

Defining Jihad

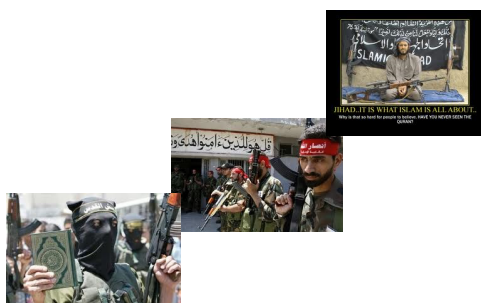
L3 TALKING TO THE DEAD

Gary R. Bunt

1

Images of 'jihad'

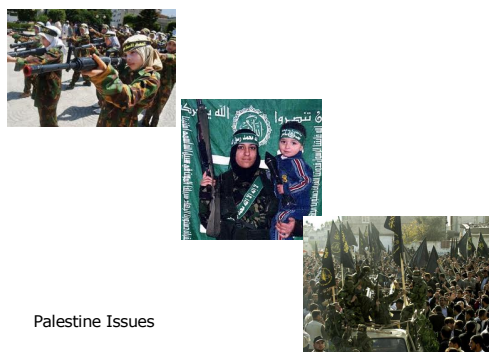
2



3



4



Palestine Issues

5



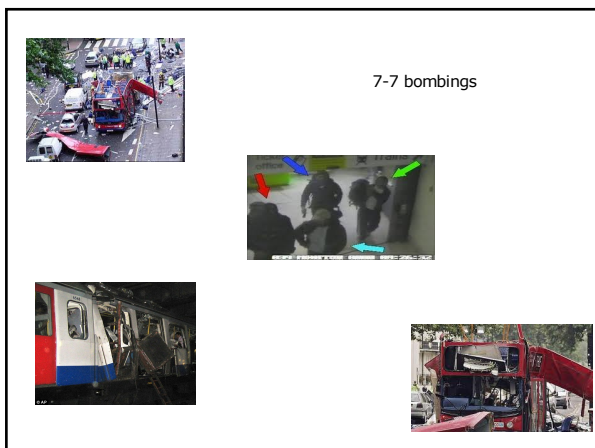
6



7



8



9

jihād < from *jahāda* (exerted)

jihād fi-Allah - 'Quest for God'

Exertion " ... of one's power in Allah's path."

military action sanctioned in the name of God is the lesser jihād;

the greater jihād is spiritual and religious striving on a path towards - and in the name of - God.

Jihād: exoteric and esoteric emphases

Mujāhid: one who participates in jihad

10

The first military jihads took place in the lifetime of the Prophet

Whilst the concept of 'holy war' predates Muhammad, the origins of 'lesser jihad' could be demonstrated when applying the Qur'an, Hadith, and Sunnah as primary documentary texts.

Military victories -- and defeats -- during Muhammad's lifetime are referred to in the Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah, and are exemplified in biographical sources and histories associated with the life of Muhammad.

Militaristic activity is but one part of the 'lesser jihad,' which can incorporate religious missions and persuasion, and the application of religious jurisprudence falling under the broad spectrum of the 'shari'ah'.

11

The militaristic stereotype of jihad has been applied as a tool against Islam, especially in statements suggesting that conversion 'by the sword' was the principal way in which Islam spread.

Whether by the sword or the Qur'an, the lesser jihad has played an important role in the propagation of Islam.

12

The emphasis within the Qur'an between violent and persuasive jihad varies, according to the period of the Revelation.

The Qur'an itself states that "There shall be no coercion in matters of faith". [2:256 al-Baqarah]

13

Qur'ān

- "And fight with them until there is no persecution and all religions are only for Allah." Qur'an, 8:39
- "And they will not cease fighting with you until they turn you, back from your religion if they can." Qur'an, 2:217

14

In Sunni Islam (where there can be a different concept of religious leadership), the question arises of who has the capacity to judge instigation (or not) of lesser jihad? Whether this lies in the hands of a caliph, an *alim* (religious scholar), or some other form of ideologue is an open question.

Elements of historical revisionism can interpret military campaigns as being under the banner of jihad, where the protagonists might not have applied that term. Similarly, the symbol of jihad has been applied in recent conflicts -- occasionally on both sides -- in order to justify military campaigning.

