as 2:193, are used to justify the creation of an Islamic state. The words 'religion is purely for God', he argues, is only possible when such a state is set up in the world (Vol. 7, 34-35). | Semantic expansion                |
| 8:61  | If unbelievers have an agreement of peaceful coexistence with Muslims, the Muslim leadership can accept it. However, this is a temporary measure. The final orders are in Q. 9. Some scholars contend that this verse has been abrogated by 9:5 (Vol. 8, 43-83).   | Abrogation/<br>provisional tactic |
| 9:5   | This is the final form of the orders for jihad. All earlier, provisional rulings are amended by these orders to fight people of earlier faiths till they submit to Islam. Though about Makkah idolators, this verse applies to all idolators (Vol. 8, 43-83).  | General not specific              |
| 9:29  | Followers of previous religions must submit to Islam and pay the poll tax (Vol. 8, 27-28).   | General                           |
| 60:8  | He does not explain it in a separate volume. However, in his opinion, those who quote 8:61, 60:8 and other verses of peace are using 'defeatist logic'. These verses are provisional. As soon as Muslims are powerful they should implement the final orders in Q. 9 to ensure 'freedom' for all humanity to choose the right religion (Islam) or pay the poll tax.          | Abrogation/<br>provisional tactic |

Source: *Zilāl* Vols. 1, 7 and 8.

Quṭb's basic ideological imperative is that Islam must dominate the world politically since only such a system will ensure the freedom of humanity to worship God, i.e. follow Islam. He either considers the verses for peace abrogated or explains them through semantic expansion so that they do not stand in the way of eternal war. For instance, he explains

2:256 ('there is no compulsion in religion') in conjunction with 8:60 (equip yourself against the enemy) as well as 2:193 (fighting should go on till there is peace and God's religion reigns supreme). He argues that if the idea of 'no compulsion' had been the only one in the Qur'an, then those who argue that 'jihad is a matter of history and is no longer valid or necessary' would be right. However, since Islam opposes tyrannical regimes and establishes a just social order, jihad remains necessary. That is where the order to prepare for war (8:60) comes in. Thus, the verse about there being no compulsion in religion is not to be read in isolation.<sup>27</sup> This verse is taken up again in volume 4 and Quṭb declares that no other faith except Islam is acceptable to God. However, he also says that compelling people to convert to Islam is not allowed. This implies, as Quṭb says elsewhere explicitly, that political dominance, or rule, should be Muslim, though non-Muslims can live under Muslim rulers as protected citizens.<sup>28</sup> While summing up *Sūrah al-Nisā* (Q. 4), he says Muslims should not live under non-Muslim leaders and they should fight those who oppress Muslims anywhere.<sup>29</sup>

Quṭb especially criticises people who argue that jihad is purely defensive as the modernist Muslims of his time did. As the aim of jihad is to create 'freedom'—a word used by Quṭb in the sense of following God's laws only (i.e. semantic expansion)—all political systems depriving people from this good must be abolished by force.<sup>30</sup> People are not free, he argues, till they live in ignorance (*jāhiliyyah*) by which he means basically non-compliance with the *Sharī'ah* and obeying authorities other than God (*tāghūt*). In short, not living under the Islamic state and not obeying Islamic laws is by itself wrong. Indeed, even peaceful co-existence with other nation-states, even if offered by them, will not be accepted unless they pay the poll tax.<sup>31</sup> However, as a temporary measure, the orders in 9:5—advocating all-out war against the polytheists—can only be suspended if Muslims are very weak but they must be ultimately obeyed. Here he mentions the massacre of Baghdad by the Mongol conqueror Halākū (also spelled Helugo) Khān (1218-1265), the killings of Muslim emigrants from India to Pakistan in 1947 (ignoring the Hindus and Sikhs killed in the areas that later became Pakistan) and the 'extermination' of Muslims in Soviet Russia and China. As for fighting Western powers, Quṭb uses both secular (political, economic, social, and cultural) as well as religious arguments to explain 9:29 (about fighting the People of the Book). His main argument is that the Christians had changed the Bible and both they and the Jews had perverted their beliefs. Thus, they did not worship God in the right way. So, fighting them was a religious duty. To

this he adds that there was much awe of the Byzantine Empire in the early period of Islam so that defeating the empire would serve to deter all other would be combatants. At places he uses the narrative of victimisation of Muslims all over the world, Western economic exploitation, and the culture of decadence. However, Quṭb does not develop these arguments choosing to privilege only the religious one.<sup>32</sup> In short, Quṭb uses all hermeneutical devices—suspension of peaceful verses, superseding them by the aggressive ones, and reading verses with others so as to negate them through semantic expansion etc.—to present a reading of the Qur'an which supports aggressive warfare in the world.

