Abstract: Can Islam and Christianity so dialogue with each other as to begin to unfold a new universal tradition on the restraint of war and the promotion of peace? At the very least, a deepening understanding on how each tradition has developed might help such an endeavour to begin. The cause of peace would be considerably enhanced if there were a greater convergence between the Western-Christian tradition and the Islamic tradition on the questions of a “Just War’ and “Justified recourse to revolutionary armed struggle.” Arriving at such a convergence will require an immense amount of work, all the more reason to begin a conversation that might at least launch such a project. The present paper seeks to make a modest, if not to say, tiny, contribution to beginning this conversation in our context in Pakistan. In order to do so, this paper will attempt: (i) an overview of Islamic thinking on war and armed revolution and (ii) a philosophical approach to ‘receiving’ and appropriating this tradition in our times. It will be obvious that I do so not as a Muslim, but as someone who wishes to enter into a dialogue with the Muslim tradition.

Jihad – A Complex Issue

A point of departure that suggests itself is to consider the notion of Jihad. Etymologically, the term means any effort directed towards a determined objective. Repeatedly in the commentators one finds the view that interior spiritual struggle
to be considered the “spiritual” or “greater” Jihad and military action is to be considered the “physical” or “lesser” Jihad. If that is the case, it becomes necessary to examine closely the assertion – nowadays frequently repeated but seldom cogently argued - that in the doctrinal and historical tradition, Jihad is pre-eminently military action with the object of the expansion of Islam or if needs be, of its defence. The ideology behind that rather un-nuanced view is based on the assumption of the universality of the scope and temporal power of Islam, understood territorially and hegemonically, which it is argued, must in the end embrace the whole world, if necessary by force. This desired hegemony is modified by allowing the followers of those religions who are consider to be Ahl-al-Kitaab, to be tolerated, if they pay poll tax and property tax, as well as by a brake on killing women, children, the insane and monks. Such exemption does not apply to those e.g., polytheists, for whom conversion to Islam is assumed to be obligatory under pain of death or enslavement. This view does not, of course, cover the question of wars between Muslim states.

Jihad is considered to be a duty. But there would seem to be at least four divergent strands of thought as to how it is to be put into practice. The first enjoins pardon for offences with an invitation to conversion to Islam by peaceful persuasion; the second enjoins force to ward off aggression; the third enjoins initiative in attack, but outside the sacred months; and the fourth enjoins the initiative in attack at all times and places. Many scholars would argue that these differences correspond to stages in the thought and development of the Prophet of Islam, most especially between the Meccan period – mostly confined to moral and religious teaching – and the Medina period when he is implementing a politico-religious policy and is militarily capable of fighting those who do not submit to his teaching. Jihad like other Islamic institutions must have gone through stages of development in the early period. But it is difficult to detect them from the historical sources.

In the unuanced, somewhat fundamentalist, version of the tradition that would methodologically privilege the Medinan
over the Meccan texts, the notion of ‘Naskh’ is introduced. This is a range of theories advanced in exegesis and law, when texts are in apparent conflict. It holds that the later theories and the texts to which they appeal, always abrogate the earlier. A later regulation will always supplant an earlier one and thus chronology becomes the key to the resolution of difference. There is however, even within traditional Islam, a theological objection to the theory of ‘Naskh’. This argues that since all the verses of the Quran were of divine inspiration, none could be superior: thus there could be no ‘Naskh’ of one Quranic text by another and a fortiori, not by a Hadith. This line of interpretation is extended to suggest that no ‘Naskh’ is necessary because of the omnipotence of God. Since all that God reveals and commands is good, none of it can be undone by ‘Naskh,’ which could never be posited as a divine activity. Thus ‘Naskh’ could apply to regulations in the Quran only if they were expressly stated to be temporary. The intellectual basis of this approach is found in the concept of ‘Idjaz’, which literally means rendering powerless or incapable. Its intellectual basis is the inimitability of the Quran Sherif in content and form, coupled with the insufficiency of human strength to perform any confirmatory miracle. In this way it is argued that ‘Naskh’ is impossible, because humans cannot compound anything comparable to the Quran.

Diversity of Opinion

The concept of Jihad has clearly undergone developments, even within early Islam, that preclude any hypothesis of one simplistic reading of the sources. Two of the earliest extant Arabic texts on war, the Kitab al-siyar of Abu Ishaq al Fazari (d.802) and the Kitab al-Jihad of Abdullah b. al-Mubarak (d.797) are distinguished by their indifference to and partial rejection of the authority of the caliph in the conduct of war. The texts themselves may be considered as compilations or redactions of earlier traditions governed by a desire to imitate the Prophet of Islam and his Companions. For Fazari, authority in the conduct of war inheres in the scholar-ascetic himself who may impose Sunna without delegation. A similar trend is found
in Ibn al-Mubarak but beyond that, there is an emphasis on merit and volunteering, leading to an internalisation of norms.

Politically, this represents a distinction between war conducted by a constituted authority and war as action engaged in by individuals in search of religious merit. At a literary level, it argues that the term *Maghazi* went “from being a record of a past collective quest…. to one which was a restricted to the period and background of the Prophet, and then to one which was further restricted (at least by al-Waidi) to the Medinan period of the Prophet’s life.” Al-Fazari actually took part in military campaigns; he participated physically in the activity he studies and in his writing, *siyar* is a kind of *fiqh* for war, probably representing an older state of affairs or even a local tradition prior to its more rigorous use in sources like al-Sahybani. What is clear is that the *Siyar* does not concern itself with obedience to the imam. It avoids this theme. His notion of authority is a more literal sense of imitation as if to make his Prophet palpably present in his action.

The *Kitab al-Jihad* is, according to modern scholarship, likely a compilation and redaction of earlier circulating traditions and conveys a different emphasis from *Kitab al-Siyar*. Its rhetorical emphasis is on merit and reward though this probably comes only at the end of this process of redaction as there are a large number of traditions that seem unaware of the notion of *ajr* as divine reward. This leads to a focus on the warrior’s intention (*niyya*) and his inner state (*hal*). What stands out is the internalisation of norms, and this removes the conduct of war from the jurisdiction of the imams. While the language used for divine reward is Quranic: “the point is that this Quranic language does not enter the picture until this relatively late stage.”12 This text shows even less interest than Fazari, in the theme of obedience to the imam. People are exhorted to take upon themselves the obligation to volunteer.13

Even within more established traditionalist thinking, there is a diversity of opinion on war. Ata (d. 733) upholds the prohibition on fighting during the sacred months. Sufyan al-
Thawri (d. 715) held that *Jihad* was obligatory only in defence; in attack it can only be simply recommended. A further modification is the view that the duty of *Jihad* becomes operable only when conditions are favourable i.e., when there is hope of a victorious outcome. It eventually became generally agreed that it falls upon the sovereign to say if this is the case and that the declaration was to be preceded by an invitation to the enemy to accept Islam. This raises a particular problem in Shi’ism where according to most scholars, the occultation of the Imam necessarily suspends the practice of *Jihad*.

For traditionalist-fundamentalist thinking therefore, the duty of *Jihad* remains as long as the whole world is not Muslim: there are no peace-treaties, only truces. A permanent state of war is assumed to exist between ‘*dar al –Islam*’ and ‘*dar al-harb*.’ Textually speaking, it constructs the Quran Sherif as a cosmologically framed drama of the Muslim striving in the path of God against all things that might lead him astray. Violence – under certain conditions – is rationalized within this Islamic *Weltanschauung* in a form of discourse which rests on the semantics of the ‘lesser *Jihad*.’ For some tendencies, the generic character of Quranic speech and the indefiniteness of referents, allow the primal reference to the Umma to refer also to contemporary experience. Quite clearly, the same indeterminateness, since it points towards argument by analogy in a contextualized reading, could also open up a space for a different meaning.

In particular, it would beg the question as to how the Prophet of Islam intended the universal scope of Islam to be interpreted: in terms of the Arabian peninsula; among all Arabic speaking peoples; in the whole of the known world? If analogous reasoning allows the scope to be universalised in an absolute sense, then hermeneutically, the door is also opened for many other uses of analogy, not necessarily always leading to a fundamentalist conclusion. Nevertheless, even within traditional thinking, the practicalities of diplomacy and statecraft, led many jurists to avoid the conclusion that the duty of *Jihad* should be waged on non-Muslims solely on the grounds of belief. This in
turn – though mainly on the basis of practicalities rather than textual criticism – led to a *de facto* consensus that war is legitimate only in the case of defence.

The point of departure of modernist interpretation of *Jihad* seems to be that war is to be waged only as a defence against outside aggression.\(^{16}\) Thus: “Everything that is mentioned in the Quran with regard to the rules of fighting is intended [to be understood] as defence against enemies that fight the Muslims because of their religion.”\(^{17}\) The most important Quranic text this line of interpretation appeals to is Q2: 187-190: “Fight in the way of God with those who fight with you, but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors.”\(^{18}\) By giving decisive emphasis to this verse and those verses cognate to it, this line of interpretation attempts to furnish itself with an hermeneutical key to interpret texts such as Q9: 5: “…slay the idolaters wherever ye find them and take them (captive), and besiege them and prepare for them each ambush…,”\(^{19}\) which - by reading contextually - it understands as directed against Meccans who had broken treaty obligations. Similarly Q9:10\(^{20}\) is read not as a summons to fight Jews and Christians *per se*, but only those who had broken their pledges. It is important to bear in mind however, that if some texts are to be given a hermeneutical privilege over others, then methodologically speaking, it is also necessary to establish the basis of this privilege. This latter point will be taken up in the second part of this paper.

