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Contemporary political mobilisation of the 'Caliphate': the clash of propaganda and discontent

Abstract
Extract:

Islamic politics has become entangled with problematic issues such as Middle Eastern tensions, energy resource access, migration and refugees, international terrorism, and human rights issues. This intertwining of problems and partial solutions remains deeply challenging, even for modernising and democratising states such as Turkey and Indonesia, both of which suffer from complex demands that are not just national, but engage wider, multi-regional perspectives. In this setting, an ideological battle has emerged in which historical institutions such as the Caliphate have been mobilised, often in an ahistorical way that does not lead to substantial notions of Islamic governance, nor realistic paths for governmental responses to the real needs of Islamic communities.

Keywords
Islamic politics, Ottoman Caliphate, militants, international terrorism, revivalism

Cover Page Footnote
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Contemporary Political Mobilisation of the 'Caliphate': The Clash of Propaganda and Discontent[1]

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Summary

Islamic politics has become entangled with problematic issues such as Middle Eastern tensions, energy resource access, migration and refugees, international terrorism, and human rights issues. This intertwining of problems and partial solutions remains deeply challenging, even for modernising and democratising states such as Turkey and Indonesia, both of which suffer from complex demands that are not just national, but engage wider, multi-regional perspectives. In this setting, an ideological battle has emerged in which historical institutions such as the Caliphate have been mobilised, often in an ahistorical way that does not lead to substantial notions of Islamic governance, nor realistic paths for governmental responses to the real needs of Islamic communities. The Ottoman Caliphate was abolished in 1924, largely due to its incompatibility within a modernising Turkish state that needed to emphasise a national future within a competitive system of great powers. The utopian vision of a caliphate in the 21st century as a long-term focus for militant Islamic groups (whether al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamaiah, or Hizb-ut-Tahrir) remains a marginal and incoherent agenda. In turn, it has become the focus for intensified security reactions and threat perceptions by current global powers and national governments. It undermines rather than furthers political and civilizational dialogue on the place of Islam within current political systems.

1. Divergent Visions of the International Order

Revisionist claims of militant Islam since 2001 have taken central place in much international relations and security analysis. Though not fully representative of the wider Islamic community, these demands have posed a serious security challenge to modern states in the 21st century. With over 1.5 billion believers, and strong minority communities through most of the Western world (as well as Russia, China and India), Islam in a collective sense has tried over the last 1400 years to position itself as a major force in global affairs, in both religious and political terms. It now has the challenge of existing within both democratic and authoritarian state systems, and working across a global system largely devised by Western, 'post-Christian' states.

Likewise, the issue of Islamic politics has become entangled with problematic issues such as Middle Eastern tensions, energy resource access, migration and refugees, international terrorism, and human rights issues. This intertwining of complex problems and solutions remains deeply challenging, even for modernising and democratising states such as Turkey and Indonesia, both of which suffer from complex demands that are not just national, but link wider multi-regional perspectives including areas of recent or ongoing conflict. In this setting, an ideological battle[2] has

[1] The research for this article was completed through 2007-2008 with generous help from the ISEAS (Institute for Southeast Asian Studies) Library, Singapore, and financial support from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Bond University, Queensland, Australia.
[2] The idea of an ideological 'battle-space' alongside the physical conflict has become a commonplace in strategic analysis of these issues, see Fred Burton and Scott Stewart, "Al Qaeda and the Tale of Two

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emerged in which historical institutions such as the Caliphate have been mobilised, often in an ahistorical way that does not lead to substantial notions of Islamic governance, nor realistic paths for governmental responses to the real needs of Islamic communities. The Ottoman Caliphate was abolished in 1924, largely due to its incompatibility within a modernising Turkish state that needed to emphasise a national future within a competitive system of great powers. The utopian vision of a caliphate in the 21st century as a long-term focus for militant Islamic groups (al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamaiah, Hizb-ut-Tahrir and others) remains a marginal and incoherent agenda that has become the focus for intensified security reactions and threat perceptions by current global powers and national governments. It undermines rather than furthers political and civilizational dialogue on the place of Islam within current political systems. Thus, efforts by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (the OIC), Iranian, Malaysian and even Uzbekistanian[3] foreign policy to position Islam as a 'normal' factor within the global system and a dialogue across cultures has become mired within heightened threat perceptions and an intentional mobilization of violence focused on supporting or resisting various 'Islamist projects'.

2. Radical Revisionism, Militant Challenges and Utopian Projects

Western political terminology can be problematic when applied to different cultural systems. So-called 'fundamentalist Islamic leaders' often do not fit in with the stereotype of an anti-modernist, backward looking traditionalism.[4] Likewise, it is important to distinguish reformist from militant dimensions of political activity. Indeed, many Islamic reform groups 'resemble Catholic Liberation theologians who urge active use of original religious doctrine to better the temporal and political lives in a modern world'.[5] Rafic Zakaria suggests a more fruitful dichotomy, distinguishing between conservative and liberal trends in Islam, where the 'battle between the fundamentalists and the secularists can perhaps be more accurately described as a struggle between forces who resist change in Islam and those who wish to accelerate it.'[6] Islam has an indigenous tradition of 'revival' (*tajdid*) and 'reform' (*islah*), which suggests that any judgement of Islamic revivalism[7] needs to place the particular reforms and ideas of a movement in their historical and ideological context.

Battlespaces", *Stratfor*, 2 october 2008 [Access via www.stratfor.com]. As stated in the subtitles near the start of the Islamist propaganda film (released on the Internet), *The Word is the Word of Swords: 1. The Raid of the Muezzin*, (2007): "The battle of the Zio-Crusader [sic] enemy against our Ummah isn't waged solely at the military and economic level, but is waged first and foremost and in addition to and after that at the level of doctrine." [Access via http://www.archive.org/details/the_word_is_the_word_of_swords].

[3] See "War on Terror Must not be Interpreted as Confrontation with Islam – Uzbek Foreign Minister", *Interfax*, 29 September 2008 [http://www.interfax-religion.com/?act=news&div=5203]. Note that 'Uzbekistani' is the proper descriptor for all citizens of multi-ethnic Uzbekistan, as distinct from the majority ethnic group, the Uzbeks. Creating an inclusive sense of citizenship has been problematic for most Central Asian states, including Kazakhstan.

[4] Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, N.Y., 2002; John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, Oxford University Press, N.Y. 1992, contra Bernard Lews, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 266 No. 3, September 1990, pp.47-60.

[5] Robin Wright, "Islam, Democracy and the West", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 71, Summer 1992, p. 131.

[6] Rafic Zakaria, *The Struggle Within Islam: The Conflict Between Religion and Politics*, Penguin, N.Y., 1988, p. 14; see further Asta Olesen, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, Curzon Press, Richmond, 1995.

[7] John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, Oxford University Press, N.Y. 1992, p. 8.

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Islamic revivalism incorporates a much wider spectrum than militant anti-Western groups. From the point of view of most Muslim reformers, *Dawa* (call) societies are not just sources of religious propaganda, but are a serious effort at social and global reform.[8] These 'call' activities also include a range of social, welfare and teaching activities, though such 'call' societies have also been used to channel and recruit for militant groups.[9] The role of the media is thus seen as crucial in the presentation of Islam and in its relationship with other faiths. There is a serious struggle not just over the proper political role of Islam at the national level, but also about how it is represented internationally and the way it interacts with the current international system. Many Muslim leaders around the world (e.g. in Egypt, Malaysia, and Iran) are in fact keen to emphasise dialogue rather than confrontation with other value systems.

Rather than use blanket terms, we may approach these issues by addressing the range of demands made by diverse Muslim communities. These range from demands for human rights under authoritarian regimes, greater and deeper democratisation (e.g. through much of Central Asia and the Middle East), through to more explicit demands for a state system run directly on particular formulations of Islamic law. At the most extreme, militant groups have suggested the recreation of an international order based on Islamic thought and the revival of past institutions. It is important to distinguish among diverse demands made by different groups and ideologies. Over the last decade the following issues have come into prominence as part of a constellation of grievance and displacement: -

1) Demands for greater respect for Islam, Muslims and Islamic sensitivities even by non-Muslims, nationally and internationally.[10] Controversially, this may require patterns of restraint, self-censorship and limits on 'freedom of expression', e.g. as demanded through 2005-2006 in Afghanistan, Iran, Azerbaijan and much of the Middle East over cartoons published in Western newspapers that were viewed as demeaning Mohamed.
2) Demands for the ability to pray and live freely as Muslims even within non-Islamic communities, e.g. a space legally possible in Russia but subject to diffuse patterns of prejudice and security monitoring (intensified since 2000 and having a strong impact on Russian minorities through 2006-2008), a trend repeated to a lesser degree in France and the United States. Associated with this is the desire to freely teach and propagate Islamic viewpoints at the local, regional and global levels. This freedom has been further restrained by international security regimes since 2001.
3) Demands for implementation of aspects of Shariah law at the civil and social level, e.g. regulation of marriage, divorce, and family law. In many Muslim societies which have modernist state legal traditions (e.g. Indonesia and Malaysia), a large space has been left for these patterns of Islamic law. However, problems emerge over individual rights and gender equality. In more extreme customary usages this can also lead back to the 'dignity' of the family as the basis for honour

[8] Ibid., p. 23.
[9] Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, N.Y., 2002. For a negative Western view, see Benny Morris, "The Future of Hamas: Alms and Arms", *New Republic*, 8 July 2006 [Internet Access via http://www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?i=20060710&s=morris071006].
[10] As demonstrated via a 2001-2007 Gallup poll on Muslim opinion across 35 countries, see John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, " Who speaks for Islam: Part I", *Gulfnews.com*, September 05, 2008 [http://www.gulfnews.com/nation/Heritage_and_Culture/10242738.html].

