

A HERMENEUTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF *JIHĀD*  
THROUGH ITS HISTORICAL CONTINGENCIES

BY

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to critique existing academic hermeneutic models for understanding the concept of jihād in Islāmic tradition and to propose a new model that accounts for the entirety of the historical data - the Qur’ān, the Aḥādīth, the Sīrah, and early Muslim views on jihād. The research begins by presenting three models for interpreting jihād: (1) jihād as praxis, (2) jihād as modality, and (3) jihād as theme. The praxis and modality models are analyzed with reference to their notable proponents, and they are determined to be unable to sufficiently explain important sets of historical texts. The theme model is further divided into two types: (1) Muslim supremacy, and (2) Jus ad bellum ("justice to war"). The study rejects the model of Muslim supremacy and instead favors the model of jus ad bellum. This model is then applied to the primary source material - the Qur’ān, Aḥādīth, and Sīrah. The research concludes that Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.) understood that the justification for war in Islām is intended to be as a response to aggression and protection of fundamental rights, and proposes the definition of jihad as “the struggle for the self-preservation of Islām.” Following sections consider this model as it relates to two significant historical figures: (1) Taqī al-Dīn ibn Taymīyah, who lived in a turbulent moment of the classical period, and (2) Abū al-A‘lá Maudoodi, who likewise experienced the unrest of the colonial and postcolonial transitions. By situating the extracted definition of jihād in their historical contexts, the meaning is found to be consistent though with slight modifications considering evolving understandings of citizenship and loyalty. This definition of jihād reconciles its various facets, political and spiritual, across historical contexts in a way that is coherent and true to its spirit of preservation rather than destruction. The final section offers concluding remarks, suggesting possible uses of this research in future studies and sociopolitical analyses. Special attention is focused on resolving contemporary European and American Islāmophobia through re-education on the concept of jihād and its practical applications.

## مُلخَصُ البَحْثِ

يهدف هذا البحث إلى نقض بعض الأطروحات الأكاديمية المعاصرة التي تناولت مفهوم الجهاد في التراث الإسلامي، ويسعى إلى عرض صيغة جديدة لإدراك مفهوم الجهاد على نحو أكثر شمولية يستوعب جميع المعطيات التاريخية، متناولاً مصادرها من القرآن والحديث والسيرة ومفاهيم الجهاد عند المسلمين الأوائل؛ يبدأ البحث بعرض ثلاث صيغ (مدارس فكرية) لتفسير الجهاد؛ هي: الجهاد العملي، والجهاد وسيلةً، والجهاد غايةً، وبدراسة الصيغتين الأوليين وإسنادهما إلى أصحابهما المعتبرين؛ يَصِحُّ أنه لا يُمكن من خلالهما تفسير بعض النصوص التاريخية، في حين أن الصيغة الثالثة يمكن إرجاعها إلى فكرتين رئيسيتين؛ هما: السيادة الإسلامية، والحرب لتحقيق العدالة، ويرفض البحث الفكرة الأولى، وينتصر للثانية؛ لأنها مرتكزة على المصادر الأصلية من القرآن والحديث والسيرة، ثم يخلص البحث إلى أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قد خاض الحروب ردًا على العدوان وحماية للحقوق الأساس؛ لذا يقترح أن يُعرَّفَ الجهاد بأنه "الكفاح من أجل الحفاظ على الإسلام"، وتتناول المباحث الشرح التفصيلي للصيغة الجديدة وعلاقتها بشخصيتين تاريخيتين؛ هما: ابن تيمية الذي عاش في حقبة مضطربة من التاريخ الإسلامي، وأبو الأعلى المودودي الذي عاش أيضًا في حقبة من اضطرابات الاستعمار وما بعده، وتخلص النظرية إلى التعريف المتقدم للجهاد - من خلال السياق التاريخي للرجلين - إلى اتساق واضح في المعنى؛ على الرغم من تباينات يسيرة تتعلق بتطور مفهومي التحنُّس والولاء، وبهذا تتوافق في هذا التعريف جوانبه المتعددة، السياسية والروحانية، عبر السياقات التاريخية المختلفة على نحو دقيق مترابط مع روحه الوقائية لا الهدمية، وتشير خاتمة البحث إلى إمكانية الاستفادة منه في الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية وغيرها، فقد أولى اهتمامًا خاصًا بظاهرة خواف الإسلام (الإسلاموفوبيا) المنتشرة في أمريكا وأوروبا، وطرق معالجتها من خلال توضيح مفهوم الجهاد وتطبيقاته العملية.

