

Part 3: Historical emergence of extremism in Islam

Dhul-Khuwaisarah

The earliest indicator of violent extremism in Islam was related to both ideological and behavioral traits identified by Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Al Mutairi's research on the causes of extremism identifies two forms that accord with the above mentioned observation; however, he asserts the origin of extremism, in this regard, is related specifically to only one of the forms; namely, belief related extremism.¹ A more detailed examination of his findings shall be made later in the chapter when discussing manifestations of extremist ideology and whether any single behavioral traits, by themselves, cause individuals to adopt a violent extremist ideology and practice. It is important to state, however, that the account shortly to be described, and the Prophet Muhammad's (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) identification of the case study and his progeny/followers, was as a result of divinely inspired revelation which is attributable only to Prophets and Messengers assigned by Allah. This is absolute so far as religious tenets amongst the Abrahamic faiths are concerned, particularly Islam and, therefore, discussion around intrinsic or spiritual insights are limited due to the difficulty in applying these to conventional, empirical research methods. Ruthven, rather frankly, addresses this absolute by stating:

*"Theologically, fundamentalists must reject choice because they know there is only one truth that has been revealed to them by the supraempirical spiritual entity most of them call God."*²

If, in this instance, connotations of the term fundamentalists refer to adherence to the basic ideological tenets, or 'pillars' of Islam, then she is, to an extent, correct in her assertion insofar as they form the foundations of the religion. However, caution must be exercised in the generality of her observation regarding the rejection of choice as this in fact contradicts an unequivocal teaching of the Quran, which generally censures compulsion in religion.³ Censure surrounds distortion and rejection of established ideological foundations once an individual has *chosen* to convert/begin practicing the religion.

During the era of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), he experienced a significantly definitive confrontation with one of the later converts, named Dhul-Khuwaisarah. This individual challenged the Prophet over his choice of distribution regarding war booty obtained after one of the battles. Dhul-Khuwaisarah harshly rebuked the Prophet stating that he should be just and fair in his distribution. This was a direct inference that the Prophet was metering a degree of injustice and indeed, favoritism. Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) responded by asking who would be fair if it was not he. One of the closest companions of the Prophet, Umar ibn Al-Khattab, understood the inference and disrespect metered

¹ Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, pps.95-98.

² Ruthven, M: 'Fundamentalism: A Very Short Introduction', Oxford University Press, 2007 p.123

³ The Qur'an Chapter 2 [Surah Al Baqarah] verse 256

out from Dhul-Khuwaisrah and was on the verge of attacking him. However, the Prophet censured him and provided a prophetic insight into what was to be expected from Dhul-Khuwaisarah and his progeny:

“There will appear from this man’s progeny people who recite the Quran but it will not penetrate beyond their throats... [in another narration]: ...who one of you [i.e. the Prophet’s companions] would belittle his own prayer when compared with theirs and his fasting compared to theirs...but they will pass through the religion just as an arrow might pass through a target.”

This indicates their lack of comprehension regarding Islam. The remaining part of the first narration concludes by stating:

“They will slaughter the people of Islam and invite the idol worshipping people.”⁴

This refers to their declaration of takfeer upon the Muslims, thereby legitimising the latter’s killing.⁵ From the above mentioned account, the characteristic trait of harshness was witnessed in Dhul-Khuwaisarah’s behaviour. Such behaviour falls into the category of extremism, described at the beginning of this chapter as *Al-Unf*. Although Al Mutairi considers the above account to have highlighted belief related extremism, he does mention the fact that behavioral or deed related extremism is a characteristic that can and will occur amongst individuals in any given time and place.⁶ Al Mutairi’s observation that the above account illustrates belief related extremism is supported by Shaykh Salih Ali-Shaykh who points to ignorance and a lack of correctly contextualised religious knowledge of Islam, its principles etc. as being a primary cause of extremism.⁷ The researcher accords with this position so far as the belief related driver, in this instance, is concerned but suggests that harshness, under the legislatively and lexicological definition, also exists in this narration. Upon identifying the initial historical proponent of violent extremism amongst the Muslim world today, focus shall now be shifted to historical events succeeding this account and not long after the Prophet’s (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) death.

