START
NATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR THE
STUDY OF TERRORISM AND RESPONSES TO TERRORISM

Debates among Salafi Muslims about use of violence
Religious concepts central to arguments for and against violence

OVERVIEW

This summary report discusses the common religious concepts used in Salafi Muslim discourse to discuss violence and non-violence. It offers a short summary of Salafi debates surrounding the concept of *jihad* and focuses on the most common religious concepts used by Salafis to justify violent action and the major religious concepts employed in non-violent Salafi discourse.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This summary report discusses research from a larger project, the Counter-Narrative Knowledge Tool for CVE Practitioners and Communities, which seeks to curate a library of violent narratives and pair them with non-violent counternarratives and alternative narratives that will serve as a resource for anyone engaged in countering violent extremism. The curated library is intended to help raise awareness of the messaging used by violent extremists and their non-violent supporters to bolster their social legitimacy and recruit individuals into their movement. Additionally, the library could help inform and expedite counter-messaging efforts, which include identifying gaps in current counternarrative and alternative narrative content.

Though this report focuses on debates among Salafi Muslims about violence and non-violence, the larger project not only examines extremist narratives espoused by violent extremist movements such as al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIL), but also includes narratives employed by violent U.S. far-right extremist actors, including violent white supremacists, militia violent extremists, violent sovereign citizens and violent anti-abortion extremists. A literature survey and this resulting summary report explores Salafism as a broad religious movement within Sunni Islam, and identifies intra-Salafi debates on violence and non-violence. The research team notes explicitly that this inquiry does not constitute an endorsement of a strategy that promotes or rejects non-violent Salafis and their ideas as bulwarks against violent Salafis and their ideas. Rather, this literature survey is simply one step toward developing a more comprehensive understanding of the weaknesses in violent Salafi recruitment narratives.

KEY CONCEPTS

DEFINITIONS

Sharia is frequently translated as "Islamic Law." *Sharia* is a concept: the ideal body of law which encapsulates God's will for mankind. In practice, Muslim clerics study the sources of authority in the Muslim tradition (the two most important of which are the Qur'an, which is believed to be the revealed and literal word of God, and collections of biographical stories of the Prophet Muhammad and his closest companions, referred to as *Hadith*) and then interpret those sources to provide their religious-legal opinion (*fatwa*) as to what constitutes the correct response to a specific question of faith. This process has resulted in a highly diverse body of interpretation of what Islamic Law *should be* in practice.

Salafism is a religious methodology that originated in the Arabian Peninsula[1] and is adhered to by an influential minority of Sunni Muslims, which seeks to return Islam to the way it was originally observed by the early Muslim community by:
1. Emulating the beliefs and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (*Sunnah*) as well as those of the first three generations of the early Muslim community (*as-salaf as-salih*), a group some Muslims consider to be the best embodiment of the *sunnah* and understanding of Qur'anic revelation due to their close historical and physical proximity to both sources. This emulation extends beyond personal private religious belief and practice to all aspects of human activity, both public and private.
2. Rejecting beliefs and practices which have developed within the Islamic faith or have been appropriated by it since the time of the Prophet and the first three generations of Muslims, which Salafis refer to as "innovation" (*bid'a*).

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[1] Similar puritanical movements have arisen in other geographical and historical contexts and have co-mingled with and influenced Salafism and violent Salafism. The authors seek to focus on Salafism in this report, but acknowledge that it is not the only relevant intellectual movement or methodology that has influenced or has a relationship to "jihadist" terrorism.

A **violent Salafi** is an individual who adheres to the religious methodology of Salafism, as defined earlier, and engages in violence or adheres to a set of beliefs that explicitly or implicitly[2] advocates for violence to advance those beliefs in the near term[3] against their perceived enemies.

OVERARCHING FINDINGS

Salafism is far from monolithic. While Salafism can often be broadly thought of as a highly conservative scripturalist movement within Sunni Islam, differences also exist among various groups who identify as "Salafi." In fact, they are highly fractured and often fight with each other.

Despite the internal differences, violent and non-violent Salafis share many similarities. In general, they agree on most points of religious belief and methodology, as well as socio-political end goals (an Islamic political community governed by their interpretation of *sharia*, or Islamic law). In terms of socio-political objectives, the differences between violent and non-violent Salafis lay not with the goals but the means to achieve them.