**A Just War Tradition**

May one speak of a ‘Just War’ tradition - in the philosophical-ethical sense – within Islamic thinking? Such a reflection invites a kind of comparative dialogue in the mind of the reader;\(^{21}\) as well as in the mind of the writer. The problematic may be succinctly stated: in the West - since Victoria writing in the seventeenth century - it has been assumed that difference in religion can never be a just cause of war, whereas in traditionalist Islam, religion is the only just cause for war, considered as *Jihad*. Some Sunni theorists certainly did consider war to be a possible or useful means of extending the
territory of Islam, but only under certain conditions. From *their* point of view, there had to be what may be considered to correspond to a just cause; - in their thinking, that was to extend the territory of Islam - when peaceful persuasion to convert to Islam had failed. The goal may be considered to be peace - at least in the sense of an Islamic peace, where people either converted to Islam or agreed to pay poll tax. The war may be declared only by a competent authority whose task it is to access capabilities and the probability of success, as well as adherence to Islamic principles. The war can never be declared by individuals or self-appointed ‘leaders.’

Thus there is certainly something comparable both to the principle of competent authority, as well as to that of proportionality, even if the latter is present merely as a kind of prudential necessity. Further, there is also a principle corresponding to right intent, since the war must be conducted according to Islamic principles; prosecuted for God and not merely for spoils. Finally, because it had to be fought according to God’s designs, religion may be considered as a limit on war.

Moreover, although coming from different roots, there is at least in principle, a comparable tradition of ‘*Jus in Bello*’ restraint, even if there is not quite the same understanding of non-combatants. Scholars distinguish between those in ‘*dar al-harb*’ who are monotheists and those who are polytheists. Al–Shyanbani, to take one example, argued that if the transportation of prisoners of war became dangerously impossible, the males were to be slaughtered but not the women and children. Consequently, Islamic thinking may arguably be considered to have chosen a very broad interpretation of the principle of double effect, whereby the killing of non-combatants is accepted as an inevitable though unintended side effect of a legitimate military operation.

Although this is clearly different to Christian thinking – whatever about selected western practice – there is nonetheless in both traditions, a recognition of the categorical prohibition of murder. Lewis quotes the list of prohibitions attributed to Abu Bakar in Al-Tabari including betrayal, misappropriation,
mutilation, killing women and children, cutting down palm or fruit trees, slaughtering sheep, or monks in convents. Unlike the western tradition's distinction between combatants and non-combatants, Sunni theory specifies categories of persons, women, disabled, children, monks, the insane. Crucially however, it is the leaders of the ‘dar al-Harb’ who are considered to be responsible for the death of the ‘innocent.’ Nonetheless, there is the notion of protection and security which appeals directly to the Prophet of Islam, whereby all Muslims are bound to protect an infidel (sic) if security has been expressly guaranteed to him though it were by the least of the Muslims.  26

**Sunni and Shia Perspectives**

Sunni consensus on war and related matters came to be closely identified with the culture of the High Caliphate during the classical period of Islamic civilization. It was a kind of “establishment Islam.”  27 This thinking had considered the conquest of the Near-east to be a just and natural extension of the work of the Prophet of Islam. Thinking about the moral and political and religious issues involved, gave rise to ‘fiqh;’ making judgements consistent with Islamic religious law or ‘Shariah.’ The intellectuals considered themselves ‘al-fuqaha;’ those who understand - and their form of reasoning by analogy from precedents - was called ‘qiyas.’ The notion of limitations on war thus developed in the context of an imperialist state and these in general, were wars to extend the territory of Islam, rather than to win converts as such.

The *Jus in Bello* restraints that were developed seem to owe just as much to political and military factors, as to theological principles. Al –Shayabani appeals to Hadith in writing on the conduct of war and following this school, Sunni theorists both developed and presupposed a particular interpretation of the Quran Sherif. Moreover they did so in conjunction with the interests of an imperial state.  28 Here the assumption was always against rebellion. One way of noting the difference between a war of territorial expansion and one of defence, is that the duty to participate is different for each. In the
former it is a kind of collective obligation – ‘fard kifaya’ – with many ways of exempting oneself, including sponsorship of others; while the latter is a matter of individual duty – ‘fard ayn.’

In Shi’ism the situation is dissimilar because of a different historical position concerning the leadership of the Muslim community, as well as a theological difference on the relationship between God’s power and human responsibility. Despite the occultation of the Imam, there is an unknown designated leader in every generation – ‘al-Nass’ - designated by the previous leader. It is at his direction that Muslims may engage in the lesser Jihad. Yet the ‘naib al-Imam,’ the vicar of the hidden Imam – in modern times the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran was usually considered to be such – is not imbued with infallibility and his reasoning is functional rather than definitive.  

According to Shia theology, the Imam through whom the leadership of the community continues, cannot be elected, because of his unique function - ruling the community, examining religious science and spiritual guidance - for which he must be inerrant. He can receive this only from ‘on high’ from the previous Imam. Thus there always is an Imam, a hidden ‘Mahdi,’ alive but unseen by the majority of people. He will finally appear as an eschatological event. But without him, all temporal rule – including its capacity to declare Jihad - is marked by imperfection. One hugely important corollary of this thinking was that Shia theologians could never act as apologists for the High Caliphate and always regarded their military operations as questionable if not illegitimate, since they could not satisfy the criterion of right authority. Consequently, there can only be a defensive war and not an offensive Jihad though some jurists have extended this to include a pre-emptive strike. In modern times, the Iran-Iraq war was always considered by Shia theorists to be ‘an imposed war.’
Sufism

If a rigid one-dimensional interpretation of Islam would prove to be impossible both to analogical reasoning and to inevitable politico-legal development, an even more radical critique of such simplistic argumentation had long before come from a movement that would become known as Sufism. Exegetically speaking, its critical principle was that God intends every sense that can be understood from his word without distorting the plausible meaning of the Arabic language. The ascetics - called ‘Nussak’ - who wore rough woollen cloth – probably in imitation of Christian monks – desired to practice Islam in a manner that went far beyond legalistic observance. Their focus was on the love of God; and in expressing this through asceticism and poetry, they drew not only on this spiritual meaning of the Quranic tradition, but expanded it with philosophical ideas drawn in the main from neoplatonism, but occasionally including Aristotelian elements.

In the thought of al-Rumi, one of its greatest exponents, we find a spiritual insight born of personal religious experience, that becomes in time, a hermeneutical principle: both in God and in the believer, mercy always prevails over wrath. This highlighting of the element of spiritual quest in Islam with the inevitable consequence of downgrading the militaristic, has meant that fundamentalist Islam has always seen Sufism as a major opponent. In the Sufi quest there is a conscious thrust for a form of self-annihilation in the goal of becoming one with the beloved, who is God. This self-annihilation can be understood as the dethronement of the egotistical ego or more extremely, as the obliteration of personal identity. When the latter flowers into an extreme interpretation of the doctrine of ‘Wahdat al-Wujud,’ it can in unsophisticated form, tend toward the destruction of purposefulness. From this perspective Allama Iqbal accused the movement of promoting passivism and fatalism. In the ‘Asrar-e-Khadi,’ his Nietzschean influenced stress on the development of the ego over self-annihilation, shocked many of his readers.
For Al-Ghazali (b.1054), for many, the pre-eminent figure in Muslim thought, religious knowledge is knowledge that is first of all lived. What is original in his thought – and thereby proposing a new horizon of understanding to Muslim thought in general - was the insistence on consciously subordinating even ‘Kalam’ to the realization of the experience of God. Although an expert in both law and philosophy, he vigorously critiques both of them in function of mystical religious experience. For him, the object of ‘Kalam’ is to know God Himself; and not just to know about God. The true source of knowledge which allows for the discovery of the true nature of things is the unmediated experiential knowledge – ‘mukashafa’ – which relativises even ‘Kalam,’ even though his own theological positions are consistent with the main line of the schools.

Developing the Tradition

Majid Khuddani has sought to demonstrate the lack of unanimity among early Muslim scholars on the question of war. In his view, prestigious scholars such as Abu Hanifa (d. 768) and Shayabani (d.804) make no explicit declaration that Jihad was a war to be waged against non-Muslims solely on the grounds of disbelief. Shayabani was a pupil of Abu Hanifa and it is through him that we know Hanifa’s teaching. Shayabani insists on the necessary complementary rules of ‘reasoning’ – ‘ra’y’ – and of traditional Hadith in the elaboration of ‘fiqh.’ This concept of rationality is rigorous and systematic and is conducted according to strict analogical reasoning. Here we find early examples of mainline theological Islam’s insistence on the congruence between rationality and faith that is foundational to the development of the Islamic tradition itself, as well as forming an important point of dialogue with the Christian tradition, especially in the West. Not surprisingly, these writers stressed that unbelievers be shown tolerance. When the Caliph Haroon al-Rashid (d.809) made war against the Christian city of Bani Taghlib, Hanifa regarded that war as unjustified.

In Khuddani’s view, it was Shafi (d.820), who formulated the doctrine that Jihad had for its intention the
waging of war on unbelievers for their disbelief, and not only when they had entered into conflict with the Islamic state; thus blurring the distinction between an offensive and a defensive war. Indeed fundamentalist reading of the Islamic tradition seems to deny the applicability of the categories of ‘offensive’ or ‘defensive’ to Jihad. For this reading, a narrowed interpretation of Jihad as universal, armed, revolutionary struggle is simplistically considered to be in as little need of justification as the Quran itself. It is moreover, difficult to understand how ‘unbelief’ per se could be sufficient reason for Jihad since quite clearly, ‘unbelief’ still continues after the ‘unbelievers’ have undertaken to pay the poll tax and are in fact, paying it. The oft-quoted text attributed to Abu-Bakar: “I have been ordered to fight the people until they profess the faith that there is no god but Allah…” on this reading, could only be taken to refer to the polytheist Arabs of that time.\(^40\) In the same vein, others have argued that according to the consensus of modern orientalist scholarship, in the time of Muhammad, the concept of Jihad as attack applied only to the peoples of Arabia; its general application was a consequence of ‘Idjama.’\(^41\)

In modern times, several commentators, among them M. Shaltut, representing a kind of establishment Islam in twentieth-century Egypt, argue on the basis of the Quranic teaching that there can be no compulsion in religion, that fighting cannot per se be a part of the Islamic mission. The only justified war is a defensive one. He also argued that previous traditions do not contradict this conclusion, inasmuch as the situation in each tradition is different from the other.\(^42\) The politico-legal conditions for this kind of development in perspective may be traced to constitutional changes in the Ottoman Empire. When by edict on 3 November 1838, it laid down the principle that all subjects were equal before the law, this legal innovation, given the integralist nature of Islam, was also a theological development.

