

Boko Haram and the Ideology of Qutbism: Understaning the Basis for Religious Terrorism and Islamic-Fascism

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Abstract

Terrorism has become endemic to humanity. The development of 9/11 in the year 2001 in the United States of America elevated terrorism to the level of global threat. Countries of the World across economic, religious and cultural divides have witness varying degrees and different manifestations of terrorism. In other words, there is no specific rationale in the status of a state in the contemporary time that makes it attractive or less attractive to terrorism or terrorist attack. Terrorism as a global trend attracts networking, alliance-building and coalition forming. As such, local or state based groups have connection with foreign terrorist groups or organization and they exchange information, intelligence and weaponry. Boko Haram is the name-tag for a terrorist group that has maintained a domineering posture in terrorist activities in the western Africa since late 1990s, with its operations notably felt in; Nigeria's moth-eastern region, Chad republic, Niger republic and the Cameroon. The paper linked Boko Haram terrorism to ideology of Qutbism as an intellectual base which can only be defeated intellectually. The paper argues that the basic tenets of Islamic-Fascism are structured on a similar puritan beliefs, faith and orientations as Salafism, Wahabbism and Deobandi; and that while puritan Islamic orientation may have set the tone and foundation of the ideology of Qutbism, in reality, it was the Islamic theoreticians that provided the intellectual framework for it. The position of the paper is that terrorism is not Islamic but that the decline of the contemporary Muslim community as a result of practicing a corrupted form of Islam is the driver for religious terrorism. The paper conclude that the war against terrorism can only be fought at multiple levels and one of these levels is attacking the basis that provides justification for the activities of terrorism i.e. Qutbism. Relevant portions of the Hadith and Qur'an should be used to provide *hujjat*, that is, proof, to show that insurgents who kill non-combatants is guilty of *baghy* (armed aggression) which is a capital offence in Islamic law.

Keywords: Qutbism, Boko Haram, Terrorism, Islamic Fascism, Violence, Sharia, Globalization

Introduction

A fact of our existence and global reality is that our world is engulfed in the throes of violent conflicts ranging from politically motivated to religious motivated conflicts. In a bid to make sense from the global proliferation of conflicts, scholars have made various attempts to categorise them into types. Hence, terms such as ‘internal conflicts’ (Brown 1996), ‘asymmetrical warfare’ (Mack, 1974, 2008; Arreguin-Toft, 2001), ‘civilian-based civil wars’ (Anderson, 1999); ‘fire next door’ (Francis, 2006), ‘new wars’ (Kaldor and Vashee 1997), ‘small wars’ (Harding 1994), ‘civil wars’ (King 1997), ‘ethnic conflicts’ (Stavenhagen 1996), ‘conflicts in post-colonial states’ (van de Goor et al 1996), ‘ethno-religious wars’ (Furley, 1995), ‘greed and grievance’ (Berdal and Malone, 2004, Collier, 2004), ‘guerrilla/insurgence warfare’ (Clapham, 2000), and ‘unconventional warfare’ (Merari, 2007), have emerged as labels for the types and nature of global conflicts.

This, notwithstanding, current events around the globe have shown that the greatest threat man is facing today and perhaps in the future is not nuclear weapons, military coups or any pandemic or endemic diseases but religion and religious differences which have spawned a form of terrorism that seem to surpass two of the greatest tragedies of our modern history - the two World Wars. The exacerbation of this form of terrorism has led to an inquiry as to why religion is more powerful and controlling than all other phenomena – politics, military arms and scientific advancement. The answer lies in that religion is not just a social, cultural, political or ideological phenomenon but incorporates all of them within itself. Experience has shown that man is more willing to die for the sake of his religion and religious beliefs than for any political, social or ideological reason.

Ancient etchings and carvings on walls of caves have shown that religion is as old as mankind with its roots firmly embedded in the inner recesses of the human spirit. Man’s travails through this world have produced a tapestry of religious practices and ideologies that only serve to create more problems than they solve. Between 800 B.C.E. and 300 B.C.E., four great systems of thoughts and belief systems were formed by religion. The Chinese Confucianism, and Daoism provided the world with religious doctrines of how to lead an ethical life that would be in harmony with nature and the cosmos. The Indian religious doctrines which emerged from Jains, Buddhism and Hinduism saw existence as an endless cycle of birth and rebirth (samsara). The basis of these three religions is that how one lives his life while here on earth may determine how he will return at rebirth. This belief rests on the concept of Karma which says that every good or evil action has its effects. However, the existence of an all-powerful God has characterised the Hebrews or Israelites and Muslim religious philosophy such that they were the first people in history to base their identity as a nation on faith in a single God. Finally, the Greek philosophical traditions emerged in the sixth century B.C.E. and much of what constitutes the contents of Western philosophy and science today are derived from the Greek tradition of rational inquiry (Craig et al, 2009, McKay et al 2007).

Nigeria has had, before now, her own share of religious ‘riots.’ A defining characteristic of these ‘riots’ were either that they were internal (intra-religion); that is, directed at other Muslim sects who were considered *kafirs* or unbelievers as was the case between the Izala in Zuru and the Darika in Sokoto state, or external (inter-religion); that is, such as were directed at people

of other religions, such as Christians (Albert, 2004). Among the most notable of such inter-religious and intra-religious ‘riots’ (as popularly termed by the media and politicians who seek to downplay such acts of religious terrorism for their benefits) were the Kaduna Polytechnic religious riot (1988), the Katsina revolt of 1991, the Bauchi religious conflict of 1991, the Kano and Jalingo upheavals of 1991 and 1992, the Zango-Kataf crisis of 1992, the Funtua uprising of 1993 and the most notorious Maitatsine riot of 1980, the 1982 Fagge crisis, the Reinhard Boonke riot of 1991 and the Akaluka incident of 1994 (Ukanah 2011, Albert 2004). Of all these, none has been so devastating and protracted as the present Boko Haram Islamic terrorist sect that has its operational base in Borno State (Northeast) of Nigeria. Its operations have been both intra- and inter-religion especially with the assassination of the Emir of Gwoza and other prominent Muslim leaders and the bombings of Christians’ churches which have resulted in many deaths.

