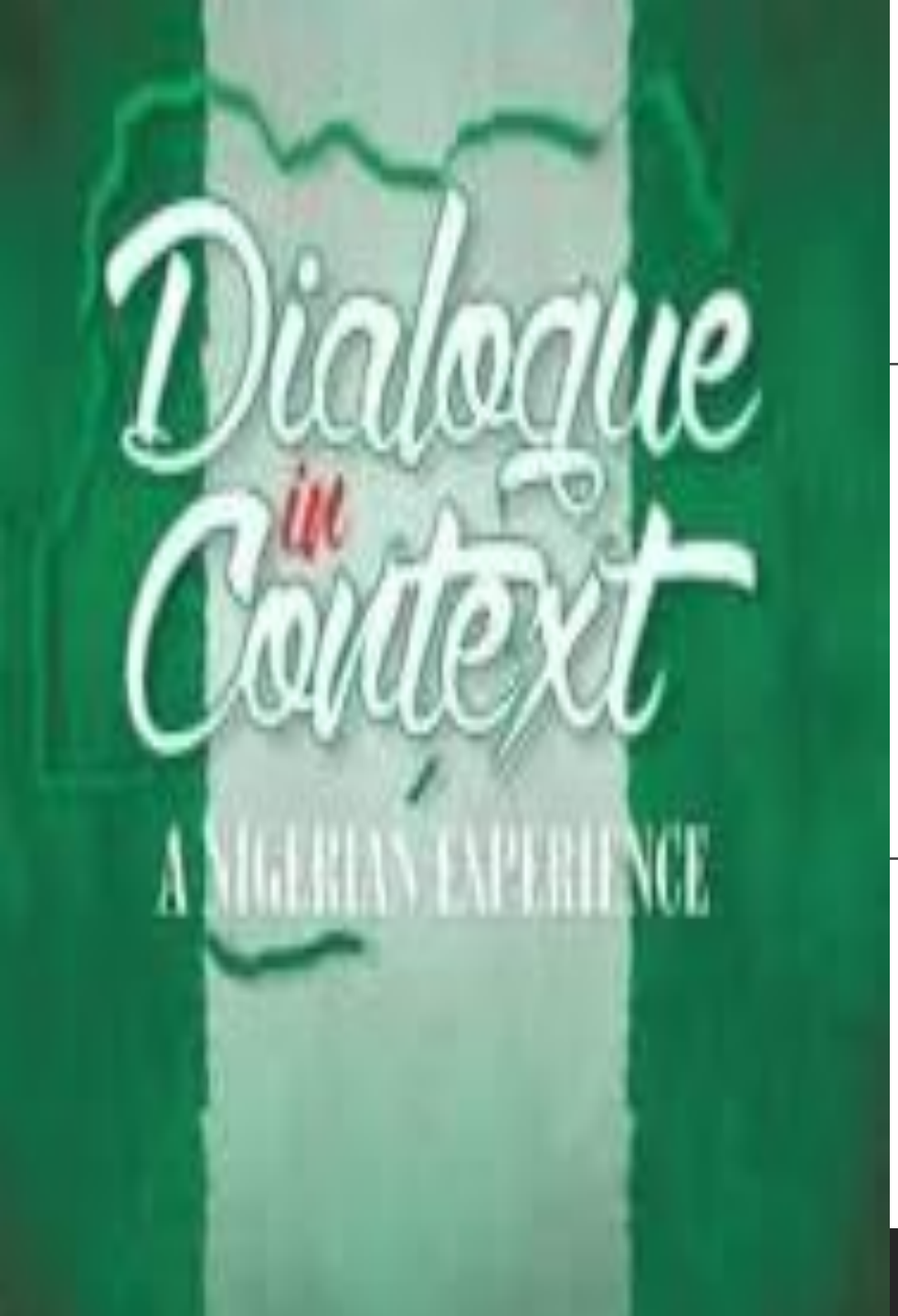


QUEST FOR THE IDEOLOGY OF TERRORISTS

CORNELIUS AFEBU OMONOKHUA

MY ROOT AND MY CALL

BORN INTO RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

WHERE HUMANITY GUIDES RELIGION

My Maternal Grandfather EKHAISOMI IMOEDE

My maternal grandfather Ekhaisomi, was a true and dedicated Muslim. He was a grandfather every child prays to have.

