A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE IN ISLAM

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Abstract

of

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE IN ISLAM

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate the role of violence in the religion of Islam from historical and theological perspectives. Today there is a general assumption that the religion of Islam has been “hijacked” by minority groups of militant radicals. In contrast, Islamic religious leaders, scholars, and experts claim that the inclusion of jihad is the most accurate, complete, and orthodox adherence to the religion of Islam. This study utilized two key bodies of evidence to assess historical and theological evidence of violence dating back to the birth of Islam. The history and practices of Islam’s first four religious/political leaders and the Koran, the religion’s most authoritative religious document, were used to examine the role of violence within Islam. As a result of this examination, the study found that the practice of violence as a religious element of Islam can be traced back to Islam’s first leader, the prophet Muhammad. Additionally, the study found scriptural support contained in the Koran for the practice and religious significance of violence. According to this evidence, the radical Islamic movement is not a collective of militant groups twisting the nature or purpose of Islam. These groups are instead, fundamentalist adherents to the Islam practiced by the religion’s own founder, existing for over 1,400 years. The examination of this evidence leads to the conclusion that violence is an inherent component within the Islamic religion and stems from its origins.
historical and theological nucleus. The United States and non-Islamic civilization in general needs to develop a greater understanding of the inherent relationship between violence and Islam. Islamic terrorism will continue to fulfill its role in religious obligation. Violence will continue as a fundamental element within the foundation of the Islamic religion. It is important to understand that violence is an inherent component to ensuring the dominance of the Islamic religion. This conclusion must be considered in order to accurately assess the threat which Islamic terrorism poses today.

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Date
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the world’s Muslim population, approximately 1.3 billion people, believe that Islam is a religion of peace; one that encourages and nurtures qualities such as kindness towards others, charity for the poor, tolerance of differences, and forgiveness (Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Rosenberg, 2009). For others however, Islam is a religion of violence; one that regards death, killing, and destruction as the surest path to salvation and paradise (Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). This second ideology is the foundational inspiration for today’s radical Islamic movements in the Middle East and across the world. According to numerous studies, adherents to the radical ideology today make up the definite minority of the total Muslim population; approximately seven percent of the 1.3 billion Muslims are considered “radicals” which totals about 91 million practitioners of radical Islam (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Clarke, 2004; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009). Although the size of this movement is relatively small considering the size of the total Muslim population, it has fast become one of the greatest threats to Western and non-Islamic civilizations. The radical Islamic ideology is the source of motivation behind many of today’s most damaging terrorist attacks such as the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the Marine Corp barracks bombing in Beirut 1983, the London subway bombing in 2005, the police academy bombing in Iraq 2006, and countless others (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gabriel, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009).
These terrorist attacks, and many others like them, are evidence of the important role which violence plays in radical Islam.

Many leaders and theorists today view the association of violence with Islam as a recent phenomenon created by the public opinion of the modern global community and by the recent increase in Islamic terrorist activities. Moderate Muslims and some Islamic religious experts argue that such acts of violence are isolated events perpetrated by radicals and are therefore not consistent with true historical Islamic beliefs and practices (Ali, 1935; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nasr, 1981; Rosenberg, 2009; Taheri, 1987). Due to the proliferation of such claims, Americans generally believe that the true face of Islam is one of peace (Caner & Caner, 2009; Coughlin, 2007; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Manji, 2003; Spencer, 2006). President George W. Bush in the midst of the War on Terror said the following: “The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, in effect, to hijack Islam itself” (Coughlin, 2007, p. 4). The peaceful version of Islam conflicts with the views expressed by radical Islamic groups who assert that violence is a fundamental religious component that has evolved with Islam from the beginning. The confusion over which of the two is true Islam and a lack of understanding of the role of violence places the safety of the United States and Western civilization at risk from an inability to assess real threats to national security. Even after the September 11th attacks the threats made by radical Islamic groups against the United States were continually dismissed as angry rhetoric rather than analyzed as information to identify and flag potential terrorists. Dr. Walid Phares, a Senior Fellow with the Foundation for
the Defense of Democracies, Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at the Florida Atlantic University, and author of numerous studies on modern terrorism states that despite recent developments around the world, terrorism as a whole and the jihadi threat specifically have not only thrived but remain poorly understood by leaders, policymakers, and the general public (Phares, 2006). This lack of understanding concerning the jihadi threat and the continual dismissal of imminent danger opens the door for radical Islam to orchestrate attacks that may be much more devastating than those of the past.

Statement of the Problem

The heart of the problem today, is that Western leaders and civilization have continually underestimated the historically significant role of violence in Islam. The radical Islamic movement claims that its beliefs, practices, and worldviews are the only true Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). They even believe that those Muslims who would abandon the use of violence in the spread, protection, and practice of Islam deserve to die (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Since these radical Islamic groups view violence as a fundamental religious practice in Islam, so should Western civilization. Radical Islamic groups have clearly articulated their intentions of violence and have provided ample demonstrations of their willingness to carry them out. The danger today is that Western leaders continue to
dismiss these claims that state there is a clear and strong precedent for the use of violence today in Islam. Modern radical Islamic leaders such as Osama bin Laden, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the now-deceased Ayatollah Khomeini, and others present ample evidence to support their claims of the important role of violence in Islam (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Snow, 2005; Taheri, 1987). These radical leaders use evidence from history and religious literature to validate their claim that radical Islam is the only true Islam. Moreover, they point out that in their version of Islam physical violence and warfare against non-Muslims are necessary religious obligations for every Muslim (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Manji, 2003; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Despite the growing amount of evidence and attacks that validate the dangerous nature of the radical Islamic threat, the West has continued to view these radical Islamic beliefs as the hijacking of a peaceful religion rather than as an orthodox system of beliefs and practices rooted in history.

The abandonment of the practice of violence is what, according to radical Muslims, has brought the current state of decadence and internal conflict to the Islamic world. Osama bin Laden in his April 2006 speech to the Muslim world outlined one of the primary goals of jihad as the destruction of all existing moderate Islamic governments who have abandoned the fundamental commandment of physical jihad (Phares, 2006). He claimed that it would be a sin for any Muslim to abstain from engaging in physical jihad: “Jihad today is an imperative for every Muslim. The Umma [Muslim global
community] will commit sin if it did not provide adequate material support for jihad” (Phares, 2006). Furthermore, bin Laden and other radical leaders claim that the highest form of jihad [struggle] is not an internal one, but rather that which consists of physical violence and warfare against non-Muslims for the glory of Allah (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Phares, 2006; Spencer, 2006). The arguments and evidence presented by bin Laden and other radicals demonstrate a precedent for a fundamental component of violence that has evolved with Islam. The radical Islamic movement claims that all who do not believe and live as they do, including other Muslims, are to be targeted with violence for not following the true path of Islam (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The United States and other Western civilizations have already felt the impact of radical Islamic violence in the form of modern day terrorism. Despite this, the Western world continually fails to realize that the modern radical Islamic movement and their claims of violence are deeply rooted in Islamic history and that because of this; they will never stop performing violent jihad against non-Muslims.

Need for the Study

The debate over Islam’s relationship to terrorism continues to this day despite mounting evidence that links violence to Islam. Some experts argue that the practice of violence by the modern radical Islamic movement was born out of a misinterpretation of
religious doctrine and is not legitimately related to Islam or Islamic history. The world accepts this claim by continuing to believe that Islam has been “hijacked” (Caner & Caner, 2009; Coughlin, 2007; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). In opposition is the argument that Islam has displayed a precedent for the use of violence against non-Muslims since its very beginning (Caner & Caner, 2009; Coughlin, 2007; Choueiri, 1990; Espostio, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). The true role of violence in Islam has been camouflaged consistently by the use of rhetoric, half-truths, and claims of its use only in self-defense (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Herzog & Gazit, 2004; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Additionally, the media has also played a significant role in distorting the true role of violence in Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Manji, 2003). For example, on October 5, 2001, just weeks after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon Oprah Winfrey aired a program called “Islam 101” hosting Muslim guests for the purpose of educating the audience about Islam (Gabriel, 2002). Winfrey’s guests presented Islam as completely devoid of violence, stating that the religion’s true purpose was to unite the world peacefully (Gabriel, 2002). Dr. Mark Gabriel, a former professor of Islamic history at the prestigious Al-Azhar University of Cairo Egypt, once a devout Muslim and Imam in a mosque in Giza, states that Winfrey and her guests presented a false Islam which was designed only to placate public unrest (Gabriel, 2002). Dr. Gabriel asserts that the religion of peace, tolerance, and love presented on Winfrey’s
show as Islam was not consistent with historical evidence or primary source material from the Koran itself (Gabriel, 2002). Dr. Gabriel agrees that Islam’s ultimate goal is to unite the world, but asserts that violence is its primary tool for achieving that objective (Gabriel, 2002). According to Dr. Gabriel, there is a deep historical and evolutionary relationship between violence and Islam, supported by both historical records and religious text (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spencer, 2006). It is important that the West be able to recognize this and overcome its vulnerability by identifying the falsehood in the belief that Islam is a religion of peace. Radical Islam’s goal of achieving global domination through violence is too great for the West to ignore or dismiss prematurely. Determining and identifying the role of violence in Islam will allow the United States and other Western societies to engage in more effective and accurate policy-making concerning the Jihadist threat, in order to better secure the future of democracy.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of violence in Islam by examining the primary historical and textual evidence used by the radical Islamic movement in order to determine the historical significance between them. There is ample evidence to support the position that violence is a significant part of the modern radical Islamic belief system. Determining the role of a historical, fundamental, and religiously motivated link between violence and Islam is an important step in understanding and recognizing the commitment of the modern radical Islamic movement to the violent destruction of non-Islamic civilization. Determining the validity of the claims made by the radical
movement may lead to greater efficiency in areas such as international relations, immigration screening, and educational exchange programs. Identifying these radicals and recognizing their commitment to violence may also lead to a more secure future for the peaceful coexistence between Western civilization and the Islamic world as a whole.

Methodology, Scope, and Limitations

In order to determine the existence of a foundational link between violence and Islam this study utilizes two key bodies of evidence: An examination of the lives of Islam’s first four leaders who are today still considered the most respected Muslims in history, and a study of actual scriptural text found in the Koran (Islam’s most authoritative religious document). The study of these four Islamic historical figures, specifically the prophet Muhammad, will facilitate an examination of actual events and practices that were performed by the most influential and revered leaders in Islam. The Koran, as the highest authority in Islam, which provides examples and instructions for Muslims to this day, will be critical in determining the role of violence in Islam. These two sources will facilitate an examination of the role of violence in Islam in its original, and according to moderate and radical Islamic beliefs; most accurate setting.

For the purposes of this study, the literature review will examine the four most revered Muslim leaders according to Islamic belief and history. The lives of the prophet Muhammad, the first Caliph Abu Bakr, second Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, and the third Caliph Uthman ibn Affan will be examined to provide historical evidence of the role of violence in Islam. This study will examine the major instances in each leader’s reigns that involved violence against non-Muslims. These historical figures and events commonly
appear in radical Islamic literature and speech as examples to follow and inspiration for modern day terrorist groups in their practice of violent physical jihad.

It is also important to note that according to Islamic tradition, the only accurate and infallible version of the Koran is that which exists in the original Arabic language. Muslims believe that any other translation is subject to misinterpretation and corruption. For the purposes of this study only English translations will be utilized, specifically English translation by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, which is highly respected by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike.

Definition of Terms

This study will attempt to define Islamic terms and names where it is appropriate within the text. In addition to this effort, a comprehensive glossary of the Islamic and Arabic terms relevant to this study can be referred to in Appendix A.

Overview

The following review of the literature will focus on two primary collections of evidence. The first section will give an account of the lives of four of the most important and influential leaders in early Islamic history in order to examine the foundational role of violence in Islam. The second section of the literature review will examine the Koran, the highest religious authority in Islam; believed to be the written will of God (Allah). These sources remain two of the most revered and influential writings in the Islamic faith today. Therefore, the role of violence in Islam as described and illustrated by these sources is still incumbent on the lives of Muslims today.
Chapter 2

ORIGINS OF VIOLENCE IN ISLAM

Muslims consider the life and actions of the prophet Muhammad to be the perfect example of how to live in submission to the will of Allah; this life of submission is the central and most defining characteristic of followers of Islam. Despite the numerous divisions that exist in Islam today the literature suggests that the prophet’s life continues to be the most cherished example of Islamic life, relevant to every Muslim (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The radical Islamic movements like all other followers of Islam, strive in every way to emulate this original period of Islamic life, specifically the life of the prophet Muhammad (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). This early period of Islamic history is considered to be the most authoritative illustration of how Muslims should live with each other and how they should behave towards non-Muslims. According to traditional Islamic beliefs, the reading of the Koran provides Muslims with instructions for how to live an Islamic life. Additionally, the lives of the prophet Muhammad and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs have
gained a special significance as the most accurate illustration for living out those instructions according to scholars, religious leaders, and Muslims worldwide.

Muhammad’s life and actions not only constitute a special source of inspiration for Muslims worldwide, but according to the radical movement, also serve as one of the primary examples of the religious importance of violence in Islam. The radical Islamic groups of today continually model their modern practice of jihad after the campaigns led by the prophet Muhammad (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Taheri, 1987). Radical groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and many others maintain that the use of violence in spreading, protecting, and purifying Islam was practiced by the prophet himself, and therefore it is a religiously significant and acceptable means of dealing with non-Muslims today (Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Taheri, 1987). Additionally, the literature indicates that the prophet Muhammad’s three successors, known as the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, also provide inspiration for and command a great deal of influence on radical Islam today (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). As a result of the practices which were solidified by these influential historical leaders, violence in Islam developed beyond the
traditional concepts of self-defense and expansion common to many early civilizations (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Spencer, 2006). The role of violence in Islam quickly evolved as a means of cleansing or purifying the non-Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Spencer, 2006). The method of violence is known as jihad, and according to modern radical Islamic groups it is a practice that remains incumbent on Muslims today. These groups believe that because Muhammad and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, Islam’s most respected leaders, used violence in this way that modern followers of Islam too are religiously obligated to continue this practice of purification on non-Muslims today.

This section of the literature review will examine the lives of four individuals, the prophet Muhammad and the first three Caliphs. The collective periods of leadership by each individual within the early Islamic community played a singular role in establishing the religion’s foundational beliefs and practices, and in solidifying the unique role of violence in Islam. The organization of this literature review will follow the evolution of violence in Islam through several key military engagements, as it developed out of self-defense and into a method of cleansing non-Muslim populations.

The Early Life of the Prophet Muhammad

In their practice of Islam, Muslims everywhere regard the life of the prophet Muhammad as the greatest example to follow throughout history; therefore, an understanding of the actions and events of his life and the presence of violence is
necessary to demonstrate the role of violence in Islam. A brief overview of Muhammad’s
life before Islam will show the evolutionary changes which have led to the important
religious role of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam.

As a whole, the literature is clear that Muhammad’s life before the birth of Islam
was peaceful. Historians and experts agree that the prophet Muhammad was born into the
life of a merchant in 570 A.D. amongst the predominately nomadic, trade-oriented, and
tribal culture of the Arabian Peninsula (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Hiro,
2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). He was orphaned at a young age and
raised by his uncle Abu Talib who was a prominent leader among the Arab Quraysh tribe
centered in and around the city of Mecca in what is modern-day Saudi Arabia (Ali, 1935;
Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel,
2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi,
1967; Nasr, 1981; Perry, Chase, Jacob, Jacob, & Von Laue, 2009; Peters, 1973; Spencer,
2006). Historical accounts of this pre-Islamic period show that the tribes of the Arabian
Peninsula were largely polytheistic, having a cultural tradition of paganism (Esposito Ed.,
1999; Lunde, 2002; Spencer, 2006). According to the literature, the original tribe of the
prophet Muhammad (the Quraysh) controlled the trade-center city of Mecca and the
surrounding area (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed.,
1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters,
1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The Quraysh were one of the most prominent clans
in the Arabian Peninsula religiously and economically (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000;
Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002;
Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). This tribe not only controlled one of the largest trade settlements in the Peninsula, but also carried the traditional role of guardianship over what was then the most revered site of pagan worship, known as the Kaba (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The Quraysh, like all other tribes in the Arab culture of that time, utilized violence only as a means of self-defense and retaliation against rival tribes (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). However, Muhammad himself was not a warrior during his life before the birth of Islam.