The same ideas, explained in a simple and forthright style, are given in *Milestones*. The basic idea is that all societies are based upon ignorance (*jāhiliyyah*) as pre-Islamic Arabian society was. Haddad points out that 'Quṭb concedes that he has borrowed this definition from Mawdūdī's *Mabadi al-Islam*.'<sup>33</sup> Mawdūdī's works began to be translated in the 1950s and one of his followers, Abū 'I Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī, who has been mentioned earlier, 'expounded Maudoodi's Modern jahiliyya doctrine' in one of his books.<sup>34</sup> However, the concept of *jahiliyya* has a much more central place and resonance in the worldview of Quṭb than of Mawdūdī. According to this idea, the only society which is enlightened and civilised is the Islamic society. But this is not any ordinary society of Muslims; it is only that society which is based on the Muslim testament of faith, 'there is no deity but Allah', taken in the political sense of establishing an Islamic state. Such a society, Quṭb argues, is free in the real sense of the word since no person is subservient to any other. Quṭb, like Mawdūdī, calls the rulers idols (*ṭāghūt*) who have assumed God's power of legislating and imposing manmade laws. The ideal Islamic society, unlike others, Quṭb argues in *Milestones*, will impose the *Sharī'ah*, segregate the sexes, and ban certain forms of arts, literature, and philosophy. This, he clarifies, is the establishment of the sovereignty (*ḥākimiyyah*) of God and it is the duty of Muslims to establish it all over the world. Jihad to be undertaken in pursuit of this ideal is not aggression but actually the spread of freedom.

Such ideas might not have gained such widespread dissemination if Jamal Abdul Nasir's (1918–1970) [also spelled as Gamal Abdel Nasser in some sources] regime had been less repressive and if Quṭb had not become the hero of Islamist revolutionaries when he was hanged by the regime in 1966. Just as Socrates refused to avoid death by running away from his prison because that would subvert the principle that the law should be obeyed, Quṭb also refused to beg pardon of Nasir's regime. Adil Salahi,

his admirer who later edited and translated his exegesis into English, describes how Quṭb's sister visited him in his death cell and pleaded with him that he should sign a letter stating that he had been paid by the Saudi government to oppose the regime. Such a statement would save his life. Quṭb refused to do so and was hanged the next morning.<sup>35</sup> Such accounts of his death, as inspiring for Islamists as the drinking of hemlock by Socrates was for the Europeans, shrouded him in charisma that has stood the test of time. It helped in the dissemination of his views and in making him an icon of radical Islamist thought in the world.

Part of this influence was the use of his ideas to justify the taking up of arms against rulers perceived to be less Islamic by revolutionary Islamists. One such person who took up arms against his Marxist Afghan government was Burhānuddīn Rabbānī, the leader of the Jamī'at-e-Islāmī of Afghanistan, who had translated Quṭb's works into Persian.<sup>36</sup> Rabbānī was an important figure in the war against the Soviet Union and was inspired by Quṭb. Others in Afghanistan may have been more directly influenced by 'Abdullāh 'Azzām or Osama but Quṭb remains the ultimate source of many of the ideas of radical Islam. Quṭb's works were translated into English, as were those of others, which brought his views to the attention to the growing generation of young Muslims in Western countries. For instance, Adil Salahi, the president of the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS) in Britain, translated *Ma'ālīm fi al-farīq* in English in 1966.<sup>37</sup>

Meanwhile in Egypt, ideas even more dangerous than before came to be held albeit by small coterie of activists. One reason for this seems to be that there was much frustration among the youth. Kepel tells us that 'in the 1970s, the number of Egyptian students more than doubled to half a million, while university infrastructure remained unchanged'.<sup>38</sup> Many of these students, having come from the villages, were alienated from the cities, which seemed to them like flesh-pots. Moreover, these frustrated students could hardly find satisfactory jobs and, in their frustration, they turned to promises of a better, more honest, and meaningful world which the Muslim Brotherhood announced untiringly.<sup>39</sup> Under the circumstances, given that Anwar al-Sadat (1918–1981), the successor of Naṣir, had recognised Israel, all efforts to mend fences with the Islamists to bolster the government's hold on Egyptian society, backfired. Consequently, Sadat was murdered in 1981 and it is to the ideas of his murderers to which we turn now.