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codes. However, Shariah is more than just a legal code. It embraces its source concept from the root *shr'*, the road, with Shari'ah therefore being 'the road that men and women must follow in this life'.[11] It therefore can include a wide range of public and private life, including moral prescriptions as well as legal requirements. Moreover, the derived legal system depends upon the diverse orientations of the four different legal schools within Islam, and the way later sayings are interpreted to support Koranic injunctions. Thus the relatively moderate form of the Hanafi legal school of Sunni Islam remains dominant within much of Central Asia, for example,[12] in contrast to more restrictive codes developed in Afghanistan under the Taliban, in part due to the influence of north Indian Deobandi thought. Thus the patterns of moral and legal codes derived from Islam are not only constrained by modern constitutions, but also influenced by patterns of local custom. This has led to a range of moral issues (dress codes, sexual conduct, the public role of women) becoming new political battlefields, e.g. in Turkey over the headscarf issue and in Indonesia over local codes that restrain a range of public behaviour.[13]

4) Demands for full implementation of one vision of Shariah law within countries with Muslim majorities (made by the Islamic Renaissance Party and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in Central Asia, for example). These demands were also made by minority political groups in Indonesia, under the phrasing of the Jakarta Charter to change the current constitution, but since 1999 this has never been able to gain more than 14% of electoral party support, though opinions supporting a rigorous defence of Islam have been reported as rather higher (depending on the survey and exact question asked).[14] Partial and different levels of application of Shariah law have been made in Afghanistan under the Taliban, in Iran (but under a Revolutionary Islamic model within a Shiite community), Sudan, and in Somalia with a growing role for Islamic Courts through in 2006, thereafter suppressed in part due to Ethiopian intervention, but with a strong rise again in 2008.[15]
5) The implementation of an Islamic state ruled entirely by Islamic principles and patterns of governance, claimed as the long term goal of militant groups such as Jemaah Islamaiah (JI) in Indonesia, of the IMU for Uzbekistan, as the past and

[11] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 76.
[12] Mehrdad Haghayeghi, "Changing Dynamics of Islamic Politics in Central Asia", *Muslim World,* Vol. 92 No. 3/4, Fall 2002, pp. 315-331.
[13] See Zuhairi B. Misrawi "Nahdhatul Ulama, Politics, and Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia", Speech presented in the UE-Indonesia Day, Pluralism and Democracy: Indonesian Perspectives, 7 December 2006, Brussels. [Access via http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/indonesia/eu_indonesia_day/speeches/17_nu_z_misrawi.pdf].
[14] Nadirsyah Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian constitution: a recent debate", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* Vol. 36 No. 3, October 2005, pp. 419-440; Anthony L. Smith "Indonesia in 2002: Megawati's Way", in Daljit Singh & Kin Wah Chin (eds) *Southeast Asian Affairs 2003*, ISEAS, 2003, Singapore, p. 102; Harold Crouch, "Political Update 2002: Struggling to Maintain Momentum", in Edward Aspinall & Greg Fealy (eds) *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2003, p. 23; Zuhairi B. Misrawi "Nahdhatul Ulama, Politics, and Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia", Speech presented in the UE-Indonesia Day, Pluralism and Democracy: Indonesian Perspectives, 7 December 2006, Brussels. [Access via http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/indonesia/eu_indonesia_day/speeches/17_nu_z_misrawi.pdf].
[15] Michael A. Weinstein, "Analysis: Ideological Diversity in Somalia's Islamic Courts Movement", *Garowe Online*, 2 October 2008 [Access via www.garoweonline.com/]; Gregory Alonso Pirio & Hrach Gregorian, "Outside View: Jihadist threat in Africa", *UPI International Editon*, 8 July 2006 [Access via http://www.upi.com/InternationalIntelligence/view.php?StoryID=20060708-100934-7727r].

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future goal of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and one possible goal for networks of militants in Iraq. This involves not only the implementation of Islamic legal codes, but styles of political governance based directly on Islamic tradition.

6) Creation of a modern Caliphate as the basis of international order providing leadership for the global community of believers, a claim made for a social movement such as Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT), active for some decades in the Middle East, Central Asia and as a loosely connected HTI group in Indonesia, and implied in some al-Qaeda and JI communications (but needing careful analysis, see below). Likewise, JI and HTI may have entertained the vision of building an Islamic state within one nation, but then moving towards a wider Islamic community across much of Southeast Asia (perhaps with a somewhat larger footprint than the Malay geographical concept of Nusantara). These models seem to be derived from Sunni historical traditions, but have limited ability to be applied in the modern period (see below), and ignore the troubled history of such institutions over the last fourteen hundred years.

These constellations of ideas can also be positioned within three 'ideological tendencies' of Islamic transnationalism, Islamic nationalism and Islamic pluralism, with the Caliphate approach firmly entrenched as regionalized challenges to the modern system of secular states.[16]

Several questions flow from these diverse demands. The first is whether each of these points is a stepping stone towards a greater and more sweeping revision of national governance and then the international order. So, for example, does toleration of Islamic political parties lead to the prospect for future governments that will move towards stronger implementation of Shariah law and then eventually towards an Islamic state (with wider applications of Islamic concepts in governance, morality codes, and an Islamic banking system). Such fears have been mobilised to restrict Islamist parties historically in Algeria, Turkey (until recently), Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and have been resurrected as a 'creeping' concern in Indonesia.[17] Beyond this, however, we need to consider the demands and problems inherent in each of these stages, the costs they impose, and the political trade-offs implied. Sustaining a narrowly interpreted Islamic political order is extremely difficult in terms of domestic, foreign and economic policy (see below).

3. Politics *and* Propaganda

Islamist political activities include the mobilisation of a wide range of socio-religious expression and dissent.[18] As represented in Western international relations analysis and media coverage these are often viewed as a range of loosely connected aims: the

[16] Michael A. Weinstein, "Analysis: Ideological Diversity in Somalia's Islamic Courts Movement", *Garowe Online*, 2 October 2008 [Access via www.garoweonline.com/.

[17] See Aubrey Belford, "Rising Through the Ranks", *The Diplomat*, November-December 2007, pp18-19; Sarah Kendzior, "Inventing Akromiya: The Role of Uzbek Propagandists in the Andijon Massacre", *Demokratizatsiya,* Vol. 14 no. 4, Fall 2006, pp. 545-562; Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Central Asia: Hizb Ut-Tahrir Calls for Islamic State Find Support", *Eurasia Insight*, 17 January 2006a [Internet Access via www.eurasianet.org]; Gulnoza Saidazimova, "HRW Highlights Uzbekistan's 'Disastrous' Human Rights Situation", *Eurasianet*, 21 January 2006b [Internet Access via http://www.eurasianet.org].

[18] Anthony H. Johns & Nelly Lahoud (eds) *Islam in World Politics*, Routledge, London 2005, pp. 19-20.

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right to implement one version of Shariah law within their communities; justice for Palestinians; a diffuse resentment of US and Western imperialism (at times focused into the real fear of intervention, as in Afghanistan and Iraq, potentially or indirectly for Iran and Somalia); demands for regime change in countries as diverse as Tajikistan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia; demands for self-determination and independence, as in Aceh or for parts of southern Thailand; or even the reshaping of international borders by independence movements, as in the vision of an independent East Turkestan (now largely comprising Xinjiang Autonomous Region within the People's Republic of China). From such viewpoints, the current international system is regarded as unbalanced and unjust, with the United Nations and related agencies often promoting a double standard, e.g. with irregular enforcement of Security Council resolutions based on a post-colonial system of imperfect states.[19] In this context, such claims seem to Western interests to be either 'fundamentalist', looking back to an idealised past, or dangerously revisionist, looking toward a violent future.

Less clearly articulated are the ideas of the creation of modern Emirates and a reborn Caliphate, creating Islamic polities that would reshape existing regional and international orders. The call for an Islamic polity at a national level at times is limited to the demand for a more accountable and 'Islamist' government, in other cases justifying rapid transformation of political regimes (aspired to by the Taliban in Afghanistan). In the case of early Indonesian movements (such as *Dar'ul Islam* from 1948-1962, under the leadership of S.M. Kartosowirjo), there was an effort to build an Islamic state that would give a key political role for Islam within national borders.[20] Likewise, Osama bin Laden and elements within the al-Qaeda network seem to have supported the idea of a future Caliphate (viewed as a pan-Islamic, extended state-system) to be built out of one successful front of activity (perhaps in Iraq, via regime collapse in Saudi Arabia, or even beginning in southern Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Somalia), but eventually embracing a wider footprint in the Middle East.[21] One unsigned letter sent to a Pakistani newspaper and attributed to Osama bin Laden suggested that: -

> Today, every member of the Muslim world agrees that all the Muslim countries of the world having geographical boundaries on the basis of nationality, geography, religious discord, color and race, should be merged into one Muslim state, where men do not rule men. There should be one caliph for the whole state whose capital should be Mecca. There should be one currency and defense for this state and the Holy

[19] See, for example "Declaration of Jihad, August 23, 1996" in Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p.3. For Osama bin Laden, the UN is 'nothing but a tool of crime', see "Bin Laden Rails Against Crusaders and UN (BBC News Online, November 3, 2001)", Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p. 37. Indeed, fierce debates over the imperfect application of UN determinations such as Resolutions 242 and 338 have remained a major irritant for much of the Arab world since 1967, see Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, pp. 414-415.

[20] Simon Kearny & Patrick Walters, "SE Asian Muslims Turn to Radicals", *The Australian*, 29 September 2005, p. 4; Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 76.

[21] Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, p. 470; Juan Cole "Osama bin Laden's Scary Vision of a Grand Muslim Super State", *History News Network*, 4 December 2004 [http://hnn.us/articles/7378.html]. See further Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, N.Y. 2002.

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> Koran should be its constitution. The name that has been proposed for this vast state is Global Muslim State.[22]

Bin Laden has suggested that most of the Gulf states have lost their real sovereignty and are illegitimate, made calls against corrupt regimes re-iterated by al-Qaeda from 2006,[23] and has claimed victories against the government and the U.S. in Iraq through 2007. The centrality of Iraq in this opportunistic strategy has been suggested in a 2005 letter from senior al Qa'ida strategist, Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, published by the (U.S.) Office of the Director of National Intelligence: -

> The first stage: Expel the Americans from Iraq.
>
> The second stage: Establish an Islamic authority or amirate, then develop it and support it until it achieves the level of a caliphate- over as much territory as you can to spread its power in Iraq, i.e., in Sunni areas, is in order to fill the void stemming from the departure of the Americans, immediately upon their exit and before un-Islamic forces attempt to fill this void, whether those whom the Americans will leave behind them, or those among the un-Islamic forces who will try to jump at taking power.[24]

When these claims are linked to the call for a caliphate, however, they suggest linkages to specifically Islamic forms of governance. These new forms are inspired by the past but point towards new political projects, and are not modelled on current national projects in Iran, Sudan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Brunei or the Gulf states. For a short time the so-called Emirate of Afghanistan was a partial model to which some militants might turn,[25] but one which was readily undermined by American power and by its own limited legitimacy. In the case of *Jemaah Islamaiah* operations in Southeast Asia, it has been suggested that they not only wished to create Islamic polities in Malaysia, Indonesia and via an independent Mindinao, but also envisaged a new Muslim polity that embraced much of the Southeast Asian archipelago.[26] Such visions suggest an extension from a transnational Islamic society towards a new international political order.