## APPROVAL PAGE

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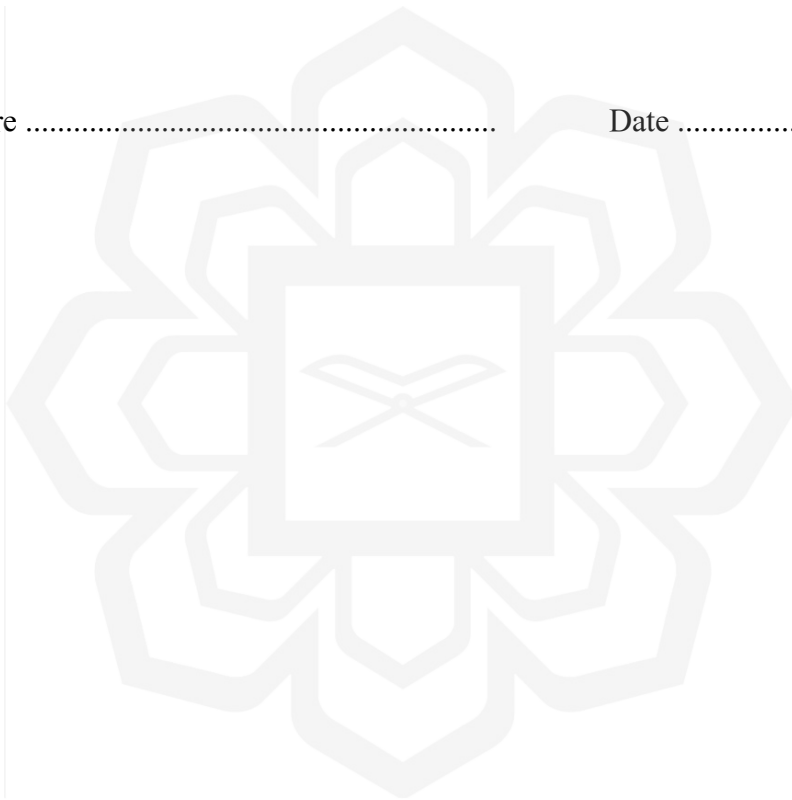
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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## DEDICATION



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, it is my utmost pleasure to dedicate this work to my dear parents and my family, who granted me the gift of their unwavering belief in my ability to accomplish this goal: thank you for your support and patience.

My whole adult life has been an attempt to live out the beautiful qualities that my mother, May Hashem Suleiman, inspired me with, and to live up to the lofty example of my father, Dr. Ahmad Suleiman. May Allah accept this work on behalf of both of them.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

*Jihād*, an Arabic word which root linguistically means ‘to endeavor, to strive,’<sup>1</sup> has become the basis of highly contentious debates in both religious and secular circles regarding its intended role in Islām, resulting in a vast array of misinterpretation, misuse, and confusion in our times. Among the most erroneous opinions heard and amplified in society today is that Islām sanctions unprovoked warfare as a means towards salvation. Case in point, Raymond Ibrahim, a widely published author and public speaker stated:

Whereas first-century Christianity spread via the blood of martyrs, first-century Islām spread through violent conquest and bloodshed. Indeed, from day one to the present—whenever it could—Islām spread through conquest, as evidenced by the fact that the majority of what is now known as the Islāmic world, or Dar al-Islām, was conquered by the sword of Islām. This is a historic fact, attested to by the most authoritative Islāmic historians.<sup>2</sup>

Ibrahim’s opinion is partly reactionary and stems from the emergence of many post-9/11 extremist groups who have hijacked the term jihād to justify their egregious violence in response to oppressive regimes and sociopolitical conflicts. The most recent obvious example of this being the rise of the Islāmic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which – beginning in 2013 – took over large swathes of Iraq and Syria and has committed some of the worst human rights violations in recent history.