My mother, Aleabu Awawu Veronica was a mother any child could pray to have. She gave me the love and peace she inherited from her Muslim father and traditional priest mother .

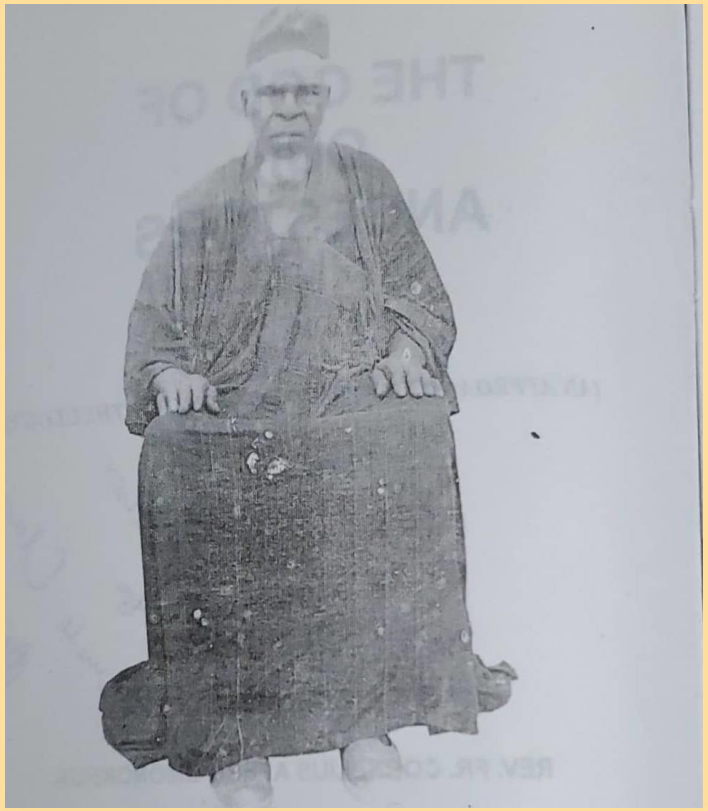
Unfortunately, my maternal grandmother, Esiema died before I was born.

My Paternal Grandfather OMONOKHUA ELEENODE

My paternal grandfather, Omonokhua Eleenode was an African Traditional Priest and Herbalist. He was known for love, peace and generosity. He was a grandfather every child would pray to have.

My father, Okhifo, a traditional priest, gave me the love, peace and generous values he inherited from his own father.

My parents were my first scriptures, where I practically learned the value of life, generosity, love, peace, patience, care and fortitude.



Mallam Haruna Ekhaisomi

Mallam Haruna Ekhaisomi, who led prayers in the mosque at Irekpai was my maternal uncle.

Were my Parents Religiously normal?

I ask because:

How and why did Ekhaisomi, my maternal grandfather live in peace with my maternal grandmother who was a herbalist? How did he allow my mother, to marry my father who was a traditional priest? How come that religion did not put them asunder? When Omonokhua was the eldest man in the village, Ekhaisomi was the second in the council of elders. They ensured peaceful co-existence using the traditional norms and values based on humanity.