These more militant, revisionist notions have been played out against a wider sense in Muslim communities that the time is ripe for further development of the role of Islam on the world stage, either to push forward and help transform a greater part of the world into the *dar al-Islam* (house of Islam), including the reform of corrupt governments, or to find a more lasting interaction between belief, science, and

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[22] "Daily Prints Usama Bin Ladin 'Letter' Calling For 'Global Islamic State'", Rawalpindi Nawa-i-Waqt in Urdu 07, Jan 01, 2001, pp 1, 11, Report by Ikramullah, in FBIS Report, *Compilation of Usama Bin Ladin Statements 1994-January 2004*, p. 146 [Access via http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ubl-fbis.pdf].

[23] In Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004; JUS News Desk, "Al-Zawahri "We Must work on Four Fronts", 7 March 2006 [Internet Access via www.jihadunspun.com/].

[24] "Letter from al-Zawahiri to al-Zarqawi", October 11, 2005, *ODNI News Release No. 2-05*, p. 3 [http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2005/10/dni101105.html].

[25] In November 2001, Osama bin Laden considered only Afghanistan as an Islamic state, which was not the case for Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, "Osama Claims He Has Nukes: If the U.S. Uses N-Arms It Will Get the Same Response (Dawn Internet Edition, November 9, 2001, by Hamid Mir)", Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p. 43.

[26] Joe Cochrane, "'Bin Laden Is a Hero': Abu Bakar Bashir looks like a gentle cleric. But his words are chilling, and investigators believe he leads a terror network", *Newsweek*, October 28, 2002, p. 32.

modernisation that does not undermine the pillars of faith.[27] Several key questions are hard to avoid for contemporary Muslims, even if formulated in rather blunt terms. A sense of historical dislocation does frustrate many Muslims who see a 'dramatic decline . . . from the leading civilization in the world for over one thousand years into a lagging, impotent, and marginalized region in the world.'[28] From this viewpoint they can question whether the West is 'the greatest threat to Islam in the fifteenth Islamic century?'[29] 'What does it mean today to be a Muslim in a predominantly non-Islamic World?'[30] When will the current negative conditions be reversed? What level of reform is needed in national governments and the international system to sustain a renewed Islamic civilization? For many Muslims the answer to these questions, including effective opposition to authoritarian governments that have received support from Western democracies, is a reforming Islam and stronger Islamist political activity.[31] However, this should not be viewed as translating directly into violent anti-Western activity. Summarizing a 2001-2007 poll of Muslim opinion: -

> According to the Gallup Poll, 7 per cent of respondents think that the 9/11 attacks were "completely" justified and view the United States unfavourably. Among those who believe that the 9/11 attacks were not justified, whom we'll call "moderates," 40 per cent are pro-US, but 60 per cent view the US unfavourably.[32]

However another survey in 2007 has suggested somewhat different figures. Through 2006 to early 2007 about two-thirds of Muslims surveyed gave strong or limited agreement to the idea of a caliphate or unified Islamic state, though a strong majority also opposed violent attacks on civilians. Likewise, the view of a future caliphate did vary greatly across different Muslim communities: -

> Majorities even agree with the ambitious goal "to unify all Islamic countries into a single Islamic state or caliphate" (overall average 65%). Seventy-four percent of Pakistanis agreed with this goal, as did 71 percent of Moroccans and 67 percent of Egyptians. However, in Indonesia only 49 percent agreed while 40 percent disagreed.[33]

Moreover, Western and regional threat perceptions have been confronted by the partial successes of the Taliban through 1996-2001 and their continued embattled survival through 2002-2005, a sustained Taliban offensive in southern Afghanistan through 2006-2008, plus intense combat operations in the Chora area of Uruzgan, the native place of the Taliban's leader, Mullah Omar, and their continued survival in an unstable Pakistan.[34] Ongoing operations of al-Qaeda, e.g. the bombing of the Naciria

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[27] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 2.
[28] Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave, N.Y., 2003, p. 1.
[29] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 72.
[30] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, p. 52.
[31] Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave, N.Y., 2003, pp. 15-16.
[32] John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, "Who speaks for Islam: Part III", *Gulfnews.com*, September 19, 2008 [http://www.gulfnews.com/nation/Heritage_and_Culture/10245965.html].
[33] Steven Kull et al. *Muslim Public Opinion on US Policy, Attacks on Civilians and al Qaeda*, World Public Opinion.Org, The Program on International Policy Attitudes (University of Maryland), 24 April 2007, p. 22 [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/apr07/START_Apr07_rpt.pdf].
[34] ABC, "Fierce Afghanistan battles 'kill more than 100", *ABC News Online*, 19 June 2007a [Access via http://abc.net.au/]; ABC, "Afghan President Dismisses Taliban Threat", *ABC News Online*, 22 June 2007b [Access via http://abc.net.au/]. Through late 2008 the Afghanistan government has sought to engage the Taliban in the political process, while in turn Mullah Omar has argued that US operations

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police station in Algeria in January 2008, or of related organisations, show the reality of a long-term place for international and transnational terrorism in the current global order.[35] Likewise, the continued success of the Islamic Courts in Somalia through 2008 as a focus for future governance projects in the face of international intervention (Ethiopia, Uganda, and the African Union backed by U.S. policy)[36] suggests that Islam remains a vital aspect of any political solution to such conflicts.

These trends have intensified the debate over justice, legitimacy and leadership in the international system that has re-emerged since 2001. The resurrection of the 'Caliphate' as a political term in popular media usage through 2005-2007 has a strange resonance given the fractured history of the early Caliphate, challenges to its legitimacy, and its later territorial subdivision (from the 10th century onwards). The eventual withering and disbandment of the Caliphate as an institution at the end of the Ottoman Empire (through 1922-1924) demonstrated how difficult it was to fit this institution into nationalist structures during the early 20th century. From 2004 the 'Caliphate' came into usage in Washington as a term for a nexus of security threats, and was cited by diverse leaders such as Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Eric Edelman, the Under Secretary of Defence, Stephen Hadley, a national security adviser, General John Abizaid, then top American commander in the Middle East, and Vice President Dick Cheney, who stated that a failed democracy in Iraq might be the basis of this new Caliphate that would then destabilise the Middle East.[37] These warnings were made in part on the basis of a letter sent in July 2005 by Ayman al-Zawahiri, a leading ideologist of al-Qaeda, which proposed such a project, even though only 6% of Muslims surveyed in the Middle East supported this agenda.[38] These visions of a 'totalitarian Islamic Empire that reaches from Indonesia to Spain', as outlined in a December 2005 speech of President George Bush, have been mobilised to bolster waning public support for U.S. operations in Iraq.[39] The threat of a totalitarian Caliphate was also mobilised through 2006-2007 to bolster continued international support for stabilisation programs in Iraq.[40] In reality however, current conditions in Iraq through 2008 suggest neither the profile of a secure democratic government, nor that of an Islamist 'victory' that could act as the basis for any future caliphate project.

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have failed over the last seven years and even offered safe passage if they choose to 'pull out', see *Daily Times* (Pakistan) "Karzai assures safety to Mullah Omar if he returns home", 4 October 2008 [Access via http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C10%5C04%5Cstory_4-10-2008_pg1_7]; *The News International*, "Mulla Omar offers safe passage to US troops", 5 October 2008 [Access via http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=138972].

[35] Transnational linkages often work across borders into adjacent states, either operating on a regional basis, as in JI 'cells' in Southeast Asia, or seeking to revise existing borders as illegitimate, as in the Jammu-Kashmir dispute.

[36] Michael A. Weinstein, "Analysis: Ideological Diversity in Somalia's Islamic Courts Movement", *Garowe Online*, 2 October 2008 [Access via www.garoweonline.com/].

[37] Elisabeth Bumiller, "White House Letter: Watchword of the day - Beware the Caliphate", *International Herald Tribune*, 11 December 2005 [Internet access via http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/12/11/news/letter.php].

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.; Republican Policy Committee, *The Strategy for Success in Iraq*, Republican Policy Committee, United States Senate, Washington, 20 December 2005 [Internet Access at http://rpc.senate.gov/_files/Dec2005IraqStratMS.pdf].

[40] William Arkin, "The Caliphate Scare", *Washington Post Online*, Washingtonpost.com, June 2007 [Access via http://blog.washingtonpost.com/].

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Likewise, no modern 'Islamic state' has the strength and legitimacy needed to carry forward the leadership claims of an international Caliphate: Iran as a Shi'a society cannot provide this role for Sunnis, the Emirate of Afghanistan fell to American intervention, Sudan remains a troubled state subject to international scrutiny and unable to project any leadership or influence, Somalia is at best a fragmented if not indeed a 'failed' state, and the battle for Iraq continues, with the sharp division between Sunni and Shi'a interests making it an unlikely prospect for a future, united Islamic state willing to project its potential power.

In this setting, Jemaah Islamaiah and other groups[41] have been touted as seeking to set up a new Caliphate based on a wide territorial footprint across Muslim-populated areas of Southeast Asia. However, this is a vague and remote political agenda given the centrality of pluralism to retaining a unified Indonesia, while Singapore and Malaysia remain deeply suspicious of religious groups that would challenge state authority. The term 'caliphate' remains a symbolic stereotype, used as propaganda by both proponents and critics in the current ideological wars that are one front of the so-called 'war on terror'. The aims of regional 'Islamist' organisations are actually quite diverse, with different goals and methods deployed in a generally reformist agenda. Likewise, the term 'caliphate' has emerged in some media in relation to tensions in 'Greater Central Asia', viewed in this context as a band of discontent and political transition stretching from Dagestan to Tajikistan,[42] with groups such as Hizb-ut-Tahrir viewed as aiming at a caliphate, though whether only peaceful methods are supported by the organisation remain disputed. The current pattern of conflict is very much among Muslims themselves as much as with Western states, and involves both deep religious and ideological divisions.[43] It is thus much more than a reaction to American foreign policy and the issue of Palestine (though these are inflammatory factors), but a deeper conflict over fundamental principles. For some militants such as Abu Musab al Zarqawi modern democracy remains fundamentally 'incompatible with Islam',[44] leading to long-term conflicts with American and European political agendas.