The Khawaarij

At this juncture it is necessary to establish the relationship between Dhul-Khawaaisarah and the group that became known as the *Schismatics* or ‘*seceders*’ (Khawaarij). This group, as will shortly be seen, dissented and broke into a separate faction from the main body of Muslims at that time. An immediate parallel can be drawn between this group and Dhul-Khuwaisarah’s belief and understanding of the religion. Furthermore,

⁴ Bukhari: ‘Sahih Al Buhkari’ Hadeeth nos. 3610, 6163 and 6933 & Muslim: ‘Sahih Muslim’ Hadeeth no. 1064.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, p.96

⁷ Ali-Shaykh, S A A: ‘A Warning Against Extremism’ UK, Jamiah Media, 2008, p. 20-21

behavioral similarities with Dhul-Khuwaisarah also become apparent when comparing their reactions to the successors of the Prophet. The emergence of the Khawaarij exacerbated an already sensitive affair, i.e. the murder of the third Caliph, Uthmaan ibn Al-Affan, over which the main community had already divided and fought each other. It is important to note that such a division had never occurred since the advent of Islam under the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).

The Khawaarij bore similarities to Dhul-Khuwaisarah in their disregard and disrespect for leadership and seniority borne out of ignorance and misunderstanding of the religion. As will be seen, they openly challenged those whose experience, understanding and authority in the religion were clearly attested to in the Quran and by the Prophet Muhammad himself.⁸ They, as Bonney observes:

*"...took a diametrically opposed view. Instead of accepting the rule of the caliph, just or unjust, they took to heart the Qur'anic injunction to command the right and forbid the wrong."*⁹

His observation is further supported by Ali-Shaykh in his definition of the Khawaarij at any given time and place:

*"The Khawaarij are any people who renounce obedience to and oppose the legitimate leadership."*¹⁰

Uthmaan ibn Al-Affan was the third caliph in Islamic history, succeeding Umar ibn Al-Khattab after he was murdered by a Magian slave, Abu Lu'lu'ah.¹¹ Both individuals were amongst the closest companions and allies of the Prophet during the latter's lifetime. Significantly, Umar was considered the 'barrier'¹² to trials and discord that were prophesied to emerge amongst the Muslim community and that, once he had been

⁸ The Qur'an: Surah al Baqarah (2:137): "So if they believe in the like of that which you (Prophet Muhammad and his companions) believe, then they are rightly guided; but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition." Surah Ali Imran (3:110): "You are the best peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Islamic monotheism and all that is good, and forbid polytheism and all that is evil, and you believe in Allah." Surah an-Nisaa (4:115): "And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger, Muhammad after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows a path other than the believer's way, We shall leave him in the path that he has chosen."

⁹ Bonney, R: 'Jihad: From Qur'an to bin Laden' Palgrave MacMillan, 2004, p.55

¹⁰ Taymiyyah, I, cited by Ali-Shaykh, S A A: 'The Fitnah of the Khawaarij' www.answering-extremism.com p.13

¹¹ As-Sallabi, Dr. A M: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab: His Life & Times, vol. 2' Riyadh, International Islamic Publishing House, 2007, pp 396-403.

¹² This is a portion of a long hadeeth narrated by Hudaifah ibn Al-Yaman who refers to Umar ibn Al-Khattab as a barrier. He addressed Umar saying; "...Between you and it [the trials] there is a barrier." Umar enquired as to whether the barrier would be broken, to which Hudaifah replied in the affirmative. When asked by those who witnessed this metaphorical address, whether the barrier was Umar, Hudaifah confirmed that it was indeed him. This narration is collected in Al Bukhari, Muslim and At-Tirmidhi and cited by Al Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, p.97.

removed, such trials would have adverse effects throughout subsequent generations. Ali Ibn Abi Taalib, a cousin and close companion of the Prophet Muhammad stated:

“By Allah, they (the Khawaarij) are in the loins of men and the wombs of women, so...it is rare that they meet anyone except that they gather together to overcome him.”¹³

It is also apt to note Al Mutairi’s reference to Shaykul Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah’s conclusion regarding the initial emergence and subsequent effects of this group that remain prevalent today:

*“That era had the greatest effect on spreading the trials and tribulations as well as initiating sects. Indeed, [that era and what occurred] is considered the event that led to formation of the two greatest extremist sects in the history of Islam, the Khawaarij and the Raafidhah.”*¹⁴

Confrontation with the Khawaarij

After Caliph Uthmaan’s assassination the close companions (Sahaba) of Prophet Muhammad (which included his family) were divided over i. when to avenge his death after having caught and apprehended the culprits, and ii. deciding on the appointment of his immediate successor. Both matters required urgent attention in order to safeguard the solidarity of the rapidly expanding Muslim community and its territories. A group, led by Mu’awwiyah ibn Abi Sufyan¹⁵ was of the opinion that Uthmaan’s death be avenged before the issue of caliphate be finalised or decided upon. However, the other group deemed it necessary that the matter of caliphate be decided upon and, thereafter, the assassination of Uthmaan be addressed. Ali ibn Abi Taalib led this group.

Resultant hostilities led to both groups engaging in war, subsequently to be known as the Battle of Siffeen. Alee’s army was the on the verge of victory, at which point, Mu’awiyah’s troop called for arbitration to cease all hostilities based upon Allah’s Judgement; namely, the Qur’an. Ali’s initial retort was that he had gone to war on the premise of Allah’s judgement and was not, therefore, prepared to cease his advance at that decisive stage of the battle. However, a group from amongst his ranks insisted that he comply with the request made. Notably, it was during the cessation of hostilities and period of arbitration that the Khawaarij emerged. They rejected both warring factions and the nature of arbitration on the basis that Allah’s judgment was not, according to their understanding of the religion, the criteria being used by each party to settle the disputes. This group consisted of approximately six thousand of Ali’s army. They subsequently broke away and relocated to a not too distant region called Harooriyyah. In an effort to avoid even further discord and disunity, Ali dispatched one of the most

¹³ Katheer, I: ‘The Beginning of the Khawaarij: Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah’ Volume 7, 283.

¹⁴ Taymiyyah, I: ‘Al-Fataawa’ vol.13 pps. 32 and 208 cited in; Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: ‘Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims’ translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, p.98.

¹⁵ He was the son of Abu Sufyan and was another close companion and associate of Prophet Muhammad, (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him).

knowledgeable companions of Prophet Muhammad, Abdullah ibn Abbas, as a representative, to engage with this new group. This visit and ensuing debate has become the pinnacle upon which succeeding generations have been able to discern some characteristics peculiar to those possessing *Kharijite* traits. The perceived justification for their rejection and dissent centered around three primary factors. These are illustrated below, as are Abdullah ibn Abbas' clarifications and rebuttals of their misunderstandings:

- i. Ali permitted men to judge in the matter of arbitration when the Qur'an clearly stipulates: *"The Judgement is for none but Allah"*¹⁶
- ii. Ali fought a battle but did not take captives or war booty. If Ali considered the enemy to be disbelievers, captives of war were permissible and if his belief was contrary to this, they were neither permissible to capture *or* fight.
- iii. During the arbitration with Mu'awiyah's representatives, Ali agreed to the former's request to remove the honorary title conferred upon caliphs, namely, Leader of the Believers, (Amir al-Mu'minin). He either insist on this title or an alternative, more demeaning title; Leader of the Disbelievers.

Abdullah ibn Abbas was one of the many companions who lived during the period of the Quranic revelation and prophetic guidance and so he, like his other associates (the Sahaba [Companions of Prophet Muhammad]), had a better and more comprehensive understanding of the religion than those he was visiting and about to address. It is unsurprising, therefore, that he was able to clarify and easily rebut their positions from a number of scholastic, religious and correctly contextualised perspectives:

- 1) In response to their first point about the judgment being for Allah alone, Abdullah ibn Abbas, countered this by referring to another verse of the Qur'an in which the injunction clearly stipulates arbitration in a particular dispute being adjudged by two righteous (and independent men).¹⁷ Abdullah ibn Abbas asked whether it is better that men judge in relation to reconciling disputes to avoid further bloodshed or regarding the hunting of a rabbit. They conceded¹⁸ that the former reason was more befitting and accepted this rebuttal. He also referred them to another Quranic injunction: **"If you fear a breach between the husband and wife, appoint two arbitrators: one from his family and the other from hers."**¹⁹
- 2) In reference to their assertion relating to captives of war, Abdullah ibn Abbas highlighted the fact that one of Prophet Muhammad's wives, A'ishah was on the

¹⁶ The Qur'an, Surahs (Chapters) al-Ana'm [6 verse 57] and Yusuf [12 verses 40 and 67]

¹⁷ *"Oh you who believe, do not kill game while you are in a state of Ihram [ritual purity for performing Hajj or Umrah] and whosoever of you kills it intentionally, then the penalty is an offering/sacrifice equivalent to the one [game] he killed, as judged by two just men among you."* Surah (Chapter al-Ma'idah [5, verse 95])

¹⁸ al-AlBani, M N; 'al-Silsilah al-Sahihah' and Munazzarat a'immat al-Salaf, pps. 89-91

¹⁹ The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) al-Nisaa [4 verse 35]

opposing side. He reminded them of the Quranic prohibition of the Muslims marrying or having intimacy with his wives even after his death. Additionally, the Qur'an conferred on them the revered title and positions of 'Mothers of the believers, i.e. Muslims'.²⁰ This unquestionable reverence automatically prohibited Muslims from causing harm to anyone of them. Disbelief in this injunction constituted apostasy from the religion. Again, the individuals representing the Khawaarij conceded to this counter argument and rebuttal.

- 3) Concerning their final point of contention, namely, Ali agreeing to have his title removed from the agreement, this was refuted by simple reference to the time when Prophet Muhammad met with the Quraish who were custodians of Mecca at that time. In an effort to quell the tensions that had continued to increase following the advent of Prophet Muhammad's mission, both parties agreed to contract an agreement that would end existing hostilities. This became known as the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. The Quraish, however, rejected the title conferred on the Prophet which was, '*Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah*', on the basis that, had they recognised him as such, they would have accepted his message and converted. Prophet Muhammad's reaction was to request that his scribe on that occasion, (Ali ibn Abi Taalib), simply remove the title from the document, so as to facilitate agreement of the treaty. Abdullah ibn Abbas used this historical account to challenge the Kharijee representatives, highlighting the divine and venerable status of the Prophet compared to Ali's as the leader of the Muslims, and the fact that the former had agreed to erase a title that had been conferred on him by Allah. He thus had a stronger claim to retaining his divine title than Alee yet, in the spirit of conciliation; he agreed to erase it from the agreement. Upon hearing this final clarification and rebuttal, the representatives of the Khawaarij recanted their previous erroneous beliefs. Another two thousand Khawaarij who all returned to the main battalion of Ali followed them.²¹

The remaining group of Khawaarij was ignored at that point, as Ali was about to march with his army again in face of the arbitration with Mu'awwiyyah breaking down. However, towards the final stages of preparation for war, news reached him that the Khawaarij had started slaughtering Muslims in the adjoining cities. The conclusion was reached by Ali was to eradicate this immediate problem as indeed, the purported '*farthest enemy*' who were in actuality, righteous companions and former associates, posed less of a threat than the '*near enemy*', the Khawaarij. The atrocities committed in neighboring towns had reached the extent that they actually murdered a close associate of the Prophet, also killing his wife and their unborn child.²² Ali decided retribution for this atrocity was the necessary course of action in an effort to set an example and avert future atrocities of this nature reported.²³ The collective Kharijite response as Ali and

²⁰ The Qur'an, Surah (Chapter) al-Ahzab [33 verse 6]

²¹ al-AlBani, M N; '*al-Silsilah al-Sahihah*' and Munazzarat a'immat al-Salaf, pps. 89-91 and Katheer, I: '*The Beginning of the Khawaarij: Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah*' Volume 7, 283.

²² He was Abdullah ibn Khabbab ibn Aratt.