This was proclaimed by the Sultan and formally announced by the foreign minister. Clearly, political interests were in view. The independence of Greece – a non-Muslim
country – and strengthening nationalist movements, especially in Egypt – a majority Muslim country – were making a rigid traditionalism impossible to maintain. The notion of reform – ‘Tanzimaz’ – became part and parcel of Islamic theologico-legal thinking.\textsuperscript{43} It was allowed that Christians who had converted to Islam, would not be put to death in the case of re-conversion to Christianity. A memorandum from Ali the Grand Vizier, stressed the equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. The consequent admission of the Ottoman Empire into the: “Public Law and concept of Europe,”\textsuperscript{44} meant that international law lost its exclusively Christian character. By the same token, a space was opened up for the very dialogue which is being explored in these pages. Nonetheless the unresolved question in Islamic law on the nature of the relations between states remains, since the Muslim claim to universality would seem to make Islamic law unilateral.

Some jurists had for centuries past, always recognised an intermediate zone between ‘\textit{dar al-Salam}’ and ‘\textit{dar al-Harb}’ which was variously referred to as ‘\textit{dar al-ahd}’ or ‘\textit{dar al-Sulh}’.\textsuperscript{45} Fundamentally, the idea was local autonomy under Muslim suzerainty. Historically, it began with a treaty with the Nubians which did not include the payment of ‘Djizya.’ Their land and property remained absolutely their own. There were different opinions among jurists as to the procedure in the case of a breakdown of the treaty. This idea was further developed in modern times with the incorporation of more and more land into the Ottoman empire\textsuperscript{46} and later the independence movements in these lands, many of which were majority Muslim.\textsuperscript{47} When equality under the law was declared, Jamal the chief of the Ulema of Mecca denounced it with a ‘\textit{fatwa}’ and called for \textit{Jihad} against the Ottomans. The call was not heeded.

\textbf{Towards a New Consensus}

The end of the Caliphate and with it, the demise of an important symbolic institution, opened up the task and all the theological questioning that went with that task, of finding new ways of ordering life as well as the disputes that are part of it – most especially, recourse to war. The groundbreaking
“Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam” was Allama Iqbal’s seminal attempt to reconcile Muslim theology with contemporary European philosophy – and vice-versa - in a personal way. The goal of this aspect of his writings was to teach Muslims to regain their strength whether as individuals or nations. This led at the theoretical level, to sustained reflection on the notions of ‘Ijma’ and ‘Idjihad’- finding solutions to legal problems. ‘Ijma’ had meant the unanimous doctrine and opinion of the recognized religious authorities at any given time, which contrary to the contrived unanimity of fundamentalism, inevitably meant that there were obviously greater or lesser degrees of controversy and disagreement. With the passage of time, the notion was given its theological formulation as a result of which it gave rise to a recurrent investigation into the relationship between faith and reason.

The crucial intervention of the Pakistani jurist, K.A. Faruki, was to seek to adapt the concept of the legal validity of ‘Ijma’ to the necessities of the modern world and the socio-political system of which the believing Muslim is a part. The background to the notion of ‘Idjihad’ was that after the ninth century, the idea arose that only scholars were qualified to find solutions to legal problems. This quickly degenerated into the view that all future legal activity had to be limited to the explanation, application and at most, interpretation, of doctrines as they had been handed down once and for all. This ‘closing down of ‘Idjihad’ led to the demand among the scholars for ‘Taklid’ or the unquestioning acceptance of the doctrines of established schools and authorities especially in relation to classical formulations. The consequent problematic remains a very live one, especially in Pakistan, where the debate between reshaping the institutions of Islam in the light of modern conditions, or simply by the traditional problematic of ‘Idjihad-Taklid,’ remains a very actual one.

‘Ijma,’ which Iqbal had described as “perhaps the most important legal notion in Islam” lead him to propose that the power of ‘Idjihad’ be transferred to a Muslim legislative assembly in which the Ulema would form a vital part, helping
and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. Implicit was the notion that this ‘vital part’ would not be ‘an overall control;’ and explicit, was the assurance that the discussion would be free. These ideas were further developed by K. A. Faruki.  

His point of departure was that the ultimate protection against spurious ‘IJma’ in the form of subjective views and decisions, was the ‘collective conscience of the Muslim community.’ Ever a realist, he argued that comparative knowledge of other systems was a qualification for exercising ‘Idjihad’. He insisted that the age of the great individual ‘mujtahidun’ had long passed and that nowadays, no single individual could possibly possess all the qualities that go into the making of a ‘mujtahid’ since there was always an element of ‘zann’ or subjective conjecture, inherent in individual ‘idjitad.’ For Said Ramadan indeed, the notion of ‘IJma’ had become ‘obsolete and imprecise’  

Faruki stressed that the pressing need of the hour was for ‘IJma’ - which historically had always been a matter of considerable differences of opinion - to function prospectively and not just retrospectively.

Building on Iqbal’s proposal, Faruki suggested agreement of 75% as the criterion of consensus, since 100% would be impossible and 51% unacceptable. The beginnings of this moderate and modern approach to the resolution of practical questions, at least as far the sub-continent is concerned, is usually traced to Sayyad Ahmed Khan who equated the implied and interpreted truth of the Quranic tradition with his understanding of ‘reason’ and ‘nature’. He denied the validity of ‘Idjihad’ and stressed the right of every individual, educated Muslim to employ individual reasoning. Music to the ears of the educated, these views, while they had an enormous impact on the subsequent history of Muslims in the sub-continent, never won favour with the Ulema.

His particular contribution to the subject under discussion – based on his reflections on the plight of sub-continental Muslims in the situation post-1857 – was to confine the notion of Jihad to the obligation to the defence of Muslims against religious oppression. He argued that since the British did
not hinder religious practice, armed *Jihad* against them was unlawful. In this way, his thinking opened up a space for representative participatory politics. Iqbal goes further and on the basis of the ideas of ‘movement,’ power’ and ‘freedom’ as developed in his poetry, broadens the concept of ‘*Ijma,*’ equating it with democracy in a parliamentary system of government. “The transfer of the power of ‘*idjtihad*’ from individual representative of schools, to a Muslim legislative assembly…is the only possible form ‘*Ijma*’ can take in modern times.”

**Fundamentalism**

To every action there is an opposite reaction. Just as modernity, democracy, representative participation, analogical reasoning and a bias towards peace, were giving a renewed shape and thrust to the Islamic tradition, there arose a counter-movement in favour of a fundamentalist traditionalism. Born in Asut, Egypt in 1906, Sayyid Qutb and the school that propagates his ideology, attempted to argue a rationale for the use of violence. Having experienced racial prejudice in the USA where he went for two years in 1949, and brutality in prison under the Nasser regime in Egypt, his writing – essentially the monumental 30-volume, “In the shadow of the Quran,” - attempts to construct an equivalence between Arabia in the time of Muhammad and Egypt in his day; both, in his view, describable as ‘*Jahalliya.*’ This theory became the basis of modern Sunni fundamentalism. Previously a cultural advisor to the leaders of the 1952 revolution, he parted with them on the basis of his belief that Egypt should be an Islamic state. The result was a reactionary, romanticised and ahistorical view of Islam.

Fundamental to his hermeneutic is the sectarian premise that: “God distinguishes between people on the basis of belief.” He argued that religious differences are more basic than racial or nationalist or economic ones and thus religious war was the only form of killing that was morally sanctioned. This allowed him to construct a cosmological polarity between a believing “us” and a disbelieving “them.” An anthropologist might
immediately point out that this is the cosmography that lies at the base of how all pre-modern and mythically based ethnic groups construct their worldview. One of the consequences was the notion of ‘takfir,’ the act of identifying someone as a ‘kaffir’ and deserving of death. Including his own native country in the world of ‘Jahalliya’ because of its succumbing, in his view, to western values, he argued for a return to the era of conquests and empire, inviting – ‘dawa’ - all non-Muslims to convert to Islam. Those who decline are to be given the inferior status of ‘dhima’ and will pay the poll tax – ‘Dziyza.’ If they object to this then fighting – ‘qatl’– is the only response.

Qutb quite explicitly rejects the traditional Muslim interpretation of the ‘lesser Jihad’ as war only in the defence of Islam. By characterizing the Nasser regime, and by extension, the west in general, as ‘jahalliya,’ he argued that Jihad considered in militaristic terms, was the only response. From the perspective of the ‘greater Jihad’, it might be said that his extremist view of Islam was much more a matter of response to social circumstances than the result of any mystical striving within himself. This kind of fundamentalism which in great part, is a reaction to the complexities of modernity, rather than a simple continuity with traditional belief in a pre-critical period, reflects the feeling of being overwhelmed by the new technologically-based globalised culture as well as the traditional dislike for their rulers felt by people of the middle-East. Muslim Egypt – to be followed by Iraq, Arabia, Syria and many other Muslim countries - had after all, rejected the hegemony of a Muslim empire which also claimed to be the Caliphate!

