WARFARE IN EARLY ISLAM

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
GLASGOW IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

MALIK ABDULAZEEZ AL-MUBARAK

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR J. N. MATTOCK

OCTOBER, 1997

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents, the two most precious individuals in my life, as a token of love and gratitude. I owe them a debt of gratitude for their unselfish sacrifices, never-failing loyalty and unconditional support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis considers various aspects of warfare in early Islam and, where appropriate, compares the techniques, strategies, tactics and attitudes of the participants of this period with those of western belligerents of later periods, up to the present day. It aims to show that, in many respects, the early Islamic approach to warfare anticipated that of later practitioners, and that, as far as the more 'huname' or 'civilised' side of warfare is concerned, the philosophy of those inspired by a newly instituted religion might well serve as an example for today.

Emphasis is placed upon the faith of the warriors of Islam, since it is regarded as beyond doubt that the majority of them were motivated by a desire to fight in Allāh's cause. The relevant injunctions from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth are cited. It is also contended that the early Muslims engaged solely in defensive, rather than offensive, wars, in order both to spread the word of Allah and to protect their own and others' freedom to worship as they saw fit.

The topics covered are the following:

Faith and the Warrior;

Early Islamic Military Strategy and Armies;

Qualities of Warriors and Leaders;

Intelligence and Reconnaissance in the Islamic Military Strategy;

War Plans;

Psychological Warfare in the Life of People and Nations;

Warfare Tactics: Surprise Attacks in War;

Surprise Tactics in Modern Warfare;

Conduct of War and Opening of Hostilities: the Islamic Strategy;

The Concept of Security and Islamic Military Strategy;

The Ending of Wars and Reconciliation: The Islamic Military Strategic Approach;

Treatment of Prisoners of War in Islam;

The Basic Principles of Islamic Military Strategy in Times of War and Peace.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication

Acknowledgements

Abstract

System of Transliteration

SYSTEM OF TRANSLATION

ʾ	....	ء		f	....	ف
b	....	ب		q	....	ق
t	....	ت		k	....	ك
t h	....	ث		l	....	ل
j	....	ج		m	....	م
ḥ	....	ح		n	....	ن
h h	....	خ		h	....	ه
d	....	د		w	....	و
d h	....	ذ		y	....	ي
r	....	ر		a	....	ﹷ
z	....	ز		i	....	ﹻ
s	....	س		u	....	ﹹ
s h	....	ش		ā	....	ﹷﺎ
ṣ	....	ص		ī	....	ﹻﻲ
ḍ	....	ض		ū	....	ﹹﻮ
ṭ	....	ط		ay	....	ﹷﻲْ
ẓ	....	ظ		aw	....	ﹷﻮْ
ʿ	....	ع		h	....	ة
g h	....	غ				

CHAPTER ONE

FAITH AND THE WARRIOR

FAITH AND THE WARRIOR

A. Definition of Faith

Faith represents the highest ideal for a man and is something for which he is ready to sacrifice life and goods because it is in principle more precious than personal life or any material possessions. Generally speaking, history shows that the most successful armies are those that were inspired by some ideal greater than the individual.

B. Islam and the Warrior

The effect of the fixing of the new faith of Islam in the hearts of its warriors was twofold. First, it liberated them from the fear of death, for, according to the Islamic scriptures, Allāh alone was the supreme being who decreed life or death, and it was He who defined the ages of human beings. This conception of human destiny is most clearly outlined in the Islamic scriptures.

> Nor can a soul die except by Allāh's leave,
>
> the term being fixed as by writing.
>
> (3:145).

> To every People is a term appointed:
>
> When their term is reached,
>
> Not an hour Can they cause delay,
>
> Nor (an hour) can they advance (it in anticipation)
>
> (7:34).

Thus, death, decreed by Allāh and Him alone, came at its fixed date. It had no relation to war or peace or to the place where an individual found himself, whether fortified or unfortified. This conception of human destiny and fate is repeatedly emphasised by the Qur'ān.

3

"Wherever ye are,

Death will find you out,

Even if ye are in towers built up strong and high!"

(4:78).

Thus, Islam, with its insistence upon Allāh's control of man's earthly destiny, removed from its warriors' minds and hearts much of the terror of an untimely death caused by an over-active imagination.

This did not, however, mean that the army should embark on a holy war without due precautions and preparations. On the contrary, it should obey Allāh's instruction:

O ye who believe!

Take your precautions.

And either go forth in parties or go forth all together.

(4:71)

This verse clearly advises Muslims not to undertake jihād individually and in a selfish spirit, but rather in small groups -or as a whole army- and in a collective spirit, as the situation might demand. Muslims undertaking jihād individually could be easily intercepted by enemies who could be either members of non-Muslim communities or even members living within the Muslim community (the so-called munāfiqīn). This verse also emphasises the necessity for the individual Muslim not to detach himself in action from the community, for actions undertaken in a selfish spirit are bound to be less of a source of strength to the Muslim community.

According to the Islamic scriptures, the first and foremost duty of Muslims fighting a war for the cause of furthering the spread of Islam is to preserve their faith and

4

never deviate from the moral teachings of the Qur'ān, however harsh the conditions of a war might prove to be. The Qur'ān goes into quite surprising detail about the manner in which military strategy and tactics can be reconciled with the fulfilment of Islamic duties during the time of a war. For instance, on the subject of prayer during hostilities, it offers this advice to Muslims actively engaged in jihād:

> And let the other party come up
>
> Which hath not yet prayed-
>
> And let them pray with thee,
>
> Taking all precaution,
>
> And bearing arms:
>
> The Unbelievers wish,
>
> If ye were negligent of your arms and your baggage,
>
> To assault you in a single rush.
>
> (4:102).

The second effect of the fixing of faith in the hearts of combatants was their liberation from anxiety for sustenance. This liberation from concern for sources of sustenance is of critical importance to the success of a military campaign by an army. This is so in view of some obvious considerations. First, people are usually anxious about the source of their sustenance and this anxiety might lead them to resort to means that are religiously immoral and socially undesirable, such as flattery and pretence, or even cheating, bribery and embezzlement. However, the faith which liberated man from the fear of death can also liberate him from anxiety about sustenance. The Qur'ānic scriptures affirmed to the Muslim that sustenance was from Allāh:

There is no moving creature

On earth but its sustenance

Dependeth on Allāh: He knoweth

Its resting place of its

Temporary deposit:

All is in a clear record.

(11: 6)

The notion that Allāh was alone capable of providing for His creation is repeatedly emphasised in the Qur'ānic scriptures:

And in heaven is

Your Sustenance, as (also)

That which ye are promised.

Then, by the Lord

Of heaven and earth,

This is the very Truth,

As much as the fact,

That ye can speak

Intelligently to each other. (51: 22-23)

However, it does not mean that Muslims should not endeavour to secure their sustenance; hard and honest work is one of the demands of faith. Muslims are in fact constantly reminded by the Qur'ān that though their sustenance, both physical and

6

spiritual, is in the hands of Allāh, they still have to struggle towards obtaining it. While Islam enjoins upon Muslims the necessity of endeavouring to secure their sustenance, it nevertheless categorically forbids any efforts to obtain it by inappropriate and fraudulent means. Thus, fixed in the hearts of believing Muslims, the Islamic faith managed in a short period of time both to liberate man from fear of death, and to liberate him from anxiety about sustenance, so that he might not deviate, in his search for it, from what his faith demanded from him in the way of military prowess.

C. The Fixing of Faith in Combatants' Hearts as Perceived by Muslim Thinkers & Commanders

In Mukhtaṣar Siyāsat al-Ḥurūb, al-Harmathī declares that "a combatant's first weapon in his war should be his taqwā (piety and fear of Allāh); he should remember Allah frequently, ask for His help and trust in Him, take refuge with Him, ask Him for support, assistance, safety and victory."[1] Thus, the main item of the Islamic agenda for the Muslim warriors is piety in its widest possible sense. But to attain taqwā Muslim warriors have to be permanently conscious of their duty to their Creator and be prepared to honour that duty even under the harshest conditions of a war.

That Allāh watches over man, and observes and records his every deed is stressed repeatedly by the Qur'ānic scriptures:

And He is with you Wheresoever ye may be.

And Allāh sees well all that ye do.

(57: 4)

-and whatever deed ye (mankind) may be doing, -

We are Witnesses thereof

When ye are deeply engrossed therein.

7

Nor is hidden from thy Lord (so much as)

The Weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven.

And not the least

And not the greatest

Of these things but are recorded

In a clear Record

(10: 61).

Writing in connection with the conduct of armies in times of war, al-Māwardī advises that "a commander should control and command his army mindful of the rights and the prescriptions of Allāh, so that no deviation should arise in faith and no transgression in what is due. Those spreading the message of the Islamic religion and fighting for its protection should be under an even more urgent obligation to adhere to its laws and to distinguish between what is right and wrong. Hārith b. Nabhān relays from Abān b. 'Uthmān, who in turn relays from the Prophet, MPBUH, the following: "restrain your armies from corruption, for corrupt armies would have fear cast into their hearts by Allāh; restrain your armies from dishonest behaviour, for Allāh afflicts dishonest armies with smallpox; and and forbid your armies from committing adultery, for otherwise Allāh will inflict on them an untimely death." [2]

Abū al-Dardā' calls on Muslims to "do good deeds prior to embarking on conquest, for your deeds will benefit you in your wars." He adds: "A combatant should fight to further the cause of the religion of God and to abolish all opposing religions. Only combatants fighting a war with such a motive, obedient to Allāh's orders, and loyal in their efforts to spread His word and defeat His enemies will be rewarded by God and reap the fruits of their endeavours. A Muslim should not undertake a jihād with the aim of increasing his material possessions. Any Muslim embarking on jihād with any motive

other than spreading the word of Allāh would be simply a soldier of fortune and nothing by a way of a <u>Mujāhid</u> (i.e. a soldier who fights for God)".

In his <u>al-Adillah al-Rasmiyyah fī al-Ta`bi'ah al-Ḥarbiyyah</u>, Muhammad b. Mankalī, Chief army in the Sultanate of al-Ashraf Sha`bān in Egypt,[3] wrote that "piety is the greatest basis of supreme victory" and that "the commander of the army should unite the hearts of his companions in devotion to God and make sure that Allāh's laws and prescriptions prevail amidst his army." In connection with army counsellors ('staff officers' in modern military terms), he advises that 'a Counsellor must be obedient to God and loyal in his devotion to Him'.

Thus, many outstanding Islamic thinkers agree that the fixing of faith in the hearts of both commanders and soldiers is absolutely necessary for obtaining victory. Throughout its wars and the preparation of its armies, the Islamic nation never failed to press on its soldiers the need for an unswerving devotion and loyalty to Allāh, a fear of His punishment, and a total commitment to His laws and orders.

D. The Impact of Faith in Islamic Conquests

The Islamic army, with faith firmly fixed in the hearts of its combatants, managed within the space of a very short time to break through the borders of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. Thirty years after its appearance, Islam succeeded in establishing a nation state that extended from China in the east to the borders of France in the west and from Siberia in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, eliminating in the process all political and geographical borders within this empire. It first managed to conquer the countries of Syria, Persia and North Africa and extend its influence to Asia Minor. From these countries, the Islamic armies set off to conquer neighbouring countries and used these newly subdued countries as a launchpad for even further conquests. The Islamic armies also broke through into Europe and continued to progress in this continent until they reached the walls of Vienna.

One of the most famous sultans during the Ottoman empire, Muhammad II, the conqueror of Constantinople, made use of and developed some of the most advanced military equipment at the time. Tsar Peter the Great's ambassador to the Ottoman empire wrote that "the Ottoman Sultan considered the Black Sea his backyard and therefore a no-go zone for foreigners." In his biography of Muhammad II, Baron Caradafo states that "this conquest [of Constantinople] was not an accidental event. It was accomplished not because the Byzantine Empire was weak but because the Sultan made meticulous preparations for the conquest and made use of all the scientific knowledge and technical power available at the time."[4]

Cannons were a new invention at the time of Muhammad II, and he sought and succeeded in the construction of one of the biggest cannons. He appointed a Hungarian engineer who designed and supervised the construction of a cannon capable of firing cannonballs weighing 300 kilograms, with an effective range of more than a mile. It is reported that such a cannon required 700 men to move and two hours to load. When Muhammad the Conqueror moved on Constantinople, he had under his command an army of three hundred thousand combatants and an impressive artillery. His fleet, which besieged the town from the sea, was made up of 120 warships. He was also a master tactician and strategist. The fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Ottoman sultan signalled that the time of holy wars fought with lances, swords, shields, bows and arrows had passed and a new era had arrived in which wars were fought with more sophisticated means of warfare such as cannons and siege engines, and such logistics and tactics as the building of bridges, the organisation of sieges and hiring of foreign expertise were exploited. The spirit of Islam does not prevent Muslims from nor is it inconsistent with the use of such sophisticated means of warfare; in fact it encourages them in this direction. The Prophet's, MPBUH, pronouncement that "Wisdom is the believer's ever-elusive quest and he is most worthy of it wherever he finds it"[5] is clearly a call to believers to be constructively inventive and industrious.

E. Treatment of Conquered or Defeated People

The rapid spread of the Islamic religion was not due to a systematic campaign of oppression, pressure or torture on the part of the Muslim armies throughout the newly conquered territories. The Qur'ān, articulates both an explicit and consistent conception of human destiny, grounded in the Oneness and Ominiscience of God and the spiritual equality of mankind as one creation, as well as an equally explicit and coherent conception of human rights, grounded in tolerance, forgiveness and co-existence within a diverse pluralist community. And it is this conception of human rights that the Muslim armies and commanders abided by in their treatment of the peoples of the conquered territories. With regard to the latter conception, the Qur'ān lays down very specific rules and guidelines of relationship and responsibility between Muslims and others (see previous sections for Qur'ānic quotations enjoining upon Muslims the need for fairness, honesty, and tolerance in dealing with each other and with others from outside the Muslim community.)

In matters relating to the treatment of others, deeds are generally more effective than words. If an army behaves morally and tolerantly, would not that create a more favourable atmosphere for it to spread its religious message? More than that, if an army unswervingly follows the dictates of Islam, moulding its conduct according to the moral teachings of the Qur'ān, would not that prove the superiority of the Islamic teachings to those of the other religions and creeds followed by the peoples of the conquered nations and help spread the message of Islam among the followers of these religions and creeds?

No doubt Islam enjoins upon Muslims to fight and lay down their lives for the preservation of their Islamic ideals and to remove evil from the world. But Islam remains fundamentally a religion of peace, for even during wars, it has prohibited cruelty, oppression and intolerance altogether (see above). Peaceful co-existence and tolerance is not a new idea to Muslims; it is as old as their religion. In newly conquered territories, newly converted Muslims were provided with equal opportunities to play their full part in the development of their countries and the wellbeing of their inhabitants. The Muslim

conquerors were also prepared to give equal opportunities to non-Muslims and guarantee their protection and freedom of faith and expression. Muslim rulers, for instance, approved the appointments of non-Muslims to important positions, if those appointments did not involve ruling the whole country.

For example, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb employed some of the people of Qayṣariyyah after its conquest as officers, according them therefore the status of civil servants. On his appointment as ruler of Iraq, Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī appointed a personal Christian clerk. Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān put Ibn Athāl, a Christian medical doctor, in charge of collecting the tribute for the County of Ḥimṣ and exempted him from the tribute.

When Egypt was conquered, all the Byzantine labourers were retained and the country kept its original languages (Greek, Persian, Coptic) as official languages up until the age of ʿAbd al-Malik. Throughout this period, the currency remained unchanged and some Christians were appointed to some senior positions. One of these Christians is Athanasius, known then as 'the great clerk', who used his position to build a church, Umm al-Ilāh, in al-Rahā, using money coming from the leasing of four hundred Ḥānūt that he owned.

Another was Theodosius who occupied a privileged position in Alexandria and who, on paying a certain amount of money to Yazīd, was appointed ruler of Alexandria, Mariut and their surroundings, with no accountability to the then Ruler of Egypt. Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik also employed a personal Christian clerk, al-Bīṭrīq b. al-Naqā, and made him governor of al-Ramlah.

⸙ al-Manṣūr appointed a Jew called Mūsā as one of two tribute collectors in Baghdad and a group of Jewish and Christian medical doctors were on good terms with the Caliphs and other Muslims in important decision-making positions.[6]

Christian architects contributed significantly to the building and designing of mosques and palaces. One of the characteristics that distinguished the Islamic empire from Christian Europe during the middle ages was that whereas the former was a pluralist

society allowing for the co-existence of peoples of different faiths, the latter was exclusively Christian.

Christians and Jews co-existed with Muslims under Islamic rule, and their rights were enshrined in statutory laws enforced throughout the Islamic empire and for the duration of the Islamic rule.[7]

In <u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u> and <u>Wafayāt al-'A`yān</u> it is reported that Khālid al-Qasrī, who died after 105 H, built a Church just outside of the western fence of al-Kufa Mosque and Christians used to ring the bells during the call for prayer; their hymns used often to drown the voice of the Imām so that he would not be heard, and yet there were no complaints from him. On being informed about this, the Caliph did not object to the behaviour of the Christians and took no decision against them since Islam guarantees religious freedom and encourages the Peoples of the Book to practice their devotions.[8]

During the Muslim conquests of Persia, Europe, Egypt and Syria, the General Commander and Ruler Caliph `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb had categorically forbidden his soldiers to take anything from the conquered people. He left the peoples of these conquered territories free to do whatever they wished and he maintained and approved their ownership.

The Islamic conquest was not motivated by an express need to have access to sources of material and financial prosperity, nor was it for the simple need to overcome and subdue others. Rather, it was conducted in a spirit of freedom, development, justice, scientific renewal and invention. Whenever Allāh's word was heeded and his laws were truly accepted and abided by, the Islamic Army would withdraw from those conquered territories, leaving the peoples of those territories run their own affairs in the way they see fit and elect a leader who believes and follows the Sharīˋa from amongst themselves.

Muslims pulled out of some of the conquered countries as soon as the rulers of these countries accepted Islam as their religion and made a pledge to preserve Islam as their religious faith. For example, the Persian Bāzān was approved to rule Yemen by Abū Bakr and Fayrūz was appointed to rule Ṣanˋā'. When the latter was ousted by Qays b.

13

Abd Yaghūth, an Arab, Abū Bakr intervened and reinstated him, helping thereby a Persian Muslim to win over an Arab Muslim.

The tolerance of the conquering Muslims had a great effect in encouraging the non-Muslim populations of the conquered territories to embrace Islam, and many of them returned to Islam on account of the discipline and tolerance the newly-arrived conquerors showed towards them.[9]

The main objective of the Islamic war was to uproot evil, whether in the form of tyrants or those who turned against Islam and struggled to undermine it by either misleading their peoples or preventing them from embracing the Islamic religion.

Notes:

1. Al-Harthamī, <u>Mukhtaṣar Siyāsat al-Ḥurūb</u>, pp. 15-16.

2. Al-Māwardī, <u>al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah</u>, p. 65.

3. Cited in Khaṭṭāb, <u>Bayna al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Qiyādah</u>, p. 47. Khaṭṭāb notes that

   al-Mankalī's book exists in manuscript form and that two copies of this

   manuscript are available for consultation in the Library of Aya Sofia in Turkey,

   one under the number 3739 and the other under the number 2875. He also

   indicates that he is currently working on an edition of this manuscript.

4. See ʿUmayrah, <u>Hādhā huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, 50-54.

5. Cited in al-Tirmīdī, 3: 382; see also al-ʿAjlūnī, <u>Kashf al-Khafāʾ</u>, 1: 363.

6. See Amīn, <u>Duḥā al-Islām</u>; see also Ibn Taymiyyah, <u>al-Fatāwā</u>.

7. IBID.; see also ʿUmayrah, <u>Hādhā huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, p. 53.

8. Al-Iṣfahānī, <u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u>; see also Ibn Khallikān, <u>Wafayāt al-Aʿyān</u>.

9. ʿUmayrah, <u>Hādhā huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, pp 54-55.

CHAPTER TWO

EARLY ISLAMIC MILITARY STRATEGY & ARMIES

<u>Early Islamic Military Strategy & Armies</u>

<u>1. Introduction</u>

During the first period of revelation, there was an order to propagate Islam when the verse "And admonish thy nearest kinsmen" (26: 214) was revealed. Nonetheless, there was no thinking of preparing any army to protect those few weak Muslims in Makkah. But after the Prophet's, MPBUH, migration to Madīnah and after the revelation of the verse "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allāh and your enemies" (8:60), the Prophet, MPBUH, started to prepare a force in order to protect the Islamic community and propagate the Islamic Da`wa to all mankind.

This force consisted at first of the migrants from Makkah and their supporters in Madīnah, and carried out a number of missions and raids. After each mission, the members of this force would return to its civil affairs such as trading, agriculture and so on and so forth. At this time, there was no permanent army with its own structure and organisation, for two reasons.

1. The small number of Muslims compared with that of the pagans who surrounded them in the peninsula.

2. The limited financial resources available to prepare an organised army.

The arming and equipping of this force was based upon individual initiatives. Whoever had arms or money could contribute and participate either financially, materially or physically. For instance, the force directed to Tabūk was sustained, supplied and prepared almost entirely by `Uthmān b. `Affān; this army was called <u>Jaysh al-'Usrah</u> (The Army of Hardship).[1]

If there was a shortage of weapons for the Muslims to equip such a force, they would borrow weapons from non-Muslims, as happened in several battles. For example, they borrowed arms from Ṣafwān b. Umayyah, though he was a non-believer. This situation continued unchanged under the Caliph Abū Bakr.[2]

17

However, during the period of `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb the position of the Muslims grew more powerful, and a group of the companions were able to lay the foundations for the scientific structuring of a strong army which had some of the qualities of a modern army. The`measures necessary for this can be summed up as follows:

1. The preparation of an organised force which has the quality of semi-permanency.

   The function of this force was to defend and protect the Muslim Ummah.

2. The creation of a <u>Dīwān al-Jund</u> (Army Board) to oversee the army's needs by

   way of weapons and equipment.

3. The preparation of the nation for jihād.

2. Structure of the Islamic Army

a. The First Stage in the Development and Organisation of the Islamic Army

Several stages can be identified in the development and structuring of the Islamic Army. The first stage extends from the time of the Prophet's, MPBUH, migration to Madinah to the end of the period of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. During this period, the Islamic army had no fixed and stable structure. Early on during this stage, the army took the form of an extended family; for instance, the Green Division (<u>al-Katībah al-Khadrā'</u>), which played a major role in the conversion and liberation of Makkah,was organised from Muhājirīn and Anṣār.[3] Later on during this stage, the army was organised into divisions, with each either wholly or heavily drawn from one specific tribe, such as Banī Salīm, Banī Ghifār, Banī Aslam, Muzaynah, Tamīm, Qays and Asad.[4] On the whole, the army had no fixed structure during this first stage of its development, and was generally organised differently on different occasions depending on such factors as the type of mission, the nature of the battleground and how far the battle was from the secure and safe area of al-Madīnah.

b. Second Stage

This second stage in the development of the Islamic army extends from the period of `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb until the end of the period of `Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. This stage saw the conquest of many territories. The battles resulting in the conquest of these territories necessitated a well organised, strong and modern army, capable of accommodating itself to different circumstances, battles and missions. This army, unlike that which existed during the early stages of the advent of Islam, was not rooted in a family or tribal structure.

A brief look at of some of the military organisations and formations will help shed some light on the structure of the Islamic army during this second stage of its development.

1. al-`Urafā'

`Arīf, the singular form of `Urafā', is the leader of a group of ten combatants, and `irāfah was a group of ten soldiers steered by an 'Arīf. `Irāfah, the equivalent of the modern day Hadīrah, constitutes the smallest unit in the Islamic army.

2. al-Nuqabā' (Leaders of Groups consisting of Ten `Irāfāt'):

When the Prophet Muḥammad, MPBUH, asked the Ansār during the second Bay`ah of al-`Aqabah to "Elect from amongst you twelve Naqībs who will lead their people and direct their resources",[5] they chose twelve Naqībs, nine out of al-Khazraj and three out of al-Aws.[6] A Naqīb is the person in charge of and overseeing the welfare of a group of hundred soldiers. A Naqīb is responsible for the combatants under his authority and accountable to his superiors. He is entrusted with the duty of guiding those under his charge and seeing to their needs to the best of his ability. The Naqīb is also called Amīr al-`ashīrah.[7]

19

3. al-Katībah (Battalion):

The term katībah was used by the pre-Islamic Arabs in their battles, as is testified by this verse by the poet 'Antarah:[8]

"I charged on her (his mare) in every encounter, for a long time,

my kuhl none other than the dust of the Katībah."

The word katībah continued to be used during the early Islamic period. The battle undertaken to liberate Makkah, for instance, saw the merging of the Muhājirīn and the Ansār into one katībah, al-Katībah al-Khadrā' (the green division), under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad, MPBUH. The word Katībah was also used during the period of al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn. According to al-Nuwayrī, a Katībah is made up of between one hundred and one thousand soldiers. After the period of the four Caliphs and prior to the battle of al-Yarmūk, the term "Kardaws" was adopted as a synonym of 'katībah'.[9]

4. al-Jaysh or Nizām al-Khamīs

Like the Persians and Byzantines and such allies of theirs as al-Manādhirah and al-Ghassāsinah, the Muslims used the five-party system (Nizām al-Khamīs), i.e., organising the army into five complementary divisions. This system has five parts, namely:

a. al-Talī'ah (the vanguard), consisting of highly skilled cavalry.

b. al-Maymanah (the right wing).

c. al-Maysarah (the left wing).

d. al-Qalb (the core), which accounts for the majority of the army and is made up

entirely of foot soldiers.

e. al-Sāqah (rearguard), consisting of transport, supplies, camp followers and

supplies.

This system was followed throughout the Muslim wars.[10]

3. The Islamic Army During the Period of the Caliph `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb

The army structure underwent a significant reform during the period of `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in a move to protect and maintain the existence and integrity of the Islamic Ummah. Amongst the laws, rules and regulations which `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb introduced, the following were the most notable:

First: Compulsory National Military Service. While prior to the era of `Umar, joining the army was a matter of personal choice and tradition, it was now incumbent upon the individual to do military service as part of his duty to protect the Ummah.

`Umar sent his envoys to the different tribes with orders to inform them of the new law and invite them to join the army. `Umar's orders to his envoys were thus: "Leave no one uncalled amongst the tribes: Rabī`ah, Muḍar, their allies (ahl al-Najdāt), whether foot-soldier or horse-soldier. If anybody declines the invitation to join the army, bring him to me by force. Show some rigour in approaching the Arabs. Do not leave out anybody uncalled and in particular those with arms, weapons, equipment or those with a skill that may benefit our cause or those in a position to offer an opinion, advice or experience. Bring them all to me as soon as possible and treat my orders with a sense of urgency".[11]

Second: establishing the Dīwān which consists of two sections:[12]

a. Dīwān al-Jund (Army Board)

At the time `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb became Caliph, the Islamic Army was still heavily relying on volunteers. Convinced of the necessity of a permanent, stable and well-organised Islamic army capable of protecting and preserving the integrity of the then ever-expanding Muslim nation, he ordered the setting up of a Dīwān al-Jund whose function was to maintain a record of the number of people on active service in the army,

their names, racial and ethnic origins, their entitlements, salaries, and the times these salaries were due.[13] In addition to monitoring the quantity and quality of weapons in the possession of the Islamic army, this board served as the military body that financed the arming and equipping of fighters, as well as caring for their families during their absence on service.

Conditions for Joining the Islamic Army

Applicants to join the Islamic Army had to meet a number of conditions and satisfy a set of criteria set up by the Army Board:

1. Puberty; applicants should be of the age of 16 or over.

2. Freedom; applicants should be free individuals and not slaves.

3. Islam; applicants should be Muslims, because the intention was to protect Muslims, defend and propagate Islam and fight those who resisted Islam or oppressed Muslims for their faith.

4. Health; applicants had to be in a healthy condittion and not afflicated by any disability.

5. Bravery; applicants had to be brave individuals, knew how to fight or were willing to be trained to fight and use (their) weapons properly. [14]

These conditions and requirements were, however, waived under special circumstances and in the case of a limited number of applicants. For instance, after initially rejecting their application, the Prophet, MPBUH, authorised Samrah b. Jundub al-Fizārī and Rāfi` b. Khudayj, two fifteen year-old brothers from Ḥārithah, to join the army on the basis of the Companions' testimony that "Rāfi' knows how to use weapons and particularly how to shoot enemies with his arrows and 'Samrah can beat Rāfi' in fighting'.[15] The Prophet, MPBUH, also permitted `Amr b. al-Jamūh to join the army, though he was lame (A`raj), following the latter's protests that he would benefit the Muslim army by looking after its food, equipment, and clothes. Ibn Umm Maktūm, a blind Muslim, asked the Prophet, MPBUH, for permission to join the army which was

on the point of departing for Persia. On being told by the Companions that he "cannot fight [against the foes of Islam] or join the army", he protested that "If I cannot fight, then I might be able to at least increase the number of Muslims in the eyes of the enemy and look after your food, equipment and clothes'. This incident is cited in the Qur'ān:

(The Prophet, MPBUH,) frowned and turned away

Because there came to him the blind man (interrupting)

(80:1-2)

The above cases are of course exceptions; the conditions enforced by the Islamic Army Board for joining the Islamic Army were generally strictly enforced.

b. Dīwān al-'Atā' (The Funding Department of the Army Board)

Dīwān al-'Atā' was the department in charge of distributing the nation's revenues among the members of the Muslim community, al-'Atā' being the funds provided annually to all Muslims, whether living in the Peninsula or outside of it. These funds were the main income in the case of the majority of Muslims.

The revenue of Dīwān al-'Atā' comes from various official channels:

1. al-Khums (The fifth): it comes from the revenue of battles undertaken by the

   Islamic Army.

2. al-Fay', the property taken peacefully from the enemy, as is mentioned in the

   following Āyah:

"What Allāh has bestowed on His Messenger (and taken away) from the people of the townships, - belongs to Allāh, - to His Messenger, and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer."

(59: 7)

23

3. al-Zakāt, the percentage payment on increase paid by Muslims.

4. al-Jizyah, the levy paid by non-Muslims (al-Dhimmiyyūn) living within the

Muslim community and under the Islamic Law. This levy was paid towards

ensuring their protection, civil and legal rights.

5. al-Kharāj: (tax on land) and one tenth of trade's profit.[16]

The development of Dīwān al-ʿAṭāʾ went through three stages:

a. First Stage:

During this stage, which lasted for the duration of the period of the Prophet, MPBUH, , there was no regular institution for payment and no stable and fixed revenue; as a consequence, funding was neither fixed nor steady.[17] Whatever the Muslims acquired through such approved channels as ghanīmah, fayʾ, or jizyah was distributed as soon as it reached al-Madīnah.

b. Second Stage:

The second stage, lasting for the duration of Abū Bakr's Caliphate, saw an increased number of Muslims in al-madīnah and the government's revenues coming under more and more pressure, leading ultimately to the Caliph's decision to have the nation's funds distributed equally between Muslims, irrespective of age, gender and whether they were free or slaves. This distribution was usually done as soon as funds became available and the revenue had reached al-Madīnah. [18]

c. Third Stage:

This last stage continued for the duration of the Caliphates of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and his two successors. This stage saw the liberation of most of the Arabian Peninsula in addition to several other large countries. As a consequence of the expansion of the Islamic state, ʿUmar introduced a set of laws whereby:

1. a record of the Government's resources was to be kept. He ordered in this regard various market researches, surveys and statistics to be carried out with the aim of determining the exact number of the Muslim population, the surface of the territory under Muslim rule, the products of these territories and the products that could be potentially developed, and the various Inland Revenue Resources.

2. al-`Atā'āt were to be distributed equally amongst the people. The nation's resources and revenues increased substantially during this period, allowing the Caliph `Umar to direct some of them to the needy among the People of the Book (Jews and Christians).

3. the distribution of resources was to be monitored to ensure it was made in accordance with the principles laid down for distribution. It should be mentioned in this regard that, initially, priority in distribution was given to those who were first to become Muslims, in accordance with the Caliph `Umar's conviction: "I do not consider the one who fought against the Messenger of Allāh (MPBUH) the same as the one who fought for him!'

The distribution of al-`Atā' was regulated in terms of a specific set of factors, and the amount of funds Muslims received varied depending on the following considerations: [19]

a. the number of family members or dependants.

b. the number of horses made available as steeds of war for the cause of Allāh. There was much competition amongst Muslims in this respect and in response to the following verse from the Qur'ān:

"Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts) of the enemies, of Allāh and your enemies." (8: 60)

c. Rich fighters could decline the funds they were entitled to if they wished to do so and those who refused to join the army when invited were not eligible to receive any funds from the inland revenue. [20]

No doubt, the Dīwān al-Jund and Dīwān al-`Aṭā' played a significant role in enhancing the power and morale of the Islamic Army. Muslim soldiers felt financially and emotionally secure and were untroubled by what might become of their families and/or dependants should they get killed in action against the enemies of Islam. The Caliph `Umar used to assure soldiers on the point of engaging enemies in war with the words: "Go with the blessing and peace of Allāh; we will look after your families until you return". [21]

4- Continuous Training of Soldiers

On joining the Islamic Army, a soldier was registered with the Dīwān al-Jund and underwent an intensive training programme designed to instruct soldiers in matters of fighting skills and strategies, reading and understanding skills, moral discipline and social civility. The objectives of this training programme were as follows:

a. to train soldiers in the use of all weapons and equipment.

b. to familiarise the trainees with various methods of fighting an enemy.

c. to foreground and reinforce the faith in the hearts of soldiers and strengthen their belief in the Islamic cause for which they would be fighting.

d. to familiarise Muslim army leaders with various problem-solving techniques and train them in the devising of effective strategies and tactics to thwart the plans of the enemy, demoralise its army and destroy its equipment and arms.

While the Muslim infantry exhibited a superior fighting ability to that of its counterparts from other armies, the Islamic army was not as skileful as the Sasanids and the Byzantines in the art of archery:

a. the necessity of intensifying and increasing the training of Muslim soldiers in archery and javeline throwing. The Prophet, MPBUH, 's declaration, repeated as many as three times, that "strength lies in shooting",[22] sought to impress upon Muslim soldiers the importance of this skill in deciding a war.

26

b. the promotion of the industry of arms making, especially the art of perfecting and manufacturing arrows, and bows declaring in this respect that "Allāh will admit to Paradise as many as three people for each single arrow [made and shot]; the person who made it, the one who shot it, and the one who supplied and facilitated the shooting of it. Then shoot and ride; but I would rather you shot than rode".[23]

c. relating the general objectives of fighting with solid training, skilful use of arms and especially the mastery of the art of shooting arrows and the like, emphasising in this respect to his soldiers that "it is these sharp arrows and bows that will enable you to liberate countries from the hands of Non-Muslims" and "there were no other better weapons than these arrows".[24]

d. the need of implementing the idea of lightning strikes against opposite armies using a well-organised cavalry, capable of swift but effective attacks. In an attempt to impress on his soldiers and their leaders the importance of a well-disciplined cavalry, the Prophet, MPBUH, declare: "Steeds of war have good bound in their forelocks until the day of resurrection"[25] and discipline your horses for they can be made tactable".[26]

The Qur'ānic scriptures endorse the concept of lightning strikes against opposing armies:

By the (Steeds) that run, with panting (breath),

And Strike sparks of fire,

And push home the charge in the morning.

(100: 1-3)

The substantive proposition of these verses is expressed in a series of metaphors, all converging on and endorsing the value of swift but effective attacks against enemies. Three layers of meaning can be differentiated in this regard.

(1) On one level, these verses invite us to contemplate the awesome scene, horses charging in a war on behalf of their masters, striking fire with their hoofs by night at the

27

behest of their riders, pushing home the charge in the morning, chivalrously giving the enemy the benefit of daylight; and how, notwithstanding the flashing steel or the weapons of their enemies, they boldly penetrate into the midst of their foe risking their lives for the Cause. These verses are also an invitation to compare the loyalty of these steeds of war with the disloyalty and ungratefulness of man to his Lord Allāh; in contrast to the fidelity of these steeds of war, man is violently in love with wealth and gain and mundane things that never last.

(2) On a second level, and by way of metonymy, the fidelity and courage of the war-horse may be seen as a reference to the courage and loyalty of those believers who rally to the cause of Allāh and show neither hesitation nor fear in their struggle to spread the word and message of their Lord Allāh.

(3) On a third level, these verses can be interpreted as a set of guidelines for warring Islamic armies. In order to catch their enemies unawares and unprepared and consequently inflict on them a swift and convincing defeat, Muslim armies are enjoined to march during the night time and charge during the daytime.

Having liberated the neighbouring countries of the Arabian Peninsula, the Islamic army was facing the task of liberating Iraq, the Levant (Syria, Jordan and Palestine) and Egypt, notorious then for their strong castles and fortresses. This task demanded a more intensive and rigorous physical training of soldiers, a reinforcement of the number of soldiers, an augmentation of weapons as well as the devising of new ones. For this purpose, the Prophet, MPBUH, ordered `Amr b. Mas'ūd and Ghaydah b. Salāmah to acquire the skills required to manufacture siege engines, which they were able to do in Jurash near Makkah al-Mukarramah.[27]

In anticipation of the possibility of having to negotiate water barriers in their campaign to liberate the above mentioned territories, Muslim soldiers were instructed in the art of swimming. The Prophet, MPBUH, called upon Muslims in this regard to "teach your children how to swim, how to shoot and how to ride war-horses". Muslims were also able to construct water rafts and dinghies and instruct youngsters in the use of

these. These inventions proved of immense value during the Muslim liberation of Damascus.[28] Furthermore, the Muslims were able to perfect the art of building wooden bridges, a skill which proved of immense service to them during the Battle of the Bridge (Ma`rakat al-Jisr) in Iraq. In order to encourage creative initiatives and promote individual creative industry within the community, competitions were organised regularly, and the most creative inventions and plans were rewarded and developed.[29]

At different stages of the development of the Islamic Army, the Prophet, MPBUH, and the Muslim Caliphs insisted on the Muslim soldiers not only benefiting from a rigorous and continuous training in matters of fighting skills and endurance, but also from constant and updated briefings on the nature of arms and equipment in possession of their enemies as well as the nature of the terrain on which they were to fight those enemies. These types of pre-war briefings gave the Islamic Army an edge over opposing armies and enabled it to take the necessary precautions prior to the start of a war. The General Leader `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, for instance, advises Sa`d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, the Commander at the battle of al-Qādisiyyah, thus:

"You should know that you are about to confront a large nation that is well equipped and armed and devastating in its might as well as a naturally difficult country -easy as it might be for us- protected by seas, valleys .... Start fighting them as soon as you confront them and beware of their deception and cunning and do not negotiate with them unless you receive guarantees from them that they will submit to your will ..... " .[30]

This accurate account of the nature of the battlefield clearly testifies to the Islamic Army leaders' insights into and wide knowledge of the geography, civilisation and cultural specificities of both neighbouring and distant countries at that time. The wide-ranging knowledge of the army leaders served to provide Muslim soldiers with a fairly accurate idea of the culture, education, history, and geography of the countries they were seeking to liberate and the armies they were about to confront.