Normal Abnormality?
Inter-religious Family

Ekhaisomhi Grandchildren (Clerics)

1. Fr. Prof. Cornelius Afebu Omonokhua (Catholic)
2. Fr. Dr. Anthony Ekhaisomi (Catholic)
3. Rev. Sr. Martha Oteku SSMA (Catholic)
3. Archdeacon Moses Ogbidike (Anglican)
4. Rev. Innocent Oshomah Ogbidike (Great grandchild – Anglican)
5. Mallam Otaru Ekhaisomi
6. Mallam Lut Ekhaisomi

Omonokhua Grandchildren (Clerics)

1. Fr. Prof. Cornelius Afebu Omonokhua (Catholic)
2. Fr. Dr. Stan-Williams Ede (Great grandchild)

Authority to discuss this subject

I feel confident:

Not just as an academic expert in Dialogue and peace-building but as a human being born into a multi-religious family. Experience is the best teacher.

Officially, I have been in this Dialogue and Peace Project from the grassroot to National and global level since 1991.

I was prepared for this dialogue and peace mission from my mother's womb.

Scriptures
Double Edge Sword

(2 Timothy 3:16-17): **All Scriptures are inspired by God for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

Muzammil H. Siddiqi **laments that some Qur'anic verses are misquoted and taken out of context to prove that the Qur'an promotes violence by the terrorists.**

(Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi , "Islamic Horizons", November / December 2001):

Scriptures
Content and Context

The contents of scriptural messages are revealed in context, that is the events surrounding the particular revelation. The wars in the Bible (OT) are never fought in the cause of God. Even in Revelation 12, where war breaks out in heaven, the war was in defence of human beings. God is strong enough to defend himself.

In the Holy Qur'an, passages that deal with war were revealed in the context Jihads. To create an ideology of violence from scriptures is out of context.

Scriptures
Content and Context

Muslims are enjoined:

Do not take life, which Allah has made sacred, except for a just cause" (Qur'an 17:33).

Killing a person unjustly is the same as killing all of humanity, and saving a person is the same as saving all of humanity (Qur'an 5:32).

Unfortunately, some terrorists who claim to be Muslims seem to derive their ideology from the Qur'an to justify their fighting in the name of Allah.

Scriptures
Content and Context

While the terrorists interpret the Qur'an out of context to act in their own twisted quest for hatred and vengeance, Some Christian kings engaged in "holy wars" killing a whole nation using verses in the Bible to justify their actions.

The Terrorists claim about 109 verses that call Muslims to war with nonbelievers for the sake of Islamic rule. Some Christian fundamentalists who reference verses of violence from the Old Testament of the Bible to unleash terror should know that the New Testament has no references that call Christians to war or violence.

Bellow are among the Bible and the Qur'anic verses that can mislead true and orthodox Christians and Muslims.

Scriptural Verses on War

Deuteronomy 13: 6-10:

When your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, entices you secretly, saying 'Let us go and serve other gods,'…you shall kill him, your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the Lord your God. . . "

Scriptural Verses on War

Numbers 31:17-18:

Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known man intimately. But spare for yourselves all virgin maidens.

Exodus 23: 23-24

I will send my terror in front of you...you shall utterly demolish them and break their pillars in pieces".

Scriptural Verses on War

Qur'an 2:190):

Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits, for Allah does not love transgressors.

Qur'an 2:191

And slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out; for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you. Slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith.

Scriptural Verses on War

Quran (2:216)

Fighting is prescribed upon you, and you dislike it, but is it possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you? But Allah knows, and you know not.

Quran (2:244)

Then fight in the cause of Allah, and know that Allah hears and knows all things.

Exegesis and Hermeneutics

Scriptural Exegesis

Exegesis does an in-depth analysis of the text, using many tools: word analysis, variant readings in the different manuscripts, grammatic elements, tenses and the meaning attached to them; it explores what the word meant in sources of the time, does searches for meaning in other NT and ancient works to grasp the meaning intended by the author.

Exegesis is the actual interpretation of the sacred book, bringing out of its meaning the writer gives to it at that particular time or context.

Exegesis and Hermeneutics

Scriptural Hermeneutics:

This is the contextualization of the text. What does the text means for us today? That is bringing it to another context. What God told the Israelites, how does it apply to us today? What is the cultural distance?
The study and establishment of the principles by which it is to be interpreted. This includes written, verbal, and nonverbal communication.