Boko Haram has surpassed all the other groups and acts of religious terrorism ever experienced in Nigeria in its tenacity, reach, sophistication and modus operandi. This is not surprising when one recognises the fact that al Qaeda (The Base), has lived up to its name and its modus operandi has become the basis for other religious sects and religiously motivated terrorism (Agara et al, 2017). Boko Haram as an active terrorist organisation has links with the Taliban from which it derives active logistic, monetary, and other supports and by extension an affiliate of al Qaeda with which it shares similar ideological underpinnings. This partly explains the unprecedented dimensions, when compared with earlier cases, to which Boko Haram has carried its operations such as kidnapping and abductions, targeted assassinations and mass killings of innocent villagers and the wanton destructions of villages.

Conceptual Clarification: What is Terrorism?

While it is not possible to exhaust all the answers to this simple question, we shall adopt an approach that attempts to briefly provide the answer within the ambits of the ‘WH’ questions format (that is, what, why, who, when, where and how).

What is Terrorism? According to Juergensmeyer (2004, pp. 34-38), the root word comes from Latin *terrere*, meaning “to cause to tremble.” Terror therefore, becomes a “symbolic act designed to influence political behaviour by extra-normal means, entailing the use or threat of violence.” However, current attempts to define it can be grouped into two; official and academic definitions. Schmid and Jongman (2005) have compiled a number of official definitions of terrorism. For instance, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives”. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) states that terrorism is “any activity that involves an act that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; and ... must also appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping.” The US Department of Defense defines terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to

intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological objectives.”

Not surprisingly, these definitions betray the priorities and interests of the different governmental bodies. For instance, given the specific mandate of the FBI, it is not surprising that its definition address the psychological aspect of terrorism, stressing on the intimidatory and coercive aspect of terrorism. The Department of Defense definition seems to be the more complete than the others because it focuses on threat as much as the actual act of violence and the targeting of the whole society as well as the government even though the definition did not distinguish between attacks on military combatant and non-combatant civilians. Three commonalities can be discerned from all of these definitions; (1) the use of violence, (2) political objectives; and (3) the intention of sowing fear in the target population.

However, academic definitions are rather more complex. For instance, Jenkins (1980, p. 2) has insisted that terrorism should be defined “by the nature of the act, not by the identity of the perpetrators or the nature of their cause.” Thus, Hoffman (2006, p. 40) has defined terrorism “as the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change, while Combs (2003, p. 11) has defined it as “a synthesis of war and theatre, a dramatisation of the most proscribed kind of violence – that which is perpetrated on innocent victims – played before an audience in the hope of creating a mood of fear, for political purposes.” Nicholson (2003) has defined terrorism as “the deliberate killing of non-military personnel in order to pursue a claimed political goal through exertion of pressure on a society”. Shimko (2018, p. 319) has opined that terrorism is “the indiscriminate use or threat of violence to advance social, political, economic, or religious objectives by creating a climate of fear.” Rourke (2008, p. 316) has defined terrorism by highlighting the features common to it thus; “terrorism is (1) violence; (2) carried out by individuals, non-governmental organisations, or covert government agents or units; that (3) specifically target civilians; (4) uses clandestine attack methods, such as car bombs and hijacked airliners; and (5) attempts to influence politics.” Finally, Kegley and Wittkopf (1999, p. 189) have defined it as “criminal acts and threats against a targeted actor for the purpose of arousing fear in order to get the target to accept the terrorists’ demands.” On our part, we submit that terrorism can be seen as acts of violence deliberately perpetrated on innocent victims (third parties) in an effort to or with an intention to coerce or force the opposition or persons to act in a desired way.

While not claiming to be exhaustive, however, deriving from the various definitions of terrorism above, it is clear that terrorism involves three basic components: the perpetrator(s), the victim(s) and the target(s) of the violence (Badey 2010/2011, p. 1). In some cases, the perpetrators are seen as fanatics, disaffected groups or minorities who employed terrorism as a tool to oppose the rule and the oppression of an established and militarily superior power (Nicholson, 2003). The victims are seen as innocent people who have no part or are directly involved in the struggle and the struggle or target is political. Victims are not chosen because of their involvement or guilt but because their death or injuries are determined to create not only fear but also to shock the sensibilities of normal people such that pressure can be made to

bear on the opposition or in most cases on the government to concede to the demands or make some concessions to the terrorists. If this is the case, then it means that terrorist violence is merely a means to an end. Violence, mass deaths and injuries caused by terrorists' attacks are basically geared towards achieving an end. Within a state system, the end can only be a political goal. However, much controversy attends the admission of a political goal for terrorists' attacks.