Unfortunately, current claims made by militant Islamists and Western security reactions have generated a divisive non-dialogue of propaganda and counter-propaganda directed to divergent audiences, leaving little space for genuine political dialogue or accommodation.[45] It may be necessary to generate a more profound dialogue among several sets of values systems if there is to be an openning up of a social and transnational space in which violence remains the last, rather than the first, resort for those (whether states or social movements) seeking their own vision of justice.

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[41] In part using less extreme political goals run in mainstream parties such as the Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia. For the complex layers of PKS goals, see Aubrey Belford, "Rising Through the Ranks", *The Diplomat*, November-December 2007, pp. 18-19.

[42] Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Central Asia: Hizb Ut-Tahrir Calls for Islamic State Find Support", *Eurasia Insight*, 17 January 2006a [Internet Access via www.eurasianet.org]; see further below.

[43] Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani, & Eric Brown (eds) *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, Volume I, Hudson Institute, Washington, 2005, p. 1.

[44] Ibid. pp. 5-11.

[45] On the desperate need for such a political space, see Tariq Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*, Verso, London, 2002. For political polarisation that tends to also close academic genuine dialogue, even in countries without a 'patriot act', see Bernard Lane "Battles Rage Within Study of Terrorism", *The Australian*, 8 October 2008, p. 27.

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4. The Caliphate as Islamic Governance

A number of terms from Islamic governance have been imported into popular analysis without a clear appreciation of their lineage and meaning.[46] Terms such as Emir, Emirate, Sultan, Sultanate, Caliph, Caliphate, Sharif and Mahdi have been used in European analysis to signal various patterns of religious and political leadership in accounts of Arabic, Middle Eastern and Islamic history.

The term Caliph in its most basic sense means successor and in its original context means 'the vicegerent of the Prophet', or 'Deputy of God' implying a delegated power such as that held by Abu Bakr as the first khalifah.[47] Although the Caliph was at first viewed as the temporal, political leader of the threatened Islamic community, it was also expected in the earliest period that he should be 'a man of piety, trust, knowledge, strength, justice, integrity and righteousness'.[48] Traditionally, it was also expected that the Caliph should be a member of the Quraish, the tribe to which Muhammad belonged (a qualification stressed by al-Mawardi), though some groups such as the Kharijites argued that office should be open to any 'capable' Muslim.[49] This placed an enormous burden on the person chosen within the community to have spiritual, moral and pragmatic leadership abilities, though in later periods it was not expected that he would necessarily be an expert in law or its interpretation, nor would he have 'prophetic qualities'.[50] From this viewpoint, the Caliphate had different aspects that could not always be fully engaged: -

> The caliphate has an exterior and an interior aspect. Its exterior aspect is the striving for the establishment of religious tenets within the framework of monarchical or administrative power. Its interior aspect is similitude (*tashabbuh*) to the actions and qualities of the Prophet. In this sense the caliphate is the will of God which radiates through the mind of the rightful caliph to the hearts and minds of the individuals of the community.[51]

During the early period he was also the head of the community in that he led the community in prayer and supported key legal decisions, though from the early 9th century onwards Caliphs sometimes chose to delegate this task to specialised officials, the *khatibs*.[52] During the period of the first four Caliphs an effort was made to provide

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[46] Rebecca Kinyon, "Osama bin-Laden: Legitimate within Islamic Legal Thought?", *al Nakhlah*, Spring 2004, pp. 1-5 [Internet access via http://fletcher.tufts.edu/al_nakhlah/]; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. xii.
[47] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 11; Hugh Kennedy, *The Court of the Caliphs: When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, Phoenix, London, 2004, p. xix.
[48] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 27.
[49] Ibid., I, p. 61; Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, p. 141.
[50] Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, p. 136; see further Janina Safran, "The Command of the Faithful in al-Andalus: A Study in the Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy", *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 30 No. 2, May 1998, p. 191.
[51] Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, p. 140.
[52] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, pp. 275-278.

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consultation among the wider Islamic community, and to try to ensure that some form of community consensus could be achieved. Thus it was at least proto-democratic in principle, though tensions emerged as soon as the claims of Ali ibn Abu Talib were deferred until he eventually became the fourth Caliph through 656-661 C.E.[53]

The first four Caliphs are generally regarded by Sunnis as righteous and pious, signified by the term 'rightly guided caliphs' (*Khulfa e Rashidoon*, though doubts are sometimes expressed about the third Caliph, and sometimes Omar bin Abdul Aziz is added as a later fifth rightly-guided Caliph), but this was not sustained following the assassination of Ali and the creation of Umayyad dynasty, which in effect converted the Caliphate into a 'hereditary sultanate'.[54] Writers such as Ibn Khaldun and Jalal al-Din-Dawwani argued that though dynasties based on hereditary succession were in fact not Caliphates but kingships, these rulers might need to adopt this role in protecting the widespread Islamic community.[55] For a thinker such as al-Mawardi (d. 1058) there should be only one Caliph at a time, but he might need to delegate power to a vizier or commander to administer extended territories or provinces, thus leaving open the prospect of a weak caliphate legitimating separate dynasties within the Islamic world.[56]

Once the early Caliphate declined, there was still recognition that even an imperfect leadership was useful to protect Islam and to provide a focus for 'world order' among competing powers and princes. Under such conditions, obedience to an imperfect Caliph was dependent on how far his policies were compatible with Shariah, and in the thought of some later Islamic theorists it might even be necessary to accept a despotic caliph if he could not be deposed.[57]

The idea of the Caliphate as a focus of political leadership and legitimacy linking the international order back to the times of the Prophet and the 'vision' of these first Caliphs continued to be sustained at the formal and rhetorical level. Thus in the theory of Sunni Islam, even when the Caliphate was itself weak, the 'legitimacy of rule . . . flowed from the Caliph who bestowed his favors on ambitious princes and soldiers through a whole range of titles'.[58] The early Caliphs, plus even the Caliph Mansur (from 754 C.E), for a time preserved the notion of 'the public performance of monarchy', with the Caliph visible at the Friday prayers, and allowing courts of

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[53] Ibid., I, p. 64, p. 91; Hugh Kennedy, *The Court of the Caliphs: When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, Phoenix, London, 2004, p. 3.

[54] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p.116; Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, pp.59-73.

[55] Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, p. 61; see Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Thought: Theory, Concepts and Doctrines in the Context of Southeast Asian Islam", in K.S. Nathan & Mohammad Hashim Kamili (eds*) Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, Social and Strategic Challenges for the 21st Century*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2005, p. 7.

[56] Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, pp142-143.

[57] See Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117 No. 2, April-June 1997, p. 274.

[58] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 58; see further Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, p. 141.

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complaint and petition (the *mazalim* court) where any individual, even the poor and dispossessed, could seek redress for the wrongs of officials, though this process tended to fall into disuse and had to be revived, e.g. in 870 C.E.[59]

Illegitimate governments, of course, find it harder to mobilise social and religious support, and tend to need greater levels of force to sustain their regimes.[60] At the broader level, Ibn Khaldun asserted that the function of the Caliphate was to provide the conditions that allow the community of believers (*ummah*) to live according to Shariah.[61] Islam, with its universalist claims, its wide outreach into communities from Morocco to China, with its willingness to include diverse races and its support for international communication and trade, could be viewed metaphorically as a form of 'proto-globalization' linking Africa, the Mediterranean, the Middle-East, Central Asia and an emerging Indo-Asian network through a network of great cities.[62] It was perhaps 'the waning of this universalist tradition that led to localization and atrophy of what was once an open and searching intellectual society'.[63]

In the long run, it was not possible even within the Sunni world for the Caliphate to retain real military power as the Abbasids weakened and began to fragment: -

> Gradually the actual military power of the caliphs diminished; real military and political power fell into the hands of local kings, and the caliph retained only nominal authority. Under these conditions a new theory of political authority was developed by the Sunni jurists (*fuqaha'*), in which the caliph remained the symbol of the unity of the Islamic community and the rule of the *Shari'ah*, and the king or *sultan*, with actual military and political power, had the duty to preserve public order and protect the borders of the Islamic world.[64]

After the first four rightly guided Caliphs, fierce disputes would arise concerning the leadership of the Islamic world, leading to the split between the Sunnis and Shiites, the latter supporting the claims of Ali (as son-law and married to the Prophet's daughter, Fatimah) and his descendants to political leadership. The dispute in this case was not just on the issue of who should succeed, but also on the nature of the Caliphate itself: -

> The Sunnis believed that the function of such a person should be to protect the Divine Law, act as judge, and rule over the community, preserving public order and the borders of the Islamic world. The Shi'ites believed that such a person should also be able to interpret the Quran and the Law and in fact possess inward knowledge. Therefore he had to be chosen by God and the Prophet, not by the community. Such a figure was called *Imam*.[65]

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[59] Hugh Kennedy, *The Court of the Caliphs: When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, Phoenix, London, 2004, p. 14, p. 49, p. 141, p. 146, pp. 204-206.
[60] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 58.
[61] Adapting the account in Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 274.
[62] Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, p. 110.
[63] Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave, N.Y., 2003, p. 5.
[64] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 111.
[65] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

Likewise, from the 860s onwards there was a serious decline in the Abbasid Caliphate, which was now virtually controlled by its Turkish bodyguard, and which encouraged the rise of independent dynasties in Morocco and Egypt.[66] In this context, the Fatamids (as Isma'ili Shiites) would establish their own powerful empire (909-1171), centred on Egypt and stretching from Tunisia to Syria. They made their own claim to the Caliphate in the name of their Imam, and from '910 the Fatimid Ubaidullah had declared himself the Mahdi and the Caliph of all Muslims'.[67] Thus there were three different claims to caliphal political leadership, by the Abbasids (based on the military power of the Turks), by the Fatimids from Cairo (a claim temporarily relinquished in 1171 when Al Aazid died), and the Umayyads from cosmopolitan Cordoba, the latter being based on cosmopolitan governance and opposition to the Fatamids rather than the control of an extensive territorial domain.[68]