This reappraisal of the notion of Jihad was strongly influenced by Mawdudi whose work Qutb had studied deeply. Reared and educated in total isolation from the English language and western culture, Mawdudi became deeply involved in the Khilafat movement and as editor of the journal of ‘Jama’at-e-Ulema-e-Hind,’ in which he published in serial form, his detailed study of Jihad. From the simplistic premise that the influence of western civilization was corrupting he: “wanted to rid them, (i.e., the Muslims) of the wrong notion that they needed to borrow
from others in the matter of culture and civilization.” He opposed M.A. Jinnah at every step, but after the emergence of Pakistan, played a key role in directing Pakistan away from developing the secular democratic form that Jinnah had in mind.

For Mawdudi, Pakistan was not to be Jinnah’s sub-continent homeland for Muslims, but a theocratic Islamic state. His succession of roles in securing the ‘Objectives Resolution’ as a preamble to the constitution; in the (often violent) agitation against the Ahmedis in 1952-3; in the acceptance in the 1956 constitution of the country as a Muslim society on the basis of the Quran; and finally, his influence in providing the ideological infrastructure to the Zia dictatorship, are a measure of his achievements. Because of the capacity of religion to inspire ultimate commitment even to violence, these developments have led B.Lewis - writing as he is, from a chosen ideological standpoint - to conclude that an earlier (sic!) view of Jihad has been revived: “where the overwhelming majority of theologians, jurists and traditionalists…understood the obligation of Jihad in the military sense and have examined and expanded it accordingly.” In Peters’ view, the new fundamentalism seems to deny the applicability of the categories of ‘offensive’ or ‘defensive’ to Jihad, because Jihad is a permanent revolutionary struggle which ends in peace only with the final victory of Islam.

Demeaning the Concept of Jihad

The ideology of Qutb was further extended by Abd al-Salam Faraj who sought to ground the violent actions of terrorists-freedom fighters in a new reading of the Quran and Hadith. He pre-emptively posited that these sources – sacred to Islam – were fundamentally about warfare. For him, Jihad literally means fighting and not allegorically interpreted spiritual struggle. Anyone who deviates from this line becomes himself a legitimate target of Jihad, whether apostates from within, or perceived enemies from without. The true soldier of Islam may use any means including deceit, trickery or violence to promote Jihad. The only limit to violence was that innocent bystanders
were not to be harmed in assassination attempts, but only where this was possible. The duty to engage in such violence is incumbent on all Muslims and the reward for doing so is paradise.⁶⁵

Methodologically, this seems like eisegesis of a dangerous kind whereby a Fanonesque⁶⁶ obsession with and romanticisation of violence is read into the sources rather than out of them. The opposite pole of this kind of eisogesis is found in a transference of a Christian-influenced notion of pacifism so as to suggest that Jihad is utterly and entirely non-violent.⁶⁷ The notion of Jihad and the traditions surrounding its interpretation are far too nuanced to be summed up neatly in either militaristic or irenicist terms.

What is quite intriguing is the manner in which various armed Jihadist groups seeking to base themselves on this new form of Quran justification, offer arguments that appeal not at all to the Quran and Hadith, but to the rhetoric of post-colonialist self-determination. It will be clear that here we are not attempting any political analysis as such, but simply pointing to developments in thought patterns, ideologies and interpretations of a tradition. The rhetoric of the PLO drew more on the popular struggles in Vietnam, Algeria and Ireland than on strictly Islamic sources. This ideological rather than religious, orientation is clear in the speeches of the late Yassar Arafat: “we are struggling so that Jews, Christians and Muslims may live in equality, enjoying the same rights and assuming the same duties, free from racial or religious discrimination…We distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. While we maintain our opposition to the colonialist Zionist movement, we respect the Jewish faith.”⁶⁸ He locates the Palestinian struggles not within Islamic cosmography, but in terms of ”oppressed nations right to self-determination” and in tandem with: “all liberation movements fighting against racism and imperialism.” Speaking of the Palestinian question, he specifically states that: “Its causes do not stem from any conflict between two religions.” He promised separation of Church and State and a regime where “Christian, Jew and Muslim will live in equality.”⁶⁹
Moreover a sometimes quite cynical distortion of Islamic tradition is also found in a purely propagandist appeal to *Jihad* having little or nothing to do with the spiritual striving that contextualizes all discourse on that subject. In the first Gulf War, which began with an offensive invasion of a Muslim state, Saddam declared that Iraq was: “determined to carry out *Jihad* without any hesitation or retreat and without any fear of the foreigner’s power.”\(^{70}\) Here was a putative *Jihad* destroying both Arab unity and Muslim unity. Saddam and his Ba’athist party could scarcely have been considered ‘religious’ in any ordinary sense of that term, but what counted in his distortion of Islamic religious symbols was not the truth or untruth of his argument, but his capacity to relate those symbols - which resound powerfully in the consciousness and unconsciousness of Muslim people – with his own cause, even if that meant distorting them. In this way he could claim that the war was a: “crisis between Allah’s leadership and the devil.”\(^{71}\) Even though this regime was breaking Muslim law by killing civilians in Kuwait, he did not need to worry about anyone asking about his credentials as a ‘mujtahid’ as long as he could load his rhetoric with the power of symbolic references. He thus articulated what some might term a pseudo-Islamic religious interpretation of the confrontation with the USA and its allies, even though that alliance included Saudi Arabia itself!

The concept of *Jihad* can also be bent to seek to justify war between nation and nation though especially between a Muslim and a non-Muslim state. Here the term is being twisted to justify a secular nationalist ideology. In October 1973, the rector of Al-Azhar declared: “*Jihad* is an obligation for all without distinction between Muslims and Christians (sic!). It is the first duty of a who live under the sky of Egypt.” He went on to promise paradise to all who would be killed in the ensuing war.\(^{72}\) Throughout the colonial period in fact, revolutionaries, whatever their ideology or goals, appealed to *Jihad* to mobilize people. At the other end of the spectrum, the Ottoman policy of presenting the Sultan as a kind of Caliph or spiritual leader of all Muslims, resulted in *Jihad* and the call to *Jihad* becoming simply part of the imperial propagandist policy in an empire where a
degree of secularisation had already occurred. Ironically, much of the nationalistic struggle which arose in the Near-east, arose in opposition to what was technically a Muslim empire with a spiritual standing.

In these struggles which took on a nationalistic rather than a religious tone, the notion of Jihad played little part and in many cases was not invoked at all.

*Jihadist* vocabulary is also stretched - beyond breaking point, - in this writer’s view - in the ideology of ‘*istishhadi*’ or ‘self-chosen martyrdom’ that lies behind what is described as ‘suicide bombing’ in the media. It is actually conceptualised as an act of defensive war – though anthropologically considered, it is structurally suggestive of a sacrificial rite. Clearly there are many theorists, especially among Lebanese Shi’ite clergy who insist that this is done in fulfilment of Islam’s obligations. There are others who argue the opposite. The key symbolic swerve in justifying this, is to make a link with, and then make it a re-enactment of, the martyrdom of Hussein in the mind of the future self-martyr. Paradoxically, until very recent times, no Islamic tradition so thoroughly disavowed violence as the Shi’ite one, deferring the right to wage war until the eschatological time. Public self-flagellation in processions such as in Pakistan, formed no part of the Lebanese remembrance of Hussein’s martyrdom. Instead it took the form of a call to inner repentance ritualised in a mournful recitation of the saga of the martyrdom of Hussein.

Traditionally concentrated in the Bekka valley, the Shi’as bore the brunt of the Israeli invasion of 1982. Their political wing, originally involved only in campaigning for a redistribution of resources within Lebanon, linked up with Iranian Revolutionary Guards to form Hizbollah - to fight for an Islamic state. While ideologically legitimated as self-sacrifice, the death of most the ‘*istishhadi*-suicide bombers seems to be selected, prepared and guided by powerful individuals thus blurring the distinction between sacrifice and self-sacrifice. For all that, this ideology is deeply internalised by many who
articulate the notion that ‘martyrdom’ is a rare opportunity and that one is honoured to be given it. Few have the opportunity to choose their destiny and since death is inevitable, it is better that it be ‘on the path of God.’ Also blurred is the traditional notion that youth and women should not be victims of war. This ideologically and socially controlled self-sacrifice then becomes the manner par excellence of identification with Hussein, thereby abolishing the classical struggle against self and turning it into struggle against the other.

Yet here again the clerics are divided for some, on the basis of traditionalist principles, argue that self-martyrdom is permissible only if it can bring about a degree of change proportionate to the gravity of the act. Sadly, a kind of mimetic rivalry has resulted in Hizbollah and Amal competing for headlines and resulting in reciprocal violence, including the murder of clerics. Thus we see the cycle of violence breaking free from the restraints of piety and systematic theology, and degenerating from self-repentance to self-flagellation, and from there to sacred war, to self-martyrdom and finally to fratricide.

Discerning a Perspective

Like many other parts of the Muslim world, but perhaps more than most, Pakistan is conflicted as to which line it must choose to interpret adequately and faithfully its Islamic tradition – and very especially so in relation to the issue of armed violence. One line of interpretation leads from the sources through the great Islamic philosophers like Ibn-Sinna, down to Syyed Ahmed Khan and through Allama Iqbal and onto M.A. Jinnah and his political heritage of a Muslim homeland with a place for a plurality of voices, respect for minorities and a genuinely democratic outlook. Another rises out of the Meccan Suras and comes to us through the Sufis, through al-Rumi and Al-Ghazzali down through classical figures like Bulhe Shah and Shah Abdul Latif and on to the great popular interpreters of that tradition such as Nasrat Fatah Ali Khan and Abida Parveen. It proposes tolerance, inoffensiveness and inclusiveness. The third,
stressing a militaristic notion of *Jihad* comes from a selective reading of the Medinan Suras, and passing through the thought of Shafi, Mawdudi, Qutb and Farj down to the Taliban, wishes to short-circuit the complexity and finesse of the tradition, to give a makeshift one-dimensional version of something which is nuanced and sophisticated and which has always stretched its greatest minds in their attempts to offer a synthesis of its teaching.