The question of political engagement is the central debate among Salafis. "Quietists" eschew any political activism whatsoever and focus on bottom-up "education and purification" of society. "Politicos" believe in non-violent political activism but tend to reject democratic means of engagement.[4] "Jihadis" believe in the revolutionary overthrow of existing state structures to be replaced by theocracies implementing their interpretation of sharia.

Non-violent Salafis are outspoken about the actions of their violent counterparts and their critiques center largely on religious methodology and scholarly pedigree. Non-violent Salafis tend to critique their violent counterparts on two grounds.
- First, they contest how violent Salafis arrive at a particular conclusion and place less emphasis on the substance of the conclusion itself.
- Second, non-violent Salafis often argue that their violent counterparts lack the formal religious training necessary to issue authoritative religious opinions (*fatawa*). ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's emphasis on his purported religious training can be seen as a way of pre-empting this latter critique.

RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

In addition to *jihad*, the research team identified 11 frequently-employed religious concepts in violent Salafi argumentation and six common religious concepts used in non-violent Salafi discourse.[5]

JIHAD

Jihad is the most hotly contested religious concept, employed by both violent and non-violent Salafis. Broadly speaking, *jihad* means "struggle." In Islamic religious practice, this effort can be seen as a spiritual, non-violent struggle for personal righteousness. Mainstream Salafis recognize this understanding of jihad.[6] A second possible interpretation of this concept – and one that is more relevant to this survey—is the notion that jihad can also be an outward military struggle. This understanding of jihad has a long and complex legal history,[7] with some scholars arguing that many aspects of its legal history

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[2] We say "implicitly" based on examples such as Sayyid Qutb. Although himself not a Salafi, during Qutb's life he provided much of the ideological framework for leaders in later violent Salafi groups like Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Gama'a Islamiyya, and al-Qa'ida, without **explicitly** calling for violence. See: Barbara Zollner, "Prison Talk: The Muslim Brotherhood's Internal Struggle during Gamal Abdel Nasser's Persecution, 1954 to 1971," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 3 (August 2007): 419.

[3] We say "near-term" because, as it will be become clear in this report, violent and non-violent Salafis tend to share many of the same underlying beliefs, including their hostile view of the religious "other." The main difference between many, but not all violent and non-violent Salafis, is not if, but when and under what conditions it is permissible to engage in violence against a perceived enemy. Violent Salafis tend to have a much lower threshold (and therefore more immediate willingness) to engage in violence compared to their non-violent counterparts who call for sweeping, peaceful transformation of societies through education and religious outreach, *before* any violent action can be permissible.

[4] Although both the contemporary Salafi trend and the Muslim Brotherhood developed as Islamic reform movements, the Brotherhood and its ideological offspring value the Islamization of society to such a high degree, they are willing to accept certain beliefs and practices which most, if not all, Salafis would consider un-Islamic. Therefore, while the Muslim Brotherhood has Salafi roots, it is not currently considered to be a Salafi group for the purposes of this analysis.

[5] Compared to the list of religious concepts frequently used in violent Salafi argumentation the number of concepts frequently used in non-violent Salafi argumentation is substantially shorter. We ascribe this to the dearth of academic research on non-violent Salafism, which represents a substantial gap in the scholarly literature

[6] For instance, see: Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid, "20214: Ruling on Jihad and Kinds of Jihad." *Islam Q&A*, (n.d.), accessed May 18, 2015, http://islamqa.info/en/20214

[7] For an overview, see: Sherman A. Jackson, "Jihad and the Modern World." *Journal of Islamic Law and Culture*, 7, no. 1, (2002): 1-26.

are analogous to Christian Just War Theory.[8] All Salafis also acknowledge the legitimacy of this second interpretation of jihad, at least in principle. However they strongly disagree on circumstances under which jihad can be conducted.