One of the theoreticians of this assassination was 'Abd al-Salām Farāj (1954–1982). Farāj was a leader of a terrorist network which included



the Egyptian artillery officer Khalid Islambouli (1955–1952), who killed President Sadat on 6 October 1981. Farāj provided the intellectual justification of this public execution in his famous treatise, *Al-jihād: Farīdah al-ghaibah* (the neglected duty) which was written sometime in the late seventies and early eighties. This book has been translated under the title in parentheses by Johannes J.G. Jansen<sup>40</sup> and it is this translation to which references are made here.

Farāj begins by quoting a hadith—‘I have been sent with the sword...’ (full text in Annexure C)—which he interprets as permission to fight against all unbelievers in all ages. Then he quotes other texts to the effect that Islam will eventually dominate the world. In between, however, there will be a ‘King who hinders’ (Egypt’s royalty) and a ‘King who Compels’ (military) and then a just caliphate.<sup>41</sup> He then comes to the imperative of ruling according to the *sharī‘ah*, this time quoting *Sūrah al-Māidah* (Q. 5), the gist of which is that ‘those who do not make judgments according to God’s law are unbelievers’ (5:44). These ideas are part of what Cook calls the ‘activist trend’ towards authority. Based on the Islamic injunction to command right and forbid wrong, the activists ‘risk armed insurrection against them’ while the ‘quietist trend’ regards even verbal ‘confrontation with the authorities with deep misgivings’.<sup>42</sup> Farāj belongs to the activist trend. Like Sayyid Quṭb before him, he condemns the rulers of the Muslim world who do not govern according to Islamic law referring to the religious edicts of the Hanbalite medieval theologian Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328). Ibn Taymiyyah lived during the Mongol era and condemned the ruling Mongols who had converted to Islam but still followed their tribal code of conduct and governance rather than the *sharī‘ah*. Farāj refers to Ibn Taymiyyah’s *al-Fatāwā al-kubrā* and especially to the section on ‘Jihad’ for most of his own views on the subject of governance and fighting.

In *al-Siyāsah al-sharī‘ah fī iṣlāh al-rā‘ī wa ‘l-ra‘īyya* (Governance according to God’s Law reforming both the ruler and his people), Ibn Taymiyyah argues on the basis of 2:193 and 8:39 that those who do not accept Islam must be fought ‘until there is no persecution and religion is God’s entirely’. He goes on to assert that ‘those who depart from the law of Islam must be fought, even if they pronounce the two professions of faith’.<sup>43</sup> He then goes on to quote other Qur’anic verses as well as hadith to prove that jihad is the ‘best voluntary [religious] act that one can perform’.<sup>44</sup> He distinguishes between jihad for propagating the religion which is voluntary and jihad for defence which is ‘out of necessity’.<sup>45</sup> Besides Ibn Taymiyyah, Farāj takes the support of Ibn Kathīr, whose

exegesis has been discussed earlier, to argue that Muslims should fight those who do not rule according to the religious law.<sup>46</sup>

These and other such pronouncements were taken to justify rebellion and civil war against Muslim rulers, especially those of Egypt. That Farāj had misinterpreted Ibn Taymiyyah is the view of many scholars. For instance, Fazlur Rahman states that ‘under no condition did Ibn Taymiyyah condone infighting among Muslims’.<sup>47</sup> However, Rahman refers to the infighting among the Companions while the Mongols, about whom Ibn Taymiyyah was writing, in his eyes at least, only pretended to be Muslims. Thus, Farāj’s justification of war against Muslim rulers found resonance among the radical Islamists.<sup>48</sup>