Why is there Terrorism? It is interesting to note that the reasons or causes commonly associated with why insurgent recourse to the use of terrorism actually differentiates between political and religious induced terrorist acts. The difference between them is important basically because they are predicated on different value systems, mode of justification and legitimacy for their actions rests on a different concept of morality, belief systems and world view. While for the secular terrorist, terrorism becomes a means to an end, for the religious terrorist, terrorism is an end in itself. Violence, therefore, becomes a sacred instrument or means to achieve a divine duty in response to a divine imperative. They are not guided by any man-imposed political or social imperatives, but see their acts as a sacramental duty with transcendental dimension expedients for the attainment of their goals. This explains in part why religious motivated acts of terrorism are more intense and claim more fatalities than the less relatively more discriminating violence perpetrated secular terrorists. Guided by a perception that sees themselves; that is, religious terrorists, not as 'insiders' or members of the system, but as 'outsiders' seeking to effect fundamental changes in the existing order along certain doctrinal lines, the religious terrorist has a high sense of responsibility coupled with a sense of alienation that enables him to distance himself from the victims of his atrocities and thus able to contemplate ever more destructive means of expressing his dastardly acts. This explains the rhetoric common in the vocabulary of such demagogues denigrating and dehumanising their victims in terms such as 'infidels,' 'dogs,' 'children of satan,' and many others. The deliberate use of such terms not only justify the acts of violence since the victims are not seen or regarded as human beings, but also justifies and erodes away very form of constraints on violence and emboldens the perpetrators.

As Rapoport (1984, p. 659) has noted, religion has provided the only justification for terrorism and it was not until 1980, as a result of the repercussions of the revolution in Iran the previous year that the first "modern" religious terrorist groups emerged (Hoffman, 2008). Thus, going by White's (2000) submission, religious violence centers around three sources; (1) the feeling, expressed as a religious obligation, by some religious group to purify the world for a new epoch. This, White (2003, p. 7), has called "religious eschatology," (2) the feeling that a religious group has been specifically chosen and so may destroy others in the cause of righteousness. This type of feeling leads to zero-tolerance of others who are not of the same religious belief and, (3) some people may become so consume with a particular cause that they create surrogate religious belief to advance it. These three seem to characterise instances and places where religious violence has predominated.

Who are the Terrorists? A major misconception is to think of all terrorists as the down-trodden of the earth, the disenfranchised and marginalised, illiterate and uneducated people in the society. This misconception is as a result of the fact that terrorism has been more frequently associated with violence committed by the politically disenfranchised and marginalised people

in the society seeking for political accommodation in their society. However, the findings from a research conducted by Bergen and Pandey (2008, p. 148) into the background of the 79 terrorists responsible for five of the worst anti-western terrorist attacks in recent times – the World Trade Centre bombing in 1993, the African embassy bombings in 1998, the 9/11 attack, the Bali nightclub bombings in 2002 and the London bombings on July 7, 2005 - revealed that more than half of the group had university education, two with doctoral degrees and two working for their doctoral degrees. Of the sample, 48% were western educated and 58% had science and technical degrees. According to them, engineering was the most popular subject studied by terrorists in their sample. They concluded from their findings that there is a strong correlation between technical education and terrorism, thereby suggesting that “perpetrating large-scale [terrorist] attacks requires not only a college [university] education but also a facility with technology.”

Of equal note is the fact that Osama bin Laden was an American trained engineer from a very wealthy Saudi family. His deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri was a surgeon from a distinguished Egyptian family. Ali Mohammed, Al Qaeda’s long time military trainer, was a former Egyptian army major with a degree in psychology who started work on his doctoral degree in Islamic history before moving to America in the mid-1980s. Nigeria’s own export and claim to international terrorism, 23 years old Umar AbdulMutallab, is from a wealthy family, educated and well travelled. According to Shehu (2011, p. 24) the former leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Lawan, left for further studies at the University of Medina. This paved the way for Mallam Muhammad Yusuf who was described as brilliant and a civil servant with Yobe State Government. As Shehu (2011, p. 28) had stated, Boko Haram under the leadership of Yusuf,

was able to attract membership from the families of the high and mighty in Borno State. In fact, at a point, one of the sons of the former Secretary to the State government in one of the state of the north east region was a member of this group.. Many other members of prominent families from Borno and Yobe states reportedly join or later became sympathetic to his cause and supported it financially.

Psychologists and sociologists have attempted to identify the traits most commonly related to a mindset willing to either join or become a terrorist (Agara, 2016). It is believed that if these traits can be identified, it then becomes possible to predict, identify and hence prevent the emergence of terrorist groups. Along this line, Hacker (1976, pp. 8-9) has identified three categories of persons who commit terrorism and these are “crazies, criminals and crusaders.” According to him, the ‘crazies’ “are emotionally disturbed individuals who are driven to commit terrorism by reasons of their own that often do not make sense to anybody else.” The ‘criminals’ “perform terrorist acts for more easily understood reasons: personal gains.” These transgressed the law of the society being in full control of their faculties and senses and both their motives and goals for doing so can be clearly understood by everybody even though it is deplorable to us. The ‘crusaders’ commit terrorist acts because they “seek not personal gain, but prestige and power for a collective cause.” Like the ‘crazies’ their reasons for doing this are often unclear both to themselves and others, their ultimate goals are even frequently less

understandable. They commit these acts because they believe that they are serving a higher cause. The basic difference in the mindsets of these three types is very clear. For instance, the criminal does what he does with anticipation that he will live to enjoy the reward of his illegality, whereas, the crusader will be more willing to blow himself up along with his targets or victims because their service carries the assurance of a greater reward in the hereafter. The crusader is always a well trained professional, disciplined, obedient and committed to the cause. They are not ready to negotiate any resolution because such action is viewed as a betrayal of the cause and there is little the negotiator can offer because the crusader does not desire any personal gain or safe passage out of the situation. Their belief in the cause and justification of their action makes death not a penalty but a path to glory and a greater reward than can be offered here on earth by either the negotiator or government.