Furthermore, during both the Prophet, MPBUH, 's and the Caliphs' period soldiers (as well as other Muslims) were encouraged to learn the languages and dialects of those countries the Islamic Army liberated or was about to liberate. The captives of the Battle of Badr were promised release from captivity in return for instructing ten of the Muslim youngsters into the skills of reading and writing and the Prophet, MPBUH, ordered Zayd b. Thābit and some of the other companions to learn Persian, which Zayd was able to master within one and a half months and subsequently serve as a translator and interpreter for the Prophet, MPBUH, . These examples were by no means isolated cases and serve to illustrate how keen the Prophet, MPBUH, and other General Leaders of the Islamic Army were on soldiers and other Muslims learning other languages and something about the cultures and civilisations of other nations and countries.

Physical Training of Muslim Soldiers

The physical training of the Islamic Army was rigorously carried out, continuously maintained and scientifically planned. Such a rigorous and continuous physical training was necessitated by a number of factors and considerations:

a. The weapons used in the early battles undertaken by the Islamic army were heavy, requiring thereby a great deal of strength and endurance. In respect of this, physical exercises were planned to build the soldiers' muscles, develop their endurance and maintain their fitness. Used as part of the physical exercises devised to develop the soldiers' physical strength was, among others, the carrying of rocks and metal weighte.[31]

b. Since the cavalry was an important and fundamental part of the Islamic army, soldiers were trained in mounting and dismounting, riding horses for long distances, balancing themselves confidently on the back of a horse and enduring the forward and backward jerking movements they were bound to experience on the back of a horse during a battle. Because of the physically demanding nature of this type of training, every effort was made to sustain the motivation of the soldiers and boost their morale. In this respect,

regular race competitions were organised under the supervision of the Prophet, MPBUH, and winners were handsomely rewarded.[32]

Training in the Use Arms & Weapons

Training in the use of arms and weapons was carried out in spacious grounds and open places called 'training fields' (al-Madārib). These training fields comprised two parts:

a. Training Grounds:

In these fields, army soldiers and fighters underwent rigorous training in the various methods of fighting, both as part of an infantry and a cavalry. Soldiers were trained on, among others,

1. riding horses with or without saddles.

2. fighting with swords on the ground or from the back of a moving horse.

3. shooting arrows and using stabbing weapons most effectively.

4. shooting from the back of a (moving) horse as well as standing on the ground.

5. such fighting manoeuvres as quick movement forward and backward on the back of a horse.

b. Training Fields for Steeds of War:

These training fields were located mostly in a safe and secure zone. The Caliph `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb employed Salmān b. Rabī`ah al-Bāhilī as General Director of Military Training and issued him with directives whereby:

1. The number and quality of horses available were to be recorded; the differences between the pure and the hybrid breeds was to be carefully noted.

2.These horses were to undergo a medical examination on a regular basis. They were to be isolated in the event of sickness or disease and they were to be continuously treated until a complete recovery.

3. These horses were to be trained in the manoeuvres and moves required of them during the fighting. They were to be trained to obey the orders of their Muslim masters and to respond to these orders promptly and positively.

4. These horses were to be trained individually as well as collectively, i.e., they were to be trained on how to react and perform correctly even in the midst of other horses and a lot of noise.

At the end of training periods, competitions and horse races were organised to monitor the fighting and riding skills of soldiers. Peaceful military manoeuvres were also organised with the aim of testing the soldiers' combat capabilities and endurance, honing their fighting skills as well as familiarising them with the conditions of a real armed conflict.[33]

Furthermore, the Muslim Army undertook simulated combat operations during the winter and summer seasons, known as Tadrīb al-Shawātī wa al-Sawā'if. The objectives of these operations were, among others, to safeguard the borders, to collect information about the enemy and monitor his movements, to raise the morale amongst Muslim fighters, and to prepare them for real armed conflicts.[34]

Special Medical Doctors, Judges and Translators for the Army

During the time of the Prophet, MPBUH, , a group of individuals specialised in treating the injured used to accompany the Islamic army to scenes of battle. However, since there was no unit specialised in burying the dead (martyrs), this task fell to everybody and all used to co-operate in the preparation of burial grounds and interment of those killed in action. Women played an effective role in this respect; to those who accompanied their husbands to battles fell the task of bringing water to and caring for the injured.

In the Ṣaḥīḥ, al-Imām al-Bukhārī includes a section which he entitles "Treatment of the Injured by Women During the Fighting of a Battle", and in which he mentions the following hadith: "We were with the Prophet of Allāh, MPBUH, during the war, our task being to offer water to and treat the injured and send the dead to al-Madīnah." [35]

This situation remained much the same during the period of Abū Bakr, but during the period of the ʿUmar a specialised Medical Unit was set up to undertake these duties. In his History, Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī narrates, in connection with the events of the year 14 H, that "ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sent [with the army] physicians, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Rabīʿah al-Bāhilī in the capacity of a judge and in charge of the distribution of al-Fay' and appointed Salmān al-Fārisī a General Commander." [36] Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ narrated that the Caliph ʿUmar appointed Hilāl al-Hajarī a translator and sent him with the army leaving for al-Qādisiyyah, so that he could translate any oral or written communication from the leaders of Persia and facilitate communication with the Persian prisoners of war. [37]

It is evident from the above that the Muslim Leaders were thorough and assiduous in their preparations for combat and diligent in taking the necessary precautions for entering armed conflict with their enemies.

5. Types of Arms, Weapons and Equipment Used during Islamic Battles

The Islamic scripture enjoin upon Muslims the need for vigilance against the enemies of their faith and makes it the duty of each Muslim to be forever ready to do his utmost in defence of his Lord's message. Allāh says:

"Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allāh and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allāh doth know." (8: 60)

The preparation of a source of strength for the purpose of defending the Islamic faith meant the organisation of a human force armed with weapons which combatants m'ght use in their armed confrontations with the enemies of the Islamic faith.

The Early Muslim military leadership soon realised the critical importance of the armament aspect of this task force. However, the weapons and equipment the early Islamic army used in its battles against other armies were essentially no different from the traditional weapons and equipment used by other armies. The weapons used during the early stages of the Islamic army's development fall into two categories:

1. Arms used or operated by a single fighter.

2. Arms requiring a collective effort to use or operate.

We give below examples of arms falling under the first category:

a. al-Qaws (Bow):

The bow is said to have come to the Arabs from the Persians. At the time of the advent of Islam, Persians were renowned for their archery skills and were considered the masters of this art. However, through continuous practice and training, the Arabs were able to master this art and use it so effectively in their defeat of the Persians and Byzantines. The most famous place for manufacturing bows was Za'r in al-Shām, hence the renowned Za'rī bows (al-Kanā'in al-Za'riyyah). The Muslims continued to improve the manufacturing of bows and were able at one point to manufacture sophisticated machines (e.g., al-Majarrah (large crossbow), probably comprising either a steel or a wooden tube and allowing for a more powerful shot. [38]

b. al-Sahm (The arrow)

c. al-Rumh (The lance)

d. al-Sayf (The sword)

e. al-Dabbūs (The mace)

f. al-Khanjar (The dagger)

2. Arms requiring more than one fighter to operate include, for example, the

following:

a. al-Manjanīq wa al-ʿArrādah (The mangonel and the small catapult)

b. al-Dabbābah or al-dabr (The scaling tower)

c. al-Usṭūl al-Baḥrī (The Fleet)

Notes:

1. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 4: 169-180.

2. This took place when the Muslims were marching to Hawāzin. Ṣafwān asked:

"Are you taking these weapons by force, O Muḥammad?" and the Prophet, MPBUH,

replied: "It is a loan guaranteed until we return it to you". IBID., 4: 68.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk, 13: 54.

4. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 421.

5. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk, 2: 238.

6. Ibn al-`Athīr, al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh, 2: 98-101; see also `Abd

al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 47-51.

7. Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyūn al-Akhbār, 1: 125.

8. Al-Baghdādī, Khizānat al-'Adab, 1: 62.

9. Al-Nuwayrī, Nihāyat al-Irab fī Funūn al-Adab, 6: 189.

10. Al-Harthamī, Mukhtaṣar Siyāsat al-Ḥurūb, pp.41-42.

11. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk, 4: 82.

12. Al-Māwardī, al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah, pp. 220-221.

13. Al-Farrā', al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah, p. 225.

14. IBID., p. 235.

15. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 3: 66.

16. Al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-mulūk, 13: 89.

17. IBID., 13: 339.

18. IBID., 13: 358.

19. Al-Farrā', al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah, p. 226.

20. IBID., 218.

21. `Umayrah, <u>Hādhā Huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, p. 18.

22. This Ḥadīth is cited by Muslim in <u>Fadl al-Ramiyy</u>: 1917

23. Cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Jihād</u>, 1637.

24. Ibn Qayyim, <u>Kitāb al-Furūsiyyah</u>, pp. 15-16.

25. Cited by al-Bukhāri in <u>al-Manāqib</u>: 28.

26. Ibn Hazīl, <u>Kitāb Hilyat al-Fursān</u>, p. 513.

27. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 1: p 478

28. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk</u>, 13:439.

29. IBID

30. IBID., 13: 490-491.

31. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, <u>Kitāb al-Furūsiyyah</u>, p. 8.

32. Ibn Qayyim, <u>Kitāb al-Furūsiyyah</u>.

33. `Awn, <u>al-Fann al-Harbī fī Ṣadr al-Islām</u>, pp.195-197.

34. IBID., 10-20; see also al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk</u>, 14: 62-67.

35. Al-`Asqalānī, <u>Fatḥ al-Bārī - Sharḥ al-Bukhārī</u>, 6: 79.

36. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 7: 37.

37. Al-`Azm, <u>Ashhar Mashāhīr al-Islām</u>, p. 349.

38. Zaydān, <u>al-Tamaddun al-Islāmī</u>, 1: 169.

Chapter Three

QUALITIES OF WARRIORS AND LEADERS

QUALITIES OF WARRIORS AND LEADERS

War, for whatever reasons it is waged, is a cruel and demanding enterprise and as such requires the services of men who are physically fit, militarily well-drilled and psychologically prepared to undergo and withstand the harsh and merciless conditions of military combat.

The Islamic military strategy was highly alert to the special mental and physical demands that a war imposes on fighters and set out, accordingly, to prepare the Muslim warrior in such a way that he would withstand and endure the demands and conditions of a war. The many victories won by the Islamic army on various battlefields and on several fronts are, without doubt, a clear testimony to the fighting spirit of the Muslim fighter and his physical, mental and endurance abilities. What then were, as part of the tactics of the Islamic military strategy, the qualities required of a Muslim warrior? A study of the history of Islamic warfare reveals that these qualities were the following:

A. Deep-seated Faith

Muslim warriors believed firmly that the wars they were fighting were for the sake of spreading Allāh's religion and intended for no other purpose than to allow people to embrace the religion of Islam. These Muslim warriors fought their various wars with the strong conviction that the latter were never motivated by the desire to annex more territories, dominate other peoples, have access to raw materials, or amass capital and taxes.

Muslim warriors, in other words, fought not for personal glory, the glory of a certain class, an existing state, or a specific race with presumably superior qualities, but for the sole aim of spreading Allāh's word on earth and allowing Allāh's law to take control over the affairs of mankind. Each individual was free to choose the faith

that he or she wished to embrace, in line with the scriptural injunctions, 'Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error' (2: 256) and 'Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!.' (10: 99)

It was often the case that war placed Muslims and their relatives on opposing sides in a war. During the battle of Badr, fathers and sons of different faiths met in war and, inevitably, the sword had the last word. For instance, while Abū Bakr was fighting on the side of the Muslims, his son was fighting for the cause of the unbelievers and, while `Utba b. Rabī`ah was supporting the cause of Quraysh, his son, Ḥamzah, was one of the Muslim warriors.

When `Utba b. Rabī`a was killed during the battle of Badr, and his son saw his dead body, he felt agitated and distraught. When the Prophet, MPBUH, noticing his distress, asked, Ḥudhayfah, you feel distressed for your father, do you not?' Hudhayfah replied: 'By Allāh no, Prophet of Allāh!, MPBUH, I have not the slightest doubts about my father or his death. I know my father had good sense, was kind and had good judgement. I just wish he had converted to Islam. When I saw what befell him and remembered that he had died while still an unbeliever I felt dejected and sad.'[1]

During one of the Islamic battles, Abū `Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāh, in accordance with his leader's orders, considered that all soldiers fighting under the banner of monotheism were his kinsfolk, regardless of the geographical distance separating them and regardless of their different nationalities and races. He equally considered that all those who sided with Quraysh and fought on its side were his enemies and the enemies of his faith, regardless of the fact that some of them were among his closest relatives. Acting on his faith and religion and his understanding of the role his religion required of him to fulfil, he saw his father fighting on the side of the unbelievers and putting to the sword some of his co-religionists. He chased his polytheist father and did not relent until he had killed him. The father was an unbeliever who did not believe in Him who created him and to that extent was worthy of no sympathy or compassion.

A deep-rooted faith dictated Abū ʿUbaydah's actions and loyalties, and it was this faith that motivated his behaviour and actions. It was, similarly, the lofty aims of their faith that motivated Muslim warriors' determination to fight to the death in defence of these aims. It was this determination, born of a deep-seated faith and an unswerving allegiance to the aims of this faith, that enabled the Muslim armies to inflict defeat on the two strongest states of the time.

B. High Morale

Military experts widely agree that morale is of far more importance than numbers and quality of military equipment in determining the manner in which a war is resolved. This theory is often supported by what happened to the Italian army during the Second World War. Though this army was equipped with the most modern and deadly weapons, was well-organised and huge in numbers, its morale was at its lowest ever and, thus it became, eventually, more of a burden on and a liability to the German army. The Italian army fought in what the Allied Armies characterised as 'a military vacuum'. Bereft of a cause and a homeland, they surrendered without any resistance, whether the danger facing them was real or imaginary, and their presence became immaterial to their German allies.

Islamic strategy raised the morale of its warriors by reinforcing their firm belief in the notion of fatalism and the doctrine that affairs and events are predestined and run along a course ordained by the Divine power, and in the notion that a war fought for the purpose of spreading the Islamic religion leads to one of two ends only, either victory or martyrdom, in accordance with the words of the scriptures', "Say: 'Can you expect for us any fate other than one of two glorious things?' But we can expect for you either that God will send his punishment from Himself or by our hands." (9: 52) The Muslim warrior thus went to war with the firm conviction that a fighting Muslim's fate is glorious irrespective of the outcome of the war he is fighting, whereas the fate of an unbeliever is inglorious, whether he emerges from a war a victorious or a vanquished party.

Following the example of the Prophet ,MPBUH, the first leader of a Muslim army, Islamic strategy aimed throughout its wars more at destroying the morale of its enemies than their material power. This strategy was based on the assumption that once an enemy's morale collapsed, its military prowess and capabilities, however formidable, would not save it from a crushing defeat; its defeat was thought to be a foregone conclusion and simply a matter of time.

C. Preparation/Training

Military training is one of the most crucial means of creating an efficient army capable of enduring the tough conditions of a war. Major General Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥfūẓ argues that "military training has very important material and moral effects and consequences",[2] the most important of which include the following:

i. It creates a high level of efficiency among armed forces, be they leaders or soldiers.

ii. It prepares the army for immediate and efficient action, irrespective of circumstances and conditions.

iii. It reduces the armed forces' losses in lives and military equipment, for a well-trained soldier is less susceptible to injury than a less well-trained soldier. The history of war confirms such a conclusion, and a well-established principle among military commanders maintains that 'sweat in training saves blood in battle.'

D. Discipline

What does 'discipline' mean in military terms? Does it simply imply a blind and unquestioning readiness to carry out commanders' orders? Does it constitute the very condition and imperative without which an armed force will be incapable of engaging in a war? Or does it mean obedience, honesty and the total readiness unhesitatingly to execute all orders issued by the leadership?

For some leaders, military discipline is the mental condition and training which renders obedience and sound behaviour an instinctive act in all circumstances. Obedience, in this sense, does not then constitute the core or totality of military discipline; it is simply a constituent component of it. Major General Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥfūz argues that:

"Discipline cannot be said to be complete unless one does what he knows or thinks is right even in the absence of [higher] orders or control. One should be fully committed to obedience and sound behaviour in all circumstances and .... [in the face of] all pressures. This is what is meant by obedience and sound behaviour being instinctive in all conditions."[3]

Discipline, it follows, is a condition of mind born of a conviction which functions as a driving force and a guiding principle behind a person's obedience to orders and commitment to sound behaviour, even in the most adverse circumstances and in the absence of close supervision.

Entrusted to convey a message in the course of a battle, a truly disciplined soldier will never shy away from fulfilling his duty and will never hesitate to execute his mission, even when he is fully aware of such potential dangers and risks as ambush and death. Such a soldier embarks on his duty without compulsion or persuasion. It is for these reasons that some military leaders prefer to speak of 'self-discipline' rather than mere 'discipline'.

Bases of Discipline

Islamic strategy emphasised the point that discipline in warriors should be an ingrained element of the human soul. Some of its bases are:

A. Freedom and Dignity

Islam strove to free man from all types of enslavement and bondage; man should be a slave and submit to none but Allāh, his creator and the creator of all mankind and the universe. From the perspective of Islam, slavery was a form and a means of humiliation and degradation. According to Islam, all human beings should be free to embrace the faith they choose for themselves, free of any compulsion, for God insists, "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error." (2: 256) As is evident from this holy verse, Allāh honours man by conferring upon him the freedom to choose whatever faith he deems best for himself. By bestowing upon man the freedom of choice in matters of faith, He simultaneously makes him responsible for his acts, decisions, and choices. Islam thus makes human freedom and responsibility indivisible. For Islam, freedom of faith is the first and foremost human right man is entitled to; depriving man of freedom of faith implies dehumanising him and depriving him of his basic elementary human rights. With freedom of faith is born the notion of preserving the freedom to propagate such a faith.

Islam instituted the right to preserve one's soul, material possessions and honour. It prohibited harming other people's souls, violating their honour and robbing them of their money. The Prophet, MPBUH, insists that "A Muslim is forbidden to hurt another Muslim either by sheding his blood, taking his money or violating his honour."[4]

Islam also demanded that man's relation to Allāh should be direct and unmediated by any other party. The Scriptures state in this regard, 'When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close: I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calleth on Me." (2: 186)

Islam prohibits flaunting descent and boasting of superiority of race, insisting that there are no people of superior or inferior descent, since all men are born from Adam and "Adam was created from dust'[5] In Islam, humans are distinguished only in terms of their fear of Allāh and his good deeds. The Scriptures regularly emphasise

44

that "The most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you." (49: 13)

From the perspective of Islam, differences in language, colour, descent, race, talent and aptitude are immaterial; what matters, in the final account, is whether a person has been righteousn and virtuous or not.

B. Self-Control and Conscientiousness

Islamic strategy aimed at instilling in Muslim warriors, much as Islam sought to do in all human beings, a strong sense of self-control which would forever prevent them from any deviation, corruption or depravity. Conscientiousness would induce them to fulfil their duties and exercise their functions, honestly and to the utmost of their abilities. There is no sure guarantee that outside control can always be present, but self-control and conscientiousness will be a part of the individual at all times. Self-control, as Islam conceives of it, should be born out of a fear of Allāh and of a conviction that the Creator of the universe is forever watchful over humans and human acts.

Strategic Leadership: the Islamic Approach

Ever since Allāh created mankind and made out of it different nations and societies, leadership has been a basic requirement for and an important element in the organisation and lives of nations and societies. Leadership, an important component of the life and survival of any state, is, however, subject to laws and principles.

Islam requires that each Muslim group, society or nation, regardless of size, should elect a leadership, so as to preserve its unity, work towards a common aim, and avoid fragmentation and divisions. The aim of electing or appointing a leadership is also to ensure justice for all members of a group, society or nation. The Prophet,

MPBUH, declares in this connection that 'any three people in any given place should elect one of them as their leader."[6]

Leadership Qualities: The Islamic Approach

Islam's approach to the issue of appointing leaders is grounded in two basic principles: strength and honesty. These two fundamental attributes complement the other qualities required by Islam in all those who chose to embrace it, namely;

a. righteousness (taqwā);

b. justice (ʿadālah);

c. good example (qudwah ḥasanah);

d. kindness (in its various forms) (rifq);

e. commitment to the principles of shūrā (consultation);

1. Political or military leadership in Islam is open to those who are strong in faith and will and honest in intent and purpose. A weak or treacherous person is therefore not allowed to assume leadership. Strength in war is measured by bravery, experience in the techniques of war, and mastery of military deception (cf. the Prophet's, MPBUH, famous dictum: 'war is the art of trickery')[7]. Power is also measured by the ability to fight hard and expertise in military equipment, in line with the Qur'ānic injunction: 'Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the enemies of Allāh and your enemies.' (8: 60)

A leader's capacity and potency in governing is judged in terms of understanding of Islamic law, ways of litigation, and justice, as commanded by Islamic law, and in line with God's injunction: 'Allāh commands justice, the doing of good.' (16: 90)

Similarly, a leader's strength and capacity for governing is gauged in terms of his ability to enforce the law and to execute rulings and sentences against both the

strong and the weak. Honesty implies fulfilling one's duties to the best of one's abilities, fearing Allāh, and submitting to His laws. The Islamic scriptures command in this respect: "Therefore fear not men, but fear Me, and Sell not My Signs for a miserable price. If any do fail to judge by what Allāh hath revealed, they are unbelievers." (5: 44)

Islam's insistence on the necessity of electing a strong, capable, and even-handed leader at the head of an Islamic state, community or group is also clear from the Prophet's, MPBUH, famous reaction to the great companion Abū Dharr's request to be appointed a ruler: "you are weak, and governing is a trust, and those who breach the trust will feel ashamed on the Day of Judgement."[8]

A person appointed to lead a group of Muslims is assumed to hold a trust. Abuse of leadership therefore constitutes a betrayal of the trust of Allāh and of all Muslims. The Qur'ān instructs Muslims in this regard: "O ye that believe! Betray not the trust of Allāh and the Apostle, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you." (8: 27) Similarly, the Prophet , MPBUH, cautions his followers that "whoever has authority over Muslims and appoints someone over them who is not the best man that he can find betrays God, His apostle and all Muslims." [9]

2. Righteousness is a most essential criterion for electing a leader. The Islamic scriptures declare: 'O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you." (49: 13)

If a Muslim's leadership is based on and grounded in righteousness, Allāh will aid his cause and grant him victory in any war that he wages in the name of justice. The Qur'ān promises the faithful that "Allāh will certainly aid those who aid his cause, fo verily God is full of strength, exalted in Might. Those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: with Allāh rests the end of affairs." (22: 40-41)

Righteousness is, then, the surest means of attaining success and securing the guidance and aid of God in one's undertakings. The Islamic scriptures remind Muslims that only the righteous "are guided by their Lord, and it is these who will prosper." (2: 2) Besides, righteousness can be a source of good judgement and insight. The Prophet , MPBUH, cautions in this regard: "Beware of the insight of the believer for he sees through the light of Allāh."[10]

3. Justice

The kind of justice required by Islam in a leader is comprehensive and inclusive, the kind of justice that includes all and excludes none. Justice, from this perspective, is the right of every man, regardless of his faith, race, or identity. Islam's notion of justice thus corresponds to what has come to be accepted in modern times as a humane notion of justice, whereby all people of all orientations, views or ideologies, regardless of their faith, race, or ethnicity, should be treated justly and equally. This notion of justice, never known before Islam, has remained at the heart of Muslim rule and strength. Allāh instructs in this regard: "And when ye judge between man and man, that you judge with justice. Verily how excellent is the teaching which he giveth." (4: 58)

Allāh commands both the ruler and his subjects to be committed to justice, even when such commitment entails personal harm and hardship and/or harm and hardship to their nearest and dearest. Allāh instructs the believers in this regard: "O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses for God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, whether it be rich or poor, for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts of your hearts, lest ye swerve." (4: 135) The Prophet, MPBUH, comments in the same regard: "If Fāṭimah, daughter of Muḥammad, were to steal something, Muḥammad would cut off her hand."[11]

It is reported that while ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the second Caliph, was distributing the spoils of war among the soldiers returning from the battlefield, the man who had killed his brother, Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who had since converted to Islam

and joined the Muslim army, turned up to claim his share. Noticing him, the Caliph turned his face away in anger, and when the man asked: 'Do you hate me, `Umar?', the Caliph replied: 'Yes, I do, because you killed my brother. I hate as much as the earth hates blood." To the man's next question, "Will you, then, deny my rights?", the Caliph replied: "No, for Allāh said, 'Let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety.' (5: 8)" and added: "I care nothing about your love or hatred. That is something only women care about."[12]

4. Good Example

A leader should aspire towards setting a good example for his followers and subordinates through a firm and unswerving commitment to justice, integrity, uprightness and rectitude. The Prophet, MPBUH, the first commander of an Islamic army, was a paragon of justice, equity and virtue, and the Muslim commanders who succeeded him sought to imitate his example. Allāh reminds the Muslims in this respect: "Ye have indeed in the Apostle of God a beautiful pattern for anyone whose hope is in God and the Final Day." (33: 21)

Khālid b. al-Walīd, the commander of the Islamic army at the battle of Yarmūk, was a shining example of the honesty, uprightness and justice required of a Muslim leader. The story of his meeting with one of the Byzantine leaders is often cited to illustrate and highlight these much needed qualities of a Muslim leader.

Leaders of the Byzantines were so impressed by his military genius that one of them, Jarjah, asked Khālid to come out and meet him during a temporary cessation of hostilities in the battle of Yarmūk. On meeting, the Byzantine leader asked Khālid,"O Khālid, tell me the truth, for a free man does not know how to tell lies. Did God hand the Prophet , MPBUH, a sword from heaven and the Prophet, MPBUH, give it to you so that you would defeat anyone against whom you might fight?." When Khālid replied that that was not the case, the Byzantine leader asked, "why are you called the Sword of Allāh, then?" and Khālid's reply was: "God sent us an Apostle. Some of us

49

believed in him and others did not. At first, I did not believe in him, but God led me to the right path and I embraced Islam. The Prophet, MPBUH, prayed to God and said to me: 'You are one of the swords of God.' That is how I came to be called "the Sword of God." The Byzantine leader then asked: "And what do you call men to?" and Khālid answered: "We call them to the monotheism of Islam." To the Byzantine leader's next question, "If someone entered Islam today, would he get the same reward as you?," Khālid's response was: "Yes, the same and even more." And to the Byzantine leader's question, "How could it be so?," Khālid's reply was: "We lived with the Apostle of God and we saw his miracles and wonders. Whoever saw what we saw and heard what we heard would have no difficulty converting to Islam. But if you, who did not see him and did not hear him, believed in him, your reward would be greater, provided your intentions were pure." On hearing this, the Byzantine leader headed towards the Muslims' camp and, on reaching it, stood next to Khālid and cried out in a loud voice: "O Khālid!, teach me Islam." [13]

This Byzantine leader was not fascinated by Islam, since he knew nothing about it, nor was he convinced of the teachings of this faith since no one, prior to his meeting with Khālid, had told him about them. Rather, he was impressed by Khālid's personality, equity, fairness, and the good example he set for his soldiers and subordinates.

Owing to the virtue and equity shown on the part of the Muslim leader, bloodshed was averted and not only the Byzantine leader, but also his soldiers embraced Islam and took it upon themselves to call men to monotheism and defend the Islamic faith. The Islamic scriptures remind the believers in this regard: "When comes the help of God and victory, and thou dost see the people enter God's religion in crowds, celebrate the praises of thy Lord and pray for his forgiveness: for He is Oft-Returning." (110: 123)

5. Consultation (Shūrā)

The principle of consultation is considered by Islam as an essential element and even the very basis of a good and just leadership. Consultation is the best ground for equipping a leader with practical training in the art of sharing of responsibility and accountability. Through it, wrong is set right, and a leader can learn to share power rather than wield it blindly. Consultation is meant to curb the sense of detachment, superiority and misuse of power and provide the leader with a sense of perspective about his role and importance.

Trappings of high office may induce a sense of detachment and superiority, and consultation is therefore a means of stopping a leader from being driven, either by a sense of superiority or self-importance, into undesirable acts or ill-informed decisions. Good leadership is measured in terms of its accountability and the close associations it maintains with those it serves. God commands in this regard: "So pass over their faults and ask for God's forgiveness for them and consult them in affairs. Then when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in God." (3: 159)

A commitment to the principle of consultation by a leadership is a measure of its obedience to God's command whereby consultation is ranked equal to the pillars of Islam. Allāh, be He raised a above, said, "Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish regular prayer; who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation." (al-Shūra: 38) The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "Those who seek God's guidance and those who consult others never regret."[14] The good Companion, Abū Hurayrah, said, "The Prophet, MPBUH, (God's blessing and peace be upon him) was unequalled in the art of consultation."

When the Prophet, MPBUH, learned of the strength and the great number of soldiers from the tribe of Quraysh facing him in the battle of Badr, he said to his soldiers, "O people, give us advice." al-Miqdād b. ʿAmr, a Muslim leader, responded, "O Prophet of God, do as God has commanded, for we will be with you and support you. We will not say as the people of Israel said to Moses, 'Go thou and thy Lord,

51

and fight ye two, while we sit here and watch.' (5: 24) But we shall say, 'Go thou and thy Lord, and fight ye two' we will fight with you."

Sa`d b. Mu`ādh, leader of the Khazraj, asked, "O Prophet of God, do you want our advice?" The Prophet, MPBUH, replied, "Yes", and Sa`d said, "We have believed in you and followed you. Do as God has commanded. I swear by Allāh who truly sent you that every one of us will follow you." Then the Prophet, MPBUH, said, "Go, and may the blessing of God support you. I can see the death of our enemies."[15]

When the Islamic army had taken its positions, ready to face its enemies in the battle of Badr, al-Ḥabbāb b. al-Mundhir, one of the Prophet's companions, said to the Prophet, "O Prophet of God, has it been decided to stay in this place, or can we volunteer our opinions?," adding, "This is not the right place. We should move further down so that we shall be in a position to control the water." To this, the Prophet, MPBUH, replied, that is good opinion, indeed." [16] The advice volunteered by al-Ḥabbāb proved a key factor in the great and decisive victory attained by the Islamic army in the battle of Badr. Thus, seeing that such a victory would not have been possible if such advice had been dismissed or unheeded, consultation is a most important quality of a successful leadership.

6. Kind Treatment of Soldiers:

At the heart of leadership in Islamic Strategy was always a concern for the well-being of soldiers. The Islamic military leadership sought to be kind-hearted, patient, understanding, and tolerant of ignorance, shortcomings and weaknesses, in conformity with Allāh's address to the Prophet, "Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over their faults and ask for God's forgiveness for them and consult them." (3: 159)

In view of this, what do politicians and military leaders in our own times think about the qualities required in a successful leadership?

Leadership Qualities in Early Islam

The qualities of a good and efficient leadership are as follows:

1. Quick and correct decisions:

The ability to make a quick and correct decision is one of the most essential qualities of a good leadership. Two main factors are crucial to the making of a quick and sound decision:

a) the mental capacity of the leader.

b) obtaining and carefully studying information about the enemy, the physical geography of the battlefield, etc..

Many Islamic military leaders have shown an enviable talent for making quick and correct decisions. Khālid b. al-Walīd's decisions to move his army quickly from `Ayn al-Tamr to Dūmat al-Jandal, from Iraq to Buṣrā, from Buṣrā to Ajnādayn and Tūdhar, near Damascus, are all good examples of the ability to make quick, decisive and correct decisions. The overwhelming victories that resulted from these moves are evidence that the ability to make prompt and correct decisions is a much needed quality in a military leader.[17]

2. Personal Courage:

The quality of personal courage was never better manifested than in the person of the Prophet (MPBUH). For instance, on hearing a very loud sound one night, the people of al- Madinah panicked, and some of them started hurrying towards what they thought was the source of the sound. The Prophet, on his horse, already coming back from the source of the sound after finding out what it was, met them half-way and to assured them with the words: "Do not panic."[19]

The Prophet, hearing the disturbing sound, went alone to find out what it was and what had caused it. He did not wait for anyone to accompany him, in spite of the dangers and the fact that the enemy often ambushed the Muslims. `Alī b. Abī Ṭālib,

commenting on the Prophet's bravery and his famed ability to act quickly, declared: "When things went badly and dangers enveloped us from all sides, the Prophet, MPBUH, was always there. He was the nearest one to the enemy."[18]

The leaders who graduated from the school of Islamic leadership were in many ways similar to their first leader, the Prophet, MPBUH,, in being, among other things, strong-hearted and of a powerful and solid faith. For instance, the leader Bisr b. Abī Arta`ah showed so much bravery and intrepidity during the invasion of Egypt that the Caliph `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to `Amr b. al-`Āṣ in Egypt; "Give 200 dinars to those who witnessed the pledge of Ridwān, to Khārijah b. Hudhāfah for his hospitality and to Bisr. Abī Arṭ'ah for his courage." [20]

3. A strong and firm will:

Leaders of Islamic armies were reputed for, among other things, their strong and firm will. `Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, [21] who was head of the Islamic state for 20 years, after holding different military and civilian positions, typified many of the much applauded qualities of Muslim leaders. Some of the qualities for which he was renowned were the following:

a) He was never a dictator; he consulted his men in all matters before he carried out any military action.

b) His talent in choosing suitable men for suitable jobs was almost unparalleled. His entourage consisted always of skilled leaders and practised councillors who advised him on matters of state and helped him execute his official tasks and duties most efficiently and effectively.

c) He exerted himself for peace prior to entering into any war and, even when a war was in progress, never spared any efforts to resolve a conflict through peaceful negotiation, in his constant efforts to avoid the horrors of war, especially if this war involved other Arabs and Muslims.

d) He manoeuvred constantly to persuade his enemies to switch sides, promising them good positions and financial rewards.

e) He had the utmost confidence and trust in his men.

Muslims, both men and women, gathered around the Prophet, MPBUH, to defend him. Nasībah al-Khazrajiyya, a woman whose duty was to procure water for soldiers, took a sword and started fighting the enemy until she was hurt and fell unconscious. When she came around, even though both her husband and her two sons were taking part in the fighting, the first thing she did was ask, "How is the Prophet?".

Sa`d b. al-Rabī`, one of the Muslim warriors in the battle of Uḥud, was badly wounded in the fighting and was lying almost dead from his injuries. His condition did not, however, distract him from showing concern for his leader, and when he saw a man sent by the Prophet, MPBUH, in the aftermath of the battle to find out if he were among the living or the dead he asked: "Go, give the Prophet my best regards, and tell him that we are for ever grateful to him, and may God reward him. Ask your people to defend the Prophet for as long as they are alive".

Bisr b. Abī Arṭa`ah's[22] mission to a far-away Byzantine land coincided with the Greater Bayram. His soldiers looked for sacrifices but found nothing. Starting his sermon to his soldiers by giving thanks to and praising Allāh, he declared, "O people, we have looked for sacrifices but we have found none." As he was in possession of nothing but a camel, he announced to his soldiers, "We shall sacrifice this for you and for me, for a leader is very much like a father." Then he slaughtered the camel and pleaded with Allāh, "O God, please accept this from me and from them."

Such self-abnegation, equity, and virtue cannot but earn a leader the confidence, trust, respect and love of his soldiers.

4. Personality

According to psychologists, those who seek to benefit the largest possible part of human society are generally individuals who possess superior and perfectly integrated personalities. In his Madkhal ilā al-ʿaqīdah wa al-qiyādah, Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥfūẓ wrote: "the degree of personality integration is directly proportional to the part of society the individual endeavours to benefit. One who endeavours to please/benefit only himself has a less integrated personality owing to the conflict between his personal and social desires. Next to this is someone who tries to benefit his family and children, and then someone who tries to benefit his relatives and friends, but the best one is he who tries to benefit the whole of society."

Psychologists claim that it is seldom, if ever, that one finds an individual concerned with nothing but the benefit of the whole of mankind. Contrary to this claim, and in line with Allāh's commands, the Prophet, MPBUH, never conceived of himself as anything but a servant and a messenger to the totality of mankind, insisting, "I was sent to all people" and "You are not true believers until you wish for others that which you wish for yourself."[23] The Prophet's altruism earned him the undying devotion of his Companions and followers. ʿUrwah b. Masʿūd al-Thaqafī announced to his people, the Quraysh, on returning from one of his negotiations with the Prophet, "I have never met anyone like Muḥammad. His followers love him dearly and will never give him up." This encomium, coming from an enemy of Islam and the Muslims, captures the essence of the Prophet's relationship to his followers and the bond that bound them together.

ʿAbdullāh b. Saʿd b. Abī al-Sarḥ, one of the most notable Islamic leaders, was a conqueror and a ruler endowed with a strong personality; he was never flattered by people's praise or irked by their criticism. His personality helped him to remain a wise leader, always willing to consult and listen to others both before and during battles. He was never too arrogant to listen to and heed the right opinion and to act upon it.[24]

`Abdullāh b. Sa`d b. Abī al-Sarḥ took part in the conquest of Syria and Egypt, later becoming ruler of Egypt. It took him two years to conquer Africa, a year to conquer Cyprus, a year to subdue Nubia, and another year to resume the conquest of Africa. He also spent a year in Dhāt al-Ṣawārī.[25]

He always insisted on leading his men in person, never found his share of the burdens of war a daunting task, and never felt too insecure to listen to other people's advice, opinions and suggestions. He spent most of his life away from his family, conquering new territories and spreading the Islamic faith. His retention of an unmatched sense of humility, when a military leader and a ruler, and his maintaining of close associations with his advisers and his people strengthened his ability to wield power effectively and efficiently.

5. Physical fitness:

Physical strength, whether be it of soldiers or their leaders and commanders, is as crucial to war as the number of soldiers on the battlefield and the type of weapons used by a given side in a conflict. It has a great effect on both the morale of the soldiers and their leadership and their mental alertness. Only a physically fit and mentally prepared warrior can hope to survive the tough and unremitting conditions of war.