However, on the other side of the spectrum are equally reactionary interpretations by some Muslims of what jihād stands for. In response to the negative

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Wehr and J. Milton Cowan, *Arabic-English Dictionary: The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (English and Arabic Edition)*, 4th ed. (Urbana: Spoken Language Services, 1993), 168.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Ibrahim, “Are Judaism and Christianity as Violent as Islam?” *Middle East Forum*, June, 1, 2009, <http://www.meforum.org/2159/are-judaism-and-christianity-as-violent-as-islam>.

portrayals offered by figures like Ibrahim, many have taken a revisionist approach that removes most historical and doctrinal context from jihād and defines it away from its literal meaning. The resulting interpretation is that jihād is exclusively an inner struggle that does not necessitate physical warfare of any kind. An example of this understanding being widely adopted can be seen in Lima Sanneh's land mark study of the West African Sufi tradition of *jihād* entitled, *Beyond Jihad: The Pacifist Tradition in West African Islām*.<sup>3</sup>

That said, there have also been efforts outside of these extremes to define a doctrine of jihād, but unfortunately no coherent or objective methodology has been reached or widely-accepted, resulting in further confusion among laypeople.

To resolve the dilemma of these equally erroneous extremes and lack of clarity, jihād must be understood and explained in light of its original context as it was applied at each moment by the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H) himself as the founder of Islām. Furthermore, the relevant departures in Islāmic history from the Prophetic understanding of jihād must also be given due consideration. The Qur'ān states that the religion was completed with the Prophet (P.B.U.H) indicating that all evolving concepts had reached their final pristine forms. Islāmic tradition eschews 'innovations' in religion, which is to make arbitrary changes to core religious practices and concepts. Yet like many other complex subjects of creed and jurisprudence, jihād took on radically different forms in each of the first three centuries following the departure of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.); almost all subsequent framings of the concept had its own share of biases implanted by the apparatus of state

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<sup>3</sup> Lima Sanneh, *Beyond Jihad: The Pacifist Tradition in West African Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

power, Islāmic legal schools of thought (*madhā'hib*), and debates among Qur'ānic exegetes (*mufasssīrūn*). As David Cook notes:

The juridical definition, of course, has been a major force in shaping the reactions of Muslims towards war over the centuries, but it would be rash to assume that it has been the only one. [...] The attitudes of the first generations of Muslims towards questions of war and peace were shaped by several factors. Paramount among them were (a) the cultural norms of the pre-Islāmic societies to which they belonged, (b) the attitudes towards war contained, implicitly or explicitly, in the Qur'ān, and (c) the dramatic events in their own lifetimes. All of these factors contributed to the formation of the 'classical' Islāmic conception of war...<sup>4</sup>

Thus, a more holistic and historical approach to the term jihād can be undertaken by focusing on how the concept was understood against the backdrop of specific social and political circumstances during Muslims history that have mediated its meaning. In order to achieve this objective, a thorough review must be conducted of the doctrinal, historical, and legal dimensions of jihād starting with the genesis of the term and its practice in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, to its formative legal applications from this period to the end of the medieval era, and finally revisionary and revival attempts from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

This larger objective entails canvassing a varied genre of texts to recreate a multifaceted understanding of jihād and *shahādah*, or martyrdom, as dynamic discursive terms through time. Such sources include the Qur'ān itself, exegetical works (*tafsīr*), early and late works of *Aḥādīth* which purport to contain the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.), and the excellences of jihād (*faḍa'il al-jihād*) and the excellences of patience (*faḍa'il al-ṣabr*) literatures, which are often not consulted on this topic. Furthermore, the comparison of early and late sources and texts from

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<sup>4</sup> Fred Donner, "The Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War," in *Just War and Jihād: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions (Contributions to the Study of Religion)*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., ed. John Kelsay and James Turner (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 32–33.

these genres allows one to chart both the constancies and changes in the spectrum of meanings and repertoire of activities included under the terms jihād and shahādah. Recovering this broader semantic landscape undermines exclusively martial conceptualizations of both these terms and has important implications for the contemporary period.

Regarding the introduction of jihād in the Islāmic tradition during the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the research begins by documenting the events surrounding the establishment and meaning of the term throughout the ministry of the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H). The research demonstrates, through his ethics, strategy, and deployment of jihād that the purpose of warfare was intended for specific circumstances. This is contrasted to other forms of 7<sup>th</sup> century warfare within and outside the Arabian Peninsula, further demonstrating that at times of conflict Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.) always prioritized a far more humane and peaceful outcome. As stated by Philip Jenkins, "By the standards of the time, which is the 7th century A.D., the laws of war that are laid down by the Qur'ān are actually reasonably humane."<sup>5</sup> It is argued that Muḥammad's (P.B.U.H.) methodology of warfare reformed the practice during his time into a more balanced and morally justified activity intended to secure the lives and values of his community, eventually serving as the roadmap for future generations of Muslim scholars as well.