The Birth of Islam

Islamic history indicates that at the age of twenty-five Muhammad married a wealthy widow named Khadijah (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). As a result of Muhammad’s familial relationship to the Quraysh tribal leaders, and his wealth acquired by marriage, his life before Islam was financially and socially comfortable (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). He developed a reputation as one of the most agreeable and trusted merchants in the Arabian Peninsula (Ali, 1935; Esposito Ed., 1999; Kozlowski, 1991; Lewis, 1993; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Historical accounts show that during his life before Islam,
Muhammad enjoyed taking periodic trips into the countryside surrounding the city of Mecca in order to meditate, renew his spirit, and to contemplate spiritual and philosophical matters of interest (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). It was on one such trip away from his home in 610 A.D. that Muslims believe Muhammad received a visit from the angel Gabriel, who brought with him a revelation from God or Allah (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). According to Islamic history, Muhammad was told by the angel Gabriel that he was called to be Allah’s final messenger to humanity. His job would be to spread Islam: the belief that there is only one God and that all of humanity must submit to his will to receive salvation on the Day of Judgment (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Said, 1981; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Muhammad began the spread of Islam peacefully, utilizing logic and verbal argumentation to denounce polytheistic practices and urge his fellow tribesmen to accept the truth that Allah had revealed to his prophet. However, this eventually led to the development of deep religious and social tensions between the first Muslims and the Quraysh.
The Development of Religious Tensions

Islam’s link to the practice of violence against non-Muslims developed gradually as a result of social and religious tensions. These tensions eventually developed to the point of violent confrontation between Muslims and non-Muslims which will be discussed at another point in this review of the literature. In the very beginning of his career as a prophet, Muhammad kept the teachings of Islam inside his own home; his first true convert was his wife (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). As Muhammad became more confident he began to speak publicly, gaining a small number of loyal followers amongst his immediate family, relatives, and close friends (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). Yet, even as the early Muslim community grew, they remained a minority population in Mecca (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). Tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims existed from the beginning as a result of the Quraysh’s steadfast adherence to the cultural norm of polytheism. Muhammad’s insistence that there was only one God and that only by worshiping him could the people hope to receive salvation went against everything the Quraysh and other Arab tribes knew and believed. During this initial period of development for Islam, Muhammad
made several attempts to reduce the tensions caused by Islam’s lack of traditional religious beliefs in order to draw in more converts from the Quraysh.

The small allowances for pagan practices and beliefs that Muhammad made during Islam’s initial period of development eventually led to an increase in the tension between the two groups. Several studies show that Muhammad accepted a small number of pagan practices in order to increase the appeal of Islam to the Quraysh (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). However, the incorporation of these practices did not last; Muhammad quickly began to claim them as false and ignorant of the truth found in Islam (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). Shortly thereafter, Muhammad began to denounce pagan practices altogether, which began to solidify the concept of Muslim and non-Muslims in the minds of both his followers and the Quraysh (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973). This marked the beginning of the significant increase in tensions between the two groups which had been present from the start of Islam.

Muhammad and his message of Islam encountered a great deal of rejection both before and after this denouncement of pagan practices (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Peters, 1973). As this rejection of his message continued, Muhammad’s insistence that non-Muslims would all perish on the Day of Judgment if they refused to accept Islam became more vehement (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Peters, 1973; Said,
These tensions only grew as Muhammad and his followers continued to claim the traditional polytheistic practices of the Quraysh as wrong and ignorant compared to Islam.

The Quraysh quickly moved beyond the simple rejection of Islam and began to publicly ridicule and humiliate Muhammad and his followers for their beliefs. Historical studies suggest that the Quraysh became greatly offended by what they came to interpret as an attack against their polytheistic practices, which had existed as the cultural norm for generations (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Kozlowski, 1991; Lewis, 1993; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973). Islamic historical accounts indicate that as this persecution increased, Muhammad and his followers were continually ridiculed and harassed for their beliefs in the form of taunts, objects being thrown at them, and even threats of bodily harm (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Peters, 1973; Said, 1981; Taheri, 1987). Several studies however, suggest that the persecution which Muhammad and his followers faced consisted more of petty taunts and teasing rather than threats of violence (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Islamic historical sources indicate the opposite, asserting that Muhammad and the early Muslims lived in constant fear for their physical well-being and that assaults against Muslims were fairly common (Ali, 1935; Choueiri, 1990; Said, 1981; Taheri, 1987). Nevertheless, despite the type of persecution directed against the early Muslims, the literature indicates that as time progressed Muhammad exhibited less patience for the refusal of Islam, as well as, for simple taunts and ridicule; Muhammad
frequently exhibited outbreaks of aggressive and destructive behavior induced by anger and irritability (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1867; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The literature suggests that this steady increase in social and religious tensions between the Muslims and non-Muslims marks the beginning of Islam’s use of coercion and violence in dealing with those outside the Islamic community (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Eventually, as a result of these tensions and the persecution that Muhammad and his followers experienced, the early Islamic community felt it necessary to leave Mecca. These events in Islamic history resulted in Muhammad’s eventual endorsement and practice of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam.

The Beginning of Violence

The abandonment of Mecca marks the beginning of Islam’s shift to the practice of using violence to win new converts as it spread across the Arabian Peninsula. Historical records indicate that the early Muslims emigrated from the city of Mecca in 622 A.D. to the oasis settlement of Medina, establishing themselves as a purely Islamic community separate from all outside influences (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Lewis, 1993; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Several studies suggest that as a result of the persecution directed against Muhammad and his followers by the Quraysh, and the
Muslim emigration which followed, the seeds of hatred and aggression were planted between the two groups (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Lewis, 1993; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Said, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The literature supports this birth of hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims in the historical accounts which show that almost immediately after establishing themselves in Medina, Muhammad and his followers began to target trade caravans from Mecca, specifically those of the Qurasyh, with violence (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Smith, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). This was the beginning of their use of violence in Islam; and it also coincides with the change in tone of the divine revelations from Allah, from peaceful to aggressive towards non-Muslims, which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). These events which led to the practice of violence in Islam eventually resulted in a series of large scale battles which solidified the use of violence as a legitimate means of practicing and spreading Islam and for forcing conversion on non-Muslims.
The Battle of Badr and Other Major Battles

The role of violence in Islam matured quickly in large part through a series of major physical conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims which followed shortly after the settlement of Medina. The Battle of Badr was the first significant attack launched by the Muslims against the Quraysh. The attack took place in 624 A.D.; Muhammad and 315 of his followers attacked and destroyed a large trade caravan of approximately 900 men, slaughtering many, taking some as prisoners, and looting everything they could find (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Muhammad and his followers viewed this victory against the pagans as a sign that they had gained Allah’s support for their use of violence; this battle is referenced in Koran 8:17 which reads: “you did not kill them but God killed them” (as cited in Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Pickthall, 2006; Spencer, 2006). Their success in this battle was interpreted to mean that Allah had condoned their use of violence.

Following the Muslim’s victory at Badr, they launched numerous raids and conquests throughout the Arabian Peninsula (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Dr. Gabriel, former professor of Islamic history at Al-Azhar University, asserts that Muhammad personally led no fewer than twenty-seven raids, and he sent his army out without him against non-Muslims forty-seven times (Gabriel, 2002). This number, which does not include the major conflicts such as the
Battle of Badr, averages approximately seven times per year from the time the early Muslims left Mecca until Muhammad’s death in 632 A.D. (Gabriel, 2002). Additionally, according to Sheikh Mukhlas, a radical Islamic religious leader in Indonesia, Muhammad personally engaged in and instigated operations of jihad seventy-seven times during his first ten years of leadership in addition to major violent confrontations (Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Because the victory at the Battle of Badr led to the belief that Allah condoned the use of violence against any group that would refuse to convert to Islam, Muhammad and his followers felt that they were not only justified in pursuing the practice of violence against non-Muslims, but that they had been chosen as a people to either convert or destroy the enemies of Allah and Islam.

The Battle of Uhud

The violence between Muslims and non-Muslims continued to escalate as time progressed. In retaliation for their loss in the Battle of Badr, the Quraysh led 3,000 soldiers to attack the Muslims near the base of Mt. Uhud in 625 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). It is important to note that the fighting in this instance was initiated by the non-Muslims, whose sole purpose for being there was to kill Muhammad whom they believed to be the cause of the aggressive religious tension between Mecca and Medina (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973). The fighting stopped immediately once the soldiers from Mecca believed that they had accomplished their goal of killing the prophet Muhammad; the literature
indicates that there was no interest in taking prisoners or slaughtering the rest of Muhammad’s 700-man company (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Seventy-five Muslims were killed compared to twenty-seven pagan Arabs, yet Muhammad himself was only wounded despite the attempt on his life (Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). The literature indicates that the Muslims interpreted this as a defeat which also meant that they had somehow lost Allah’s blessing (Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Spencer, 2006). For Muhammad and his followers, religion was central to every aspect of life, including military actions against unbelievers (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Spencer, 2006). The Muslims believed that they had lost Allah’s blessing as a result of becoming too focused on material possessions and building their community in Medina (Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Muhammad and his followers believed that the only way they could regain their place in Allah’s sight was through purifying themselves by renewing their commitment to fighting and killing the enemies of Allah to protect and spread Islam (Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The Battle of Uhud and its aftermath in the Muslim community solidified violence as a means of maintaining religious purity. This concept of purification through violence is a reoccurring theme
throughout Islamic history, supported by historical records and is present today in the radical Islamic movement.

As violence continued between Muslims and the pagan Arab tribes led by the Quraysh, the overall concept of Muslim versus non-Muslim began to solidify in the minds of Muhammad and his followers. Additionally, as the Quraysh continued their attempts to remove Muhammad’s influence over the Muslim community, jihad, in addition to its religious importance became a necessary physical obligation for Muslims in the preservation of Islam (Gabriel, 2002; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spencer, 2006). The practice of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam began to take on a full-time physical and religious meaning to the early Muslim community.

The Siege of Medina

Violence between Muslims and non-Muslims continued to escalate through each major conflict. The next major conflict between Medina and Mecca, the Siege of Medina, also known as the Battle of the Trench or the Battle of Ahzab, occurred in 627 A.D. and was another attempt by the Quraysh to remove Muhammad’s influence over the Muslim community (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The Muslims ultimately prevailed against the Quraysh and broke the siege on Medina (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). In addition to increasing the already significant status of religious warfare against non-Muslims, the
Siege of Medina also resulted in the express divine revelation which commanded the use of violence as a means of purifying non-Muslims. The literature indicates that after the battle, Muhammad received a revelation from the angel Gabriel, who told him that he and his followers had been betrayed by the small Jewish community still living with them inside the city of Medina (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Historical records indicate that, after the surrender of this Jewish Banu Qurayzah tribe of Medina, Muhammad ordered the deaths of all the male tribe members; approximately 700 to 800 men were beheaded as a result, and the remaining women and children were taken as slaves (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). The Koran itself provides the following passage in support of these actions taken by the first Muslims in Koran 8: 12-13 which reads:

> When your Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, therefore make firm those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them. This is because they acted adversely to Allah and His Apostle [betrayal to the Quraysh]; and whoever acts adversely to Allah and His Apostle-then surely Allah is severe in requiting evil. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 134)

According to this divine revelation any who refused the truth of Islam or acted against Allah or Muhammad were deserving of death. As a result of these military engagements,
violence against non-Muslims became commonplace for Muhammad and his followers. The literature suggests that these major conflicts between the early Muslims and non-Muslims led to the development of the important role of violence in the Islamic religion. Violence was first seen as permissible or was first condoned after the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uhud brought violence as a means of purification for the Muslim community, and finally the Siege of Medina resulted in the need to purify the non-Muslim communities by using violence.

The Treaty at Hudaybiyah and the Practice of Taqiyya

The continual conflict between the followers of Muhammad and the Quraysh of Mecca eventually fell into a stalemate which resulted in attempts to establish a working truce between the two parties. Historical accounts describe peace negotiations between Muhammad and the Quraysh, which took place one year after the Siege of Medina. In 628 A.D. Muhammad marched to Mecca at the head of 1,400 men; they met with a group of leaders who represented the pagan tribes of the city in a place called Hudaybiyah, nearby the city, and agreed upon a truce (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Specner, 2006). The Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah stipulated that the Muslims and the pagan tribes of Mecca would not engage in warfare with each other for a period of ten years, and that the Muslims would be free to take their pilgrimage to Mecca as long as there was peace between the two peoples (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006).
treaty, however, was only between the cities of Mecca and Medina, and did not apply to the various other oasis settlements of pagan, Jewish, and Christian tribes. The literature indicates that, because of this limitation in the treaty, the Muslims were thereafter able to move about freely without fear of reprisal from Mecca as long as they did not attack the city itself or one of its trading caravans (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008 Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). For approximately two years Muhammad and his followers systematically conquered the pagan and non-Islamic tribes who were not protected by the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Muhammad and his followers continued the practice of violence against non-Muslims despite having signed the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah. The two years which followed the peace agreement show that the early Muslims began to widen the focus of the application of jihad to include non-Muslim tribes with whom they had no history of conflict.

Historical accounts show that one such conquest took place only two weeks after the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah was signed; in the conquest of the Jewish settlement of Khaybar ninety-three Jews were killed before the community submitted to the Muslims (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The literature suggests that only pagans were forced to convert to Islam in these encounters.
(Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Since Jews and Christians were also monotheistic, and shared some of the same religious history with Muslims, Muhammad and his followers allowed them to maintain their religious practices (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spencer, 2006). However, the Jews and Christians were required to publicly acknowledge that they and their beliefs were inferior to Islam as well as agree to pay the Jizyah [tribute or protection tax] to Muhammad and his followers (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The increase in the application of violence against noncombatants enabled the Muslims to build their strength economically and militarily while the Quraysh of Mecca remained stagnant and unaware of the growing Islamic threat. These events at Khaybar and other non-Muslim settlements, not affiliated with the Quraysh of Mecca, suggest that the practice of violence as a means to spread Islam was continued in spite of the truce agreement at Hudaybiyah and even began to thrive after the truce. Not only was violence initially necessary to the preservation of Islam, but it also became a primary tool for forcing the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam. These actions demonstrate the important evolutionary role of violence in the spread and protection of Islam and show how violence began to evolve into an accepted method of cleansing or purifying the non-Muslims for the glory of Allah.
In the practice of Islam, the use and concept of jihad as necessary in dealing with non-Muslims was solidified further as a result of the collapse of the treaty made at Hudaybiyah. Despite the agreement of peace between Muhammad and the Quraysh, the prophet acted immediately on the first opportunity to reinitiate his campaign of Islamic violence against the Quraysh of Mecca. Historical accounts show that two years after the treaty was agreed upon in 630 A.D., eight years before the agreed end of the truce, Muhammad and his followers marched on the city of Mecca taking it by surprise (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). One study suggests that Muhammad believed the Quraysh had broken their agreement with the Muslims by killing several of his followers in a personal dispute (Caner & Caner, 2009). Outraged by this, Muhammad immediately prepared his men for an all out attack on the city of Mecca (Caner & Caner, 2009). Historical accounts point out that the Qurasyh, unaware of their betrayal and taken completely by surprise, were unable to mount any organized resistance to Muhammad and his 10,000 Muslim soldiers; any who did resist were killed without mercy and the rest were forcibly converted to Islam (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Some accounts however, suggest that Muhammad and his followers were the ones guilty of betraying the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah (Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Despite these discrepancies between historical accounts of these events, all sources agree that the
Quraysh were taken completely by surprise and that Muhammad and his fellow Muslims took the city in a matter of hours, forcibly converting hundreds of non-Muslims with the threat of violence (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Regardless of which party was responsible for the failure of the treaty, this event led Muhammad and his fellow Muslims to believe that the word or promise of a non-Muslim was meaningless and also that a promise made to a non-Muslim was insignificant.

The decrease in mutual trust between the Muslims and the Quraysh led Muhammad and his followers to believe that no one outside of their specific group could be trusted or was even worthy of their trust. The actions of the prophet Muhammad and his followers, during the betrayal of the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah and capture of Mecca, set the precedent for the Islamic doctrine of Taqiyya (or Kithman) which encourages Muslims to lie or go back on a promise if it will benefit the cause of Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2006; Spencer, 2006). Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, a highly respected Islamic scholar and theologian who lived from 1058-1111, wrote that “speaking is a means to achieve objectives…it is permissible to lie if attaining the goal is permissible” (as cited in Gabriel, 2006, pp. 149). Obtaining the holy city of Mecca and securing it for Islam was a permissible goal for Muhammad and therefore going back on the promise of peace made to the Quraysh was acceptable. Additionally, Amir Taheri, an accomplished author of numerous works on Islam and the Middle East wrote that
Muslims have every right to lie so long as it benefits the cause of Islam, and that a promise made to a non-Muslim can be broken at any time (Gabriel, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Although the majority of the literature indicates that the initial dispute which led to the Muslim attack and victory against Mecca was a personal matter, it remains clear that Muhammad used those events as an opportunity to disregard the entire treaty and attack the Qurasyh regardless of which party was at fault. Brigitte Gabriel, an expert on and survivor of Islamic terrorism, founder of the American Congress for Truth, and international speaker on a wide range of topics related to terrorism and the Middle East writes that the claims made by Muslims today of a peaceful Islam demonstrate the existence of Taqiyya. Gabriel asserts that it is beneficial for Islam as a whole and radicals in particular that the world believe that Islam is a religion of peace (Gabriel, 2006). According to Gabriel and other scholars these false claims of peace serve Islam by disguising its true ideology of hate (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Phares, 2006; Spencer, 2006). This ideological camouflage has allowed radical Islam to continue its operations of religious violence against non-Muslims throughout the world to this day.