The Sufi tradition seems to be incompatible with fundamentalist militarism since its whole emphasis is on the presence of God in the authentic self and the emptiness of merely external religion. It is also difficult to reconcile it with an ideology of modernisation if and when it stretches the notion of self-annihilation in love, to the point of denying the autonomous self. However it is entirely consistent with a scientific-world view if it applies that line of thought and spiritual experience to the dethronement of the ego in favour of the authentic self who considers the good of others in the light of the goodness of the Wholly Other.

While religious fundamentalism is reactionary and reductionist - if not to say murderous - it points to some important issues. Among them is a growing realization – in the West as well as in the East - that wholly secular principles of legitimacy are either inadequate to the fullness of human experience, or at most, are capable of being sustained only in very limited political contexts. Somewhere in the forty shades of grey between the black-and-white polarities of a theocracy that stifles genuine freedom and creativity, as well as the gift that can spring from difference, and thorough-going secular humanism, which in banishing the transcendent to a purely private sphere, cuts off a community’s human striving from its origin and ultimate end in union with God, nations must struggle to find a consensus that respects their own formative traditions as well as the groups within their boundaries who look to other traditions. This, is seems to me, is no less the case in any one part of the world than in any other.
The glaring gap in the fundamentalist position is that it falls down precisely in its construction of the ideal that energises and drives it forward. It appeals to a golden age of Islam. But that imagined golden age was never one in which a fundamentalist reading of the sources prevailed either in the intellectual life of the Umma or in the construction of a political order. On the contrary, the golden age of Islam was an age of scholarship and intellectual striving. Far from being an era in which all the answers were ready-made and available, it was one where great minds sought out these answers in a variety of ways, allowing for a genuine plurality of opinions about the secondary principles of the tradition. It was an age where rationality and faith were congruent both in their search for the truth and in an adequate articulation of that truth.

Rationality and Faith

It was as much a time of ‘Akl’ as of faith. ‘Akl’ in Islamic thought is virtually the same as ‘nous’ in Greek, or ‘ratio’ or ‘intelligentia,’ in Latin thought. In Islamic philosophy, it is the first entity emanating from God, considered as first cause, and proceeds from the divinity by intellectual emanation. Considered as the first created entity, it is even called “messenger” and “representative” of God in the world-terms of great density of significance in this tradition. From an Islamic perspective, this is a truly remarkably use of words. Some sects indeed seem to acknowledge a sort of incarnation of ‘Akl’. As a cosmological, though purely intellectual principle of motion, it corresponds to the ‘nous’ of Aristotelian metaphysics. All this as well as its implications for the intellectual life and the understanding of the Islamic tradition, is highly developed in the Islamic philosophy of the golden age.

By contrast, Ibn Hazm’s concept of ‘fiqh’ is not formed by virtue of standards of concrete value or with the intention of dealing with a particular situation of humanity at a particular historical juncture. For him, God acts as He wills and pays regard to nothing but His own will. Here the desire for finding the eternal significance of a given law, risks making law
unconnected to the present. Nonetheless even he rejected the position of al-Sirafi whose view was that Aristotelian logic, being linked to the Greek language, was of no use to Islamic-Arabic philosophy. Ibn Hazm argued that what was obtained through a study of Aristotle was common to all languages and therefore could be profitably used. For him, the method of reconciling texts in the tradition that apparently did not agree, was a matter of employing this logic.

Equally Al-Shaybani insists on the necessary role of reasoning – ‘ra’y’ - together with traditional Hadith in the elaboration of fiqh. This reasoning is rigorous and systematic, following strict analogical reasoning.”
80 ‘Kiyas,’ the science of interpreting and juxtapositioning Quranic texts and more precisely, the action of the exegete in doing so, proceeds from reasoning by analogy. It is inductive reasoning, going from the known to the unknown, and is strongly influenced by the Greek notion of syllogism. The aim of the exercise, surpassing scriptural fundamentalism, is to define a rule which has not been the object of an explicit textual formulation. In ‘Ilm-al-Kalam’
82 the science which is concerned with firmly establishing religious beliefs by adducing proofs and banishing doubts, – to be distinguished from ‘Kalam Allah’
83 - there are, as in all great intellectual traditions, different emphases and different schools, especially with the rise of Mutazilism.
84 Such differences did not undo the fact that all were in fact united in respect of the reality and implications of ‘Akl’ in illuminating faith. It was a time when great minds sought the congruence of rationality and faith, when they saw both of these as the complementary paths to truth, when they sought philosophical constructs that facilitated this ever more adequately. It was - to borrow a classical phrase from another tradition – an era of ‘fides quaerens intellectum.’

A high point in this quest is found in the work of Ibn-Sina,
85 known to western students of the history of philosophy as Avicenna. It is said that by the age of 18 he had mastered all known science and yet he not was a philosopher who lived in his books. Busy all day in socio-political affairs, he wrote at night – apparently with great rapidity. From the perspective of Islamic
history, he is the philosopher of being: developing philosophical realism to understand essences in the actualised state. The whole of his philosophy is ordered around the double problem of the origin of being and its transmission to essence, specifically to individually actualised essence. Precisely as a believer, he is attempting to integrate Islamic dogma with philosophical formulation and he continually works in this direction. According to his thinking, being is not in every existing thing by necessity – the essence of ‘man’ does not imply the existence of some given man. Existence rather is given to actualised concrete beings by a Being that differs from all of them and whose essence is this very being.

Thus although he does not actually employ the phrase, “analogy of being,” he certainly proceeds from the knowledge of created beings to that of the uncreated Being with at least the implication that he considers there to be a real analogy between their natures. The proximity of this line of reasoning to the Christian and especially the Catholic tradition, can scarcely be doubted, where although in the analogy between God and the human person, and by extension, between the divinely ordained and the humanly achievable, unlikeness remains infinitely greater than likeness; it does not stretch to the point where it abolishes the language of analogy. Even if Ibn-Sina does not - in explicit terms - go as far as Aquinas in formulating the distinction between beings and uncreated Being – as well as the analogy of being itself – nevertheless Aquinas does quite demonstrably, base his line of argument upon Ibn-Sina. This point alone is of considerable importance in the context of the present discussion. Thus in drawing the conclusion that God is not a genus and being is not a genus, he cites Ibn-Sina seven times in developing this position. We might say that Ibn-Sina established the principles and Aquinas drew the conclusion. Even his intellectual opponent, William of Auvergne found in him the distinction between essence and existence which becomes one of the cornerstones of the thought of Aquinas. Indeed a pontifical decree of Pope Gregory IX in 1231 in the face of controversy from this source, permitted the study of Ibn-Sina by Christians.
Dialogue is possible only if the participants can conceive of their standard of rationality as: “an appropriate operationalisation of a mutual intuition of truth.” The previous paragraph has sought to outline such a ‘mutual intuition of truth.’ This is exemplified in a common philosophical development – in this case of the Aristotelian tradition - in searching out an epistemologically coherent discourse on the nature and content of religious faith in a compassionate transcendent god. Thus it is not simply that each tradition possesses, through being gifted, a monotheistic faith, but more particularly, that the scholars of each tradition are both engaged in the task not only of seeking to understand their respective faiths – and that always against the horizon of belief - but of seeking to grasp the way they understand them. What the interdependence of the thought of Ibn-Sina and Aquinas shows is a ‘golden age’ in each of the traditions where (i) great minds sought not only to profess monotheistic faith but sought (ii) to show the coherence of that faith with a shared construction of rationality, going on to show (iii) a coherence in the cognitional structure of that rationality.

Now they were people of their time as we are of ours. Attention is drawn to their respective achievements not to suggest that we should simply return to the ‘content’ of their syntheses but rather, return to their rigour of thought. It is not at all just a matter of repeating their conclusions, nor even of understanding what they understood, but of searching and understanding as they searched and understood. Here we are seeking to do that specifically in relation to the question of a justified recourse to armed physical force in war or revolution. Thus the intellectual task ahead is to: (a) jointly confess faith in a transcendent and infinitely compassionate God; (b) show that this faith is congruent with reason; (c) work to find an adequate and cognitionally aware construction of rationality through which to express that congruence; (d) on the basis of this shared rationality, work out a common position on justified recourse to armed violence and ethical restraints in war; (e) on the basis of this shared ethical viewpoint, work together for justice and peace through non-violent action; (f) proclaim the eternal truth of
God’s infinite compassion from a consistent engagement in such a praxis.

We may attempt to take some further steps to continue to endeavour to do this by reflecting on a text from a different tradition - this time my own - with a view to continuing what was earlier described as: “a kind of comparative dialogue in the mind of the reader.”

Armed Struggle: Only as a Last Resort

“The fight against injustice is meaningless unless it is waged with a view to establishing a new social and political order in conformity with the demands of justice. Justice must already mark each stage of the establishment of this new order. There is a morality of means. These principles must be especially applied in the extreme case where there is recourse to armed struggle, which the Church’s magisterium admits as a last resort to put an end to an obvious and prolonged tyranny which is gravely damaging the fundamental rights of individuals and the common good. Nevertheless the concrete application of this means cannot be contemplated until there has been a very rigorous analysis of the situation. Indeed because of the continual development of the technology of violence and the increasing serious dangers implied in its recourse, that which today is termed ‘passive resistance shows a way more conformable to moral principles and having no less prospects of success.’

We may provisionally characterize this position as that of ‘last resort.’ An individual, community or nation may resort to the military use of armed force only under the most stringent of conditions – as a ‘last resort’. It is not enough that ‘justice’ be the end that is sought in the use of force, each step in the determination of this conclusion, and each step in implementing it, must also be ‘just.’ The context of the discussion is of course, ‘justice’ and not simply ‘order.’ For one group's imposed ‘order’ can be another’s painful ‘injustice.’ Acceptance of ‘order’ can result from internalised oppression or simply from the fear of overwhelming force. The concept of war as purely defensive and
only as a last resort, is argued in the context of the right of all peoples to live in justice. Justice implies the common good, equality before the law enacted with the consent of the people, incorporating respect for both the tradition of the majority as well as the well-being of minorities.