Hermeneutic refers to some particular method of interpretation. It can take a moral, analogical, theological, literary approach to a text.

Hermeneutics of Terrorist ideology

To restore peace to the world, the ideology of the terrorist need a counter narrative with the lens of exegesis and hermeneutics. The world we live in today is quite different from the time these scriptural verses where revealed. Those who accept that these war verses are applicable to this present age may need a redefinition of God and a subjective meaning of the "religion of peace". The witness of many good Muslims in the world who live in peace and show love to the people around them render the above verses in the modern context anachronistic.

Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Those who want to sustain the definition of the transcendence as the "God of love, care, mercy and compassion" must also endeavour to practically defend the ideology of "a religion of peace" to enable us look elsewhere for the terrorist ideology outside the revealed religions. Acquiring the weapons of mass destruction as a means of leveraging for peace has never worked. This is also anachronistic. An ideology is a conviction that cannot easily be destroyed especially when the person who has the idea is not afraid to die.

Osama bin Laden

The ideological guide of Osama bin Laden (1957-2011):

- Linked to Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, and Sayyid Qutb.
- To ensure the withdrawal of Western military forces from the Middle East
- The establishment of an Islamic state that is guided by the laws of Allah.
- The religious ideology of Bin Laden was labelled illegitimate
- By the Wahhabi's doctrine that only political leaders can call for jihad.
- He believed that "the only Islamic country" in the Muslim world was Afghanistan under Mullah Omar's Taliban.

Wahhabism

- Wahhabi is behind the Saudi royal family whereas
- Bin Laden called for the overthrow of the Saudi government.
- While Bin Laden was “resisting western domination”
- Wahhabism focuses on correct methods of worshipping God,
- removing idols, and ensuring adherence to Islamic law.

Bin Laden was born in Saudi Arabia but he opposed the Saudi government for allowing US troops to be involved in the saga of Saddam Hussein in 1990.