The search for a terrorist personality or mindset that would act as a common denominator is legitimate but may prove futile. However, this has not dissuaded profilers from embarking on this journey. O'Ballance (1979:300-301) has offered one of such profiles of a successful terrorist. He identified certain characteristics such as (1) Dedication which implies being a 'fedayeen', a man willing and ready to sacrifice everything for the cause. Dedication also implies absolute obedience to the leader of the group. (2) Personal bravery which includes the possibility of death, injury, imprisonment or even tortured. (3) Devoid of human emotions of pity or remorse. This is necessary because most of the victims of terrorist attacks are made up of innocent victims; men, women and children, who are not in any way related to the cause but who he must be prepared to kill without hesitation in pursuit of the cause. (4) Fairly high standard of intelligence. This is necessary because they are expected to "collect, collate and assess information, devise and put into effect complex plans and evade police, security forces and other hostile forces." (5) Fairly high degree of sophistication. This is particularly essential because terrorists are expected to mingle with the most sophisticated crowd without standing out. (6) Reasonably well educated and possess a fair share of general knowledge. So, looking for terrorists among the down trodden and the illiterate is pathetic.

When and Where do they Operate? A simple answer to this question and which the present reality agrees with would be anytime, anywhere and everywhere. To aid our understanding, we must recourse to the five pillars of Islam which a Muslim faithful is expected to strictly adhere to and observe. One of such pillars, supported by many relevant passages in the Quran and the hadiths, stipulated the need for a jihad. This has become the fundamental basis for Muslim militancy and terrorism. According to Islamic laws, it is lawful and legitimate for Muslim faithful to wage war anytime, anywhere and everywhere against four types of enemies; infidels, apostates, rebels and bandits. Of these four only the first two counts as a religious obligation for all Muslims, hence the jihad.

As Lewis (2003, p. 31) has noted, classical Muslim jurists have made a distinction between offensive and defensive wars. It is only in offensive war that jihad becomes mandatory and an obligation to all Muslims and may therefore be performed by volunteers and professional soldiers. The defensive war becomes an obligation of every able bodied individual to defend Islam anytime, everywhere and anywhere. It is this principle that Osama bin Laden invoked in

his declaration of a universal war against America and its allies. It is also on this principle that the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria can be and should be understood. They are waging both a defensive and offensive wars against the Nigerian state, infidels (non Muslims and northerners) and apostates (those leaders that have been deemed as compromising and not following the true teaching of Islam).

The mentality and justification of Islamic fundamentalists rests on this principle which have been upheld and held sacrosanct by all faithful Muslim for most of fourteen centuries of recorded Muslim history. To aid our understanding of what has been dubbed indiscriminate attacks and killing of innocent civilians and the tenacity of Islamic jihadists, we must also look inward to the Muslim tradition as enunciated in the hadiths. According to the Muslim tradition, the world is divided into two houses; the House of War (*Dar al-Harb*) and the House of Islam (Peace) (*Dar al-Islam*). In the House of Peace where Muslim governments rule in accordance with Islamic laws and principles, there is no need for a jihad, but in the House of War where the world is still ruled and governed by infidels, then jihad becomes an imperative and an obligation. The presumption here is that jihad becomes a continuous duty until the whole world has accepted the Muslim faith. Hence, Muslim terrorists can operate anytime, anywhere and everywhere as long as there is *Dar al-Harb*, the continued existence of which provides a basis and justification for continued attacks and killing.

How do they Operate? Many operational methods have been adopted by Islamic terrorists. Most prominent of their modus operandi are assassination, kidnapping, armed banditry, robberies, suicide bombers and killing not only military personnel, government officials and those deemed to be apostates, but in most cases, also innocent civilian victims. These are in addition to other illegal acts such as cyber fraud; drug trafficking, forgery and forging of documents, extortion for protection and creation of screen companies for illegal laundering of money. The wide range of illegal activities engaged in by terrorist organizations, irrespective of whether they are politically or religiously motivated have prompted scholars to argue that the fault line separating terrorist groups from organized criminal organizations have now become blurred (Makaraenko 2004, de la Corte 2013, Sanderson 2004, Wannenburg 2003).

The practice of assassination in the Islamic world dates back to the antiquity. The word 'assassin' is derived from the Arabic word *Hashishiyya*, the name given to a Muslim sect active in Iran and Syria from the 11th to the 13th century. This sect is credited with transforming the act of assassination into a system and later an ideology. Their actions were directed against Muslim leaders whom they saw as impious usurpers and it is in this sense that this sect can be said to be the true predecessors of modern Islamic terrorists. In fact the name *Hashishiyya* was given to them because of the fact that members of the sect drugged themselves on hashih (hemp, marijuana) before going for their assignment. The members of this sect, rather, saw themselves as *fedayeen*, a term derived from the Arabic word *fida'i* meaning 'one who is ready to sacrifice his life for the cause.' It would seem that Boko Haram has also perfected these acts of assassination and tyrannicide.

Boko Haram has also perfected the use of tyrannicide which is the assassination of a tyrant political (secular or religious) leader. The leading advocate of the doctrine of tyrannicide was a Spanish Jesuit scholar, Juan de Mariana, whose principal work *De Regis Institutiones*, was banned in France (Zasra and Lewis 1957). Although the practice of tyrannicide was not an Islamic innovation, it is recognised in Islam and justified by the fact that such leaders have deviated from the 'path of God'. Such leaders and individuals are regarded as apostates and the rule of war against such are stricter than against unbeliever. In the average Muslim's eyes, the apostate or renegade is worse than an unbeliever because while the unbeliever has not seen the light and may eventually see it, the renegade has known the true faith and abandoned it. For this offence, an ordinary person punishment is death, but for the ruler, death usually comes through assassination. This point is made clear by 'Abd al-Salam Faraj, an Egyptian executed for assassinating President Sadat in 1982. As Jansen (1986, p. 159) has recorded it, "there is no doubt that the first battlefield of the jihad is the extirpation of these infidel leaderships and their replacement by a perfect Islamic order, and from the will come the release of our energies."