Islam urged Muslim warriors and all believers to learn swimming and riding. Beside other kinds of sporting events, Islamic strategy organised (horse-)racing, wrestling and weightlifting competitions with a view to improving the physical fitness of the Muslim soldiers, in line with the Prophet's prescription, "God prefers a strong believer to a weak one."

The Prophet, MPBUH, was a physically fit person who regularly wrestled against strong men and beat them. It is reported that he once met a strongly built man from Quraysh and asked him to embrace Islam. When the man declared, "If I knew that you were right, I would follow you." The Prophet, MPBUH, challenged him, "Let us then fight and if I beat you, you will know I am right." They fought and the

Prophet, MPBUH, beat him twice.[26]

These are the most important qualities needed in leaders in wars. Some of these qualities are instinctive while others are acquired through discipline, training and practical experience on the battlefield.

Notes:

1. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 3: 238.

2. Maḥfūẓ, <u>al-Madkhal ilā al-`Aqīdah wa al-Istrātijiyyah al-`Askariyyah al-Islāmiyyah</u>, p. 290.

3. IBID, p. 291

4. This Ḥadith is cited by Tirmidhī in <u>al-Birr</u>, p. 18 and by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in <u>al-Masnad</u> 2: 227, p. 360.

5. This is in fact part of a Ḥadīth in which the Prophet (MPBUH) declares: "You all belong to Adam and Adam was created from dust... People should refrain from boasting about their fathers or they run the risk of being forsaken by Allāh.'

   Cited by Tirmidhī in <u>al-Manāqib</u>: 73.

6. Narrated by Abū Sa`īd al-Khudrī and cited by Abū Dāwūd in <u>al-Jihād</u>, p. 2608.

7. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Jihād</u>: 157; and by Muslim in <u>al-Jihād</u>: 1740.

8. This Ḥadīth is cited by Muslim in <u>al- Imārah</u>: 1825.

9. Cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Jumu`ah</u>: 29 and by Muslim in <u>al-Imārah</u>: 19.

10. This Ḥadīth ıs cited by al-Tirmidhī, 4: 382.

11. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Ḥudūd</u>: 1430.

12. Al-Ṭammūwī, <u>al-Idārah fī `Ahd `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb</u>, p. 213.

13. `Umayrah, <u>Hādha Huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, pp. 28-29.

14. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Ṭabarānī in <u>al-Mu`jam al-Ṣaghīr</u>, 1: 251.

15. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 2: 615.

16. IBID., p.260.

17. Suwayd, <u>Ma`ārik Khālid b. al-Walīd</u>, p 317.

18. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>.

19. IBID., 2: 327.

20. Bisr b. Abī Arṭa`ah, one of the Muslim leaders, died in Damascus in 86 A.H.

   See al-`Asqlānī, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah</u> 1: 152.

21. `Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, the Umayyad caliph, was born in 26 A.H. and died

   in 86 A.H.

22. Ibn `Asākir, <u>al-Tahdhīb</u>, 3: 222.

23. Saḥiḥ Muslim Al Iman, 71

24. Al-`Asqlānī, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah</u> 4: 94-96

25. IBID

26. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 1: 391.

PART TWO

CHAPTER ONE

INTELLIGENCE AND RECONNAISSANCE IN ISLAMIC MILITARY STRATEGY

INTELLIGENCE AND RECONNAISSANCE IN ISLAMIC MILITARY STRATEGY

Intelligence and its Role in Military Strategy

Intelligence and reconnaissance are critical to all military operations and constitute two of the most vital resources for preparing for war. The analysis of intelligence and reconnaissance determines the enemy's plans, intentions, and capabilities before these are actualised, as well as the impact of the weather and terrain on military operations. Intelligence and reconnaissance resources and means are generally accepted as combat multipliers: in addition to supporting the planning and execution of all operations, they augment the efficacy of combat operations and improve the decision-making process.

Intelligence and reconnaissance, in general, provide the military leadership with information about the weather, terrain, enemy plans, troop positions, planned routes for troop movements and other information vital for devising and carrying out a combat strategy. They also serve to provide early warning and security to an army and deny the enemy the possibility and ability to find out about one's plans, detect one's attack and attack one's defensive positions. Intelligence and reconnaissance missions are also conducted to obtain information concerning the identification of possible breach locations, enemy avenues of approach, and the location and nature of both natural and man-made terrain routes and obstacles.

All military commanders accept that the outcome of wars and battles, and, by implication, the future of nations and peoples, depends heavily on the accuracy of the information a nation's military obtains through its intelligence and reconnaissance resources and means, as well as the success and speed with which this information is interpreted and presented to those at the end of the chain of responsibility.

History provides us with many examples of how a state's intelligence information on an enemy state can be exploited to launch a successful surprise attack in the event of a war. It is, for instance, widely accepted that Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor during the Second World War, which resulted in the destruction of a great part of the American

naval fleet, was due largely to the defective intelligence of the United States and, more specifically, to the inability of the Americans to secure information bearing on Japan's intentions and war plans. The report of the Hoover Committee, which was formed by the American government in 1955 to examine and evaluate American intelligence services, attributed the Pearl Harbour debacle to the lack of a powerful intelligence machinery and the consequent inability to anticipate Japan's surprise attack:

The skilled military leadership devises its battle strategies and mobilizes the troops only after it has conducted a careful study of the intelligence and reconnaissance information made available to it. The skilled commander must seek to have adequate and accurate information about his enemy, the nature of the terrain on which the next battle is to be fought, the weather conditions and the tactical plans which may control the fighting potentials. War experts insist that, besides these considerations, a military commander must also have accurate and complete information about the numbers of the striking force of the enemy, his weaponry, his tactics in combat, his allies, and the nature of the terrain on which the enemy is to be faced.

The Muslims showed remarkable knowledge of the many terrains on which they had to fight their battles and were extremely well informed about the names and locations of Arab and non-Arab tribes as well as the topography of the countries which were under their rule.

Means of reconnaissance in the Islamic Army

As regards intelligence and the gathering of information, the Muslims divided information into two categories:

First, information on the Arab nation, its people and land, and the nature of potential enemies.

Second, mobilization information, which was prepared and organised prior to and during the march of the army, and prior to and in the aftermath of battle.[1]

64

Aims of Intelligence in Islamic Strategy

First, it is unarguably true that intelligence is one of the vital necessities in time of peace as well as during wartime. Possessing information about an enemy helps an army's fighting troops to enter battle with confident steps and steady hearts. Meeting an enemy without sufficient information about his military plans, troops and weaponry not only greatly reduces an army's fighting capacity but, perhaps more importantly, makes it liable to surprise and places it in danger of great losses or even total destruction.

Second, intelligence is one of the factors of combat empowerment; information about the enemy makes an army advance to battle in total knowledge of the movements, fighting potential of its enemy and thus completely at guard against any deception or surprise.

Third, intelligence is the basis and foundation of garrisoning, which Islam enjoins upon its followers:

O ye who believe !

Persevere in patience

And constancy; vie

In such perseverance;

Stay in garrisons;

And fear God; That ye may prosper.

(3: 200)

'To garrison' here means to mass in and hold positions during a war or to hold and defend those positions which are liable to enemy attack. 'Garrisoning' also means being permanently watchful, constantly vigilant and in total readiness to oppose and repel

65

aggression. None of this is possible without some knowledge of what is taking place on the enemy side, including where his troops are stationed, how numerous his troops are, what venues of attack he is contemplating, etc..

Fourth, intelligence provides one of the means of caution and vigilance against surprise enemy attacks or offensives. God, be He raised for above, instructs the faithful:

O ye who believe !

Take your precautions.

(4: 71)

and,

Obey God and obey the Apostle,

And beware (of evil).

(5: 92)

Fifth, intelligence is a means of protection against harm and destruction; it is concerned with both collecting information about the enemy and denying him information about friendly forces. Thus, it achieves protection of the nation and the army from defeat or liability to destruction or annihilation. Allāh orders the believers to avoid negligence and to beware of enemies:

And make not your own hands

contribute to (your) destruction

(2: 195)

The Holy Qur'ān also warns of the consequences of carelessness and the harm to which the striking force of the Muslims may come as a result of its negligence:

The unbelievers wish, If you were negligent

Of your armies and your baggage,

To assault you in a single rush.

(4: 102)

Prerequisite qualities of intelligence agents

The Prophet (MPBUH), the first commander of a Muslim army, outlined accurate ground rules for those who are chosen to fulfil the difficult task of espionage. One general rule which he always reminded them of was: one should never embark on any action that might draw the attention of the enemy to them. Intelligence men were duly rewarded for securing important information about enemy parties, even when this information was not of immediate benefit to the war endeavours of the Muslims, for accuracy and truthfulness were two of the most important commitments of those concerned with intelligence.

Thus, the most important qualities which practitioners of reconnaissance and intelligence should have are:

1- Intelligence: quickness and incisiveness of perception and understanding. A man grows more perceptive as he grows older and wiser, if only owing to the cumulative effects of the experiences he has in the process.

2- Understanding: understanding is a main characteristic of man; he draws on it to grasp the meaning and implications of what is good. God, be He raised far above, said:

To Solomon We inspired

The (right) understanding

Of the matter.

(21: 79)

That is, either God blessed Solomon with the power of understanding matters or He inspired in him, from among all other people, such understanding.

3- The ability to discern and take the right decision.

4- Flexibility and adaptability; the ability to adapt to different conditions and cope with different situations.

5- Self-assurance, self-possession, and firmness in the face of danger or in critical situations as well as a natural insusceptibility to impetuosity and recklessness. God, be He raised far above, says:

O ye who believe !

When you meet a force,

Be firm, and call God

In remembrance much (and often);

That ye may prosper.

(8: 45)

Firmness in war is generally manifested as bravery and courage in the face of the enemy's power.

6- Secrecy: this is perhaps the most important principle of war. The Muslims introduced and developed the strategy of "secrecy" some fourteen centuries before the Germans discovered and perfected it, during the Second World War.[2]

Islamic leadership chose and used a group of intelligence agents to secure vital information about actual and potential enemies of the Islamic state. What recommended this group of men for the task of intelligence and espionage was their possession of most of the above qualities. One of these men was Hudhayfah b. al-Yamān al-`Absī, who was chosen by the Prophet, MPBUH, from among all others to spy for the Muslims among

68

the hypocrites of Madinah. His selection owed a lot to an exemplary ability to preserve secrecy, an ever-present intuition and a self-possession that was never perturbed even in the most difficult and demanding situations.

Hudhayfah said that the Prophet, MPBUH, ordered him to infiltrate the ranks of the enemy at the time of the battle of al-Khandaq with a view to finding out what was going on. He said "So, I went in among the people, while the winds and God's forces were destroying them and turning their pots, fires and buildings upside-down. Then, Abū Sufyān, commander of the polytheist army, stood and announced 'O people of Quraysh, let each one of you check on the identity of his neighbour !" So, I put my hand on the person to my right and asked "Who are you?" and the man replied "Mu`āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān". Then I put my hand on the person to my left and asked "Who are you?" and the man replied `Amr b. al-`Āṣ.[3]"

This incident illustrates the quickness of intuition, the self-assurance, and the speed of reaction in the most critical situations which characterised many of the Muslims entrusted with the task of intelligence during the time of the Prophet, MPBUH, and which enabled them to operate unnoticed in the midst of the enemy. If Hudhayfah had not been quick to ask his neighbours about their identity, they would have asked him about his and would probably have found out who he was and foiled his mission and the Muslims objectives and plans.

Major General Muḥammed Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥfūẓ says:

There is much evidence that people selected to work in intelligence by the Prophet, MPBUH, had the qualities prerequisite for intelligence activities:[4]

First, there was not one single incident in the history of the early Islamic wars in which a Muslim Intelligence man was exposed and found out.

Second, the enemy's plans of aggression reached the Prophet, MPBUH, in time, which enabled him to take the necessary preventive measures and precautions.

Third, as commander of the Islamic army, the Prophet, MPBUH, did not make a plan for a conquest or a march without securing and studying the information needed for a successful attack plan, including information about the nature of the terrain, the weather, etc.

Intelligence and the Confrontation of Danger

Those who work for intelligence services know only too well how risky and dangerous conducting intelligence missions is and are well aware of the fact that they may often face situations which may cause their death or earn them long prison terms. Some of these people have, however, performed extraordinary feats in eluding the enemy' s grasp. As an example of this, we may mention the deeds of the Muslim commander, `Amr b. al-`Āṣ, prior to conquering Palestine. `Amr was so keen on gathering information about the enemy that he volunteered to infiltrate the enemy's positions, making himself liable to capture or death. He managed to enter the enemy's fortress under the guise of an Arab soldier carrying a message to the commander of the Byzantines. He was able to study the fortress and acquaint himself with its secrets, its passages and its weaknesses. Once back among the Muslims, he made a plan to occupy the fortress using the information which he was able to acquire during his espionage mission. When the commander realised that the person who had stood in front of him just a while before was not an ordinary soldier but the leader of the invading army, he protested: "The man tricked me. He is the most intelligent of all men."[5]

No doubt, `Amr b. al-`Āṣ's visit to Egypt before converting to Islam served him well as a commander of the Islamic army in that it familiarised him with the conditions of the country, its people and its roads. The information which he gathered during this visit proved extremely valuable when he came back to Egypt at the head of a conquering Islamic Army. Historians are agreed that `Amr's army entered Egypt by the same road along which he and his companion, al-Shammās, travelled on his visit to Egypt.[6]

`Amr b. al-`Āṣ's bravery and ingenuity were matched by those of another Muslim leader, al-Muthannā b. Ḥārithah al-Shaybānī, commander of the Muslim army sent to conquer Iraq. Prior to conquering Iraq, he led a division of cavalry on reconnaissance expeditions through the country in order to gather vital information and note the points of vulnerability that might be exploited in achieving a speedy conquest and that could facilitate the defeat of the enemy army. Through these expeditions he was able to find out about points of weakness, realize the bad social conditions inside Iraq and gather accurate information about the continuous and strong conflicts between the kings of Ḥīrah over sovereignty and leadership. His reconnaissance missions were to prove one of the most important factors contributing to his victory.[7]

Thus, the Muslim military commanders were among the first to establish a major principle and vital element of war or battle preparation, namely, the gathering and studying of intelligence information. The Muslims, in addition, never overlooked one important possibility, that the enemy about whom they gathered information might have take similar measures and precautions by collecting information about the Muslim Army and its preparations for war. Secrecy was therefore enforced on all the Muslim war efforts, including espionage and intelligence operations. The Prophet's saying: "Support your deeds with secrecy"[8] became a strictly followed motto for the Muslims in everything they did.

The Prophet, MPBUH, drew attention to the necessity of maintaining secrecy while gathering information and preparing for war so that the enemy might not be provided with the opportunity to collect any information about the Muslim Army which he could use to seize the initiative or gain advantage.

If collecting information is a double-edged weapon, it should be noted that the Muslims blunted one of its edges by adopting secrecy in all their military preparations and endeavours. For instance, at the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet, MPBUH, pleaded with Allāh to prevent news of the Muslims' secret march from reaching Quraysh: "O Lord, keep the spies and news away from Quraish."[9] As part of the general effort to keep Quraysh in the dark about the Muslim plans, he also ordered his followers to keep watch

on the roads leading to Mekkah and to arrest any suspected person heading there. Ordering `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb to supervise the watch, he advised him, 'Don't let anyone pass you without turning him back." It was the enforcement of such measures that foiled Ḥātib b. Balta`ah's attempt to report the plans of the Prophet, MPBUH, and the movements of the Muslim army to Quraysh. Ḥātib sent a letter, saying that "The Prophet, MPBUH, called on the people to get ready for war and I don't think he means to attack anyone but you," by a woman named Sārah whom he hired for this purpose, asking her to hide it and "not pass by the road as it is watched." Finding out about this attempt to smuggle information out of Madinah, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent `Ali, al-Zubayr and al-Miqdād after the woman, and they were able to catch her and retrieve the letter, which she hid in her hair.[10]

The Muslim commanders adopted the same measures of secrecy followed and recommended by the first commander of an Islamic army, the Prophet. Ibn Hishām reports that `Amr b. al-`Āṣ's soldiers at the victory of Dhāt al-Salāsil asked him to let them make a fire to protect themselves against the cold, but he turned down their request. `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, a mere soldier then, protested against `Amr's refusal and went to consult with Abū Bakr who advised, "Leave him. God's Prophet, MPBUH, has not sent him as commander but for his knowledge of war." When some other Muslim soldiers later objected to `Amr's order not to make fires, he was no less uncompromising: "If anyone of you makes a fire, I will throw him into it!" When the Muslims complained to the Prophet, MPBUH, about his refusal to allow them make fires during the night, `Amr justified his orders thus: "I was afraid that the light might rise high enough to reveal the positions of the Muslims to their enemies. Taking into consideration the small number of Muslims, the enemies might end up by destroying them."[11]

One of the most important means of preventing the enemy from gathering information about the Islamic army was the tactic of concealing movements of the Muslim forces at night. This tactic robbed the enemy of the opportunity to collect information about the Islamic forces and use it to effect the defeat of the Muslims.

Intelligence Operations and the Learning of the Enemy's Language

One of the vital necessities for intelligence operations and the ability to carry out psychological warfare among the enemy's forces and obtain vital information from them is the knowledge of their language and the mastery of both its spoken and written forms. The Prophet, MPBUH, laid much emphasis on this point. On the Prophet's order to him to learn the language of the Jews, Zayd b. Thābit said: 'God's Apostle (MPBUH) ordered me to learn to correspond with the Jews in Aramaic for him and said to me: "By God. I cannot rely on corresponding with Jews [in Arabic]." Zayd added, "By God, no more than half a month had passed before I had learned and mastered it. So, I was able to write to them for him and read their letters to him." [12]

Thus, those entrusted with the task of intelligence in Muslim armies had to master the languages of their enemies and were able to address them using such languages. Equipped with the language, they were able to hide among them and seek information about them, exemplifying thereby the truthfulness of the old Arab saying that "He who learns the language of a people is safe from their cunning."

Intelligence and the Use of Cipher

In the field of intelligence, the language of messages, whether spoken or written, is transformed into a coded language in order to exclude all but their senders and addressees from comprehending their content. This is what is understood in our modern times by "encyphered language."

The use of cypher is vital for concealing the contents of messages from the enemy. It is generally well-established that each of the fighting combattant uses a special cypher for its purposes and, meanwhile, attempts to decode the cypher used by the other party, that is, discover the secret code at the basis of the cypher. It is owing to the constant efforts of one party to break the code of another party's cypher that armies in modem times do not employ one form of cypher for an extended period of time. They

change it from time to time in order to deprive their enemies of the chance to decode it. Armies might even resort to changing their cypher several times a day.

The Prophet, MPBUH, relied much on the efficiency of this technique whose essence is completely evident from the following incident:

In the campaign of al-Khandaq, the Prophet, MPBUH, knew that the Jews of Banu Qurayzah had broken a promise they gave to the Muslims after al Madinah was surrounded by ten thousand fighters from Quraysh and other allied tribes. The situation of the besieged Muslims was very critical, for their forces did not exceed three thousand. After the Jews of Banu Qurayzah had broken the pledge they gave to the Muslims, danger enveloped the Muslims from both inside and outside of Madinah. With the Muslims under siege, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent Sa`d b Mu`adh, Sa`d b `Ubādah, `Abdullāh b. Rawāhah and Khawāt b. Jubayr to Banu Qurayzah to find out if news of their breaking of the pledge between them the Muslims were true. He ordered his envoys to say, on return from their visit to Banu Qurayzah, something that he alone might understand and, if the news of Banu Qurayzah's breaking of the pledge were to be true, not to reveal that information to anyone.[13]

The Prophet's insistence on using this technique of code was motivated by his fear that news of Banu Qurayzah's breaking of the pledge between them and the Muslims might dampen the spirits of his Muslim people and inspire fear in them. He was determined not to inform them until they had finnished preparing the defensive trench they were in the process of digging and had completed all other military preparations. If the Prophet, MPBUH, had permitted these unfortunate tidings to circulate among the Muslims prior to their making all the required preparations for the battle, confusion and fear would have taken its toll on them and ultimately broken their spirits.

We would like to introduce and discuss in the following section some examples of the Muslim intelligence operations effected both inside the Arabian peninsula and on lands as far distant as Persia or the borders of the Byzantine empire.

The Role of Intelligence in the Campaign of Badr

When the Prophet, MPBUH, knew about the caravan of Abū Sufyān, the commander of the Makkan army, which was carrying Quraysh's merchandise to Syria, he ordered a division of the Muslim Army to intercept it and seize it as spoils. When the troops approached a place called al-Safrā', they sent two soldiers, Baṣṣīs b. `Amr and `Adī b. al-Rab`ā' to the Well of Badr to reconnoitre the position and progress of the caravan. While engaged in reconnoitering the area, they heard one bondmaid asking another to repay her debt and the other replying that she would duly do so when the caravan arrived the following day or two days after, as she would work for them and receive a fee in return for her work. On hearing this, the two soldiers hurried to the Prophet, MPBUH, and informed him of the day of the caravan's arrival.

When the two armies approached Badr and started manoeuvering for control over water positions, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent `Ali b. Abi Ṭālib, Sa`d and al-Zubayr to Badr on a reconnaissance mission, and the Muslim envoys returned with two of Quraysh's slaves. The Prophet, MPBUH, asked the two slaves about the army positions and they replied: "Behind that hill" and when he asked them "How many are the people?", their answer was that they did not know. Then the Prophet, MPBUH, asked: "How many camels do they slaughter every day?' and they replied: "Ten on one day and nine on the next." The Prophet's deduction from their answer was that "The army of the enemy is between nine hundred and one thousand."

When the Prophet, MPBUH, asked them "Who are the leaders of Quraysh among them?", they mentioned a group of men noted for their strength and bravery among Quraysh. On hearing their reply the Prophet, MPBUH, announced: "Makkah has thrown at you the choicest parts of its livers [i.e., its most important people].[14]

The interrogation of the captives advanced the Muslims' war cause in that it helped them determine the size of Quraysh's troops. However, Quraysh was also able to carry out successful reconnaissance of the Muslim troops. Abū Sufyān Ibn Ḥarb's examination of the dung of the horses of the two Muslims who reconnoitred the positions

of the Badr troops and the inferences he made about the identity of these two Muslims were nothing short of brilliant. The success of the two fighting parties in acquiring information on each other prevented either side from gaining the advantage and taking the other by surprise. Thus, neither of the two sides benefited from their intelligence and reconnaissance operations and resources.

The Muslims benefited from the information they had obtained from the two Qurayshi slaves by hurrying to the water points of Badr, seizing them and keeping them at their backs. This deprived the fighting force of Quraysh of water on the day of the battle and caused their rapid defeat.

The striking force of the Muslims presented a constant threat to the most important trade route between Makkah and Syria. The caravans of Quraysh felt totally unsafe and vulnerable when using this route and, as a result, the trade of Quraysh, the source of its livelihood, was badly affected. The Muslim army also threatened Makkah with economic blockade through depriving the people of Quraysh of a safe passage from Makkah to Syria.

The Battle of Uhud

Before this campaign, al-`Abbās, the Prophet's uncle and one of the Muslim spies operating in Makkah, sent the Prophet, MPBUH, a message informing him of the time of Quraysh's mobilisation to fight him and of the number of its troops. The messenger carrying the message of al-`Abbās hurried to deliver it to the Prophet.

When `Ubay b. Ka`b read the message to the Prophet, MPBUH, he was ordered not to divulge its contents to anyone else. Then, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent Anas and Mu'nis, sons of Fudālah, to reconnoitre the progress of Quraysh's march. They knew that the fighting force of Quraysh was approaching Madinah. They told the Prophet, MPBUH, about this, and the Prophet, MPBUH, sent al-Ḥubāb b. al-Mundhir to find out more. One of the Muslim horsemen, Salmah b. Salāmah, went out and sighted Quraysh.[15]

The Role of Intelligence in the Battle of Uhud

Quraysh sought to extract revenge for its defeat at the battle of Badr and, thus, started mobilising an army and making military preparations to take on the Muslims. No sooner had al-'Abbās, uncle of the Prophet, MPBUH, become aware of Quraysh's intentions than he started collecting information about its military campaign, the number of soldiers it mobilised and the time it fixed for troop movements. al-'Abbās's information quickly reached the Prophet, MPBUH, in al Madinah via a messenger. Ordering his military staff to observe the utmost secrecy with regard to the contents of al-'Abbās's message, the Prophet, MPBUH, immediately ordered Muslim spies to reconnoitre the vanguard of the invading army. The work of Muslim intelligence proved of vital importance as it prevented the polytheists from taking al Madinah by surprise.[16]

The Role of Intelligence in the Campaign of al-Khandaq

The Prophet, MPBUH, learnt from his Muslim intelligence that Quraysh, with the support of its allies, the Jews, had mobilized some ten thousand soldiers in order to attack Madinah. On learning of Quraysh's mobilisation, the Muslim military leadership ordered a trench to be dug around Madinah. On approaching Madinah, the force of Quraysh was thus stunned to discover a defensive trench protecting the Muslims in the city. They were so stunned that they thought, "By God, this is a trick which has never before been played by the Arabs.[17]" This incident illustrates not only the success of Muslim intelligence during the period of the Prophet, MPBUH, obtaining information on the enemy's plans and intentions in time and thus preventing defeat, but also the failure of the enemy's intelligence. This failure becomes even more remarkable if we take into consideration the fact that the digging of the trench lasted for about twenty days, a period which should have been long enough for the spies of Quraysh to discover and report about the Muslim activities and preparations.

This incident also illustrates the success of the Muslims' preventive intelligence; they succeeded in keeping their military plans secret for a long time and denied the enemy any information about them. In his discussion of the effectiveness of the Muslims'

preventive intelligence, the international espionage and intelligence expert, Ladislas

Farago, wrote: "When the Makkans (Quraysh) decided to get rid of Muḥammad for ever,

they mobilized against him a force that consisted of ten thousand men. This, however,

did not upset the Prophet, MPBUH, as he had in Makkah qualified agents who reported

his enemy's plans to him. But his opponents had no agents in this city. Therefore, when

the Makkans reached Madinah, they were stunned to find a trench and a wall surrounding

al Madinah like a bracelet surrounding a wrist and protecting Muḥammad and his

followers from aggression." [18]

On reaching Dhu al-Ḥulayfah, a place near Makkah, on his way, together with a

thousand or so of his companions, to perform the `Umrah - later to be known as the

`Umrah of al-Ḥudaybiyyah -, the Prophet, MPBUH sent a Muslim spy to reconnoitre the

road ahead of them. The latter returned from his reconnaissance mission as the Prophet,

MPBUH and his companions reached `Asafān and reported: "They have learnt about

your march, so they have come out wearing tiger skins and have camped in Dhu al-Ṭawā.

They have vowed to God not to let you enter Makkah. And Khālid b. al-Walid is among

their horsemen camping in Kurā` al-Ghamīm. On hearing this, the Prophet, MPBUH

ordered his companions to move on to a subroad west of the main road. It proved a

rough road along which the Muslims negotiated their passage with some difficulty, but

they were able to avoid running into the force of Quraysh until they reached al-

Ḥudaybiyyah, three miles to the north of Makkah, where they decided to set camp.

Muslim intelligence was thus able to prevent what was evidently an imminent

clash with the enemy's forces. This clash would have resulted in the undoubted and total

annihilation of the Muslims who were intending to perform the `Umrah and were thus

neither prepared nor had the numbers and weapons to fight the numerically superior and

prepared force of Quraysh.

The Role of Intelligence in the Conquest of Makkah

In his The History of Wars in the World, Field Marshal Montgomery wrote: "The excellent strategic ability of Napoleon was due to the making of his plans on the basis of information presented to him by his military staff, headed by Britie and Count Daru. It was also due to the fact that every compaign was preceded by careful organization, accurate research, long preparation and correct planning in the light of the information he obtained about the enemy." [19]

It was a similar careful organisation and correct planning in the light of the information gathered about the enemy that led to the successful conquest of Makkah by Muslim forces. The Muslim leadership was able to obtain every little detail about the force of Quraysh and other neighbouring tribes. In addition, the Muslims were able to learn from a delegation from Banu Khuzā`a that had earlier arrived in al Madinah that Quraysh had broken its truce with the Muslims. Through psychological studies, the Muslims were able to determine how hesitant Quraysh was in its decisions and military preparations. They were also able to gather all information, whether it was to their advantage or otherwise, entering or leaving Madinah.

This enabled the Muslims to intercept the secret message sent by Ḥūtib b. Abī Balta`ah, in which he informed Quraysh of the movements of the Muslim fighting force and the intentions of the Muslim leadership. Quraysh, on the other hand, was not able to secure any information about the Muslims and their army until the latter approached Makkah.

Abū Sufyān, leader of Quraysh and commander of its army in many battles, tried to secure information about the Muslims from his daughter Umm Ḥabībah, wife of the Prophet, MPBUH, but failed. He also tried to obtain information about the Muslim force from the Muslims of al Madinah but failed to do so again. Moreover, he tried to learn something about the Muslim army preparations from the delegation of Khuzā`ah who came to the Prophet, MPBUH on a secret mission, but they denied any knowledge of Muslim actions and plans.

Thus, Quraysh remained in the dark until the Muslim Army reached Makkah and besieged it from all sides, causing the enemy force to surrender with little if any resistance.[20]

The Role of Intelligence in the Campaign of Hunayn

Following the conquest of Mecca, Hawāzin and Thaqīf decided to take the initiative and defeat the Muslims before the latter defeated them. In response, the Prophet (MPBUH) sent 'Abdullāh b. Abī Hadrah al-Aslamī on an intelligence mission to gather the vital information necessary to foil Hawāzin and Thaqīf's ambitions and plans.

Ibn Ishāq wrote: "When the Prophet, MPBUH heard of their intentions, he sent 'Abdullāh b. Abī Hadrah al-Aslamī to them. He ordered him to infiltrate them and live among them to gain information about them and to report back to him. al-Aslamī infiltrated them, lived among them and learnt from Mālik b 'Awf, the commander of Hawāzin, and others that they had agreed on fighting against the Apostle of God. Then he went to the Apostle of God and reported the news.'[21]

The Prophet, MPBUH thus learnt about the intention of the Muslims' enemies as well as the locations where they were massing. To gain the fighting advantage, he decided to seize the initiative and surprise them with a sudden attack. The vigilance of Muslim intelligence and the army's ability to mobilise and move quickly helped to spoil the enemy's plan of aggression against al Madīnah. [22]

The polytheists sent reconnaissance patrols to determine the direction of the Muslim Army's march and its progress. These reconnaissance operations proved instrumental to their occupation and control of Wādī Hunayn prior to the Muslims' arrival there. They were thus able to surprise the Muslim vanguard when the latter reached the wādī. But for their reconnaissance patrols, they would not have known the progress of the Muslim army's march. They designed their military plan in the light of the correct information they were able to secure through reconnaissance and were thus able to take the Muslim Army by surprise.

Major General Maḥmud Shīt Khaṭṭāb wrote in connection with the defeat of the Muslim army at the battle of Ḥunayn:

"The most important duty of the vanguard is the protection of the main body [of the army] and the acquisition of information about the enemy, so as to exclude the possibility of the main forces being taken by surprise. The Muslim vanguard failed in this duty.

They failed to find out about the positions which the polytheists occupied in Wādī Ḥunayn. The vanguard rushed onwards without any guidance or insight. The rest of the Muslim forces followed them, believing that their rapid advance was safe, and on the assumption that if there had been any danger, the vanguard would either have not rushed forward or would have dealt with it. One of the most important reasons for the defeat of the Muslims at the Battle of Ḥunayn was ... the failure of the vanguard to do its duty. They had not acquired information about the positions of the enemy's troops and, consequently, did not prevent the enemy's surprise attack on the main body." [23]

The Battle of Tabūk or the Total War

In his book The Nation at War, Ludendorff argued that 'the modern war is no longer simply a war between armies and military forces, but rather a total war, amounting to a war of nations against nations. Thus, a nation should put all its mental, literary and material powers at the service of the war. These powers must be devoted to the prosecution of the war." [24]

Ludendorff also views war as a means, rather than an end. The whole nation, he argues, must and should always be ready for war. He also adds: "The duty of women is to produce powerful sons for the nation who are to bear the burdens of the total war. The duty of men is to mobilize all their forces to this end." [25]

Major General Maḥmūd Shīt Khaṭṭāb wrote, in an overview of Ludendorff's views: "These views were considered by the military as new ones. They began to expound on them, spread their principles, and call for their adoption. There is nothing

strange about this. What is strange, however, is that some modern military men should consider these views as new plans in modern battles, which no leaders had preceded the Germans in adopting. We must say that the total war which was adopted by Germany, Italy and Russia in the Second World War was not a new concept. It was followed by the Islamic Strategy fourteen centuries earlier. We think, however, that there is a fundamental difference between the modern total war and the old Muslim war. This difference lies in that the Muslim war was essentially a defensive war. Its objective was to spread peace and establish its foundations. The Muslim war did not involve acts of aggression against anyone." [26] The Muslims invited all people to God, carrying out thereby the order of God, be He raised far above:

Invite (all) to the way

of thy Lord with wisdom

And beautiful preaching;

And argue with them

In ways that are best

And most gracious.

(16: 125)

As well as God's order:

Let there be no compulsion

In religion: Truth stands out

Clear from Error.

(2: 256)

Thus, the Muslim wars were motivated by a search for peace. The Muslims made peace with those who agreed to have peace with them and did not commit aggression

against anyone. They did no more than vehemently defend their creed and the freedom of spreading it among people and exalting the word of God in the heights. The book ordered them:

Go ye forth, (whether equipped)

Lightly or heavily, and strive

And struggle with your goods

And your persons, in the cause of God.

(9: 41)

All Muslims were thus soldiers in the fight to protect and spread the word of God, and all their material goods were readily placed at the service of those actively engaged in fighting for the cause of God.

At the battle of Tabūk, the Muslim troops totalled some thirty thousand, including some ten thousand horsemen. To get to Tabūk, such an army had to march for long distances in the desert, in summer, at a time of great drought; hence the name "the army of distress". It was extremely difficult to support this huge army in such difficult circumstances with such logistics as water, food, munitions and weapons. Thus, it fell to all Muslims to share the burden of supporting it. [27]

Historical sources agree that Abū Bakr, whose balance of money was forty thousand dinars on his conversion to Islam, spent all his money on this campaign, in the cause of God. `Uthmān b. `Affān contributed three hundred camels and a thousand dinars to the Muslim military campaign. `Umar b. al-Khattāb spent half of his money. Al-`Abbās, uncle of the Prophet, Talhah b. `Ubayd Allāh and the rest of the rich Muslims all contributed great sums of their money to the Muslim army's cause. These generous donations made it possible to support and maintain a huge army at a time of great difficulties. [28]

Thus, it can be said that the Islamic military strategy knew total war some fourteen centuries before the world came to know and practise it.

In this campaign, the intelligence of the Byzantines knew a great deal about the movements of the Muslim Army. They relied for this information on members of the Nabatean tribes who traded in Madinah and individuals from Arab tribes who were allies of the Muslims. Such individuals, known in modern times as "the Fifth Column', helped to convey information to the Byzantines.

`Abd Allāh b. Jaḥsh's Reconnaissance Campaign

The patrolling division, under the command of `Abd Allāh b. Jaḥsh', was a reconnaissance division whose aim was to reconnoitre Quraysh's information and movements. [29] Through the information secured by this reconnaissance division, the Muslims were able to surveil the various trading routes leading from Shām to Makkah as well as gather information on the different tribes of the region and use such information to form alliances with such tribes.

The information which the Muslims were able to secure through reconnaissance were also used to barricade and block Quraysh's caravans' routes and proved highly instrumental in gaining advantage for the Muslims in the various battles that flared between them and Quraysh, and which eventually ended with the Muslim conquest of Makkah.

The Reconnaissance Campaign to Spain [al-Andalus]

Once the Muslims had established and consolidated their hold on North Africa, they set their sights on conquering the Iberian peninsula, and a weakened rule in Spain enabled them to achieve their ambition. Roderick, the ruler of Spain at the time, was locked in a power struggle with Spain's legitimate rulers. He was up against the allies of king Ghetshar, who were led by Julian, to whom the sons of Ghetshar had resorted for help to restore the rule of their father. Julian then met Ṭāriq b. Ziyād and persuaded him to conquer Spain; Ṭāriq, in turn, persuaded Mūsā b. Nuṣayr of this. Mūsā wrote to al-

Walīd b. `Abd al-Malik, the Muslim Caliph, to inform him of Julian's invitation to conquer al-Andalus and asking for permission to embark on this conquest. In reply, al-Walīd wrote: "Go through it [i.e., Spain] with small groups of men until you are familiar with its nature. Do not throw all Muslims into a sea full of troubles."[30]

Thus, the Caliph's approval was conditioned only by the necessity of carrying out reconnaissance and scouting operations prior to committing the Muslim army to a conquest. Mūsā, accordingly, prepared and launched a reconnaissance operation involving four hundred infantrymen and a thousand horsemen, commanded by Ṭarīf b. Mālik al-Ma`āfirī. The reconnaissance troops were ordered to cross the strait to Spain and reconnoitre the forces of the enemy. To cross the strait, Ṭarīf used the boats supplied by his ally Julian; four ships carried the Muslim reconnaissance troops from Sabtah to the peninsula of Palomas (also known as the Green Peninsula). Guided by Julian himself, Ṭarīf and his troops explored the peninsula and its environs, reconnoitred the enemy's forces and their movements, and eventually retuned, in possession of all the information that the Muslim leadership needed to design a complete and effective combat plan.[31]

The Islamic army's conquest of Spain took place a year or so after the return of the reconnaissance expedition and, as masters of a newly established empire, the Muslim rulers were able to maintain peace and security and ensure equal justice for all people of the new empire, regardless of their nationality or creed.

NOTES

1. Hānī, <u>al-Jāsūsiyyah bayna al-Wiqāyah wa al-ʿIlāj.</u>

2. Maḥfūẓ, <u>al-Madkhal ilā al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Istrātijiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al- Islāmiyyah</u>, p. 190.

3. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 3: 208.

4. Maḥfūẓ, <u>al-Madkhal ilā al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Istrātijiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al- Islāmiyyah</u>, p. 189.

5. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 3: 208.

6. IBID

7. IBID, 2:415

8. Al-Iṣfahānī, <u>Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ</u>, 5: 215.

9. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u> 2: 157.