To continue this ‘comparative dialogue in the mind of the reader,’ - as well as in the mind of the writer, we might examine the structure of this argument especially with regard to: (i) its specific rootedness in an ideological or theological tradition whose point of departure and criterion of judgement is the action in history of an infinitely compassionate God; (ii) the complexity and diversity of historical contexts: (iii) our nature as historical beings and (iv) the narrative structure of ethical discourse. In this way an adequate discourse will surpass any tendency toward the reduction of ethical argument to a set of pragmatic calculations, because both in Islam and in Christianity, it is a particular kind of community which is in engaged in the discourse; one which continually interrogates itself as to whether it has truly internalised its conviction that all discourse has to be congruent with belief in an infinitely compassionate God meditating on Whom always implies the ethical transformation of the moral agents themselves, something which is of course, central to the notion of the ‘greater Jihad.’ Such a point of reference, which functions as a horizon of understanding in seeking to evaluate our own discourse, is the crucial difference between a form of ethical argumentation constructed primarily by pragmatism and effectiveness, and one which allows that neither the originating nor the ultimate configuration of history lies in the grasp of human calculation.

**The Moral Agent**

Although human choice is always contextualized in an existential situation co-determined by the use and abuse of power and force and therefore in some sense, is already ‘violent,’ nonetheless violence understood as ‘violation’ and distinguishable from physical force as e.g., when used a ‘last resort’ against a tyrant, remains the act of an ethical agent.
Consequently, the manner of exercising power or force always entails an element of moral choice. A deterministically oriented view of violence does scant justice either to the human being’s capacity to choose, or to our understanding of God’s fidelity to His creation. For even if our capacity to make moral choices is partial, limited, co-determined and contingent, in freedom we remain capable of transcending this in a real and substantial, even if sometimes incomplete way, seeking to integrate our perceiving, deciding and acting into the dynamics of God’s mercy and compassion. In however situated a manner, we are always capable of ethical choice. For it is not enough just to state that an option to killing human beings in a systematic way is a matter only of ‘last resort.’ It is equally necessary to examine the structure of our argumentation where we to attempt to say what, and when, and how, and why, a chosen strategy is considered to be a matter of ‘last resort.’ This is not only a matter of rigorous argumentation, but also a matter of compassionate self-awareness and integrity. Not to do so risks simply assimilating a model of human striving driven by a merely instinctive energy which may be dangerously ego- or ethno-centric.

In short, the kind of people who are likely to be able to give a truly ethical response to the question as to what constitutes ‘a long-standing tyranny,’ or a ‘grave injustice’ and what counts as having ‘tried all reasonable means’ to overcome it, are likely to be people who apart from being cognitionally aware and philosophically rigorous – at least in an implicit way - are people who are always striving to overcome tendencies toward injustice and tyranny, as well as self-serving argumentation, within themselves.

In practice, human beings and religious traditions differ in their formulations of the nature of justice and in what constitutes a just war or a justified armed revolution. This follows in part from the manner in which what purports to be ethical discussion is itself embedded in different and sometimes mutually excluding narratives as evidenced in most long-standing and historically intractable conflicts. The Holy Land itself is the outstandingly pathetic example. Historically
speaking, it was the virtual impossibility for the would-be-objective observer of disentangling competing narratives – beginning with Victoria – that rules governing the conduct of war or *Jus in Bello* took on increasingly more importance than *Jus ad bellum*. In D. Bonhoeffer’s extraordinarily perspicacious and internally coherent reflection on tyrannicide – for him, as we know well, no merely theoretical exploration – the question of the self-awareness and ethical transformation of the moral agent is centred on the concept of ‘responsibility.’ This begins with surrendering any sense of self-righteousness because in principle, there can be no *right* to kill another human being. The manner in which ideologically or instinctivistically defined narratives are distorted in time of upheaval, into pure propaganda – as in the de-personalization and demonisation of one’s supposed enemies to make it all the easier to call on others to kill them – calls for a new perspective.

This comes about when one begins to take compassion seriously as a hermeneutic; to develop a parity of esteem and compassion for all who suffer, innocently or not, and finally to adopt the perspective of those who suffer. This surpasses the more common line of argumentation which sees the ‘last resort’ to armed force as one instrumental means among others, even if the last one to be adopted. It goes beyond a naïve assumption that ‘we know’ the ‘facts.’ Because ‘facts’ are always co-determined by ‘interests’ and interests as well as being sometimes rational and reasonable, are nearly always also shaped by a degree of self-deception and self-justification. An ethical line of argumentation constructed against the horizon of understanding that follows from faith in an infinitely compassionate God will, by contrast, always be ideologically self-critical because our ethical argumentation is derived not only from our rules and principles, but is woven from the texture of the great and little traditions and narratives that have formed our consciousness.

These in turn, are shaped by the filters through which we read the ‘great tradition.’ They determine the texts that are prioritised; the examples that are considered paradigmatic, as well as the tendencies that are sidelined or silenced. All too
often, it is the unexamined cultural assumptions that become the criterion of understanding the revealed religious tradition, and not the other way around. The consequence is the that the infinite mercy and compassion of God is not allowed to function as the criterion which relativizes, corrects and re-focuses our valuing, deciding and acting – most especially with regard to the use of armed force.\textsuperscript{94}

**The Greater Jihad**

What we have been seeking to outline here is may be considered as a first attempt at working out in contemporary terms what it means to engage in the ‘Greater Jihad.’ For the greater Jihad is nothing less than the on-going struggle against selfishness, intellectual laziness, myopic myth-making and corrupted and corrupting inadequate notions of God which are used as pseudo-legitimations for strategies to endorse purely instinctivist and self-serving goals. Those who engage in the greater Jihad are constantly calling their own methodological assumptions into question as they seek an ever more rigorous cognitional self-awareness. They are constantly examining the hidden motives for their actions, even the ones that externally seem most assured and applauded, always desiring to root their actions in transcendent values that seek the common good, and not merely the avoidance of personal or communalist discomfort and the pursuit of self-importance. All this striving is in turn, rooted in the never-ending quest to submit their lives to God, the source of all peace, who desires peace for all human beings, whoever or whatever or wherever they may be. That, it seems to me – in an attempt to understand another tradition - is the deeper meaning of Islam: that is to say, of submitting one’s thinking, valuing, deciding and acting to the spiritually perceived designs of an infinitely compassionate God.

Fundamental to the notion of Jihad is that the greater Jihad is the condition of the possibility of the lesser.\textsuperscript{95} As a consequence, only those prepared to engage in the greater can hope to have anything useful to say about engaging in the lesser. Our capacity to delude ourselves is great, and never more so than
when we compose a narrative that legitimates killing and depersonalises those we deem we have a ‘right’ to kill.

Some contemporary Islamic thinkers also draw attention to the paradigm shift in favour of peaceful means in conflict resolution, insisting that Islam’s own religious heritage provides a rich source for the development of such approaches. Instead of beginning with a discussion on the conditions under which war is justified, they seek to ground the discourse in peace and conflict resolution studies. Such studies point to seminal figures such as Abdul Ghafar Khan from NWFP – the ‘Frontier Gandhi’ – as a pioneer in the construction of a non-violent socio-political movement based on the Quran. This line of thought emphasizes peacemaking and negotiation as the first strategy to resolve conflict. It argues that active pacifism is a core concept in Islamic philosophy, since the Quran clearly upholds the sacredness of human life. Here peace as social harmony is considered possible only if one is at peace with God and living at peace with one’s fellow human beings. Many indeed have also discerned a tendency in Islam towards non-violence in the self-offering on mount Arafat during the hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca.

These approaches refuse to accept any dichotomisation between terms such as ‘peace’ and ‘Jihad’ stressing the comprehensive nature of the latter since ‘not all forms of armed violence are necessarily evil and not all forms of peace are necessarily good’ and stressing that peace is not just ‘western’ peace – nor one may add, just an ‘Islamic’ peace - since in a globalised world, peace is an indivisible concept. These approaches rather than simplistically applying the abrogation rule to legitimate a nostalgic longing for the return of a bygone era, stress the need to join with all humanity in the construction of a truly just and egalitarian world. This opens out into the need for a renewed fiqh based not simply on a given regime’s need for self-justification, but on the people’s right to a truly human future. The task of working for this defines Jihad not as a fearful reaction against otherness, but as a struggle for the advancement of world peace.
Contextualized Meaning

Conceptually, what is at issue is examining the hermeneutical question of determining the criteria according to which a ‘Great Tradition,’- in this case that constructed through the transmission and reception of the Quran Sherif down through the ages – and which has as a corollary, the respective weight assigned to a given selection of its content. This reading, transmitting and ‘receiving’ of the textual-scriptural tradition in our own very changed times and circumstances, is characterized by great developments in our awareness, especially of the complexity of human affairs. In particular, special attention has to be given on the one hand, to an awareness of the pluriform nature of the human family and the concept of universal human rights, and on the other hand, to the spectre of weapons of mass destruction which seriously call into question any possibility that war could ever be waged according to the principle of proportionality.¹⁰⁰

Under such conditions how do we retain a ‘basic identity of meaning’ between ‘our reading today’ the ‘reading of the ‘great minds’ in the ‘golden age’ and the reading of ‘the founding figures’ in ‘illo tempore’? It is equally futile to seek an identity of significance at the level of context – which has changed beyond all recognition – as it is at the level of practical procedures. What counts as an enlightened practical procedure under one set of circumstances e.g., allowing quadrigamy to soften the cruelty of rampant polygamy, has an entirely different ‘meaning’ in an era which affirms the equality in dignity of male and female.