An emerging but significant method of operation now is suicide terrorism. In a sense this is new because going by the trend; political terrorists usually carry out their attacks from a safe distance. Suicide mission seems to have been pioneered by religious organisations such as Hamas and Hezbollah and now refined and extensively used by Al Qaeda and its allied organizations. Boko Haram has adopted this technique and has recorded a number of successes from using it (Agara, 2016b). A remarkable innovation now is the use of women or female suicide bombers started by the Kurdish terrorists in Turkey in 1996-1999 and by Palestinians from January 2002 (Patkin 2004, Agara 2015, Agara and Onimawo, 2018).

Ideological Underpinnings of Religious Terrorism

Our starting point in this section is to undertake an intellectual expedition and inquiry into what an ideology is. Like many concepts in Social Sciences, ideology is a highly contested concept, but it is generally agreed that Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836), a French scholar, should be credited for introducing the term. He defined it as a study of the process of forming ideas – a science of ideas (Baradat, 1979). He recognized that ideas are stimulated by the physical environment; hence the notion of ideology as derived from empirical learning or sense-experience. However, Bell (1960, p. 370) has argued that ideology is "the conversion of ideas into social levers." It "simplifies ideas, establish a claim to truth and, in the union of the two demand a commitment to action" (Bell, 1960, p. 372). According to Apter (1964, p. 16), ideology acts as the linking pin that "links particular actions and mundane practices with a wider set of meanings and, by doing so, lends a more honorable and dignified complexion to social conduct." Some scholars have tended to see ideology as a rather loosely organized folk philosophy encompassing the totality of ideals and aspirations of a people (Ingersoll and Matthew, 1991, p. 4).

Thus, the term ideology can be applied in two ways; first as a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group of people or nation or society without further examination or inquiry as to their validity. Second, as the science of ideas which examines how different ideas

are formed, how truth is distorted and how we can overcome this distortion to come to the truth. Ideology as a set of ideas is propounded in order to justify or denounce a particular or an accepted way of life and belief of a social, economic or political organization. Viewed this way, ideology becomes a matter of faith with no scientific basis and is not subject to any verification. Its adherents are satisfied to accept it and order their way of life according to its tenets and principles while others may disagree and attempt to prove its falsehood. Thus, ideology leads to the development of a love-hate relationship. In other words, as Bell (1960, p. 371) had equally noted, what gives ideology its force is its passion. Ideology taps emotion and fuses its energies and channels them into politics. This passion is then channel into politics or political issues and hence its connection with revolution becomes rather natural.

In contemporary times, ideology has come to be accepted as a set of ideas which are adopted by a group in order to motivate it for the achievement of predetermined goals. Basically, ideologies perform at least 3 basic functions. The first is that they amplify, clarify or enlarge our view of the world and the events that take place in it. Secondly, they instigate action either for or against a proposed course of change and finally, they attempt to justify a course of action taken by individual or a group of individuals or by the government. However, for an ideology to be effective or persuasive, it need not meet with the measurement of rationality or the logic of consistency, but like religion which often serves as the basis for ideology, it must have the power to facilitate the reconciliation of the individual with its act or with those acts he desires or supports. In other words, for an ideology to be effective, it must reconcile and act as the basis for justifying actions and policies made on its behalf. Thus, for the revolutionaries, an ideology provides the basis for actions and at the same time justifies the violent overthrow of legitimacy. Ideology supplies the revolutionaries the needed justification for their actions, the 'why' and 'ought' for revolutionary action. In the final analysis, ideology therefore becomes a mass of doctrine that enables a variety of men to espouse a simple cause and to reduce their apprehensions for jeopardizing the stability of an old regime.

As it relates to religious terrorism, President Bush had been credited with describing the ideology behind Islamic terrorism as Islamic-Fascism (CNN 2006). So what ideology of Islamic terrorism has been so labeled? In specific terms, the ideology of Islamic-Fascism, which has become the guiding principles on which all Islamic terrorists derived their justification and basis for their terrorism, is derived from a collection of violent Islamic thought called 'Qutbism' derived, principally, from the writings of Sayyid Qutb and to which other Islamic theoreticians such as Abul Ala Maududi and Hassan al Banna, were later to contribute to (O'Connor *nd*, Eikmeier 2010/2011, p. 126). Qutbism integrates elements of Islamic teachings of Maududi and Banna with the arguments of Sayyad Qutb to justify armed jihad. Although Qutbism is not a structured body of thought from a single individual, but, it is a conglomeration of thoughts, a fusion of puritanical and intolerant Islamic orientations that include elements of fundamentalism from the Sunni and Shia sects. It advocates violence and justifies terrorism against non-Muslims and apostates in the drive to realize an Islamic world. Qutbism, therefore, provided the intellectual and religious basis for Ayman Al-Zawahri, Abdullah Azzam and Osam bin Laden to build terrorist organizations and turned the ideology

of Islamic-Fascism into a global plan of action for subsequent and contemporary Islamic militants.