After the Fall of Mecca

The practice of jihad and Taqiyya did not stop with the fall of Mecca and the Qurasyh tribe, but continued as Muhammad went on to effectively conquer the vast majority of the Arabian Peninsula. After the fall of Mecca, historical accounts indicate that the entire city was purged of anything opposed to Islam; all people, places, and objects that resisted Islam through belief or symbolic meaning were destroyed by the
Muslims (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). With Mecca under the control of Islam, Muhammad and his armies immediately began the conquest of the remaining cities and settlements on the Arabian Peninsula (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss; 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Although small enclaves of non-Muslims remained, the prophet had gained control of the main economic power source in the area and had become virtually untouchable militarily. This series of successful military campaigns against the Quraysh and the remaining tribes of the Arabian Peninsula was interpreted by Muhammad and his followers as signs of Allah’s favor and approval of their use of jihad in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam. Radical Islamic groups’ today claim that this application of violence was the primary reason for Muhammad and the early Muslims’ success against and dominance over the non-Muslims of their time (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Snow, 2005; Spencer, 2006). Furthermore, because of the authority and influence accorded to Muhammad as the prophet of Allah, all Muslims including the radicals believe that his life and actions are to be emulated to earn salvation on the Day of Judgment (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Peters, 1973; Phares, 2006 Rosenberg, 2009; Said, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The divine revelations given to Muhammad
command that jihad against non-Muslims or enemies of Allah continue until there is no other form of religion but Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). For this reason, radicals believe that they follow the only true Islam by including the practice of jihad against non-Muslims (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). Additionally, radicals claim that because Islam is not the only form of religion in this world, jihad is still incumbent upon all true Muslims for the purpose of destroying all forms of religion and civilization which exalt themselves over Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Radicals today believe the Muslim community as a whole, has abandoned the complete practice of Islam by not practicing jihad against non-Muslims, and that this is the primary reason for the current state of the Islamic world, as well as for what they view as the social and religious abuse of Muslims worldwide (Caner & Caner, 2009; Clarke, 2004; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Radical Islam claims that only by returning to what they view as the true Islam, which includes jihad against non-Muslims as a fundamental component, can they regain their rightful place of dominance over the world and the enemies of Allah.

Over the course of the development of the role of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam, Muslims began to view the world as existing in either one of two ideological camps. Through the lens of Islam which held a deeply-
rooted adversarial view of all non-Muslims as a result of years of escalating conflict, Muhammad and his fellow Muslims came to believe that the world was divided into two completely separate ideological territories (Esposito, 1999; Spencer, 2006). The territories Dar-al-Islam or “the House of Islam,” and Dar-al-Harb or “the House of War” separate the Muslims from the non-Muslims (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Esposito, 1999; Spencer, 2006). The goal, according to the prophet Muhammad, was to convert or destroy the House of War or all non-Muslims, for the glory of Allah (Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Spencer, 2006). Religious experts today point to scriptures taken from the Koran which display this dividing line between Muslims and non-Muslims, and that encourage the use of violence through an “us vs. them” mentality (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Manji, 2003). In a divine revelation from Allah, Sura 8:39 of the Koran reads: “And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is all for Allah. But if they cease, then lo! Allah is Seer of what they do” (Pickthall, 2006, pp. 136). Additionally, Sura 47:4 of the Koran says:

Now when ye meet in battle those who disbelieve, then it is smiting of the necks until, when ye have routed them, then making fast of bonds; and afterward either grace or ransom til the war lay down its burdens. That (is the ordinance) and if Allah willed He could have punished them (without you) but (thus it is ordained) that He may try some of you by means of others. And that those who are slain in the way of Allah, He rendereth not their actions vain. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 360)
These passages indicate only two categories in which humans can live: as an ally or as an enemy of Allah; and also the passages show the commandment that jihad must continue until only Islam and the allies of Allah remain. Sura 47:4 above describes physical warfare against non-Muslims as “the way of Allah,” providing a valid religious basis for the legitimacy of violence in Islam. These commandments were followed by Muhammad, and by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs who ruled the Muslim community after his death. For these reasons, radical Islamic groups today assert that they are religiously justified in dividing the world ideologically, leaving no room for a middle ground, and they are similarly justified in waging jihad against any non-Muslim individual, group, entity, or nation. These divisions in history and scripture also validate the concept that today’s radical Islam is not an unorthodox hijacking of a peaceful religion, but rather a deeply-rooted system of beliefs and practices.

The First Caliph and Continued Violence After Muhammad’s Death

While Muhammad’s life and actions demonstrate the fundamental link between violence and the practice of Islam, the role of violence in Islam did not end with the prophet’s death. Such practices continued with the religious leaders who followed in his footsteps. After the death of the prophet in 632 A.D., Muhammad’s close friend Abu Bakr became the first Caliph. Although he and those Caliphs who followed him were not considered prophets of Allah, the Muslim community saw the Caliphs as the ultimate religious authority on earth in Muhammad’s absence (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). Islamic history
indicates that Abu Bakr’s first demonstration of violence as Caliph began almost immediately after the death of Muhammad; once the prophet was gone, several of the Arab tribes that he had brought under the control of Islam believed that their obligations of loyalty to Muhammad and the Muslim community were fulfilled (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). The Arab tribes of Najd, Oman, and Yemen felt that they were free to separate themselves from the main community and worship Allah in their own way (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). The literature suggests that Bakr was confident in his belief that the separatist movement was an act of apostasy against Allah, Islam, and Muhammad; and that those who were guilty deserved death for their actions. Abu Bakr immediately launched what became a two year war against these tribes known as the Ridda Wars which lasted from 632-634 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Caliph Bakr sent armies to systematically destroy or “purify” every group who attempted to leave the Islamic faith practiced by Muhammad (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Bakr also sent them to conquer all the remaining non-Muslim settlements on the Arabian Peninsula in accordance with Muhammad’s final command which stated that no two religions can exist in the Arabian Peninsula (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Historical accounts show that by the end of these Ridda Wars, Islam had completely and literally conquered the entire Arabian Peninsula and had begun its violent spread into Oman, Syria, and parts of modern-day Iraq under the first Caliph’s leadership (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002;
Peters, 1973). These accounts indicate that the first Caliph’s rule was one of constant warfare and conquest; forcibly spreading Islam to the outer territories of the Byzantine (East Roman) and Sasanian (Persian) Empires, and using violence to maintain and purify the Muslim community itself (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Bakr’s application of violence in the expansion and maintenance of Islam further solidified its use as a primary means of converting non-Muslims, and purifying the Muslim community of incorrect practices.

The Second Caliph

The application of violence in the practice and spread of Islam continued under the leadership of the second Caliph, Umar ibn al-Khattab. According to the literature, Caliph Umar led the growing Muslim empire from 634 to 644 A.D.; many of the conquests that began under the first Caliph were continued under Umar’s leadership (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). Historical accounts indicate that Caliph Umar expanded Islamic military conquests further north through Syria in 634 A.D., expanded into Iraq in 636 A.D., began spreading into Egypt and parts of northern Africa in 639 A.D., pushed Byzantine forces back to the north of the Tarsus Mountains, and completely destroyed the last of the standing Sasanian military forces in the Battle at al-Qadisiyah in 637 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). After the destruction of the Sasanian forces, Caliph Umar and his followers were able to spread Islam further eastward into Khuzestan, Azerbaijan, and parts of Iran (Bloom & Blair,
2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973). Clearly, violence continued to play a foundational role in the spread and protection of Islam under Caliph Umar’s leadership. The city of Damascus fell to Muslim forces in 635 A.D., followed later by Jerusalem and Ascalon in 638 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). According to several historical accounts, by the mid 650’s Islam dominated vast amounts of territory from Yemen to Armenia, and as far south as Egypt all the way up to eastern Iran, far beyond its origins in the Arabian Peninsula (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973). Caliph Umar did not halt his armies there; historical accounts record that Muslim forces remained on the move by organizing raids against non-Muslims into areas such as Libya, North Africa, Sudan, and further north into Mesopotamia, Anatolia, the Caucasus Regions, deeper into Iran, and eventually into Afghanistan and Central Asia (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973). These conquests were driven by Islam’s goal, as revealed by the prophet Muhammad, of eliminating the enemies of Allah (non-Muslims) through jihad in order to establish the rightful dominance of Islam throughout the world (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Specner, 2006). In 644 A.D. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was assassinated by surviving members of the Sasanian Empire’s military forces who sought to avenge the empire’s demise (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). During his leadership, Caliph Umar’s life and actions reflected the importance of violence in the practice of Islam and of following the example set forth by Muhammad. This practice of
cleansing the non-Muslim world with violence was central to Caliph Umar’s rule, just as it was under Caliph Bakr, and Muhammad himself. Additionally, the practice of using violence as a cleansing mechanism for Muslims and non-Muslims alike became a legitimate religious concept which continues today.

The Third Caliph

The religious significance of violence in spreading Islam and winning converts continued as one of the primary aspects of the third Caliph’s leadership despite significant shifts in social and political priorities. Islam spread even further under Uthman ibn Affan, whose rule lasted from 644 to 656 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Under Caliph Uthman’s leadership Muslim armies reached as far west as Morocco, began moving up into the southern reaches of Europe along the Mediterranean coastline, and reached as far east as the borders of China (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). According to some historical accounts, Uthman’s reputation as Caliph was far less aggressive compared to his predecessors; the accumulation of wealth and power was of greater concern for Uthman (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Hiro, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). Although military expansion still occurred rather frequently, it did not have the same priority as it did for the Caliph’s predecessors (Esposito Ed., 1999; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). Islamic historical experts suggest that due to this shift in priorities, rumors began to spread which hinted at Uthman’s corruption and weakness as a Muslim and as a leader (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri,
1987). These rumors eventually led the early Muslims to believe that Uthman favored his relatives and friends in appointing leaders for the community (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). According to Islamic historical accounts, these rumors resulted in Uthman’s assassination at the hands of Muslim soldiers in his home in 656 A.D. (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). This assassination occurred because Muslims saw any deviation from the militant example of Islam set forth by Muhammad as inherently weak, and as an offense against Allah which had to be purified or cleansed through violence (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). As a result of this belief, Islam demanded the cleansing of Uthman’s leadership because his rule became an affront to Allah and the prophet Muhammad. This was another significant step which developed the importance of violence in cleansing even the leadership of the Muslim community, in addition to the already solidified practice of cleansing those who strayed from the true Islam illustrated by the earlier Ridda Wars.

The Practice of Jihad

The three Caliphs, who inherited the leadership of the Muslim community after the prophet Muhammad, each enhanced the religious necessity of jihad or violence against non-Muslims and Muslims alike. They believed that the performance of this holy warfare was meant to maintain the purity of Islam and to spread the religion as far and wide as possible. These goals are identical to those sought by today’s radical Islamic groups (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999;
The Caliphs kept the Muslim community in a sustained state of war through the practice of jihad, which aided them in achieving these goals and in cementing the important role of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). The literature also points out that the constant presence of warfare in Islamic society aided the Muslims in becoming united in one single and constant purpose (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Nasr, 1981). Warfare helped Muslims overcome their diverse tribal backgrounds and cultural history, which had in the past fostered a more fragmented society characterized by internal conflict. Furthermore, several studies also point out that this constant religious need for the outward expansion of Islam, the domination of all non-Muslims, and the maintenance of its standing army gave the early Islamic community great power as a whole economically, militarily, and religiously (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2008; Hiro, 2002 Lunde, 2002; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). During this original Islamic period violence and warfare developed to the point of becoming the primary activities for the Caliphs and their followers. Violence in Islam was not only a religious necessity, but also a means to acquiring economic wealth for the purpose of fueling the continuous cycle of jihad against non-Muslims.

The practice of jihad benefited the Muslim community in three primary ways by forcing non-Muslims to choose one of three possible choices, in addition to their belief in
its ability to ensure one’s salvation in the afterlife. During the performance of jihad, Muslim armies offered three choices to the non-Muslims they encountered (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). The first choice was submission, which was only offered to those who already held a monotheistic belief system (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). These non-Muslims were offered a place as secondary citizens on the conditions that they pay the jizyah (protection tax) to the Muslims and that they publicly declare themselves and their beliefs as inferior to Islam on a regular basis (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Requiring this submission and tribute from the monotheistic non-Muslims provided the Caliphs and their followers with a virtually free source of income. The only energy required from the Muslims in order to maintain this source of economic stimulus was the threat and occasional use of violence. The second choice was conversion; this too was offered to monotheists but primarily was required of polytheists who were forced to convert (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). This option directly empowered the Muslims by providing them with a means to replenish their military forces in order to continue jihad. It is also important to note that a constant state of jihad was required in order to maintain this continual influx of new Muslim converts. The third and final option for polytheists, and any monotheists who refused to pay the
jizyah or declare their inferiority, was death (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The practice of killing those non-Muslims who refused to comply with the first two choices ensured that no potential enemies would be left behind if and when the Muslims relocated. The choices of submission, conversion, and killing each benefited the early Islamic community in the unique ways discussed above, and by bringing great success and wealth to the Muslim community. As a result of the rapid physical growth and expansion which occurred because of these practices, the Caliph’s and their followers believed that they held Allah’s favor and continued to practice violence against non-Muslims.

Historical Implications

The lives of the prophet Muhammad and the first three Caliphs demonstrate the extensive use of violence and military action in spreading the faith of Islam to other peoples and in preserving Islam’s purity. Through these practices Islam spread more rapidly across the earth than any other major world religion (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nasr, 1981; Spencer, 2006). After Muhammad and his follower fled to Medina, violence against non-Muslims quickly developed into a fundamental religious element of orthodox Islamic practices. One study claims that the Muslims during Muhammad’s life in Medina engaged in over 100 attacks against various trade caravans and non-Muslim settlements in addition to the major conflicts with the Quraysh discussed earlier (Gauss, 2009).
Historical sources also make it apparent that the Caliphs made the violent spread, protection, and purification of Islam a major priority, in accordance with the prophet’s last wishes and the will of Allah which is recorded in the Koran (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Lunde, 2002; Perry et al., 2009; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Furthermore, the assassination of Uthman ibn Affan was an example of the Muslim community utilizing violence without the direction of a central religious leader for what they believed to be right for the protection and purification of Islam (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973; Taheri 1987).

Overall, this review of the literature indicates that violence through the practice of jihad against non-Muslims was an integral part of orthodox Islam, and not simply a recent development solely associated with the modern groups who have been deemed “‘radical.’” Acts of assassination, murder, conquest, and violence in the name of Islam were highly valued as sacred religious acts of faith and commitment throughout this early Islamic period. In addition to the lives of Islam’s four most respected historical leaders, one further example of this is the first group to be known as assassins. This devout group of Muslims which existed approximately 800 years ago believed, under the guidance of their Islamic religious leaders, that spreading terror through the murder and destruction of the enemies of Allah would benefit Islam by either forcing the conversion of many new Muslims or destroying their enemies; as additionally these acts assured their acceptance into Paradise if they were killed (Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010).
The practice of violence became a required and justifiable holy obligation for every Muslim during the beginning of Islam, and according to the Koran and lives of these influential historical figures (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Lewis, 1993; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The practice of violence became so important to Islam that any period of social, religious, and economic decay today or throughout Islamic history has been attributed to the abandonment of this practice (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Taheri, 1987). According to this historical evidence, the radical Islamic groups of today are not the first Muslims to practice violence against non-Muslims for religious purposes, but are only the modern practitioners of traditional Islam.

Violence in the Koran

The Koran is the ultimate authoritative power in Islam. According to Islamic beliefs, the Koran is the only pure and unaltered word of God (Allah) and is meant to override the authority of both the Holy Bible in Christianity and the Torah in Judaism (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2000; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). Due to the religious significance of this document in Islam, it is critical to any examination of the importance of violence in the religion. This section of the literature review will examine and analyze a collection of verses taken from the Koran, specifically from the English translation compiled by
Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, which is highly respected by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike.

