



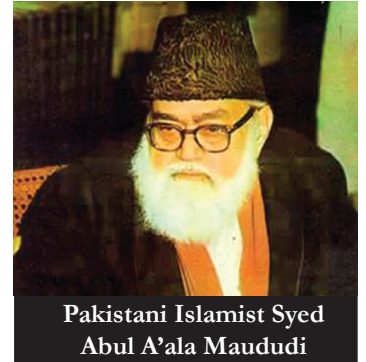
# Terrorism Monitor

*In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror*

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## AQAP DEPUTY LEADER AL-SHIHRI URGES SOLDIERS OF THE HOUSE OF SA'UD TO JOIN JIHAD

A new communiqué from the Saudi Arabian deputy leader of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Abu Sufyan al-Azdi al-Shihri (a.k.a. Sa'id Ali Jabir al-Kathim al-Shihri), urges troops in the service of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to abandon their “apostate” masters and take up arms in the service of jihad (Global Islamic Media Front, November 18).

Al-Shihri was captured on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in December 2001 and sent to the American detention camp at Guantanamo Bay in January 2002. He was released in November 2007 and repatriated to Saudi Arabia, where he completed a government-sponsored rehabilitation program. Following his graduation he immediately traveled to Yemen, where he joined AQAP, quickly becoming its deputy leader under Nasir al-Wuhayshi (a.k.a. Abu Basir), who escaped from a Yemeni prison in 2006.

The AQAP deputy commander says his advice was prepared in response to inquiries that had reached AQAP from members of the Saudi armed forces. These individuals serving the “al-Sa’ud infidel and apostate government” were unsure of whether they should remain in uniform or join the mujahideen in the “Land of Jihad and Preparation in [the Prophet] Muhammad’s Peninsula,” i.e. Yemen. Al-Shihri cites the works of scholars such as Ibn Hajar and Shaykh Ibn Taymiyah in preparing his response, as well as the works of contemporary Jordanian jihad ideologue Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, the former spiritual guide of late al-Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Besides the apostasy of the Saudi rulers, who have allied themselves with “Jews and Crusaders,” al-Shihri also accuses the regime of promoting “moral corruption, permitting the forbidden intermingling of the two sexes and the spread of nakedness and unveiling, and the corruption of society from drugs, alcohol and other types of clear sins...”

Al-Shihri condemns the treatment of Haylah al-Qusair (a.k.a. Umm Rabbab), a rare female al-Qaeda leader who joined the organization in 2004 after her husband was killed. Since her arrest earlier this year, al-Shihri says the “shaykhs of Satan, the scholars of al-Sa’ud” have “spoiled her reputation, sitting with her, debating with her and pressuring her through her daughter Rabbab, who was shackled in chains.”

Al-Shihri also warns of the regional machinations of the Jews of Israel and the “Magian Rafidites,” a pejorative appellation for Iranian Shiites that implies both paganism and religious deviation: “Understand well that the Muslim nation may soon enter a war, the ferocity of which none but Allah knows.” According to the AQAP leader, the Jews seek to rebuild the Temple of Solomon and establish Greater Israel, but have been foiled by the Salafi-Jihadi movements in Gaza. The “Magian Rafidites” of Iran are set on seizing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina according to al-Shihri, who says “the Jews will launch a war against Iran, but the actual battleground will be al-Sham (i.e. Greater Syria, or the Levant) and the Arabian Peninsula.”

Al-Shihri instructs would-be jihadis in the armed forces to focus their attentions on targets in nearby Israel:

Openly declare your disobedience to the commands of the idolaters [i.e. the royal family] and do not direct your weapons at Muslims who have rebelled against the idolaters... Rather, aid them and direct your weapons towards Israel which is only a few kilometers away from you, whose lights can be seen from Haql, an area in the north of the Arabian Peninsula. The pilots among you should seek martyrdom over the skies of Palestine, and those in the navy should point their weapons at the Jews there, earning the honor of martyrdom in the Cause of Allah.

For the soldiers of Saudi Arabia, al-Shihri offers the following advice:

- Form small cells to recruit those in the military and political fields who can aid the cause, especially “those who belong to the Air Force, or are responsible for weapons depots, are officials in the army, Interior Ministry, operations centers or media...”
- Work secretly in creating operational cells to gather intelligence and identify key targets.
- Guards of the government and royal family should emulate the example of Khalid Ahmed Showky al-Islambouli, the Egyptian military officer who played a key role in the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in 1981.
- Employees of the Interior Ministry should gather intelligence from ministry records and pass this along to al-Qaeda.
- Avoid spilling blood unnecessarily, “even if it results in delays in attacking specified targets.”
- Imprisonment should be avoided in favor of martyrdom.