15

Different types of jihad have different names:

al-Muharibun (against secession);

al-Ridda (against apostasy);

al-Baghi (against dissension).

These terms were influential during the development of Islam, especially during the expansion of Muslim influence after the death of Muhammad in 632 CE.

16

If there were to be a consensus about lesser jihad amongst various factions of Islam, it would be that *ribat* or defence (i.e. on the frontiers) of Islam is imperative, with a hadith stating the importance of *ribat*:

"It is related from Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sa'idi that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Ribat for one day in the way of Allah is better than this world and what it contains. The place of the whip of one of you in the Garden is better than this world and what it contains. A morning or an evening spent in the way of Allah is better than this world and everything it contains."

Aisha Bewley (trans.) *The Sahih Collection of al-Bukhari*, (Muhammad ibn Ismail Bukhari), Chapter 61, Book of Jihad and Military Expeditions. LXXII: The Excellence of *ribat* in the way of Allah, 2735

17

In the final analysis, there is no general consensus, except perhaps in the use of the Qur'an as a source of inspiration: essentially, within the main ideals and traditions of Islam, the central tenets of jihad remain the same. One hadith suggests:

"Some one who does jihad in the way of Allah is like someone who fasts and prays constantly and who does not slacken from his prayer and fasting until he returns."

'Book of Jihad', 21.1, *Al-Muwatta, Imam Malik*, (Malik ibn Anas), trans. 'A'isha 'Abdrahaman at-Tarjumana and Ya'qub Johnson, (Norwich: Diwan Press, 1982), p. 197

18

In hindsight, it could be said that Muhammad fought a personal inner jihad, and an external jihad of conquest and propagating Islam.

Jihad could be seen as having been the essential requirement that prevented Muhammad's Revelation being consigned to historical and theological footnotes:

Qutb -- and others -- described jihad as the 'miracle' of Islam, in that it was responsible for such a rapid transformation of a tribal society in such a small period of time.

However valid the Revelation is, without jihad it could not have survived, at least in its present form.

19

Jihad was the determining factor in the development of Islam: its role today -- whether 'lesser' or 'greater' jihad -- ensures the spread and/or survival of Islam on many levels.

An inner inspiration, and an outer tool; a means of finding God within, and of spreading God to others; a source of scepticism, salvation, and suffering.

If not a 'Sixth Pillar,' although 'un-quantifiable' in many ways and 'misused' in many others, jihad is and always has been a 'fundamental' component within the many forms and categories of Islamic expression.

20

There are many individual ḥadīth relating to *jihād* (if you plan to cite these quotes, you would have to locate the original sources). These are just a few examples:

"Every nation has its monasticism, and the monasticism of this [Muslim] nation is the jihad."

"I am the Prophet of mercy, I am the Prophet of fighting, I am the smiling warrior."

21

"Some of my people will continue to fight victoriously for the sake of the truth until the last one of them will combat the anti-Christ."

22

Somebody asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Who is the best among the people?" Allah's Apostle replied "A believer who strives his utmost in Allah's cause with his life and property." They asked, "Who is next?" He replied, "A believer who stays in one of the mountain paths worshipping Allah and leaving the people secure from his mischief."

23

Allah's Apostle said, "There is no hijra (i.e. migration) (from Mecca to Medina) after the conquest (of Mecca), but Jihad and good intention remain; and if you are called (by the Muslim ruler) for fighting, go forth immediately."

24

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "The example of a mujahid in Allah's cause--and Allah knows better who really strives in His cause--is like a person who fasts and prays continuously. Allah guarantees that He will admit the mujahid in His cause into Paradise if he is killed, otherwise He will return him to his home safely with rewards and war booty."

25

Yahya related to me from Malik from Abu'z-Zinad from al-Araj from Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said "Someone who does jihad in the way of Allah is like someone who fasts and prays constantly and who does not slacken from his prayer and fasting until he returns."

L3 TALKING TO THE DEAD -
GARY R. BUNT

26

EXAMPLES: 'JIHAD'

- Battles of Badr, Uhud.
- Explanation of martyrdom in Qur'an and biographical sources (Sira)
- Qur'an commentaries can provide further details

27