Before discussing the other views of Farāj, let us pause for a moment and see how Ibn Taymiyyah has been used by others in interpreting jihad. Ironically, Qaraḍāwī, in his magisterial study of jihad, uses Ibn Taymiyyah for arguing that unbelievers are not to be fought with for their views but only because they may be a threat for Muslims. Again, with reference to Ibn Taymiyyah, Qaraḍāwī also says—something which would be anathema to the militants and music to the ears of the modernists—that the Prophet (ﷺ) ‘never began hostilities against any unbeliever’.<sup>49</sup> In short, Ibn Taymiyyah lends himself to various uses and interpreters appropriate him according to their ideological assumptions.

Going back to Farāj, we now come to his ideas about creating a *sharī‘ah*-governed society. In this regard, he first takes up the alternatives to taking political power which he dismisses one by one. For instance, some people think that joining ‘benevolent societies’, i.e. pressure groups exhorting Muslims to say their prayers and pay the alms tax etc., is enough; or spending one’s life in devotion to God; creating Islamic political parties; occupying influential positions, propagating Islam through non-violent propaganda, emigration, and the quest of knowledge—is inadequate. For him, most of these things require collaboration with the state and making compromises which prevent one from imposing the *sharī‘ah*.<sup>50</sup> He does permit emigration according to Islamic precedents but does not dwell upon it. Farāj is highly critical of the ideal of some people called ‘the quest for knowledge’ because, in his view, it comes from people who do not practice jihad. If they know that jihad is necessary and still neglect it, he does not think they should be taken seriously.<sup>51</sup>

Another point which the radical Islamists are at pains to prove is that jihad is both defensive and aggressive and not just the former. In this context, Farāj, though not an ‘*ālim*’ in the traditional sense of the term, nevertheless uses the hermeneutical device of *naskh* to interpret 9:5.

For this he refers to past scholars who support his position while ignoring those who oppose it. Thus, he refers to Ibn Kathīr who says that it cancelled every treaty between the Prophet (PBUH) and the infidels. Then he quotes the exegete Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī (1294–1340) who, in his *Tafsīr al-tashīl lī 'ulūm al-tanzīl* (Commentary on Acquiring the Knowledge of Exegesis) wrote that this verse abrogates the command to live in peace with the infidels found in 114 verses of the Qur'an.<sup>52</sup> He also refers to Muḥammad Ibn Ḥazm's (994–1063/64) book on abrogation in the Qur'an entitled *al-Nāsikh wa 'l-mansūkh* in which he asserts that 'in 114 verses in 48 surahs everything is abrogated by the Word of God', i.e. 9:5.<sup>53</sup>

After this interpretation of the Qur'an, Farāj accepts those traditions which emphasise aggressive warfare while dismissing those which define jihad to mean spiritual or moral effort for excellence. In this context, he dismisses the tradition that the greater jihad is self-improvement like Bannā before him and goes on to assert that 'the only reason for inventing this tradition is to reduce the value of fighting with the sword, so as to distract the Muslims from fighting the infidels and the hypocrites.'<sup>54</sup> He then takes up the argument that jihad is obligatory only when one is militarily powerful. On this point he presents no theological argument merely repeating rhetorically that one cannot be strong if the duty is suspended or ignored. He also asserts that jihad is no longer a collective duty (*farḍul kifāyah*) but an individual duty (*farḍul 'ayn*). It becomes an individual duty when: (a) two armies meet; (b) when infidels attack a Muslim country; (c) when the leader of Muslims (*imām* or caliph) orders Muslims to fight. He then argues, as mentioned earlier, that there are two types of enemies. Those who are near (*al-'aduw al-qarīb*) and those who are far away (*al-'aduw al-ba'īd*) and that, contrary to fighting those who are far away such as Israel or the USA, the near ones, who are the rulers of Muslim countries, should be eliminated first. Moreover, he adds, 'there is no (need to) ask permission of (your) parents to leave to wage *Jihād*.'<sup>55</sup> As for leadership, there is no need to look up to the state since it is taken hostage by the enemy. Just as a suitably qualified Muslim may lead prayers so can one such person lead the jihad.<sup>56</sup> These ideas, Aaron Zelin, a researcher, points out, constitute a 'paradigm shift in the intellectual history of Jihādi thought' since Farāj really made jihad an anarchistic device for total warfare and rebellion against all established authority.<sup>57</sup>