- Non-violent Salafis argue that the prerequisites to engage in combat are not currently met, to include the need for proper spiritual preparation (which tends to be vaguely defined).
  - Non-violent Salafis, pointing to the Muslim community's lack of social or political unity, argue that calling for *jihad* at present would be counterproductive because it would lead to communal discord.
  - Engaging in acts that do more harm than good is forbidden because it creates conditions which prevent the basic practice and propagation of Islam.
- Conversely, violent Salafis argue that the current political and social conditions of the Muslim community demand militant *jihad*, both for defensive and offensive purposes.
  - For example, al-Qa'ida and its affiliated groups argue that Muslim territory is currently being occupied by non-Muslim armies —either directly through the presence of foreign troops on Muslim soil or by proxy through the efforts of local "apostate" regimes—thereby fulfilling the requirements for defensive *jihad* and necessitating its implementation.[9]
  - ISIL also references defensive *jihad* in its rhetoric, but in addition it emphasizes offensive militant *jihad* to expand the domain of what it considers to be authentic Muslim rule.

DOMINANT RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS USED IN VIOLENT SALAFI NARRATIVES

Tawhid. *Tawhid* refers to God's absolute unity and indivisibility, and is frequently translated as "monotheism." It is the religious precept at the heart of all sects and strands of Islam, including Salafism. For Salafis, *tawhid* implies that only God alone has the right to be worshipped. This belief is at the base their opposition to the veneration of Sufi saints and the reverence for the descendants of the family of the Prophet Muhammad (Ahl al-Bayt) by the Shi'a. However, violent Salafis use *tawhid* - or more specifically the violation of *tawhid* - to justify violence against other Muslims, particularly political regimes throughout the Islamic world. To arrive at this conclusion, violent Salafis begin with the premise that to ascribe sovereignty to anything is to worship it. To worship anything other than God is a violation of *tawhid,* called *shirk* (defined below). God's sovereignty is made manifest through the implementation of *sharia*. Therefore, any government which fails to fully implement and adhere to the violent Salafi interpretation of *sharia* is guilty of ascribing sovereignty to something other than God. Such a sin is sufficient evidence of a regime's unbelief and, consequently, violence may be directed at the regime (see *takfir* below for more on this subject).[10]

Shirk. The antithesis of *tawhid* is *shirk*, ascribing divinity to anything other than God. Because it is viewed as the most grievous sin within all sects and strands of Islam, most Muslim scholars agree that willfully committing *shirk* automatically transforms a believer into an apostate.[11] Recently, the debate over *shirk* within the Salafi community has centered on whether or not a Muslim ruler who implements non-Islamic laws has committed *shirk*. Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a prominent scholar among violent Salafis, asserts that *tawhid* demands obedience and devotion to God "in every meaning that the word worship encompasses."[12] For him, the act of formulating and following law is a form of worship; therefore, to implement or adhere to non-Islamic laws is a form of *shirk*.[13] Conversely, Muhammad al-Albani held that *shirk* required a willful decision to elevate something to a position meant to be held by God alone.[14] In other words, if a Muslim ruler implements a non-Islamic law, he is not guilty of *shirk* unless he conscientiously does so with the intention of worshipping something other than God. Consequently, al-Maqdisi declares that a ruler who applies non-Islamic laws is a *kafir* (an unbeliever, defined below) while al-Albani argues that this is not necessarily true. Being labeled as a *kafir* has important implications for other concepts, such as *al-wala wal-bara* (loyalty and disavowal, defined below), that are used by violent Salafis to rationalize violence against their perceived enemies.

Kufr, Kafir, Takfir. *Kufr* is a state of unbelief, a *kafir* is non-believer, or infidel, and *takfir* is excommunication, or the process of declaring one to be guilty of *kufr* and, consequently, outside of the Muslim community. Historically within Islam, there has been debate over whether "one's belief could be nullified by one's actions" and, if so, what types of actions would indicate that one

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[8] For example, see: Charles Amjad-Ali, "Jihad and Just War Theory: Dissonance and Truth." *Dialog: A Journal of Theology*, 48, no. 3, (Fall 2009): 239-247.

[9] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad." *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 4, (Winter 2001), accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.mepc.org/articles-commentary/commentary/new-global-threat-transnational-salafis-and-jihad?print.

[10] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 4 (December 2001), 26, doi: 10.1111/j.1475-4967.2001.tb00006.x.

[11] Joas Wagemakers, "'Seceders' and 'Postponers'? An Analysis of the 'Khawarij' and 'Murji'a' Labels in Polemical Debates between Quietist and Jihadi-Salafis," in *Contextualising Jihadi Thought*, J. Deol and ed. Z. Kazmi (London: Hurst & Co, 2012), 150.