²³ Katheer, I: '*The Beginning of the Khawaarij: Al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah*' Volume 7, 283.

his army approached is significant and indicative of their contemporary counterparts' misrepresentation of religion. After demanding the identity and surrender of the culprits, they responded, declaring:

“Return to that which you left and do not violate those things which Allah made forbidden to you, since your desires have made the killing of Muslims alluring to you.”²⁴

Also:

“Do not address them, (i.e. Ali and his army)...and prepare to meet the Lord...Depart to Paradise! There is no judgment except Allah's - depart, depart for Paradise.”²⁵

This misplaced conviction in the face of adversity will be revisited when discussing violent extremist/takfeeri tendencies in the contemporary era. In any event, the ensuing battle between Ali's army and the Khawaarij witnessed the former group sustaining minimal casualties (seven in number) whereas the Khawaarij incurred heavy losses and a devastating defeat, (of the four thousand Khawaarij that participated in the battle, only four hundred wounded soldiers remained). This decisive battle became known as the Battle of Nahrawaan.²⁶

In conclusion, it is perhaps necessary to refer to one of the contributory factors that caused the Khawaarij to revolt. Al Mutairi refers to their resentment of Ali arising as a result of his acceptance of arbiters to the conflict with Mu'awiyah. This, according to their understanding, contravened the religious injunction that judgment is the sole domain of Allah's. They, therefore, sought to remove the process of human application to every legislative process. This intent of theirs was, as Ali ibn Abi Taalib commented: *'A statement of truth by which is intended falsehood.'*²⁷ The classical and renowned scholar, Ibn Taymeeyah also discussed the appearance of the Khawaarij during Uthmaan's caliphate, highlighting their resentment of him and his leadership. His subsequent murder at the hands of this group was, Ibn Taymeeyah, asserts, as a result of their covetousness for leadership:

“Anyone, whether from the Khawaarij or not, that leaves the obedience and allegiance to the legitimate leader, (government, president, authority etc. [in a Muslim country]), it is only an inner love for worldly affairs and leadership that

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Muslim: 'Saheeh Muslim' cited in Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, Chapter 2, p.112

*leads him to that. He then uses some religious issues...for imposing Islamic law and uses that as an excuse to fulfill his inner desires.”*²⁸

Al-Mahmood, points to the Khawaarij’s application of an incorrect methodology when deriving evidences from the legislative texts, resulting in them gaining an incorrect understanding of the religion itself.²⁹ A counter argument may be proffered stating that the Khawaarij dissent was something productive in that it enabled the possibility of a democratic process of debate. This can be refuted by Islamic legislative texts as can be seen from the following Quranic verse and ahadeeth³⁰ respectively:

“O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who are in authority amongst you.”³¹

Also:

“Indeed, if one has a guardian (leader) appointed over him and he sees that he (the leader) is doing something from the acts of disobedience to Allah, he should hate what he (the leader) has brought forth from disobedience, yet not raise his hand in opposition to the obedience (towards him).”³²

Yet another narration warns:

“There will come upon you leaders of whom you will approve but reject (the bad from them). So whoever rejects (their bad deeds,) he is absolved from blame. And whoever, hates (their bad deeds) he is (also) saved. However, whoever is pleased with them and follows them (i.e. their bad deeds), then he is destroyed.” *The Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) said; ‘Shall we fight against them?’ He (the Prophet) said; ‘No, so long as they pray, no, so long as they pray.’*³³

This account, together with the description of Dhul-Khuwaisarah’s belief and deed-related characteristics of extremism, arguably provide a platform from which a comparison can be made with contemporary violent extremism. Al Mutairi poses the question of contemporary extremists examining the Khawaarij and other historical extremist groups, and points to research findings that are, in fact, inconclusive at this

²⁸ Taymiyyah, I, cited by Ali-Shaykh, S A A: ‘The Fitnah of the Khawaarij’ www.answering-extremism.com p.10

²⁹ al-Mahmood, Dr. A R S: ‘Man-Made Laws vs Shariah: Ruling by Laws other than what Allah Revealed – Conditions and Rulings,’ Riyadh, International Islamic Publishing House, 2003, pps 220-229

³⁰ Ahadeeth is plural for hadeeth (narration).