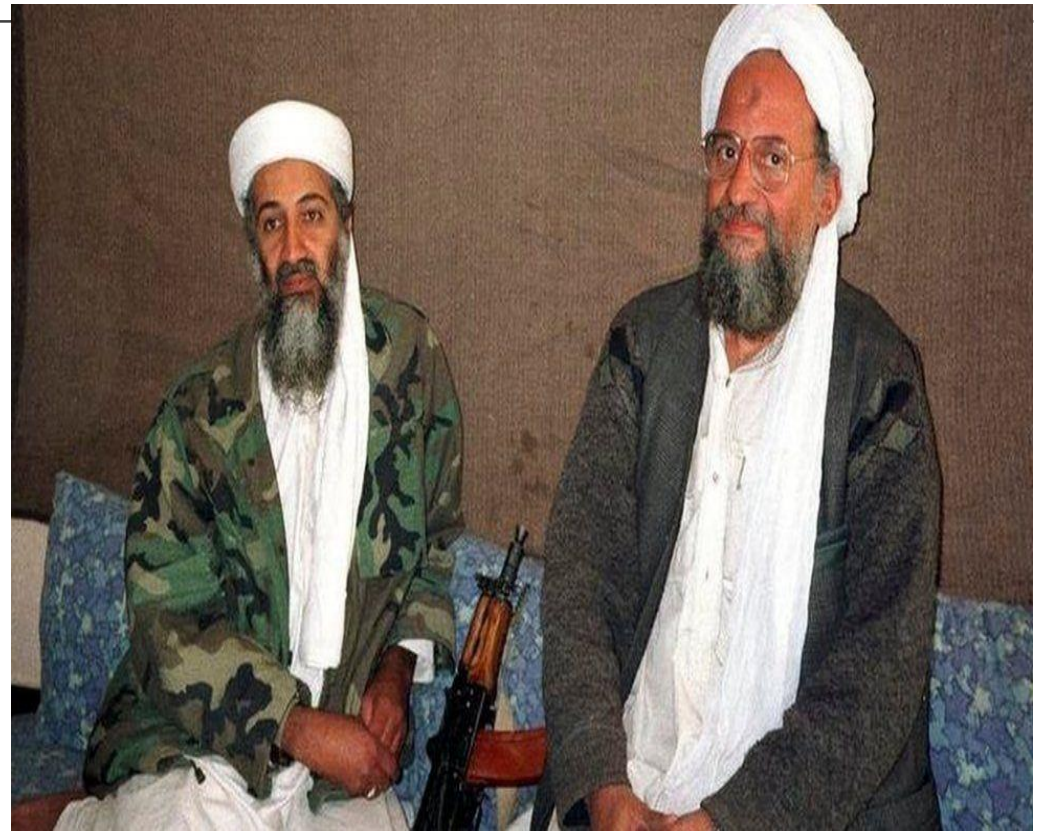
Osama bin Laden
Ayman al-Zawahiri

OSAMA BIN LADEN

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI

Bin Laden and Zawahiri formed the World Islamic Front for Jihad against Jews and Crusaders in 1998

Zawahiri was born in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, on 19 June 1951 into a respectable middle-class family of doctors and scholars. His grandfather, Rabia al-Zawahiri, was the grand imam of al-Azhar, the Centre of Sunni Islamic learning in the Middle East.



Ayman al-Zawahiri

RADICAL / POLITICAL ISLAM

Zawahiri was arrested at the age of 15 for being a member of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood - Egypt's oldest and largest Islamist organization.

AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI

Ayman al-Zawahiri

- He studied medicine at Cairo University's medical school, from which he graduated in 1974 and obtained a masters degree in surgery years later.
- His father Mohammed, who died in 1995, was a pharmacology professor at the same school.
- Zawahiri initially continued the family tradition, building up a medical clinic in a suburb of Cairo.
- He joined the Egyptian Islamic Jihad that was founded in 1973,

Ayman al-Zawahiri
Radical youth

- In 1981, he was rounded up along with hundreds of other suspected members of the group after several of them, dressed as soldiers, assassinated President Anwar Sadat during a military parade in Cairo.
- Although he was cleared of involvement in Sadat's assassination, Zawahiri was convicted of the illegal possession of arms, and served a three-year sentence.
- Following his release in 1985, Zawahiri left for Saudi Arabia.
- He was sentenced to death in absentia by an Egyptian military court.

Ayman al-Zawahiri
Western targets

- **The US heralded his death as a victory, particularly after the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, but Zawahiri held relatively little sway as new groups and movements such as Islamic State have become increasingly influential.**
- **A new al-Qaeda leader will no doubt emerge, but he will likely have even less influence than his.**

predecessor.https://www.google.com/search?client=opera&q=Ayman+al-Zawahiri&sourceid=opera&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8

Osama bin Laden
Leader of al-Qaeda terrorist organization

Osama bin Laden

Osama bin Laden (born 1957. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia—died May 2, 2011, Abbottabad, Pakistan)

He was the founder of the militant organization, al-Qaeda.

He masterminded:

- **Numerous terrorist attacks against the United States**
- **Other Western powers, including the 2000 suicide bombing of the U.S. warship *Cole* in the Yemeni port of Aden**
- **And the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon near Washington, D.C.**

Osama bin Laden Education

Osama bin Laden studied business administration at King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah.

He received instruction in religious studies from Muḥammad Quṭb, brother of the Islamic revivalist, Sayyid Quṭb, and Abdullah Azzam, a militant leader.

His time at the university was key to his future role as leader of al-Qaeda.

Osama bin Laden
Early life

Bin Laden was one of more than 50 children of Muhammad bin Laden, a self-made billionaire who, after immigrating to Saudi Arabia from Yemen as a labourer, rose to direct major construction projects for the Saudi royal family.