YOWERI MUSEVENI ACCUSES INTERNATIONAL FORCES OF “ENJOYING THEMSELVES IN THE OCEAN” AS UGANDAN TROOPS BATTLE AL-SHABAAB

Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni became the first foreign head of state to visit Somalia in over 20 years when he made a three hour visit to Mogadishu on November 28. Though the president’s visit was a carefully concealed secret until his arrival, it served as confirmation of Museveni’s continuing commitment to the political stabilization of Somalia and the elimination of radical Islamist groups such as al-Shabaab and Hizb al-Islam. Ugandan troops form the majority of the African Union’s peacekeeping force in Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Though many other nations have pledged military support to the mission, only Burundi has actually sent troops to support the Ugandans.

After landing, Museveni travelled to the AMISOM Halane base camp and met with AMISOM commanders, including Ugandan force commander Major General Nathan Mugisha, Burundian deputy commander Major General Cyprian Hakiiza, Ugandan contingent commander Colonel Michael Ondonga and AMISOM’s

Ugandan chief-of-staff Colonel Innocent Oula (*Daily Monitor* [Kampala], November 29). The president also met with Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) president Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmed and the new Prime Minister, Muhammad Abdullahi Muhammad.

With Uganda and Burundi engaged in frontline combat to preserve the imperiled TFG, Museveni was critical to the point of sarcasm in commenting on what he described as a lack of seriousness regarding Somali security issues on the part of the international community, which maintains an expensive deployment of warships off the Somali coast that has had little impact on piracy and virtually no impact on the internal struggle for Somalia:

We want more troops from Uganda or from anywhere in Africa. Uganda is a country of 33 million people, so we could mobilize three million people. But who will pay for it? International support is not enough. [The international community] don't take the Somali problem seriously. They are busy enjoying themselves in the ocean, having a nice time in the ocean. Do you know how much money they spend in the ocean? The pirates who go to the ocean to steal from ships come from land. Have you heard that Somalis have become aquatic? (*Daily Monitor*, November 29; *New Vision* [Kampala], November 29).

AMISOM troops have assumed the burden of defending the TFG from Islamist assaults. A continuing effort to train the TFG's own military force has been largely unsuccessful with a lack of discipline and resources cited as the main problems. Somali information minister Abdirahman Omar Osman recently admitted that the TFG's failure to make regular payments to its troops and the appeal of al-Shabaab's Islamic propaganda have led to defections from TFG forces (*Daily Monitor*, November 7). The TFG mandate expires in August 2011, leaving an uncertain future for Somalia.

Though the Islamists continue to control most of southern Somalia, Ugandan Colonel Michael Ondoga says progress has been made in recent months in Mogadishu, where AMISOM troops have expanded the area under the control of the TFG to roughly 50% of the city, the largest area secured by the peacekeeping force since its deployment three years ago. The next step is to take Mogadishu's Bakara Market (currently in the hands of al-Shabaab), but further offensives are

hampered by insufficient forces to consolidate and hold positions already taken (*New Vision*, November 29). The market was the scene of several days of heavy fighting and shelling that coincided with Museveni's visit (Garowe Online, November 30).

Ugandan diplomats have argued with the UN Security Council (whose chairmanship Uganda will relinquish next month) that an enhanced AMISOM force of 20,000 men would be cheaper and more effective in dealing with piracy than a varied naval presence that lacks a unified leadership (*New Vision*, November 14). Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza has also called for reinforcements and a more aggressive mandate for AMISOM (Garowe Online, November 19). Burundi has just sent an additional battalion to AMISOM, bringing the peacekeeping force up to the original projected strength of 8,000 men for the first time (*Daily Monitor*, November 26).

Museveni's visit was not well received by Hizb al-Islam, whose spokesman Shaykh Muhammad Osman Arus claimed AMISOM was committing genocide in Mogadishu: "[Museveni] came here to witness how the Muslim people are being harmed. He must have felt pleased by the atrocities committed." The shaykh pledged new attacks on AMISOM to demonstrate the Islamists' displeasure (*Africa Review* [Nairobi], November 30).