One of the great upheavals that reshaped the Islamic world was the invasion of the Mongols, who conquered Baghdad and killed the last Abbasid Caliph in 1258. This led to a short period when there was one recognised Caliph in North Africa (al Mustanir from 1260-1261), but in 1261 the Mamlukes of Egypt 'resurrected the Abbasid Caliphate in Cairo' by inviting a surviving relative to come to Egypt and continue the Abbasid link as a propaganda tool in their conflicts with the Mongols.[69] Although later Mongol leaders adopted Islam as the Il-Khanids, they and the following empire of Timur and his descendants lacked the international credentials to lead the Muslim world. By the 16th century, the Islamic world had been fractured into three great polities that would represent themselves as leaders of the large Muslim communities - the Ottomans, the Safavids (of Persia), and the Moghuls, controlling most of South Asia.[70]

The Ottomans were at first content to use the 'military-political institution' of the Sultanate as their focus for governance.[71] The title Caliph, according to debated sources, was taken over by the Ottomans in 1517 by bringing the last surviving Abbasid Caliph to Istanbul where he abdicated in favour of Selim I.[72] In part it was

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[66] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 49.
[67] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 11, p. 124.
[68] Janina Safran, "The Command of the Faithful in al-Andalus: A Study in the Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy", *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 30 No. 2, May 1998, pp. 183-198; Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, pp. 171-217; Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, pp42-43; Tariq Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*, Verso, London, 2002, p. 33.
[69] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 234, p. 308; see further Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003.
[70] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 28.
[71] Ibid., pp. 124-166.
[72] Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 135; Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, p. 40; Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, p. 63.

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taken up due to successful campaigns in Iran (1514) and Egypt (1517), and also a desire in later periods to mobilise this role within the Islamic world as a partial balance against the growing power of European states. Others suggest that the Ottomans did not assert their formal claim to the Caliphate till the signing of the Treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja in 1774.[73] However, religious justification for the dominance of the Ottoman Sultan was sought as early as the 16th century and contemporary sources suggest that Suleyman the Magnificent had inherited the title,[74] though perhaps the claim was more emphasised from the 18th century onwards: -

> When the Ottomans reached their hay-days by the sixteenth century, as head of a Muslim state, the sultans required spiritual and divine approval and developed the theory of the Ottoman Caliphate. The Grand Wazir Lütfi Pasha who was the key person in this process, composed a treatise in 1541 called *Khalasu 'l-Ümme fi Marifeti'l-Eimme* firmly defined and established the caliphate of the Ottoman Sultans, denying the classical theory of the Quraysh origin, with some religious arguments.
>
> After the war with Russia (1768-74) the treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja named the Ottoman Sultan as Caliph asserting the religious authority of the caliph over the Tatars in the Crimea. From this time onwards the practice of sultans of adopting the title "caliph" became very frequent in order to exert religious influence upon their Muslim subjects and to be used as a political weapon against rebels within the Empire.[75]

Different Sultans would seek to mobilise religious claims as part of pan-Islamic politics in different ways, e.g. the effort to use it to support Turkish-Arabic cohesion in the face of growing European interventions in the late 19th century.[76] Likewise, the Ottoman constitution adopted in December 1876 in its third and fourth articles explicitly set forth the possession of the 'Great Islamic Caliphate' by which the Sultan was 'protector of the religion of Islam', a title also used in later official government yearbooks.[77] However, Seyyed Nasr contends that the Ottoman rulers were really only sultans adopting 'a political order that functioned in many ways like the other caliphates'.[78] The diverse re-assertions of the Caliphate from the 13th century onwards might be viewed as necessary 're-inventions' in order to provide an international focus for the religious needs of the wider Islamic community during the very periods when its unity had been largely splintered.[79]

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[73] Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, p. 144.

[74] Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, pp. 60-61.

[75] Seyfettin Erşahin, "Islamic Support on the Westernization Policy in the Ottoman Empire: Making Mahmud II a Reformer Caliph-Sultan by Islamic Virtue Tradition", *Journal of Religious Culture,* Vol. 78, 2005, p. 7 [Access via http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/irenik/religionskultur.htm]. See further Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 31

[76] See Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, pp. 59-89; Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117 No. 2, April-June 1997, pp. 253-277.

[77] Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, pp. 60-61. See the translation of the 1876 Constitution located at http://www.worldstatesmen.org/OttomanConstitution1876.htm.

[78] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p.131; see also Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 203.

[79] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 304.

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The diverse line of dynasties that might take up the Caliphate could thus lead to disputes among great powers as to where the Caliphate resided, e.g. between Ottoman and Moghul claims: -

> However, there was a clash of grandeur. Both monarchs called themselves 'Caliph', 'shadow of god', 'refuge of the monarchs of the universe'. Ottoman authorities behaved with insolence to Mogul emissaries in Constantinople. The Moguls, for their part, never forgot descent from the great Timur, who had captured the Ottoman Sultan in 1402. Mogul emperors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries claimed that their capital Agra was the 'abode of the Caliphate'; Constantinople was merely 'seat of the Ottoman sultanate'.[80]

In time the Ottomans extended their claims to the Caliphate to buffer their political power, even as it began to wain in the 18th century: -

> For the Ottomans, the idea of the caliphate took on a new meaning which included responsibility for looking after the security of the *hajj* routes, protection of the sacred places, the defence of Islam, and the inclusion of all Muslims under a security blanket combined with the *gazâ* tradition. . . . Later, particularly during the period of loss and diminution of the empire, the Ottomans began to place great emphasis on their being the caliphs for all Muslims so as not to lose the authority they had possessed within the Muslim world.[81]

In such roles the Ottoman sultan might also be described as 'God's shadow on earth', 'the leader of the believers', and 'protector of Islam'.[82] One of the specific claims and duties of the later Caliphs was that they protected (directly or indirectly) the holy places of Mecca and Medina, and the major hajj caravans, as well as defending Islam in a more general sense. This could be hard to sustain, with the Caliphate soon finding itself unable to cover the breach between different reform and nationalist movements. The weakening of the Mughal empire would lead to 18th century thinkers such as Shah Wali-Allah emphasising the need for even an imperfect or 'general' caliphate.[83] Indeed, the growing weakness of the Ottoman empire from the late 19th century onwards would lead to intense debates about how the Caliphate might be re-established, or whether it might need to be shifted to a new Arab caliphate, a view which emerged as early as 1877 among Syrian groups, and at a mature stage in the thought of Rash Rida (1865-1935) once other options became impossible.[84]

Even through the 19th century Muslims were keen to retain the presence of a Caliph on the world stage, perhaps in part due to the increasing pressure of European

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[80] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, p. 190.

[81] Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 31; see further Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, p. 72.

[82] Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 494.

[83] See Aziz Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", *Studia Islamica,* Vol. 28, 1968, pp. 135-144.

[84] Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, p. 69; Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117 No. 2, April-June 1997, pp253-277.

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colonialism. Thus once the Mughals fell, Indian Muslims were politically supportive of the Ottoman Caliphate (the pro-Ottoman Khilafat movement), and one British Viceroy suggested that if Britain allowed Istanbul fell to fall to Russian control this would cause violence in India.[85] In the early 20th century the pan-Islamic aspirations of the Ottomans also gained recognition from Indonesian Muslims, with many Malay students being educated in Turkey.[86] For a relatively short period in the late 19th and early 20th century the Ottomans gained some international prestige as the last independent Muslim power and defender of Islam.[87]

The tilt towards Islam did provide some groundswell of support for the Ottomans, but in the late 19th century it also undermined their claims towards building a multi-religious, cosmopolitan state.[88] Even as late as 1914 the Ottomans may have hoped to strike at the British through an eastward campaign to link up with Muslim populations in north-east India, a move that was pre-empted by Russian pressure on north-eastern Turkey and northern Persian. In turn, some Indian soldiers were reluctant to fight fellow Muslim Turkish soldiers in Iraq, but overall British control remained intact.[89] Indeed, unofficial English and French opinion was keen to see the collapse of Caliphate as one of the few symbols around which resistance to their geo-political and colonial projects might be focused, while 'free-lancers' such as Wilfrid Blunt thought that England might gain much by 'assuming the role of protector' of an Arab caliphate.[90] In turn, British unwillingness to support the Ottomans at various stages helped mobilise opposition in South Asia: -

> In 1919-24 India was swept by the Khilafat movement, an explosion of hostility to Britain and the loyalty to the Ottoman Caliphate which had resurfaced in 1877-8 and 1912-1913. Indian Muslims' concern for the future of Constantinople was shared by Gandhi and some Hindus. The All-India Khilafat Conference organized mass meetings in Delhi, Bombay and Karachi and sent a delegation to Constantinople. There was a pro-Khilafat rising in the Muslim province of Kerala.[91]

Thus the future of the Caliphate as either a religious or political institution was a major issue for the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Ataturk's policies saw political Islam as an obstruction to modernisation and nation-building. At first the Grand National Assembly may have been willing to retain the Sultan-Caliph as a symbol of national unity and a glorious past, but Sultan Vahdettin's opposition to the nationalists

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[85] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, p. 306, p. 384.
[86] Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*, Singapore, Horizon Books, 2001, p207.
[87] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, pp. 320-322; Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, p. 279.
[88] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, p. 275.
[89] Ibid., II, p. 94, p. 312.
[90] Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, pp. 85-88; Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, pp. 316-317.
[91] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, p. 391.