10. IBID., 4: 397; Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 4: 283.

11. IBID, 4:218

12. Al-ʿAsqalāni, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah</u>, No. 2887, 2:490

13. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 2: 617; IBID., 4: 94.

14. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 3: 208.

15. Al-ʿAsqalāni, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah</u>, 2: 9.

16. Ibn al- Jawzī , <u>Al-Muntadam fi Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam</u>, 3:162 and Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 4:85

18. Hānī, <u>al-Jāsūsiyyah bayna al-Wiqāyah wa al-ʿIlāj.</u>

19. Quoted in Faraj, <u>Fann Idārat al-Maʿrakah.</u>

20. Khaṭṭab, <u>al-Rasūl al-Qāʾid</u>, 348-349.

21. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 4: 68.

22. Maḥfūẓ, <u>al-Madkhal ilā al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Istrātijiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al- Islāmiyyah</u>, p. 189.

23. Khaṭṭab, <u>al-Rasūl al-Qāʾid</u>, p. 382-383.

24. Quoted in Khaṭṭab, <u>al-Rasūl al-Qāʾid</u>, p. 408.

25. Khaṭṭab, <u>al-Rasūl al-Qāʾid</u>, p. 409.

26. IBID.

27. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 4: 515-517.

28. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>al-Riyād al-Nadirah fi Manāqib al-ʿshrāh</u>; 2: 111, 122.

29. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 4: 62; al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk</u>, 5: 33.

30. Ibn Khaldūn, <u>Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn;</u> 4: 253.

31. IBID., 4: 254.

Chapter Two

War Plans

War Plans and Tactics: A brief Introduction

Throughout history, soldiers and military commanders have learned one most valuable lesson of war: to fashion a war or a battle victory, the correct military strategy is not simply to place the right amount of military force on the battlefield to counter the might and power of the other warring side. War involves an extremely complex network of decisions and operations as well as the interplay of several related dynamics and factors. One of the most vital dynamics of the war enterprise is the war plan; if a drilled, disciplined and professional army is the oxygen to a war, war plans and tactics are the very blood that carries the oxygen. Formulated by the army central command, and based on a careful study of, among other things, the nature and type of the terrain, effective, timely, and accurate intelligence information on the enemy's plans, intentions, capabilities, and troop locations, as well as information about weather, targets, and threats, the plan draws possible battle strategies and sketches the various stages of an offensive or counter-offensive. War plans specify the manner and degree to which manoeuvre, firepower, indirect warfare tactics and other dynamics of combat power are maximized, effectively balanced and synchronised, and brought against the enemy with maximum effect.

While war plans may vary as required by an army's mission and operating circumstances, they tend generally to concentrate their efforts on developing strategic, tactical and operational responses for such contingencies as a counterattack by the enemy. War plans generally focus on destruction of the enemy as the main operational objective of the offensive or counter-offensive.

The war plan is of a most vital importance to the pursuance of war. The war plan defines well ahead of the outbreak of actual hostilities the way an offensive or counter-offensive is to be strategically, tactically, and operationally conducted. A potentially winning war plan is that which is based on a careful study of intelligence data gathered on enemy troops' locations, morale, level of preparedness and degree of mobilisation for war, the enemy's military capabilities, combat power and assets, and the nature of the terrain whereon the battle is to take place. Success on the battlefield depends on an army's

ability to fight in accordance with a well-thought-out and carefully constructed war operations plan. The outcome of a war depends largely on the army's ability to mobilise quickly, and to fight in a disciplined manner, and, most importantly, on the leadership's ability to develop a coherent war plan, the strategic tactical, operational, and logistic tactics in terms of which a war is started and pusued to its logical conclusion.[1]

Even the most cursory look at the history of war reveals that war plans and tactics have always been a most critical component of the war enterprise; history is littered with examples of war plans responsible for either overwhelming victories or humiliating defeats. It is agreed among military experts and leaders that a well-thought-out combat plan is mandatory and indispensable for pursuing the objectives of a military campaign.[2]

Like any other military leadership, Islamic leadership showed a keen interest in the war plan, and the history of the Islamic military conquests is perhaps the best testimony to the great concern that the Islamic military leadership showed in this major component of war and to the fact that the war plan was an integral and major component of the Islamic strategy of war. A study of the series of victories achieved by the Islamic armies reveals that these victories were the effect of an admirable expertise and precision in the formulation of war plans.

The military tactics which the Islamic military leadership developed in the course of its military campaigns were not based solely on the commander's military industry, assiduity, past experiences on the battlefield and personal vision of how a war is best conducted, but, rather, on his military vision and expertise as well as the advice and recommendations of his aides, and a careful study of the information secured by Muslim intelligence on the enemy's military capabilities and the morale and locations of his troops.

A good war plan is one that does not ignore one vital factor in the art of war, the warriors' morale. It is the assumption among many that a lonely soldier or small group of soldiers fired by deep conviction in the correctness of his/their cause can counter and withstand the challenges of a larger and stronger group lacking faith in the cause for

which they are fighting. This assumption was in fact a major tenet of Islamic military strategy. According to the Islamic scriptures, faith provides the moral and psychological force essential to destroying the enemy's ability and will to persist in fighting: 'O Apostle! rouse the Believers to the fight. If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand' (8: 65); "For the present, God hath lightened your (task), for He knoweth that there is a weak spot in you: But (even so), if there are a hundred of you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred, and if a thousand, they will vanquish two thousand, with the leave of God: for God is with those who patiently persevere." (8: 66).

Army morale is of vital importance to the proceedings and outcome of a war. The art of war is governed by a number of factors, all of which need to be taken into account. Belief in a higher ideal causes the people to be in complete accord with their commander and submit to his orders, undismayed by any potential or real danger to their lives.

The 'Collective Plan' in Islamic military Strategy

Central to Islamic military strategy was the 'collective war plan'; inspired by the values of team spirit and team work, much lauded and celebrated by Islam, the Islamic leadership pursued and promoted the notion of the 'collective plan', the collective development of operational and tactical war procedures and strategies. This practice was in accordance with the Islamic scriptures' injunction to "hold fast, all together, by the Rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves." (4: 103). Or, similarly, in the words of the Prophet: "God's hand is with the group." [3]

The emphasis laid by Islamic military strategy on team work sprang from a desire to reduce or curb unbridled individualism and, thus, a possible cause of disagreement and fratricide in times of war. We have provided examples at several points in this thesis illustrating how the Prophet consulted his aides on all sorts of matters, of both military and non-military nature, during the many battles and wars the Islamic army fought under his leadership.

Commander-Soldier Relationship

One of the most essential dynamics of combat power is a competent and confident military leadership. Military leaders determine the degree to which manoeuvre, firepower, and protection are maximised, effectively balanced, and brought to bear against the enemy with maximum effect. Commanders at all levels seek to develop not only tactical and operational strategies, but also, and as importantly, solidarity and morale among their forces, by stressing regular teamwork and by providing a model example of determination, loyalty to cause and perseverance.

The commander should strive to embody the virtues of wisdom, determination, benevolence, courage, strictness, and justice. The relationship between the commander and his soldiers is of major importance not only to the general morale of an army, but to the maintenance of a disciplined and effective army and, by extension, to the outcome of a military campaign. A relationship based on fairness enhances morale and reinforces the sense of responsibility among fighting troops. Soldiers should be aware of the immensity of their responsibility and of the fact that the destiny of their nation rests on their shoulders. They should always bear in mind that that they constitute the only buffer between their nation's peace and safety and its downfall.

A military leader should not lose sight of the welfare of his soldiers, nor should he carelessly endanger their lives and burden them with more than they can tolerate. A leader should be a paragon of discipline, kindness and virtue, and should never contrive to set up or encourage, whether wittingly or unwittingly, barriers between himself and the rest of his fighting troops. He should always remain close to them and their concerns.

The Islamic military strategy stressed the need for and importance of compassion and trust between the leaders and the soldiers under their command. The Prophet, leader of the first Islamic army, set up the foundations outlining the leader's commitments and obligations towards his soldiers. During the battle of Badr, Muslim soldiers tried to keep him away from the horrors of the battle by building him some sort of an "operation room" from which he could follow the course of the battle in total safety from the arrows of the

enemy.[4] However, the Prophet, MPBUH, was adamant in taking part in the battle alongside his soldiers. Believing that the best way to rally his Muslim soldiers and to raise their morale was to share the burden of combat with them, he left his safe place and joined the front lines, pleading with the Lord, 'O God, here is Quraysh trying to accuse Your Prophet of lying. O God, give me the victory you promised."[5]

The Prophet, MPBUH, always insisted that a leader's relationship with his soldiers should be based on mutual trust, compassion and solidarity. He also believed that the leader's responsibility towards those he commanded should nowhere be more evident than on the battlefield; his dedication to the cause of his Ummah and his faith and his perseverence in the fighting of its enemies would inspire a similar dedication and perseverance among his soldiers who, thus inpired, would fight until they obtained victory or fell as martyrs. With a view to reinforcing solidarity among the Muslim soldiers and raising their morale during the battle of al-Ahzāb, the Prophet, MPBUH, insisted on sharing with them the tasks of digging entrenchments, performing guard shifts and going on vanguard missions, showing unparalleled tolerance and endurance while performing such duties. It is reported that whenever a rock stalled progress during the digging of entrenchments, the Prophet, MPBUH, would volunteer, and eventually manage, to break it into pieces with his pick.[6]

The first Caliph, Abū Bakr, was inspired by the example of the Prophet. Once he went out to bid farewell to the Muslim army setting out for the Byzantines' strongholds, led by Usāmah b. Zayd. Feeling uneasy that he was riding his horse while the Caliph was walking, 'Usāmah said to Abū Bakr, "either you ride or I dismount." Abū Bakr, in a voice loud enough to be heard by some of the soldiers, replied, "By God, you will not dismount and I will not ride. Why should I not walk for an hour in God's cause?" [7] Abū Bakr sought to set an example for the leaders of his armies to follow and to emphasise the need for a strong and fair relationship between them and their soldiers.

In a letter to Yazīd b. Abī Sufyān, one of the Islamic army leaders, Abū Bakr advised, 'Be friendly with your soldiers and treat them well. Offer them good advice and show them the right way." [8] `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the second Caliph, did likewise. In a

letter to ʿUbaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ, commander of the Islamic army stationed on the Syrian front, ʿUmar advised, "Do not risk the lives of Muslims in pursuit of spoils, do not let them stay in a place until you have made sure it is safe, and when you send messengers, send warriors with them to protect them. Do not ever expose the lives of Muslims to [unnecessary] danger." [9]

Evident from all this is the strong sense of responsibility and obligation which the Muslim Supreme Command and leadership felt towards the Muslim soldiers and their general welfare. This concern for the welfare of soldiers is also clear from ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb's pledge to the Muslim soldiers leaving on a military campaign: "Go along and the blessing of God be with you. I will be a father to your children till your return." [10]

Muslim army leaders obeyed and implemented the orders of the Prophet, MPBUH, and his successors. In line with these orders, they did their best to protect their soldiers and not to expose their lives to unnecessary danger, abstained from forcing them to do things they did not wish to do, and were never intolerant or insensitive in their treatment of them. The leaders led the same life as their soldiers, led them into battle and consulted them at times of danger. On hearing one of his followers report, "I have seen people who love death more than life, people who are humble and modest, who have no desire for wordly goods. They sit on the ground and eat on their knees, and their leader is treated no differently from any other. The master is not in any way distinct from his slave," [11] the Muqawqas was so impressed that he could not help declaring to his men: "By God, these men would overcome mountains. No one could ever fight them." [12]

When Abū ʿUbayd b. Masʿūd, [13] commander-in-chief of the Islamic army in Iraq, was offered some food by two Persian dignitaries, his first reaction was to ask: 'Did you also offer some to my soldiers?" On learning that this was not the case, Abū ʿUbaydah turned down the food he was offered, insisting, "I do not need this food; these are my soldiers and they have risked their lives coming here with me. How can I ever enjoy what they cannot? By God, I will not eat until all my soldiers have eaten first." [14]

There was no preferential treatment within the ranks of the Muslim army. Soldiers and leaders were all equal; what was forbidden for soldiers was equally forbidden for the leader and what was allowed for the leader was equally allowed for his soldiers. This equality bred a robust loyalty among soldiers to their leaders and reinforced solidarity among the fighting troops. When the fighting broke out, the soldiers fought with the utmost determination, born out of a strong faith in the cause for which they were fighting , in the hope of either emerging victorious or gaining martyrdom.

Successive generations of Muslim leaders and commanders adhered to and implemented the many principles established and the values promoted by the Islamic military strategy in the formative years of the Islamic state. Similar principles and values have been stressed by some of the most notable and capable military leaderships of modern times. Napoleon developed the same sense of mutual trust, compassion, and solidarity among his troops as that which existed between Muslim military leaders and their soldiers. One of the concerns of Napoleon during his military campaigns was that of evolving and maintaining an amicable and solid relationship with his soldiers, based on mutual trust and mutual respect. The loyalty and devotion that the French soldiers showed to Napoleon is now viewed as the stuff of legends; it was such that it is often claimed that Napoleon could have conquered the valleys of Lombardy [15] with an army of bare-footed men. Napoleon's numerous victories were, no doubt, facilitated by the strong trust he placed in his soldiers, his great pride in them and the high regard in which he held them. He once declared to his troops, "I know you deserve more than you are getting. Here I am leading you to places that will allow you to earn pride and glory", [16] and to the people of France, he declared: "Without doubt, I can conquer the whole world with these men."

Montgomery, the British commander, and Rommel, the German commander, were also model commaders who sought and succeeded not only to inculcate a strong solidarity among their fighting troops, but also to secure the undying loyalty of the soldiers under their command.

Fighting Spirit

Fighting spirit is a condition of mind or sentiment of an army fighting for such a common cause as the survival of a nation or the spreading of a faith. An army's fighting spirit is dependent on numerous factors, including, most notably, the leader's experience and qualities, the physical/mental qualities and attributes of soldiers, the loyalty of soldiers to their leader, and their belief in the soundness of the cause for which they are fighting. Fighting spirit is the driving force that animates the will of soldiers and induces them to persevere in pursuit of victory.

Man is a true heir to an endless and unlimited well of spiritual energy, and this energy is perhaps the most powerful weapon mankind has ever had in its possession in its long history. Islamic military strategy made war against the self a much more important concern than the war against the enemies of the Muslim Ummah and Islam; in fact, Islamic military strategy considered war against the self the greatest struggle of man in his life. This is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the Prophet Muḥammad's celebrated declaration to Muslim soldiers returning from the battle front: "You came back from the small struggle [only] to [embark on] the great struggle [against the self]."

Similarly, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, commander of the Islamic army during the battle of al-Qādisiyyah, advising him: "I command you and all the men under your command to fear God at all times, since the fear of God is the best and strongest weapon in war. I command you and all the men under your command to beware more of sins than of your enemies. The army's sins, rather than the enemy, should be the main source of fear. Muslims attain victory because of their enemies' disobedience to God. But for their disobedience, we could not defeat them, since they outnumber us. So, if we disobey God, as they do, they will certainly be stronger than we are."[17] ʿUmar, the General Commander of the Islamic State, advised his soldiers that the fear of God is the best means of overcoming such human weaknesses as physical fear. ʿUmar commanded his men not to disobey God, since disobedience to God would alienate them from a vital source of spiritual strength, thus precipitating their defeat and downfall. It is repeatedly noted in the Islamic scriptures that God alone grants victory and

that He grants victory only to those of true faith and unswerving loyalty to God's cause: "Ye who believe! If you will aid God, He will aid you and plant your feet firmly." (Muḥammad: 7)

Thus, God, according to Islam, grants victory only to those truly faithful and genuinely committed to His cause. True faith and commitment are some of the values reapeatedly emphasised by the Islamic scriptures: "So lose not heart, nor fall into despair: for ye must gain mastery if you are true in faith" (4: 139) and "Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with God: of them some have completed their vow, and some wait: but they have never changed in the least." (33: 23).

In line with the principles and values of the Islamic faith, Islamic military strategy was wedded to the belief that soldiers and warriors should be armed with patience, and it deemed patience and perseverence the most effective weapon against the forces of tyranny and in the face of oppression. God reminds the faithful in this connection: "O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear God; that ye may prosper." (4: 200).

Victory in war, according to the Qur'ānic verse just quoted, is contingent on four most important attributes and/or conditions, which may be detailed under the following headings:

- Patience; Islam expects the warrior to bear the burden of fighting in God's cause with patience and dignity. It also expects of him the capacity to tolerate pain and to tower above such negative emotions as frustration and despair.

- Perseverance; the warrior should persevere in the struggle against those enemies bent on weakening his resolve and breaking his spirit and will to fight for God's cause.

- Standing at constant readiness for war; warriors should be on permanent and full alert throughout the period that hostilities last, lest their enemies take them by surprise. The Islamic scriptures warn Muslim warriors against negligence and sloppinesss while

97

fighting enemies of the Islamic faith, enjoining: "The unbelievers wish, if you are negligent of your arms and your baggage, to assault you in a single rush." (3: 102).

- <u>Fear of God</u>. The Islamic faith looks upon the fear of God as the warrior's best protection against a potential slackening of resolve and conscience.[18] The fear of God, Muslim warriors are advised, will liberate them from the spirit-sapping fear of death and focus their minds on the noble cause they have to fulfil.

Islamic history books record countless events illustrating the bravery and strong resolve of Muslim warriors and leaders during the many wars fought by the Islamic army. One such event is the meeting between the Muqawqas, ruler of Egypt, and one of the Muslim leaders. On their coming face to face, the Muqawqas asked, "Are you ready to die in pursuit of your goal?" and the Muslim leader replied, "Whoever is killed from among us is destined for Paradise and whoever is killed from among you is destined for hell; those of us who survive will attain victory."[19] Similarly, the Muslim warrior `Ubaydah b. al-Ṣāmit said to the Muqawqas, during a meeting between them: "Each one of us asks God day and night to grant him martyrdom. No one of us is concerned about his land, his family or his people. We entrust their fate to God. We are not concerned about anything but the mission we must fulfil."[20] Such strength of resolve and will, born out of the firm religious belief that no one should be feared but God, struck much confusion and terror in the hearts of enemy rulers and commanders like the Muqawqas and undermined their will and resolve to fight in such a way that their defeat was only a matter of time.[21]

Fighting spirit for which the early Muslim warriors were reputed became a characteristic inherited by following generations of Muslim warriors. This spirit remained a torch burning in their hearts to continue fighting and to attain victory. Ludhrīq's (Roderick) army which met the Muslim army led by Ṭāriq b. Ziyād, conqueror of al-Andalus, was, in the words of Lane- Poole, 'as many as six times the number of the Muslim army'. The small number of the Muslim army setting out to conquer Spain was, however, never felt by the leaders of that army to constitute a disadvantage; the sentiment was that any numerical limitations could be counterbalanced by more determination and a

stronger faith in the cause for which they were fighting. The Muslim army was so determined that Ludhrīq's intelligence advised its leadership that "[the Muslims] come seeking either death or victory. They burnt their boats so that they might not have any hope of going back." [22]

The fighting started and continued unabated for eight days. Greatly inspired and stirred by Ṭāriq b. Ziyād's famed declaration: "Your enemies are great in numbers and are in possession of more weapons. You have no refuge but in God and your swords. You have no food but what you can get from your enemies. I intend, God willing, to kill their tyrant, Ludhrīq. So, fight alongside me and if I am killed before I kill their leader, continue fighting by yourselves".[23] The Muslim soldiers fought with a great deal of commitment and determination and went on to win an overwhelming victory. Spain was conquered and, while under Islamic rule, became one of the most prosperous of countries.

Commitment to the War Plan

A commitment to the war plan is of vital importance to the war enterprise; fighting a war in strict accordance with a clearly-thought-out and carefully-studied plan is the first step towards fashioning a victory.

The defeat suffered by the Muslims in the battle of Uḥud was partly caused by their failure to remain committed to the battle plan set out by the Prophet. One of the requirements of that plan was to keep archers, led by ʿAbdullāh b. Jubayr, positioned on the top of the mountain to protect the rear.[24] The Prophet's orders to them were clear and precise: "Protect our backs against the enemy, and do not leave your posts. If you see us defeat them, still do not leave your posts; if you see us killed, do not offer any help or defend us, but kill their horses with your arrows." [25] The archers, however, chose to disobey these orders, throwing thereby the Muslim's battle plan into disarray and incurring a heavy defeat. As soon as they noticed that Quraysh was nearly defeated and its warriors had started fleeing from the battlefield, one of the archers said, "why should

we stay here when God has defeated the enemy? Let us go and collect spoils with the other warriors." Realising the risk involved in disobeying the Prophet's orders, a second archer reminded them: "Did the Prophet of God not tell you not to leave your posts and not to help even in case of seeing the Muslims being killed?" But although the archers were also warned by their leader of the dangers involved in going against the Prophet's orders, most of them chose to leave their posts.[26] Khālid b. al-Walīd noticed that the archers had left their important strategic position on the mountain. Ibn Sa`d in al-Tabaqāt said, "When Khālid found that there were only a few [archers] left on the mountain, he and `Akramah b. Abī Jahl attacked the remaining archers and killed them all, including their leader `Abdullāh b. Jubayr." Confusion reigned amongst the ranks of the Muslims, and they were finally defeated. [27] Thus, a near victory turned into a defeat, as a result of a group of Muslims choosing to act in defiance of the set plan of battle. The Islamic scriptures attribute the believers' defeat to their disobedience: "God did indeed fulfill his promise to you when ye with His permission were about to annihilate your enemy, until you flinched and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed it after He brought you in sight of that which you covet. Among you are some that hanker after this world and some that desire the hereafter. Then did He divert you: for God is full of grace to those who believe." (4: 152).

God also said, "Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, it was Satan who caused them to fail, because of some evil they had done. But God has blotted out their fault: for God is oft-forgiving, most forbearing" (4: 155).

`Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb drew up plans in his headquarters in al Madīnah, in the light of the information submitted to him by Muslim intelligence, before sending those plans to Sa`d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, leader of the army stationed in Iraq, who faithfully carried them out. In one of his orders to Sa`d, `Umar wrote: "If you reach Qādisiyyah, (the gateway to Persia in the pre-Islamic period and a stronghold dominated by barrages and rivers), [28] attack your enemies with all your strength for they will be trapped between our horses and the mud." `Umar also wrote to Sa`d, "If God grants you victory, do not hesitate to

take al-Madā'in ... I believe you will defeat them. So, never doubt [your victory]."[29]

`Umar, the General Commander, assured Sa`d of victory, thus filling his heart with optimism and boosting his determination to seek victory. Sa`d was not, however, the only leader `Umar advised and guided to victory. He wrote to al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd al-`Āmirī regarding the people of Hayt: [30] "If they surrender, let them go. If they do not, besiege them fiercely and wait till I make up my mind."

Leaders at all levels carried out the plans drawn up by `Umar with total commitment, no hesitation and much bravery. Their hearts were filled with faith and the plans they implemented were successful, attaining victory in every battle they fought.

Plans in the Islamic strategy and their effects on modern battles

In the battle of Mu'tah, the Islamic military leadership carried out a night plan designed to mislead the Byzantine leadership and confuse its plans. There were feigned movements of units behind the infantry troops, the right wing of the army was replaced by the left wing and the vanguard was replaced by the rear. The next morning, the army leader, Khālid b. al-Walīd, made a quick succession of attacks against the enemy to make them believe that he had received reinforcements from his headquarters in al Madinah. He then first withdrew his wings, and then withdrew the remainder of his forces under the protection of the two wings. [31]

If a leader's tactical operations run into difficulties during a military campaign, then his best course is to withdraw, for this enables him to survive hostilities with minimum cost in lives and saves his troops from the possible danger of total annihilation.

A similar plan to the one carried out during the battle of Mu'tah was resorted to during the Second World War. Rommel, a leader reputed for his strong military sense and organized mentality, was appointed as Commander of the German Army in North Africa. Upon his arrival at the scene of operations in 1942, he challenged the British

troops, forcing them to retreat from their forward positions in al-`Aqīlah and driving them back to Marsa' Briqa where their armored forces were stationed in a strong defensive position. Rommel attacked this pos'tion but faced fierce resistance from the British troops. Unable to effect a breakthrough, Rommel resorted to the tactics of deception. He moved round the British position through a difficult narrow corridor, camouflaged trucks as tanks and had vehicles stir up heavy clouds of dust. Tricked into the belief that the number of German troops was inordinately large, the British troops preferred to withdraw rather than take the risk of engaging an enemy force that presumably outnumbered them.[32]

In the same year, Rommel decided to launch an attack against the bases of the British Eighth Army stationed in the area extending from `Ayn al-Ghazālah to Bīr Hakīm, but he had neither sufficient troops nor enough military hardware to do so. So, he resorted again to the tactics of deception. The British reconnaisance planes' monitoring of the German armored forces convinced General Rich, Commander of the Eighth Army, that Rommel's attack would be directed against the British bases in `Ayn al-Ghazālah and prepared his forces to face that attack. While the German General Croveld was actually carrying out an attack on `Ayn al-Ghazālah, the core troops of Rommel suddenly appeared in Bir Hakīm, leaving the British troops little time to mobilise and prepare a solid defence. The tanks monitored by British reconnaissance planes by day, it turned out, returned to their positions at night and were replaced by trucks camouflaged as tanks, and the heavy clouds of dust were stirred up by engines of old planes fixed to trucks.[33]

Similar tactics involving the element of deception were employed by General Eisenhower in Europe. Information concerning the projected landing of allied forces in the Pas de Calais in May 1945 was in fact no more than a fiction contrived by Eisenhower, Commander of the allies' armed forces in that area, to deflect the Germans' attention from the actual invasion area, in Normandy.

No sooner had German Intelligence learned about what would turn out to be a feint invasion than the Germans started massing a large number of divisions near the shores of the Pas de Calais. It was not, however, till some six weeks later that the famous

successful landing operations on the shores of Normandy took place away from the massed divisions of the German army in the Pas de Calais.[34]

In view of the obvious affinities between early Islamic military tactics and modern military tactics, one might wonder whether such modern leaders as Rommel had been exposed to the plans of Islamic Strategy as part of their professional training. While no clear conclusions are available to date on whether these leaders had read Islamic literature on war and learnt from them, or the similarities noted above were no more than a matter of coincidence, it is worth noting that many Islamic books dealing with war and battle plans ended up in Europe following the European occupation of the Islamic countries in the aftermath of the First World War. Among the books that were to find their way to Europe were Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Shaybānī's Kitāb al-Siyar, Abū Yūsuf Ya`qūb b. Ibrāhīm's Kitāb al-Kharāj, Muhammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi`ī's Kitāb al-Umm, Abū Muhammad `Abdullāh b. Muslim b. Qutayba's Kitāb `Uyūn al-Akhbār, al-Harthamī's Mukhtasar Siyāsat al-Hurūb, Abū al-Hasan `alī b. Muhammad b. Habīb al-Basrī al-Baghdādī's al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah, al-Tarsūsi's Kitāb Tabsirat Arbāb al-Albāb fī Qābiliyyat al-Najāt fī al-Hurūb min al-Asā', 'Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's Kitāb al-Furūsiyyah and many others.

The Battle of Yarmūk

When the Muslim army's siege of the Byzantine defensive positions and forces deployed along a valley dragged on for too long at the battle of Yarmūk, with neither side managing to achieve a breakthrough, the Muslim army command sent a message to the Caliph informing him about the situation and requesting reinforcements. The Caliph, Abū Bakr, wrote to Khālid b. al-Walīd, at the time involved in a military campaign in Iraq, ordering him to march from Iraq to Shām and link up with the Muslim army at Yarmūk: "Go until you reach the place where the Muslims are stationed. Do not ever take pride in anything you do for we should be grateful only to God Who alone rewards man." [35] On receiving the Caliph's orders, Khālid gathered the best guides and asked: "Can you

inform me of a way to move behind the Byzantine lines and reach the Muslim positions without the enemy barring my route?" The guides' reply was anything but encouraging: "We know of only one route; a very risky one indeed, and only an arrogant person would choose to opt for it. The journey would last for almost five days across the desert." [36] Khālid, a master tactician and a brave commander, was not to be deterred by the hazardous conditions of the desert journey and immediately led his Muslim troops across Iraq, in the direction of the Shām front. The linking of Khālid's forces and the Muslim army besieging the Byzantine positions was in due time realised and all without the Byzantine picket-lines and intelligence noticing it. The Muslim forces then conducted a combined assault on prepared Byzantine trenches and won a convincing victory.

Modern history has witnessed similar bold and ingenious military adventures. Soon after he was crowned Emperor of France in 1804, Napoleon used the period of peace that followed the 1802 Treaty of Amiens to recruit, resupply and train his forces, with his efforts culminating in the Grande Armée: a fighting force powerful enough quickly to crush the resolve of the various Anti-French European coalitions. The formation of the Third Coalition in 1805, an alliance of Britain, Austria, Russia and Naples, forced him to abandon his plans of crossing the English Channel and invading his great enemy, the British Isles. Forced to give up the idea of landing his army at Dover and invading Britain, Napoleon turned to the east and marched against the armies of Russia and Austria, who were already pushing south. Making Vienna, rather than London, his target, he turned to face the allied forces in Central Europe, ultimately defeating their armies in the two famous battles of Ulm in October 1805 and Austerlitz in December of the same year.

To reach the battlefields in Ulm and then Austerlitz, Napoleon carried out an amazing plan to transfer some 450 thousand soldiers stationed in Western Europe in camps as far apart as Brittany, Holland, Hanover, Italy and Corsica. Most of the French army divisions pushed up north unchallenged and along safe roads to reach the Rhine at Strasbourg. After crossing the Rhine and pushing towards the Neckar river to the north of Stuttgart and Würzburg, the French army's march became, however, increasingly

hazardous, as the French troops had not only to overcome fatigue and exhaustion but also to engage allied forces pushing down from the north. The French advance along the Danube in the direction of Vienna was fraught with similar difficulties. However, Napoleon's strategic plan worked to perfection, as he completely enveloped the Austrian army at Ulm, forcing their capitulation with the loss of more than half of their forces and routed the allied forces at Austerlitz. [37]

The Gap Plan at the Battle of Yarmouk:

The Islamic leadership devised and executed an ingenious manoeuvre which confused the Byzantine forces and caused their decimation at the Battle of Yarmūk. It intentionally opened a gap between the Muslim attacking divisions, and the Byzantines fell for the ploy completely. Seeing a gap open between the divisions of the Islamic army, but failing to realise that the opening had been intended as a feint to lure them away from their defensive positions, the Byzantine forces seized the chance to flee the battlefield. The plan resulted in isolating the infantry from the rest of the defending forces, and opened the way for besieging and ultimately heavily defeating them. A similar plan to this seventh-century Islamic army strategy was carried out by General Liman von Sanders, Commander-in-Chief of the allied German and Turkish forces on the Palestinian Front in the First World War.

In May 1918, at the battle of Ṣulṭ, east of the Jordan River, a division of the English army led by Allenby got hold of the area of Sult after defeating the Turkish garrison stationed there. In order to dislodge the English troops from this area, the German General von Sanders, co-ordinating with a Turkish division on the offensive from the north and west, crossed the Damia bridge, launched an attack from the east and besieged the British divisions stationed in Sult. While laying and maintaining a siege to this division was one easy and safe option, the German commander preferred intentionally to open a gap through his front troops to facilitate the withdrawal of the British troops. His decision was based on the belief that his troops were too tired and exhausted to defeat an organised counter-offensive by the besieged British division without heavy losses. [38]

A question that arises in this respect is whether the plan which the German commander executed was inspired by or modelled on that used by the Islamic strategy at the battle of Yarmūk in the seventh century to defeat the Byzantine army on the Shām front. While this question remains open, there is some evidence that suggests that the German plan might well be inspired by the one executed by the Islamic leadership in its defeat of the Byzantines. What, in particular, makes this hypothesis quite plausible is the fact that General Goltz, the German commander on one of the German-Turkish fronts during World War I, referred to Khālid b. al-Walīd as "my master in the art of war". [39]

The Principles of War and Islamic Military Strategy

In the field of warfare, great military leaders have accepted that there are some overarching principles of war which, if observed, will generally bring about victory in battle, and similarly, if overlooked, will precipitate defeat or even cause total devastation. These overriding principles of war represent those principles which have been adopted and exploited by great military commanders in the prosecution of war for centuries.

Military leaders, irrespective of the (modern) military school of warfare to which they subscribe, have expressed great interest in the principles of war and emphasised the greater need for a unifying set of principles that can guide the conduct of warfare. Clausewitz and Napoleon are just two of the many famous names that immediately leap to mind in connection with the creative use and comprehensive grasp of the principles of war.

Though unanimously agreed in terms of their immense interest in and recognition of the importance of the principles of war, military leaders tend, nonetheless, to differ on the exact nature of these principles. In other words, while the principles of war have been unanimously accepted as imperative for the conduct of warfare, the relative importance of these principles vis-a-vis one another remains a debated issue. Questions as to which of these principles should be prioritised over the others, and, similarly, if one or more of them can or must be overlooked, have solicited different views from military leaders. These differences are by no means surprising if they are seen in light of Clausewitz's

widely held view that the principles of war are a means of study and not " ... a sort of manual for action," [40] These differences are also to be expected, owing to one or more of the following considerations:

First, each country is unique in terms of its geography, history and beliefs.

Second, different battles necessitate different tactics and the different experiences of leaders foster different conceptions as to the best way to conduct warfare and as to what principles of war should be prioritised over the others. Every military operation is, in principle, directed towards a clearly defined objective and to the extent that objectives change the tactics the principles that underpin them these tactics may equally vary. Similarly, since the formulation and execution of military strategy is a creative exercise, the decision as to whether one or more of the principles of war can or must be disregarded under certain war circumstances will depend on the leadership's understanding and grasp of these principles.

Third, different methods might be followed in the building of armies and preparation of combat forces.

Throughout history, military commanders, analysts, and historians have condensed and distilled the lessons of war and the insights of past military campaigns into a general set of principles that the military establishment could use to guide the conduct of warfare. Some of these time-tried principles of war are presented below.

A. Mobilisation:

By this principle is meant the massing of the greatest possible number of soldiers and the greatest amount of military equipment with a view to countering the strength of the enemy. This principle played a vital role in the early Napoleonic wars as well as in the first stages of World War II, when Nazi Germany swept through Poland, France and most of Western Europe.

Regarding the Islamic strategy's approach to the principle of mobilisation, it is worth noting that the Prophet, MPBUH, relied most crucially on the principle of mobilising forces during the whole period of his struggle against enemy forces in the Arabian Peninsula. The Islamic Scriptures state in this regard that "To those against whom war is made, permission is given to fight because they are wronged; - and verily God is Most Powerful for their aid." (22: 39).

This verse grants Muslims the permission and right to fight; all able Muslims should fight in defence of their faith, and, in so doing, they were fulfilling and submitting to God's order. God said, "Go ye forth, lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle, with your goods and your persons, in the cause of God. That is best for you, if ye know." (9: 41) God condemned and disapproved so strongly of those who lagged behind and did not come out with the rest of the Muslim 'Ummah to fight for God's cause: "If there had been immediate gain and the journey easy, they would without doubt have followed thee, but the distance was long on them. They would indeed swear by God, 'If only we could, we should certainly have come out with you': they would destroy their own souls; for God doth know that they are certainly lying." (9: 42). God, be He raised far above, said,"If they had intended to come out, they would certainly have made some preparation therefor; But God was averse to their being sent forth; so He made them lag behind, and they were told, 'Sit ye among those who sit'." (9: 46).

God regards the sin of failing to respond to the call for war to be so grave that He proscribes praying for them when they are dead. God commands his Prophet, MPBUH, in this regard, "Nor do thou ever pray for any of them that dies, nor stand at his grave; for they rejected God and his Apostle, and died in a state of perverse rebellion." (9: 84).

For his military campaigns, the Prophet, MPBUH, mobilised the greatest possible number of fighting forces that he could manage. For the battle of Badr, he mobilised 300 warriors and for the conquest of Makkah he mobilised as many as 10.000 warriors. [41] The leaders who guided the Muslim Ummah in the wake of the Prophet's demise showed an equally great interest in the principle of mobilisation. The first Caliph, Abū Bakr, mobilised some eleven brigades when he had to fight the renegades, and when he planned

to conquer Iraq, he mobilised some 18.000 warriors. `Umar made mobilisation compulsory for every able adult Muslim and ordered the leaders of the various regions of the Islamic empire to enlist anyone who owned a horse or a weapon. Furthermore, he took personal charge of the preparation of reinforcements, motivation of the people and supervision of military movements. His strong belief in the principle of mobilisation was such that he offered the Banu Bajīlah, in return for their mobilisation in the Muslim army, a quarter of the spoils of war in addition of their set share. In his "Fann 'Idarat al-Ma`rakah fī al-Islām", Faraj wrote that the Caliph "`Umar did two things which are worthy of mention here. First, he allowed the [Muslim] leader al-Muthannā b. Hārithah, at the time he was leading a military campaign in Iraq, to recruit the likes of such Iraqi Arab Christians as the Christians of Taghlib and the Banu Nimr. These Arab Christians fought bravely and tirelessly, and Muhran al-Hamadhānī, leader of the Persians, was even killed by a Christian Arab from Taghlib. Second, with a view to augmenting Islamic mobilisation in the face of an enemy which was far greater in numbers, as well as to offering them the chance to expiate their apostasy, he permitted the Muslims who renounced Islam and then embraced it again to engage in fighting." [42]

B. The Principle of Economy of Combat Force

Military leaders are generally agreed that "the party with the last bullet and the last soldier is the party which wins the battle." The importance of this well-known principle is even more evident in situations of protracted wars or wars of attrition. The Islamic military leadership displayed a remarkable grasp of the principle of economy in war, and its robust understanding of this principle allowed it to maintain the best possible balance among the principles of war for its various strategic objectives. A few examples will serve to illustrate this point.