By the time of Muhammad's death in an airplane accident in 1967, his company had become one of the largest construction firms in the Middle East, and the bin Laden family had developed a close relationship with the Saudi royal family.

Osama bin Laden
Building al-Qaeda

After the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, bin Laden, viewed the invasion as an act of aggression against Islam.

By 1984, he collaborated with Azzam in Afghanistan and Pakistan to recruit and organize Arab volunteers to fight the Soviet occupation.

In 1989, he returned to Saudi Arabia, where he was initially welcomed as a hero but later regarded by the government of Saudi as a radical and a potential threat.

Osama bin Laden
Building al-Qaeda

In 1990 the government denied his requests for permission to use his network of fighters to defend Saudi Arabia against the threat of invasion posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

In 1991 he left Saudi Arabia, settling in Sudan at the end of the year.

In 1994, as bin Laden expanded his group's militia in Sudan to fight around the world, Saudi Arabia revoked his citizenship.

Osama bin Laden Building al-Qaeda

In 1996, under heavy international pressure, Sudan expelled bin Laden, and he returned to Afghanistan, where he received protection from its ruling Taliban militia. Later that year bin Laden issued the first of two *fatwā*s (Arabic: "religious opinions") declaring a holy war against the United States, which he accused, among other things, of looting the natural resources of the Muslim world, occupying the Arabian Peninsula, including the holy sites of Islam, and supporting governments servile to U.S. interests in the Middle East.

Osama bin Laden
Building al-Qaeda

In 1998 bin Laden ordered an operation larger than any of al-Qaeda's previous operations—simultaneous bombings of U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, Dar es Salaam and Tanzania, which altogether killed 224 people.

In 2000, al-Qaeda bombed the USS *Cole*, an American warship harboured in Yemen, and killed 17 sailors.

Osama bin Laden
Building al-Qaeda

In October 2004—less than a week before that year's U.S. presidential election—bin Laden emerged in a videotaped message in which he claimed responsibility for the September 11 attacks.

In 2008, he threatened retaliation for the deaths of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

In 2009, he challenged the U.S. president, Barack Obama, to continue the fight against al-Qaeda.

The September 11. 2001. attacks and the U.S. pursuit of bin Laden

In 2001, after 19 militants associated with al-Qaeda staged the September 11 attacks, the United States led a coalition that overthrew the Taliban in Afghanistan.

In December 2001 bin Laden went into hiding after evading capture by U.S. forces in the Tora Bora cave complex.

On May 2, 2011, bin Laden was killed by a small U.S. force in a secure compound in Abbottabad, a medium-sized city near Islamabad in Pakistan.

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The September 11, 2001, attacks and the U.S. pursuit of bin Laden

His body, identified visually at the site of the raid, was taken out of Pakistan by U.S. forces for examination and DNA identification and soon after was given a sea burial. Hours after its confirmation, bin Laden's death was announced by President Obama in a televised address. Several days after Obama's announcement, al-Qaeda released a statement publicly acknowledging bin Laden's death and vowing revenge.

The September 11, 2001, attacks and the U.S. pursuit of bin Laden

Later that month al-Qaeda released a final audio message said to be from bin Laden, purportedly recorded by him shortly before he was killed. In the message, bin Laden praised the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings of early 2011 and called on al-Qaeda followers to help people struggling against unjust governments.

https://www.britannica.com/biography/Osama-bin-Laden

The Creed of the Terrorists?

- **The use of armed forces alone cannot stop any terrorist operation that is based on a wrong idea especially when it is presumed to be rooted in a religious faith and supported by the Holy Books.**
- **The argument of whether “a group of terrorists” is a religious sect or not is not a panacea to a peaceful coexistence.**
- **Terrorists do not deny that they are fighting a religious jihad. They reference the Qur’an and hadith to support their operations.**

The Creed of the Terrorists?