The doctrine of jihād for the Prophet (P.B.U.H) had multiple dimensions, demonstrated through his personal and collective struggle to improve one's relationship with God and His creation and to spread Islām primarily using non-violent approaches of reconciliation and calling to justice for all of humanity. The Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H) said, "The best jihād in the path of Allāh is a word of

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<sup>5</sup> Barbara Bradley Hagerty, "Is The Bible More Violent Than the Qur'ān?" *National Public Radio (NPR)*, March, 18, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124494788>.

justice in front of an oppressive ruler.”<sup>6</sup> Notice that in this tradition, one of the best acts of jihād is done by words alone, without any fighting involved at all, which further demonstrates that the purpose was, and remains, to achieve these Islāmic objectives through peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and freedom of religion; warfare and combat are a last resort against oppression. The exercise of military force was only as a means of self-defense and strategic deployment within the bounds of an unprecedented code of ethics, a standard revolutionary for its time which protected the rights of women, children, prisoners of war, and even enemy property, to the extent that many who came into the hands of the Muslim armies sought refuge, asylum, and even converted to Islām as a result.

That said, this standard of securing the lives and values of the Muslim community were subsequently understood and practiced by the students and companions of the Prophet himself (P.B.U.H.). For example, Ibn ‘Abbās, perhaps the first major exegete of the Qur’ān, reportedly stated, “The best jihād is to build a mosque and therein to teach the Qur’ān, Sunnah, and religious understanding (*fiqh*).”<sup>7</sup> The meaning of *jihād* to them was not exclusively a martial activity; it was also used in its full linguistic sense as a struggle to achieve good for the sake of God, involving such activities as charity, education, and so on.

After the death of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), this understanding of jihād was generally adhered to until the rise of the Umayyad Dynasty (661 – 750 CE<sup>8</sup>). It was at this point that Muslims had defeated and subdued two of the strongest empires in the world at the time: the Byzantium and Sassanids. Now that the Islāmic polity had been

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<sup>6</sup> Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath al-Sijistānī Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Sidon, Lebanon: al-Maktabah al-Ash‘riyah, 1980), 4:124, no. 4344.

<sup>7</sup> Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi‘ li-aḥkām al-Qur’an* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutūb al-Miṣriyah, 1964), 8:296, verse 9:122.

<sup>8</sup> All dates of empires and historical figures will be listed according to the Common Era (CE) unless otherwise noted.

established and provided relative security to its inhabitants, the doctrine of *jihād* began to change in relation to these new conditions, with statesmen and scholars alike adopting a more forward-looking approach to future threats to the stability of the empire. As such, the expansion and strengthening of the state became paramount and *jihād* became a means to retain the hard-fought security of previous generations. Asma Afsaruddin states:

Early jurists not aligned with official circles, like Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161/778) and Hijazi scholars like ‘Ata’ b. Abi Rabah, Abū Salama b. ‘Abd al-Rahman (d. between 94–104/712–722) and ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar, were of the opinion that *jihād* was primarily defensive, and that only the defensive *jihād* may be considered obligatory on the individual. However, Syrian jurists like al-Awza‘i (d. 157/773) and Makhul al-Shami (d. between 112/730–119/737) who were close to the Umayyads, held the view that even aggressive war may be considered obligatory. No doubt this last group was influenced by the fact that the Syrian Umayyads during his time were engaged in border warfare with the Byzantines and there was a perceived need to justify these hostilities on a theological and legal basis. It would not be an exaggeration to state that expressing support for expansionist war at this time (the Umayyad period) was to proclaim one’s support for the existing government and its policies. [...] By the early part of the ‘Abbāsīd period (750–1258), roughly mid-late 2nd/8th century, the military aspect of *jihād* became foregrounded over other spiritual and nonmilitant significations of this term in juridical and official circles. *Jihad* from this period on would progressively be conflated with *qital* (“fighting”), collapsing the distinction that the Qur’an maintains between the two.<sup>9</sup>