[12] Joas Wagemakers, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: al-wala' wa-l-bara' in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 92.

[13] Joas Wagemakers, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: al-wala' wa-l-bara' in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 93.

[14] Joas Wagemakers, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: al-wala' wa-l-bara' in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 100.

has abandoned his faith.[15] Due to this lack of consensus and because *takfir* is considered to be such a gravely serious matter, its declaration has traditionally been reserved solely for qualified religious scholars and its application limited to certain strict conditions.[16] For violent Salafis, however, *takfir* has become "a blanket weapon selectively wielded to legitimize attacks against those deemed obstacles to Salafi thought and activism."[17] Traditional Islamic law recommends the death penalty for Muslims who willingly renounce their faith and do not repent.[18] Consequently, when violent Salafis engage in *takfir* against other Muslims, they are declaring that these individuals have left the faith and are therefore permissible targets of violence. In particular, violent Salafis direct accusations of unbelief against political leaders as a way to justify their violent opposition to them. It is important to note that many other Salafis may agree with the violent Salafi assessment of a ruler, namely that he has entered *kufr* by contravening *sharia*, but they discourage this specific use of *takfir* because it risks plunging the Muslim community into internal conflict.[19]

Al-Wala wal-Bara. Literally translated as "loyalty and disavowal," when taken to its extreme, *al-wala wal-bara* essentially divides the world into two camps which are inherently opposed to one another. This reading of *al-wala wal-bara* demands unquestioned loyalty to the "true" Muslim community and "authentic" Islam and requires total disavowal of all things un-Islamic, including European fashion or "American" nicknames. Violent Salafis, relying primarily on the writings of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, have added a political dimension to this concept. They believe that the exhortation of disavowal includes calling for violence against rulers who they believe to be apostates.[20]

Tatarrus. *Hukm al-Tatarrus*, literally the "law of shielding," is a "religiously legitimate, albeit obscure, Islamic concept" that is employed by violent Salafis as a response to criticisms from Islamic scholars that their attacks are unlawful because they kill innocent Muslims.[21] This legal precept states that it is permissible to kill Muslims in the course of battle if they are being used as human shields by non-Muslim enemies. The leading proponent of the modern interpretation of this concept was al-Qa'ida ideologue and strategist Abu Yahya al-Libi.[22]

Hakimiyya. Usually translated as "divine sovereignty," *hakimiyya* is the notion that God alone has the authority to rule. Divine sovereignty is exercised by the full implementation of *sharia*. Violent Salafis see the violation of *hakimiyya,* such as the creation of man-made law or participation in a democracy, as an act which elevates man to a position rightfully occupied by God. Consequently, disregarding *hakimiyya* is *shirk* and, as such, an indication of *kufr.*

Murjia. The *Murjia* (those who postpone) was a sect that developed in response to the political debates of the early Muslim community. They refused to become involved in conflicts over leadership of the *Umma* (the collective Muslim community), opting instead to postpone judgment and let God decide who should rule. Over time, the *Murjia* extended this practice of deferment to cover matters of belief as well. They reasoned that only God knew whether or not one's faith was genuine. In a modern context, *Murjia* has become a derogatory term used by violent Salafis against the apolitical "quietist" Salafis. For these violent Salafis, to compare the contemporary quietist Salafis to the *Murjia* is to suggest that they are unquestioningly subservient to corrupt Muslim regimes and to imply that they are neglecting their duty to denounce sinful behavior.[23] The derogatory labeling of non-violent Salafis continues to be a key narrative employed by violent groups like al-Qa'ida and ISIL.

Hijra. In Islamic tradition the concept of *hijra*, or "migration," refers to when the Prophet Muhammad and the early community of Muslims left Mecca to go to the city now known as Medina in order to escape persecution and practice their religion freely.

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[15] Jacob Olidort, "The Politics of 'Quietist' Salafism," *Brookings Institute*, (February 2015), last accessed April 16, 2015.

[16] Thomas Hegghammer, "Jihadi Salafis or Revolutionaries? On Theology and Politics in the Study of Militant Islamism," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 247.

[17] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad," *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 4 (December 2001), 27, doi: 10.1111/j.1475-4967.2001.tb00006.x

[18] *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, s. v. "Murtadd," accessed May 7, 2015, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/murtadd-SIM_5554.