Another important Arab thinker, though he has always opposed the Islamist view that aggressive jihad is incumbent upon Muslims, is mentioned here because he permits violence in Israel. He is none other than the celebrated Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī. In his book *Jurisprudence of*

*Jihad*, he asserts that Israel is the only *Dārul Harb*. Since the Palestinians are under attack and are much weaker than Israel, he approves of suicide bombing which he calls 'missions of self-sacrifice'. In this context, it is pertinent to point out that Qaraḍāwī resorts to eclecticism as a hermeneutical device here. He refers to the case of the famous Companion Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī (576–674) who, though an old man, voluntarily joined the army and died in one of the raids against the Byzantine Empire and is buried in Istanbul. As Qasim Zaman has pointed out, Qaraḍāwī uses this example but leaves out another case of a similar kind by a man fighting in the siege of Damascus. The latter did survive but his commander, 'Amr bin al-Āṣ (d. 664), reprimanded him, reminding him of God's command by quoting 2:195—one should not put one's self in the path of destruction—to him.<sup>58</sup>

As suicide attacks are responsible for the deaths of innocent civilians, let us consider the views of the radical Islamists about them. David Cook, in his study of martyrdom in Islam, mentions Nawwāf al-Takūrī's book, *al-'Amaliyyāt al-Istishhādiyyah fī al-mīzan al-fiqhī* (martyrdom operations in the legal balance)<sup>59</sup> which justifies suicide attacks primarily against Israel but also in Bosnia, Kashmir, Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq on the grounds that they 'equalize what would otherwise be unequal conflicts'.<sup>60</sup> He adduces eleven occasions from the time of the Prophet (PBUH) in which such operations were launched. However, Cook points out that these were attacks in the heat of the battle and 'the line between bravery in battle and suicide is blurred in this material'.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, the arguments of those who oppose such operations are 'persuasive and strongly rooted in Islamic history and law as well'.<sup>62</sup> The interpretation of Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, who also calls them 'martyrdom operations' but only in the case of Israel, is an example of the way such operations are selectively defended. To meet the objection that such missions result in civilian casualties, Qaraḍāwī argues that all Israelis are combatants since they are given military training and may be called upon to fight any time. With reference to this, Zaman points out that 'there is no mention, for instance, of those who are exempt from military service, for example yeshiva students'.<sup>63</sup> And, one might add, children, the elderly, the mentally challenged, chronic patients, visitors, and so on. In the same way, although Qaraḍāwī restricts the permission of suicide bombing to Israel only, the logic of asymmetrical military power could be used by others, including as it happened, in Pakistan and India. Indeed, at least one Taliban commander, operating in Afghanistan in 2005, did say: 'suicide bombings are a tactic with which we drive the enemy to panic.'



Without this miracle weapon we would never accomplish our goal of reconquering all of Afghanistan.<sup>64</sup> So, views such as Qaradāwī's support the narrative of the militants all over the world however much he may oppose them for misinterpreting the canonical sources about jihad.

Others whose radical views reached Pakistan were 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Azzām, Osama bin Laden, and Ayman al-Ẓawāhirī.<sup>65</sup> Their radical ideas have been disseminated in Pakistan through translations mostly because of the Afghan war when the Arab fighters came to Pakistan and Afghanistan. First, let us take the views of the Jordanian–Palestinian academic 'Abdullāh 'Azzām (1941–1989). 'Azzām wrote a religious edict (*fatwā*) which is translated as *Defence of the Muslim Lands: the First Obligation after Iman*.<sup>66</sup> His major thesis is that jihad has become an individual obligation (*farḍul 'ayn*) since the infidels have attacked and captured Muslim lands and the present generation of Muslims is sinning if it does not fight to expel them from 'Afghanistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Kashmir, Lebanon, Chad, Eretria etc.<sup>67</sup> This statement is important for radical Islamists since, as we have seen in Farāj's work above, in such cases they argue that no permission is required for anyone to join the jihad. 'Azzām then goes on to argue that, though Palestine is the crucial problem for the Muslim world since it is occupied by the Jews, it is to Afghanistan that Muslims should go to fight first. The obligation to fight keeps expanding from one area to another since it is not tied to nationalism but to the concept of the Islamic *millah*—a collectivity defined by faith rather than nationality. This theory of expanding circles of jihad is succinctly summed up by Shaikh 'Abdullāh Naṣṣāḥ al-Wān, one of the Islamic scholars to whom 'Azzām showed his work. The Sheikh said:

If the unbelievers are not beaten back, then, the Fard Ayn of Jihād spreads in the shape of a circle. The nearest to the next in nearness. Until, the Jihād has become Fard Ayn upon the whole earth, the destruction of the enemy and their complete expulsion from the Muslim land.<sup>68</sup>

Like Farāj, 'Azzām too dispenses with the condition that the political head of the state should command jihad. This, he argues, may be true for settled states when they undertake expeditions against the enemies of Islam using their paid troops. However, when jihad becomes a *farḍul 'ayn*, a commander may be chosen and there may be several of them. This doctrine ensures perpetual warfare in the world and especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

'Azzām was enthusiastically supported in Afghanistan and the border areas of Pakistan where he lived and worked. In his *fatwā*, he approvingly produces a letter written by 'Abdul Rabb Rasūl Sayyāf (b. 1946), an Afghan politician and commander fighting the Russians, published in the *Jihād Magazine* (9th issue). The gist of the letter is that Afghanistan needed people who could provide religious legitimacy to the ongoing military struggle against the Russian invasion. Such legitimisation was provided by 'Azzām's edicts from Peshawar to kill 'the infidels in the name of God'.<sup>69</sup> Those inspired by him kept offering their services or, at least, approbation such as Khawlā Bint al-Azoor—probably an assumed name since Khawlā Bint al-Azwar is a role model known for fighting in the battle of Thanīta-al-'Uqāb in 634 against the Byzantine Empire—who wrote that she wished to give her life to 'this pure land' (Afghanistan) but being 'a girl' she was 'not able to do anything'.<sup>70</sup> Thus, 'Azzām provided the crucial service of spreading his ideas which influenced not only the fighters against the Russians but a whole Islamic militant movement which later fought both the Americans and the Pakistanis.<sup>71</sup> More importantly, in the short run these ideas influenced the Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden (1957–2011), who bankrolled the Afghan war against the Soviets during the eighties and then took to opposing the United States.<sup>72</sup> He issued an order on 23 February 1998, making the same argument as Farāj and 'Azzām that jihad had become a *farḍul 'ayn* so all Muslims had to fight the Americans. This was based on the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia despite the fact that the Saudi government had invited them in order to deter aggression from Saddam Hussein (1937–2006), the president of Iraq (r. 1979–2003) who had attacked Kuwait and threatened Saudi Arabia itself in 1990. Quoting from the canonical sources, Osama urged Muslims to believe that 'killing the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who is capable of it and in every country in which it is possible to do so'.<sup>73</sup>

Osama's deputy in the Al-Qaeda organisation, Dr Ayman Muḥammad Rabī al-Ẓawāhirī (b. 1951), first expressed his ideas in *Farsān taḥet Rāetun Nabī*, written in 2001, which was later translated into English as *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner*.<sup>74</sup> The book has twenty-one chapters and was smuggled out from Egypt to England where it was published. Ẓawāhirī describes the bombing of the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad and his role in fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. He makes the point that 'popular Arab sources' donated 200 million US dollars' worth of material in ten years to refute the charge that the cost of this mission was borne solely by America.<sup>75</sup> The main benefit of the victory in Afghanistan

was that it 'destroyed the myth of a (superpower) in the minds of Muslim mujahideen young men.'<sup>76</sup> His letter to Abū Muṣ'ab al-Zarqāwī (1966–2006), an unusually ferocious Islamist militant, cautioning him gently against killing too many Shī'a as that may alienate the masses, indicates that, on occasions, he could be pragmatic in the larger interest of his mission.<sup>77</sup> His letter to the Americans is important since it presents his justification, repeated by many radicals, that civilians should be killed since they elect the leaders and support pro-Israel policies. Women too may be killed since they fight in the armed forces.<sup>78</sup> More important for South Asia is his letter to Pakistan in which he rants against Musharraf whom he accuses of selling Islamists for money and exhorts the army to 'disobey the orders of his commanders to kill Muslims in Pakistan and Afghanistan'.<sup>79</sup>