The first comes from the conquest of Damascus by the Muslim leader Abū `Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāh. Abū `Ubaydah planned a direct attack on Damascus, but, learning that some of the enemy troops were stationed in Fahl, he feared that these troops might intervene in the combat in Damascus. In order to ensure that the Fahl troops would not support the core of the enemy forces, Abū `Ubaydah posted some of his troops under the

leadership of Abī al-A`war al-Salmī to barricade these Byzantines and keep them in check and marched with the rest of his troops to engage the enemy and ultimately to conquer Damascus. [43]

A second example comes from the Caliph's orders to `Amr b. al-`Āṣ to capture Ajnādyn. A veteran of many military campaigns and a brilliant tactician, he knew that the Byzantine leader had placed some of his troops in Īliyā' and al-Ramlah. In order to ensure that these troops would not later intervene in the combat at Ajnādyn, `Amr posted two brigades; one, led by `alqamah b. Ḥakīm, [44] to engage the Byzantine troops in Īliyā', and another, commanded by Abū 'Ayyūb al-Mālikī, [45] to engage the Byzantine troops in al-Ramlah. The main core of the army made off towards Ajnādyn and seized it, after defeating the Byzantines.[46]

C. The Principle of Surprise:

The principle of surprise in warfare involves striking against the enemy in an unexpected manner and/or at an unexpected time and/or place, thus leading to his confusion and robbing him of the chance and time to organise and plan and placing him in a position of disadvantage. [47] Examples of surprise in war include the use of an unexpected strategy, carrying out an unexpected manoeuvre, developing a new technique of fighting or the introduction of a new weapon. Surprise could also be achieved as a result of the choice of time and place to strike, the number of troops mobilised, uncovering the enemy's secrets, deception, seizing, retaining and exploiting the initiative to strike first, and flexibility in application of combat power. As the principle of surprise is central to the war enterprise and therefore very important in attaining victory, we have devoted a separate chapter to this topic.

D. Security

To achieve its provisional goals, the Islamic leadership placed the principle of security at the very heart of its strategy. To acquire an unexpected advantage over its enemies, it got information from different sources such as reconnaissance and

110

intelligence, and took precautions against allowing the enemy to surprise them or to seize the initiative, thereby placing them at a disadvantage. [48]

Besides, the Islamic leadership organised a permanent task force ready for intervention, whose duty was to engage enemy forces and pin them down until the main core of the army was ready for combat.

v) Offensive:

Attack is, arguably, the best defence; besides flexibility in applying combat power, it allows the seizing and retaining of control of the proceedings of a war or battle. It raises the morale of the soldiers, forces the enemy to fall back on a defensive plan and weakens his morale and resolve. An offensive requires a concentration of combat power (i.e., forces and weaponry) at the decisive place and/or time and depends on, among other things, the exploitation of the seized initiative, the details of the plans in terms of which the offensive is conducted and the will and endurance of the attacking forces.

The Islamic leadership's tactics were based on the knowledge, gathered through reconnaissance and intelligence, of the enemy positions, on an exact psychological estimate of the enemy's scheme, on new tactical elements (see below), and, last but not least, on the impressive military skills of commanding leaders.

A cursory look at the history of Islamic strategy shows that the offensive was the principle often adopted in the military campaigns of the Islamic army. A clear example of this strategy was the invasion of Iraq. The invasion was started by Khālid b. al-Walīd at Kawāẓim and completed by Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ in Madāʾin.

The same military strategy was at the heart of the military campaigns of the Islamic army in Egypt and North Africa. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀsʾṣ victory in al-Faramā was followed by a quick succession of victories culminating in the conquest of Spain by Mūsā b. Nuṣayr and Ṭāriq b. Ziyād. In Asia, the Islamic forces reached as far as India and the Indian Ocean.

Factors behind the Success of Islamic Military Strategy

Edward Aṭiyah attributes the success of the Islamic conquests to three main factors:[49]

a. The high morale of a new nation buoyed by a new faith and the enthusiasm of this nation fired by a series of early and consecutive victories.

b: The genius of the two most important Islamic military leaders, Khālid b. al-Walīd and ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, who led a quick succession of victorious military campaigns in Syria, Iraq and Egypt. The victories which these two leaders won were no less impressive than those achieved by Napoleon and Alexander the Great.

c: The use of new military tactics and strategies within a new environment over which they had total control. The environment in question is the vast and untrodden deserts. The Islamic army tactics included the effective use of cavalry in a way that was entirely unfamiliar to the Byzantines. The camel played a vital role in these strategies; it provided an effective means of transporting army units for long distances and in relatively short times. The appearance of the Muslim army at target places was most unexpected and sudden, catching the enemy by surprise, throwing his plans into disarray and causing total confusion among his forces.

Bernard Lewis compares the commanding and impressive facility with which the Arabs used and exploited the desert to the masterful control which the British had for centuries over the sea. While their enemies found the desert a daunting and hostile environment, the Arabs felt at ease in its conditions and exploited them to the full. They were able to effect sudden appearances and strike with maximum effectiveness against enemy forces, before vanishing again into the desert, leaving little or no trace in their wake. [50]

While Aṭiyah and Lewis are correct on the factors leading to the formidable military achievements of the Islamic army, they seem to have underplayed the much more important role of the Arabs' radical transformation as a result of embracing Islam. It was

112

the new faith of Islam that fired the enthusiasm, determination and ardour of the Islamic armies and was the crucial factor behind the success of the Islamic conquests. The Islamic army was no different from the enemy forces in terms of military equipment or its use, but had the important advantage of being driven by an extraordinary fervour, resolve, and eagerness to fight for a divine cause and to propagate a divine message.

Notes:

1. See, among others, Keegan, <u>A History of Warfare</u> and Paret (ed.), <u>Makers of Modern Strategy</u>.

2. See Keegan, <u>A History of Warfare</u>.

3. Cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Fitan</u>: 7 and al-Nisā'ī in <u>al-Tahrīm</u>: 6.

4. ` Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat ibn Hishām</u>, 2: 620.

5. IBID., 2: 628.

6. IBID., 3: 217.

7. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk</u>, 2: 246.

8. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 6: 304.

9. Al-Ṭammāwī, <u>al-Idārah fī `Ahd `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb</u>.

10. `Arjūn, <u>Khālid b. al-Walīd</u>.

11. Ibn Taghrī Bardī, <u>al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah</u>, 1:11.

12. IBID., 1:12.

13. Abū `Ubayd b. Mas`ūd al-Thaqafī, a brave Muslim leader, was killed at the battle of Al-Jisr in 13 A.H. See Ibn al-Athīr in <u>al-Hawādith</u>.

14. Al-Dhahabī, <u>Tārīkh al-Islām</u>, 2: 5.

15. Faraj, <u>Fann Idārat al-Ma`rakah fī al-Ḥurūb al-Islāmiyyah</u>, p.103.

16. IBID., p.104.

17. `Umayrah, <u>Hādhā huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, p. 27.

18. Quṭb, <u>fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān</u>, 2: 200-201.

19. Bardī, <u>al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah</u>, pp. 1-15.

20. IBID., 1: 16.

21. `Umayrah, <u>Rijāl Anzala Allāhu Fīhim Qur'āna,</u> 2:155.

22. Faraj, <u>Fann Idārat al-Ma`rakah fī al-Ḥurūb al-Islāmiyyah</u>, p.116. and Swayd <u>Al-Fann Al-'Askarī Al-Islāmī.</u>, 327-354

23. Ibn Khaldūn, <u>Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn: al-`Ibar wa Diwān al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabar fī Ayyām al-`Arab wa al-`Ajam wa al-Barbar,</u> 4: 253.

24. For a full biography, see al-`Asqalānī, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah</u>, No. 4573.

25. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 4: 21.

26. Faraj, <u>Fann Idārat al-Ma`rakah fī al-Ḥurūb al-Islāmiyyah</u>.

27. Ibn Sa`d, <u>al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā</u>, 2: 41-42.

28. Ibn `Asākir, <u>al-Tahdhīb</u>.

29. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk</u>.

30. Al-`Asqalānī, <u>al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣahābah</u>.

31. Kamāl, <u>al-Ṭarīq ilā al-Madā'in</u>, pp. 196-198.

32. Samaḥah et al., <u>al-Ḥarb al-`Ālamiyyah al-Thāniyah</u>. 1: 193-194.

33. IBID., 1: 349-350.

34. IBID.

35. `Arjūn, <u>Khālid b. al-Walīd</u>, p. 252.

36. IBID., p. 253.

37. Suwayd, <u>Ma`ārik Khālid b. al-Walīd.</u>

38. IBID., p. 227.

39. IBID., p. 228.

40. Clausewitz, On War, p. 141.

41. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, 6: 316.

42. Faraj, "Fann 'Idārat al-Ma`rakah fī al-Islām", p. 159.

43. Al-`Asqalānī, al-Isābah fī Tamyīz al-Sahābah, 4: 451.

44. IBID., 5: 105.

45. IBID., 7: 23.

46. Suwayd, Ma`ārik Khālid b. al-Walīd.

47. Kamāl, al-Tarīq ilā al-Madā'in, p. 336.

48. Al-`Usayli, al-Mudaffar Qutz, p. 167.

49. Kamāl, al-Tarīq ilā al-Madā'in, from Eduard 'Atiyah The Arabs , p34

50. Kamāl, al-Tarīq ilā al-Madā'in, p. 336.

Chapter Three

Psychological Warfare in the Life of People and Nations

Psychological Warfare in the Life of People and Nations

Warfare does not necessarily mean the use of weaponry, for there are other methods of war which have come to be deemed even more effective than conventional arms. The kind of war waged using these non-conventional methods has come to be known in modern times as 'psychological warfare'. Indeed, psychological warfare - broadly characterised as the strategic, operational, and tactical use of propaganda across the spectrum of peace, crisis, crisis escalation, and armed conflict to achieve national military, political and economic objectives - has come, in and of itself, occasionally to relegate other more traditional and conventional forms of warfare to the sidelines.

With psychological warfare increasingly marginalizing conventional warfare, it bears emphasising from the outset that the practice of this warfare tactic is not a novel event but only the latest, and emphatically the most sophisticated, phase in a long-established historical phenomenon. Like conventional war, the psychological warfare agenda is long-established.

No balanced evaluation of contemporary psychological warfare is possible without an appreciation of the cataclysmic impact of twentieth-century war upon always complex, sometimes contradictory, often paradoxical, and occasionally volatile international relations. The role of psychological warfare in the twentieth century assumed new dimensions in the wake of the two World Wars and, most especially, during the Cold War era. The Post-WW II world order has been overshadowed by war to the point that the climate is one of incessant warfare, whether actual or imminent. A immediate implication of this climate is the fact that the most important concern in this new world became foreign and security policy. With twentieth century conflict moving inexorably towards 'total war', it became appreciated increasingly that the scope, intensity and especially the outcome of psychological warfare can be just as significant as actual war.

Psychological Warfare: A brief History

The use of psychological war against potential or real enemies is a long-established and respected adjunct to military operations. From the early days of history, men of religion, politicians and military leaders have all recognised and relied on the power of words to mobilise the political will of a people or a large section of a population. In ancient Egypt, Tutmosis the Third relied on tricks, deception and surprise in his military wars, and no more so than in his conquest of Yafa in Palestine. In ancient Greece, revilement, vituperation and political vilification and defamation were all mercilessly used to undermine and destroy the morale of foes or adversaries. The Moguls, the Tatars and the corsairs all used psychological warfare to good effect in the furtherance of their military objectives.[1]

Espionage, exploitation of ideological or religious differences, propaganda and the policy of 'divide and rule' were central to the establishment and maintenance of the British colonial enterprise. Political deception and emotional manipulation, crucial components of psychological warfare, were also an integral part of the Napoleonic conquests. During his conquest of Egypt, Napoleon, hardly a stranger to the world of great-power politics and colonial manoeuvring, trumpeted himself as a Muslim, proclaimed himself the Protector of Islam and declared: "I worship God, be He raised far above, and I respect his Prophet and the Holy Qur'ān.[2]"

Psychological warfare, as a separate technique of waging war, has been an integral component of Islamic wars since the advent of Islam. For instance, the death of the Prophet, an event that caused much confusion among his followers, was exploited by foes of Islam to stir up dissension and cause further confusion among Muslims. It is in response to these attempt at provocation from foes of the Islamic state that Abū Bakr made his famous proclamation: "O people, if you worship Muḥammad, Muḥammad is dead; if you worship God, God is alive'.[3]

During the conquest of Spain by the Moors and in an effort to drive and motivate his army, Ṭāriq b. Ziyād proclaimed: "O soldiers, the enemy is in front of you and the sea is behind you; By God, the only choice you have is between death and victory."[4]

The two World Wars and the state of war emergency that has characterised much of the twentieth century radicalised and accelerated peacetime policies and both admitted and justified new extreme measures, from opportunistic military alliances to merciless psychological warfare. Psychological warfare played a most vital role in deciding the outcome of W.W.I, so much so that an important body of military and political experts came to believe that psychological warfare was the weapon that won that war.[5] In the inter-war years, the English, the Germans, the Russians and the Americans evolved highly complex and sophisticated warfare tactics, transforming in the process psychological warfare operations from an incidental strategy to a major adjunct to military tactics. During World War II, military psychological warfare tactics, including scare mongering, misinformation, propaganda through radio and television broadcasts, and the promotion of acts of subversion, were all employed to maximum effect. Since World War II, psychological warfare has dominated international geo-politics, resulting in a situation universally characterised as the state of Cold War - a situation of neither actual war nor real peace. The Cold War saw the extension and consolidation of this form of warfare and its transformation into a major department of war, and it ensured its continuance as a significant force in world affairs and politics.

There is no denying that psychological warfare stands as one of the most perplexing challenges to the construction of a post-W.W.II peace order. Fundamental, however, to meeting the challenges presented by psychological warfare is the need to come to grips with the problem of definition. As a phenomenon, psychological warfare and its related concepts - propaganda, information warfare, intelligence-based warfare, cultural warfare, etc. - are subject to a wide variety of meanings.[6]

Psychological Warfare: Towards a Definition

What is psychological warfare? The answers to this question have been as diverse as psychological warfare's interpreters; they have included military historians, military leaders and experts, and representatives of the social sciences who have offered a variety of approaches in describing this undeniably vital adjunct to military operations. What is more, the study of psychological warfare has produced a plethora of related terminology - propaganda, information war, intelligence-based war, economic war, etc.. However, this maelstrom of terminology, fortunately in our case, serves to illuminate rather than obfuscate the meaning of psychological warfare.[7]

There is little disagreement among political and military experts on the effectiveness of well-focused, carefully planned and sustained psychological warfare operations - either in the form of radio or television broadcasts, news bulletins, and pictures, or in the form of military alliances and manoeuvres - in influencing the thoughts, opinions, emotions, attitudes and behaviour of the people and leaders of enemy states and ultimately furthering economic, political and military policies and objectives.

As pointed out earlier, psychological warfare is not a modern phenomenon; it is as old as conventional war. As an adjunct of military operations, psychological warfare has been variously described as a propaganda war, an ideological war, a war of nerves, an information war, and a political war, having the specific purpose of controlling men's will and changing people's minds and behaviour. If a common thread of agreement can be found among the various definitions of this warfare tactic it can be found in the understanding of psychological warfare as in fact a combination of all these things . It is indeed a war of nerves in that it crucially involves the manipulation of such psychological factors as morale and the exploitation of such cognitive and emotional states as confusion and fear to strengthen the ability of one specific country or group and to undermine or weaken the enemy of such a country or group. It is also a propaganda war in that it relies crucially on the strategy of information manipulation, degradation, and distortion in the aim of inducing or urging the adoption of certain assumptions, doctrines or lines of action by others. It is equally an ideological war in that it involves the deliberate and calculated

effort to influence beliefs and attitudes of others for furthering one's cause and objectives and undermining an opponent's cause and goals. It is also an intelligence-based warfare in that it involves the design, protection and gathering of information vital to national security in general and warfare in particular.

Thus, psychological warfare operations encompass the use of information, intelligence, and psychology: information, manipulated in a specific direction, is used to create in target groups behaviour, emotions, and attitudes which assist the realisation of the national objectives of the country or group supplying and managing that information. In various ways, psychological warfare combines truth distortion, information manipulation, exploitation of such cognitive and emotional states as confusion, disorientation and fear with the objective of influencing a targetted foreign audience's emotions, motives, and objective reasoning, ultimately resulting in behaviour and actions favourable to the originator's objectives.

In view of its often devastating effect on the will and morale of the enemy, psychological warfare is regarded by many as the most potent weapon of modern war. However, psychological warfare operations are likely to have little lasting impact on targetted nations or groups if the latter are alert to the objectives of the propaganda tactics directed against them and happen to be quite knowledgeable in the various methods of defensive psychological warfare.[8]

In his Istrātījiyyat al-Ῑlām al-`Arabī, `Aliyū characterises psychological warfare as "a form of propaganda used by the enemy to convince a targetted group of the futility of resistance and desirability of surrender."[9]

According to Mukhtār al-Tuhāmī, "psychological warfare is the planned use of propaganda and other information tactics on the part of one or several countries to influence hostile, neutral or friendly groups' opinions, emotions, attitudes and behaviour in such a way as to assist the fulfilment of the policy and goals of the party originating the propaganda.'[10]

In addition to assuming different forms - for instance, intelligence-based warfare, economic sanctions, and political marginalisation are all forms of psychological warfare often waged in pursuit of military dominance - psychological warfare may involve operations directed against different targets, including the national will, the opposing commanders, or the enemy troops. One of the most notable forms of psychological warfare is the operations carried out by the armed forces during military operations, often consisting of broadcasts, publications and leaflets dropped by planes in an attempt to achieve the goals of modern war.[11]

As an important adjunct to a military war, psychological warfare may be waged before, during and after war. Although not unique to wartime, these tactics and operations are most widespread and uninhibited in war situations. Psychological warfare campaigns are not necessarily always initiated or undertaken by parties involved in armed conflict. Unlike conventional military war, psychological warfare practices are not subject to the international laws and customs regulating conduct during military hostilities.[12]

Psychological warfare operations can have a major lasting impact on targetted audiences if they are carefully focused and well planned. Though it is often difficult to measure it quantitatively, the impact of psychological warfare can be overwhelming. Its failure can equally be catastrophic, even though such a failure is not always immediately tangible and can only be gauged over periods of months and even years.

The Goals of Psychological Warfare

At the very heart of psychological warfare is the use of information against the human mind with the primary objective of controlling it. Psychological warfare may involve operations directed against, among others, the national will, the opposing commanders, or the enemy troops. The use of psychological warfare against the national will through either persuasion or intimidation is an ancient and respected adjunct to military operations, and so is the psychological warfare used against enemy troops and commanders on the battlefield.

The goals of modern psychological warfare are manifold. These include, inter alia, the following:

first, to persuade enemy troops and their military leadership that they are fighting an insuperable military power and that the prospect of a victory against such a power is nothing short of an impossibility. Psychological warfare operations directed against an enemy with this objective usually rely on deliberate distortion and exaggeration of accounts of the enemy's defeats and/or the size of the military force mobilised against such an enemy.

second, to encourage or persuade enemy troops to surrender or defect. Psychological methods used against an enemy state's forces with the objective of persuading them to surrender or defect include, among others, the broadcasting of messages and distribution of leaflets commending surrender and/or defection and warning of the dire consequences of continuing to resist or fight.

The use of psychological methods against an enemy state's forces usually exploits one cognitive and emotional factor: fear of death. During the Gulf War, Coalition forces persuaded many of the Iraqi troops that their only way to stay alive was by abandoning their vehicles and surrendering to the Coalition forces. This persuasion policy was reinforced by the Coalition's weapons that had just destroyed thousands of vehicles during the fighting.

third, to shake the enemy's faith in its principles, policies and objectives. This goal of psychological warfare is often pursued through carefully planned propaganda campaigns that present a distorted and false picture of the enemy's principles, policies and objectives, emphasise the impossibility of implementing or actualising these principles and policies, and exaggerate the mistakes made by the enemy in his (previous) efforts to implement these policies and fulfil these objectives.

fourth, to weaken the enemy's internal front. Psychological warfare operations directed against the national will of an enemy state, with a view to enfeebling it, generally focus on persuading the citizens of such an enemy state of the inability of their country's

economic, social and political systems to fulfil their expectations and/or endure the strains of a war.

fifth, to cause the public of an enemy state to lose confidence and trust in the political leadership of that state. This objective is often pursued through propaganda campaigns planned with the specific purpose of both raising doubt among the public about the efficiency of the armed forces and civil sectors of their country as well as stirring up dissension and fomenting unrest among the general public.

sixth, to break the unity of a hostile multi-national front. Propaganda campaigns calling into question the aims and rationale of co-operation among the members of a hostile alliance, or encouraging division among the members of this alliance, or promoting suspicion among the various members of this alliance are some of the psychological warfare operations utilised to weaken an antagonistic multi-national front.

These are some of the most important goals of psychological warfare as practised in the modern world. Did the Islamic military strategy understand psychological warfare in terms of these same objectives? Did the Islamic striking force use or rely on these same tactics in its efforts to undermine the cause and morale of its enemies prior to and while engaging them in actual battle?

While it is true that psychological warfare as understood and employed nowadays and in the sense defined in the preceding subsections was not known to the Islamic military leadership, some of its modern tactics and principles were nonetheless familiar to and used by the Islamic leadership in its military campaigns. Both the Islamic scriptures and the Islamic Tradition include vivid descriptions and explicit accounts of many psychological warfare operations mounted against enemies of the Islamic state during its formative years. If psychological warfare operations were an interesting component of Islamic military strategy, the question then is: what were the goals and nature of Islamic psychological warfare operations during the battles and wars Muslims fought against their various adversaries?

Psychological warfare in Islamic military campaigns

The psychological warfare operations directed by the Islamic military leadership against its enemies during the formative years of the Islamic state were based on three principles, viz.

(i) psychological exhaustion of the enemy.

(ii) spiritual mobilisation.

(iii) resistance to the psychological warfare waged by enemies.

Psychological exhaustion of the enemy.

This first principle relied mostly on one basic strategy, frustration of the enemy. The Muslims relied upon this strategy most heavily during the early years of Islam, and most especially during the era of the Prophet and for some time after his demise. The psychological operations mounted by the Muslims against the alliance between the Jews of al Madinah, Quraysh and Ghaṭafān provide a most interesting example in this regard. The army of this alliance laid siege to al Madinah after it failed to storm through the deep, wide and heavily guarded Muslim trenches dug all around the city.[13] There was much confusion and fear among the Muslims as the ferocious and relentless siege wore on. The Holy Qur'ān gives a vivid account of the terror that seized the people of Madina as the enemy forces surrounded them from all sides: "When there came down on you hosts, We sent against them a hurricane and forces that ye saw not: but God sees that which ye do. Behold ! they came on you from above you and from below you, and behold, eyes became dim and hearts leaped up to the throats." (33: 9-10)

As the siege of al Madinah wore on and fear and panic became more and more manifest among the Muslims, Na'īm b. Mas'ūd b. 'Amir, from Ghatafān, came to the Prophet and declared, 'O Prophet of God, I converted to Islam but my people are unaware of my conversion. Command me to do whatever you wish." The Prophet's

reply to this offer to help was, " ... do whatever you can to foment distrust among our enemies, for war is a ruse." [14]

Nu'aim b. Mas'ūd went first to the Banū Qurayzah, with whom he was previously on friendly terms, and said, "You know that I am your friend. ... This land is yours and, unlike Quraysh and Ghaṭafān, you live on it and so do your women and children and there is no other place for you to go. Quraysh and Ghaṭafān came to fight against Muḥammad and you supported them. But if they fail to defeat him, they will depart and leave you on your own and you are nowhere as strong as Muḥammad's army. So, do not support them against Muḥammad unless they hand you some of their noblemen as a guarantee that they will support you against Muḥammad till you defeat him."

Then Nu'aim visited Quraysh and said to Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb and his men, "You know that I am a friend of yours. I have come to learn of something of which I feel I should inform you. ... The Jews have sent messengers to Muḥammad to express to him that they regret the actions they took against him and to inform him of their readiness to take some of Quraysh and Ghaṭafān's noblemen and hand them over to him to kill as well as supporting him in exterminating the rest. And Muḥammad has accepted their offer. So if the Jews should seek to keep some of you as hostages, resist their demands."

Finally, Nu'aim visited the people of Ghaṭafān and sold them the same scheme that he had concocted. It was a Saturday when Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb and Ghaṭafān's leaders sent 'Akrama b. Abī Jahl together with other messengers to the Banī Qurayẓah to inform them that "this is not our place. Our camels and horses have been killed. So, let us get up and fight Muḥammad till we defeat him and get this matter over with."

In reply, the Jews pointed out that Saturday was the Sabbath and that they therefore could not, in line with what their religion demands of them, engage in any non-religious activities on such a day. They also insisted that they would not support them against Muḥammad unless they were given men to keep as a guarantee that they would not be left alone to face an enemy that was too strong for them. For Quraysh and

127

Ghaṭafān, this response from their Jewish allies seemed only to confirm what they had been told by Na`īm. In reaction, Quraysh and Ghaṭafān sent messengers to the Banū Qurayẓah informing them of their determination not to "hand you a single man. If you want to fight Muḥammad, go ahead and fight him." Quraysh and Ghaṭafān's reaction reinforced the Banū Qurayẓah's suspicions and validated their doubts about their allies' intentions; their response was, "What Nu`aim b. Mas`ūd said was true. They will, if given a chance, leave us alone. We will not fight alongside them against Muḥammad".

When the fighting broke out, the Islamic army was able to capitalise on the momentum it gained through the psychological war waged single-handedly by Nu`aim b. Mas`ūd and it was only a matter of time before the Banu Qurayẓah, Quraysh and Ghaṭafān, their alliance weakened by internal divisions and dissension, were convincingly defeated by the Muslim army. As the scriptural verses quoted above vividly depict, when at last the blow was struck, their defeat was total.[15]

The Battle of al Qādisiyyah and the Role of Psychological Warfare

On learning of the Islamic army massing on the borders of Iraq in preparation for what was later to be known as the battle of Qādisiyyah, and faced with the daunting prospect of fighting an Islamic army riding high on a succession of resounding victories, Rustam, commander of the Persian army, sent a message to Sa`d b. Abī Waqqās, commander of the Islamic army, requesting a Muslim envoy to speak with.

The choosing of the right man for such missions in time of war was as serious as actual war itself, for the outcome of the war depended largely on the success or failure of these missions. After some consideration, Sa`d chose Rab`ī b. `Āmir, one of the bravest men in his army. When Rustam was informed of Rab`ī's arrival, he sat on a gold divan, leaning on fine cushions. Rab`ī arrived on his horse, his sword in its sheath and his spear strapped to his body. He was asked to dismount and did so. However, when he was asked to put away his arms, he declined, insisting, "You invited me. I did not come to you of my own accord. Why should I obey your order and put away my arms." When he

was asked, "Why have you come?", his reply was, "God has sent us to deliver those living in darkness and those who are oppressed. We call people to Islam. If they accept it, we will not fight them. But if they reject it, we will fight them till we die or achieve victory." To Rustam's "We have heard what you have said. Can you give us a chance to think it over?" Rab'ī replied, "in line with the teachings of our Prophet, we will give you only three days. After the expiry of this deadline, you will have three options to choose from: If you convert to Islam we shall leave you and your land; if you agree to pay tribute, we will not fight you. if you do not accept either option, we will fight you." On hearing of this ultimatum, Rustam asked, "Are you the leader of your people?" and Rab'ī's reply was, "No, but Muslims are like one body; those of high rank listen to those of low rank". Rustam, impressed by Rab'ī's reply, turned to his followers and declared, "Have you ever heard better words than these?"

The next day, Rustam sent a messenger to Sa'd asking him to send Rab'ī b. 'Āmir again, but Sa'd sent Ḥudhayfah b. Muḥsan instead. When he arrived at Rustam's palace, the Muslim envoy refused to kneel down in front of Rustam and to Rustam's question, "Why did the other man not come?", Ḥudhayfah declared, "Our leader practises justice among us. It is my turn". When Rustam asked "Why has your army come?", Ḥudhayfah gave a similar answer to that of Rab'ī. Such was the effect of the conduct and words of the two Muslim messengers on Rustam that as soon as the second messenger left Rustam turned to his men and declared: "Can you not see what I see? These two men have defeated us on our own ground. They despise the kings whom we glorify."

The Muslim envoys' mission was not one with the objective of finding a compromise or a settlement satisfactory to both warring sides. The men Sa'd sent to Rustam were in fact armies in and of themselves and their mission was designed to destroy the morale of their enemies. A practised and intelligent leader should spare his army actual combat till he has dealt a strong psychological blow to the morale and will of his enemies, for once the morale of the enemy is destroyed and his resolve weakened, the army's task on the battlefield, capitalising on this first moral victory, will be an easy one.

This was precisely what Sa'd had sought to do and managed to achieve during the battle of Qādisiyya.

Rustam asked Sa'd to send him another envoy and Sa'd sent al-Mughayrah b. Shu'bah. On arriving at Rustam's palace, al-Mughayrah seated himself on Rustam's couch. When Rustam's men removed him, Al-Mughayrah rebuked them, "You are such a foolish people. We, the Arabs, do not enslave each other. I thought you did the same. Instead of what you have done, you should have told me that you are masters and slaves. I did not come because I chose to, but you invited me. Now I am convinced that you will be defeated. No kingdom can be established on the basis of slavery or minds that either perpetrate or accept slavery.'[16]

The job of the first two messengers, Rab'ī b. 'Amir and Hudhayfah b. Muhaṣṣan, was to destroy the morale and confidence of the enemy leaders and convince them of their weaknesses. The mission of the third messenger was to find a crack within the ranks of the enemy troops and exploit it, in order further to undermine their morale and resolve. al-Mughayrah found that they were masters and slaves, inferiors and superiors, and a people who humiliated the weak and denied them their rights. His words and actions were accordingly calculated to incite the enemy soldiers to revolt against those who deprived them of the right to live and who unjustly enslaved them. His words and actions were equally designed to impress on these enemy troops the message that the Muslim religion did not allow the favouritism or discrimination in which their leaders indulged and that the Muslims were not seeking to gain any worldly goods, but to help them believe in God, to make life better for them and to deliver them from the oppression of their rulers. al-Mughayrah's actions and declarations were carefully calculated, and their effect was such that some of the soldiers started thinking, "By God, this Arab is right", and their leaders admitted, "This messenger called for something our slaves could only aspire to. May our predecessors be cursed for misunderstanding such men!".[17]

When the fighting eventually broke out, the enemy, already morally undermined as a result of the the psychological warfare operations of the Muslim messengers, was unable to put up any resistance and was convincingly defeated.

The Conquest of Egypt and the role of Psychological Warfare

On learning of the Islamic army's siege of Egypt, the Muqawqas sent messengers to `Amr b. al-`Āṣ, commander of the Islamic army, seeking information as to the purpose of the Muslim military expedition. `Amr's reply was: "there is no enmity between you and me, but you will have to choose one of three options: either you embrace Islam and believe in monotheism, or, in the event that you reject Islam, you pay tribute. If you refuse to embrace Islam or to pay tribute, we will fight you."

When the messengers returned, the Muqawqas asked them about the morale of `Amr's soldiers and they replied, "We saw people who loved death more than life, people who were humble and had no love for wordly possessions. They sat on the ground and their leader was like any of them. You could not tell one from the other. The masters and the slaves were treated alike. When it was time for prayer, no one remained behind. They washed before their prayers and they prayed in fear of God."

The Muqawqas said, "By God, such men would move mountains, and no one could defeat or stand up to them. If we do not seize the opportunity today before they have crossed the Nile, we will not be able to challenge them once they occupy the land".

Then the Muqawqas sent more messengers to `Amr to say, "Send us some messengers  so that we can reach an agreement in the interest of both of sides." According to al-Miqdād, ten men from among the companions of the Prophet were chosen and sent as envoys to the Muqawqas. The man appointed by `Amr b. al-`Āṣ spokesman of the group was `Ubādah b. al-Ṣāmit. The messengers were ordered vehemently to insist on the enemy accepting the Muslims' conditions and to agree to no concessions or compromise.

Al-Miqdād, one of the ten men chosen by `Amr b. al-`Āṣ as messengers, reported that `Ubādah was a very tall, black man and that on seeing him, the Muqawqas ordered:

"Take this man away and let someone else talk to me." Al-Miqdād, however, insisted, "This man is the best of us and our commander appointed him leader of our group."

When the Muqawqas said, "Come along, you, the black one, and talk to me gently, for I fear your blackness.", `Ubādah replied: "I heard what you have just said. There are one thousand Muslim men who are blacker and more fearful-looking than I am. If you see them, you will be even more frightened. Though I am old now, I can still fight a hundred of my enemies and so can my companions. It is our wish to fight in God's cause and we only seek God's favour. Our conquest is not pursued for the sake of worldly goods ... . We do not care whether we have gold or nothing and whether we are rich or poor. All we want from this life is some food to satisfy our hunger and a cloak to protect us from the cold. That is all we need. If any one of us has money, he spends it on things that please God. Luxurious life is not our aim, for we seek the hereafter. It is our God's and our Prophet's command to do so. Our only purpose in life is to fight to raise God's banner high and please him."

On hearing `Ubādah's speech, the Muqawqas declared to his entourage, "Have you ever heard any one talk like this? I was frightened by his features and I am now even more frightened by what he has just said. This man and his fellow warriors are empowered by God to devastate the land, and I think they will seize the whole of it."[18]

The psychological warfare that `Ubādah and his men waged against the Muqawqas and his men proved effective and caused much fear and dismay among his troops. No sooner had the two armies clashed than the enemy troops either fled from the battlefield or surrendered.The Muslims' psychological warfare operations had destroyed their enemies' morale and impregnated their minds with fear and trepidation. Once an army has reached such a state of disorientation, fear and confusion, there is very little an army commander can do to avert defeat.

<u>**Spiritual and psychological mobilization of the Islamic army:**</u>

The spiritual or psychological mobilization of the Islamic Army was achieved through and focused on the following factors:

a) the kindling of the spirit of fighting in the hearts of the believers.

b) the encouragement of warring believers to seek martyrdom.

c) the disparagement of the enemy.

We shall deal with each of these in detail:

a) The kindling of the spirit of fighting in the hearts of the believers:

The Islamic scriptures declare: "God hath purchased the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs is the garden of Paradise: they fight in His cause and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in Truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'ān. And who is more faithful to his covenant than God? Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded: that is the achievement supreme." (9: 111) Verses like these, urging the faithful to spare no effort in fighting in God's cause, touched and captured the hearts of the believers, becoming the very philosophy that dominated their lives. For such believers, these verses were not simply words to be mentally contemplated, nor did they embody some abstract meanings to be reflected on, but, rather, they outlined a whole philosophy of life which they embraced whole-heartedly.

The Islamic scriptures also declare: "Will ye not fight people who violated their oaths, plotted to expel the Apostle, and began the aggression by being the first to assault you? Do ye fear them? Nay, it is God whom ye should more justly fear, if ye believe! Fight them and God will punish them with your hands, cover them with shame, help you to victory over them, heal the breasts of the believers, and still the indignation of their hearts. For God will relent for whom He will; and God is All-Knowing, All-wise." (9: 13-15) These verses urge the warring believers to fear no one but the all-powerful and

133

omnipresent God and assure them that the outcome of war is a matter of God's will, for God alone is capable of granting victory and inflicting punishment.

In a ḥadīth reported by al-Bayhaqī and transmitted from ʿUtbah b. ʿAbd al-Salmī, the Prophet is reported to have said, "The dead are of three categories: the believer who has fought in God's cause, has killed the enemy and then has been killed. He is a martyr, lodged in the tent of God under His throne, and only one step below the prophets. The believer who has committed many sins, then he gives his life and money in God's cause. If he is killed, the sword expunges his sins and he enters Paradise through one of its eight gates. The third is the hypocrite who has fought in God's cause, has killed and has been killed. He goes to Hell, for the sword does not efface his hypocrisy."[19]

b) Glorifying martyrdom in God's cause:

While preparing his followers for the battle of Uhud, the Prophet declared: "If a man perseveres in fighting the enemy today and is killed, he will be in Paradise."[20] It is reported that once they heard the Prophet's proclamation, every soldier fought bravely in the hope that he would become a martyr. A story reported in this respect is that of ʿUmayr b. al-Ḥamām who, on hearing the Prophet's words, threw away the dates he was about to eat, declared "Well, well! I have only to be killed by the enemy to be in Paradise", drew his sword and fought till he was killed.[21]

Ibn ʿAbbās reported: "The Prophet of God said, 'when your brothers were killed at 'Uhud, God placed their spirits in Paradise in the form of green birds that ate of the fruits of Paradise and drank from its rivers. When they found how well they were fed, they asked, 'Who will tell our brothers that we are alive in Paradise, so that they may not give up fighting in God's cause?' God, be He exalted, said, 'I will inform them'. Therefore, God, be He exalted, said, "Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord."

134

The effect of the scriptures and the Prophet's assurances and promises was such that even those exempted from fighting on account of some disability or other asked to take part in war in the hope of becoming martyrs. A story reported in this regard is that of 'Amr b. al-Jamūḥ, a noticeably disabled Muslim, with four sons fighting alongside the Prophet. When the Prophet set out for Uḥud, 'Amr's sons wanted to stop their father from joining the war effort on account of his disability. Disappointed, 'Amr approached the Prophet and complained, "O Prophet of God. My sons are trying to stop me from going to war alongside you, and I would very much like to be a martyr and thus go to Paradise." the Prophet reminded 'Amr of his exemption and then remarked to his sons, "Why do you not let him fight? Perhaps God will make him a martyr."

c) Disparagement of the enemy:

As part of its efforts used psychologically to prepare the Islamic army for battle, the Islamic leadership disparaged their enemies and detracted from their skill in war and their capability for perseverance. Muslim warriors were assured that their enemies could not persevere in combat or win the battle, for they neither had God on their side nor were they driven by the quest for martyrdom. As part of their psychological preparation for combat, Muslim armies were permanently reminded of the following Qur'ānic verse: "They will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance. If they come out to fight you, they will show you their backs, and no help shall they get." (4: 111) Thus, enemy forces might prove a 'trifling annoyance' prior to actual combat, but once fighting broke out, they would suffer overwhelming defeat and complete humiliation.[22]

The Muslim leadership's dismissal of enemy armies as a transient hindrance was a strategy used by such leadership to raise and reinforce morale among troops prior to battles. Muslim soldiers were assured that their enemies' greater number of troops would not make any difference to the outcome of battles and that their superior military equipment would not save them from a humiliating defeat. They were reminded in this regard of such scriptural declarations as "There is no help except from God" (22: 126),

135

urged to persevere in combat and to trust in God, for God alone granted victory and inflicted defeat.