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the rise of colonial European states and the subsequent pushback against Muslim expansionism, the nature of *jihād* became a focal point of discussion between Islāmic scholars and non-Muslims alike, which cannot be rightly divorced from its context of support or resistance to European colonialism. As Michael Bonner notes, “Many of these modern arguments over historiography, and over the rise of Islām and the origins of *jihād* more generally, began in the nineteenth and the earlier twentieth centuries among European academic specialists in the study

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<sup>9</sup> Asma Afsaruddin, “*Jihād and Martyrdom in Islamic Thought and History*,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 9, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.46>.

of the East, often referred to as the orientalists. Their involvement in the colonial project has been much discussed.”<sup>10</sup> Muḥammad’s (P.B.U.H.) military career, the mentions of jihād in the Qur’ān, and his traditions, form the foundation for most judgments about his mission. Islām is either a religion of peace or war depending on which interpretation of the messenger and message is followed or emphasized, sometimes selectively. That said, it is not surprising that Orientalists generally construed jihād as primarily militaristic, perhaps not only to justify the subjugation of Muslim societies by European powers, but also as a means to justify their own military doctrines.

When discussing the contemporary period, we must begin with the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, when the Muslim world – for the first time in its history – has not been ruled by any central political administration (i.e. Caliphate). As a result, the understanding of jihād has once again evolved to accommodate the changing political and intellectual landscape, some taking more extreme views based on anachronistic perceptions or those removed from history all-together, and others still attempting to determine what the doctrine of jihād entails.

The research challenges not only the extreme views emanating from the confusion and discord of the contemporary period, but to offer an objective and holistic means towards understanding jihād for future generations.

## **1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this study are the following:

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<sup>10</sup> Michael David Bonner, *Jihād in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 16.

1. To comprehend the historical context and original understanding of the concept of jihād during the life of the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.) and his companions by examining the consistency of the Prophetic implementation of jihād in light of his own changing circumstances.
2. To comprehend the historical contexts behind the understanding of jihād during the post-Prophetic era of Islām (9<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries) and how the political and social climate during this time affected and influenced that understanding by examining the thought of Ibn Taymīyah in response to the aggression of the Mongols.
3. To comprehend the historical contexts behind the understanding of jihād during the Modern-Contemporary period of Islām (19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries) and how the political and social climate during this time has affected and influenced that understanding by examining the thought of Abū al-A‘lá Maudoodi which has set the stage for many influential interpretations of jihād in the modern era.
4. To provide a sound understanding of the concept of jihād through an objective methodology that gathers these historical circumstances, contexts, and biases holistically into a definitive understanding of the concept of jihād which can be used for future research endeavors.

### **1.1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Due to a lack of coherently agreed-upon scholarship surrounding the concept of jihād in the contemporary period, the world has been left with reactionary theories by independent researchers outside the realm of traditional scholarship and peer-review. For example, Andrew Bostom, an associate professor of medicine at Brown

University – by no means an expert on Islāmic or Middle Eastern Studies – has published numerous articles and books on the subject of jihād, such as *The Legacy of Jihad: Islāmic Holy-War and the Fate of Non-Muslims*, where he argues his central thesis:

In fact, the consensus view of orthodox Islāmic jurisprudence regarding *jihād*, since its formulation during the eighth and ninth centuries, through the current era, is that non-Muslims peacefully going about their lives – from the Khaybar farmers whom Muḥammad ordered attacked in 628 to those sitting in the World Trade Center[s] on September 11, 2001 – are “muba’a,” licit [...] And these innocent noncombatants can be killed, and have always been killed, with impunity...<sup>11</sup>

Likewise, ISIS follows the same interpretation, justifying their indiscriminate killing on the pretext that war is conducted against others simply by virtue of disbelief. In their now (in)famous and retired propaganda magazine, *Dabiq*, in an article entitled, “Why We Hate You and Why We Fight You,” they provide their reasoning behind their acts of violence:

We hate you, first and foremost, because you are disbelievers... Furthermore, just as your disbelief is the primary reason we hate you, your disbelief is the primary reason we fight you, as we have been commanded to fight the disbelievers until they submit to the authority of Islām, either by becoming Muslims, or by paying jizyah – for those afforded this option – and living in humiliation under the rule of the Muslims.<sup>12</sup>

Despite being from two different ideological perspectives, both this lay author and ISIS extremists have a similar reactionary interpretation regarding the subject of jihād – they have removed the formative conception from its historical contexts and applied it to their own time without any regard to changing conditions. As such, their views are based on an ignorant and narrow perception of history and Islāmic doctrine.