## Philippine Armed Forces Adopts New Counter-Insurgency Strategy

By Jacob Zenn

The Philippine military's new operational strategy in Mindanao involves the transfer of Marines from Basilan to Central Mindanao as part of a realignment of forces. Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief-of-staff Lieutenant General Ricardo David confirmed on November 4 that a Marine brigade is being transferred from Basilan province, where Abu Sayyaf members are hiding, to Central Mindanao, where the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is located. The combat units moving to Cotabato City are part of the "national maneuver forces" and are thus capable of being deployed anywhere in the Philippines (GMA News TV, November 4).

The new counter-insurgency plan is set to be implemented in January 2011. As a result of the plan, the Army will become the dominant force in Basilan. The retirement in November of Wesmincom (Western Mindanao Command) commander Lieutenant General Benjamin Dolorfino, a former Marine commandant, may also pave the way for an Army general to be appointed as the next Commander of Wesmincom. Wesmincom covers the two main Abu Sayyaf hideouts, Basilan and Sulu Provinces, and also Tawi-Tawi Province and the Zamboanga Peninsula.

The rise of kidnapping incidents in Central Mindanao prompted the Cotabato City business community and prominent locals to request the return of the Marines to the area. The Marines were stationed in Cotabato City in 2002, but moved to Basilan in order to conduct an offensive against Abu Sayyaf. AFP chief Ricardo David denies that the transfer of the 1st Marine Brigade back to Central Mindanao represents a shift in operational focus from Abu Sayyaf to the MILF. National Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin maintains that the transfer is a response to requests for more security from local people and that the move has support from religious and government leaders (GMA News TV, November 4).

The transfer of forces to Cotabato City was made possible by the success of the relentless, intelligence-driven military operations that have significantly reduced the threat from Abu Sayyaf in Basilan. According to Lieutenant General Dolorfino, Abu Sayyaf "has been on the run, so many of their leaders have been neutralized"

(*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, November 5). Abu Sayyaf's strength is now estimated at 400 fighters, less than half the 2002 total.

Other insurgent groups in the Philippines are also weakened or in conflict. In Samar, Bicol, Carage, Northern Luzon, Central Luzon and Negros, where the communist New People's Army (NPA) insurgency is still ongoing, the NPA's strength has been reduced from its 25,000 fighters in the 1980s to 5,000 fighters today (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, November 20). In Central Mindanao, the MILF is suffering from factional rivalries and has been fighting with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) since March 2009 (*Zamboanga Today*, July 31).

The new anti-insurgency plan continues the Arroyo-era goal of "finishing off" Abu Sayyaf and other insurgent groups, but the strategy of force is no longer the focus. Lieutenant General Raymundo Ferrer, the new Wesmincom commander, says the "military operation has been shifted to peace and development as a new strategy in addressing the remnants of the militants and the root causes of terrorism in the region." Ferrer says that the AFP is "working on the framework of securing peace and development because development will overcome the problem of insurgencies and quell the threat of terrorism (*Philippine Star*, November 23).

In Basilan, for example, the strategy involves surgical military operations enhanced by civil-military economic development programs that are intended to separate public support from Abu Sayyaf and keep the fighters on the run (*Sun Star* [Zamboanga], May 26). No longer will the AFP engage in large-scale military operations in Basilan or comb the jungles searching for Abu Sayyaf members concealed among the local population. Such operations are "counter-productive" because they lead to large displacements of people and cause locals to have negative perceptions of the military (Asia Times, June 19).

In Central Mindanao, the transfer of troops to Cotabato City may be a way to gain leverage and pressure the MILF to revive negotiations with the government. Talks have stalled since the Supreme Court stopped the government from signing the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) in 2008, which would have expanded the existing Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to an additional 712 villages. President Benigno Aquino III has declared peace talks with the MILF to be a "top priority" and

is trying to bring the MILF back into negotiations (*Philippine Star*, November 1; ABS.CBN News, November 20).

The military developed this new strategy with input from civil society. New aspects of the anti-insurgency plan that were absent in the expiring and much criticized “Bantay Laya” plan (associated with a wave of extrajudicial killings) include greater transparency, an end to human rights violations, the promotion of good governance within local administrations and the AFP, and using less combat in favor of more peaceful tactics (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, November 21). Under the new strategy the military will cease to use the words “destroy,” “neutralize” and “terminate” and instead will refer to “winning the peace.” Armed Forces chief Ricardo David gives his support to the plan because he believes to achieve victory “you have to have a clear human rights advocacy” (GMA News TV, November 16).