The identity in signification or meaning is crucial to the transmission and reception of any religious tradition, especially a scriptural one. This identity in signification is found neither in the identity of context nor of practical procedure, both of which are impossible, but precisely in the identity of the relationship between each. This may be simply illustrated as follows:   A:B : : C:D   where A = the practical interpretations-procedures-priorities in illo tempore; and B = the contextualised matrix of
circumstances under which they were proposed; where \( C = \) the practical interpretations-procedures-priorities adequate and proper to today and where \( D = \) the matrix of circumstances that make today to be today and not yesterday. The assumption of the possibility of \( A=C \) is false as is that of the possibility of \( B=D \).

This model - which may be called a 'correspondence of relationships' model - respects both the Quranic tradition and its normative function within the tradition, the variety of contexts in which these scriptures emerged and the changed context in which they are transmitted and received. Adapting this hermeneutic frees the tradition from always searching for formulae to copy as well as from quite fantastic efforts to demonstrate that every new scientific discovery or philosophical insight is already present in a self-contained way in the scriptural text. The coherence of relationships model provides a coherent and dynamic way of keeping faith with the Quranic tradition and maintaining congruence between the community-forming narrative and our own reading-in-context today.

In doing so we allow our horizon of understanding to be shaped by an on-going attempt to adopt the perspective of those who suffer – the view from below – refined by a parity of esteem for all victims itself the fruit of sustained meditation on the infinite compassion of God. In this way one relativises the emotional and intellectual grip of myths perpetrated by both imperialist powers, revolutionary groups and solely ethnically defined communities; who as well as possessing a core of historical truth and justly-felt grievance, may also construct their narratives with self-serving and self-deluding fictions.

**Conclusion**

‘Jihad’ is a nuanced and sophisticated concept which may not be simplistically reduced to either militaristic or purely pacifist interpretations. It has a history of interpretation which precludes any simplistic or reductionist view. The burden of the textual evidence, as well as the history of its interpretation however, point towards viewing it primarily as the ‘greater’
Jihad: - struggle against self-delusion, moral cowardice and the idolatrous reduction of the notion of God to the dimensions of our own desires and ambitions. While resort to armed struggle – the lesser Jihad - may under stringent conditions be theoretically legitimated as a ‘last resort,’ only those who have engaged deeply and consistently in the greater Jihad, are likely to be able say when the conditions have been met to state that such a stage has been reached. The consensus of mainline Islamic thinking points towards the conclusion that the lesser Jihad is legitimate only in defence. At the same time, much contemporary thinking questions even the very possibility of a ‘just war’ in an era where weapons of mass destruction will inevitably be used. Progressive Islamic thinking emphasises the need for investment in peace building and conflict-resolution and the elaboration of a fiqh to strengthen such approaches to working for a truly human future. Islam and Christianity can surely dialogue with each other within these parameters so as to begin to unfold a new universal tradition on the restraint of war and the promotion of peace.
References and Notes

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1 Quite obviously all westerners are not Christian and all Christians are not western. Here the term ‘Western-Christian’ is used in a somewhat general sense. I am western through birth and upbringing and belong to the Catholic tradition. I have spent 20 years in Pakistan and care deeply abut its wellbeing and therefore about a meeting of minds and a discovery of communality between the Catholic and the Islamic traditions.

2 The United States Dept. of Justice has used its own ad hoc definitions of Jihad in indictments of individuals involved in “terrorist activities:” As used in this First Superseding Indictment, 'Jihad' is the Arabic word meaning 'holy war'. In this context, Jihad refers to the use of violence, including paramilitary action against persons, governments deemed to be enemies of the fundamentalist version of Islam." As used in this Superseding Indictment, 'violent Jihad' or 'Jihad' include planning, preparing for, and engaging in, acts of physical violence, including murder, maiming, kidnapping, and hostage-taking." in the indictment against several individuals including José Padilla. Cf. www.milnet.com and http://newes.findlaw.com

   Clearly there is a pragmatic reductionism at work here which scarcely does justice to the complexity and philosophical depth of the concept of ‘Jihad.”


   Jihad is sometimes referred to as the sixth pillar of Islam, although it occupies no official status as such. J. Esposito (2005), Islam: The Straight Path, pp.93.
It has been asserted that most modern studies of Jihad support the hypothesis that Islam lends itself easily to a justification of war. Cf. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam* in [eds] A. Azziz Sais et al, *Contemporary Islam: Dynamic or Static* (London, 2006) 131-171, p.131. This, hopefully, will not be the case in this paper which will consistently view the ‘lesser’ Jihad as a subset of and therefore conceptually governed by the ‘greater’ Jihad.

Jihad has been classified either as al-jihād al-akbar (the greater Jihad), the struggle against one's soul [sic] (nafs), or al-jihād al-asghar (the lesser Jihad), the external, physical effort, often implying fighting. Gibril Haddad has analyzed the basis for the belief that internal Jihad is the greater Jihad. ("Jihad al-akbar"). Haddad identifies the primary historical basis for this belief in a pair of similarly worded Hadith, in which Muhammed is reported to have told warriors returning home that they had returned from the lesser Jihad of struggle against unbelievers to a greater Jihad of struggle against lust. Gibril Haddad (2005-02-28). Documentaiton of “Greater” Jihad.

This construction of course begs the question as to what ‘universal scope’ might have meant during the formative period of the religion. Did it mean the boundaries, however widely or narrowly drawn, of Arabia? Did it mean the known world?


J. Burton “Naskh”, in NEI Vol. 7 pp. 1009f.

M. Bonner notes the work of M. Hinds (`Maghazi and Sira in Early Islamic scholarship’ in *La Vie du Prophete Mahomet* (Paris, 1983), p.65.) which argues that the term Maghazi went “from being a record of a past collective quest….to one which was restricted to the period and background of the Prophet, and then to one which was further restricted (at least by al-Waidi) to the Medinan period of the Prophet’s life.” Cf. Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times”p.404.

The contrast invites comparison with the typical charismatic-institutional dialectic in most religious systems, especially during their formative stages. From this perspective, the modern arrogation of the right to summon people to violent action without reference to properly constituted competent authority, could be viewed as a corruption of an ancient charismatic function prior to the political institutionalisation of Islam in the caliphate.

Bonner refers here to an earlier work of his own: ”Ja’a’il and Holy War” p.57 cf. “Arab-Byzantine relations in early Islamic times” p.419.n 76. In a similar way there is nothing, according to Bonner about martyrdom in Yahya’s recension of the Muwatta. This he argues means that when Shaybani visited Medina c. 767 these traditions had not yet come into circulation. Ibid. p.421.

Bonner adds that; ‘It is noteworthy too that Shafi’s notion of sultan develops after the stages that are being examine here.’ Ibid. p.424-425.


As translated by Picktall, op. cit., p.251. Arberry’s translation is virtually identical, op. cit. p.179. It is noteworthy – and worth further study - that this is the only Sura of the Quran that does not begin with; “In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.”


Clearly one sees here a development from earlier writing, corresponding to the growing complexity of Muslim political life and thereby the institutionalisation of Muslim structures.

“Islam and War: a study in comparative ethics,” p.35.

Although exploring the question in detail lies outside the scope to this paper, it goes without saying that the appeal to religion by Western political leaders in time of war, is in every case, by no means justifiable according to the Christian principles of what constitutes a ‘just war.’ The late Pope John Paul II repeatedly stated that the invasion of Iraq was not a justifiable war. What is more, even in military undertakings that might claim a measure of justification, not every military action, e.g., bombing unarmed civilians, of which there are all too many examples, is morally justifiable.


T.W. Juynboll “Aman” NEI vol. 1 p.325.

“Islam and War” p. 31.

Kelsay quotes F. Donner’s view that they did so partly by incorporating practises both from pre-Islamic Arabia and from conquered peoples thus creating a cultural consensus. Ibid. p.60.
Many Christians in Pakistan show a deep appreciation of the Sufi tradition especially as exemplified in the thought of Sufis like Bulhe Shah and Shah Abdul Latif. This appreciation, when elevated to a criterion of understanding, is open to the charge that it prioritises an alternative form of Islam over its main doctrinal content. This charge has often been levelled against Christians trying to appreciate Islam. Edward Said wrote that L. Massignon used Hallaj to "embody, to incarnate, values essentially outlawed by the main doctrinal system of Islam, a system that Massignon himself described mainly in order to circumvent it with al-Hallaj". (“Orentalism,” p. 272).

To dialogue with Islam in Pakistan however, is to dialogue with Sufism. This is the Islam of mystical longing, the Islam of personal interior experience. This is an Islam characterized not by legalistic observance, but by the sheer delight in seeking and worshipping the God who dwells not in mosques or temples or books, but in the human heart. While this is the popular form of Islam, it would be quite inaccurate to categorize it solely as popular religiosity. It is mystical theology of the highest order, including practical guidelines into the stages of prayer by which one enters into deep personal communion with God.

At a popular level, this is the Islam which appeals to the common man in its deconstruction of the claims of official religion and its self-important representatives. It is a form of Islam which democratizes holiness: one’s religion is only as real as one’s actual experience of God.
It also provides the basis of one important part of social life in the festivals or melas that are organized around the tombs of the great Sufi saints now become the pirs, who mediate the concretely salvific presence of the divine. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of these events in the actual religious life of the people. Cf. John O’Brien, “Our presence to the world of Islam in Pakistan” in ‘Islamocristiana’ vol.29, (2003), 17-38.

The famous text is: “God has hidden wrath in his mercy and hidden mercy in his wrath” Mas. V: 419 Cf. R.A. Nicholson “The Mattnavi of Jalalud’din Rumi” vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1936) p.27. I do not consider this to be just a neat parallelism: wrath is contained within mercy and subject to it; mercy always prevails. Cf. Also V.632 “wrath is concealed under the semblance of good fortune; and 11. 1446, “Kill the cow of your ego as quickly as you can so that your inner spirit can come to life and attain true awareness.”