³¹ The Qur’an, Surah An-Nisaa (Chapter 4 verse 59)

³² Muslim: ‘Saheeh Muslim: Book of Leadership (no.1855) reported from ‘Awf bin Malik cited in ‘The Explanation of Sufficiency in Creed’ by al-Maqdisee, I Q, Al-Manhaj Publishing, 2002, p.178

³³ Muslim: ‘Saheeh Muslim: Book of Leadership (no.1854) reported from ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood cited in ‘The Explanation of Sufficiency in Creed’ by al-Maqdisee, I Q, Al-Manhaj Publishing, 2002, p.179

stage.³⁴ He makes reference to research that arrives at the conclusion of contemporary extremists deriving their ideological impetus and actions from the Khawaarij.³⁵ He highlights the connection made between the Khawaarij's and contemporary extremists' understanding and application of '*Al-Haakimiyyah*,' (judgment belonging solely to Allah).³⁶ The subject of '*Al-Haakimiyyah*' shall be elaborated upon in the succeeding section. Contrastingly, other researchers hold the opinion that historical origins of extremism have no bearing or influence on contemporary extremist thought and that it is merely a type of '*strange coincidence*' that parallels actually exist between the two.³⁷

After examining the two positions, I suggest they are not, in their entirety, mutually exclusive; especially in view of the evidence extrapolated from Al Mutairi's research. His examination of one of the contemporary extremist groups of the 1960's in Egypt; namely, Mustafa Shukri's '*Takfeer wal Hijrah*', illustrated that, in its earliest stages, the extremist tendencies of the group had no correlation with any historical bases whatsoever. This was established after observing the following:

- i. When this phenomenon (of violent extremism amongst the group) first surfaced, access to literature or sources expounding the beliefs of previous deviant sects was impossible. This was due to group members being incarcerated and restricted from all religious literature, including the Qur'an. The manifestation of the group's extremist beliefs was '*the child of prison cells*' and what they concluded '*was the result of their own thinking based on what they had memorized*' of religious sources (the Qur'an and prophetic discourse);³⁸
- ii. The extremism emanated following discussions regarding recent (contemporary) issues that had arisen. The resultant extremist tendencies were, therefore, a '*child of the circumstances*';
- iii. Most members of the group were ignorant of the Islamic sciences and, finally, but most importantly;
- iv. Once some members became aware of the historical origins of violent extremism and particularly the Khawaarij, they eschewed such thought upon realising their ideas were rooted in a flawed extremist foundation.³⁹

³⁴ Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.100

³⁵ Al-Majd, A K: 'Hawaar la Muwaajahah,' p.67 cited in Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.100

³⁶ Ibid, p.100

³⁷ Ibid, p. 8

³⁸ Al-Samura'ee, N: '*al-Takfeer: Judhooruhu, Asbaabuhu wa Mabru'atuhu*,' p.8 cited in Al- Mutairi, Dr. A R M L: 'Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims' translated by Zarabozo, J M M, Basheer Company for Publications and Translations, 2001, p.101

³⁹ Ibid, p.102

Al Mutairi's conclusion suggests the influence of historical or 'ancient' sects upon contemporary extremists occurring at a later, as opposed to earlier, stage of their development.⁴⁰ Cesari's examination of contemporary fundamentalist movements questions:

*"...whether [their] interpretations of Islam, based on anachronistic and ahistorical readings of scripture, have a necessary correlation with the violence and development of Jihadi movements, particularly among young Muslims in the West."*⁴¹

I would argue that, irrespective of the *stage* of such influence or whether contemporary extremists familiarise themselves with the historical origins/ancient sects etc., clear correlations exist between the two periods, providing an insight of how to effectively address the phenomenon today. However, having said this, al-Mutairi's observation of extremism emanating from prevalent issues that affected the members of the group, resonate with the 'cycle of violence' theory in that a perceived atrocity or injustice can propel an individual towards violent extremism.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.103

⁴¹ Cesari, J: 'Muslims in Europe and the Risk of Radicalism', Chapter 8, p102, Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge in Europe, Ashgate Publishing Ltd. Edited by Coolsaet, R. 2008