Specifically, while puritan Islamic orientation may have set the tone and foundation of the ideology, in reality, it was the Islamic theoreticians that provided the intellectual framework of Qutbism and one of the founding fathers was Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) (Jaffry, *nd*). He argued that the decline of the contemporary Muslim community is as a result of practicing a corrupted form of Islam. The contamination comes from accepting and adopting non-Islamic ideas and culture. He reminded Muslims that Islam is more than a religion; it is a complete social system that guides and controls every aspect of life including government. Thus, tolerance of non-Muslim rule and non-Islamic concepts and systems was an insult unto Allah. He urged Muslims to practice the true religion (pure Islam) and take their rightful place in the world through the establishment of Islamic states where Islam rules independent of non-Islamic interference and influence. From these states, Islam would spread across the globe and God's reign would be established through jihad. He explained his understanding of jihad as referring "to that militant struggle and utmost exertion which the [Islamic Party] brings into play to achieve [the objective of Islam which is] to destroy all states and governments anywhere on the face of the earth which are opposed to the ideology and programme of Islam regardless of the country or nation which rules it." He went further to point out that the goal of Islamic jihad "is to eliminate the rule of an un-Islamic system and establish in its stead an Islamic system of state rule." He was also quick to point out that "Islam does not intend to confine this resolution to a single state or a few countries; the aim of Islam is to bring about a universal revolution" (Maududi, *nd*, pp. 8-9, 24).

In the same vein, Islamic thinkers such as Hassan al Banna, Salam Faraj (1986), and Sayyid Qutb (1995, 1991) have espoused similar ideas and have attempted to put them into practice. Hassan al Banna (1905-1949) was the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimum*) in 1928 who, like Maududi, strongly believed that a revival of 'pure Islam' was the antidote needed to Western domination and the medicine for the malady infecting the Muslim world. His approach was gradualist rather than revolutionary. Nevertheless, his legacy was in reminding Muslims that the Qur'an recommends jihad against unbelievers as an obligation. Jihad is therefore not just defense but also a means "to safeguard the mission of spreading Islam." (al Banna, *nd*).

This idea of using jihad to spread Islam was then expanded by Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966). Qutb is generally regarded as the founding father and leading theoretician of the contemporary extremist movement (Gerges, *nd*). He was one of the leading spokesmen and thinkers of the Muslim Brotherhood. Qutb argued that the entire world, including the Muslim world also, was in a state of ignorance (*jahiliyah*) and since this cannot co-exist with Islam, an offensive jihad becomes necessary until ignorance of the true God is eliminated. He argued that all true Muslims have a personal obligation to wage this offensive jihad. His advocacy for an offensive jihad as against the defensive jihad was based on the fact that the latter "diminish the greatness of the Islamic way of life [simply because] defense is not the ultimate objective of the Islamic

movement of jihad but it is a mean of establishing the divine authority ... which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind ...” (Qutb *nd*). In addition, Qutb used the Islamic concept of *takfir* or excommunication of apostates which provided a legal ground around the prohibition of killing a fellow Muslim. Since the Islamic law does not forbid the killing of apostates, the use of this concept provided a basis for the killing Muslim officials of the state who were found not to live as true Muslims. Thus, the *takfir* concept along with the advocacy for an offensive jihad became a blank cheque for Islamic extremists to justify attacks against anyone. These also provided the intellectual basis behind the exhortations of Abdullah Azzam and Ayman al-Zawahiri and ultimately the preferred modus operandi of Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda.

al-Zawahiri’s contribution to Islamic-Fascism ideology was in devising the “far enemy first” strategy as against the “near enemy first” strategy of al Banna, Qutb, Azzam and Faraj (Aboul-Enein, 2005). This paradigm shift in ideology was necessitated by comparing the failures of the Muslim Brotherhood to prevail over the “near enemy” to the successes recorded by the Afghan mujahideen in their victory over the Soviets. By this shift, they were able to overcome the disadvantages which the jihad against “near enemy” portends for the struggle while according the jihad many advantages as the table below shows.

Table: Comparative Advantages/Disadvantages of Jihad Against Far and Near Enemy

Advantages of Jihad against “far Enemy	Disadvantages of Jihad against “near Enemy”
Unifies and rallies international Muslim support	Splits Muslims and localizes support
Allows greater sanctuary for terrorists’ cells in supportive states	Subjects terrorist cells to more effective states’ security agencies scrutinies
Is easier to portray and present terrorist activities as the defense of Islam and a religious obligation	Geography and political factors limit internal sanctuary
Attacks the source of power behind apostate regimes	Local politics versus religious issues confuse the members and the people, weakening their resolve
Is easier because infidel countermeasures are limited and less effective	Western support to apostate regimes not affected.

Source: Adopted from Eikmeier (2010/2011, p. 128)

This provided a shift in operational method and ideology of al Qaeda in the 1990s and the basis for the focus on the “far enemy” in US and Western Europe; from small isolated extremists attacking local apostate regimes to jihad against infidels. It became clear that al Qaeda and its affiliates such as Boko Haram share Qutbist ideology and goals.

In summary, the basic tenets of Islamic-Fascism are structured on a similar puritan beliefs, faith and orientations as Salafism, Wahabbism and Deobandi (O’Connor (nd.), Agara and Imonie, 2015). Puritan Islam rests on the following ideological base;

1. A belief that Muslims have deviated from true Islam and must return to ‘pure Islam’ as originally practiced during the time of the Prophet.
2. The path to ‘pure Islam’ is only through a literal and strict interpretation of the Qur’an and Hadith, along with strict implementation of the Prophet’s commands.
3. Muslims should individually interpret the original sources without being slavishly bound to the interpretation of Islamic scholars, and
4. That any interpretation of the Qur’an from a historical, contextual perspective is a corruption and that the majority of Islamic history and the classical jurisprudential tradition is mere sophistry (El Fadl, *nd*).