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Note:

1. Interview with an official from the Philippine Department of Defense.

## **Trial of Would-Be Assassin Illustrates al-Awlaki’s Influence on the British Jihad**

*By Raffaello Pantucci*

The conclusion in early November of the trial against 21-year-old Roshonara Choudhry, convicted of attempting to murder British member of Parliament Stephen Timms, marked the end of a case that dealt with the importation of the concept of the “lone jihadi” as espoused by American-Yemeni jihad ideologue Anwar al-Awlaki. According to Peter Clarke, the former head of London’s Counter Terrorism Command, Choudhry’s actions highlighted the fact that “we are nowhere near getting the counter-narrative [to jihad] through,” and were described by British police as the first instance in which an al-Qaeda inspired Briton attempted an assassination on British soil (*Guardian*, November 3). [1]

The strange case of Roshonara Choudhry first came to the public’s attention on May 14, 2010, when she walked into MP Stephen Timms’ constituency office for an appointment she had made. Specifying that she had to see the MP rather than an assistant, when she arrived for her appointment Choudhry seemed “anxious” to the security guard working in the office (*Telegraph*, November 2). After a short wait, Mr. Timms came out of his office to greet the young woman, who approached him as though to shake his hand. All dressed in black and wearing traditional Muslim garb, Timms “was a little puzzled because a Muslim woman dressed in that way wouldn’t normally be willing to shake a man’s hand, still less take the initiative to do so” (*Telegraph*, November 2). In fact, as described by Choudhry, the outstretched hand was a ruse: “I walked towards him with my left hand out as if I wanted to shake his hand. Then I pulled the knife out of my bag and I hit him in the stomach with it. I put it in the top part of his stomach like when you punch someone” (*Telegraph*, November 2).

The security guard and one of Timms’ assistants quickly restrained the young girl, and police and ambulance services were summoned. In an interview conducted hours after her arrest, Choudhry was open in describing her desire to die in the course of her action: “I wanted to be a martyr,” since “that’s the best way to die... It’s an Islamic teaching.” [2] Prior to her attack, Choudhry

decided to clear all of her debts, something typical of aspirant Islamist martyrs (*Guardian*, November 2). When asked why she targeted Timms in her attack, Choudhry responded, “I thought that it’s not right that he voted for the declaration of war in Iraq,” adding that the ideas for this path of vengeance came from “listening to lectures by Anwar al-Awlaki” she found on the internet.

Choudhry appears to have been something of a model student, working up from humble beginnings in East London as one of five children of a Bangladeshi tailor. At the time of her attack, the family was largely living off of benefits and monies the children were able to raise through work. Her background did not prevent Choudhry from earning a place at the prestigious King’s College, London, where she studied English and Communications. In her spare time, she volunteered at an Islamic school and was seen as a prize student on course to achieve a first-class degree (the highest level in the British university system) (*Guardian*, November 2).

Sometime during her third and final year, Choudhry underwent a transformation and decided to drop out of her course: “Because King’s College is involved in things where they work against Muslims....they gave an award to [Israeli politician] Shimon Peres and they also have a department for tackling radicalization....So I just didn’t wanna go there anymore...cos it would be against my religion.” By her own account, the path that led her to attacking Timms was set in motion prior to her decision to drop out. She discovered Anwar al-Awlaki’s speeches sometime in November 2009, claiming that she found them through her “own research.” From his lectures she got the idea that “as Muslims we’re all brothers and sisters and we should all look out for each other and we shouldn’t sit back and do nothing while others suffer.” She was particularly taken by al-Awlaki’s speeches as “he explains things really comprehensively and in an interesting way so I thought I could learn a lot from him and I was also surprised at how little I knew about my religion so that motivated me to learn more.”