E. Tynan “Djihad” in NEI vol. 2 p. 538f.

‘Islam and war’ pp. 49 &71. In this context it is also interesting to note the restraint in the rhetoric of the Ayatollah Khomeini in the earlier part of the ‘imposed war’ when he refused to allow his army to invade Iraq when they had pushed back the invading Iraqi army. He was opposed to an ‘offensive’ war.


At the time there were about 12 million Christian subjects in the Ottoman empire.


“The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam” (Lahore 1971 ed.) p.174. Iqbal went on to argue that the arrangement in the Persian constitution of 1906 providing for a separate ‘ecclesiastical’ committee of Ulema having the power to supervise the legislative activity of the majlis was: “a dangerous arrangement.”


“This religion of Islam” (California, 1967), p.67

One may also add that what many religious ideologues describe as ‘belief’ is actually ‘doctrine;’ and usually their version of it.

Even a cursory acquaintance with the Islamic sources would seem to suffice to show that this view cannot be substantiated. Consider the Hadith, which recounts that when the Prophet of Islam stood to respect a funeral and was told that it was a Jewish funeral, he wondered aloud “Is not that a soul!” Cf. Sahih al-Bukhari 2: 23: 399.

“Religious violence in Islam,” p. 64.

The Muslim Ulema had actually opposed the creation of Pakistan, passing a Fatwa declaring M. A. Jinnah a Kaffir on account of his secular politics. Z. Malik, “Religious Minorities in the Historical Context of Pakistan” in Eds., D. Mughal and J. Jivan, “Religious Minorities in Pakistan: Struggle for Identity” (Rawalpindi, 1996), 1-20, p.6 When Jinnah turned down an offer from the Khaksars to join with the Muslim League if the sought-after Pakistan would be based on Islamic principles, they branded him the “Kaffir-e-Azam.” Ayesha Jamal, “The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah and the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan,” (Cambridge, 1985), p.91.

When Jinnah was asked if Pakistan would be a secular or a theocratic state he replied; ‘You are asking me a question that is absurd. I do not know what a theocratic state means.” J. ud-Din “Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah” (Lahore, 1960), p.422. The acceptable face of both dogmatic Islam and of Sufism is constantly changing in Pakistan depending on what the Government of the day seeks to religiously endorse. The re-invention process is not without its lighter moments: Zia once sought to have Jinnah named ‘Hazrat Jinnah!’


For F. Fanon the seminal writer on post-colonial armed struggle the world is “divided into two compartments, this world cut in two is inhabited by two different species,” (cm. Qutb!). The “existence of an armed struggle shows that the people are decided to trust violent methods only,” and “the practice of violence
binds them together as a whole since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence.” F. Fanon, “The Wretched of the Earth,” (London, 1965) pp. 30, 66, 73.

67 Cf. C. Troll “Founder of Islam still an Enigma” in ‘The Tablet’ 11 November 2006, p.25, where he takes issue with K. Armstrong’s equally eisogetical interpretation which on his reading, baldly states that Muhammad: “eventually abjured warfare and adopted a non-violent policy,” describing that statement as bizarre and corresponding to no Muslim account of the issue.


72 “Al-Musawwar” (Cairo) 12-10-1973 as cited by Peters, op. cit., p.133.

73 In many cases parents were kept in the dark about their son’s – or daughter’s – intention. The youth were told by Hamas leaders that they would receive seventy virgins and seventy wives in heaven and their families would receive between 12-15,000$. This amount was doubled in 2002. M. Jurgensmeyer, “Terror in the mind of God,” (Los Angles 2003), p.79.

74 Quoted in M. Jurgensmeyer, “Terror in the mind of God,” p. 72.

75 In his first address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Jinnah had emphasized that religion was a personal matter that had: “nothing to do with the business of the state.” C.M. Nain, “Iqbal Jinnah and Pakistan: The Vision and the Reality” (Lahore, 1984), pp. 208-210. Referring to minorities Jinnah had said: “They will be in all respects, the citizens of Pakistan without any distinction of caste or creed.” M.M. Shaheed (ed.) “Jinnah: Speeches and Statements“ (Lahore, 1976),
As one example among many beloved of a large body of Pakistanis, cf. Bulhe Shah’s poem “Bulhe ki jannan me kaun” whereby he explicitly excludes himself both from organised religion and from blasphemy; from being either a Muslim or a Hindu, and arguing that it is essential to do this to know that “which is first and last” i.e., God. Cf. M.A Ghaffaar, “Masterworks of Punjabi Sufi Poetry: Bulleh (sic) Shah” Vol. 1, (Lahore 2005), pp. 195-205.


The resemblance to Logos-Christology and their common resemblance to the emanation of Sophia from God in the Hellenised Jewish Wisdom tradition seems clear.


Id. “Kalam,” in NEI vol. 4, p.468f.

Cf. H.S. Nyberg, “al-Mu’tazila” in (ed.s) H.A.R. Gibb and H. Kramers, “Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam” pp.421-427. Its characteristic doctrine was of the state intermediate between belief and unbelief as a way of dealing with the case of a Muslim believer who was also a sinner.


This line of reasoning has important implications for political theory. The ‘analogy of being’ implies both the unworkability of theocracy as well as of a totally privatised view of religion. If socio-political structures are to based on a substantive degree of consensus – the democratic principle – then religion (which will always be an interpreted religion or religions) may neither
dominate the socio-political sphere nor be systematically excluded from it.


89 Obviously one is not simplistically arguing that Avicenna and Aquinas thought exactly the same on all questions. Muslim philosophy had distinguished essence from existence. Avicenna followed Alfarabi in regarding existence as an accident of essence. Aquinas followed them in their way of approaching the distinction (De ente et essentia c.4) but argued to a different conclusion whereby created essences and existences arise together, but essence exists only through existence which in created being is thus more fundamental. For Aquinas it is the implied contingency of created beings that immediately points to the existence of a Being who is the source of finite existence. Cf. F. Copleston, “A History of Philosophy: Medieval Philosophy, vol.;2” (New York, 1948, 1993), pp. 334-335. The points at issue in the present paper are: (i) Aquinas was influenced by Avicenna and quoted him often; (ii) they both believed faith and reason were congruent; (iii) they both built on what they regarded as the best philosophical mediation available to them [Aristotelianism] to construct a common rationality; (iv) this made for a true dialogue between their positions even though historically they were not contemporaries. (v) this provides a paradigm for contemporary dialogue.

90 Cf. “Libertius Nuntius” (Vatican, 1984) translated into English as ‘Instruction on Certain aspects of the “Theology of Liberation” (CTS. London, 1984) nos. 78-79. Note the many qualifications with which the notion of ‘last resort’ is hedged.
Muslim scholars frequently make the same point cf. note 99 below.

B. Walker, in “Theological Ethics and Revolutionary Armed Force” Unp. Doctoral thesis (Dublin, 1989) has argued very closely that moral reasoning and ethical argumentation in working out the understanding of recourse to armed struggle within a specifically religious tradition, has to be a specifically theological form of reasoning and may not limit itself to technical or instrumental argumentation.

All but one of the Suras of the Quran begin with “Bismillah…” “In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate” as translated-interpreted by A.J. Arbarry “The Koran Interpreted” (London, 1964) passim. I am using the term ‘compassionate’ to attempt to communicate the theological density of this antiphon. It is surely noteworthy that the only exception to this is Sura 9 ‘Repentance,’ noted for many “stern commandments” cf. M. Pickthall, ‘The Holy Quran with English translation” (Lahore, ndg.) p.249.

This is true of all religions, because all religions can be corrupted. The cult of violence in certain areas of Islamic fundamentalism finds its mirror image in comparable movements in some quarters of American Protestantism, Zionism and just about every religious tradition at some time or other. Nearly 40 years ago Cardinal Spellman of New York once infamously declared in relation to the Vietnam war that: “we shall win because God is on our side.”

Gibril Haddad has analyzed the basis for the belief that internal Jihad is the greater Jihad. ("Jihad al-akbar"). Haddad identifies the primary historical basis for this belief in a pair of similarly worded Hadith in which Muhammed is reported to have told warriors returning home that they had returned from the lesser Jihad of struggle against unbelievers to a greater Jihad of struggle against lust. Although Haddad notes that the authenticity of both hadeeth is questionable, he nevertheless

96 Cf. E. Easwaran, “A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Non-violent soldier of Islam (Petaluma, 1984). During 1932 the Khudai Khidmatgar involved women in the movement. This caused the police to be 'kind of in a dilemma', five police officers were suspended due to 'horrible reports about violence used against young female volunteers'. These young women were truly heroic in their commitment to non-violent protest.

97 It appeals to Quran 8:39 in support of this: “If they incline to peace, you should also incline to it and trust in God.”

98 “If anyone saved a life, it would be as if he had saved the life of a whole people” Q 5:32.


100 This approach is characteristic of contemporary Catholic teaching on war at least since the address of Paul VIth to the UN in 1966 where he passionately pleaded for an end to the assumption that war was inevitable. (“Non a la guerre; jamais la guerre!”)The same idea can be found in Muslim thinkers who argue that in the modern world, Muslims cannot use violence; as enunciated in the fifth of eight theses on peace in “The non-violent Crescent: Eight Theses on Muslim Non-violent Actions in [ed.s] C. Satha-Anand et alii, (Honolulu, 1993), pp.7-26.

101 I borrow this approach from C. Boff, “Teologia e Pratica: Teologia do Politico e suas Mediacoes” (Petropolis, 1978), pp. 43-59. The same idea is found in many writers on the subject of the transmission of tradition in a changed context.