The Historical Basis of the Islamic-Fascism Ideology

As Lewis (2003, p. 3) has observed, “it is difficult to generalise about Islam” primarily because “in one sense it denotes a religion, a system of belief and worship; in the other, the civilisation that grew up and flourished under the aegis of that religion.” Thus, the term ‘Islam’ denotes more than fourteen centuries of history, a billion and a third people, and a religious and cultural tradition of enormous diversity. Islam actually became prominent and represented the leading civilisation in the world during the interlude between the decline of the ancient civilisation of Greece and Rome and the rise of modern Western civilisation of Europe. Historically, the rise of European civilisation eclipsed the prominence of Islam hence the tendency among Muslim to see Western civilisation and all of its trappings as evil and America as its bastion. This tendency had always been reflected in many of the pronouncements made by Osama bin Laden, especially in his videotape of October 7, 2001 where he alluded to the “humiliation and disgrace” that Islam has suffered for “more than eighty years.” Like every nation or religion, the Muslim peoples are aware of their history, they are shaped by it and their awareness dates back to the advent of Islam.

Islam, as far back as the time of Muhammed, has developed a strong interface between it and the state with Muhammed assuming the headship of both, thereby uniting them under one inseparable authority. Thus, as Lewis (2003, p. 7) had noted, “religious truth and political power were indissolubly associated: the first sanctified the second, the second sustained the first.” While the idea of a nation based on religion may seem anachronistic, it is not so to Islam and its adherents. The reality is as Kibble (1996) has cautioned; that there is no separation between religion and state in Islamic countries because governments’ claim to legitimacy and authority to rule are derived from the Muslims’ Quran and the peoples’ submission to the religious dogmas makes them equally subservient to the rulers in authority over them. This is basically the linkage between religion and terrorism in Islamic world.

Throughout the Muslim world there is widespread bitterness not only against America but against believers of other religions especially Christianity. This bitterness has bred an atmosphere that is highly conducive to extremism. The present crisis of religious terrorism must be understood within the rubric of the process of modernisation. It is a historical fact that Islam had once been a religion of success. Within the first hundred years after the death of

Prophet Muhammed in 632 AD, the Muslims had conquered and had control over a territory that extended from the Himalayas to the Pyrenees. By the 15th century, Islam had become the greatest world power, not dissimilar to the US today. However, the expansionist programme of the Western powers which coincided with the great Western transformation started a competition with Islam everywhere they went, from the Middle East, to India, Persia, Southeast Asia, China and Japan. In the 16th century, when Europe was in the early stages of its transformation into world power, the Ottoman Empire which ruled Turkey, virtually the whole of the Middle East and North Africa was probably the most powerful state in the world, perhaps more powerful than any single state in Europe.

With the reformation of the military, economic and political structures of the European powers, the Islamic nations were not able to withstand their incursion into territories once controlled by Islam. In 1798 Napoleon defeated the reigning Muslim Mamelukes of Egypt, a stronghold of Islam in Northern Africa. Other Muslim strongholds soon fell to the military supremacy of the Western nations such that between 1830 and 1915, the European powers have effectively ousted Muslim occupation but not the Islamic religion and imposed Western rule in occupied Algeria, Aden, Tunisia, Sudan, Libya and Morocco. Like all Western colonies, these states were exploited as sources for raw materials which fed European industries. Perhaps the most tragic was Egypt which was saddled with the responsibility of providing the funding, materials, labour and 200 square miles of its territory for the building of the Suez Canal. The profits and shares of this project were held and appropriated exclusively by Europeans. This cost outlay of this project eventually bankrupted Egypt and this gave Britain an excuse to set up a military occupation there in 1882.

While the evil effects of colonialism were not exclusive to the Muslim nations alone, the nations of the Middle East had always have autocratic rulers which had not provided them with the conditions to fully develop a democracy and modernise along the lines of their closest neighbours in Europe. Thus, in the Muslim nations, modernity did not bring freedom and independence rather; it came in a context of political subjection. The baton of power shifted after World War II with the relegation of Britain and France to secondary powers and the emergence of America as the leader of the Western world. As Armstrong (2007, p. 4) had noted;

Even though the Islamic countries were no longer colonies but were nominally independent, America still controlled their destinies. During the Cold War, the United States sought allies in the region by supporting unsavoury governments and unpopular leaders, largely to protect its oil interests.

Many Muslims resented America for its support of unpopular rulers such as President Hosni Mubarak of the Egypt, the Saudi royal family and the State of Israel. In their frustration, many have abandoned Westernisation and adopted religious fundamentalism as an acceptable alternative. Fundamentalism therefore represents their rejection of western secularism and modernism. Every fundamentalist movement and this is not peculiar to Islam alone, is

convinced that the modern, secular society is anti the true faith and religious values. Fundamentalists therefore tend to downplay the compassionate teachings of their faith and over emphasise the more belligerent passages in their article of faith. However, fundamentalism in every religion tends to be localised initially; that is, their fiery passion is usually turned against co-believers whom they viewed as not being pious enough or as having watered down the religious values. Initial confrontation is therefore intra-religion (the 'near enemy' paradigm). It is only at a later stage that fundamentalists export their religious fervency and confronts foreign enemies that are seen as behind the evil and non-acceptance of the faith by their people (the 'far enemy' paradigm). The change in the nature and character of these recent religious crises, violence and terrorism from the earlier holy wars fought by Mohammed and later by his generals can only be accounted for as responses to contemporary theme in the world's political and social life: globalisation. Modern day religious acts of terrorism, whether local or international, in a sense, are statements of resentment against modernity and globalisation. The clerics and leaders resent the western-style modernity that secular globalisation is imposing on them. At the local level, believers in other faiths and religious values are seen as the impostors while at the international level, western nations and in particular America, are seen as the main culprits. The US role in creating a 'new world order' of globalisation and forcing it on other nations especially the Third World, has created a sinister image of the United States. In certain respect, this distrust of globalisation is justified for the great imbalance and distortions which it has engendered in the political, social, cultural and economic lives of the nations.