Even more important is his critical analysis of the *Constitution of Pakistan* (1973) entitled, in English, *The Dawn of the Day and the Flickering Lamp*. The book was translated into Urdu and the initial print run was of 2,000 copies which were disseminated in Pakistan. Al-Zawāhirī begins with the claim that democracy and the Islamic philosophy of rule are based on different systems of thought. While democracy is based upon the will of the majority of the people who choose their representatives to express their collective will, Islam enforces the will of God irrespective of the will of the people. From this premise he argues that, since even the Objectives Resolution of 1949 mentions democracy, the constitution is a device for fooling the people of Pakistan into feeling that it is Islamic.<sup>80</sup> He then points out that there are various constitutional provisions which are contrary to the *sharī'ah*. Among these are: the possibility of a woman's rule; the possibility of a judge being a non-Muslim; the power of the president to pardon convicts; the bar against punishing anyone more than once for an offense (his view is that if the first punishment is not Islamic, there should be no such bar); the continuation of interest in the economy; and the dominance of secular laws over religious ones; the advisory nature of the Council of Islamic Ideology (in his view this court should be able to change all laws by its superior authority), etc. At one point, he quotes from Ibn Taymiyyah to argue that if rulers are like those of Pakistan it is permitted to fight (*qitāl*) against them.<sup>81</sup> As usual, in the case of radical Islamist scholars, he supports his various claims and arguments by referring to the Qur'an and the hadith in addition to Ibn Taymiyyah and other scholars. He concludes that ordinary Pakistanis want an Islamic system of rule but the ruling elite does not. However, in order to keep the people with them, this elite pretends to establish an Islamic

rule which, he asserts, is not Islamic at all. In short, Zawāhirī preaches rebellion against the constitution of Pakistan and democracy itself and not just the government of the day. He does, however, name General Pervez Musharraf (b. 1943) and former President Asif Ali Zardari (b. 1955) as the leaders of this iniquitous system which, in his view, favours the American–Jewish global war against Islam rather than Muslims like himself and Osama bin Laden who are out to resist the invaders. However, the real object of Zawāhirī's criticism and condemnation are not individuals but the system of rule of the country and the democratic philosophy upon which it is based.

To sum up the ideas of the radical Arab Islamists mentioned above: first, they deviate from the orthodox Sunni norms about jihad, i.e. it can only be waged by orders of a legal Islamic ruler; secondly, they consider the killing of civilians legitimate using the doctrine of 'proportional response'; thirdly, they argue that, though suicide to end one's life for private reasons is taboo, it is allowed as a 'martyrdom operation' since these are a just response to the disproportionate power of the enemies of Muslims. Another idea, often reiterated by Islamists, is that rebellion in the name of Islam against the rulers of the Muslim world is justified since, by radical standards, they are apostates. Most of these ideas are found in the literature produced by Islamic militant groups in Pakistan. However, this is not to say that some of them did not exist, possibly in embryonic form, in the Subcontinent. From the eighteenth century onwards some ideas, later attributed to the Ahl-i-Hadith movement, had come into India. As Brown observes, 'the survival and spread of Ḥanbalī revivalism was also reflected in and further encouraged by the publication and circulation of Ibn Taymiyyah's works. These first began to appear at the end of the nineteenth century.'<sup>82</sup> Indeed, 'the modern rediscovery of Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Kathīr—as well as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya and some lesser lights—was to take place in twentieth-century Egypt and Muslim India.'<sup>83</sup> But this is only to be expected in a world where belief systems, among other objects of thought and culture, have influenced each other. To those Pakistani radicals who appear to be influenced by such views, let us turn to the next chapter.