According to Choudhry, it was a video featuring the late Shaykh Abdullah Azzam (1941-1989) and his instruction that it is “obligatory on everyone [i.e. every Muslim] to defend [Muslim] land” that pushed her into the decision to act sometime in April 2010. At this point she decided to seek revenge on a member of the British parliament who had supported the invasion of Iraq using public information websites and a radical website called RevolutionMuslim.com that provided a

list of MPs who had voted in favor of the Iraq invasion. Timms was specifically chosen because according to websites she had found, “he very strongly agreed with the invasion of Iraq.” Another factor was Choudhry’s own experience of meeting the MP as part of a school trip sometime in 2006 or 2007. What is striking about the choice of Timms is that during this first meeting with the MP, Choudhry recalled a fellow student questioning Timms over his support of the war and of feeling that “she [the student] should be quiet and that she’s embarrassing herself.” Four years later, Choudhry had been radicalized to the point that she was willing to murder the same MP.

In the wake of Choudhry’s arrest, there was a spike of attention in the British media about the radicalizing impact of websites. In a speech in Washington, DC, Security Minister Lady Pauline Neville-Jones raised the issue of YouTube hosting videos by radical preachers and other US websites that hosted material she described as “inciting cold blooded murder” (*Guardian*, November 3). On November 17, British police arrested 23-year-old Bilal Zaheer Ahmand from Dunstall, Wolverhampton for soliciting murder and possessing information likely to be useful to terrorists. The young man was allegedly linked to RevolutionMuslim.com, which published the list of MPs who had voted for the Iraq war and a post which praised Choudhry as a “heroine” (BBC, November 17; *Telegraph*, November 17). Whether Ahmand will be successfully convicted is still in question. A trial in July against Mohammed Gul, a 22-year-old London student who was allegedly uploading radical videos to a website and who was in contact with extremists abroad, concluded with a hung jury and will go to retrial next year (*Romford Recorder*, July 27, 2010; *Daily Mail*, February 24, 2009). For Choudhry, however, the future is clear; on November 3 she was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum of 15 years. She is currently being held as a “Category A” prisoner, meaning she is subject to intrusive strip-search regimes every time someone visits, something she finds demeaning and against her faith and which has, as a result, kept her in isolation since her incarceration (*Guardian*, November 2).

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Notes:

1. Peter Clarke, interview with author, November 2010.

2. Unless otherwise indicated, Choudhry's quotes are taken from her police interview, published by the *Guardian*, November 3, 2010:<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/nov/03/roshonara-choudhry-police-interview>.

Islamiyah al-Muqatilah bi Libya (Libyan Islamic Fighting Group - LIFG), known for its ties to al-Qaeda. In 2009 these discussions led to the release of some of its older members from prison (see *Terrorism Monitor*, June 18, 2009). The distinguishing characteristic of the members who were released was their renunciation of violence in a document that became known as *al-Muraja'at* ("the Revisions"). The Revisions did not change the ultimate goals of these men; rather the document used arguments based on Islamic law to demonstrate that the violent overthrow of Arab and Muslim governments is illegitimate. [1]

In the most recent development, pan-Arab daily *Dar al-Hayat* reported a movement in three Algerian prisons among adherents of "Salafist jihad" to re-examine the use of violence (*Dar al-Hayat*, November 16). If successful, the article suggests, this tentative step in the direction of disarmament might be looking at the LIFG's renunciation as a model. If Algerian jihadists begin to follow in the footsteps of the Egyptian, Saudi and Libyan groups to renounce the violent path of armed jihad against the central government, we could expect to see a further weakening of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). AQIM has already suffered at the hands of Algerian security forces but remains active, especially in the Sahel region, more as kidnappers and bandits than as a revolutionary Islamic movement. This time, however, the attack on AQIM could come as an internal ideological reversal guided by traditional religious authorities. If this effort is successful, it would appear that mainstream Salafist religious leaders are one of the most potent complements to security operations in the struggle against the so-called "Salafi-Jihadis." It is important to note, however, that without strong security operations as leverage, programs leading to revisions would be extremely unlikely, if not impossible. This requirement does not mean that the revisions are ineffective; once jihadists sign such a document, their ideological credibility and motivation to support violence as jihadists diminishes significantly. As this movement of renunciations spreads, we need to review what Salafism means and examine its historical relation to those who call themselves Salafist-Jihadis.