A major factor in the justification calculus is the role played by the religious clerics or Imams (teachers) whose sanctioning or blessing of terrorism is of critical importance, at least, to the Shi'a and Sunni Muslim perpetrators. Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* (a legal ruling or order issued by mufti; a qualified jurist at the request of religious court) on Salman Rushdie in 1989 and the fatwa by Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman obtained by the Sunni bombers who bombed the New York City's World Trade Centre in 1993 are pointers to this fact. The implication of the role played by these Muslim clerics is to spiritualise violence thereby giving religious violence a remarkable power. Thus, in Nigeria, it should not be any wonder why most cases of religious terrorism happened spontaneously after the Friday Jumat prayers when the Muslims would have been incited by the clerics in the mosques.

Closely linked to this is the role played by the madrassa (an Arabic term meaning 'school'). The Nigerian experience has shown that majority of the street urchins used for perpetrating religious violence in parts of Northern Nigeria are madrassa-educated. Madrassa, therefore, offers an avenue for propagating the ideology of religious exclusiveness, hatred and irrationality apart from providing the source of breeding, training and preparing future terrorists. In the July 2004 report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9-11 Commission), madrassas were described as "incubators of violent extremism." The Secretary of Defense, David Rumsfeld, in October 2003, has been reported as wondering if "we are capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?" (Bergen and Pandey, 2008, p. 148).

Going by the experience in Nigeria, madrassas are veritable sources and instruments for training people to be suicide killers and violent extremists, a kind of hate factory. The process of rote learning of the entire Quran with its fiery admonition to kill the “people of the Book” can only breed hatred and solidify obedience to authority of the Imams whose claim to legitimacy is derived from the same Quran. Thus, in any claim to combat terrorism, the relevance and the socio-political role played by the madrassas cannot be ignored, at least, to the extent that they constitute a domestic problem. Only by recognising the roles of madrassas in producing terrorists capable of carrying out major attacks can Nigeria and the world shape more effective policies and strategies to ensure national and global security.

Conclusion: Neutralising the Influence of the Ideology

Eikmeier (2010/2011) has suggested five “lines of operation” to be utilized by agencies involved in counter terrorism. His approach is based on the fact that the ideology of Qutbism formed and provided the basis, the “center of gravity,” for the terrorist organizations globally. Thus, for any strategy to be successful, it must synchronize efforts along the proposed five “lines of operation.”

The first line of operation is to “attack the message.” To be able to do this, moderate Islamic clerics should be recruited to counter the fiery ideology and theological foundation of Qutbism. Moderate Islamic scholars and clerics should be given support and the necessary medium to express contrary views to Qutbism. Qutbism has an intellectual base and it can only be defeated intellectually. Relevant portions of the Hadith and Qur’an should be used to provide *hujjat*, that is, proof, to show that insurgents who kill non-combatants is guilty of *baghy* (armed aggression) which is a capital offence in Islamic law. This is propaganda geared towards diffusing the center of gravity of Qutbism for the evil it is. The second line of operation is “attack the messenger.” Effective counter propaganda strategy rests on attacking the creditability of a message and the credentials of the messenger. Ideology is not based on logic and reasoning, hence it can be attacked on the weakness of the logic and reasoning behind it. Perhaps, apart from attending madrassas, most terrorists do not have the more formal and rigorous training that could qualify them as Islamic scholars and clerics. Moderate clerics and scholars, “exercising the collective wisdom of 14 centuries of Islamic theology should be able challenge and refute their extreme Qutbism position” (Eikmeier, 2010/2011, p. 129).

The third and fourth lines of operation are to “attack Islamic-Fascism’s supporting institutions and support mainstream Islamic institutions.” These are mirror images of the same thing; one been the negative image of a positive. Both moderate Islam and Islamic-Fascism need and make use of similar three institutional support structures – educational, financial and informational. Hence, institutions that provide counter balance and alternatives to Qutbism or support moderate Islam need to be recognized and supported. Only by enabling advocates and disciples of moderation can government expect to counter the evil call of Qutbism. Finally, the fifth line of operation is “inoculation.” By inoculation is meant making what is attractive in Islamic-Fascism obnoxious such that new recruits and membership are denied it thereby, setting the stage for its eventual demise. According to Eikmeier (2010/2011, p. 130), inoculation comes in two ways; first by answering the question, what are we fighting against; and second what are we fighting for. Inoculation requires information campaigns and the

education of the citizens regarding the anti-human rights and religious intolerant of Qutbism, using the its own words and writings against it. The second half of inoculation is to explain to the citizens what they must protect and promote. A nationwide information campaign will be needed to drive this effort, to promote a vigorous defense of what may be termed “universally accepted values.”

We conclude by saying that the war against terrorism must be fought at all levels and one of these levels is attacking the basis the provides justification for the activities of terrorism. Understanding Qutbism, exposing and discrediting it as an Islamic aberration of extremism do provide one of the many ways to confront and eventual eliminate Islamic terrorism.

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