[19] Yasir Qadhi, "On Salafi Islam," *Muslim Matters*, April 22, 2014, accessed April 6, 2015, http://muslimmatters.org/2014/04/22/on-salafi-islam-dr-yasir-qadhi/.

[20] Joas Wagemakers, "The Transformation of a Radical Concept: al-wala' wa-l-bara' in the Ideology of Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 94.

[21] Abdullah Warius and Jarret Brachman. "Abu Yahya al-Libi's 'Human Shields in Modern Jihad," last updated May 15, 2008, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/abu-yahya-al-libi%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Chuman-shields-in-modern-jihad%E2%80%9D.

[22] Abdullah Warius and Jarret Brachman, "Abu Yahya al-Libi's 'Human Shields in Modern Jihad.'" *CTC Sentinel*, May 15, 2008, accessed June 19, 2015, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/abu-yahya-al-libi%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Chuman-shields-in-modern-jihad%E2%80%9D; Jack Barclay, "Al-Tatarrus: al-Qaeda's Justification for Killing Muslim Civilians." *Terrorism Monitor*, 8, no. 34, September 9, 2010, accessed June 19, 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/TM_008_87.pdf, 6-9.

[23] Joas Wagemakers, "'Seceders' and 'Postponers'? An Analysis of the 'Khawarij' and 'Murji'a' Labels in Polemical Debates between Quietist and Jihadi-Salafis," in *Contextualising Jihadi Thought*, J. Deol and ed. Z. Kazmi (London: Hurst & Co, 2012), 157-160.

Those who participated in this migration are referred to as the *muhajirun* or "emigrants."[24] ISIL leadership today portrays the world as split between "the camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr [disbelief] and hypocrisy" and repeatedly urges Muslims to emigrate to the so-called caliphate, which ISIL claims is a religious obligation for all Muslims.[25] Although both al-Qa'ida and ISIL emphasize emigration from apostate lands, ISIL is more inclusive than al-Qa'ida and its associated movement in its calls for *hijra*.[26] The former urges all types of Muslims, including but not limited to doctors, scholars, specialists and their families, to make *hijra* to the so-called caliphate.[27] Leaders from the al-Qa'ida movement, including Usama bin Laden and Anwar al-Awlaki, also incorporated *hijra* into recruitment narratives, but directed their messaging to would-be fighters. Al-Awlaki references the Prophet Muhammad's decision to depart Mecca for Medina and explains that modern Muslims face a similar decision. Muslims that decide to remain in areas hostile to Muslims are considered hypocrites if they fail to either embark on *hijra* in order to then engage in *jihad* on active battlefields in the Muslim world, or engage in violent *jihad* in the West.[28]

Rafidha. Translated as "rejecters,"[29] *Rafidha* is sometimes used as a derogatory term directed against the Shi'a by Salafis, particularly violent Salafi groups and movements. Non-violent Salafis may also refer to Shi'as as *rafidha* because Salafism in general exhibits strong antipathy toward the Shi'a as well as Sunni Sufi movements, who they view as engaging in *bid'a* (innovation) and *shirk* (associating partners with God). The term has been become especially popular in a post-2003 Iraq invasion political climate that fuels sectarian violence in the Middle East.

Munafiqun. The *munafiqun*, or "hypocrites," are frequently mentioned in the Qur'an as adversaries of the early Muslim community. Historically, the *munafiqun* were those in Medina who converted to Islam after the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad "for the sake of political expediency" rather than out of religious conviction.[30] Because the *munafiqun* aided the enemies of the early Muslim community, applying such a designation to a contemporary Muslim has a more profound negative resonance than the English translation "hypocrite" would imply.[31] Violent Salafis use the *munafiqun* narrative "to refer to any professing Muslims who do not advocate Islamist extremism."[32]

Murtadd. A *murtadd* is an apostate, a Muslim who has rejected Islam. As mentioned in the discussion of *takfir*, the penalties for this offense under traditional Islamic law are quite severe, and, historically, adult males who left the faith were usually put to death.[33] Contemporary violent Salafis therefore build upon this historical precedent and declare their fellow Muslims to be *murtadd* as a way of justifying violence against them. ISIL has extended its use of *murtadd* beyond political regimes and applied it to those Muslims who oppose their interpretation of Islam.