Islamic history asserts that Allah originally gave his written word to the Jews and then to the Christians who each eventually went astray and corrupted what is recorded in the Bible and the Torah (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Gesiler & Saleeb, 2002). Muslims believe that the Koran, as it was revealed to the prophet Muhammad, was given by Allah for the purpose of correcting those errors and offering humanity one final chance to understand and have faith in Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). Muslims believe the Koran holds the instructions necessary for correct living. According to the Koran, all life is to serve the purposes of Islam; there is nothing more important to a Muslim than to live in complete submission in every area of their life, to the will of Allah (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Manji, 2003; Saleem & Vincent, 2009). The word Islam itself literally means “submission” (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Yungher, 2008). Due to the religious and social influence of the Koran in the lives of Muslims throughout history, the Koran is critical to determining the existence of a religiously-significant connection between violence and the practice of Islam.
Overview of the Koran

A general understanding of the structure and significance of the Koran in Islam and Muslim culture is essential to the analysis of its relationship to the practice of violence. The Koran, according to traditional Islamic beliefs, was revealed to Muhammad in three distinct periods. The first two periods of Islamic revelation encouraged a more peaceful and tolerant attitude towards non-Muslims in order to win converts through logic and reason, while the third and final set of divine revelations urges the use of violence (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito Ed., 1999; Kozlowski, 1991; Lewis, 1993; Lunde, 2002; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981). According to scholars and experts in the radical Islamic movement, the instruction for violence was among the last of the commandments given by Allah to the prophet Muhammad (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). These religious scholars and experts from the radical Islamic movement assert that those final revelations which urge the use of violence remain important today because of the doctrine of Nakesh, which allows for the later violent revelations to replace those emphasizing peace which came before them (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner, & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2002; Spencer, 2006). This concept of replacement is the primary reason why radical Islamic groups today believe that violence in the form of jihad remains an important and religious-validated obligation for all true Muslims. Prior to addressing the doctrine of Nakesh and its influence over
Islamic violence today, the overall structure of the Koran and the prophetic periods must first be discussed.

The Koran was given by dictation from Allah through the angel Gabriel to the prophet Muhammad during three separate periods of Muhammad’s life by what is known as divine revelations or prophetic visions. According to traditional Islamic beliefs there were a total of eighty-six Suras revealed to Muhammad during the first two periods while he lived in Mecca, and twenty-eight during the final period in Medina (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Pickthall, 2006; Spencer, 2006). The overall organization of the Koran consists of 114 separate chapters or Suras traditionally arranged according to length by longest to shortest, not according to chronological order or prophetic period of origin (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). The Koran does record the corresponding prophetic period and city in which each Sura or chapter was revealed to Muhammad (Caner & Caner, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). According to the literature, Suras 1, 51-53, 55-56, 68-70, 73-75, 77-97, 99-104, and 111-114 were given to Muhammad during the first period of revelation from 611-615 A.D. (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gauss, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). From 616 through 622 A.D. Muhammad received his second period of prophetic revelation which yielded Suras 6-7, 10-21, 23, 25-32, 34-46, 50, 54, 67, 71-72, and 76 (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gauss, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). The Suras given to Muhammad during these first two periods of revelation from Allah largely spoke of peace and tolerance of non-Muslims; urging them not to become aggressors in any situation (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel,
In 623 A.D. Muhammad received his final set of revelations from Allah while living in Medina, which ended in 632 A.D. with his death (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Peters, 1973; Taheri, 1987). This period resulted in Suras 2-5, 8-9, 22, 24, 33, 47-49, 57-66, 98, and 110 (Caner & Caner, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). This final period of revelation focused on urging the utilization of violence, killing, and coercion in order to spread Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). In addition to this shift towards violence, this final prophetic period also brought the religious concept of abrogation, also known as the Islamic doctrine of Nakesh.

The Doctrine of Nakesh

Nakesh is the Islamic concept of abrogation, described in the Koran, which abolishes the early commandments of peace and replaces them with instructions for the use of violence against non-Muslims who resist conversion or submission to Islam. As a result of Nakesh, radical Islamic scholars and experts believe that the practice of violence against non-Muslims became an important religious obligation, one that remains relevant today. The revelation of Nakesh validates the shift towards violence in the practice of Islam by asserting that because Allah is supreme in every way, he can change the instructions in the Koran whenever he deems it necessary (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). According to historical Islamic beliefs, Allah revealed the doctrine of Nakesh to Muhammad after the escape from Mecca so that the early Muslims might
know how to act when non-Muslims refused or persecuted Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Nakesh stipulates that any revelation which differs from the instructions provided by a previous revelation should automatically replace that previous instruction (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009). The Islamic concept of Nakesh or abrogation is established in the following two passages from the Koran; both discuss the replacement of earlier revelations (peace) with those received later (violence). Sura 2:106 of the Koran, revealed to Muhammad in Medina, states: “Such of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, we bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is able to do all things [change instructions]?” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 34). Additionally, Sura 16:101 states: “And when We put a revelation in place of (another) revelation,-and Allah knowest best what He revealeth-they say: Lo! Thou art but inventing. Most of them know not.” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 197). This concept of replacement, validated by these passages, therefore allows the earlier revelations calling for peace and tolerance to be overlooked in light of the later or better revelations, discussed later in this section, which instruct the use of violence against non-Muslims. According to Dr. Mark Gabriel, there are 114 verses in the Koran which speak of peace, forgiveness, and love towards non-Muslims given to Muhammad during the first two periods of prophetic revelations (Gabriel, 2002). All of these individual verses were given to Muhammad before the revelation of Sura 9:5 which commands all Muslims to fight and slay unbelievers (non-Muslims) unless they submit or convert to Islam (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner &
Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002, Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Furthermore, Dr. Gabriel asserts that sixty percent of the verses in the Koran discuss jihad in the context of holy warfare (Gabriel, 2002). This coincides with the fact that the final period of revelation in Medina was the largest of the three received by the prophet Muhammad (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Nakesh and the verses which followed nullify peace and tolerance by advocating the adoption of violence as the primary way of spreading the religion of Islam.

The Adoption of Violence

As a result of the revelation of Nakesh, and the physical pressure from external persecution, the practice of violence in Islam replaced the previous ideals of peaceful tolerance which characterized Muslim life before the flight to Medina. Due to these religious and social factors, the revelations received by Muhammad underwent a shift from a tolerant and peaceful worldview to one more aggressive and vengeful towards non-Muslims (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Spencer, 2006). Sura 22:39 of the Koran, according to the authoritative Islamic scholar Rudolph Peters, is traditionally believed to be the first passage of scripture to advocate the use of violence (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009). This verse (revealed during the final prophetic period) reads: “Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged [persecution/resistance]; and Allah is indeed Able to give them victory” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 241). This passage implies permission for the use of violence; stating
that violence is acceptable in the face of persecution or resistance to Islam. After Muhammad and his followers took up residence in the city of Medina following their flight from Mecca, the significance of violence began to develop in practice as he and his followers fought with the Quraysh, the polytheistic Arab tribe of Mecca who first persecuted Muhammad and his followers. Also, the religious significance of violence in Islam began to grow through the revelations Muhammad received while in Medina. For example, Sura 2:191 of the Koran, revealed during Muhammad’s time in Medina, states:

And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drive you out [Mecca], for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Invioable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 41-42)

Additionally, Sura 8:12-13 of the Koran which was also revealed during the final prophetic period, commands:

When thy Lord inspired the angels, (saying): I am with you. So make those who believe stand firm. I will throw fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Then smite the necks and smite of them each finger [use of violence against non-Muslims]. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger [persecution in Mecca]. Whoso opposeth Allah and His Messenger, (for him) lo! Allah is severe in punishment. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 134)

Similarly, Sura 4:89 of the Koran also revealed to Muhammad during his final prophetic period, states:
They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of Allah [accept Islam]; if they turn back (to enmity) then take them and kill them wherever ye find them, and choose no friend nor helper from among them. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 80)

These passages show that violence became the primary response to persecution and resistance to the superiority of Islam. These passages differ significantly from those given to Muhammad during Islam’s birth in Mecca; the juxtaposition demonstrates the shift towards violence (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Spencer, 2006).

The most commonly cited passage of scripture which Muslims today use to argue that violence played no part in spreading Islam is Sura 2:256 (Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). Sura 2:256 of the Koran states: “there is no compulsion in religion…” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 49). However, earlier in Sura 2 there are verses which instruct Muslims to fight and utilize violence (Sura 2:191, 193, and 216) until persecution and resistance to Islam are stopped (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009). In addressing this contradiction, many non-Muslim and radical Islamic scholars and experts have shown that the majority of these verses which mention peace or tranquility do so in the context of the peace found after the practice of violence has been exercised (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). For example, Sura 36:58 of the Koran states that Allah will offer a word of peace or encouragement to Muslims in facing the enemies of Islam (Gauss, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). Sura 48:4 of the Koran
describes how Allah will provide *peace* for the Muslims in order to increase their faith (Gauss, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). Sura 47:35 of the Koran commands that Muslims are to never look for peace during a time of jihad or warfare but to remain steadfast in battle (Guass, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). Finally, Sura 6:127 of the Koran promises peace for Muslims in return for the acts they have done (jihad) for the glory of Allah (Gauss, 2009; Pickthall, 2006). Religious and historical experts assert that peace in the context of coexistence or tolerance only played a visible role in Islam prior the Muslim flight from Mecca (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). The doctrine of Nakesh enabled this shift in the final prophetic period towards the complete adoption and solidification of violence in the religion of Islam. For this reason, the modern radical Islamic movement asserts that violence completely replaced the concept of peace, and that their “radical” use of violence is a traditionalistic practice rooted in religious history as a fundamental element of Islam.

The developmental shift towards religious violence in the Koran led to the early establishment of jihad as a primary practice for Islamic expansion. Irshad Manji, a Muslim, acclaimed journalist, lecturer, and a staunch advocate for reforms against religious violence in Islam disagrees with the claim of Islam being a religion of peace. Manji, as an outspoken advocate for reform in modern Islam, denounces the claim that radical Islamic movements have “hijacked” Islam. She writes that despite her personal rejection of and distaste for violence in Islam; radicals do have scriptural and historical
support for their actions (Manji, 2003). She points out that the religion was not a spectator to the violence committed by Muslims throughout history, but was actually its main instigator and inspirational source (Manji, 2003). Manji points to several verses in the Koran which elevated the use of violence by glorifying the practice of physical jihad (holy warfare) against non-Muslims as evidence of Islam’s evolution into a religion centered on violence. For example, Sura 8:60 of the Koran states:

Make ready for them all thou canst of (armed) force and of horses tethered, that thereby ye may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others beside them whom ye know not. Allah knoweth them. Whatsoever ye spend in the way of Allah [jihad] it will be repaid to you in full, and ye will not be wronged
[assurance of the righteousness of jihad]. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 137-138)

Additionally, Koran 4:74 reads:

Let those who fight in the way of Allah, who sell the life of this world for the other. Whoso fighteth in the way of Allah [jihad], be he slain or be he victorious, on him We shall bestow a vast reward. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 79)

Passages such as these provide evidence of the close knit religious relationship that developed between violence and Islam (Ankberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Manji, 2003; Spencer, 2006). Additionally, Suras 8:60 and 4:74 as seen above, state that there will be rewards in the afterlife for those individual Muslims willing to engage in violence for the benefit of Islam. This concept will be discussed in greater detail later in this section of the literature review. The important role of violence, as a result of its widespread success, became an honored
religious and social component of Islam which Muslims believed was supported and encouraged by Allah.

Jihad and the Koran

There are two primary disputes between moderate and radical Islamic schools of thought over the religiously-significant role of violence in the Koran and Islam as a whole. The first main argument is over whether or not the actual religion of Islam has been mistakenly confused with the cultural history of its geographical area of origin (Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Manji, 2003; Said; 1981). This argument asserts that the cultural norms existing prior to the revelation of Islam (610 A.D.) which centered on violent tribal disputes and fragmented relationships should be seen as separate from Islam. Proponents of this view claim that Islam is what actually brought the culture of the Arabian Peninsula out of its violent history (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Manji, 2003; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981). In opposition to this point, Dr. Gabriel points to the fact that the early Muslim community was born into an environment which inherently fostered violence and that conflict between tribal groups was an accepted cultural norm; and furthermore, these norms do have a relationship with Islam constituted by the development and continued use of jihad (Gabriel, 2002). According to Dr. Gabriel, the only change in the cultural norms as a result of Islam was that religious affiliations became more important to Muslims than any tribal group or other physical means of distinguishing between friend and enemy (Gabriel, 2002). The second argument is over whether or not the Koran holds explicit instructions for violence and if those verses which call for warfare and violence
are to be interpreted literally or metaphorically (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spencer, 2006). According to numerous studies, this argument is irrelevant in light of the historical evidence showing that physical violence was in fact used by Muhammad and the Caliphs who wrote and read the Koran and then interpreted its instructions literally (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Despite these arguments, the historical and textual evidence suggests that the practice of violence against non-Muslims has played a religiously-significant and continual role in Islam since its early use by the prophet Muhammad and his successors. Despite the arguments of numerous non-Muslim experts, world leaders, and policy makers who believe that there is no specific mention of violence in the Koran, many Muslim scholars still affirm the presence of explicit instructions for the use of violence and killing in the Koran. As religious scholars of the Koran and Islamic traditions, it stands to reason that these individuals have a greater knowledge, understanding, and exposure to this authoritative religious document. Irshad Manji, a practicing Muslim educated in the Koran who is today an advocate for Islamic reform, affirms the existence of explicit instructions for violence in the Koran by arguing that the main problem in Islam is the literalism with which Muslims interpret the Koran. Manji argues this point further by asserting that the Suras which command or instruct violence against non-Muslims have been taken out of context by radical groups today. In calling for reform,
she claims that the strictest interpretation of the jihad (physical warfare) or qital (fighting) in the Koran, while clearly explicit, is no longer necessary because Islam is no longer under threat of persecution or oppression (Manji, 2003). These calls for Islamic reform indirectly affirm that violence did play a significant religious role in the early development and expansion of Islam and Muslim territory.

Radical experts and scholars argue against reformers such as Irshad Manji, asserting that interpretations of the Koran’s instructions which disregard the importance of violence are inconsistent with scriptural requirements for following Islam. In showing the important religious role of violence in Islam, radical religious scholars and leaders point out the instructions in the Koran which command that Muslims physically fight against non-Muslims until there is no religion in the world except Islam (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Furthermore, radical religious scholars and experts point out that there is no limitation in the Koran to how far Islam should be spread throughout the world, in fact, the Koran encourages Muslims to utilize violence in the spread Islam until it is the only remaining religion (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). For this reason, radicals claim that jihad remains an important religious obligation today, and that the Koran directly instructs the continuation of physical warfare, as carried out by the
prophet Muhammad and his successors, until Islam has achieved dominance throughout the world (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Taheri, 1987). To support their claims, radical experts point out that, in adherence to traditional Islamic beliefs, verses in the Koran must not be subject to human interpretation, but only imitated in their perfection as the true and literal word of Allah (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Said, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Therefore, these experts assert that jihad is still a critical component to the practice of Islam and essential for the proper adherence to the Koran today. These views are at the core of the radical Islamic movement and are the reasons why followers of this ideology believe that the practice of jihad has held a religiously-significant place in Islam which remains directly applicable to the non-Muslims of today’s world.

The Koran provides evidence of this religiously-significant use for violence by commanding its continuous use in the spread of Islam until it is dominant across the earth. Sura 8:39 of the Koran reads: “And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is all for Allah [no other religion remains]. But if they cease, then lo! Allah is seer of what they do” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 136). According to numerous religious and historical experts, this passage only urges an end to the violence once the non-Muslims have “ceased” to resist Islam by either converting or submitting themselves
to its superiority (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Peters, 1973; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). The opposing interpretation of this passage is that violence must continue only until there is an end to the persecution of Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). Persecution, according to the prophet Muhammad as well as Islamic fundamentalist groups today, is present where ever Islam is not dominant over all other religions or ways of life (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Peters, 1973; Saada & Merrill, 2008; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006). However, according to non-Muslim and radical Muslim religious experts, this second interpretation is inconsistent with Sura 9:5 of the Koran (shown later in this section and in Appendix B) which commands an end to violence only if the non-Muslims have repented by establishing worship or conversion and submitting by paying the jizyah, the protection or tribute tax required of non-Muslims living under Muslim authority (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Manji, 2003; Pickthall, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Despite their minor differences, both interpretations of Sura 8:39 (listed above) imply the necessary use of violence in protecting Islam from persecution. In addition to Sura 8:39, Sura 2:193 of the Koran commands: “And fight them [non-Muslims] until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah [the only remaining religion]. But if they desist [conversion or submission], then let there be no
hostility except against wrongdoers [criminals]” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 42). This passage of scripture also describes violence as a justifiable and necessary function until all religion or worship is directed to Allah. Many Muslim and non-Muslim religious experts assert that the word ‘desist’ means to cease the persecution of Islam by either converting to the religion or submitting to Muslim superiority (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). These passages provide further evidence of the religiously-significant role of violence in the Koran. Additionally, they lend support to the claims made by the modern radical Islamic movement which assert that violence has been a continuous and fundamental religious practice since early Islam. Additionally, radicals claim that this role of violence remains an important religious obligation today because Islam has yet to achieve dominance, as required by the instructions in these passages of the Koran, throughout the earth. According to radical Islamic groups, jihad or the use of physical violence is not only important as a means to achieving the foundational religious goal of turning all worship to Allah, but also as a means of demonstrating and testing an individual’s commitment to Islam.