The Islamic scriptures outlined the course of action and the conduct which Muslim warriors should adopt when locked in armed conflict with their enemies: "O ye who believe! when you meet a force, be firm and call God in remembrance much that ye may prosper: and obey God and His Apostle; and fall into no dispute lest you lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for God is with those who patiently persevere." (4: 45) These verses outline the various factors crucial to obtaining victory in a situation of war, namely,

a) Firmness in confrontation with the enemy.

b) Deep-rooted faith and abiding trust in God.

c) Avoidance of dispute leading to internal divisions and dissension.

d) Caution, patience and perseverance.

Islamic military strategy and counter-psychological warfare

Islamic military leadership made strong and deep-rooted faith the backbone of its counter-psychological warfare policy and the chief means of protection against the psychological warfare of its enemies.[23] The Islamic scriptures insist that the only power that a true Muslim believer should fear is that of God. God alone has control over the destiny of humans and He alone decides matters of life and death. The Holy Qur'ān invokes those believers who remain insensitive and impervious to the psychological war waged against them by the enemy: 'Men said to them: 'A great army is gathering against you' and frightened them." (4: 173) The reference here is to the fierce and relentless psychological warfare that was directed against the Muslims shortly after their defeat in the battle of Ūḥud. However, the attempts of their enemies failed to shake the believers'

faith on account of the latter's perservance and their firm belief that "For us God sufficeth and He is the best disposer of affairs." (4: 173)

NOTES

1. Jordan Albert, Sāykūlūjyat Al'sha'ah, Translated by Ṣalāḥ Mhhymar

2. IBID

3. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, 5: 184.

4. Sālim, Tārīkh al-Muslimīn wa Āthārihim fī al-Andalus; 'Anān, Dawlat al-Islām fī al-
   Andalus.

5. Hārūn, 'Ilm al-Nafs al-Ijtimā'ī, pp.352.

6. IBID, p. 353

7. Ṣubḥī, Naẓarāt fī al-Ḥarb al-Ḥadīthah, p.35; al-Tuhāmī, al-Ra'y al-Āmm wa al-Ḥarb
   al-Nafsiyyah, p.125.

8. Hārūn, 'Ilm al-Nafs al-Ijtimā'ī, p.354.

9. 'Aliyū, Istrātījiyyat al-I'lām al-'Arabī, p.82.

10. Al-Tuhāmī, al-Ra'y al-'Āmm wa al-Ḥarb al-Nafsiyyah, p.125.

11. Ṣubḥī, Naẓarāt fī al-Ḥarb al-Ḥadīthah, pp.36-37.

12. Abū Zayd, al-Shā'i'āt wa al-Ḍabt al-Ijtimā'ī, p.135.

13. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 3: 221.

14. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Bukhārī in al-Jihād, 157 and by Aḥmad in al-Musnad 1:81.

15- 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 229-231.

16. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, 7: 40.

17. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, 7: 31.

18. Umayrah, <u>Rijāl Anzala Allāh Fīhim Qur'ānan</u>, 2:156-159.

19. Al-Bahaqi, <u>al-Sunan</u>, al-Bahaqi, 5:291 and al-Haythamī, <u>Majma al-Zawaid wa Manba al-Fawaid</u>, 9:164

20. `Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 1: 627.

21. IBID., 1: 630.

22. See Ṣubḥī, <u>Nazarāt fī al-Ḥarb al-Hadīthah</u> and al-Tuhāmī, <u>al-Ra'y al-`Āmm wa al-Ḥarb al-Nafṣiyyah</u>.

23. IBID.

PART THREE

Chapter 1

WARFARE TACTICS: SURPRISE ATTACKS IN WAR

141

The Tactics of surprise military attacks and their role in the attainment of victory in wars

Surprise military attacks and other surprise warfare tactics had played a central role in ancient wars and still remain some of the most important and effective warfare tactics in modern times. No practised and intelligent military leadership can afford to dismiss or ignore the vital role of the tactics of surprise military attacks in the attainment of quick and decisive victories in wars.

The Arabs were a nation of warriors. When Islam came, it authorised the Muslims to engage in combat so they could defend themselves and spread the Islamic religion to the rest of the Arabian Peninsula and to the world beyond. Accordingly, the Muslim Arabs adapted the principles of warfare as defined in the Islamic scriptures and proceeded to apply them in their military campaigns against adversary forces. One of these principles was the tactics of surprise attacks which they maximally exploited whenever circumstances were favourable.

Military leaders generally agree on tactics of surprise attacks as one of the most effective in conducting a war and on its role in bringing about a decisive and quick war victory. The importance of the tactics of surprise military attack derives from the total confusion and chaos it engenders amongst the opposing striking forces and from its effective capacity to rob such forces of the opportunity (and time) to make sufficient preparations to repel or counteract an outside military offensive.[1]

Surprise tactics, needless to say, vary in response to place and time of fighting, and in response to such conditions as difficulty of terrain as well as to the level of alertness amongst an opposing military force.[2]

Covert planning and quick mobilisation are the two most important components of surprise attacks in war. The Islamic military leadership maximally exploited this in all its

142

wars and, as a result, emerged victorious from many of the battles it fought, however heavily outnumbered and under-equipped it was on many occasions.

Covert military tactics and their effect on securing victory

Covert tactics are a most requisite element of war, and all military leaders subscribe to the golden principle that "the nation that best manages the protection of its military secrets will most likely secure victory [in the event of a war]".

A requisite quality of military leaders is a high degree of caution and prudence in handling military secrets. Leaders who fail to be prudent with military secrets will inevitably lead their men to disaster. Disclosing military secrets is considered by most nations as treason by both civilians and the military alike.

A passing word may, on the surface of it, be deemed trivial and unimportant, but may in fact prove to be a military secret the disclosure of which may lead to disaster. The history of past wars provides us with clear examples. The Islamic scriptures consider keeping secrets a duty incumbent upon every individual within the Muslim community, and the Prophet, MPBUH, both urged the necessity of keeping secrets and relied on the circumspection of his close aides and commanders in preparing and launching military campaigns throughout his military leadership.

Islam warned the Muslims against disclosing the military secrets of their communities and deemed the divulgence of such secrets as a characteristic of the hypocrites: "Islam enjoins upon Muslims the necessity of referring to the general leadership and of always verifying information before accepting its validity or truth: "Truly, if the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease and those who stir up sedition in the City desist not, We shall certainly stir thee up against them: then will they not be able to stay in it as thy neighbours for any length of time". (33: 60)

Surprise military tactics and covert military planning in the early Islamic wars: some examples.

The Islamic leadership relied on superb warfare tactics and an extremely well-disciplined army. However, in illustrating its military dispositions in certain battles, we will have only to describe one aspect of Islamic warfare tactics, viz. surprise military attacks.

In his discussion of an urgent fact-finding mission that 'Abdullāh b. Jaḥsh had to fulfil for the Islamic army, Ibn Hishām wrote: "the Prophet, MPBUH, wrote down a message and ordered 'Abdullāh b. Jaḥsh not to read it till he had marched for two days in a certain direction."[3] In line with the Prophet's orders 'Abdullāh b. Jaḥsh led his party for two days before he read the message, which stated: "march till you reach Nakhlah (a place between Mecca and al-Ṭā'if), and from there you will observe Quraysh and learn about the extent of their preparations and movements." When 'Abdullāh read the message, he declared, "I must listen to the Prophet's words and obey his command. He commanded me to go to Nakhlah to get information about Quraysh. The Prophet, MPBUH, ordered me not to force anyone to come with me. Whoever wants martyrdom, let him come, and whoever does not, let him go back. I will carry out the Prophet's command.'[4] He then led the party to the designated site.[6] The total secrecy in which the mission of this party was carried out ensured its success and kept the enemy's spies residing in Yathrib at the time from finding out about it.

The same happened during the military preparations leading up to the Muslims' conquest of Mecca. The General Commander of the Muslim army kept secret the preparations for this campaign even from his closest companions. Ibn Hishām reported that the Prophet, MPBUH, ordered his people to get ready for a long-distance journey. While getting ready for the journey, 'Ā'ishah, wife of the Prophet, was asked by Abū Bakr: 'Daughter, what are you doing? Did the Prophet order you to get ready? She said, "Yes." Abū Bakr asked, "What

do you think he intends". She replied, "I don't know." When the people were ready for the journey, the Prophet, MPBUH, informed them that Mecca was the destination, ordered them to be alert, and pleaded with God: 'O God, deprive Quraysh of information and weaken their alertness so that we can take them by surprise."

Some historians claim that when he decided to conquer Mecca, the Prophet, MPBUH, placed soldiers on the road leading to Mecca to monitor it and prevent the news from reaching Quraysh about the impending attack. However, one of the Muslims, Ḥāṭib b. Balṭa'ah [5], managed to send a woman to Quraysh with a message. The Muslims were quickly alerted to this and no sooner had the Prophet, MPBUH, been informed than he sent out some horsemen in her pursuit, and she was eventually tracked and the message intercepted.[6] Thus, the Prophet, MPBUH, was able to mobilise an army of ten thousand soldiers to conquer Mecca in complete secrecy and take Quraysh by surprise. The Muslim force attacked Quraysh from four sides, and Quraysh, taken by total surprise, surrendered without any significant resistance.

Another example of the use of the tactics of surprise military attacks by the Islamic military leadership comes from the battle of the Banī Lihyān fought in retaliation for the killing of Khubāb b. 'Adī. and his companions. The people of the Banī Lihyān were strongly fortified in caves and on mountain tops. So, in order to take them by a surprise assault, The Prophet, MPBUH, acted as if he were heading for al-Shām. It is reported in Ibn Ishāq that 'the Islamic army made haste on its way until it arrived at the intended place. The enemies, taken by complete surprise, were unable to climb the mountains or take refuge in the caves, and had therefore to accept the conditions imposed on them by the Muslims.[7]

A further example comes from the battle of Khaybar, which was inhabited by the Jews, then known for their riches and their role in the politics of the Arabian Peninsula. The Prophet, MPBUH, led an army of 1400 warriors, including 200 horsemen. When the army reached al-Rajī', a place near the homes of Ghaṭafān allies to the Jews, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent a small division of the army to the camp of Ghaṭafān to dupe them into the

belief that they were the intended target, and then quickly mobilised the main divisions of the army to Khaybar.

This manoeuvre made Ghaṭafān believe they were the object of the attack and the Jews believe they were safe from a Muslim offensive. These tactics allowed the Prophet, MPBUH, to take both parties by surprise and to prevent any possible co-operation between them. Khaybar was besieged and its people had to comply with the Prophet's orders, which were to leave the Arabian peninsula at once.[8] The Qur'ān records the effects of this tactics of surprise attack on adversaries thus: 'It is He Who got out the unbelievers among the people of the Book from their houses at the first gathering of the forces. Little did ye think that they would get out and they thought that their fortresses would defend them from God! But [the Wrath of] God came to them from quarters from which they little expected and cast terror into their hearts, so that they destroyed their dwellings with their own hands and the hands of the believers. Take warning, then, O ye with eyes [to see]!" (59: 2)

A wise leader is one who can exploit, in a maximal and skilful manner, both the tactics of surprise attack and covert tactics. Both of these warfare tactics, as was noted above, were exploited by Islamic military tactics in many of its wars.

Besides these two tactics, the Islamic military leadership also relied on those of quick mobilisation of troops in the wars and battles they fought against their various adversaries.

A good example of this comes from the battle of al-Buwayb on the borders of Persia. Al-Muthannā b. Ḥārithah ordered a quick and quiet mobilisation of the army divisions under the cover of night. When al-Muthannā planned to enter Baghdad, he made al-Marzubān believe that he was intent on conquering al-Madā'in. When halfway there, al-Muthannā was told by Muslim reconnaissance that the distance separating them from al-Madā'in was equal to that separating them from Baghdad. He then ordered his army to move to Baghdad and arrest anyone who might inform the enemy of their coming, and by dawn, he was able to accomplish his military mission. The attack he launched was so sudden that the enemy were

unable to fight or resist.[9]

Surprise military attacks and the effect of these tactics on the acceleration of the conquest of Egypt

The Islamic army which set out to conquer Egypt was under the leadership of `Amr b. al-`Āṣ. Egypt proved to have strong fortifications and an alert garrison, and as a result, its siege by the Islamic army lasted for a long period, during which time the Caliph sent some reinforcements led by some strong leaders, such as al-Zubayr b. al-`Awwām. As the siege of the fort of Babylon[10] because protracted, with little prospect of an immediate breakthrough, al-Zubayr informed `Amr b. al-`Āṣ that in view of the long time it would take to obtain victory through siege-warfare and in view of the great obstacle the fortifications presented, the best way to obtain victory was to launch an unexpected and surprise attack against the enemy. He also informed `Amr of his willingness to volunteer: "I volunteer to break into the fort for God's cause.'

Together with a number of horsemen, he managed to climb the walls of the fort, reach its gate and prise it open before the guards could notice or react. Once the gate was prised open, Muslim soldiers hurried into the fort like a torrent, overwhelming the enemy army and inflicting a crushing defeat on it. Breaking into this fort was the deciding factor in the conquest of Egypt. [11]

`Amr was a very skilful leader who excelled in surprise attacks and was in many ways a pioneer in the field of such tactics. His operations relied on continuous reorganisation and clever staged manoeuvres that made enemies overestimate the power of the Islamic army. The application of this military principle was, in many cases, an important factor in shifting the balance of power and changing it in favour of the Muslims.

147

The battle of Babylon was one of those conflicts where tactics won over strong fortifications. The history of Islamic military operations is replete with instances of the clever and maximal exploitation of the factor of surprise in combat.

Surprise military attacks and the effect of these tactics on the acceleration of the conquest of North Africa

The Islamic army which set out to conquer North Africa -the then so-called "Black Lily"- was led by ʿAbdullāh b. Saʿd b. Abī al-Sarḥ and comprised some 20,000 men. This Islamic army was hugely disadvantaged vis-a-vis the Byzantine army, and the Byzantine commander, Gregorius, felt confident that with an army of over 100,000 men at his disposal, he could easily and immediately bring the enemy army's progress to a halt. But he failed to reckon with the talents of the brave Islamic leadership or to foresee that in some cases the genius of one man or a small group of men was far more effective than superiority in numbers.

At a place called ʿUqbah near Sbeiṭla, the two armies met and a drawn-out battle ensued. The fighting continued for days without either of the two armies establishing a clear and decisive supremacy. When the battle had dragged on for a long time, the Muslims received reinforcements led by the great Companion ʿAbdullāh b. al-Zubayr. Fighting continued from early in the morning till noon, then each army returned to its tents. When Ibn al-Zubayr was informed about the 'strategy of the battle', he told ʿAbdullāh b. Saʿd "It will take us a very long time to obtain victory; the enemy receives continuous reinforcements; this land is theirs and we are far away from ours. I propose that we leave some brigades in the tents and have the rest of the army go out and fight till the enemy tires. Those [initially] left back in the tents will then continue the fighting. Perhaps in this way we can attain victory, for 'war is deceit'. "ʿAbdullāh b. Saʿd approved of ʿAbdullāh b. al-Zubayr's stratagem and ordered its immediate implementation. It proved a massive success and resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Muslims. The Byzantines, taken by surprise by the offensive,

fled from the battlefield leaving behind their fortification and military equipment.[12]

The tactics of surprise attacks allowed the Islamic army to put a quick end to this battle and proceed to Sbeiṭla to root out those pockets of resistance that persisted. After that, the army moved to Qafṣah, whose people fortified themselves in the fort of al-Ajjam. When they surrendered and had to choose either to embrace Islam or pay tribute, they chose the latter option.

A wise leader does not make sheer power the focal point of his military strategy. Rather, he should seek to utilise and capitalise on the full range of military tactics, including those of evasiveness and surprise attacks. A knowledge of the psychology of one's adversary can also play an important and effective role in managing a quick and successful war.

The tactics of surprise attacks and their effect on the conquest of al-Shām

The Islamic military leadership developed and improved its fighting tactics in the wars they fought against the Byzantines in al-Shām. Surprise attacks and camouflage were some of the most important tactics used in those wars. The Byzantines were tempted to chase the Muslims, especially after the latter had left some spoils on the battlefield, but as soon as them Byzantines were out of their forts and strongholds, the Muslims launched a surprise attack, inflicting a crushing defeat on them.

At al- Ladhqyah, Abū ʿUbaydah used another form of surprise tactics. Holes were dug in the ground to conceal the horsemen and their horses, for the land around the city was a bare plateau and any movement of the cavalry would be detected by the town garrison.[13]

During the conquest of Damascus, the negotiations between the Muslims and Romans lasted for a long time and proved eventually fruitless. However, as soon as these negotiations came to an end, Khālid b. al-Walīd ordered his army to storm the city walls from the area of the Eastern Gate. The quick appearance of the Muslim forces on an unexpected front caught

the enemy unawares. This quick and unexpected manoeuvre resulted in the enemy's forces surrendering their weapons and accepting the conditions of the Muslim leadership with no resistance whatsoever.

Notes:

1- Al-Durrah, <u>Ma`ārik al-`Arab al-Kubrā</u>, p.235.

2- Khaṭṭāb, <u>al-Rasūl al-Qā'id</u>, p.451.

3.`Abd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 2: 601-602.

4. IBID., 2: 601; Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 3: 248.

5. Ḥāṭib b. Abī Balta`ah, a follower of the Prophet, MPBUH , fought in all the battles with the Prophet, and was one of the most accurate archers. The Prophet, MPBUH, sent him as a messenger to the Muqawqas. He died in Madinah in 30 A.H.

6.`Abdul-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 3: 392-393.

7. IBID., 4: 40.

8. IBID., 3: 342-348; al-Durrah, <u>Ma`ārik al-`Arab al-Kubrā</u>, p. 160.

9.`Umayrah, <u>Idārat al-Ma`ārik aw al-Istrātījiyyah al-Ḥarbiyyah</u>, p.13.

10. See al- Baghdādī, <u>Mu`jam al-Buldān</u>, 2:20.

11. Khaṭṭāb, <u>Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ al-Shām wa Miṣr</u>, p. 228.

12. Khaṭṭāb, <u>Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ Shamāl Ifrīqiyya</u>, pp. 54-61.

13. Khaṭṭāb, <u>Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ al-Shām wa Miṣr</u>, p. 63.

Chapter Two

Surprise Tactics in Modern Warfare

The effect of surprise attacks on modern wars

It is indubitable that surprise attacks played an important role during World Wars I and II. The best-known instance of such tactics in World War II is the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. On December 7,1941, the Japanese air force carried out a sudden and unexpected attack on the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. In less than two hours the American military and naval forces suffered many casualties and the loss of, or severe damage to, planes, battleships, light cruisers and other vessels.

Major General Ḥusām Suwaylim believes that surprise warfare tactics played an important role in the successful landing of the allied forces in Normandy and the subsequent liberation of France and the rest of Europe from Nazi occupation.[1] The allies embarked on a comprehensive operation of deception against North-Western Europe during the period from April 1943 to May 1945 with the aim of diverting the Germans' attention from the real purpose of their offensive operation against Europe, which started in Normandy with an immense landing operation by air and marine forces.

The allied plan included manifold subsidiary and complicated sub-plans, with a theatre of operations that extended from the North Cape to Cairo and from Moscow to Algeria, with the sole aim of dispersing the Germans' military efforts, forcing them to commit troops to areas and fronts other than, and away from, the planned sites of landing, and falsely luring them into the belief that the liberation of France was not a priority in their political and strategic plans, and that if such a liberation were to take place it would not start in Normandy.

The false political and strategic manoeuvring, on the one hand, and the surprise tactics, on the other, used by the allies were a major contributing factor to the enormous success of the massive air and marine landing operations which were to prove vital to the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation.[2]

Major General Ḥusām Suwaylim argues that "while the factor of surprise is necessary in launching an attack or waging a war against an enemy, it nevertheless needs a great deal of preparation in time of peace, including, most especially, the study of the

adversary's qualities, a total familiarity with areas of weakness and inadequacy in his strategy and military equipment and the devising of a strategy of effective and decisive surprise attacks that capitalises on [the knowledge of] these weaknesses and inadequacies."[3]

The element of surprise was also a capital factor in the success of the war Israel fought against the Arabs in June 1967. During this war, the Israeli air force destroyed most of the Egyptian military airplanes in a sudden and unexpected air attack. According to Major General Bahyi al-Dīn Muḥammad Nawfal, the element of surprise was a major factor in the successive Israeli victories in the 1948,1956 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars. He argues that:

"First, Israel realised the defence difficulties it would face in the event of a comprehensive Arab offensive from all sides, and, consequently, applied the principle of preventive war and pursued the strategy of surprising the Arabs with sudden attack before they were fully prepared and concentrating the offensive on one front while securing the others.

Second, Israel relied on quick transfer _ the main component in the tactics of surprise attacks _ of its armed forces from one front to another.

Third, Israel recognised the difficulty of a long war and as a result adopted the strategy of sudden attacks, counting on outside intervention to arrange a cease-fire and broker a truce after the success of its sudden strikes.

Given the great importance of the time factor in the event of a sudden Arab offensive, Israel made sure it took the initiative and was the first to strike, relying greatly on its air force and civil mobilisation.

Fourth, to avoid the possibility of an Arab attack by day, Israel relied on rapid movement and training for surprise operations by night".[4]

Military strategy experts believe that the next major war is most likely to start with a sudden attack. This obviously necessitates a situation in which the armed forces of each

state should be highly prepared and constantly alert, in case of such an event. Major General Khidr al-Dahrāwī emphasises this: "the outcome of future wars will be decided in the initial stages and such an outcome will depend on the degree of surprise achieved by the aggressor and the effectiveness of the weapons that he uses."[5]

Islamic military strategy and means of deterring outside surprise assaults

Nothing could be more seriously threatening to the stability and peace of a state in our modern age than a surprise military attack by another enemy state. In anticipation of such 'nightmare scenarios', countries contrive to put in place means of counteracting possible sudden attacks and the disastrous consequences that might follow from them. In our modern age, early warning systems, sophisticated means of reconnaissance and spying satellites are all used, either to track or to monitor any military preparations or movement of weaponry and armoured vehicles.

In the past, Islamic military strategy required full alertness, for it was a time of interminable strife with treacherous neighbours, and undeclared war was the rule. The Islamic scriptures urge the necessity of alertness and caution: "O ye who believe! Take your precautions" and "Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and beware." (al-Mā'idah: 92) These verses and others like them urge the believers to take all necessary precautions against their enemies, to make the necessary preparations in the event of a war, to go forth in parties, and not to hesitate or lag behind when in the act of fighting an enemy. The Islamic scriptures urge the necessity of taking precautions not only against outside enemies but also against those enemies from inside the Islamic community, for those who conceal their enmity can prove, by virtue of their concealment, a more dangerous threat to the security and stability of the Islamic community. Obeying the supreme leadership is essential and so is commitment to its orders. In addition to executing the commands of the leadership, great caution has to be exercised.

This concern with permanent caution and full alertness is perhaps best illustrated by the duty of prayer in time of war. The Islamic scriptures command in this regard: "When thou (O Apostle) art with them, and standest to lead them in prayer, let one party

of them stand up (in prayer) with thee, taking their arms with them: when they have finished their prostrations, let them take their position in the rear. And let the other party come up which hath not yet prayed - and let them pray with thee, taking all precautions and bearing arms: the unbelievers were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to assault you in a single rush." (4: 102) In connection with the implications of these verses, Major General Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn states that "Islam considers caution and alertness a matter of absolute importance and abhors negligence and slackness, its orders that the believers should take precautions even when they were performing prayers".[6]

In Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān [7] and in connection with the same verses quoted above, Quṭb states that "the first thing that draws our attention is the insistence on performing prayer on the battlefield on account of prayer being a strong weapon of combat, but to the extent that it is so it should be performed in a way that accords with [the circumstances of war]. Another matter that attracts our attention in this text is this complete spiritual mobilisation and caution of which the believers are advised against an enemy ever ready to seize the opportunity to launch a surprise attack against them. Yet, despite this warning, the believers were assured that they were facing an enemy destined for a humiliating defeat -'For the unbelievers God hath prepared a humiliating punishment.' (4: 102)

This combination of warning and reassurance and this balance between the need for both caution and confidence is a characteristic of the approach used to educate believers to appreciate that this moral mobilisation and constant alertness were not meant to be a source or cause of ordeal for the Muslims - "But there is no blame on you if ye put away your arms because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill." (4: 102?) Bearing arms in this case [i.e., when inconvenienced by rain or while sick] would be exacting and fruitless. It would be sufficient to take precautions and await God's help and victory. [8]

Ways and means of deterring surprise attacks

First, there should be in place early warning systems, security systems, intelligence and reconnaissance for the purpose of tracking and monitoring the military preparations of hostile powers. These systems would enable the Islamic High Command to:

a) obtain early information about the enemy, its intentions and offensive preparations and strategies.

b) deprive the enemy of having access to any information bearing on military strategy and the armed forces.

Second, there should be a continuous protection of the borders, army positions and vital installation.

Third, some army divisions should be constantly on the alert and ready for a prompt counter-move in the event of a surprise attack by an outside enemy.

Fourth, there should be in place a clear plan of rapid mobilisation of reserve forces to support active forces in time of war.

Fifth, perseverance and power. God commands: "O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and in constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other and fear God that ye may prosper." (3: 200)

Perseverance is a form of fighting and Islam attaches great importance to this form of struggle. The Prophet (God's MPBUH) said, "a day's perseverance for God's cause is better than all worldly goods"[9] and "two eyes will not be touched by fire: that which cries in fear of God and that which remains awake for God's cause."[10] He is also reported to have said, "a day's perseverance for God's cause is better than fasting for a month. Whoever dies in perseverance for God's cause will be considered a martyr on Doomsday."[11]

Perseverance means persistence in fighting and holding out in places most exposed to the attack of the enemy. The Islamic military leadership was constantly on the alert, for its enemies were always ready to strike whenever an opportunity for aggression offered itself. Perseverance was, and will continue to be, a necessary quality for fighting.

The concept of perseverance has no doubt acquired new meanings in modem times. It has now become a wider concept encompassing not only the efforts of, say, those actively fighting a war on a battlefield, but the efforts of all within a nation, for no place is now beyond the reach of a hostile strike. Nowadays, frontiers or geographical distance are no longer a barrier to the launching of a war by one state against another. Perseverance is a national duty and is therefore incumbent upon all individuals, each according to his field of work and specialisation.

Sixth, a state of full alertness should be always maintained.

The Prophet, MPBUH, set a perfect example of alertness when, one night, he was the first among the people of al- Madinah to rush to the source of an unusually loud sound that caused much alarm. In connection with this incident, Anas reported: "He was the best, the most generous and the most courageous. One night, the people of al-Madinah were alarmed by a sound and went out to determine what caused it. They were met by the Prophet, MPBUH, returning from the source of the sound, having already determined what it was, and saying: 'do not panic'."[12]

When the Islamic leadership launched its military conquests, it did so not with the aim of acquiring territory for the sake of sheer territorial expansion, nor with the aim of dominating neighbouring nations for the sake of oppression or domination itself, but, rather, with the intention of spreading a message and principles that Islam deems vital to the peace, stability and prosperity of the entire world. It is this conviction, together with a deep-rooted faith in a transcendent God, the source of all power and life, and the conviction that God was fighting on the side of those who pledged allegiance to his cause, that psychologically empowered the Muslim warriors and drove them towards the victories they had achieved in their various wars.

Notes:

1. <u>Majjalat al-Haras al-Watanī</u> (The Saudi National Guard Newsletter), 5th year, October 1994, no. 147, p.512.

2. IBID., p.53.

3. IBID.

4. IBID., 6th year, no. 32, July 1985, p.32.

5. IBID., September 1984, p.122

6. Maḥfūẓ, <u>al-Madkhal ilā al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Istrātījiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al-Islāmiyyah</u>, p. 172.

7. See Quṭb, <u>Fī Zilāl al-Qurʾān</u>, Sūrat al-Nisāʾ, 102.

8. IBID.

9. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Jihād</u> 73, Muslim in <u>al-Imārah</u> 163, al-Nisāʾī in <u>al-Jihād</u> 39, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in <u>al-Musnad</u> 1: 62, 65, 66, 75.

10. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>Fadāʾil al-Jihād</u> 12.

11. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Nisāʾī in <u>al-Jihād</u> 39, al-Tirmidhī in <u>Fadāʾil al-Jihād</u> 2, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in <u>al-Musnad</u> 2: 404, 5: 269, 6: 20.

12. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>.

PART FOUR

CHAPTER ONE

CONDUCT OF WAR AND OPENING OF HOSTILITIES: THE

ISLAMIC STRATEGY

CONDUCT OF WAR AND OPENING OF HOSTILITIES: THE ISLAMIC STRATEGY

What are the laws and rules of war Could a war start suddenly and unexpectedly, allowing thereby one belligerent party to take the other by surprise? Or does the opening of hostilities require notifying the enemy of the intention to wage war against him, in the event of his failure to comply with or fulfil some specific demands? Does war necessarily start only after political diplomacy has failed to secure a satisfactory solution to a conflict between two or more belligerent parties? Could hostilities commence without previous warning, and under what conditions is it lawful to start a war?

The Hague Convention of 1907 made crucial progress in the development of the laws of war and marked the start of international legal recognition of war rules and laws binding on all nations and persons. The most important of the several Hague Conventions was undoubtedly The Hague Convention No. IV of 1907, "Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land",[1] which codified the principles and laws of war on land and established a basic international normative core for the conduct of war. The 1907 pact has been generally accepted by the international community as binding upon all nations and all individuals. The rules and laws postulated therein account for the most ambitious effort to date to "define with greater precision the rules and customs of war on land" and continue to form the fundamental core of the laws of war in the present century. The Hague Convention of 1907, relative to the Opening of Hostilities, stipulates that:

i. The contracting Powers recognize that hostilities between themselves must not commence without previous and explicit warning, in the form either of a declaration of war, giving reasons, or of an ultimatum with conditional declaration of war (Article 1).

ii. The existence of a state of war must be notified to the neutral Powers without delay, and shall not take effect in regard to them until after the receipt of a notification ... . Neutral Powers, nevertheless, cannot rely on the absence of notification if it is clearly established that they were in fact aware of the existence of a state of war."

Modern war, it follows, starts in one of several ways:

1. It starts following a clear warning, whether in the form of a declration of war or an ultimatum. A certain period of time should be allowed to elapse after issue of the ultimatum.

2. It starts after a final warning. In fact, this benefit of the ultimatum is only nominal. The ultimatum could be so short that the effect of surprise would still be felt in the event of an eventual war. The period of the ultimatum was at times as brief as three hours, as was the case of Italy's ultimatum to Greece during WWII.

It is also legal that a country start military action against another country immediately after the ultimatum. This option was exercised by Germany throughout the Second World War, and Japan did likewise when it attacked the American Fleet in the Pacific Ocean.

3. Military action starts immediately. Prior to the Hague Conventions of 1907, it was often the case that wars were started without a previous warning or an ultimatum to the other belligerent party.

In Islamic strategy, war was also started in one of three ways:

1. Immediate commencement of hostilities. This would happen if war was started by an enemy or if the enemy violated a treaty or a truce. In the event of an enemy starting a war or violating a covenant, it was then possible to commene armed hostilities without the issuing of an ultimatum.[2]

An example of this comes from the Muslims' siege of the Jews of Bani Qurayẓah after the latter had violated a treaty with the Muslims by assisting the army of Quraysh at the battle of al-Khandaq. The Qur'ān depicts what befell the aggressors and how Allāh granted victory to the believers: "O ye who believe! Remember the Grace of Allāh, (bestowed) on you, when there came down on you hosts (to overwhelm you): But We sent against them a hurricane and forces that ye saw not: but Allāh sees (clearly) all that ye do." (33: 9) In retaliation for their conspiracy against the Muslims, the Prophet, MPBUH, ordered the Muslim army to lay siege to Bani Qurayẓah. The Muslims' siege

lasted for twenty five days and nights, and caused so much panic among them that they were unable to put up any organised resistance and soon surrendered.[3]

The conquest of Makkah provides a second relevant instance. The people of Makkah violated the treaty they had agreed with the Prophet, MPBUH, by attacking the Khuzā`ah tribe, an ally of the Muslims at the time. As a result of this treaty violation, the Prophet, MPBUH, decided to conquer Makkah. He ordered the Muslim army to start the march and when it approached Makkah, he said: "O God, let Quraysh know nothing about our coming so that we can take them by surprise."[4] This was what in fact happened. Quraysh knew nothing about the Muslim army closing in on Makkah and, suddently besieged from all sides, surrendered after a short-lived and vain effort to repel the conquering Muslim army. The Prophet, MPBUH, stood at the entrance of the Ka`bah and declared: "There is no God but Allāh, Who has no partner, Who fulfilled His promise, made His slave (Muḥammad) victorious, Honoured His soldiers and, alone, defeated the hostile parties." [5] He then recited the verse, "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Not that ye may despise each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allāh is (he who is) the most righteous of you." (49: 13) The unbelievers of Makkah were anticipating bitter reprisals for their past misdeeds and brutalies and were uncertain of the way the Muslims would treat them. Their fear and apprehensions were soon dispelled when the Prophet, MPBUH, proclaimed a general amnesty. Addressing a massive public gathering in the city, he asked: "'O people of Quraysh! what kind of treatment am I going to give you today?" They replied: "You are a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Only good could be expected from you." On this the Prophet, MPBUH, proclaimed: "Today you will not be punished by me. Feel quite free to go; all of you are free".[6]

ii. The start of war with a view to driving the enemy away from the land of Islam, in the event of his breach of a covenant. The Islamic scriptures advise: "If thou fearest treachery from any group, throw back (their covenant) to them, (so as to be) on equal terms: for God loveth not the treacherous." (8: 58) The implication from this verse is that the Muslims may commence hostilities against a group living amongst them, whom they fear and with whom there is a covenant, only after first revoking the covenant. Muslims cannot fight another group with whom there is a covenant without first renouncing in public that convenant; fighting this group without first renouncing the covenant and notifying such a group of such a decision would be considered a treachery. If those resident in an Islamic state on the basis of a covenant violate such a covenant by spying, murdering or engaging in acts of corruption, they are to be expelled to a safe place. The Islamic method of expatriating those who proved unable to honour covenants finds a modern equivalent in the deportation of the likes of foreign ambassadors and diplomats guilty of acts against the security of the state.

al-Tirmidhī and Abu Dā'ūd quote Salīm b. `Āmir as narrating: "There was a covenant between Mu`āwiyah, the Muslim ruler of Bilād al-Shām and the Byzantines. Mu`āwiyah marched towards the land of the Byzantines so that, once the covenant expired, he would be near anough to attack them. A man came on a horse, saying, "Allāh is Most Great, Allāh is Most Great; let there be faithfulness and not treachery." When they looked, they found that he was `Amr ibn `Anbasah. Mu`āwiyah sent for him and questioned him. He said: "I heard the Apostle of Allāh (PBUH) say: 'When one has a covenant with a people, one must not strengthen or loosen it till its term comes to an end, or one brings it to an end in agreement with them." [7] On hearing this, Mu`āwiyah ordered the army to halt its march and turn back.

Islam insists on keeping promises and honouring treaties and covenants. If the Muslims have a justifiable fear that another group might prove treacherous, they should disown in public the covenant binding them and this second group. Treachery and deception are strictly prohibited by Islam. By categorically proscribing treachery and deception, Islam guides mankind to great heights of honour, honesty, safety and

assurance. Islam does not sanction treacherous acts or attacks against those promised safety and security on the basis of covenants and treaties, nor does Islam terrorise unprepared opponents even when they are anticipated to prove treacherous.

iii. The invitation of a people to embrace Islam (the Da`wah) or the issuing of an ultimatum prior to declaring war.

First, it is mentioned in the Sunan that Sulaymān b. Buraydah was told by his father that when the Prophet of Allāh , MPBUH, appointed an army comander, he would exhort him to fear Allāh and to take good care of the Muslims under his leadership. Then the Prophet, MPBUH, would advise: "If you come face to face with the unbelievers, invite them to accept three things and if they accept one of them, do not fight them and let them go. Invite them to Islam, and if they accept, do not fight them. If they reject it, ask them to pay the Jizyah. If they agree to do so, do not fight them. If they refuse, Allāh will help you fight them." The same hadīth is recorded in Sahīh Muslim in Kitāb al-Jihād wa al-Siyar, Book 18, thus: Burayd narrated that when the Messenger of Allāh, MPBUH, appointed an army leader he would especially exhort him to fear Allāh and to be good to the Muslims in his charge. He would say: Fight in the name of Allāh and in the cause of Allāh. Fight against those who do not believe in Allāh. Wage a holy war: do not embezzle the spoils, do not break your pledge, do not mutilate (dead) bodies and do not kill the children. When you meet polytheist enemies, invite them to three courses of action. If they respond to any one of these, you also accept it and restrain yourself from harming them. Invite them to (accept) Islam; if they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them. Then invite them to migrate from their lands to the land of the Muhājirīn and inform them that, if they do so, they shall have all the privileges and obligations of the Muhājirīn. If they refuse to migrate, tell them that they will have the status of Bedouin Muslims and will be subjected to the Commands of Allāh like other Muslims, but they will not receive any share from the spoils of war or Fay' except when they actually fight with the Muslims (against the nonbelievers). If they refuse to accept Islam, demand from them the Jizyah. If they agree to pay, accept it from them and hold your hand. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek Allah's help and fight them." [8]

In a recorded ḥadīth,ʿAlī b. Abi Ṭālib is reported as having said before the battle of Khaybar: "O Prophet of Allāh! Shall we fight them till they become like us (i.e. Muslims)." The Prophet, MPBUH, said: "Wait till you meet them, then invite them to Islam for, by Allāh, if one single man were converted to Islam because of you, that would be better than [the outcome of] much fighting."