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<sup>11</sup> Andrew G. Bostom, *Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2008), iv–v.

<sup>12</sup> ISIS (Islamic State in Syria), “Why We Hate You and Why We Fight You,” *Dabiq*, no. 15, 2016, 31, <http://clarionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/islamic-state-magazine-dabiq-fifteen-breaking-the-cross.pdf>.

It is because of this lack of education and proper understanding of jihād from the Islāmic tradition, that both Islāmophobes, or anti-Muslim ideologues, and extremists alike can support each other's arguments and lay fertile intellectual ground for their future followers. Therefore, it is important that an objective and coherent understanding of jihād be provided in a time when such confusion leads to these extremes: one of anti-Muslim hatred and persecution, and the other of terrorism and violence.

### **1.1.2 Research Questions**

This research responds to the following questions:

1. What was the historical context and original understanding behind the meaning and practice of jihād as implemented by the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H) and his companions?
2. What were the contexts behind the formative legalities and application of jihād during the post-Prophetic era?
3. What were the contexts behind the Modern-Contemporary period's understanding of jihād from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward, and how did the political and social climate during this time affect that understanding?
4. Is there an objective model of jihād that can be provided, which is rooted in authentic Islamic scholarship, that coherently defines and provides a roadmap for future applications and research in an ever-changing world?

### **1.1.3 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this research cannot be overstated. Firstly, the most important impact this research will have is in establishing an objective understanding of jihād, as

opposed to the more reactionary views surrounding the concept today. Rather than rely on sources bound to a specific time period or school of thought, the research attempts to transcend the limitations of previous efforts to define the concept of jihād by offering a coherent and holistic understanding which takes into account both the biases and circumstances surrounding Muslims in their specific periods and cultures, as well as the common thread tying them all together.

Secondly, the research challenges reactionary narratives about jihād, subsequently diluting the influences of Islāmophobes, terrorists, and revisionists alike. By providing an alternative and balanced narrative based in facts derived from a diverse tradition of Islāmic scholarship, absolutist views of jihād as being an aggressive military conquest and those suggesting that it is merely an inner struggle, can be shown as lacking and ultimately undermined.

Thirdly, this can pave the way for future scholars to be able to understand and apply the concept of jihād in accordance with the vastly different circumstances they may face different from our own, with less difficulty and confusion.

Finally, the research serves a need by filling a gap in contemporary studies on the subject of jihād by providing an objective definition and methodology towards understanding the concept. This is relatively innovative considering that past scholars have generally viewed the concept strictly from their own anachronistic biases or a reductionist/reactionary view of history. To the contrary, this research attempts to transcend both these perspectives.

## **1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY**

The research attempts to address the meaning and application of the concept of jihād by analyzing the historical circumstances and biases of Muslims in Islāmic history. In

order to do so, this research needs to focus on the three major periods of spanning 14 centuries of this religious tradition: The Prophetic Period (7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> century), the Formative Period (9<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries), and the Modern-Contemporary Period (18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Century). However, given the impracticality (and perhaps impossibility) of addressing every single period comprehensively, this research will only emphasize the interpretations and practices of three major figures who are representative of these epochs. With regard to the first period, the obvious representative is the Prophet Muḥammad (P.B.U.H.) himself. While additional focus will be given to the practices and understanding of his companions, he will be the main exemplar of this period and will serve as a foundational reference for the rest.

With regard to the Formative Period, much thought was given to whose works would be best to analyze. Honestly, it would be inappropriate to assume that any one scholar could truly encapsulate the entire intellectual tradition of Islām with respect to the concept of jihād, especially given the fact the depth of scholarly disagreement and erudition manifested throughout this vast period of time. As such, a scholar was chosen whom best represents a culmination of the *general* understanding of jihād during this period, as well as one who is most credited for influencing future generations on the subject: the well-known (and even controversial) 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century scholar, Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328). Ibn Taymīyah has been recognized as not only one of the major influences of Islāmic revivalist thought in the contemporary period but has also been accused of being the primary influence behind extremist ideologies (i.e. ISIS). It should come as no surprise, then, that his work would play a central role in this research. More specifically, his Mardin fatwá shall be analyzed, where he gives a legal opinion on the state of warfare with respect to a hybrid situation never-before-seen in the Islāmic world, in which non-believers (i.e.

the Mongols) ruled over the Muslims. His answer to this dilemma – and the nuances he employs in explaining the nature of warfare – will be especially beneficial to this research and its objectives.