Another important religious function of jihad, according to the Koran, is its use as a means of demonstrating one’s loyalty and commitment to Allah and to the religion of Islam. According to the Koran and the modern radical Islamic movement, this commitment to violence against non-Muslims is the highest form of worship and dedication to Allah that an individual can perform in this life (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009;
Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). In one of the first discussions relating to violence, the Koran describes the individual’s willingness to utilize violence as something that is admired by Allah, beneficial to the Muslim community as a whole, and is the ultimate tool for testing the Muslim’s dedication to Islam. Sura 2:216 of the Koran, which was revealed during the final prophetic period, reads:

Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; though it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye not know [violence as an expression of trust]. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 44)

Additionally, Koran, Sura 47:4, also revealed during the final period in Medina, provides further evidence of the religiously-significant role of violence in Islam:

Now when ye meet in battle those who disbelieve, then it is smiting of the necks until, when ye have routed them, then making fast of bonds; and afterward either grace or ransom till the war lay down its burdens. That (is the ordinance). And if Allah willed He could have punished them [non-Muslims] (without you) but (thus it is ordained) that He may try some of you by means of others [testing loyalty]. And those who are slain in the way of Allah, He rendereth not their actions vain [reward for death in battle]. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 360)

In these passages, the use violence is encouraged as a means of proving oneself as a dedicated follower of Islam and as a means of demonstrating trust in Allah; similar to a
method of worship. The reader is instructed that violence is an obligation and a divine tool for testing individual devotion. The passages above state that warfare has been ordained for the followers of Islam; it is for them to fight in order to show their commitment to Allah and Islam. These passages articulate the religiously-significant role of physical violence in early Islam.

Revelations from Muhammad’s later prophetic periods suggest that violence can only stop after the non-Muslims have all been converted to Islam, submitted to Islam (if they are already monotheistic), or been destroyed. This instruction is clearly articulated in the Koran, Sura 9:5 (mentioned earlier) instructs an end to violence only if one of those three events has occurred, stating:

Then, when the sacred months have passed [Ramadan], slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush [destruction]. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due [conversion/submission], then leave their way free. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 140)

According to this passage, violence and warfare are to continue until non-Muslims have no choice but to convert or submit to Islam. Dr. Ergun Caner the dean of Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and professor of theology and church history at Liberty University, and Dr. Emir Caner the president of Truett-McConnell College and international speaker on theology and world religions, claim that there are only two possible interpretations of this passage. Sura 9:5 can be interpreted descriptively, meaning that it simply explains the rules of engagement under which Muhammad fought the pagans during his lifetime,
discussing violence in a strictly historical context (Caner & Caner, 2009). Or the passage can also be interpreted prescriptively, when viewed as a command for all Muslims to continue fighting until Islam is the only religion on earth (Caner & Caner, 2009). Radical Islamic groups today adhere to the prescriptive interpretation of this passage by maintaining the religious importance of jihad and engaging in violence against non-Muslims all over the world. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, has stated that their primary operational goal has been and will continue to be jihad aimed at destroying the United States for the glory of Allah and Islam because they believe the United States is the modern-day representation of paganism resistance to conversion and submission (Esposito, 1999; Jansen, 1979; Merley, 2009). They believe their actions are in accordance with the commandments from Sura 9:5 and other passages in the Koran, and are the correct emulation of the actions of the prophet Muhammad and Rightly-Guided Caliphs. It is important to note however, that both interpretations display the religiously-significant role of violence in the practice of Islam. The descriptive interpretation details exactly how Muhammad and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs fought and killed non-Muslims in order to spread and protect Islam while the prescriptive interpretation makes jihad directly applicable to modern times. In both cases the presence and significant religious function of violence remains constant.

The Koran does not simply encourage the use of violence in the practice of Islam, but also establishes its use as a religious command, necessary for the proper adherence to Islamic religion. Sura 9:29 of the Koran articulates violence as a religious obligation by explicitly stating:
Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah not the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His Messenger, and follow not the religion of truth [Islam], until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low [conversion/submission]. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 142)

According to multiple religious experts, this particular verse not only justifies and commands the use of violence, but also instructs its use against four distinct groups of people (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979). The four groups include those who “do not believe in Allah” (non-Muslims), who do not believe in the “Day of Judgment” (people without faith), those who do anything “which Allah hath forbidden by His Messenger” (any who violate Islamic law), and those who “follow not the religion of truth” (non-Muslims), mainly the Jews and Christians (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979). A similar command for violence can be seen in Sura 9:14 of the Koran which reads: “Fight them! Allah will chastise them at your hands [punish], and He will lay them low and give you victory over them [destruction of non-Muslims], and he will heal the breasts of folk who are believers” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, pp. 141). This passage urges Muslims to essentially punish (chastise) the non-Muslims with violence for not converting or submitting to Islam. Similarly, Sura 8:65 of the Koran displays yet more explicit instructions for the use of violence against the non-Muslims, also describing them as lesser or inferior when compared to the willing followers of Islam:
O Prophet, Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred steadfast they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they (the disbelievers) are a folk without intelligence (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 138)

Additionally, Sura 9:123 of the Koran commands the continuation of violence stating: “O ye who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers [non-Muslims] who are near you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allah is with those who keep their duty [jihad] unto Him” (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, pp. 151). In addition to describing the duty of jihad, Sura 5:33 of the Koran articulates the consequences for non-Muslims who resist conversion or submission to Islam:

The only reward for those who make war upon Allah and His messenger and strive after corruption in the land [refusing conversion/submission] will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land [punishment for refusing conversion/submission]. Such will be their degradation in the world, and in the Hereafter theirs will be an awful doom. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 93)

According to many religious experts, “those who make war upon Allah and His messenger” as identified in Sura 5:33 (above) can be defined simply as any individual who would refuse conversion or submission to the religion of Islam (Ankerberg, & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Phares, 2006; Spencer, 2006). The punishments described in Sura 5:33 (above) are
not simply rhetoric, according to the modern radical Islamic movement they are literal instructions for the treatment of non-Muslims established by Islamic law and historical precedent (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Countless modern day examples of the fulfillment of these instructions exist in Sudan, Libya, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Algeria, Lebanon, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Afghanistan where non-Muslims and even more moderate Muslims are attacked, tortured, and killed daily for refusing conversion or submission to Islam or for questioning traditional beliefs and practices by advocating tolerance (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). These instructions found throughout the Koran are clear evidence of the explicit instructions for the continued use of violence against non-Muslims until they are forced to convert or submit to Islam. Furthermore, these instructions establish the practice of violence as a religious obligation required of all Muslims; solidifying the religiously-significant role of violence in the Koran and the religion of Islam as a whole.

In addition to commanding its use against non-Muslim groups, the Koran also speaks directly to the necessity of applying violence toward those Muslims who attempt to leave or change the practice of Islam. Evidence of this can be seen in the Koran where
it commands the practice of jihad against any Muslim attempting to leave the religion of Islam. For example, Sura 4:89 of the Koran states:

They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of Allah [accept Islam]; if they turn back (to enmity) [leave Islam] then take them and kill them wherever ye find them, and choose no friend nor helper from among them. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 80)

This particular use of violence against Muslims was illustrated by the actions of the first Caliph, Abu Bakr who launched the Ridda Wars after Muhammad’s death, destroying all the Muslim groups who had attempted to leave Islam and practice the religion in their own way rather than as part of the Umma (Islamic community). This passage, while clearly instructing the use of violence specifically against former Muslims, also constitutes an explicit instruction for violence as a religious obligation in the performance, protection, and purification of the Islamic religion. This concept of using violence as a means of protecting or purifying Islam from potential traitors remains a very real threat today for many former Muslims who have left the religion of Islam (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Manji, 2003; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Many former and even moderate Muslims who were Islamic religious scholars and/or members of the radical Islamic movement who edify the world today with their academic expertise and firsthand knowledge of the jihadist movement do so under constant threats to their lives. Drs. Emir and Ergun Caner, Dr. Mark Gabriel, Kamal Saleem, Irshad Manji, and Walid
Shoebat are just a few examples of current and former Muslims who experience this threat in their lives today overseas and in the United States. According to the literature, violence was also religiously-significant as a primary tool for “cleansing” the Muslims considered weak in their devotion to Islam; a practice which is still common today throughout the world.

Despite the evidence of the important and religiously-significant function of violence presented in the Koran, many world leaders and policymakers continue to believe that Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance, and that its goal in striving to spread Islam to the world is to achieve world peace. Some religious experts on Islam promote this belief by arguing that the highest form of jihad is not definitive of physical violence but symbolizes the internal struggle against sin and worldly desires that every individual must face (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981). However, in one of the most respected collections of the Hadiths (the recorded sayings and actions of the prophet, second only to the Koran in religious authority), written by Muhammad bin Ismail bin al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, there are 199 references to jihad as the practice of physical warfare against non-Muslims (Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). The Hadiths are a vast collection of writings detailing the life, sayings, and actions of the prophet Muhammad created to provide a tangible example to Muslims of how to live according to Islamic precepts (Ali, 1935; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979;
Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Spencer, 2006). Each Hadith was recorded by individuals who were close to Muhammad in some way, such as friends and family (Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Spencer, 2006). According to the Bukhari collection, Muhammad said: “I have been ordered by Allah to fight with people till they testify that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger [convert/submit to Islam]” (as cited in Gabriel, 2006, p. 202). Furthermore, the Hadiths also record the prophet encouraging Muslims in the performance of jihad:

The Prophet said, ‘The person who participates in Holy battles in Allah’s cause and nothing compels him to do so except belief in Allah and His Apostles, will be recompensed by Allah either with a reward, or booty if he survives or will be admitted to Paradise if he is killed in the battle as a martyr. Had I not found it difficult for my followers, then I would not remain behind any sariya [battle group] going for jihad and I would have loved to be martyred in Allah’s cause and then made alive, and then martyred and then made alive, and then again martyred in His cause.’ (Gauss, 2009, p. 349)

Jihad in this passage is clearly defined as physical warfare as well as described as one of the holiest undertakings a Muslim can perform for the glory of Allah. Additionally, this passage promises great rewards for those willing to fight, kill, and be killed for the glory of Allah and the religion of Islam. This concept of earning rewards by exercising violence against non-Muslims in general has existed since the beginning of jihad, and is a fundamental belief still followed today by the modern radical Islamic movement.
Rewards for Jihad in the Koran

According to the Koran, traditional Islamic beliefs, and the modern radical Islamic movement the practice of violence guarantees Muslims a place in paradise in the afterlife. Performance in jihad against non-Muslims or in the purification of the Muslim community guarantees the individual a place in Paradise if and when he or she dies. This promise has historically been seen as the ultimate reward for those willing to engage in jihad (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). Evidence of this can be seen in Sura 4:95-96 of the Koran which states:

Those of the believers who sit still, other than those who have a (disabling) hurt, are not on an equality with those who strive [fight] in the way of Allah with their wealth and lives. Allah hath conferred on those who strive [fight] with their wealth and lives a rank above the sedentary [reward for fighting]. Unto each Allah hath promised good but He hath bestowed on those who strive [fight] a great reward above the sedentary; Degrees of rank from Him, and forgiveness and mercy. Allah is every Forgiving, Merciful. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 81)

This passage essentially promises that there will be a great reward for those Muslims willing to spend their wealth and lives for the cause of Allah. In addition to the radical Islamic movement, many Islamic religious experts claim that the only assurance of salvation in the Koran is if an individual participates in jihad (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006;
Aside from rewarding salvation for dying in the performance of jihad, there is no other mention of the assurance of salvation to be found in the Koran; outside of this specification Muslims can only hope that their good deeds will outweigh the bad and earn them a place in paradise (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Saada & Merrill, 2008; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006). This assurance of acceptance into paradise can be seen in Sura 3:195 of the Koran, which states:

And their Lord hath heard them (and He saith): Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and suffered damage for My cause, and fought [jihad] and were slain, verily I shall remit their evil deeds from them and verily I shall bring them into Gardens [access to paradise for participation in jihad] underneath which rivers flow – A reward from Allah. And with Allah is the fairest of rewards. (as cited in Pickthall, 2006, p. 70-71)

According to religious experts, this passage explicitly articulates that those Muslims who fight and die in the performance of jihad will be rewarded by Allah with instant access to paradise or heaven (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). Aside from those Muslims willing engage
in jihad, Islam is ultimately a religion of works; if an individual’s good works outweigh their sins on the Day of Judgment they will be granted a place in paradise (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). In other words, access to heaven must be earned, while the performance of jihad is essentially a free pass. These passages indicate that the practice of violence in Islam is not only religiously justified as a means of spreading or protecting Islam from oppression, cleansing the Muslim community of traitors, and demonstrating individual commitment to Allah, but also because it is an approved and guaranteed path to paradise for those willing to spend their lives for Islam.

This concept of being rewarded for individual service or death in jihad is one of the primary motivational sources for today’s radical Islamic terrorist organizations. Kamal Saleem, a former devout radical Muslim from Lebanon and terrorist operative for the Muslim Brotherhood and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), who participated in and led jihadist operations in Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq describes how this belief is a powerful driving force behind traditional Muslim’s willingness to use violence against non-Muslims. In his book *The Blood of Lambs*, Saleem describes a fictional story which he was taught during his childhood in madrassa (Islamic religious school) that illustrates this concept of winning salvation through violence and that motivated him in pursuing a life of jihad for Allah and Islam. Such stories, according to Saleem and other Islamic religious experts, have great value in Islam
and in the Arab culture in general; they have been used as a primary tool for the religious education of children in Islamic countries throughout history (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Saleem & Vincent, 2009). The Hadiths are further evidence of this in that they themselves are vast collections of stories illustrating the life of the prophet Muhammad for the purposes of religious education and inspiration in the religion of Islam (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Saleem’s story tells of a merciless bandit whose life was solely defined by the robbery and murder of innocent people, an evil man who hurt others without pity or remorse (Saleem & Vincent, 2009). In the story, this bandit happened across a battle which occurred as a result of Jews resisting submission to Islam by refusing to pay tribute to a group of Muslim soldiers; he decided to join in the fight against the Jews, killing many of them before he himself was killed (Saleem & Vincent, 2009). After his death, the bandit’s mother, an honorable and devout Muslim, had a dream where she saw her son in jannah or paradise surrounded by a multitude of young women who were feeding him and tending to his needs (Saleem & Vincent, 2009). Outraged because she knew he was a murderer and not obedient to Allah she said: “You don’t belong here. You belong in Hell” (Saleem & Vincent, 2009, p. 10-11). The bandit replied: “I died for the glory of Allah and when I woke up, He welcomed me into jannah [paradise]” (Saleem & Vincent, 2009, p. 11). Saleem also points out that this story, and many others similar in nature, illustrate that the killing of non-Muslims,
the enemies of Islam according to the Koran and Islamic laws, is not considered a crime but a great service to Allah (Saleem & Vincent, 2009). Stories such as these abound in Islam and in scriptures from the Koran and Hadiths, encouraging violence as a means of glorifying Allah, to guarantee salvation, and an eternal reward in paradise.

Religious Implications

Overall, there are two main arguments that disclaim the existence of a historical and religiously-significant role of violence in Islam. Many moderate Muslim scholars and religious leaders claim that the encouragement of violence in the Koran applies only to the context and circumstances present during the lives of the prophet Muhammad and Islam’s early religious leaders (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). Proponents of this argument hold to the descriptive interpretation of the Koran as described by Dr. Ergun Caner and Dr. Emir Caner. They claim that the practice of jihad or physical violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam was limited to the hardships faced by the prophet and his followers and that the practice was justified by the persecution and oppression directed against the early Muslims (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). In opposition to this claim, numerous Islamic religious and historical experts note that the text of the Koran does not restrict the practice of jihad against non-Muslims to a specific time or place (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadwi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Radical Islamic scholars, experts, and religious
leaders of today agree with this second point asserting that physical violence against non-Muslims in the name of Allah is still a religiously-significant obligation, supported by scripture and history, and necessary for all true Muslims (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). In addition to attempting to disclaim the historical and religious role of violence in Islam by arguing that is jihad is strictly defined as the protective actions of the original Islamic community, Muslim scholars also provide several definitions of the practice of jihad.