## The Salafist Challenge to al-Qaeda's Jihad

By Michael W.S. Ryan

When commentators analyze Salafism, it is crucial to distinguish between mainstream Salafism and the kind of revolutionary Salafism promoted by al-Qaeda. To do otherwise is to lump together peaceful communities and violent revolutionary jihadists. This distinction has become increasingly important over the last few years as mainstream Salafism has emerged as an important counter to the ideology of violent jihadist groups pledged to follow al-Qaeda. Both Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the wellsprings of both versions of Salafism, have established programs to reunite revolutionary jihadists with the Sunni Muslim mainstream in their respective countries. In the war of ideas both programs have already been successful in educating the Muslim public about the way contemporary violent jihadists have deviated from the tradition they claim to be following. We may have further opportunities to judge the efficacy of these programs because they seem to be spreading. In 2006 Libyan authorities began religious discussions and negotiations with incarcerated members of al-Jama'a al-

### Towards a Definitions of Salafism

Salafism spreads a very broad tent. Trying to frame a definition that captures all who call themselves Salafist is bound to be inaccurate to some extent. A few broad strokes toward a definition are clear. Salafism is a Sunni movement that entails adherence to the example

of the earliest Islamic predecessors, the *Salaf*, usually associated with the earliest generations of Islam. Strict Salafists insist that Islamic law, the Shari'ah, must be based on the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad alone, although Salafists also argue that issues not settled in the sacred traditions may be addressed using human reason. Salafists generally take the position that traditions created after the Salaf are innovations and therefore forbidden. This results in most Salafists opposing Shi'ism and taking a dark view of the mystical tradition in Islam, Sufism. Salafist scholars of all stripes look to the great fourteenth century religious scholar Ibn Taymiyya for inspiration. It has been argued, however, that Salafism as a theological position does not require taking any specific political position. [2]

The modern Salafist trend has two parallel points of origin - Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In Saudi Arabia and most of the Arab states of the Gulf (with the notable exception of Shi'ite majority Bahrain), Salafism is the majority's preferred version of Islam. In the Arabian Peninsula and especially in Saudi Arabia, Salafism can be traced to the teachings of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792). This version of Salafism was and is primarily reformist. It is not revolutionary. Usually, the term "Wahhabism" is used to characterize Salafism in Saudi Arabia. Saudis consider this term pejorative because it makes mainstream religion of Saudi Arabia sound like a cult centered on one man. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was indeed important in establishing the majority approach to theology within the Arabian Peninsula. His reformist approach, however, like Ibn Taymiyya's, was meant to be a rational enterprise that opposed superstition as well as innovation in religion. His view did narrow the field concerning who should be considered a Muslim, but his focus was the chaotic eighteenth century tribal rivalry within the Arabian Peninsula, not the world. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's theology thus does not support al-Qaeda's ideology of global jihad. His heirs today are the religious scholars who are the pillars of the modern Saudi state and al-Qaeda's enemies. The Saudi population overwhelmingly prefers its religious institutions and scholars to the revolutionary Salafism of Bin Laden. Al-Qaeda attacks these mainstream Saudi clerics with the vitriol they usually reserve for the United States.

In a parallel movement, Salafism was rediscovered more than a century later in Egypt. The term Salafism was used by Rashid Rida (1865-1935) to describe the thoughts

of his mentor, Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). The Salafism of Muhammad Abduh, like that of his Arabian predecessor, was at its base rational. If al-Wahhab was on the conservative end of the Salafist spectrum, Abduh was at the liberal end. Abduh, moreover, was forced by circumstances to be an internationalist. He grew up in a vastly different cosmopolitan milieu in which Egyptians were confronted daily with the material superiority of European culture. Abduh's Salafism aimed at an authentic modernization of Egypt and the Near East based on a reformed interpretation of Islam. Abduh also wanted to show how Islam can be reconciled with modern thought. [3] In Abduh and Rida's thinking, the reason that the Middle East had fallen behind Europe in science and quality of life was that Muslims had lost the true meaning and basis of Islam and had turned instead to traditions that were little more than superstitions. Thinkers like Abduh were appalled at colonial-era Egyptian society, which they believed tried to imitate Europeans. Abduh's version of Salafism urged Egyptians and other Muslims to rely on their Islamic roots to modernize on a culturally authentic basis.