When the Prophet, MPBUH, sent Moʿādh b. Jabal to conquer Yemen, he advised him: 'Do not fight them till you have invited them to Islam. If they turn down your invitation, do not fight them unless they are the first to start the fighting. Even if they start, do not fight them unless they kill one of you. Then say to them: "Isn't there a better way than this? The converting of one man to Islam is better than all else." '

Thus, the invitation to embrace Islam is a precondition to starting war, for Allāh counsels: "Nor would We punish them until We had sent a messenger (to give warning)". (17: 15)

It follows from the above that it is mandatory in Islam to invite unbelievers to divine guidance before starting any military conflict against them. Fighting unbelievers only after inviting them to embrace Islam thus robs them of any excuse and reinforces the Muslims' conviction that the enemy is bent on fighting. This is what happened in the various battles in which the Prophet , MPBUH, and his successors took part. Muslims waged war against their enemies only after they had sent messages or messengers to enemy army commanders inviting them to embrace Islam. An example of this is the advice given by Abū Bakr to ʿIkrimah, the army commander Abu Bakr ordered to conquer Oman: "O ʿEkremah, go! and the blessing of Allāh be with you. Do not fight anyone who is granted safety. Let infidelity destroy itself."[9]

al-Ṭabarī wrote that it was the established norm that the Prophet, MPBUH, fought against the enemies of Islam only after calling them to Islam and that he invariably ordered Muslim army comanders to invite to Islam those incognizant of Allāh's religion. The Muslim army commanders invited polytheists to three courses of action and required response to any one of these three choices:

1. Accepting Islam as a religion and renouncing all forms of idolatry;

2. Paying the Jizyah;

3. War.

If belligerent polytheists accept Islam, then there is no ground for war. The Islamic scriptures exhort in this regard: "But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allāh." (8: 53) Acceptance of Islam would entitle the polytheists to the same rights as Muslims. Polytheists refusing to embrace Islam had to pay the Jizyah. The tribute for "free non-Muslims under Muslim rule" was equal in amount to the Zakāt required of Muslims. The Jizyah is a tax paid by non-Muslims living in a Muslim State or land that has come under the sovereignty and rule of the Muslims. To the extent that non-Muslims were exempt from paying the Zakāt imposed on Muslims and from joining the Islamic army, their payment of the Jizyah to compensate was seen as fair. It guaranteed them security and protection, and if the State could not protect those who paid Jizyah, then the amount paid was returned to them. Every member of Islamic society has to pay Zakāt which goes towards protecting the Islamic state, preparing armies and securing the borders, providing and maintaining public utilities, and assisting the unemployed, the sick, the handicapped and the needy. If Muslims accept the Zakāt, it is only equitable that the non-Muslims pay the tribute. Each individual Muslim takes part in protecting the state by joining the army and paying the Zakāt. To the extent that the non-Muslim enjoys safety and security under Muslim rule, enjoys protection inside and outside the country, and benefits from all the facilities provided by the state as well as social security in old age, it is only fair that non-Muslims (living in an Islamic state) should shoulder some of the financial burdens of the state. Thus, non-Muslims were not forced to accept Islam or to practise an islamic obligation; their obligation as residents of an Islamic state took the form of a tribute and not a charity. Islam took into consideration the fact that only Muslims joined the army and took part in the fignhting. Paying the Jizyah meant that there was, in principle, no resistance to the notion of Islam and that people were free to choose whether to accept the religion of the sovereign state or refuse it. It was thus only if Islam were rejected and paying the tribute were also resisted that war became the inevitable course of action.

Before waging a war, there should be an ultimatum of three days and during this period, the invitation to embrace Islam would be repeated. War would start on the fourth day unless the enemy chose to start it earlier.

al-Māwardī writes: "We are not allowed to fight those who have not been informed of the message of Islam. We are not allowed to start fighting before the message of Islam and its miracles are made known and we should establish the proof so that people may embrace Islam. If fighting starts before conveying the message of Islam to the enemy and before giving them an ultimatum, Muslims will have to pay ransoms for those killed as a result of a surprise attack"[10]

ETHICS OF WAR IN ISLAMIC STRATEGY

War in Islamic strategy has rules and ethics stemming from the high ideals of Islam and its supreme rules that the Islamic scriptures codified with a view to providing Muslims with a constitution in light of which they could organise their lives, manage their affairs, establish a fair, noble and just society and guide others to the straight path and the divine guidance. Among these ethics are:

1. Respect of and commitment to pledges and covenants. God commands in this respect: "O ye who believe! Fulfil (all) obligations." (5: 1) Promises and covenants should not be violated nor repealed and should not be subject to personal whims or caprices, nor be affected by private and selfish interests. Allāh says: "Fulfil the covenant of Allāh when ye have entered into it, and break not your oaths after you have confirmed them; indeed you have made Allāh your surety; for Allāh knoweth all that ye do." (16: 91)

Fulfilling covenants is a requisite factor in establishing and maintaining trust among people in times of peace and war. Without this trust, society would collapse and anarchy would dominate. Islam does not tolerate the repealing of covenants, on account of their being the basis of trust and peace among nations and groups. The repealing of covenants in the modern world is often justified in the name of the so-called 'interest of the state', but the ethics of war do not substantiate this justification, and they support the honouring of covenants.

The Prophet , MPBUH, invariably insisted on fulfilling convenanat in times of peace and in war and denounced treachery: "When all people are gathered on Judgement Day, a flag will be raised for the treacherous as a sign of their treachery." [11] He also said: "On Judgement Day, every tracherous person will have a flag raised for him, which will fly as high as his treachery." [12]

2. Prohibition of theft from the spoils of war, treachery, corruption and misappropriation of others' goods, money or property. Allāh says: "No Prophet could (ever) act dishonestly; if any person acts dishonestly, he shall, on the Day of Judgement, restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due – whatever it earned – and none shall be dealt with unjustly." (3: 161) Verses with the same message played a great role in the education of Islamic society. They, among others, caused soldiers to act honestly and to guard against all forms of treachery. It is reported that it was the common practice during the Islamic military campaigns that when a poor soldier got hold of a precious item, he would immediately hand it in to his army commander and would never contemplate misappropriating it for fear of denunciation on the Day of Judgenment.

After the battle of al-Qādisiyya, the spoils, including the treasures of the Persian king, were taken to Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ruler of the Islamic state at the time. `Umar looked at them and said to his soldiers: "people who bring this to their prince without keeping anything for themselves are honest people indeed." [13]

The Muslim warriors were committed to their faith, the law of Allāh, and were determined to spread it among all mankind. They were also committed to honesty and truthfulness in all they did, whether it was relative to their homes or to others' money, property or honour. Nothing less could be expected of an army ordered by religion to perform prayers on the battlefield, not to commit unwarranted aggression during a battle, and not to break treaties and covenants contracted with other groups. Nothing less than total honesty and truthfulness could equally be expected of an army whose leader invariably exhorted it at the start of a battle thus: "I order you to fear Allāh in all conditions because fear of Allāh is the most powerful weapon against the enemy?. Remember that Allāh knows all that you do. Therefore, avoid committing any sins for

you are fighting in His cause. Do not say that your enemy is too weak to dominate you. Allāh may invest a group with power over others, as was the case when the children of Israel disobeyed Allāh and he gave a free hand to the unbelievers: "they entered the very inmost parts of your homes, and it was a warning (completely) fulfilled." (al-Isrā': 5), and "Keep your armies away from corruption, Allāh would throw terror into their hearts. Do not let your men be false to their trust, because if they were, Allāh would allow them to be deafeated." [14]

3. Cessation of hostilities as soon as the enemy accepts Islam or agrees to pay the Jizyah. Allāh commands in this regard: "But if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression." (2: 193)

The Islamic war was waged in defence of the faith against those who stood in the way of its spread and those who sought to tempt the believers away from their faith. Those were the only conditions under which Islam sanctioned war, and those who were killed fighting such a war were considered martyrs, for they gave their lives in Allāh's cause and not in pursuit of any of the material aims for which mankind had always waged wars. War, in the case of Islam, is never for glory or domination on earth; nor is it for gain, or territorial expansion. Grounds or justification for war existed only as long as the enemy continued to oppose Islam and provoke Muslims, as is clear from the Islamic scriptures: "Say to the unbelievers, if (now) they desist (from unbelief) their past would be forgiven them." (8: 38)

4. Prohibition of the mutilation of dead bodies and the killing of women, children, the wounded and the handicapped. The Prophet, MPBUH, used to exhort Muslim soldiers before the start of fighting to "fight in Allāh's cause. Fight those who do not believe in Allāh. Fight but do not exceed the warranted limits. Do not act treacherously. Do not mutilate bodies or kill a newborn child." [15]

The Prophet, MPBUH, advised Zayd b. Ḥārithah, one of the Muslim army commanders, thus: "Do not kill a newborn child, a woman, an old person or a monk. Do not cut down trees or palm trees or demolish buildings." [16] On the day Makkah was

conquered, the Prophet , MPBUH, advised: "Do not kill the wounded or pursue anyone fleeing from the fighting. Do not kill a prisoner of war, and whoever stays indoors should be safe."[17] We understand from the Prophet's commands that the fighting army has one aim which it should pursue without exceeding normal limits. It is prohibited from:

1. killing those who do not take an active part in the fighting, such as women, children, the wounded and the handicapped.

2. acting treacherously against those assured of security and safety.

3. repealing a truce or a covenant except after an ultimatum and a declaration of war.

4. attacking monks in monasteries, for they are people of religion.

5. committing agression against land, such as cutting down trees, demolishing buildings and ruining fertile land.

6. mutilating the bodies of the enemy dead. Islam instructs that, man being an honoured creation of Allāh, dead bodies, including those of enemies, should be buried. Allāh says: "We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation." (17: 70)

Abū Bakr, the first Caliph, advised the army marching towards the land of the Byzantines: "O people, I advise you of ten things: do not act treacherously, do not commit aggression, do not exercise deception, do not mutilate bodies, do not kill a young child, an old man or a woman, do not cut down a palm tree or a fruit-bearing tree and do not slaughter a sheep, cow or camel except for food. You will pass by people who have devoted themselves to prayer, so do not harm them. Other people will invite you to eat all kinds of food; if you choose to eat something, mention the name of Allāh before eating."[18]

These are the ethics of war in Islamic strategy. The Muslim warriors hated treachery and despised treacherous enemies who had no qualms about breaking covenants. Islam instructs Muslims never to repeal a covenant no matter what objective they are pursuing. The Islamic injunction against treachery and deceit is grounded in the lofty principle that honourable goals cannot be achieved by ignoble means. Allāh hates treachery and treacherous people and enjoins in this regard: 'Allāh loved not the treacherous." (8: 58) Furthermore, Islam strictly bans the Muslim warrior from mutilating the bodies of his enemies, killing children, old people or women and throughout the Islamic campaigns, Muslim warriors conformed to the Prophet's saying: "Those who do not show mercy on the young and honour the old are not of us (the Muslims)" [19]

Islamic wars, we should note by way of a postscript, were essentially undertaken by Muslims in defence of themselves, their property, honour and state, rather than motivated by the need to expand the territories of the Islamic state or combat idolatry. The latter was combatted through the peaceful calling for divine guidance and persuasion, with hostilities opening only in the event of the enemy proving treacherous, and his belligerency, antagonism and conspiracy against the Islamic state failing to abate. The Muslims thus waged war on unbelievers not on account of their unbelief but on account of their animosity to the Muslims and their conspiracy to undermine and destroy the Muslim state. Whether they were defensive, with Muslims forced to take up arms in self-defence against aggression, or offensive, with Muslims taking the initiative in aborting anticipated conspiracies and plots of the enemy, Islamic wars were fundamentally induced by the enemy's belligerence, rather than by his disbelief.

NOTES:

1. <u>The Hague Convention of 1907-1949</u>.

2. Al-Māwardī, <u>al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah</u>, p. 35.

3. `Abd al-Hamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 4: 234-236.

4. IBID., p. 4: 397.

5. IBID., p. 4: 412.

6. IBID., p. 4: 12; Ibn Hanbal, <u>Musnad al-Imām Ahmad</u>, 4: 312.

7. Ibn Hanbal, <u>Musnad al-Imām Ahmad</u>, 4: 111.

8. This Hadīth is cited in <u>Sunan al-Tirmidhī</u>, 2: 401.

9. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>.

10. Al-Māwardī, <u>al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah</u>, 1: 42.

11. This Hadīth is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Adab</u>, 99, and by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Siyyar</u>, 28.

12. This Hadīth is cited in <u>Musnad Ibn Hanbal</u>, 2: 126.

13. `Umayrah, <u>Hādhā Huwa al-Tarīq</u>, p. 36.

14. Al-Māwardī, <u>al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyyah</u>, p. 44.

15. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. <u>Ahkām Ahl al-Dhimmah</u>, 1: 4.

16. IBID., 5: 144.

17. `Abd al-Hamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 4: 160.

18. Ibn al-Athīr, <u>al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh</u>, 2: 335.

19. This Hadīth is cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Birr</u>, 15, and by Ibn Hanbal in <u>al- Musnad</u>, 1: 257.

Chapter Two

The Concept of Security and Islamic Military Strategy

The Concept of Security and Islamic Military Strategy

Towards a definition of the concept of security in Islam & some general questions bearing on this concept

Discussion in this chapter will focus on the concept of 'security' as defined by Islamic military strategy. Our discussion of this issue will be both general and specific. As far as the general questions related to this matter are concerned, we shall start with the very question of 'rights of foreigners', both in their general nature as a religious and humanistic concept and in the sense in which Islam conceives of them.

Though the basis of the idea of rights of foreigners could be either purely humanistic, rooted in a concept of inalienable liberties and rights to which each person is entitled, or purely religious, representing and encompassing the divinely granted rights as expressed in the various monotheistic religions, the discussion here will focus primarily on the notion of 'rights of foreigners' as articulated in Islam.

A discussion of the Islamic concept of 'security of non-Muslims' is, in one way or another, inevitably linked to the broad concept of 'rights' of non-Muslims within an Islamic society. In broad terms, there are two approaches with regard to the question of 'rights' - a humanistic perspective, the outlook that defines and underlies the contemporary philosophy of human rights and constitutes one of the formative principles of a democratic and pluralistic political order, no matter how undermined that order might be by nationalistic and dogmatic considerations. The other is a religious perspective, fundamentally guided by the scriptural conception of the various monotheistic religions that all mankind is a single creation of God, and, to that extent, all creation is one in terms of its origin and aims and that there exists between all humans a natural regard and equality, the source of all those rights to which each human is entitled and all those obligations that each human has towards another human.

The philosophical bases of humanism and religion are indeed different, grounded in different conceptions of the world and the role of man within that world as well as different philosophical traditions and forms of thought and belief. While the humanistic tradition rests on a secular conception of man and the world, the religious tradition is rooted in a spiritual and metaphysical form of thought, and in an approach to the questions of human life that is fundamentally formed by the belief in a transcendent God. Nevertheless, both traditions meet in the concrete act of tolerance and mutual understanding and respect for the rights of others.

Before discussing the various questions pertaining to the concept of security as defined by Islam, and, by implication Islamic military strategy, let us enlist a few related general questions. Are there some basic and inalienable rights of security that all non-Muslims possess in Islamic societies? What responsibilities does such a right of security entail, and what attitudes and duties do Muslims expect from 'protected' individuals in a society formed according to the principles of Islam? What rights of security does Islam guarantee for non-Muslims within an Islamic society? Finally, what provisions does Islam make towards the security of non-Muslims within Muslim societies!.

The Islamic concept of 'security' of non-Muslims in an Islamic society corresponds more or less to what modern international law generally refers to as "the rights of foreigners". Foreigners are considered by modern international law as having "the definite right of enjoying the protection of the state they are residing in. The state should protect them against any aggressions and punish the aggressor. The state should preserve the aggrieved."[1]

First, what does the Islamic concept of 'security' entail? The Islamic scriptures lay down both a clear conception of what it means for a non-Muslim to be 'secure' within a Muslim society and a clear view of the obligations that Muslims, whether they be ordinary people or rulers of Islamic states, have with regard to the security of non-Muslims living or taking refuge in their midst. In particular, the principle of security under Islam guarantees for the non-Muslim, among other things, the right of protection against aggression,

177

killing, capturing, imprisonment and against violation of honour. Also, besides the freedom of worship and practice of one's religion, Islam pledges the protection of the non-Muslim's assets and property.

Sa`īd b. Jubayr [2] reported the following: "One of the unbelievers came to `Alī b. Abī Ṭalib, may God be pleased with him, and said, "would any of us be killed if he were to come to Muḥammad after the 4 months period fixed in your Books to listen to God's words or for some other purpose?," and Alī replied, "No, for God, be He raised far above, said, "If one amongst the Pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him so that he may hear the Word of God; and then escort him to where he can be secure." (9: 6)

Under Islam, the principle of security is not applicable only under certain specific conditions and for some specific purposes. Once granted, the security of an individual or a group remains in effect for the entire duration it was initially accorded, notwithstanding the unexpected outbreak, for instance, of war between the Islamic state and the state to which that person or group belongs. With regard to this point, Ibn Kathīr states in his Tafsīr [3] that "if a person comes to an Islamic country to deliver a message, conduct trade, seek conciliation, contract a truce or for some other purpose and if that person is a citizen of a country at war with the Islamic country and he demands from the Islamic ruler or his deputy that he be granted security, his demand will be met and he will be granted security for as long as he stays in the Islamic country and until his safe return home, because God, be He raised far above, commands, "Then escort him to where he can be secure" (9: 6)

Ibn Qudāmah[4] states in connection with the same point that "once enemies are granted security, killing them, confiscating their assets or harming them in any way is forbidden." The security of non-Muslims is one of the fundamental principles of Islam and one of the notions the Islamic scriptures repeatedly highlight and enjoin upon Muslims to respect. Even those enemies of Islam guilty of conspiracy against the Muslims and the Islamic faith were granted security for the time that they were on Islamic soil and escorted till they reached a secure place beyond the borders of the Islamic state.

Islam, we should note, extends the principle of security even to those who, at a previous time, have waged war against the Muslim state, conspired against Muslims with a view to undermining them and their Islamic faith, and driven them out of their homes and land. From the viewpoint of Islam, all people are characterised by the <u>fatrah</u>, and it is to this <u>fatrah</u> of people of other religious persuasions that Islamic da'wa appeals. According to the Islamic religion, once people are given a chance to hear the message of the Islamic scriptures, their <u>fatrah</u> will lead them to see the superiority of Islam to the religions or doctrines they professed It is in the light of this Islamic concept of <u>fatrah</u> that Islamic wars should be approached. The wars waged by Islam against its enemies were not undertaken with the express aim of forcing non-Muslims into accepting the Islamic religion but, rather, with a view to getting rid of those enemies of Islam who strove hard and resorted to oppressive measures in an attempt to stall the spread of Islam and to stop their people from listening to the Word of God as revealed in the Islamic scriptures, through the office of the Prophet Muḥammad, MPBUH,. The Islamic wars were, in other words, guided by the basic belief that only by eliminating those disruptive forces would the appropriate conditions be created for the Islamic message to be heard and for individuals freely to choose their faith.

The concept of security in Islam, Judaism and modern international law

The concept of security, including that of enemies, embodied by Islam, is unique of its kind and differs in a radical manner from what is advocated in, say, Deuteronomy: "When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace, and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labour for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it; and when the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the cattle and everything else in the city, all its spoils you shall take as booty for yourselves".[5]

The Islamic system of security is also different from the modern international law which stipulates that the start of hostilities between two belligerent parties necessitates or entails the suspension of all peaceful relationships between these two parties and the cutting off of all sorts of communication between them except for what is agreed upon in international treaties and conventions by way of non-hostile actions such as the use of the white flag and the discontinuing of war for limited periods of time to allow for the wounded to be evacuated for treatment and the dead to be evacuated for burial.[6]

The system of Islamic security for non-Muslims was enforced throughout the history of the Islamic conquests. It was granted, for instance, to the Christian delegations during the crusades and other wars. When such delegations called upon the Muslims for negotiations, they were treated with utmost respect and courtesy.[7]

The basic elements of security in the Islamic strategy

According to many Muslim jurists, the granting of security to an enemy is an act incumbent upon every Muslim. Both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah support this view. The Qur'ānic scriptures command in this regard: "If one amongst the Pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him so that he may hear the Word of God, and then escort him to where he can be secure." (9: 6) Also, the Prophet , MPBUH, states: "All Muslims are equal in security; whoever violates his covenants with a Muslim will be cursed by God, the angels and all people. God will not accept his deeds on the Day of Judgement."[8] In another version, the preceding tradition reads thus: "the Muslims are equal in blood. They help each other against their enemies and any of them may grant security."[9]

When Umm Hānī complained, "O people of God, I granted protection to my brothers-in-law and my brother wanted me to kill them", the Prophet , MPBUH, declared by way of a reply to her complaint: "We shall protect those to whom you granted asylum, for any Muslim, regardless of his position, can grant asylum." [10]

Zaynab, the daughter of the Prophet , MPBUH, granted asylum to her husband, Abū al-`Āṣ b. al-Rabī`, a deserter from the army of the Prophet, MPBUH,. Zaynab said: 'O people, I granted asylum to Abū al-`Āṣ b. al-Rabī`. The Prophet, MPBUH, was leading the people in prayer, and once the prayer was over, he said: "O people, have you heard what has just been said?" They replied, "Yes." He said, "Any Muslim can grant asylum, regardless of his position." Then he visited his daughter and advised her: "O my daughter, welcome him, but don't let him touch you for he is no longer your lawful husband."[11] The Tradition literature lists many other sayings to the same effect.

The Prophet, MPBUH, was strongly committed to the notion of granting security to those non-Muslims who sought it and constantly advised against breaking undertakings of security given to non-Muslims. He was quoted as saying: "If any one of you, regardless of his social position and irrespective of whether he is a free man or a slave, grants security to someone or makes a vow to him to that effect, he [i.e., the person granted or promised protection] will be secure till he hears the Word of God. If he were to accept Islam, he would be your brother in religion and if he were to reject it, then escort him to where he can be secure, and ask for God's help."

Under Islam, as might already have become clear from the Hadiths quoted above, the slave has the same right as a free Muslim of granting security. The jurists al-Shāfi`ī and Aḥmad b. Hanbal support this view, but Abū Ḥanīfah al-Nu`mān dismisses the claim that the slave is entitled to the right of granting security to others. The first opinion, however, is more in line with the Prophet's declaration that "the Muslims are equal in trust."[12]

Fāḍil b. Yazīd al-Raqqāsh said, "ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the ruler of the Islamic state at the time, prepared an army and I joined it. We besieged a certain place and it was obvious that it would fall into our hands in a day or so. A slave among us who happened to be near to our enemies talked to them in their own language. He granted them asylum by writing a vow to that effect down on a scroll and, using an arrow, shooting it in their direction. When they got it, they came out to meet us. We wrote to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb about the incident and ʿUmar said, "The Muslim slave is one of the Muslims and he is therefore entitled to grant security." A Muslim slave has therefore the same right as a free Muslim of granting security or asylum to a non-Muslim, including a member of a party against whom the Muslims are fighting a war.

If the right of Muslim individuals to grant security was the norm during the formative years of Islam – a period considered by some historians to have lasted till the end of the crusades – it would be proper to ask the important question of whether, given the many radical transformations the world has witnessed over the centuries, it would be appropriate or advisable for Muslim individuals still to retain the right to grant security to others in our modern age?

In an age when the interests of modern states conflict and often clash, and the spying contest between the various modern states is becoming more and more intense, the military secrets of a state, and by implication its stability, have never been more at risk, and the need for caution and vigilance is thus greater than ever before. Given the tensions characterising contemporary international politics and relationships and the active role of intelligence services as behind-the-scenes manipulators of international politics and agitators – the list of recent 'breach of security' incidents is extensive, with spying on allies becoming more and more common – the implications of granting asylum by a Muslim nowadays are, needless to say, rather different from those ensuing from a similar act some fourteen centuries ago.

According to some Islamic thinkers, the right of individuals to grant security may lead to breaches of state security and may consequently prove the source of much harm to the state. Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī argues in this regard that, in view of the many well-documented cases of state security breaches, "it would be preferable if individual citizens were not to retain the right of granting security on account of the great increase in population, modern governments' expertise in such matters, and the preoccupation of ordinary people with their own private concerns. While it is true that the basis of granting security is generally a potential benefit or interest, a rigorous evaluation of this interest within the context of intertwined international relationships and complicated world politics should be left to those rulers of the state with the power and authority over such matters". Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī adds that "the ruler's authority over the issue [of granting asylum to non-Muslims] is neither arbitrary nor despotic, for it is [in principle] constrained and guided by the need to secure an interest or gain a benefit, advancing the protection of the state against those who try to breach its security."[13]

Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī's argument is consonant with the state of the modern world. In an age when the institutions of modern states are each entrusted with specific functions, the sensitive issue of a state's security is nowadays universally the concern of specialised information-collecting, risk-forecasting and military and secret intelligence institutions, run by specialist groups expert in collecting and analysing information of all sorts so as to make the appropriate choices and correct decisions.

Islamic thinkers have put forward, for some centuries, arguments in support of the view that the right to grant security should be reserved to competent individuals and authorities and that, so as to protect the security of the state, ordinary persons should be denied this right. Ibn Ḥabīb, the Mālikī jurist, argues, "First and foremost, granting security should be the job of the ruling Imām." al-Lakhmī advances a similar argument: "Granting security should be the decision of the army commander after making consultations with others, for God, be He raised far above, said:[14] "And consult them in affairs. Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in God. For God loves those who put their trust [in Him]." (3: 159)

The various interpretations of the Qur'ān differ about the implications of this holy verse with regard to the notion of consultation. al-Qurṭubī says that the explicators differ about when 'exactly consultation should be made. According to TaẗT ah, it should be made when dealing with stratagems connected with war and when dealing with enemies. "Consulting them aims [merely] at raising their morale, for God's revelation to the Prophet, MPBUH, is sufficient and he is not really in need of consultation."

al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and al-Ḍaḥḥāk argue, "God's command to the Prophet, MPBUH, to seek consultation does not necessarily imply that the Prophet, MPBUH, requires the opinions of others. God wanted to instruct us in the advantages of consultation and there could never have been a better example for the Muslims to emulate than the Prophet, MPBUH,."[15]

The system of consultation has been an integral part of Western laws for centuries. There normally was a consultative council that advised and assisted the king or emperor in taking decisions affecting the state's internal or external affairs. The consultative council was in early times headed by a councillor chosen from among the clergy and, at a later point in history, from among the legal profession.

Identity of the asylum seeker: towards a definition

In the opinion of Muslim Jurists, the concept of 'security' was initially understood as applicable to a non-Muslim taking refuge with a Muslim or a group of Muslims after they gave him an undertaking that he would be safe and no harm would come his way while he remained under Muslim protection. The sense of the concept was arguably later extended to include whoever chose to reside temporarily or permanently in an Islamic state after being granted security by the competent authorities.

Under Islamic military strategy, security can be granted to an individual, a group of persons, the people of a besieged fort or town or the citizens of a neighbouring or distant country. The Islamic law allows granting security to a non-Muslim, whether he

believes in a monotheistic religion or is an atheist, whether that person is a man or a woman and whether he is a prisoner-of-war or not. Al-Shāfi'ī provides evidence in support of this conception of security in Islam. He states, "When al-Hurmuzān, leader of the Persians, was taken as a captive and brought in front of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb the then ruler of the Islamic state wanted to kill him on account of his frequent violations of the covenant between him and the Islamic army commanders. The captive asked for some water and when water was brought to him, he said, "I fear being killed while drinking," and ʿUmar said, "You will be safe till you have drunk." Then al-Harmazān spilt the water, said he didn't need it and that he wanted only to be granted protection. ʿUmar said, "I'm going to kill you." al-Hurmuzān said, "You granted me protection" and ʿUmar protested, "You are a liar". Anas b. Mālik, the great Companion, then said, "O Prince of the Believers, he's right. You granted him security. You can't hurt him" al-Zubayr testified to this and ʿUmar agreed, and so al-Hurmuzān was promised security.'[16]

According to some jurists, a captive can be granted security only by the governor of an Islamic state. The argument in support of this view is that only a governor can, by virtue of his position, act on behalf of all Muslims and for the general benefit of the total community; if individual ordinary people were to grant security to a captive, this would compromise the right of other Muslims and affect the general interest of the Ummah. The need for consultation in dealing with captives-of-war or enemies of Islam was urged by the scriptures: "So pass over (their faults) and ask for (God's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs. Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in God." (4: 159) Thus, the governor, after making consultations, grants security or abstains from so doing.

Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī says, "were the individual to have the right to grant security to a captive, this would cause confusion and chaos, especially in times of war when the ordinary person has no knowledge about the enemy's treatment of Muslim captives so as to behave in the same way. The modern international law, especially the Geneva Convention of 1929, stipulates that the captive is considered a captive of the state and the person or the army has no authority to grant him security. Thus, it would be more acceptable if the governor were to be the one responsible for granting security to a captive so as to prevent disagreement among Muslims.[17] This is in accordance with what God commands: 'If they had only referred it to the Apostle, or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have tested it from them." (4: 83)

The duty of a dutiful soldier in a Muslim army is to leave the matter of granting or denying security to those non-Muslims seeking it to the competent authorities. In all aspects of and issues relating to war, individual acts are often fruitless and futile. Decisions bearing on the critical issue of state security and the safety of its populace must not be taken hastily or individually and should be left to competent individuals or groups.

The rights of persons granted security in Islamic states

A person granted protection under Islam is entitled to a safe and dignified life within the broad frame of the rules and legislation laid down by Islam. He can engage in any lawful trade, but he is prohibited from practising usury or trading in items or products banned by Islamic religion and law, e.g., wine and pork.

A 'protected' male can marry a dhimmī woman and take her with him back to his native country. If a 'protected' woman were to marry a dhimmī, she would become also a dhimmī on account of her adoption of the husband's residence. This is in contrast to a 'protected' male marrying a dhimmī woman, for there is no guarantee that he would make an Islamic country his permanent domicile, as well as the possibility that he might divorce and leave her.[18]

These Islamic rules are no different from the rules regulating acquisition of citizenship in modern secular laws. Many of the laws related to citizenship stipulate that the wife automatically acquires the citizenship of her husband, the discretion or will of the wife notwithstanding.[19]

A person granted Islamic protection can file a lawsuit in case of a dispute between him and a second 'protected' party or between him and a Muslim about, say, rights of trade, property or some other matter. During the formative years of the Islamic state, the judge, according to some jurists, had the option either to judge between them or to decline to interfere, in accordance with God's command: "If they do come to thee, either judge between them, or decline to interfere." (5: 42) Nevertheless, the prevailing option then was that the judge was under obligation to pass a judgement in case of disputes of this kind, since the state that granted security to a person is obliged to protect him against oppression and injustice, and the passing of a judgement was one way of correcting wrongs and instituting justice in line with God's command: "And this (He commands): judge thou between them by what God hath revealed." (5: 49)

Once the revelation of the Islamic scriptures was completed and the Islamic state was fully formed, it was necessary to pass judgement on anyone residing within an Islamic state and benefiting from its protection, in compliance with God's orders: "And this (He commands): judge thou between them by what God hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which God hath sent down to thee." (5: 49)

These Islamic principles are obviously in total accord with the substance of the 1949 Geneva Convention, article 42, which stipulates that foreign nationals, including captives and prisoners of war, have the right to file a lawsuit (whether as defendants or plaintiffs). The difference, however, is that while this right was not safeguarded by modern international law till the 20th century, it has been an integral part of the Islamic law since the inception of the Islamic religion some fourteen centuries ago.[20]

Obligations of non-Muslims benefiting from Islamic security

Law in Islamic countries is in keeping with the injunctions of Islam as laid down by the Islamic scriptures and the Tradition. This naturally raises the serious question of the application of a law grounded in Islamic principles in the lives of those with a different religious persuasion than Islam. Important to point out first is the observation that every society, irrespective of the ideals towards which that society strives, has limits of tolerance beyond which it will not or cannot go. All societies live and abide by some basic convictions and principles whose rejection or suppression they cannot easily sanction; in Islamic countries this principle is Islam and the set of laws flowing from it. In Islam the limits of tolerance are clearly articulated: society cannot exist and run without an explicit and institutionalised reference to God and the laws defined in the Islamic scriptures. Thus, while the Islamic scriptures insist that "there is no compulsion in religion", they also insist that non-Muslims living within a Muslim society must be willing to accept a social and legal structure based squarely on Islamic beliefs.

Nevertheless, in line with Islam's call for the establishment of a pluralist society based on the recognition of equal rights and obligations for all men and women, irrespective of their religious, racial, ethnic, social or cultural background, and on a humane social order, Islamic law is not indiscriminately enforced, with no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims.

A person granted asylum in an Islamic society would be subject to the same laws applicable to Muslim citizens, save those laws prescribing specific punishment for specific 'crimes' against the Islamic religion by Muslims. Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī argues in this regard: "the person granted asylum is treated by the legal Islamic system in the same way as others [Muslims], except in case of crimes like the consumption of alcohol and the commission of adultery and theft for which there is a specifically religious punishment. The Muslim ruler is under no obligation to enforce a religious law against a person granted protection as that person's stay is only temporary. However, with regard to civil and criminal responsibilities, the person granted protection is treated like Muslims and non-Muslims enjoying Muslim protection. This is for the good of the whole community

and with a view to curbing criminal acts."[21]

Under Islam, a person benefiting from Islamic protection is under obligation to respect the laws of Islam and the customs of Muslims, to abstain from anything potentially insulting to the Muslims, and to refrain from any act clearly aimed at undermining the Islamic faith. He is also under obligation not to assist an enemy in a war against or a conquest of an Islamic state. He must not disclose any information, were he to be in possession of it, about the whereabouts of Muslim weapons and equipment to an enemy. Furthermore, were he to commit a crime or break the law during his residency in an Islamic state and while benefiting from that state's protection, he would be tried in court in accordance with the Islamic law, and if convicted for the crime(s) for which he was formally charged, his stay would be cancelled and he would be deported after serving the sentence imposed on him for his crime(s). Also, a person granted security is not free to proselytise among Muslims within Muslim states and would be prosecuted for such acts of extreme provocation as wounding the religious sensibilities of Muslims by denying the truth of the Islamic scriptures or denigrating the Islamic religion.

Notes:

1- Sulṭān, <u>al-Qānūn al-Duwalī al-ʿĀmm fī Waqt al-Silm</u>, 396.

2. IBID.

3. Ibn Kathīr, <u>Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr</u>, 4: 119.

4. Ibn Qudāmah, <u>al-Mughnī</u>, 8: 396.

5. Junaynah, <u>Qānūn al-Ḥarb wa al-Ḥiyād</u>; Ghanīm, <u>Mabādi' al-Qānūn al-ʿĀmm</u>.

6. Junaynah, <u>Qānūn al-Ḥarb wa al-Ḥiyād</u>, p. 107ff; Ghanīm, <u>Mabādi' al-Qānūn al-ʿĀmm</u>, p. 596.

7. Al-ʿUmarī, <u>al-ʿAlāqāt al-Siyāsiyyah al-Duwaliyyah.</u>

8. Al-Bukhārī, <u>Fatḥ al-Bārī; Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</u>, 6: 215.

9. Al-Nisāʾī, <u>al-Musnad,</u> 8: 4.

10. Al-Bukhārī, <u>Fatḥ al-Bārī; Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</u>, 6: 209.

11. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>, 2:658.

12. Ibn Qudāmah, <u>al-Mughnī,</u> 8:297.

13. Al-Zuḥaylī, <u>'Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p.243.

14. Al-Qurṭubī, <u>Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī</u>, 8:76.

15. IBID

16. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī</u>, 4:218; al-Bayhaqī, <u>Sunan al-Bayhaqī</u>, 9: 96.

17. Al-Zuḥaylī, <u>'Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p. 245.

18. Al-Murghinānī, <u>Fatḥ al-Qadīr; Sharḥ al-Hidāyah</u>, 4:3 52.

19. ʿAwdah, <u>al-Tashrīʿ al-Jināʾī fī al-Islām</u>, 1: 309.

20. Sulṭān, <u>al-Qānūn al-Duwalī al-ʿĀmm fī Waqt al-Silm</u>, p. 395.

21. Al-Zuḥaylī, <u>'Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p.253.

Chapter 3

THE ENDING OF WARS & RECONCILIATION: THE ISLAMIC
MILITARY STRATEGY'S APPROACH

Islamic Miliatry Strategy and the Ending of Wars

In what sense does Islamic military strategy understand a cessation of hostilities or the ending of a war? How is reconciliation approached and effected between Muslims and a second belligerent party? Is reconciliation a legitimate act in Islam? and if so, what are the means needed to bring a war to an end?

In modern times, war usually terminates with a peace treaty signed by the belligerent parties whereby they agree to bring the state of war to an end and resume peaceful negotiations and/or relations between them. War, from the perspective of Islamic military strategy, is an incidental state-of-affairs and peace the normal order.

Peace is one of the central principles around which the philosophy of Islam is built and one of the notions that dominate the Islamic scriptures: "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou incline towards peace and trust in God." (8: 53); "And say not to any one who offers you a salutation 'Thou art none of a believer'" (4: 94); "O ye who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly" (2: 208). From the perspective of the Islamic religion, responding to God's command and submitting to His will entail entering into a world of peace, security, assurance, contentment and stability as well as a world free of anxiety and incertitude.

In the formative years of Islam, Islamic military strategy was both a response and a strict implementation of God's commands as revealed in the Islamic scriptures. Thus, for the Islamic leadership, the scriptural command to pursue peace meant making and maintaining peace with, for instance, the unbelievers in Ḥudaybiyyah for 10 years, even though such a peace clearly did not advance the cause of the Muslims.

The Islamic leadership also made peace with the Jews of Khaybar as well the people of Najrān. The Islamic leadership continued to adopt the same strategy in the period following the death of the Prophet, MPBUH,. In a message to al-Ashtar al-Nakh`ī, whom he had appointed ruler of Egypt, `Alī b. Abī Ṭālib advised him of the need to "make peace if the enemy inclines towards it and if it pleases God, for such a peace will bring comfort to your soldiers, relieve you of some of your cares, and bring security to

your country. But beware of your enemy after making peace, for the enemy may feign commitment to peace and [eagerly] wait for the chance to take you by surprise. So, be firm and do not trust your enemy."[1]

Throughout the ages, the Islamic leadership showed a willingness and readiness to pursue peace as a means of overcoming and avoiding evil and suffering. Under Islamic military strategy, war can be brought immediately to an end in any of these situations:

1- If the enemy embraces Islam. When Rab'ī b. `Āmir, herald of the Islamic army, met Rustam, commander of the Persian army, the latter asked, "Why did you come to us?," and Rab'ī replied, "God has sent us to lead His slaves to the right path so that they can worship Him alone. We want people to have a comfortable life and benefit from the justice of Islam. We will not fight whoever accepts this. [But] we will fight those who fight us till God's promise is fulfilled". When Rustam asked, "What did God promise you?," the Muslim herald replied, "Paradise for our martyrs and victory for those among us who survive [the fighting]."[2]

It can be understood from this that war can be stopped immediately if the enemy chooses to embrace Islam. It should, however, be understood that embracing Islam is a matter of free choice, for the Islamic scriptures declare: "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error." (2: 256)

On issuing orders to his army commanders, the Prophet, MPBUH, used to advise, "when you meet your enemies, ask them to accept one of two conditions. If they do, do not fight them. Ask them to embrace Islam. If they turn you down, then ask them to pay tribute (Jizyah). If they agree to pay it, do not fight them. If they refuse, put your trust in God and fight them." [3]

2- The Prophet, MPBUH, is reported to have declared, 'I was commanded to fight people till they said "there is no god but God"'. If they say it, their lives and money will be protected and God will judge them."[4] In accordance with this tradition, an acceptance of the absolute oneness of God is thus a sufficient ground for stopping the fighting and ending the state of war.