The second argument intended to disclaim the historical and religious-significant role of violence in Islam argues that the concept of jihad today has been misinterpreted by the non-Muslims in general and that, if violence does occur, it is simply in the justifiable self-defense of Muslim rights. For example, Jamal Badawi, a highly respected Islamic apologist, argues that the aspect of jihad which involves physical violence is only utilized if at least one of two conditions is present: the need for self-defense or the need to fight the oppression of Islam (Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). However, the definitions of “self-defense” and “oppression” provided by these Islamic religious leaders are extremely broad for both moderate and radical adherents (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Manji, 2003; Spencer, 2006). For example, the radical Islamic movement today argues that any nation which has neglected to establish Islam as the national religion and law of the land (Islamic legal codes known as Shariah Law) is an “oppressor” and must be destroyed through jihad (Choueiri, 1990; Clarke, 2004; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006;
Many Muslims who classify themselves as moderates do not disagree with this definition and use of jihad to alleviate these oppressive circumstances (Caner & Caner, 2009; Clarke, 2004; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Manji, 2003; Nasr, 1981; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Said, 1981; Smith, 1981; Spencer, 2006). Additionally, Muslims have defined the secular culture of promiscuity, which they believe has led to social, moral, and religious decadence in countries such as the United States or England and has been exported all over the world through the internet and the media, as a direct assault on the religion of Islam (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Clarke, 2004; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Murawiec, 2008; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Said, 1981; Snow, 2005).

Such ideals, in the eyes of both moderate and radical Muslims, represent exactly those behaviors which are forbidden by Allah in the Koran and the Hadiths (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006). Due to the gravity with which radical and even some moderate Muslims perceive these threats to the religion of Islam; they claim that the need for self-defense through jihad has never been greater (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006). Islamic religious scholars and experts such as Jamal Badawi claim that violence or jihad is only practiced when it becomes necessary to protect the religion of Islam from extreme persecution and oppression. According to the definitions provided by these experts and
religious scholars regarding what exactly constitutes the persecution and oppression of Islam, any nation, group, and individual who does not regard Islam as the supreme religion and/or engages in any behavior or action forbidden in the Koran and Hadiths is a valid target for jihad (Ali, 1935; Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; El-Hussieni, 2008; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Murawiec, 2008; Spencer, 2006). These arguments which claim that jihad today has been misunderstood simply confirm that violence is in fact practiced as a religious obligation and is considered a necessary and justifiable solution for the protection of the religion of Islam, and is a practice that can be traced back to the religion’s origins in the Arabian Peninsula.

Overall, this analysis of the Koran and the most commonly utilized arguments intended to disclaim the existence of the fundamental role of violence in Islam, suggest that violence (jihad) does in fact play a significant and religiously influenced function in the practice of the Islamic religion. The passages of scripture discussed throughout this study show that the practice of violence is an essential element of spreading Islam to non-Muslims, demonstrating total commitment to the service of Allah, and securing passage into paradise. Secondly, the Islamic doctrine of Nakesh allowed for the adoption of violence. According to the radical Islamic movement this concept calls for the use of violence to replace the previous attitude of peace and tolerance towards non-Muslims. Nakesh explains the shift away from the use of peace and tolerance, which was practiced during Muhammad’s time in Mecca at the birth of Islam, and towards the establishment
and solidification of violence as a religious obligation necessary in spreading and protecting the religion of Islam. In addition to the historical precedent for violence discussed in the first part of this study, this religious evidence suggests, as the radical Islamic movement has claimed, that violence has been and continues to exist as a fundamental religious and traditional obligation necessary for the proper adherence to the will of Allah and Islam.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This study consists of the qualitative analysis of historical primary and secondary source materials as well as an examination of translated primary source religious texts from the Islamic faith. Historical research examines the relationships between past issues, extending beyond simple facts, events, and figures (Berg, 2001; Berg, 2009; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Furthermore, historical research examines how past issues influenced the relationships of their time, as well as how that influence extends to present and future relationships (Berg, 2001; Berg, 2009; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The methodology used in this investigation is consistent with current practices in historical research. In order to analyze the historical role of violence in the spread, protection, and purification of Islam this study utilizes two key bodies of evidence. The first examines historical literature and records that not only give accounts of early Islamic leaders, but also detail the events which led to the early uses and further development of violence in the practice of Islam. The goal in examining these historical figures and events is to determine if violence plays a historical role in the practice of Islam. The second body of evidence consists primarily of those verses in the Koran, Islam’s most authoritative religious document, which relate to the practice of violence, but also includes some analysis of the Hadiths and studies done by several Islamic religious experts. The analysis of these Islamic scriptures examines those verses which instruct and encourage the use of violence in the practice of Islam and thus provide theological support for jihad. The purpose in investigating these verses is to examine the religious significance of violence in the practice of Islam. The
common belief today is that the radical Islamic movement has essentially hijacked Islam and its peaceful nature. This study disagrees with this common assumption, asserting that there is a historical and theological foundation for the practice of violence in Islam today. This assertion will be tested by examining the historical literature and scriptural or theological evidence in the religion of Islam as it relates to the importance of jihad or violence against non-Muslims.

The analysis of the historical literature examines the first four leaders of the Islamic religion and community: the prophet Muhammad, the first Caliph Abu Bakr, the second Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, and finally the third Caliph Uthman ibn Affan. These first four authoritative figures of the early Islamic community are commonly believed, by moderate and radical Muslims alike, to be the most revered and influential leaders throughout Islamic history. All Muslims view these historical leaders as examples to follow in their own lives today. Moreover, the modern radical Islamic movement, by engaging in jihad and acts of terrorism throughout the world, claims to be following in the footsteps of these revered historical leaders. Historical sources were selected for having two or more chapters detailing these early Islamic events or the specific periods of leadership for one or more of the first four leaders examined in this study. The periods of leadership for each of these individuals displays the steady development of the important religious practice of jihad in relation to the spread, protection, and purification of Islam. For these reasons, this study investigates these authoritative figures and their respective periods of leadership in Islamic history in a search for evidence of the historical use of religious violence.
In addition to examining these four Islamic leaders, this study examines how the concept and practice of Islamic jihad was established and developed through several key military engagements during the leadership of the prophet Muhammad, and continued to develop during the leadership of his successors. This study excludes the instances during this same time period where non-Muslims willingly converted or accepted Islamic authority as such behavior did not necessitate the use of jihad. The early Muslims only exercised jihad against those non-Muslims who resisted conversion or submission to Islam. Only occurrences that used violence are relevant since this study is an examination of violence. These select military engagements are highly relevant to this study since the modern radical Islamic movement uses them as justification for jihad today and as evidence of jihad’s historical and religious significance for spreading the authority and domain of Islam. These radical groups who practice jihad today assert that these historical military engagements are evidence of the importance of practicing violence in situations when Islam is not in control. Examining these historical events and leaders is important for this study because these groups claim that their modern use of jihad is done in exact imitation of the example set forth by the prophet Muhammad and Rightly-Guided Caliphs (Bunt, 2003; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; El-Husseini, 2008; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Phares, 2006; Rosenberg, 2009; Taheri, 1987). According to historical experts and religious scholars these military engagements constitute the establishment and solidification of the important role that jihad plays today (Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Hiro, 2002; Huband, 1998;
Jansen, 1979; Lunde, 2002; Nadwi, 1967; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006). Therefore, a more in-depth look at these early Islamic leaders and their uses of jihad are relevant to the examination of the historical role of violence in the practice and spread of Islam. Such examination will help to facilitate the reevaluation of the modern belief that Islam has always been a religion centered on peace and tolerance.

The second body of evidence in this study focuses largely on the documentation of violence in the Koran, but also includes several specific sections from the Hadiths (the recorded life of the prophet Muhammad), and the analyses of Muslim and non-Muslim Islamic religious scholars. The Hadiths as a whole are a vast collection of writings which record the life, actions, and sayings or revelations of the prophet Muhammad which gives these documents immense religious significance second only to the Koran (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002). The sections taken out of the Hadiths and utilized for the purposes of this study were systematically selected on the basis of their specific examination by two or more authors throughout the literature. The study of the Koran is essential to any examination of Islam because all Muslims have believed throughout history that the Koran holds the instructions necessary for proper living, behavior, and religious adherence in order to earn salvation in the afterlife. All Muslims believe that the Koran is the actual word of Allah (God) which was revealed to the prophet Muhammad through dictation by the angel Gabriel (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). Consequently, Muslims, view the Bible and the Torah as the
word of Allah that has been corrupted by the Christians and Jews, which leads them to believe that the Koran is the only true word of Allah and thus is absolutely perfect in every way (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Esposito Ed., 1999; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Kozlowski, 1991; Lunde, 2002; Peters, 1973). This study examines those verses in the Koran which encouraged or instructed the practice of violence against non-Muslims in relation to spreading or protecting the religion, and against Muslims for the purpose of purification. The verses which instruct physical violence for the purposes of criminal punishment or domestic abuse have been excluded from this study. Additionally, each verse was systematically selected on the basis of its referral by two or more scholars throughout the literature. In addition to including these instructions for physical violence in the Koran, this study also examines the Islamic religious doctrine of Nakesh or abrogation. Abrogation for the purpose of studying the Koran is the cancelation of one revelation by bringing another newer one which amends or replaces the religious requirements laid out by the older or previous revelation (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Ibrahim, 2010; Spencer, 2006). The examination of the concept of abrogation in the Koran is important because according to the historical order of prophetic revelations from Allah the use of violence abrogated the practice of peaceful tolerance. Each verse examined in this study was collected and stored on a separate list, seen in Appendix B, and organized sequentially by chapter (Sura) and verse number. According to religious scholars, the verses from the Koran utilized in this study constitute the primary religious textual evidence that the modern radical Islamic movement cites to support its views on the
practice of jihad. Additionally, many of these verses are frequently used, by more moderate Muslim and non-Muslim religious experts alike, to provide evidence of the religious importance of violence in Islam. Each verse is discussed by Muslim and non-Muslim Islamic experts numerous times in religious and non-religious sources as evidence of the important and religiously significant role of violence in Islamic fundamentalism. Furthermore, radical Islamic religious leaders, scholars, and experts have used the verses selected for examination in this study as justification for the modern application of jihad also known as Islamic terrorism. Because radical Islamic groups assert that violence, not peace or tolerance, is established in the Koran as a necessary religious obligation, an examination of these verses is essential in order to determine whether or not Islam harbors a fundamental religious use for violence, one which has been present throughout its history.

Limitations

In the examination of the verses taken from the Koran, there are several limitations that must be discussed. Muslims have traditionally believed that the Arabic version of the Koran is the only one that is completely accurate. While there are several highly respected translations in other languages, the strictly traditional viewpoint is that these are more likely to fall prey to corruption and misinterpretation rather than remain the true word of Allah. For the purposes of this examination, the study will utilize the highly respected English translation compiled by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall for each citation of individual verses from the Koran. This particular non-Arabic translation
of the Koran is held in high regard worldwide by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike.

A second limitation that must be addressed is that those verses which instruct the practice of tolerance and peace towards non-Muslims are not included in this study. According to moderate and liberal Muslims and religious leaders, these parts of the Koran are evidence that Islam is a religion of peace which uses violence only as a means of self-defense. Additionally, moderate and liberal Muslims argue that the mention of violence in the Koran is only metaphorical and not literal. However, these verses were excluded because Islamic scholars, religious experts, and radical Muslim leaders point out that these verses, which moderate and liberal Muslims use as evidence against jihad, predate those verses that instruct the use of physical violence in the spread of Islam; consequently, according to the doctrine of Nakesh in the Koran, these verses about peace and tolerance are no longer valid. The Islamic doctrine of Nakesh indicates that all revelations which conflict with previous commandments are to be considered replacements for those earlier revelations. Therefore, those original verses are more suitable to their own separate study and not relevant to the analysis of jihad as a religious obligation in Islam.

Summary

This study will investigate the origins of jihad in Islam in order to find whether it is actually a practice rooted in Islamic history and holy texts, or the result of a radical and militant religious movement twisting the theological meaning behind a benign concept. This study will examine historical and scriptural evidence in order to determine if jihad is
in fact an important religious obligation with support dating back to the time of the
prophet Muhammad and his successors the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. The historical
evidence will consist of the literature which records both the lives of Islam’s most
revered original leaders and the major military engagements which marked the
establishment and further development of jihad. Secondly, the religious evidence will
consist of scriptures from the Koran (displayed in Appendix B), passages from the
Hadiths, and the analyses performed by several Muslim and non-Muslim Islamic scholars
and experts. Determining whether or not radical Islam is in fact Islamic fundamentalism
in its most historically and religiously accurate form will benefit protective agencies, law
enforcement, and the criminal justice system as a whole by enabling a better
understanding of the core beliefs and commitment of jihadist organizations to Islamic
terrorism. Understanding the historical and religious background behind the radical
Islamic movement is critical to identifying, anticipating, and taking decisive action to
prevent Islamic terrorism.
Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The belief of the average person regarding Islam that persists across the United States and throughout the world today is that the religion is built around peace and tolerance. It is important for the sake of developing effective policy for countering Islamic terrorism that the average person remains open to the investigation of the religious and historical significance of violence in Islam. This study examined historical and religious evidence in order to investigate the role of violence in Islam, and to determine whether or not it was an integral part of original Islamic practices. After researching historical and literary evidence relating to violence, this study found that, since Islam’s beginning, violence has actually played a very significant role in spreading Islam across the world, in removing Islam’s persecutors, and even in purifying the Islamic community. The examination of this evidence shows that there is a fundamental historical and religious foundation for the beliefs and practices of the modern radical Islamic movement which idealizes the use of jihad. According to the historical and religious evidence examined throughout this study, modern radical Islam is actually more historically and religiously accurate in its religious practices than any other Islamic group today. This analysis shows the findings of the study as well as discusses implications of this violence for the United States and the modern criminal justice system.

Radical Islam and the continued practice of jihad have quickly become some of the greatest threats ever to face the United States, and all non-Islamic civilization as a whole. The radical Islamic use of jihad has already had a significant impact on the United
States. The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were some of the largest acts of violence on U.S. domestic soil to date, claiming close to 3,000 innocent lives. These modern examples of jihad against non-Muslims show that those Muslims who follow this ideology of radicalism are willing and able to carry out similar acts of violence, today and in the future. According to experts in Islamic terrorism, attacks such as September 11, 2001 are committed for the protection of Islam; terrorists protect Islam and establish its rightful place of dominance in the world by attacking and destroying those who would oppress or persecute Muslims (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Yungher, 2008). The beliefs of the modern radical Islamic movement assert that all true Muslims must imitate every action of the most revered prophet Muhammad and his honored successors as well as interpret the Koran literally by adhering to every valid commandment that it issues (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadawi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). As a result, these groups believe that the performance of jihad against non-Muslims must continue to be their primary religious mission until Islam has been established as the dominant religion and way of life throughout the world, just as their early and most-revered religious leaders conquered the Arabian Peninsula and the surrounding territories. The imitation and literal interpretation of past actions and religious documents are characterized by the use of jihad against non-Muslims today.
Historical Findings

The common belief today is that radical Islam and the physical practice of jihad are modern mutations of what has historically been a peaceful and tolerant religion. Many, including world leaders and policy makers, believe that radical Islam has hijacked and perverted the true nature of Islam, twisting it into an ideology that views violence and killing as important religious practices. However, the historical evidence suggests that these radical Islamic beliefs are not simply evolutions of a once peaceful religion, but rather the modern manifestation of traditional Islamic concepts that are deeply rooted in the religion’s history. Numerous raids, battles, and military campaigns in Islam’s early history show that the practice of physical warfare against non-Muslims is a traditional practice which dates back to the time of the prophet Muhammad; Islam’s first and most revered leader.