A terrorist believes:

- **that martyrdom is an express and sure way to Paradise.**
- **Nawawi** enumerated seven explanations for why the martyr is called shaheed (martyr).
- **Ibn Hajar** mentioned fourteen means by which a person can acquire the title, shaheed (martyr). This includes “being killed in the path of Allah” without killing others.
- **Hanafis,** a martyr is "one who is killed by the pagans, or is found killed in the battle bearing a mark of any wound, whether external or internal".

The Creed of the Terrorists?

- ***Hanafis -*** **That "Anyone who is killed while fighting pagans, or rebels, or brigands, by a means attributed to the enemy, whether directly or by consequence is a shaheed, anyone who is killed by a means not specifically attributed to an action of the enemy is not considered a shaheed".**
- **Malikis-** **That a martyr is "one who is killed while fighting or warring unbelievers only, even if killed on Islamic land such as if the enemy attacked the Muslims Dardeer's**
- **Shafi -That a martyr is "one who is killed in fighting unbelievers, facing and not running away, for the raising of Allah's word…and not for any worldly motive"**

The Creed of the Terrorists?

- **Hanbalis -** That a martyr is "one who dies in a battle with the unbelievers, whether male or female, adult or not, whether killed by the unbelievers, or by his own weapon in error, or by having fallen off his mount, or having been found dead with no mark, provided he was sincere“.

Basis for the Creed of the Terrorists

- ***Allah has purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (paradise); they fight in his cause, they slay and are slain (Qur'an 9:111).***
- ***And there is the type of man who gives his life to earn the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to his devotees (Qur'an 2:207).***
- ***Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you win (victory) over them, heal the breasts of believers (Qur'an 9:14).***
- ***"spend in the Path of Allah, and do not contribute to your own destruction"* (Qur'an, 2:195).**

Compare the transition from Muhammed Yusuf to Abubakar Shekau

YUSUF

SHEKAU

Abubakar Shekau

“*You Goodluck Jonathan should abandon this ungodly power. You should repent and forsake Christianity to accept Islam*” (AFP, August 6, 2012). Shekau cites Bukhari who reported that Salamah ibn al-Akwa` was asked, *"For what did you pledge allegiance to the Prophet on the Day of Hudaybiyyah?"* He said, *"For death."*

There is need for a correct exegesis (interpretation) of these verses from orthodox erudite scholars.

Creed of the orthodox Muslim

Every true and orthodox Muslim believe that suicide is a major sin and the punishment is Hell (Qur'an 4:29-30).

> **Let not any of you wish for death on account of harm which has befallen him. But, if he must, he should pray, 'O Allah! Keep me alive as long as life is better for me, and take my life when death is better for me“ (Cf. Tafseer al-Qurtubi, (5/156 ; Bukhari and Muslim)**

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

In the modern context, terrorist radicalism:

The terrorist creates God in his own image - by interpreting the sacred books in accordance with his own feelings.

Nuriye Akman

The terrorist has erroneously given the label, “terrorism” to Islam, whereas, Islam states, “do not touch children or people who worship in churches”.

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

(Also Cf. Abu Bakr, ʻUmar; Salahaddin Ayyubi, Alparslan, Kiliçarslan and Sultan Mehmet II, the Conqueror).

Nuriye Akman - regrets that some religious leaders and immature followers have no other weapon to hand over to their children other than their fundamentalist interpretation of religion to serve their own selfish and ambitious purposes.

Nuriye Akman in Ergün Çapan (Ed), Terror and Suicide Attacks: An Islamic Perspective, (New Jersey, the Light, 2004) Pp 1-6

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Test the truth of divine revelation by:

The fruit and result – Does the revelation and interpretation enhance human value? Does the revelation give and promote the quality of life?

The recipient of a revelation is the only witness to what he claims as a message of God.

The claim cannot be approved or denied by another person.