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and his signing of the 'humiliating' Treaty of Sèvres made this impossible.[92] In November 1922, after the Sultan sought the protection of the British, the sultanate was abolished and the Sultan Wahid removed. The Caliphate was separated from the office of Sultan, with the appointment of Abdul Mejid as Caliph, leaving open the option of a religious and unifying role for that institution.[93] However, once it became clear that the new Caliph was becoming a centre for continued conservative opposition, the office was abolished in March 1924.[94] In turn, the manoeuvres of Sharif Husayn to try to have the Caliphate transferred to Mecca was in fact not supported by the British government, which would also not formally guarantee the return of Arabian lands after their 'necessary' occupation in World War I, in part due to the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916 to divide up the area with France.[95] Sharif Husayn's proclamation of the assumption of the office in March 1924 was an empty gesture with little external recognition.[96]

It is not surprising that powerful monarchs such as the Ottoman Sultan saw the Caliphate as a means of reinforcing their (waning) power and authority, with 19th century scholars such as Abu'l-Huda and Jamal al-din al-Afghani supporting the idea of absolute obedience to the Caliph.[97] Thus, for a short time, there was a linkage between pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic ideals, but this could not be sustained in the face of nationalist and modernising trends in Turkey and the Arabic world.[98] Others saw the emergence of a new caliphate, perhaps based around a Turkish-Iranian-Arabian reconciliation, as the last hope for the protection of the Holy Cities (Mecca and Medina, and less certainly Jerusalem and Damascus), and the maintenance of the last truly independent Islamic polities.[99]

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[92] Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn 'Ali, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 40 No. 3, November 2000, pp. 412-414. On the crucial impact of this Treaty on later Turkish foreign policy, see AHMAD, Feroz "The Historical Background of Turkish Foreign Policy", in Lenore G. Martin Dimitris Keridis, *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, Cambridge MA, MIT Press, 2004, pp. 9-36.

[93] Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117 No. 2, April-June 1997, p. 272. Some Constitutional thinkers in 1876 had considered the idea of separating the two institutions, and transferring the caliphate to the Sharif of Mecca, Ş. Tufan Buzpinar, "Opposition to the Ottoman Caliphate in the Early Years of Abdülhamid II: (1877-1882)", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 36 No. 1, March 1996, p. 63.

[94] Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn 'Ali, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 40 No. 3, November 2000, p. 422; Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.) *History of the Ottoman State, Society and Civilisation*, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, 2001, p. 131; Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, p. 413.

[95] See Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117 No. 2, April-June 1997, pp. 264-270. For a short time Mustafa Kemal (Attatürk) may have considered 'exporting' the caliphate as one way to reduce some domestic opposition to his wider agenda, see Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn 'Ali, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 40 No. 3, November 2000, p. 415.

[96] See Joshua Teitelbaum, "'Taking Back' the Caliphate: Sharif Husayn Ibn 'Ali, Mustafa Kemal and the Ottoman Caliphate", *Die Welt des Islams,* Vol. 40 No. 3, November 2000, pp. 412-424, pp. 423-424.

[97] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire, 1453-1924*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1997, pp. 322-323.

[98] Ibid., pp. 357-358.

[99] For these calls for unity, see Mahmoud Haddad, "Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Re-reading Rashid Rida's idea on the Caliphate", *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 117

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This eclipse of the Ottoman Caliphate is explicitly cited as a turning point in the weakening of the Islamic world in an al-Qaeda training manual: -

> After the fall of our orthodox caliphates on March 3, 1924 and after expelling the colonialists, our Islamic nation was afflicted with apostate rulers who took over in the Moslem nation. These rulers turned out to be more infidel and criminal than the colonialists themselves. Moslems have endured all kinds of harm, oppression, and torture.[100]

It is in this context that the effort of various Islamic reformists and modernists became extremely urgent from the late 19th century onwards. One of the most controversial of these was Seyyed Jamaluddin Afghani, who sought to unite the Islamic world under one Caliph in Istanbul, which would require reconciliation between Persia and the Ottoman Empire. He also sought to modernise Islam, and his followers influenced reform movements in Egypt, India, and Indonesia, but his efforts to create a wider Renaissance in Islamic thought were not initially successful.[101] This call for revival and reform, in different forms, became more urgent in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (see further below). In general, the sense of crisis due to the collapse of the Caliphate and the growing power of the West and nationalism has been threefold: -

> First, confronting the Europeans through *jihad*, which eventually failed. Second, accommodating and adopting European ideas, concepts and practices. This second type of response was the most common one that resulted in the adoption of European ideas, concepts and institutions such as "nationalism", "nation-state", "modernism", "secularism", and the like. The third response was proposing alternative concepts and institutions by returning to the romanticized and ideal Islamic concepts. With respect to this, some Muslim scholars and activists such as al-Afghani and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, for instance, appealed for the re-invigoration of the caliphate (*al-khilafah*) as the single, universal Islamic political entity, which, it was believed, would unify the fragmented *ummah*. Other Muslim theologians, who found that it was very difficult to establish such a caliphate, proposed another alternative concept, namely the *dawlah Islamiyyah* (Islamic state), which would be founded in a certain Muslim country.[102]

No. 2, April-June 1997, pp. 253-277. For the role of Jerusalem as a major Islamic centre from the 690s C.E., see Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, p28.

[100] *Declaration of Jihad (Holy War) Against the Country's Tyrants: Military Series (Al Qaeda Training Manual)*, UK translated document posted on United States Department of Justice Website, Accessed 2005, p. 7 [Internet Access via http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/trainingmanual.htm]. The document was found by Manchester police in 2000, and thus is also known as the Manchester Document but copies have also apparently been found in Afghanistan, and was used in a 2001 U.S. trial of terrorists (Donna Miles, "Al Qaeda Manual Drives Detainee Behaviour at Guantanamo Bay", American Forces Information Service, 29 June 2005 [Internet Access at http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2005/20050629_1901.html). The presence of this manual on a hard disc itself seems to be a breach of the kind of security precautions it outlines, while the technologies in the document itself seem somewhat dated, e.g. facsimile and wireless are discussed but not email, computers, or mobile phones, e.g. see Ibid. pp29-31. The material seems to reflect lessons learned in the 1970s and 1980s, and may draw on experience from the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, with the manual mentioning travel security when going for training in Afghanistan via Pakistan, Ibid. pp. 58-59.

[101] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, II, pp. 286-287.

[102] Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Thought: Theory, Concepts and Doctrines in the Context of Southeast Asian Islam", in K.S. Nathan & Mohammad Hashim Kamili (eds*) Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, Social and Strategic Challenges for the 21st Century*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2005, pp. 7-8.

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Such concerns remain a driving force in militant Islamic visions today, with specific triggers including the apparent threat to the Holy City based on Saudi alignment with US security policies (at least from the time of the Gulf War), the fate of Jerusalem and Palestine, and the need to create as least one 'truly' Islamic polity that can resist internal corruption and Western power.

5. Resurrecting the Caliphate for the 21st Century?

In spite of Western efforts to de-legitimize Osama bin Laden as a psychologically warped extremist, he has not only been able to maintain a following but has also been granted some credibility within wider Islamic sensibilities.[103] This is not based on being a learned or holy man, but rather as a warrior who claims to be acting in defence of the holy places of Islam and in defence of the wider Islamic community, viewed as being under attack from the U.S. and its allies, and from insidious Western values. In this context his apparent popularity in parts of the Islamic world rests on a sense of generalised dissatisfaction with the global system, and a specific sense of political dislocation. He has also tried to mobilise historical and traditional elements of Islamic thought. The warrior tradition was a noted part of the early expansion and defence of Islam, as well as re-iterated in the defence and expansion of the borders of the Islamic world as the Ottomans expanded their own frontier. Today: -

> Bin Laden's support rests on his claim that he is a self-declared amir (commander), who is willing to do what no other Arab leaders are doing. In the absence of true leadership, he is a de facto military commander, the only one willing to stand up against the western infidels and occupiers. In Islam, there is no obligation for the military leader to be a religious man as well, and bin Laden makes no claim on being one.[104]

Although Bin Laden might claim a role as an Emir or General,[105] he is not able to assume other titles such as Caliph, since he is not the leader of, nor supported by, a powerful Muslim state. Nor does he meet all the criteria for the Mahdi, the rightly guided Imam whose apocalyptic proclamation and redemptive message in any case would probably not sit well with the revolutionary agenda of al-Qaeda and related groups, contra the confused comparative efforts made by some Western writers.[106] Osama bin Laden does not have the kind of religious training that would entitle him to declare jihad independently, nor to issue *fatwas*, which are only viewed as valid if they have been debated by religious scholars and a wide consensus reached.[107] In June 2007, in response to the knighthood awarded to writer Salman Rushdie, conservative

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[103] Rebecca Kinyon, "Osama bin-Laden: Legitimate within Islamic Legal Thought?", *al Nakhlah*, Spring 2004, p. 1 [Internet access via http://fletcher.tufts.edu/al_nakhlah/].
[104] Ibid.
[105] Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, N.Y., 2002.
[106] See W. Wesley McDonald, "Osama bin Laden's Forerunner", *World and I, Volume 17 No. 6*, June 2002; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, pp.73-74; see further Janina Safran, "The Command of the Faithful in al-Andalus: A Study in the Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy", *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 30 No. 2, May 1998, p. 193.
[107] Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p. 18; Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, pp. 182-183; Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, N.Y., 2002.

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Pakistani clerics did give Bin Ladin the title of '"Saifullah", or sword of Allah' ,[108] but this seems a limited and reactive response.