History confirms the use of violence in the practices of the early Muslim community. The life and actions of the prophet Muhammad established and affirmed the use of jihad as it is practiced today by fundamentalist groups. The historical evidence shows that violence was first utilized as a means of protecting Islam from persecution and oppression. Following this development, violence also became an essential tool for Islamic religious expansion throughout the Arabian Peninsula and beyond to the surrounding territories of the Middle East, Western Asia, Northern Africa, and parts of Europe. Additionally, the historical evidence shows that violence developed a third use as a tool for purifying or cleansing the Muslim community itself from any weakness.
According to the historical evidence, the prophet Muhammad and the early Muslim community exercised jihad initially to protect themselves and their religion. After Muhammad and his followers established themselves in the city of Medina, the historical accounts show that the initial use of jihad took place during the Battle of Badr where Muslims took revenge on the Quraysh for the persecution the Muslims faced in Mecca before their flight to Medina. Through this event the concept of protecting Islam from oppression and persecution by means of violence developed as an acceptable practice for the Muslim community. Following this engagement was the Battle of Uhud which was initiated by the Quraysh against Muhammad and his followers in retaliation for the Battle of Badr. This battle served to strengthen the belief that violence was an essential part of protecting Islam from persecution and oppression by those who would not accept the religion as their own. Following the Battle of Uhud, the Siege of Medina and subsequent conquest of Mecca served to solidify the use of violence as an important and necessary part to stop the persecution and oppression of Islam and the Muslim community. These events during the life of the prophet Muhammad established violence as the primary means of protecting the religion of Islam from criticism, persecution, and oppression; furthermore, establishing such protections remains a primary function of jihad today.

Radical or fundamentalist Islamic terrorist groups today believe that the United States is an oppressor of Islam; therefore, they feel justified in using jihad against the United States for several reasons. The first reason is that the United States’ largely secular culture, which values the separation of church and state, is an affront to the
Islamic religion because in Islam there is no distinction between the church and the state. The separation between church and state that does exist in the United States therefore oppresses Islam by limiting its authority over the government; in the eyes of Islamic fundamentalists, this separation lessens Islam’s rightful place of authority over both the religious and the political in Muslim life. A second reason for Islamic terrorist groups to believe that the United States is an oppressor of Islam is the country’s support for the modern nation of Israel. Radicals view the United States’ endorsement and support of Israel as a direct act of oppression against Islamic countries and organizations since Israel and the Jewish people have fought against Islamic nations throughout history. A third reason to view the United States as an oppressor of Islam is the people’s right to the freedom of religion since this freedom also limits the supremacy of Islam in the United States by implying that every religion has an equal right to be practiced. The historical evidence found in this study suggests that Islam must be dominant, and that any nation, organization, or individual who does not accept the supremacy of Islam is its oppressor. According to the historical evidence and findings, the early Muslims believed they had a right to use violence against any who would criticize, persecute, oppress, or limit Islam. This belief and practice was established and followed by the prophet Muhammad and the early Muslim community, which according to modern Islamic fundamentalism, justifies jihad against any oppressors of Islam today. This justification therefore impacts not only the safety of the United States, but other nations which do not practice and/or recognize Islam as a religion superior to all others.
The second rationale for the use of violence was the goal of Islamic religious and territorial expansion. Initially this expansion was limited to the Arabian Peninsula and the remaining pagan Arab tribes along with local Jewish or Christian settlements. The historical evidence shows that the Rightly-Guided Caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Khattab, and Uthman ibn Affan each built on the military expansions made by those before them. The practice of violence was critical to this early period of religious and territorial expansion. Any groups that did not accept the options of conversion or submission were attacked until one of two things occurred: they acquiesced and accepted Islam’s superiority or they were destroyed. The first Caliph Abu Bakr completed the conquest of the Arabian Peninsula and began the violent expansion of Islam north into what was then the Byzantine (East Roman) and Sasanian (Persian) Empires. The second Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab continued Islam’s violent expansion by pushing its reach even further north into Syria and parts of Iraq as well as beginning expansion south into Egypt and parts of Northern Africa. Furthermore, the notably less-violent third Caliph Uthman ibn Affan made a point to continue the use of violence in expanding Islamic influence from Morocco to Western Asia and even into the southern reaches of Europe along the Mediterranean coastline. The historical evidence shows that violence played a critical role to almost every expansion of the Islamic religion and was only forgone where Islam encountered no resistance to its authority or religious supremacy. According to the modern radical Islamic movement, this historical evidence provides further justification, through the need to imitate the lives of these revered leaders, for the use of violence or jihad against non-Muslims (individuals, groups, or nations) in general (Bloom & Blair,
2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadawi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Peters, 1973; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987). Historically, violence was utilized by Islam’s most revered leaders to expand the practice and authority of the religion. This historical application influences modern jihadist groups to similarly practice violence against non-Muslims in order to expand and establish Islamic dominance in places such as the United States and other countries where Islam is not seen as the superior religion. To the Islamic terrorist groups of today, like the first Muslims over 1,400 years ago, violence was an important tool for spreading Islamic influence and authority to non-Muslims populations. This use of violence in the spread of Islam also gave rise to its development as a tool for maintaining the internal strength of the Islamic religion.

The practice of violence became an important tool in maintaining the internal strength and cohesion of the Muslim community itself through the concept of purification or cleansing. In this application of violence, the goal was to essentially purge all weaknesses or eliminate possible traitors among the followers of Islam. This third development in the use of violence was first demonstrated by the prophet Muhammad’s immediate successor, the first Caliph Abu Bakr, in the context of launching the Ridda Wars against several Islamic tribes. According to the historical evidence, these tribes sought to maintain their faith in the Islamic religion but practice it according to their unique tribal traditions apart from the Umma (the overall Islamic community). In response to this, the first Caliph Abu Bakr initiated war for the purpose of destroying all the tribes who had separated themselves from the main body of believers. The historical
evidence shows that Abu Bakr systematically destroyed each tribe in order to restore proper adherence to Islam and rid the religion of what he as the primary religious leader after Muhammad’s death, saw as weakness and apostasy. This established the precedent for violence to be used as a means of purifying or cleansing those Muslims who would deviate from the example lived by the prophet Muhammad. It is through this established practice of violent purification that modern fundamentalist Islamic groups justify the jihad against more moderate Muslim nations or groups of people. As a result, suicide bombings and other attacks against liberal and moderate Muslims can be seen in counties such as Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Morocco, Iran, Iraq, and other Islamic nations (Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Rosenberg, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Yungher, 2008). This third development in the expansion and maintenance of Islam is further evidence of the historically established role of violence in the religion.

The lives, writings, and actions of historical Islamic religious leaders affirm the presence and importance of violence in protecting, spreading, and purifying Islam. The practices of today’s radical Islamic movement are consistent with those developed and used by the original Muslim community and its leaders. This means common understanding of the religion of Islam being centered on peace and tolerance is incorrect. Adhering to this misconception of the Islamic religion threatens the United States and other non-Islamic nations by fostering an attitude of inattentiveness in accurately identifying terrorist activity. Islam has held the practice of violence as a significant tenant
since this early period of its history. Muslims who engage in jihad today are following in the footsteps of their religion’s greatest and most revered leaders. It is an inaccuracy to claim that the Islamic terrorist groups of today have “radicalized” the religion of Islam. The findings of this analysis of the historical evidence suggest that the performance of jihad today is validated as a traditional Islamic practice by historical precedent dating back hundreds years to the original Islamic community and leaders. These groups responsible for twisting a once peaceful religion are actually the historically-accurate modern extension of traditional Islam. For the United States and criminal justice in general this has several significant implications which will be discussed later in this section.

Religious Findings

In addition to the analysis of historical evidence, this study also investigated the Koran, the most authoritative power on earth for followers of the Islamic religion, for religious support of the practice of violence. This analysis found that verses in the Koran explicitly command the use and continual practice of violence against all non-Muslims until Islam has been established as the dominant religion throughout the world. Additionally, several passages found in the Hadiths, which are vast collections of writings recording the life, sayings, and actions of the prophet Muhammad during his time as leader of the early Islamic community, were also found to support and encourage violence against non-Muslims as a religious obligation. Furthermore, numerous experts agree that today’s Islamic terrorist groups are not fringe groups who have twisted the definition of jihad found in the Koran and “hijacked” a peaceful religion in order to suit
their own beliefs. Expert analysis and personal testimony show that these groups actually practice a historically and religiously accurate Islam by engaging in violence against non-Muslims or jihad (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Ankerberg & Weldon, 1991; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Clarke, 2004; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Geisler & Saleeb, 2002; Jansen, 1979; Manji, 2003; Nadawi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Rosenberg, 2009; Saleem & Vincent, 2009; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). The practice of violence in the religion of Islam has explicit doctrinal foundations. For militant jihadist organizations, this fact legitimizes the use of violence against non-Muslims by providing what they view as firm and tangible religious evidence supporting violence in Islam.

The theological evidence found in the Koran and the Hadiths support the use of violence in several specific ways. First, jihad is encouraged and commanded in some passages of scripture as a means of spreading Islam to non-Muslims by forcing conversion or submission. Secondly, this study found evidence supporting the use of jihad as a means of demonstrating the loyalty and commitment of Muslims to the religion of Islam. Additionally it was used as a tool for cleansing or purifying the Muslim community itself from weakness or traitors. Finally, this study also found evidence supporting the use and continued practice of violence as a method of securing assured access to paradise in the afterlife. These findings suggest that violence or the practice of jihad, in addition to hundreds of years of historical precedent, is supported by Islam’s most authoritative religious documents as a significant religious component for following the religion of Islam.
The Koran and Hadiths establish the importance of violence in the religion of Islam; the Islamic terrorist organizations of today understand and follow these instructions exactly as they are written in Islam’s most authoritative religious document. The passages of scripture from the Koran that were examined as evidence can be found in Appendix B. They affirm that the use of violence against non-Muslims is an essential religious component incumbent on all true Muslims for the purpose of spreading Islam, protecting Islam from oppression, purifying the Muslim Umma or community or testing Muslims’ faith, and securing access to paradise.

Implications of Findings

Understanding the historical and religious foundations of violence in Islam is an important first step today for the United States in countering Islamic terrorism and the jihadist threat both at home and abroad. The historical and religious evidence examined in this study shows that the practice of jihad is an established Islamic tradition which was solidified by both historical developments and religious beliefs dating back to the origins of Islam: the current violence is not the result of a modern radical evolution of a once peaceful practice. According to the evidence, these groups which practice jihad today adhere to one of the most historically and religiously accurate fundamental components of the Islamic religion. This means that these groups do not consist of radicalized Muslims committed to a twisted Islamic concept shaped to benefit a fringe militant belief system. Instead, the evidence supports the position that these groups practice an established fundamental and strictly orthodox version of Islam which values the use of violence against non-Muslim groups and countries such as the United States.
Accordingly, the jihadist groups of today believe that, by engaging in violence, they are doing what is right and necessary according to their historical traditions and in the eyes of their God. Furthermore, that jihadist threat, commonly known as Islamic terrorism, has existed in the same manner since the origins of early Islam. For the United States and criminal justice in general, this means that the jihadist threat to democratic society today is one that has existed in the world for over 1,400 years and will not dissipate over time or as the result of economic sanctions, deportation, or other similar passive techniques. While there is no easy answer or solution which will address this issue succinctly and render the jihadist threat harmless, understanding and acknowledging jihad’s deeply-rooted historical and religious significance in Islam is the first step towards developing a viable solution to the jihadist threat. Current policies which utilize such measures as economic sanctions, deportation, and incarceration only provide short-term solutions to a long-term problem. Such measures and policies address only the followers of this well-established fundamental ideology of orthodox principles and deeply-rooted traditions.

The true source of the Islamic terrorism which threatens the United States today is the fundamentalist ideology itself which continues to thrive and spread despite the number of jihadists brought to justice. The criminal justice system and counter terrorism procedures need to focus on identifying the sources of or places where this fundamentalist ideology exists and is spread in the United States and abroad before the questions of solutions to the problem can be considered. A follower of this ideology which values the use of violence in Islam impedes the freedom of religion in the United States by utilizing fear and force against non-Muslims. In other words, Islamic fundamentalism does not allow
for the free practice of other religions and attacks them wherever possible in the United States and abroad. Therefore, the freedom of religion enjoyed in the United States is not extended to these groups without compromising the freedoms and rights of all other non-Muslim religious groups by leaving them open to possible violence. This fundamentalist Islamic ideology has successfully embedded itself into the multicultural and free society enjoyed in the United States by taking advantage of the many privileges granted to both citizens and immigrants (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Jansen, 1979; Saada & Merrill, 2008; Saleem & Vincent, 2009). The reliable identification of these groups and individuals is the crucial first step in countering and successfully stopping the jihadist threat today in the United States.

Summary of Findings

This study examined historical evidence and religious source material in order to investigate the role of violence in the religion of Islam and its implications for criminal justice. The historical evidence shows three important applications for violence in relation to the religion of Islam. The first application of violence was to protect the Islamic religion and followers from oppression or persecution. This led to traditional beliefs justifying the use of violence wherever Islam was not dominant over all other religions. The second application of violence in relation to Islam was for the purpose of spreading the religion to non-Muslim groups and territories. This development led to precedent justifying the use of violence against individuals, groups, or nations refusing to either convert to Islam or submit to its authority. The final historical application of violence was for the purpose of purifying or cleansing the Muslim community itself. This
practice led to tradition which justified the use of violence against any individual, group, or nation which attempted to change the nature or required practices of Islam and/or which attempted to withdraw from the religion after having previously committed to following Islam. The historical evidence examined in this study traces the development of the use of violence shows to the origins of Islam, suggesting that the concept of jihad used by today’s radical Islamic movement is actually the modern extension of deeply-rooted historical and traditional Islamic practices. An examination of the second main body of evidence, Islamic religious documents, found that the practice of violence is of significant religious importance to following Islam in three main ways. First, passages of scripture in the Koran and Hadiths provide evidence of the important role of violence in establishing what they describe as Islam’s rightful place of dominance by forcing the conversion or submission of non-Muslims. Secondly, passages of scripture also establish the use of violence as an important religious tool for testing and affirming a Muslim’s commitment and faith in Islam and the will of Allah. Finally, the religious documents examined in this study establish the application of violence for the cause of Islam or Allah as a guaranteed method of obtaining access to paradise in the afterlife. The examination of the evidence from Islam’s most authoritative religious documents shows that the beliefs and practices of today’s radical Islamic movement are in actuality a strict adherence to fundamental Islamic religious precepts. Before criminal justice and protective agencies in the United States can develop and implement solutions to the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and the jihadist movement, the ability to recognize and identify this dangerous ideology must be achieved. Understanding the history and
religious doctrine supporting this fundamentalist ideology in the jihadist movement is the first step towards gaining that ability to recognize and identify threats to the United States. In order to begin this process towards understanding the extent and nature of the jihadist movement and its fundamentalist ideology, recognition of the historical and religiously established role of violence dating back to the origins of Islam must be achieved by criminal justice, leaders, and even the general public.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

Radical Islam has been repeatedly misunderstood by leaders, policy-makers, and even the general public of the Western world as angry rhetoric or the “hijacked” evolution of a once peaceful religion. This study examined Islamic historical and religious evidence in order to determine if the practice of violence is a modern phenomenon or if it has played a part in the historical and religious development of the religion since its beginning. This study examined the first four leaders of Islam, and the major military engagements which took place throughout their periods of leadership and led to the development of jihad. Examination of the evidence identified the origins of jihad as a tool for protection from persecution or oppression, Islamic expansion, and the purification or eradication of weakness within the Islamic community itself. Additionally, this study examined the role of violence within Islam’s most authoritative religious document, the Koran, as well as several passages from the Hadiths, a secondary religious source. Further investigation reviewed the analyses conducted by several Islamic religious experts regarding the importance of violence in the Islamic religion. This investigation found that violence has played a significant and highly valued role in the practice of Islam since its beginnings. This investigation examined two respective bodies of evidence in order to examine the origins of violence in Islamic history and religious doctrine. The establishment of violence as an important religious component of Islam which is rooted in history will show that the phenomena of Islamic terrorism today is not
a “hijacked” religious practice or the byproduct of unorthodox militant radicals, but simply the continuation of a foundational Islamic practice.