Over time Abduh's followers became more rigid, but education was always at the center of their modernizing agenda. An heir to this stream of thought was the founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949), who was not anti-Western as much as he was, like Abduh, against the "blind emulation" of European society. [4] One can argue whether al-Banna was Salafist or not, but as part of his political agenda he created an Islamic education project that was inspired in part by the approach of the Jesuits to education. [5] Because of the growing political importance of the Brotherhood and al-Banna's sometimes violent resistance to the colonial government, he was assassinated in 1949. The Brotherhood continued to flourish despite regular crackdowns by the Egyptian Government. During one of these crackdowns, King Faysal of Saudi Arabia opened the doors of Saudi Arabia to the Muslim Brothers, who arrived to help create the education system of Saudi Arabia and to participate in the Saudi state's development of pan-Islamic charities and educational programs. Both the Muslim Brotherhood and the state religious scholars of Saudi Arabia are considered by al-Qaeda ideologues to be within the Salafist family, but both are subjected to blistering criticism because of their "gradualist approach" and compromise with contemporary Muslim regimes.



## Revolutionary Salafism

Salafism is al-Qaeda's great cloak and cover; they are Salafist and would claim to hold the same set of beliefs as most Muslim communities who are Salafist. Al-Qaeda's Salafism, however, is revolutionary, a concept adopted from the Egyptians Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj (1954-1982), but one that had its origins in the work of the Pakistani Islamist Syed Abul A'ala Maududi (1903-1979). Maududi claimed that Islam is not merely a religion; it is a "revolutionary ideology and program which seeks to alter the social order of the whole world." [6] Sayyid Qutb adopted this and other Maududi concepts, which were later interpreted by al-Qaeda to mean that no current Muslim Government is truly Islamic. Muhammad al-Salam Faraj pushed Qutb's concept of jihad further to create a worldview that argued that jihad should be waged against all Muslim governments. Al-Qaeda embraced this view as well and then moved beyond it to the doctrine of America as the first target of jihad. Al-Qaeda argues that jihad against all Americans and all current Muslim leaders is a personal obligation of each Muslim. This doctrine is the crucial difference that separates revolutionary Salafism from the mainstream version of Salafism that is the moving force within Islam today. The doctrines of Sayyid Qutb and Maududi are so engrained in jihadists sympathetic to al-Qaeda that a jihadi ideologue and strategist like Abu Mus'ab al-Suri simply refers to the teachings of "Sayyid and Maududi" - no other description is necessary.

## The Defeat of the Ideology of Revolutionary Salafism

An ideology like Salafist-Jihadism cannot be overcome by kinetic operations alone. Leaders who are killed or captured become martyrs; military defeat of insurgent groups drives the ideology underground but does not destroy it. Fed on the revolutionary writings on classic guerrilla warfare, jihadist strategists counsel retreat from overwhelming force but never surrender. The relatively new programs leading to renunciation of violence by jihadists need encouragement without naïve expectations. Governments may choose to release those who renounce violence or keep them in prison. Without religious education programs for those who surrender and for the general public conducted by respected Muslim religious authorities, the counterterrorist efforts of security services will have no lasting effect.

The net result is that revolutionary Salafists and mainstream Salafists mean different things when they use the term jihad. Revolutionary Salafists support eternal violent jihad until the world becomes Muslim. Mainstream Salafists support violent jihad only to protect Muslim lands from invasion or imminent threat. Mainstream Salafists proselytize the world without recourse to violence. Those who do not see the distinction strengthen al-Qaeda's hand. If al-Qaeda and its allies can argue with impunity that they are merely protecting Muslim lands from the Americans or the French, for example, young Muslim men might find a fatal attraction to the call to take up arms. On the other hand, if traditional Salafist scholars argue that the engineers of al-Qaeda and its sympathizers are wrong on religious grounds (as the Islamist scholars of the Mardin Conference in Turkey did in March), the public at large may get the message. If more ideologues issue religiously reasoned renunciations of al-Qaeda's violent path, young recruits may develop their own questions.

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## Notes:

1. Camille Tawil, "The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group's revisions: one year later," Magharebia.com, July 23, 2010.
2. Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.5. Hegghammer argues that many theological terms such as "salafi, wahhabi, jihadi-salafi, and takfiri do not correspond to discrete and observable patterns of political behavior."
3. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought In The Liberal Age*, Oxford, 1967, p.56.
4. Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt*, Ithaca Press, 1998, p. 31.
5. Hassan al-Banna: *Anja al-wasa'il fi tarbiyat al-nash – tarbiya islamiya khalisa*, p.229, cited in Brynjar Lia, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt: The Rise of an Islamic Mass Movement 1928-1942*, Reading, 1928, p.57.
6. Abul A'ala Maududi, *Jihad in Islam*, The Holy Koran Publishing House, Beirut, 1980, p.5; Maududi originally delivered this essay as an address on April 13, 1939.