DOMINANT RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS USED IN NON-VIOLENT SALAFI NARRATIVES

Da'wa. Literally meaning "call" or "invitation," *da'wa* is a term that encompasses a Salafi group's myriad religious outreach efforts. It is important to note that *da'wa* is practiced by all Muslims. Though some scholars have characterized *da'wa* primarily as missionary activity intended to convert non-Muslims,[34] this concept can also denote attempts by Salafis to raise awareness of their interpretation of Islam among other Muslims. However, this can also sometimes include violent Salafi groups like al-

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[24] Fred Donner, "Muhammad and the Caliphate: Political History of the Islamic Empire up to the Mongol Conquest." In *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 8-9.

[25] Harleen K. Gambhir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State," *The Institute for the Study of War*, August 15, 2014, http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Dabiq%20Backgrounder_Harleen%20Final.pdf.

[26] Naureen Chowdhury Fink and Bejamin Sugg, "A Tale of Two Jihads: Comparing the al-Qaeda and ISIS Narratives." IPI Global Observatory, February 9, 2015, accessed April 29, 2015, http://theglobalobservatory.org/2015/02/jihad-al-qaeda-isis-counternarrative/

[27] Harleen K. Gambhir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State," The Institute for the Study of War, August 15, 2014, http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Dabiq%20Backgrounder_Harleen%20Final.pdf.

[28] Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, "Anwar al-'Awlaqi's Disciples: Three Case Studies," CTC Sentinel 4, no. 7 (2011), accessed April 10, 2015, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CTCSentinel-Vol4Iss72.pdf. This stems from a normative belief among a majority of Sunni Muslims that before the Prophet had engaged in military combat against the pagan Meccan forces that persecuted and pursued him and the small Muslim community existing at that time, he first needed to seek refuge in a land where Islam could be practiced freely and be used as the organizing principle of society, as was the case when he made his migration from Mecca to Medina. Violent Salafis like Awlaki, bin Ladin and al-Baghdadi use this religio-historical narrative to recruit individuals into their militant movements.

[29] Etan Kohlberg, "The Term 'Rafida' in Imami Shi'i Usage." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99, no. 4, (October – December 1979): 677.

[30] Jeffry R. Halverson, H. L. Goodall, Jr., and Steven R. Corman, *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 58.

[31] Rosalind W. Gwynne, "Usama bin Ladin, the Qur'an and Jihad," *Religion* 36, no. 2 (2006): 64, accessed August 26, 2015, DOI: 10.1016/j.religion.2006.06.001.

[32] Jeffry R. Halverson, H. L. Goodall, Jr., and Steven R. Corman, *Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 62

[33] Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, s. v. "Murtadd," accessed May 7, 2015, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/murtadd-SIM_5554.

[34] Susanne Olsson, "Proselytizing Islam - Problematizing 'Salafism,'" *The Muslim World* 104, nos. 1-2 (July 2014), 193, doi:10.1111/muwo.12046.

Qa'ida, who include da'wa as part of their broader recruiting strategy.[35] At times, violent Salafis have included violence itself as a form of *da'wa* because it raises awareness of "true Islam" and attracts followers to their cause.

Khawarij. The *khawarij* (singular: *khariji* or *kharijite*) were a violent secessionist movement that emerged during the early history of Islam. Today, non-violent Salafis use this term derisively to refer to violent Salafis in an attempt to portray them as extremists who threaten the unity of the Muslim community.[36] By broadening the criteria for apostasy and expanding the use of *takfir*, the *khawarij* threatened to tear the nascent Muslim community apart from within. Consequently, the term *khawarij* conjures a profoundly negative sentiment even today.[37] Since non-violent Salafis believe that violent Salafis similarly threaten to create conflict and strife within the contemporary Muslim community through their liberal declarations of *takfir*, non-violent Salafis refer to them as *khawarij*. This practice has sometimes been adopted by Arab media and governments and others seeking to delegitimize the violent Salafi claim to authentic Islam. Because this term continues to have such negative connotations, violent Salafi groups are careful to distinguish themselves from the *khawarij*.