## NOTES

1. Devji 2011, 317–18.
2. Wiktorowicz 2011, 273–279.
3. Burgat 2011.
4. Kenny 2006, 1–16.



5. Ibid., 2006.
6. Mitchell 1969; Kramer 2010; Levy 2014; Esposito 2002, 52–62.
7. Levy 2014, 148.
8. Ibid., 154.
9. Wendell 1978.
10. Ibid., 53.
11. Ibid., 81.
12. Ibid., 83.
13. Ibid., 155.
14. Ibid., 133–156.
15. Ibid., 147.
16. Ibid., 150.
17. Levy 2014, 147.
18. Kramer 2010, 44.
19. Ibid., 51.
20. Ibid., 70–75.
21. Ibid., 80.
22. Rejection of Western sexual norms after witnessing them is a common experience described by Muslims. Even Anglophiles like Mahdī ‘Alī Khān of India, who advised Indian Muslims never to oppose British rule in India says, in his private letters to his friend Nawāb Waqārul Mulk (whose real name was Mushtāq Husain) (1841–1917) that: ‘Such a shameless, lacking in honour and unclean country [as England] there could not be in the world. Faith, honour and justice is not there even in name. One does not know when it will be destroyed like Pompeii’ (Zubayri 1934, 38).
23. Sivan 1985.
24. Haddad 1983, 70.
25. ‘Editor’s note’ in *Zilāl* Vol. 7, 25.
26. The English translation *Milestones* (n.d), has been used throughout.
27. *Zilāl* Vol. 1 1999, 328–329.
28. Ibid., vol. 4, 2001, 152–153.
29. Ibid., vol. 3, 2001.
30. Ibid., vol. 7, 7–9. This occurs at various places. See also vol. 3, 2001, 232.
31. Ibid., 22.
32. Ibid., vol. 8, 2003, 271.
33. Haddad 1983, 85.
34. Sivan 1985, 23.
35. ‘Preface’ to *Zilāl* Vol. 11 2005, xi–xv.
36. Burke 2003, 66–67.
37. Bowen 2014, 103.
38. Kepel 2000, 81–82.
39. Michell 1969.
40. Jansen 1986.
41. Ibid., 164.
42. Cook 2000, 51.
43. Ibn Taymiyyah (c. 13 C) in Peters 1996, 52.
44. Quoted from Bostom 2005, 167.
45. Ibid., 172.
46. *Ibn Kathīr* Vol. 1, 102–109.
47. Rahman 2000, 158.
48. Jansen 1986, 173.

49. Ibn Taymiyyah’s *Qā’idah Mukhtaṣarah* quoted from Zaman 2012, 265.
50. Jansen 1986, 186.
51. Ibid., 189.
52. Ibid., 195.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., 201.
55. Ibid., 200.
56. Ibid., 203.
57. Zelin 2012, 31.
58. Ibn Kathīr’s exegesis of 2:195, quoted from Zaman 2012, 279.
59. Cook 2007, 150.
60. Ibid., 150.
61. Ibid., 151.
62. Ibid., 153.
63. Zaman 2012, 275.
64. Euben and Zaman 2009, 420.
65. Riedel 2009. For the role of charismatic leadership, see Ingram 2013.
66. Azzām 2002.
67. Ibid., n.p.
68. Ibid., n.p.
69. *Jihād* 27 Feb 1987, 35. Quoted from Bergen 2006, 35.
70. *Jihād* April 1987, 43. Quoted from Bergen 2006, 43.
71. Bergen 2006.
72. Quoted from the translation of Peters 1996, 177.
73. Mansfield 2006.
74. Ibid., 25.
75. Ibid., 38.
76. Ibid., 250–279. Al-Zarqāwī, whose real name was Aḥmad Fāḍil Nazāl Al-Khālāyilah, came to Peshawar in 1989 and, after fighting with Hekmatyar, returned to Jordan (Brisard and Martinez 2005, 16). However, he returned to Pakistan in 1999 and, since 100,000 Pakistanis passed through the training camps in Afghanistan, and Zarqāwī was associated with them till 2002, he might have had some influence on the thought of these young men (Ibid., 64). He is known for having killed many Shi’as in Iraq and justified the abduction and killing of Westerners (Brisard and Martinez 2005, 133–142).
77. Ibid., 292–294.
78. Ibid., 335.
79. *Zawāhir* 2008.
80. Ibid., 127–137.
81. Ibid., 149.
82. Brown, D 1996, 30.
83. Sivan 1985, 101.