It is possible, however, that both al-Qaeda and JI have long-term goals to establish a strong Islamic state within initial borders, before a wider range of regional operations that might reshape international politics. On this basis, a letter from Ayman al-Zawahiri, a key al-Qeada leader, to Iraqi insurgents suggests that the collapse of the U.S. presence was crucial as a prelude to establishing an Islamic state in Iraq that would then take the conflict to key 'secular' neighbours including Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, and only then confronting Israel.[109] There are some scattered political claims that suggest a more pragmatic approach towards sustaining a projected future caliphate. One of these is not just the protection of holy sites and Muslims, but also an effort to protect the physical resources of the Middle East, as noted in one of the early al-Qaeda communiques: -

> I would like here to alert my brothers, the Mujahideen, the sons of the nation, to protect this (oil) wealth and not to include it in the battle, as it is a great Islamic wealth and a large economic power essential for the soon-to-be established Islamic state, by Allah's permission and grace. We also warn the aggressors, the U.S.A., against burning this Islamic wealth (a crime which they may commit in order to prevent the oil, at the end of the war, from falling into the hands of its legitimate owners, and to cause economic damage to the competitors of the U.S.A. in Europe or the Far East, particularly Japan, which is the major consumer of oil of the region).[110]

The situation in Southeast Asia is equally problematic for groups seeking to sustain radical political projects. In general terms, Islam in Indonesia has been strongly influenced by pre-Islamic syncretic systems (leading to 'Kejawen' forms of Islam), a mystical inclination, and the importance of Sufism.[111] In part, this divergence has been accommodated by the concept of *adat* or local customary law, which in most areas has run alongside the core religious tenants of Islam, creating a wider social space for divergence.[112] Other patterns that may have been influenced by the Hindu past include a special reverence for the teacher (guru), though this has in part converged on the idea of the special blessings that Muslim teachers and holy persons can impart on their students.[113]

However, it is also true that small but influential numbers of Arabs, Persians, South Asians, those who returned from the struggle in Afghanistan, and those returning from the Hajj have also added new layers of Islamic belief since the 17th century.[114] Large numbers of Southeast Asian Muslims make the pilgrimage to Mecca each year, and in

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[108] Bonny Apunyu, "Pakistan: Muslim clerics honour Osama bin Laden", *SomaliNet News*, June 22, 2007 [http://somalinet.com/news/world/World/11307].
[109] JUS News Desk, "Al-Zawahri "We Must work on Four Fronts", 7 March 2006 [Internet Access via www.jihadunspun.com/].
[110] "Declaration of Jihad, August 23, 1996" in Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p. 9.
[111] Harry Aveling (ed.) *The Development of Indonesian Society: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1979; Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 45.
[112] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 63.
[113] Ibid., p. 69.
[114] Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*, Singapore, Horizon Books, 2001, pp197-213

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the past the Indonesian government gave some financial support for up to 10,000 people making the trip.[115] Arabic has also remained the primary language of advanced Islamic instruction, though in many cases used ritually rather than fully understood linguistically, while Malay became a secondary vehicle for commentary and dialogue on Islam at least as early as the late 17th century when an interpretation of the Qur'an was provided in Malay by Shaykh Abdul Rauf al Sinkili.[116] During these centuries Malay was not only one of the key *lingua franca* for regional trade, but was also one of the vehicles for religious transmission as well.[117] This transnational linkage provides a direct sense of community with the wider Islamic global society, as well as being a focus for renewed missionary and 'call' activities, *da'wa*, including the call for religious renewal.[118] People who have been through this experience not only have increased prestige within their local communities, but are unlikely to be impressed by Western visions of global affairs pretexted on neo-liberalism and liberal democracy.

It is in this context that we can see the enormous prestige and influence of Muslim religious leaders both via village institutions and through teaching institutions such as the *pesantren*, *madrasah* (theological schools, whose role became formalised in the Islamic world from the 11th century onwards) and *sekolah Islam*.[119] Though customs have been strongly influenced by local belief systems at the level of the 'abangan', sometimes viewed as nominal Muslims, it now seems that the 'santri' as devout Muslims seem to have gained some greater influence at the grass roots level in recent years.[120] It is in such a context that figures such as Abu Bakar Bashir, via the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), can gain a certain degree of influence among a strong religious minority within Indonesia. It is important not to exaggerate the conservative or negative teaching of some *pesantren* in Indonesia. In fact the *pesantren* are a key element in early nationalism movements and in the national educational program today, with some 16,000 such schools operating.[121] Since 1994 these have been modernised through the adoptions of the curricula developed by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.[122] Likewise, Indonesia

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[115] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 69.
[116] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 396; see further Iik Arifin Mansurnoor, *Islam in An Indonesia World: Ulama of Madura*, Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University Press, 1990.
[117] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 398.
[118] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 80.
[119] Hugh Kennedy, *The Court of the Caliphs: When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, Phoenix, London, 2004, p. 260; Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 65. For some of these layers operating at the local level in North Sulawesi, see Tim G. Babcock, *Kampung Jawa Tondano: Religion and Cultural Identity*, Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University Press, 1989
[120] Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims: The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in Southeast Asia*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 2002, p. 49.
[121] Zuhairi B. Misrawi "Nahdhatul Ulama, Politics, and Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia", Speech presented in the UE-Indonesia Day, Pluralism and Democracy: Indonesian Perspectives, 7 December 2006, Brussels. [Access via http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/indonesia/eu_indonesia_day/speeches/17_nu_z_misrawi.pdf].
[122] Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Thought: Theory, Concepts and Doctrines in the Context of Southeast Asian Islam", in K.S. Nathan & Mohammad Hashim Kamili (eds) *Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, Social and Strategic Challenges for the 21st Century*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2005, pp. 13-14.

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remains a multi-religious society, with most Muslims in the country supporting a pluralist democracy and not favouring a move towards an Islamic state, nor supporting wholesale extension of strict shariah codes of law.[123] There has been some growing grass roots support for a more Islamic society and some local autonomy laws restricting pornography, prostitution and gambling (since 2000). However, this has not translated into the federal political shift that would erode Indonesia as a pluralist state still allowing the religious diversity guaranteed under Pancasila concepts developed since 1945.[124]

Within Central Asia limited democratisation and slow returns from developing economies (with the exception of Kazakhstan) may have also opened a space for revived visions of an Islamic political order. Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT), the Party of Liberation, more a transnational social movement than opposition party, has come under pressure from governments in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Russia and more recently in Kyrgyzstan.[125] Operating almost globally (with publicly active groups in the UK, Australia and Indonesia), HT has argued for a widespread grassroots reform of Islamic society that might lay the basis for a future 'true' caliphate.[126] This call for a return to an Islamic state, or indeed, some more radical vision of political order such as the Caliphate, as had been viewed as a direct threat by Central Asian governments.[127] The stated aims of Hizb-ut-Tahrir include the creation of an Islamic state by peaceful means.[128] Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT) 'operates highly secretive decentralized cells in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan', but many of its members have been arrested in Uzbekistan.[129] These religious and political tensions in Uzbekistan came to a head through May 2005 in the regional city of Andijan (Andizhan), which has a population of 300,000 and is the regional centre of the Uzbek part of the fertile and divided Fergana valley. In May 2005 armed rebels there tried to free comrades charged with religious extremism, while at the same time some 3,000 people protested against President Karimov.[130] The gunmen took 10 hostages, but in turn police fired into the crowds, killing hundreds. Final estimates of death went up from 500 to over 800, far more than the total of 187 reported by

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[123] See Nadirsyah Hosen, "Religion and the Indonesian constitution: a recent debate", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* Vol. 36 No. 3, October 2005, pp. 419-440.
[124] See Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World*, Singapore, Horizon Books, 2001, p215; Zuhairi B. Misrawi "Nahdhatul Ulama, Politics, and Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia", Speech presented in the UE-Indonesia Day, Pluralism and Democracy: Indonesian Perspectives, 7 December 2006, Brussels. [Access via http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/indonesia/eu_indonesia_day/speeches/17_nu_z_misrawi.pdf].
[125] "Islamic Group Supporters Dispersed in Kyrgyzstan", *Pr-Inside.com*, 1 October 2008 [Access via www.pr-inside.com]
[126] Zuhairi B. Misrawi "Nahdhatul Ulama, Politics, and Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia", Speech presented in the UE-Indonesia Day, Pluralism and Democracy: Indonesian Perspectives, 7 December 2006, Brussels. [Access via http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/indonesia/eu_indonesia_day/speeches/17_nu_z_misrawi.pdf].
[127] Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Central Asia: Hizb Ut-Tahrir Calls for Islamic State Find Support", *Eurasia Insight*, 17 January 2006a [Internet Access via www.eurasianet.org].
[128] Gregory Feifer, "Uzbekistan's Eternal Realities: A Report from Tashkent", *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 19 No. 1, Spring 2002, pp. 81-89.
[129] Ahmed Rashid, " The Fires of Faith in Central Asia. ", *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 1, Spring 2001.
[130] *The Australian* "Uzbek Uprising Toll 'Near 500'", 16 May 2005a, p. 11.

Uzbekistan's authorities.[131] President Karimov blamed Hizb ut-Tahrir elements for much of this discontent, though at least up till 2004 that organisation had used peaceful means to support its project of an Islamic state in the region.

Through 2000-2004 Hizb-ut-Tahrir was also active in seeking Islamic reform in Kazakhstan, opposing U.S. foreign policy, and calling for a Central Asia caliphate.[132] In Tajikistan, Hizb-ut-Tahrir was accused of a car bombing in February 2005, though the evidence was circumstantial, with the London-based organisation repeating that it is 'an Islamic intellectual and political entity' that is purely non-violent, though fears have been raised that a splinter-group may have become frustrated with its peaceful approach.[133] Hizb-ut-Tahrir emerged as a loose international organisation seeking a peaceful transition towards a new transnational global order based on Islamic values.[134] It has been feared, however, the Hizb-ut-Tahrir agenda may have shifted towards a more violent methodology, or that it has been used by an interior group using more militant methods. It has become a security focus for Uzbekistan, Russia, and China, and for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, though links with al-Qaeda or the earlier IMU have not been clearly demonstrated. In this setting, it is important not to make easy assumptions. For example, the new militant Islamic group called Akromiya, supposedly a Hizbt-ut-Tahrir splinter group that was responsible for the violence in Andijan, may have been a 'propagandistic' ploy used by the Uzbekistan government in order to crack down on independent Muslim movements.[135]

It can be seen, then, that the political project of the Caliphate as put forward by al-Qaeda, JI and related groups is at best fragmentary, often mixed with revolutionary elements of 20th century European political practice,[136] and at worst a utopian reworking of a call to the past that does not coincide with the current challenges facing Islamic communities, in spite of superficial similarities. Thus: -

> The modernism and so-called fundamentalism that are evident in certain sectors of Islamic society and in certain lands have caused traditional Islamic life to wither, but have been unable to create any significant theological world view that could challenge the traditional one.[137]

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[131] Ibid.; Roland Watson & Jeremy Page, "US Skirts Criticism as Uzbek Massacre Reports Put Toll at 745", *The Australian*, 18 May 2005, p8; Sarah Kendzior, "Inventing Akromiya: The Role of Uzbek Propagandists in the Andijon Massacre", *Demokratizatsiya,* Vol. 14 no. 4, Fall 2006, pp. 545-562.
[132] Marat Yermukanov, "Hizb-ut-Tahrir members Get Prison Terms in Kazakhstan", *Eurasian Daily Monitor,* Vol. 1 No. 47, July 8, 2004 [Access via http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2368217].
[133] *Eurasia Insight* "Tajik Government Keeping Lid on Car-Bombing Details", Eurasianet, 2 February 2005a [Internet Access via http://www.eurasianet.org].
[134] A major conference was held by this organisation in late January 2007 in Sydney, D.D. McNicoll, "Fight for Global Islamic State", *The Australian*, 29 January 2007, p. 3.
[135] See Sarah Kendzior, "Inventing Akromiya: The Role of Uzbek Propagandists in the Andijon Massacre", *Demokratizatsiya,* Vol. 14 no. 4, Fall 2006, pp. 545-562; for alternative views see *Registan* "Igor Rotar Briefs Washington on Central Asian Religious Issues", Registan.net, January 2007 [Access via http://www.registan.net/index.php/2007/01/18/igor-rotar-briefs-washington-on-central-asian-religious-issues/].
[136] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, pp. 181-184.
[137] Ibid., p. 174.