Fitna. Meaning "temptation," "discord," or "trial," *fitna* has come to refer to turbulent periods in Islamic history, during which the Muslim community becomes fractionalized and believers are "tempted" to stray from authentic Islam.[38] The period of strife commonly known as the "great fitna" was the civil war that erupted between supporters of Ali and those of Mu'awiya in a fight to succeed the third caliph, Uthman, as the leader of the Muslim community. This era gave rise to both the *Khawarij* and ultimately, the Shi'a as a distinct sect. The desire to prevent *fitna*, even at great cost, has become a dominant component of Sunni doctrine.[39]

Ahl al-Hal wal-'Aqd. Literally meaning "the people who loosen and bind,"[40] *ahl al-hal wal-'aqd* refers to individuals who are qualified to elect or depose a caliph on behalf of all Muslims.[41] Non-violent Salafis,[42] violent Salafi rivals of ISIL,[43] and the broader community of Muslims[44] all use the concept of *ahl al-hal wal-'aqd* to reject and de-legitimize ISIL's claim to have established a "Caliphate."[45] Violent and non-violent Salafis are on opposite sides of a "chicken or the egg" argument: "Does an Islamic state lead to a 'good' Muslim society? Or does a 'good' Muslim society lead to an Islamic state?" Violent Salafis argue the former, while non-violent Salafis argue the latter.

Manhaj. Among Salafis, the term *manhaj* can be defined as religious "methodology." After *jihad*, *manhaj* is the most commonly contested religious concept in Salafi debates. Non-violent Salafis use this concept to criticize what they see as violent Salafis' inauthentic approach to Islam. There is a debate among Salafis as to whether or not *manhaj* is synonymous with the concept of

[35] Eric Larson, "Exploiting al-Qai'da's Vulnerabilities for Delegitimatization," in *Countering Violent Extremism: Scientific Methods and Strategies*, eds. Laurie Fenstermacher and Todd Leventhal, (September 2011), 118-119.

[36] Joas Wagemakers, "'Seceders' and 'Postponers'? An Analysis of the 'Khawarij' and 'Murji'a' Labels in Polemical Debates between Quietist and Jihadi-Salafis," in *Contextualising Jihadi Thought*, J. Deol and ed. Z. Kazmi (London: Hurst & Co, 2012), 153-156.

[37] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no.3 (2006), 228-9, doi: 10.1080/10576100500497004.

[38] L. Gardet, "Fitna," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, et al., accessed May 15, 2015, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/fitna-SIM_2389

[39] Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 8

[40] Joas Wagemakers, "Jihadi-Salafi Views of the Islamic State." *Monkey Cage* (blog), *Washington Post*, January 27, 2015, accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/01/27/jihadi-salafi-views-of-the-islamic-state/.

[41] "Ahl al-Hall wa'l-Aqd." *Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, n.d., accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e73?_hi=0&_pos=18

[42] Joas Wagemakers, "Jihadi-Salafi Views of the Islamic State." *Monkey Cage* (blog), *Washington Post*, January 27, 2015, accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/01/27/jihadi-salafi-views-of-the-islamic-state/; Sheikh Kamil Ahmad, "The Self-Appointed Khalifah and His Khilafah." *The Muslim Link*, September 20, 2014, accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.muslimlinkpaper.com/islam/islam/3755-the-self-appointed-khalifah-and-his-khilafah.html

[43] For instance, see: Sheikh Kamil Ahmad, "The Self-Appointed Khalifah and His Khilafah." *The Muslim Link*, September 20, 2014, accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.muslimlinkpaper.com/islam/islam/3755-the-self-appointed-khalifah-and-his-khilafah.html

[44] For instance, see: Abdelmajid Belrhiti and Badr-Edin El-Hmidi, "ISIS and Kharijite Approaches to Understanding Islam: The Concepts of Khilafah and Jihad." *Morocco World News*, December 23, 2014, accessed May 18, 2015, http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2014/12/145920/isis-and-kharijite-approaches-to-understanding-islam-the-concepts-of-khilafah-and-jihad/, Citing, "An Executive Summary (English Version) of The Open Letter from Muslim Scholars to al-Baghdadi," P. 1.