Modern Hermeneutics
Test for Divine Revelation

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1. Does the revelation gives peace of mind to the recipient as a mentally and psychologically healthy person?

2. Does the message promote peace, benevolence, mercy, compassion and love of nature and humanity?

3. Does the message gives hope to humanity by enhancing common good and wellbeing?

4. Does the message promote and encourage love of God and salvation of humanity on the last day?

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Nuriye Ural Akman on 9/11

One of the people, whom I hate most in the world, is Osama Bin Laden, because he has sullied the bright face of Islam. He has created a contaminated image. Even if we were to try our best to fix the terrible damage that has been done, it would take years to repair.

Nuriye Akman in Ergün Çapan (Ed), Terror and Suicide Attacks: An Islamic Perspective

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Fethullah Gűlen on 9/11

Terror can never be used in the name of Islam or for the sake of any Islamic ends. A terrorist cannot be a Muslim and a Muslim cannot be a terrorist. A Muslim can only be the representative and symbol of peace, welfare and prosperity.

(***M. Fethullah Gűlen, Essays-Perspectives-Opinion, Clifton, Tughra, P .7)***

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Fethullah Gűlen

believes that the terrorist ideology should be located in lack of education and failure of parents and the society to properly bring up their children in a civilized and enlightened manner. Religion has become a very easy tool for destruction. The glaring fact is that poor upbringing has led to drug abuse which is a necessary accompaniment of violence.

Nuriye Akman

alluded to the events in Turkey when on March 12, 1971 everyone became involved in a bloody fight. The military came and intervened.

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

On September 12, 1980 people were out for one another's blood. Everyone was killing one another. Some people were trying to reach a goal by killing others. Everybody was a terrorist. The people on that side were terrorists; the people on this side were terrorists. Everybody was labelling the same action differently. One person would say, "I am doing this in the name of Islam." Another would say, "I am doing it for my land and people." A third would say, "I am fighting against capitalism and exploitation." Everyone was killing in the name of an ideal. This was nothing less than terror.

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

These killings came to be a goal that was “realizable.” Killing became a habit. Nuriye believes that this situation could have been prevented by education, the laws and regulations of the government. Worse still, some of these marginal groups are shielded by their communities from facing the law and justice. People must understand that if they do something evil, even if it is as tiny as an atom, they will pay for that both here and in the Hereafter.

Al-Zilzal 7-8; Nuriye Akman, 5-6

Modern Hermeneutics Analysis of Terrorist Ideology

We could deduce from our study:

- **that** some terrorist organizations derive their ideology from political, economic and selfish interests.
- **that** foreign powers and "conspiracy theories" are used to destabilize the poor countries.
- **that** the internal conflicts and reactions against the incumbent government of a nation could be given a religious jihadist coloration.
- **that** terrorism is an indirect coup d'état of a hidden untouchable power.

This ideology is a conflict of interest, civilization and not religion.

Modern Hermeneutics of Terrorist Ideology

Akbar Ahmed in the forward to the book, "*Islam*" by Hesham A. Hassaballa and Kabir Helminski,

Proposed a dialogue of civilization as recommended by President Mohammed Khatami of Iran in the United Nations.

Hesham A. Hassaballa and Kibir Helminski, The Beliefnet Guide to Islam, (New York, Doubleday, 2006), P. viii

Conclusion

Mikhail Bakunin, the nineteenth century Russian anarchist:

He believes that the passion for destruction is a creative passion. The belief that human progress requires the destruction of existing institutions animated a long line of twentieth century revolutionaries that includes:

Lenin, Trotsky and Mao.

Conclusion

Francis Fukuyama, Jacobins:

Violence is a means of regenerating society, which prejudiced Great Terror in revolutionary France. Neo-conservatives belong in this Jacobin and Leninist tradition. It is relevant to carefully study the psychology and the ontology of the terrorists in the context of modernism to give the world a lasting peace.

Dialogue with only the mind frame of religion may likely hit the rocks.