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This project might seem unlikely in the face of the U.S.'s dominant strategic power, continued Russian and Chinese tensions with Islamic communities, ongoing international interventions in the Middle East and Central Asia, and the apparent robustness of governments in Southeast Asia, though Thailand and Philippines have come under increasing pressure from 2006.[138] However, militant Islamists have viewed themselves as the victor in the war against the Soviet Union (in Afghanistan from 1979), as slowly winning the war of hearts and minds in the Islamic world, and al-Qaeda has spoken of its victory against the U.S. in Beirut, Aden, and Mogadishu.[139] From the perspective of Osama bin Laden, these different conflicts are part of a longer chain of an integrated war between Crusaders and Muslims,[140] thereby engaging a long-term viewpoint and a global strategy of conflict. Conditions in Pakistan, Palestine, and Iran are far from positive for Western policy makers, while ongoing repression in Central Asia also provides a possible focus for conflict, especially in Uzbekistan. Problematic and slow stabilisation efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that there is a need for sustained multilateral international support for these new governments if they are to become genuinely accepted as local and legitimate sources of governance. At present, al-Qaeda 'affiliates' and nationally-based militants remain able to disturb the current international order but not destroy it. Nor do their statements suggest an adequate vision of alternative governance. In the contemporary setting, this leaves open the issue of how Islamic society should sustain itself in the modern period of Western global dominance.

6. The *Ummah* as the Community of Believers

These hopes of a future caliphate may be viewed as one impulse in the discontent over the status of the transnational Islamic community in the current global system. The *ummah*, the community of believers, provides the focus for a transnational network that is nearly global in reach. It is crucial to note that for many Muslims this is a key level of their identity, especially when state or governmental structures have been weak or oppressive.[141]

This sense of solidarity and brotherhood helped make Islam an appealing religion not only to Arab tribes, but aided its spread to Persians, Turks, Egyptians and a wider community that stretched from Western Africa through Central Asia to enclaves in southern China. In theory, membership within Islam overcame barriers of ethnicity, race, and status, and 'rejected all forms of racism and tribalism',[142] making it an ideal universalising religion. Alongside its core religious origins, Islam could benefit from the great diversity of its followers. Persians, Turks, and Indians would soon contribute to the rich culture and intellectual tradition of Islam. Thus, 'Islam is like a vast tapestry into which all these local cultural modes and varieties are woven like

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[138] See *Strategic Comments,* "Unstable Democracies in Southeast Asia: The Philippine and Thai Crises", Vol. 12 No. 4, May 2006, pp. 1-2; Thepchai Yong, " Who's really in charge of dealing with southern strife?", *The Nation* (Bangkok), 20 June 2006 [Internet Access via http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/06/20/opinion/opinion_30006822.php].

[139] In Robert O. Marlin (IV), (ed.) *What Does Al-Qaeda Want?: Unedited Communiques*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004, p. 13, p. 73.

[140] Ibid., p. 39.

[141] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 15.

[142] Ibid., p. 16, following Quran 49:13.

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arabesques; the larger pattern they make reflects the Oneness of the Divine Principle'.[143]

Having said this, political unity became problematic as soon as the Prophet died, and could not be easily sustained even through the Abbasid period, though the Abbasids tried to portray their rule in religious and moral terms.[144] The division between Shia and Sunni groups, claims by different leaders to the prestige of the Caliphate, and a range of orthodox and non-orthodox practices soon created a range of fractures within the Islamic world. Likewise, the impact of de-colonisation, nationalism and modernisation has left a checkerboard of Muslim societies whose states are often at odds with each other, e.g. historical tensions between Syria and Turkey, Iran and Turkey, and between Saudi Arabia and Iran. In such a context, the identity with the *ummah* remains as an ideal and aspiration, and the structures of family and local community may become a stronger reality for many Muslims than state-affiliation.[145]

Early Islam focused on the ideal of *Tawhid* as a widely conceived 'God-centred civilization' which could be established on earth.[146] This also implied a debate on authentic and 'unauthentic' traditions and practices, and a utopian push towards a universal political order based on a unity among believers across diverse cultures and transcending states: -

> Islamists furthermore suffer overall from a tendency to seek an idealized social unity, and idealized homogeneous national - or even *umma* - identity that discourages diversity and difference that is seen as fractious, divisive and harmful to the *umma*.[147]

Likewise, Muslim communities under pressure within Western countries, e.g. France through 2003-2007, have at times rebounded towards a stronger Islamic identity focused on the *ummah*, particularly if they remain within minority communities and do not work within the wider French community.[148] Islam has emerged as the second largest religion in France, with over 4 million Muslims in the country in the late 1990s and heading towards 10% of the population in the 21st century, and when compared with the 8-9% of highly active Catholics, this has worried conservative commentators.[149] At the broader level, it can also be asked in the post-2001 era whether France (and Europe as a whole) is really willing and able to protect the rights of its Muslim minorities, in spite of the legal requirement to do so, once again pushing a rebound towards alternative layers of identity.[150]

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[143] Ibid., p. 24.
[144] See Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples*, London, Faber & Faber, 2002, pp. 36-37; Hugh Kennedy, *The Court of the Caliphs: When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World*, Phoenix, London, 2004.
[145] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*, Harper San Francisco, N.Y., 2003, p. 103.
[146] Nazeer Ahmed, *Islam in Global History: From the Death of Prophet Muhammed to the First World War*, 2 vols., American Institute of Islamic History and Culture, Concord, 2000, I, p. 74, p. 89.
[147] Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave, N.Y., 2003, p. 19.
[148] Robert Spenser, "Jihad Begins in France", Human Events, Vol. 61 No. 39, 14 November 2005.
[149] David Hanley, "French Politics in the Twenty-First Century: Invention or Muddling Through?", in Susan Milner & PARSONS, Nick Parsons (eds) *Reinventing France: State and Society in the Twenty-First Century*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2003, p. 28; see Stephen Crittenden & Niall Ferguson, "Niall Ferguson on Islam and demographics", The Religion Report, (Interview Transcript) 29 March 2006 [Internet Access via http://www.abc.net.au/rn/religionreport/stories/2006/1603430.htm#].
[150] See Susan Milner &Nick Parsons (eds) *Reinventing France: State and Society in the Twenty-First Century,* London, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2003.

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At various times Islamist groups have also sought an internationalised approach through linkages into the wider *ummah*. From 1990, the formal creation of the 'all-Union' Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) aimed to revive Islam in Eurasia and Central Asia, with three main structures: the first in Central Asia, plus a Moscow-based centre to help Muslims within Russia, and another group based in the North Caucasus. The group soon set up branches in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, propagating Islam and involved in 'cultural, sociopolitical and economic life'.[151] This organisation had a strongly internationalist orientation, based on the view of a global community of believers, leading to early contact and cooperation between members in Tajikistan and the mujahidin in Afghanistan. For many Central Asians, the ability of Afghanistan to resist the Soviet invasion during the 1980s showed it was possible for Islamic communities to resist Russian domination in the 1990s,[152] a lesson being partly repeated through the continued resistance of the Taliban in southern Afghanistan through 2005-2008. These patterns of local and transnational identity have made it difficult for the top-down approach of nation-building to be applied in Central Asia, especially if religious and opposition groups are effectively denied a political voice.[153] Indeed, for radical thinkers such as Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi (1903-1979) Muslims should constitute a *jama'at*, a community rather than a nation, and as such 'secularism, nationalism and democracy are the roots of calamities'.[154] More generally, for many Muslims living in troubled states there is a real tension between religious and national identity, leading to aspirations for new patterns of political leadership.

7. Conclusion: The End of the Caliphate

Current legitimacy failures in some states with Muslim populations, and the limited democratisation of others, has resulted in an increased emphasis on Islamic political credentials and stronger recourse to patterns of traditional Islamic identity. Likewise, it is not clear whether, within the long sweep of history, the current international order is sufficiently responsive to the wider needs of the *ummah* viewed as a civilizational community. However, radical utopian projects such as a revitalised caliphate have limited resonance with modern Muslim populations. In this area, both hard and soft power options, including breaking down cultural prejudices and building new patterns of trust,[155] are needed to reduce ideological conflicts that are being played out globally, but entwined with local conflicts, e.g. in Palestine, Somalia, Afghanistan and Pakistan. If the mobilisation of a new caliphate is a bankrupt policy for Islamic militants, it is also an exaggerated pretext for security responses deployed by modern states. The ahistorical and rarefied 21st century usage of the 'Caliphate' has made it a flexible tool, readily used for propaganda or to exaggerate militant threats. Ultimately, however, in spite of some revival in popularity as an aspiration focus for many Muslims, it remains an empty political agenda for the 21st century.

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[151] Pinar Akcali, "Islam as a 'Common Bond' in Central Asia: Islam Renaissance Party and the Afghan Mujahidin", *Central Asian Survey,* Vol. 17 No. 2, 1998, pp. 267-284.
[152] Ibid.
[153] See further Pinar Akcali, "III. Nation-State Building in Central Asia: A lost Case*?", Perspectives on Global Development & Technology*, Vol. *2 No. 3-4*, 2003, pp. 409-429.
[154] Anthony H. Johns & Nelly Lahoud (eds) *Islam in World Politics*, Routledge, London 2005, p. 12.
[155] Bahtiar Effendi, "Putting All Cards on the Table: Trust and Soft Power in the War on Terror", *RSIS Commentaries*, No. 63/2007, (Singapore), 18 June 2007.