[45] Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, "This is the Promise of Allah." *Al-Hayat Media Center*, (n.d.), accessed May 17, 2015, https://ia902505.us.archive.org/28/items/poa_25984/EN.pdf, 4, Noting, "Therefore, the shūrā (consultation) council of the Islamic State studied this matter after the Islamic State – by Allah's grace – gained the essentials necessary for khilāfah, which the Muslims are sinful for if they do not try to establish. In light of the fact that the Islamic State has no shar'ī (legal) constraint or excuse that can justify delaying or neglecting the establishment of the khilāfah such that it would not be sinful, the Islamic State – represented by **ahlul-halli-wal-'aqd...**" (emphasis added)

'aqida, or belief, or whether *manhaj* is broader than *'aqida*, encompassing it.[46] The term *manhaj* appears very frequently in intra-Salafi debates on violence and non-violence, particularly by non-violent Salafis who criticize what they see as violent Salafis' inauthentic approach to Islam.

Bid'a. The term *bid'a* is an Arabic word meaning "innovation." Among Muslims in general, including Salafis, *bid'a* has a negative religious connotation. Therefore *bid'a* in the context of Salafi Muslim religious practice can be thought of as "(reprehensible) innovation"[47] that describes religious practices or beliefs that are not directly supported by evidence from Islam's primary sources—the Qur'an or the example of the Prophet Muhammad (*sunnah*) as described in *Hadith*.[48] In addition to staunchly opposing *bid'a*, Salafis believe they have an obligation to disassociate themselves from groups they regard as "innovators," or the *ahl-al-bid'a*.[49] However, there is no consensus among Salafis on what specifically constitutes *bid'a*, nor is there a consensus on how to deal with individuals who engage in *bid'a*.

METHOD

The research team developed a research manual which outlined four key components to guide the systematic gathering and coding of sources used in the scoping survey. The first step was a literature search and identification. Guiding the selection of academic resources were surveys that sought to identify the most relevant scholarly outlets in the field of terrorism studies through methods such as citation analysis. This phase of the literature survey also involved Boolean searches of databases and search engines, including Academic Search Complete, WorldCat.org, Google Scholar, and Google Search.

During the second stage of this process, researchers catalogued sources thought to be relevant to the survey by entering them into a coding spreadsheet developed during the literature search. Third, researchers analyzed and triaged these sources according to their relevance. Sources were evaluated based on whether or not they informed the overall project and whether or not they specifically discussed one or more of the categories and sub-categories of Salafi religious discourse listed in the coding spreadsheet. Finally, after identifying literature that best met the above-mentioned criteria and prioritizing it accordingly, researchers extracted information and relevant passages from those sources.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This literature survey aims to provide future researchers with a resource that organizes the existing relevant literature describing non-violent and violent Salafis. Moving forward, the researchers recommend that scholars should survey existing counter-narratives and alternative narratives against Islamist extremism. This should not only document findings from the existing scholarly literature but also incorporate existing insights from advocacy and activist publications, such as organizers' toolkits, as well as emerging scholarly findings on factors associated with exit from extremist organizations and movements espousing violent narratives. This can form the research basis for identifying and evaluating key counter-narrative and alternative narrative themes, and therefore for understanding the relevant marketplace of ideas surrounding violent Salafism.

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[46] "The Difference between the Aqeedah and the Manhaj – Sheikh Salih Ibn Fawzaan & Imaam al-Albaani," *SalafiTalk.net*, posted at *Salaf-us-Saalih*, February 8, 2010, accessed September 6, 2015, http://salaf-us-saalih.com/2010/02/08/the-difference-between-the-aqeedah-and-the-manhaj/. Cf. "There is no Difference between Aqidah and Manhaj," *Quran Sunnah Educational Programs*, no date, accessed September 6, 2015, http://www.qsep.com/modules.php?name=ilm&d_op=article&sid=218.
[47] Yasir Qadhi, "On Salafi Islam," *Muslim Matters*, April 22, 2014, accessed April 6, 2015, http://muslimmatters.org/2014/04/22/on-salafi-islam-dr-yasir-qadhi/.
[48] Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid, "10843: Detailed discussion of bid'a and shirk," *Islam Q&A*, no date, accessed September 6, 2015, http://islamqa.info/en/10843.
[49] Yasir Qadhi, "On Salafi Islam," *Muslim Matters*, April 22, 2014, accessed April 6, 2015, http://muslimmatters.org/2014/04/22/on-salafi-islam-dr-yasir-qadhi/.