Findings and Implications

The examination of the evidence over the course of this study found that the practice of violence played a significant part in the early Islamic religion both as a physical means of benefiting the Muslim community and as a religious practice demonstrating loyalty, reverence, and securing access to paradise in the afterlife. Yet, the common belief of leaders, policy makers, and the general public in the United States regarding Islamic terrorism has been that this violence is practiced by fragmented groups of militant fanatics who have essentially “hijacked” a peaceful religion and twisted its precepts to suit their desire for violence. Contrary to this belief, the historical and scriptural evidence examined in this study suggest that these militant fanatics are in actuality, devout traditionalistic followers of orthodox Islam. The historical and scriptural evidence show that violence in Islam has existed in a fundamental and religiously significant capacity since the time of the prophet Muhammad. Furthermore, according to Sayyid Qutb, an Islamic scholar considered by many to be the father of the modern Islamic fundamentalism, true Islam is inseparable from the practice of jihad as physical warfare against non-Muslims in the name of Allah (Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002). Qutb asserts that there could never be any adherence to Islam which would forsake the practice of jihad against non-Muslims because of one fundamental point: any evolution of the Islamic religion which would abandon the practice of violence would by its very nature serve the purposes of what Qutb describes as the pagan-secular culture of the world, by
leaving society free to abandon the one true religion (Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002). In other words, Qutb asserts that any abandonment of jihad would be exactly what the pagan-secular culture would want and therefore it serves their purpose and not Allah’s and must not be tolerated. According to Qutb, Muslims must:

 Immediately eliminate this pagan influence and the heathen pressure on our world. We must overturn this current society with its culture and leadership of infidels. This is our first priority: to shake and change the foundations of heathens. We must destroy whatever conflicts with true Islam. We should get out from under the bondage of what keep us from living in the ways that Allah wants us to live. (Gabriel, 2002, p. 118)

The idea of peace and tolerance, Qutb claims, is a direct threat to the name of Allah and the religion of Islam (Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002). Qutb asserts that the acceptance of peace and tolerance constitutes allowing Islam to remain in a place of equality with or even inferiority to other religions which is unacceptable according to the Koran and the prophet Muhammad (Ali, 1935; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Gauss, 2009; Saada & Merrill, 2008; Spencer, 2006; Taheri, 1876). For this reason, Qutb and other Islamic fundamentalists, claim that the acceptance of peace and tolerance is and will always be a threat or insult to the establishment of Islam’s rightful place of dominance. According to Qutb and other Islamic religious scholars, any Muslim who would abandon the practice of jihad or claim that it is for defensive purposes only, has abdicated his sacred obligation to Allah and must be destroyed alongside the non-Muslims who refuse to convert or submit (Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002). Modern
Islamic religious leaders and scholars concur with Qutb’s assessment of the nature of jihad. Osama bin Laden, Islamic fundamentalist, religious leader, scholar, mastermind behind the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center attacks, and founder of the Al Qaeda Islamic terrorist group writes:

The confrontation that Islam calls for with these godless and apostate regimes [Western civilization, secular Arab nations, etc.] does not know Socratic debates, Platonic ideals, nor Aristotelian diplomacy. But it knows the dialogue of bullets, the ideals of assassination, bombing, and destruction, and the diplomacy of the cannon and machine gun. (Gabriel, 2008, p. 118).

Sayeed Abdul A’la Maududi, the founder of the Islamic fundamentalist group called Jamaat-e-Islami, similarly describes true Islam and jihad by emphasizing the practice of violence as an essential component of adherence to the religion of Islam and the will of Allah:

Islam is a revolutionary faith that comes to destroy any government made by man. Islam doesn’t look for a nation to be in a better condition than another nation. Islam doesn’t care about the land or who owns the land. The goal of Islam is to rule the entire world and submit all of mankind to the faith of Islam. Any nation or power that gets in the way of that goal, Islam will fight and destroy. In order to fulfill that goal, Islam can use every power available every way it can be used to bring worldwide revolution. This is jihad. (Gabriel, 2008, p. 169)

Statements such as these are not rhetoric spouted in anger at the secular non-Muslim world, they are simple facts and objectives stated by the modern Islamic fundamentalist
movement (Ankerberg & Caner, 2009; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Esposito, 1999; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Gauss, 2009; Manji, 2003; Nadawi, 1967; Nasr, 1981; Saada & Merrill, 2008; Spencer, 2006; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2010; Taheri, 1987; Yungher, 2008). These individuals and organizations which the world has deemed “radical” are in actuality, followers of an Islam which is incredibly accurate historically and theologically; their lives are shaped by the same Islamic principles practiced by the prophet Muhammad. Ultimately the conclusions drawn from this examination show that radical Islam is fundamental Islam; jihad is an inherent component of Islam, violence in the name of Allah is inseparable from jihad, and jihad itself includes a strong offensive aspect as well. According to the review of existing literature and the findings of this study, the use of violence in Islam is an essential religious element for all true Muslims and has been so from its origin shortly after the birth of the Islam. Claims made by Islamic terrorist groups which assert their goal to make Islam dominant through violence are grounded in historical and religious evidence. According to these findings, Islamic terrorist groups today have “hijacked” nothing; they are simply continuing a long-standing fundamental element of the Islamic religion. Taken as a whole, the evidence examined in this study shows that violence was an integral and highly valued part of early Islam, and remains so today.

Overall, this investigation found strong historical and religious foundations for the practice of violence in the Islamic faith. The study’s examination of two primary bodies of evidence, two sources of religious and cultural inspiration, greatly enhanced its reliability. Religious instructions and the maintenance of historical practices are highly
valued in the Islamic religion and culture of today, making them ideal for examining the original purpose and development of violence in Islam (Ali, 1935; Bloom & Blair, 2000; Caner & Caner, 2009; Choueiri, 1990; Gabriel, 2002; Hiro, 2002; Lewis, 1993; Lewis, 2003; Lunde, 2002; Manji, 2003; Taheri, 1987). Additionally, future studies could instead focus on only one body of evidence, which could serve to further enhance the depth and detail of the examination, and thus build upon the findings. One area for future examinations to consider is the long history of the Islamic religion. This study was limited in that it only examined the earliest period of Islamic history. Future studies could examine other periods to gain additional evidence about the development of violence in Islam. In the 1,400 years of Islamic history the world has seen the rise and fall of numerous Islamic empires and nations. Future studies could examine the development or maintenance of the practice of violence as it relates to the religion of Islam and its practice anywhere along this timeline. Furthermore, future studies could also compare the practice of violence in early Islam with more modern groups, cultures, or religious sects. The potential and need for future study in this area is great, and will continue to increase in order to enable a better understanding of Islamic violence and terrorism throughout the world today.

The United States and Western civilization in general needs to develop an understanding of Islam which includes violence as an intrinsic and significant component of the religion. There are several ways in which understanding radical Islam as Islamic fundamentalism can be beneficial to the United States and Western civilization as a whole. This viewpoint would increase the overall attentiveness to the threat that Islamic
fundamentalism poses to the United States and the freedoms and privileges enjoyed by its citizens. Organizations such as the United States military, protective agencies, nuclear power, utility organizations, essential resource management, international relations, and even the general public would be better equipped to identify and prevent attacks such as September 11th by developing this better understanding and awareness of the committed militancy of Islamic fundamentalism.

Further developing this understanding of violence or jihad and their integral relationship with the religion of Islam will enhance the ability of the military and protective agencies of the United States to identify and detect terrorist activities and their support networks. It is crucial that such protective agencies have the ability to exercise a high degree of accuracy when identifying and apprehending Islamic terrorists so as to avoid disrupting the lives of innocent Muslim-American citizens. The successful identification and disruption of terrorist activities and financial or logistical support networks necessitates a greater acceptance and understanding of the conclusion that violence is fundamental to Islam, as is jihad. In addition to developing this greater understanding of Islam, United States military and protective agencies must be equipped with the essential tools of surveillance, intelligence-gathering, and profiling overseas and domestically in order to properly assess and identify terrorists, anticipate attacks, and prevent threats. For example, numerous Muslim organizations in the United States which claim charitable and non-profit status have been shown to have financial ties to terrorist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas (Caner & Caner, 2009; Gabriel, 2002; Gabriel, 2006; Gabriel, 2008; Spencer, 2006). Monitoring the activities of such
organizations is acceptable during a state of war in order to assess possible threats to the freedoms and well-being of U.S. citizens, Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

In order to effectively recognize, engage, and neutralize the threat of Islamic terrorism it is imperative that leaders and policy makers understand that violence is historically and religiously significant to Islam. This militant Islamic ideology threatens both Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and fuels a war which rages wherever the fundamentalist Islamic ideology is not established as the supreme religion. Developing a greater understanding of the Islamic religion as a whole, and its inherent practice of violence, will further enhance the abilities of military and protective agencies to decrease and impede opportunities for Islamic fundamentalist organizations to successfully infiltrate, exploit, extort, or attack the United States. As long as the misconception that Islam is a religion of peace continues to be commonplace in the United States the country and its citizens will be vulnerable to attack.

Understanding the historical and religious foundations of violence in Islam is the first step towards developing an effective means of understanding, recognizing, and countering Islamic terrorism today. In examining the relationship between violence and Islam, this study has found that violent Islamic groups do indeed have a legitimate and established historical and scriptural foundation for their practice of violence against non-Muslims. These fundamentalist groups practice a historically and scripturally accurate version of Islam according to the records of the early Islamic community, religious leaders, and the Koran itself. Therefore, the belief that Islam is at its core a religion of peace is incorrect. The evidence and facts as determined in this examination show that
violence is an integral and essential part of the Islamic religion, history, and culture. This conclusion must be considered in order to accurately and effectively assess the current and potential threat of Islamic terrorism today.
APPENDIX A
Definitions and Terms

Al – “the.”
Allah – The God of Islam.
Caliph – The title given to the leaders who succeeded the prophet Muhammad.
Hadith – The reported sayings and actions of the prophet Muhammad, six sets of books.
Ibn – “Son of”
Imam – An Islamic leader, usually one in charge of a specific mosque.
Infidel – One who rejects the teachings of Islam, “unbeliever”, “non-Muslim.”
Islam – “Submission.”
Jannah – “Paradise,” or Heaven in Islam.
Jihad – Holy war against non-Muslims [unbelievers] in the name of Allah.
Jihalyah – “Ignorance,” describes the period of time before the revelation of Islam.
Jizyah – Tax that must be paid by any monotheistic non-Muslim who chooses to keep
his/her own faith instead of accepting Islam.
Koran (Qur’an) – The Islamic holy book.
Madrassa – An Islamic place of learning, primarily focuses on the religion of Islam in
education.
Mecca – Birthplace of the prophet Muhammad and where he received his first revelations
of Islam from the angel Gabriel, located in Saudi Arabia.
Medina – “The Prophet’s City,” where Muhammad and his followers relocated after
persecution in Mecca, located in Saudi Arabia.
Mosque – An Islamic place of worship (church).

Nakesh (Naskh) – The system of interpretation or substitution in the Koran where newer
verses override older verses.

Quraysh – Governing tribe of Mecca and the surrounding area during the life of the
prophet Muhammad (non-Muslim).

Shariah (Sharia) – Islamic laws which stipulate the duties of Muslim life.

Sheikh – A title of reverence or respect for an ordained religious leader in Islam.

Shiite – An Islamic sect, “Party of Ali,” believe that Ali ibn Abi Talib was the rightful
successor of the prophet Muhammad.

Sunni – An Islamic sect, believe that Umar ibn al-Khattab was the rightful successor of
the prophet Muhammad.

Surah (Sura) – A chapter of the Koran, 114 in all.

Taqiyya (Kithman) – Islamic doctrine granting the use of deception when dealing with
the enemies of Islam.

Umma – Worldwide Islamic community of believers.
APPENDIX B

Violence in the Koran

These are those verses found in the Koran which instruct, encourage, or relate to the practice of violence and the concept of Nakesh as discussed in this study. The English translation utilized for the purposes of this study was *The Glorious Qur’an*, compiled by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall. The verses are organized by their sequential order as can be found in the actual Koran; by sura (chapter), followed by the verse.

- **Koran, Sura 2:106**: Such of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, we bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is able to do all things? (Pickthall, 2006, p. 34)

- **Koran, Sura 2:191**: And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drive you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Invioable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 41-42)

- **Koran, Sura 2:193**: And fight them [non-Muslims] until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrongdoers. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 42)

- **Koran, Sura 2:216**: Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; though it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye not know. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 44)
• **Koran, Sura 3:157-158**: And what though ye be slain in Allah’s way or die therein? Surely pardon from Allah and mercy are better than all that they amass. What though ye be slain or die, when unto Allah ye are gathered? (Pickthall, 2006, p. 67)

• **Koran, Sura 3:195**: And their Lord hath heard them (and He saith): Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and suffered damage for My cause, and fought and were slain, verily I shall remit their evil deeds from them and verily I shall bring them into Gardens underneath which rivers flow – A reward from Allah. And with Allah is the fairest of rewards. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 70-71)

• **Koran, Sura 4:74**: Let those who fight in the way of Allah, who sell the life of this world for the other. Whoso fighteth in the way of Allah, be he slain or be he victorious, on him We shall bestow a vast reward. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 79)

• **Koran, Sura 4:75**: How should ye not fight for the cause of Allah and of the feeble among men and of the women and the children who are crying: Our Lord! Bring us forth from out this town of which the people are oppressors! Oh, give us from Thy presence some protecting friend! Oh, give us from Thy presence some defender! (Pickthall, 2006, p. 79)

• **Koran, Sura 4:76**: Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah; and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of idols. So fight the minions of the devil. Lo! The devil’s strategy is ever weak. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 79)
• **Koran, Sura 4:89:** They long that ye should disbelieve even as they disbelieve, that ye may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of Allah; if they turn back (to enmity) then take them and kill them wherever ye find them, and choose no friend nor helper from among them. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 80)

• **Koran, Sura 4:95-96:** Those of the believers who sit still, other than those who have a (disabling) hurt, are not on an equality with those who strive [fight] in the way of Allah with their wealth and lives. Allah hath conferred on those who strive with their wealth and lives a rank above the sedentary. Unto each Allah hath promised good but He hath bestowed on those who strive a great reward above the sedentary; Degrees of rank from Him, and forgiveness and mercy. Allah is every Forgiving, Merciful. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 81)

• **Koran, Sura 5:33:** The only reward for those who make war upon Allah and His messenger and strive after corruption in the land will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land. Such will be their degradation in the world, and in the Hereafter theirs will be an awful doom. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 93)

• **Koran, Sura 8:12-13:** When thy Lord inspired the angels, (saying): I am with you. So make those who believe stand firm. I will throw fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Then smite the necks and smite of them each finger. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger [persecution in
Mecca]. Whoso opposeth Allah and His Messenger, (for him) lo! Allah is severe in punishment. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 134)

- **Koran, Sura 8:17:** Ye (Muslims) slew them not, but Allah slew them. And thou (Muhammad) threwest not when thou didst throw, but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair test from Him. Lo! Allah is Hearer, Knower. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 134)

- **Koran, Sura 8:39:** And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is all for Allah. But if they cease, then lo! Allah is seer of what they do.
  (Pickthall, 2006, p. 136)

- **Koran, Sura 8:55:** Lo! The worst of beasts in Allah’s sight are the ungrateful who will not believe. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 137)

- **Koran, Sura 8:57:** If thou comest on them in war, deal with them so as to strike fear in those who are behind them, that haply they may remember.
  (Pickthall, 2006, p. 137)

- **Koran, Sura 8:59:** And let not those who disbelieve suppose that they can outstrip (Allah’s purpose) Lo! They cannot escape. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 137)

- **Koran, Sura 8:60:** Make ready for them all thou canst of (armed) force and of horses tethered, that thereby ye may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others beside them whom ye know not. Allah knoweth them.
  WHATSOEVER ye spend in the way of Allah it will be repaid to you in full, and ye will not be wronged. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 137-138)
• **Koran, Sura 8:65:** O Prophet, Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred steadfast they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they (the disbelievers) are a folk without intelligence (Pickthall, 2006, p. 138)

• **Koran, Sura 8:67:** It is not for any Prophet to have captives until he hath made slaughter in the land. Ye desire the lure of this world and Allah desireth (for you) the Hereafter, and Allah is Mighty, Wise. (Picthall, 2006, p. 138)

• **Koran, Sura 9:5:** Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 140)

• **Koran, Sura 9:14:** Fight them! Allah will chastise them at your hands, and He will lay them low and give you victory over them, and he will heal the breasts of folk who are believers. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 141)

• **Koran, Sura 9:29:** Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah not the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His Messenger, and follow not the religion of truth [Islam], until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 142)
• **Koran, Sura 9:123:** O ye who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allah is with those who keep their duty (unto Him). (Pickthall, 2006, p. 151)

• **Koran, Sura 16:101:** And when We put a revelation in place of (another) revelation,-and Allah knowest best what He revealeth-they say: Lo! Thou art but inventing. Most of them know not. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 197)

• **Koran, Sura 17:33:** And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his heir, but let him not commit excess in slaying. Lo! He will be helped. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 202)

• **Koran, Sura 25:52:** So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them herewith with a great endeavor. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 259).

• **Koran, Sura 47:4:** Now when ye meet in battle those who disbelieve, then it is smiting of the necks until, when ye have routed them, then making fast of bonds; and afterward either grace or ransom till the war lay down its burdens. That (is the ordinance). And if Allah willed He could have punished them (without you) but (thus it is ordained) that He may try some of you by means of others. And those who are slain in the way of Allah, He rendereth not their actions vain. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 360)

• **Koran, Sura 60:9:** Allah forbiddeth you only those who warred against you on account of religion and have driven you out from your homes and helped to
drive you out, that ye make friends of them. Whosoever maketh friends of them – (All) such are wrongdoers. (Pickthall, 2006, p. 395)
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