With respect to the Modern-Contemporary Period, it was slightly less difficult to find a scholar who best represents this epoch. Perhaps the most erudite of the modern Muslim intellectuals with regard to the concept of jihād was the founder of the largest Asian Islāmic political organization, Jamaat e-Islaami, Syed Abul ‘Ala Maudoodi (d. 1997), also spelled Maududi or Mawdudi. His work *Jihād in Islām*<sup>13</sup> is perhaps the most comprehensive in scope and attempts to contextualize the concept of jihād in accordance with his own socioeconomic and political circumstances. Given that Maudoodi was responding to the recent fall of the Ottoman Empire and the evasive imperialism of the Western world, his perspective is paramount toward understanding the contexts of the Muslim experience during this era and serves as a sharp contrast to more reactionary (and less scholarly) understandings of jihād. Thinkers that produced or arose out of modern Islamic movements after Maudoodi almost all articulated their ideas of jihād in light of his formulations.

Finally, the research combines the analyses of the aforementioned exemplars and thinkers to showcase thematic similarities which provide an objective understanding of the concept of jihād.

### **1.2.1 Sources of the Research**

This study is fully qualitative and relies on primary and secondary sources surrounding the subject of jihād. Of the primary source material, there are two categories: 1) Islāmic primary sources such as the Qur’ān, Aḥādīth collections, and

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<sup>13</sup> Syed Abul ‘Ala Maudoodi [Maududi], *Jihad in Islam*, trans. Syed Rafatullah Shah (Lahore: n.p., 2017).

Sīrah literature, and 2) Tafsīr and Fiqh works by Islāmic scholars. Both of these may be further divided into Arabic and English translations. Examples within the first category include Ṣafī al-Raḥmān Mubārakfūrī's *Al-Raḥīq al-Makhtūm*, translated into English as *The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet*<sup>14</sup> and Ibn Ishāq's *Life of Muḥammad*, translated by Alfred Guillaume.<sup>15</sup> Examples from the second category would include: Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid*, translated into English as *The Distinguished Jurist Primer*,<sup>16</sup> a 12<sup>th</sup> century manual for Islāmic jurists which elucidates the positions of the four major schools of thought on a variety of subjects, and Ibn al-Qayyim's *Ahkām Ahl al-Dhimma* (*Laws Regarding the Protected People*),<sup>17</sup> a 14<sup>th</sup> century work which details the legalities governing minorities in an Islāmic polity, especially those who have been conquered through war. More importantly, however, will be the works of Ibn Taymīyah and Maudoodi. With regard to the former, Ibn Taymīyah's fatwā on Mardin plays an important role in understanding the nuances of *jihād* and its legal rulings in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, given the complexity of circumstances surrounding the Muslims (i.e. the occupation by the Mongols). His fatwā has been translated in Yahya Michot's *Ibn Taymiyya: Muslims under non-Muslim Rule*.<sup>18</sup> With regard to the latter, Maudoodi's work *Jihād in Islām* is a comprehensive treatise on the subject and how it should be understood in the modern world.

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<sup>14</sup> Ṣafī al-Raḥmān Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raḥeeq al-makhtum (The Sealed Nectar): Biography of the Noble Prophet*, trans. Issam Diab (Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishāq's Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*, trans. Alexander Guillaume (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>16</sup> Ibn Rushd, *The Distinguished Jurist Primer*, vols. 1–2, trans. Imran Nyazee (New York: Garnett Publishing, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Ahkām Ahl al-Dhimma*, ed. Yusūf al-Bakrī and Aḥmad al-'Arārūrī (Dammam: Dār Ramādī li-l-Nashr, 1997).

<sup>18</sup> Yahya Michot, *Ibn Taymiyya: Muslims under Non-Muslim Rule* (Oxford: Interface Publications, 2006).