3- The Prophet, MPBUH, used to advise army battalions and brigades thus: "If you see a mosque or hear the call to prayer, do not make war."[5] In line with this, the presence of a mosque in a town is also sufficient grounds for bringing the fighting to an immediate halt. The presence of a mosque indicates that the people of that town are Muslims, and Islam forbids war between Muslims.

But what form should acceptance of the absolute oneness of God on the part of non-Muslims take? From the viewpoint of Islam, a simple declaration (shahādah) 'there is no god but God' or 'I embrace Islam', irrespective of whether it is the expression of a genuine commitment or simply feigned, suffices for the person making that declaration to be considered as a member of the Muslim community and therefore entitled to protection. Al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad is reported to have said to the Prophet, MPBUH, "What if I meet one of the unbelievers and he fights me, cuts off my hand, then takes refuge behind a tree and announces "I embrace Islam". Should I kill him or not?" The Prophet, MPBUH, replied, "You should not kill him". I said, "O Prophet of God, but he has cut off my hand"; the Prophet, MPBUH, repeated, "You should not kill him". Thus, from the viewpoint of Islam, even when a person is only feigning his acceptance of the doctrine of God's oneness so as to escape killing or captivity, he is still entitled to protection. Abū Dāwūd also reported another story about Usāmah b. Zayd who said, "I was in a brigade sent by the Prophet, MPBUH, to al-Ḥurkāt, a village near al- Madinah. The people there learnt about our coming and ran away. We caught a man who then declared, "There is no god but God", but I still killed him. When the Prophet, MPBUH, learnt about this, he inquired, "Did the man say 'There is no god but God' and you still killed him?" I said, "O Prophet of God, he said it for fear of being killed". The Prophet, MPBUH, then asked, "Did you look into his heart to see if he really meant it or not?" The Prophet, MPBUH, repeated this several times."[6] In an effort by the Islamic leadership to avoid bloodshed, the normal practice was to give those who declared acceptance of Islam the benefit of the doubt and not to seek to determine their real convictions.

If anything, this clearly shows the eagerness of the Islamic leadership to make peace and avoid a state of war by all possible means. The Islamic scriptures warn of the dire

consequences of feigning submission to the will of God: "For recantation God will exact from him the penalty." (5: 95) and also "any one who violates his oath does so to the harm of his own soul, and any one who fulfils what he has covenanted with God - God will grant him a great reward." (48: 10)

Thus, the Prophet, MPBUH, accepted those hypocrites who feigned acceptance of the Islamic doctrine of the absolute oneness of God but hid their real convictions. The scriptures refer to those who embraced Islam only to gain protection: "They uttered blasphemy and they did it after accepting Islam; and they meditated a plot which they were unable to carry out." (9: 74) al-Bukhārī wrote that "if someone accepts Islam only out of fear of being killed, he will gain nothing in the other world.[7] Worldly judgement should be made according to what it is apparent, for God, be He raised far above, said, "The desert Arabs said, 'We believe'. Say 'Ye have no faith; but ye say, "We have submitted our wills to God." (49: 14)

Second, if non-Muslims are willing to pay tribute:

The payment of tribute was not a novel concept appearing with the advent of Islam. It was normal practice among the people of Israel, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Persians, well before Islam came. Kisrā Anū Shirwān was the first king to impose tribute and organise a system of taxes. Thus, the system of paying tributes preceded the advent of Islam and was an accepted practice among other nations.[8]

According to some historical sources, tribute became part of Muslim canon law in the eighth year of Islam. The first to pay tribute among the People of the Book were the people of Najrān, the people of Aylah and Adhruḥ and the people of Adhru'āt in the aftermath of the battle of Tabūk.

Tribute in Islam was a kind of tax levied on Muslim people living within the Islamic state and benefiting from Muslim protection.

Tribute was paid towards securing the protection of the Islamic state. Those non-Muslims who paid tribute were not requested to take part in defending the Islamic state.

195

Tribute was not a kind of penalty imposed by the Islamic state on those who refused to accept Islam, as some orientalists claim. Nor was it imposed with the intention of humiliating those non-Muslims living in the Islamic state. As clear evidence that tribute was only paid in return for Muslim protection, it was cancelled whenever the Islamic state failed to provide protection for non-Muslims.

Cancellation of tribute paid by non-Muslims benefiting from Muslim protection

A. Tribute was cancelled if the Islamic state failed to defend the non-Muslims under its protection. Abū `Ubayda, the Muslim army commander, sent a message to the Muslim rulers asking them to return to the non-Muslims the tribute they had paid. He also sent a message to the non-Muslims stating, "we return your money to you because we have learned that the Byzantines have great forces near the borders of your countries. The tribute was in return for protecting you. Now that we are unable to defend you, we return your money to you. We will keep our promise if God helps us attain victory over them."[9] During the crusades, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī returned the tribute to the Christians of al-Shām, when he had to withdraw his forces from it.

We conclude from the above that tribute was not imposed by the Islamic state with the aim of humiliating those who refused to accept the Islamic religion, nor was it an act of oppression on the part of the victorious Muslims. It was in return for a specific service the Muslims rendered to those non-Muslims living under the protection of the Islamic state.

B) The tribute was cancelled if the non-Muslims accepted Islam and embraced monotheism, in accordance with the Prophet's pledge; "No Muslim will pay a tribute." In another version, this pledge reads "whoever accepts Islam will pay no tribute."[10]

To one of the Muslim rulers who wanted to continue collecting tribute from non-Muslims after they had accepted Islam, the Caliph `Umar b. `Abd al-`Azīz sent a message saying, "God has sent Muḥammad as a herald and not as a tax collector. As soon as you receive

my message, stop collecting the tribute from those among the non-Muslims who have accepted Islam".

The non-Muslims did not have to pay tribute for the period that preceded their acceptance of Islam, in compliance with the scriptural command "Say to the unbelievers, if they desist (from unbelief), their past would be forgiven them." (8: 39) When `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb learnt about one of the non-Muslims being asked to pay tribute even after he had accepted Islam, he declared that "Islam is a refuge" and ordered that the man should not pay tribute. Thus, embracing Islam entails the automatic cancellation of tribute and cessation of fighting.

C. The tribute is cancelled if non-Muslims take part in defending the homeland. Non-Muslims joining the Islamic army for the purpose of defending the homeland are exempted from paying tribute. Suwayd b. Muqrin, one of the Muslim army commanders during the rule of `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, sent a message to the people of Jurjān saying: "You will have our protection, but every adult of you will have to pay the tribute every year. If any of you were to take part in defending the homeland, he would not have to pay the tribute and his wife and money would be protected. Nothing could change this."[11]

The tribute was thus cancelled if non-Muslims took part in defending the homeland against an act of aggression from an outside adversary. In addition to being exempted from paying the tribute, non-Muslims taking part in the defence of the motherland would also be entitled to their own share of the booty just like any other Muslim.

Surāqah b. `Amr's agreement with the people of Armenia in 22H included the condition that they would be exempted from paying the tribute only if they took part in defending the Islamic motherland. In his reference to this agreement in his 'History', al-Ṭabarī wrote: "Surāqah made the condition that they would be exempted from paying the tribute only if they were to fight [to protect the Islamic state] in the event of aggression."[12]

According to al-Zuḥaylī, "this shows that non-Muslims living in the Islamic countries today, committed to doing military service and taking part in fighting against enemies, do not have to pay tribute."[13]

D) The tribute is cancelled in case of permanent disability, old age, illness or loss of sight. When ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb saw an old non-Muslim asking for charity at the doors of mosques, he said to him, "It would not be fair if we took tribute from you". Then, he ordered that money from the treasury be given to him. Women, children, priests, monks and deacons did not pay the tribute.

Khālid b. al-Walīd sent a message to the people of al-Ḥīra in which he stated, "If an old man stops working or becomes ill, or if he was rich and then becomes poor and receives charity from the people of his religion, the tribute will not be collected from him, and he and his children will be supported by money from the treasury for as long as he remains a resident of Islamic territory."[14] In fact, the principles of Islamic justice and the requisites of mercy necessitated that the tribute should not be collected from such people, in accordance with the Islamic scriptures' insistence that, "On no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear". (2: 286)

The tribute paid by non-Muslims benefiting from Muslim protection amounted to little in comparison with what the Muslims had to honour by way of financial and other obligations. In addition to performing such duties as military service, Muslims had to fulfil the duty of obligatory almsgiving (zakāt) and voluntry almsgiving (sadaqāt). In Muslim canon law, obligatory alms are set at one fortieth of a man's income in money or kind. Al-Zuḥaylī says, "The small tributes [imposed by the Islamic state on non-Muslims] pale into insignificance when compared with the arbitrary war fines and exorbitant indemnities imposed on defeated parties by modern countries at the signing of peace treaties. For example, The Treaty of Frankfurt stipulated that France should pay 5 billion old Francs in war fines.[15] There is also a considerable difference between the Islamic principle of mutual consent when making peace and what the world has seen by way of post-World-War II peace treaties, the so-called "unconditional surrender",

whereby the defeated country has to comply unconditionally with the terms of the peace treaty as dictated by the victorious country."[16]

Notes:

1. Ṭālib, ʿAlī b. Abī, <u>Nahj al-Balāghah</u>, 2:140.

2. ʿUmayrah, <u>Hādha Huwa al-Ṭarīq</u>, p.26.

3. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Tirmidhī, 2: 401.

4. This Ḥadith is cited by Muslim in <u>al-Imān</u> 32, 36, al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Imān,</u> 17-38.

5. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Nisāʾī in <u>al-Imān,</u> 5006.

6. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Ghazawāt</u>, 5: 83.

7. Al-Bukhārī, <u>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</u>, p.64.

8. Ibrāhīm, <u>Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyāsī</u>, 1: 605.

9. Madkūr, <u>al-Madkhal li al-fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p. 50.

10. This Ḥadith is cited by al-Tirmidhī in <u>al-Zakāh,</u> 633.

11. al-Zuḥaylī, <u>Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, from Tafsīr al-Manār, 7:297

12. Al-Ṭabarī, <u>Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk</u>, 3: 236.

13. Al-Zuḥaylī, <u>Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p. 699.

14. Al-Murghinānī, <u>Fath al-Qādir: Sharh al-Hidāyah</u>, 4: 372.

15. Al-Zuḥaylī, <u>Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p. 701.

16. IBID., p. 704.

Chapter Four

Treatment of Prisoners of War in Islam

The Treatment of Captives in Ancient and Modern times

In ancient times, captives of war were either slain, offered as sacrifices to the gods or traded as slaves. The Persians treated their captives with utmost cruelty, often killing them after torturing them. Similarly, the ancient Greeks behaved towards their captives with notable brutality, often killing their captives and leaving their bodies in the wild for animals to feed on. The treatment of captives by the Arabs during the Pre-Islamic era was no different in harshness and ferocity from that of the Persians or the Romans .

However, the Arabs' treatment of prisoners of war changed radically with the advent of Islam, which called for the establishment of a political and social order based on a mutual recognition of the rights of all. The Islamic scriptures valued man and honoured him: "We have honoured the sons of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation." (17: 70)

Abū ʿAzīz b. ʿUmayr reports the following: "My brother Muṣʿab b. ʿUmayr and another man were passing me by when Musʿab said to him "Treat him kindly". I was taken a captive by the Muslims during the battle of Badr. Every time they had lunch or dinner, they would give me bread and dates because the Prophet, MPBUH, asked them to look after us. If one of them had a piece of bread, he would give it to me."[1]

The Islamic scriptures proscribe and condemn the torture or inhumane treatment of captives of war, including the willful causing of great suffering or serious injury to health or the willful deprivation of prisoners of war of food and water. The humanity of Islam towards prisoners of war is perhaps best illustrated by the Prophet's treatment of the captives from the Banī Qurayẓah and his orders to his men: "They have suffered enough during the battle. Seat them in the shade.'[2]

ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, tried to deal with the issue of captives. He initiated negotiations with the Byzantines with a view to examining and resolving the issue of prisoners of war falling in the hands of both sides in previous campaigns launched in Asia Minor during the reign of former rulers.[3]

International Law and the Treatment of Captives of War

The humane and merciful treatment of captives proclaimed by Islam is in total accord with the conduct and behaviour called for by modern international law which prescribes that captives should be protected at all times and that they should be treated with kindness and humanity.

The Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War on Land in 1907 (articles 4 - 20) and the Second and Fourth Geneva Conventions in 1929 and 1949, respectively, regulated the treatment of prisoners of war. Article 12 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) demands that captives should be protected from any aggression or torture, and that "The prisoners of war are under the authority of the enemy state, not the authority of the individuals or military units that arrested them. The enemy state is held responsible for their treatment."[4]

Article 13 of the same Geneva Convention states that prisoners of war should be treated humanely at all times. Any act of violence against them on the part of the state holding them that might lead to death or that might endanger their lives is strictly prohibited and considered a serious breach of the laws of the Convention.[5]

The Convention also strictly prohibits the mutilation of any organ of a prisoner of war or the use of him in any kind of medical experiments not approved by the medical authority entrusted with the treatment of prisoners of war.[6] Under the provisions of the Geneva Convention, prisoners of war should be protected at all times, especially against acts of violence, insult and public degradation. International law also prohibits all acts of retaliation against prisoners of war. These measures of protection were commanded by Islam long before modern international law called for them.[7]

Detention Camps for Prisoners of War

Islam commands that prisoners of war should be tied up to prevent them from escaping. The early Muslims did not have at their disposal special places or centres for detaining prisoners of war and, consequently, they either held them temporarily in mosques till it was decided what to do with them or, as in most cases, they were entrusted to individual Muslims to guard and look after. However they were held, Muslim leaders saw to it that they were well treated during their captivity, as some famous incidents from the formative years of Islam testify.

al-Bayhaqī reports that, on seeing the captive Abū Zayd Suhayl b. `Amr of Badr in the Prophet's house, with his hands tied up behind his neck, Sawdah bint Zam`ah could not help saying to him: "Abū Zayd, you gave yourself up and you surrendered your hands. Why did you not die nobly?". Then the Prophet, MPBUH, distributed the captives among his companions and said to them, "Do good unto them."

al-Bayhaqī reported that Ibn `Abbās mentioned the following story. On the day of the battle of Badr, the captives were tied up. Among them was al-`Abbās, the Prophet's uncle. The Prophet of God stayed up late that night. His companions asked him, "O Prophet of God, why don't you go to bed?' The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "I heard the moaning of al-`Abbās." Some of the companions went and untied him. He stopped moaning, and the Prophet, MPBUH, went to sleep."[8]

Dr. Wahbah al-Zuhaylī says, "Tying up the prisoner of war in such instances is not a violation of the international law which states that the prisoner of war should be tied up only if he is found to be hysterical. Tying up captives in the early years of Islam was only a means of preventing them from escape, because there were no special centres built for the purpose of detaining them. Therefore, tying up the captive was a temporary measure that was adopted till the war ended. If this had not been done, the captive would have escaped'[9]

Al-Bayhaqī says that one of the captives escaped from ʿĀ'ishah's room. When the Prophet, MPBUH, came, he said to her, "Where is the captive, ʿĀ'ishah?" She said, "I was talking with some women and he seized the opportunity to run away." The Prophet, MPBUH, sent some horsemen to look for him and eventually recaptured him.

This procedure is also followed by countries in modern times. The state has the right to take the necessary precautions to prevent the escape of prisoners of war and the possibility of their joining the army of the enemy again. Prisoners of war may be put under surveillance or detained in a safe place such as a castle or a fort.

The ground rules for treating prisoners of war laid down by Islam are rooted in the sublime principles of humanity, justice, and equality advocated by this religion. These principles consider war a means of spreading God's religion and His Word throughout the world.

The provision of food, clothing and trial for prisoners of war

The principles of Islam emanate from the belief that all humans are a creation of God and that the most virtuous of these humans are those who honour His creation. The Holy Qur'ān, urges Muslims to feed prisoners of war and considers compliance with this scriptural command as an indication of a strong faith: "And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive (saying), "We feed you for the sake of God alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks." (76: 8-10)

Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Muslim report: "Thaqīf took two of the Companions of the Prophet, MPBUH, as captives. The Muslims also took a man form the Banī ʿĀmir as a captive. While the Prophet, MPBUH, was passing, the captive said to him, "Why am I detained?" The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "It's the fault of your allies." The man said, "I am a Muslim." The Prophet, MPBUH, said,"If you had said that when you were free, you would have been prosperous." As the Prophet, MPBUH, was leaving him, the men said, "I am hungry; will you give me some food? I am thirsty; will you give me some

water?" The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "Yes, you will have that." The man was later returned to his own people in exchange for the two men who were taken captives by Thaqīf.[10]

When Thumāmah b. Athāl was taken captive by the Muslims, they brought him to the Prophet, MPBUH, who said, "treat him well and give him enough food." So he was given milk in the morning as well as in the evening. Then the Prophet, MPBUH, asked Thumāmah, "Have you got anything to say?" Thumāmah said, "You have been good to me, Muḥammad. I am ready to give you any sum of money you want." The next day, the Prophet, MPBUH, released him without ransom.

Strongly affected by the kind treatment he received during his captivity, Thumāmah washed in a nearby place, returned and entered the mosque. When he saw the Prophet, MPBUH, he said, "I bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the Prophet of God."[11] After that he returned to his home in Yamāmah. At that time, the Meccans, who were adversaries of the Muslims, bought their wheat from the peole of Yamāmah. Thumāmah swore that he would not sell them any wheat unless the Prophet, MPBUH, agreed to that. The people of Mecca wrote to the Prophet asking for his permission to continue trading with the the people of Yamāmah and the Prophet, MPBUH, gave his consent.

One of the concerns of Islam was the provision of clothing for captives. Jābir b. ʿAbdullāh (may God be pleased with him) said, "On the day of Badr, the captives were brought and among them was al-ʿAbbās who had no robe. The Prophet, MPBUH, took the qamīṣ of ʿAbdullāh b. Abī and gave it to al-ʿAbbās, for he was so tall that only ʿAbdullāh's qamīṣ fitted him.[12]

al-Ṭabarānī says in al-Awsaṭ that Ḥātim al-Ṭāʾī's[13] daughter was taken captive by the Muslims and held in a place by which the Prophet, MPBUH, passed. One day, she stood in the Prophet's way and said, "My father is dead and my brother is away. Do me a favour and let me go. May God be good to you." The Prophet, MPBUH, released her from captivity and asked her not to leave till she found someone she could trust and who

could take her safely back to her land. She stayed till some of her people came. The Prophet, MPBUH, gave her clothes and money and let her go.[14]

Bringing a captive to trial for a crime or some other wrongdoing is an established right in Islam because he is under the authority of the state and its sovereignty. The state has the right to take any measures or actions against prisoners of war necessitated by the public good. Trying the prisoner of war for any crime he might commit while held a captive of the Islamic state is a means of obtaining justice in accordance with the laws and regulations laid down by Islam in Islamic countries.

Compelling prisoners of war to divulge military secrets

Is it permissible to resort to harsh methods and measures to force prisoners of war to divulge military secrets or disclose strategic information of benefit to the state holding him? Is the state holding the prisoner of war allowed to deprive a prisoner of war of food and water in an attempt to force him divulge secrets? Many countries resort to atrocious means of torture in an effort to extract information from prisoners of war, the most notorious method being that of "brain washing".

Islam does not sanction the use of force to coerce a prisoner of war to divulge information of benefit to the Muslims. The Geneva Convention, as signed by the member states in 1949, does not allow belligerent parties to force the prisoners of war to divulge any information they do not wish to disclose. The Geneva Convention states that the information that can be requested from the prisoner of war is his name, his surname, his military rank, military identification card and his date of birth. [15] Forcing the prisoner of war to divulge any other information is considered a serious breach of international conventions and heavenly laws.

<u>Categories of prisoners of war and the type of judgement applicable in the</u>
<u>case of each category in Islam</u>

Persons who might be taken prisoners by an army during fighting include the following:

a. The prisoners of war: These are the fighters taken alive during hostilities.

b. The captives: These are the women and children.

c. The handicapped: These are the old people, the sick, the blind and the crippled. This category may also include men of religion and monks.

What treatment does Islam reserve for these categories of people? Is it killing, enslaving, generosity or ransom?

a. Killing: It is forbidden to kill women or children taken as captives by Muslim armies, irrespective of whether they are People of the Book or unbelievers.[16] The Prophet of God prohibited killing women and children and insisted that whoever killed them would have to pay their blood-price.[17]

If women or children actually take part in fighting with their people, it is not prohibited to kill them during the fighting. An example of this is given by Abū Dāwūd and al- Ṭabarānī. The Prophet, MPBUH, saw the body of a dead woman who was killed during the battle of Ḥanīn and asked, "Who killed this woman?" A man replied, "I did. I took her as a captive. When she found out that they were defeated, she tried to grab my sword and kill me, so I had to kill her'.[18]The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "What have women to do with fighting?" This woman tried to kill her captor and he was right to kill her in self-defence. Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī says,[19] "This is in accordance with international law which allows directing military actions against the formal forces of the state, whether they be men or women and whether their enlistment is compulsory or voluntary. Those who can be killed [during the fighting] can also be taken prisoners."

b. Enslavement: While it is not allowed to kill captives after the cessation of hostilities, it is believed that the Imām may decide on enslavement, generosity or ransom. Some jurists believe that the captives should be made slaves and divided in the same way as the booty.[20] This option can be illustrated by the judgement passed by Sa`d b. Mu`ādh on the captives from the Banu Qurayẓah (cited by al-Bukhārī and Muslim).[21]

The wisdom behind enslavement is the fear that women and children might end up fending for themselves and with no one to support them, and hence the assumption that it would be better for them to be looked after by the conquerors till they were set free or exchanged for Muslim captives. However, Islam recommends that captives be treated kindly and urges Muslims to exercise compassion in deciding their fate.

c. Generosity: The Imām can choose to set the captives free and allow them to return to their country without a ransom, in compliance with the scriptures: "Thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom." (47: 4)

When the Prophet, MPBUH, took captives of Hawāzin during the battle of Ḥanīn, a delegation called on him and reminded him that he was breast-fed by Halīmah, a woman from Hawāzin. The Prophet, MPBUH, reacted by setting the women and children free and reassuring the men.[22] Another example is mentioned by Muḥammad b. Jubayr. The Prophet, MPBUH, said in reference to those taken captives during the battle of Badr: "If Muṭ`am b. `Adī was alive and asked me to set these people free, I would do so." After Badr, the Prophet, MPBUH, was generous towards the Yemeni captives, setting them free without ransom.

Anas b. Mālik reports a story cited by Abū Dāwūd. It is reported that the Prophet, MPBUH, took as captives the 80 people from Mecca who came down from the mountain at dawn to kill him and his Companions and then set them free without ransom.[23] It is in the aftermath of this incident that the following verses were revealed: "And it is He Who has restrained their hands from you and your hands from them in the midst of Mecca, after that He gave you the victory over them. And God sees well all that ye do." (48: 24)

`Ā'ishah reports: "When the people of Mecca decided to pay a ransom to secure the release of captives after the battle of Badr, Zaynab, the daughter of the Prophet, sent a ransom to free her husband Abū al-`Āṣ. She sent money and a necklace given to her by her mother Khadījah. When the Prophet, MPBUH, saw it, he was greatly affected and said: "Would you set her captive husband free and give her back these items?" They said, "Yes".[24] After that al-`Āṣ b. al-Rabī`, who owed money to Quraysh, was taken captive again. Zaynab, his wife, helped set him free and pay back the money. When he reached Mecca, he returned the money to its owners, and said, "O people of Quraysh, do I owe you any money? They said, "No. May God do you good. You have been generous and faithful." He said, "I bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is his servant and Prophet. I didn't embrace Islam while in al- Madinah as I feared that you might presume I wouldn't give you your money back. Now that you have got your money, I can embrace Islam." Then he left for al- Madinah to join the Muslims living there.[25]

d. Ransom: Those entrusted with the welfare and protection of captives can demand a ransom for captive women and children. In evidence for this, one might cite what happened when the Prophet, MPBUH, took the women and children of the Banī Qurayẓah as captives. He sold them, and Abū al-Shahm, the Jew, bought an old woman and her young family. The Prophet, MPBUH, sent one third of the captives to Tihāmah, another third to Najd and the remaining third to al-Shām. They were traded for weapons, horses, camels and money. Among them were both the old and the young.[26] Ibn `Abbās referred to this when he said, "The Prophet of God , MPBUH, made the ransom of the unbelievers, who were taken captives in the battle of Badr, 400 dinars."[27] Demanding a ransom in return for the freedom of captives is in accord with the Islamic scriptures: "Thereafter (in the time for) either generosity or ransom." (47: 4)

It is reported by `Imrān b. Ḥusayn that the Prophet, MPBUH, set free one unbeliever from the Banī `Uqayl in return for the freedom of two Muslim men.[28] This might be taken as a clear evidence for the fact that Muslims could be redeemed by freeing

unbelievers. Ibn ʿAbbās said, "Some of the captives in the battle of Badr were not redeemed and the Prophet, MPBUH, decided that they should teach Muslim children to read and write if they were to be set free."[29] This Ḥadīth indicates that it was possible to set captives free in return for their services as teachers to a certain number of Muslim children.

ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said, "For me, to save a Muslim from the [hands of] unbelievers is worth more than the [whole of] Arabia."[30]

al-Qurṭubī reports the following story told by someone: "I was standing beside al-Ḥajjāj when the captives were brought to him. These captives fought on the side of ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. al-Ashʿath and they numbered about 4,800. al-Ḥajjāj killed about 300 men. Then a man from Kinda said to him, "Ḥajjāj, God will not be pleased with your actions. al-Ḥajjāj said, "What makes you think so", and the man replied, "Because God, be He raised far above, said,[31] "Therefore, when ye meet the unbelievers (in fight) smite at their necks; at length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them): thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom." (47: 4) By God, you didn't show generosity nor did you accept a ransom. And one of your poets said: "We don't kill captives, but we set them free for a ransom." In appreciation of the man's remarks and reminded of the injunctions of the Islamic scriptures, al-Ḥajjāj set free the rest of the captives who totalled in the region of 2000 men.

al-Qurṭubī argues that there is no room for debate with regard to the verse urging Muslims to "Kill the unbelievers wherever ye find them". (9: 5) However, al-Thawrī states that al-Daḥḥāk maintained that this verse was superseded by the verse "Either generosity or ransom". (47: 4) Ibn Mubārak declares that the unbeliever should not be killed but should be freed for a ransom, as commanded by the verse "Either generosity or ransom". (47: 4) Ashʿab stated, "al-Hasan hated to kill captives and [used, when deciding on the fate of captives, to] recite the verse, "Either generosity or ransom". (47: 4)

The Handicapped and the like: the prevailing argument among jurists is that the handicapped should not be killed. Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said to Yazīd

b. Abī Sufyān, ʾAmr b. al-ʾĀṣ and Shuraḥbīl b. Ḥasanah when he sent them to al-Shām, "Don't kill children, women or old people. You'll find people living in hermitages. Don't hurt them". Captives are also not to be enslaved since this was an act discouraged by the Prophet, MPBUH,.[32] They should also not be exposed to fighting. This is in line with the Geneva Convention of 1929 which stated that doctors, nurses and men of religion should not be hurt or taken captives for they render valuable human services to the sick and the wounded of both fighting parties.[33]

Prisoners of war: These are the fighting men taken alive by the Muslims. Islam legitimises the taking of prisoners of war: "And seize them, beleaguer them." (9: 5) and 'Bind a bond". (47: 4) The generosity of the Prophet, MPBUH, towards prisoners of war is well-documented; he seldom killed any of them and on most occasions freed them in return for a ransom or in exchange for Muslim prisoners of war.

This clearly shows that Islam did not resort to the barbaric practices of the Middle Ages when the execution of prisoners of war was the norm, nor did Muslim armies and military leaders act like some European armies and their leaders in some modern wars. Napoleon killed about 4000 prisoners of war in Acre in 1799 and the Nazis committed similar atrocities during World War II when thousands of prisoners of war were killed after being exposed to horrendous torture.[34]

Enslavement

An introduction to the history of enslavement.

Enslavement was considered lawful and legitimate in ancient times. It was approved by Judaism and sanctioned by Christianity. Enslavement was also endorsed by some Greek and Roman philosophers, including Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, who considered enslavement a natural or necessary order. Enslavement played a vital role in the commerce and agriculture of ancient nations and was thus a pillar in the social and economic structure of these nations and a basic system in the lives of their populace.

When Islam came, it could not immediately abolish slavery; doing so would have meant a headlong clash with the norms and customs which people had been familiar with and accepted for long. Islam, nevertheless, tried to create suitable conditions for the elimination of slavery. Islam prohibited all forms and sources of slavery except for the enslavement of prisoners of war. This was so because war was considered a just means of resisting aggression. If the enemy enslaved Muslim prisoners of war without the Muslims reacting in like fashion, the enemy would interpret the Muslims' conduct as a sign of weakness and would feel encouraged to enslave more Muslims, increasing thereby the number of slaves in the world.

Thus, the Muslims enslaved prisoners of war in an attempt to impress upon enemy parties their determination and seriousness in carrying out the laws of war. However, as soon as hostilities ceased, the Muslims would normally set free those who were taken captive and enslaved. The kind and humane treatment shown by the Muslims towards their captives was one way of inviting them to embrace Islam and become part of the Muslim Ummah.[35]

In fact, most of those who were enslaved, whether they were from Arab tribes or from a foreign enemy, were eventually set free. The Prophet, MPBUH, returned 6000 women, children and men to Hawāzin when they embraced Islam. The Prophet, MPBUH, was also very generous towards the people of Mecca to whom he said: "Go, you are free", and did the same with the people of Khaybar. When the Prophet, MPBUH, married Juwayriyyah bint al-Ḥārith, a captive from the Banī al-Musṭa'laq, he set free one hundred of her people who became his in-laws. Thus, as `Ā'ishah said, this woman provèd to be a great blessing to her people.[36]

In order to eliminate slavery and its consequences, Islam identified several ways of setting captives free. The fate of the captive, according to the scriptures, was either freedom at the price of a ransom or freedom without a ransom and as an act of generosity. Islam looked upon the release of captives as an·atonement for crimes and sins. Part of the money in the treasury was spent on freeing slaves.

The Embracing of Islam by Captives

If a captive (a woman or a child) embraced Islam, he/she would not be returned to his/her country so as to avoid to jeopardizing his/her life and/or honour. Such a resolution was in conformity with the Islamic scriptures' command: "O ye who believe! When there come to you believing woman refugees, examine (and test) them: God knows best as to their faith: If ye ascertain that they are believers, then send them not back to the unbelievers. They are not lawful (wives) for the unbelievers, nor are the (unbelievers) lawful (husbands) for them." (60: 10)

According to all jurists, were a captive to embrace Islam, he would be safe and protected among the Muslims. This view is supported by the Prophet's declaration: "I was commanded to fight people till they witnessed that there is no god but God. If they say it, their lives and money will be safe."[37]

Treatment of enemy captives and the wounded after the cessation of hostilities

Islam decrees that civilians who were not involved in fighting should not be harmed, should not be made the target of military actions and should be treated kindly. In all their wars, the Muslims never endangered the safety of the civilian peoples of the countries they passed through or fought against. The discipline and humanity of the Muslim armies was one of the contributing factors behind the rush of several nations to embrace Islam. The tolerant and disciplined conduct of the Muslim armies was in obedience to the Islamic scriptures and the Prophet's command issued to the Islamic armies whenever they were about to embark on a military campaign: "Conquer them in the name of God and for God's cause. Fight the unbelievers. Conquer but do not be false to your trust. Do not be treacherous, do not mutilate bodies and do not kill a baby.

Whenever you confront the unbelievers, invite them to accept one of three options. If they accept one of them, do not fight them." [38]

The Prophet, MPBUH, warned the Muslim combatants of the dire consequences of betraying the trust put in them and reminded them of the scriptural injunction: "If any one is so false, he shall, on the Day of Judgement, restore what he misappropriated." (3: 161) The Prophet, MPBUH, prohibited treachery - "Every treacherous person will have a flag by which he will be identified on the Day of Judgement"[39], and forbade killing women and children. Muslim reported a story from Nāfi` b.`Umar to the effect that the Prophet, MPBUH, saw a woman who was killed in one of the battles and said, "I prohibited killing women, did I not? Who killed her?" A man said, "Prophet of God, I did. I captured her and when I seated her behind me she tried to kill me, so I killed her.." The Prophet, MPBUH, then ordered her burial.[40]

The Prophet's command to bury that woman both embodies and reveals a deep respect for the human being. Islam commands all Muslims to do their best in the burial of the dead bodies of enemies and considers it a sin to leave dead bodies in the open without burial. Islam also insists that fighting must temporarily stop to allow for the burial of the dead on both sides of the conflict. This is confirmed by Ibn `Abbās who stated that when a man from the unbelievers was killed in the battle of al-Aḥzāb and his people asked the Prophet, MPBUH, to give them the man's body in return for 12,000 dinars, the Prophet, MPBUH, replied, "We need neither the body nor its price", and agreed to give them the body.

Furthermore, the Muslims exchanged information with their enemies about the dead bodies of those killed in action. This type of information was of vital importance for the Muslims in deciding on social problems arising in connection with missing fighters. Ibn Isḥāq tells this story about the battle of Uḥud. After the fight, the Prophet, MPBUH, inspected the casualties to find out if there was anyone still alive and to bury those who were dead. The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "Will someone find out if Sa`d b. al-Rabī` is dead or alive?" A man said, "I will do this for you, Prophet of God.' The man found out that Sa`d was seriously wounded and dying. The man said to Sa`d, "The Prophet,

MPBUH, ordered me to find out if you were dead or still alive." and Sa`d said, "I am one

of the dead. Remember me to your people and tell them that Sa`d b. al-Rabī said, 'you

would have no excuse before God if you let enemies harm the Prophet'." The man stayed

at the side of Sa`d till he died, then returned to the Prophet and told him about what had

happened. Thus, knowing the fate of soldiers was a matter of great concern for the early

Muslims, and the Prophet, MPBUH, showed great commitment to this aspect of the

war.[41]

Prohibition on mutilating dead bodies

One of the abhorrent war customs which prevailed in the pre-Islamic era was the

mutilation of dead bodies. The advent of Islam, however, put an end to such such a

practice. Islam strictly prohibited Muslims from taking revenge on their enemies by

mutilating them in any way or burning them. This prohibition had its roots in a set of

tragic incidents that took place during the battle of Uḥud. Hind bint `Utba, the wife of

Abū Sufyān, and some other women mutilated the bodies of the Companions of the

Prophet by cutting off their noses and ears. Hind used the noses and ears to make a

necklace for herself. Then she cut open Ḥamzah's belly, took out his liver and tried to eat

it. When she couldn't, she threw it away. After Quraysh had buried its dead, the Muslims

returned to the battlefield to bury their dead, too. The Prophet, MPBUH, went out to look

for his uncle, Ḥamzah b. `Abd al-Muṭṭalib, among the dead and found him at the bottom

of the valley in a state that caused him great sadness and sorrow. The Prophet, MPBUH,

then said, "If I obtain victory over Quraysh, I will mutilate the dead bodies of thirty

men". When the Muslims noticed how sad the Prophet was about his uncle, they said,

"If, one day, we achieve victory over Quraysh, we will mutilate their dead bodies in a

way that no one ever did before". [42]It was in the aftermath of these incidents that the

following Holy verses were revealed: "And if ye do catch them out. catch them out no

worse than they catch you out: but if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for

those who are patient. And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but from God; nor

grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots." (16: 126-127) In

compliance with these verses, the Prophet, MPBUH, strictly prohibited the mutilation of dead bodies. Ṣafwān b.ʿAssāl said: "The Prophet sent us in a battalion and advised, 'Go in the name of God and for His cause. Fight those who do not believe in God. Don't be treacherous, do not mutilate the bodies of the dead and do not kill children."[43]

Samrah b. Jandab said, "Never did the Prophet attend a meeting and leave it without urging us to practise charity and to abstain from mutilating dead bodies."[44] It was reported that when Habār b. al-Aswad hit Zaynab, the Prophet's daughter, in the stomach with something, causing her to have a miscarriage, the Prophet, MPBUH, sent a squadron in search of him and commanded: "If you find him, place him between two stacks of firewood and burn him alive". Then the Prophet, MPBUH, said, "We should be ashamed. No one should be allowed to torture by God's means of torture [i.e. fire].'"

Muḥammad b.ʿUmar and IbnʿAṭā', brother of the BanīʿĀmir b. Lu'ay, reported thatʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb asked: "Oh Prophet, allow me to pull out the two front teeth of Ṣuhayl b.ʿAmr so that he will never denounce you". The Prophet's reaction to this request was: "Though I am a Prophet, I will not mutilate him lest God should do likewise to me."[45] ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib is reported to have heard the Prophet, MPBUH, say: "Don't ever mutilate a dead body, even if it is the dead body of a rapacious dog."

It is clear from the preceding that Islam proscribes the mutilation of dead bodies and urges Muslims to consider all humans, whether dead or alive, as worthy of honour: "We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation." (17: 70) It is equally clear from the above that the Muslims, including Muslim armies, abstained from the abhorrent act of mutilating dead bodies, in compliance with the commands of the Islamic scriptures and in emulation of the good example of the Prophet.

God honoured man by endowing him with special talents, intellect and aptitudes which enabled him to make use of the riches of earth, and exploit and harness these riches to produce, synthesise and analyse things of all kinds and of all degrees of sophistication

in an effort to attain the highest degree of perfection of which humans are capable. God also honoured man by making him responsible for his actions and granting him the freedom to undertake those actions. If a complete freedom to make choices is granted to each person, and each person has been endowed with the intellectual ability to choose, then it is only fair that an account of how this freedom was used will be made in the Hereafter.

Muslims have always emulated the example of the Prophet and his advice that "God demands benevolence towards everything. If you kill an animal then ensure that the job is well done and if you ritually slay an animal then let the knife be so sharp that the slaughter may be merciful".[46] If the Muslims were this merciful towards animals, then, it would be no surprise that their treatment of other humans would be even more merciful.

The Muslims were criticised by some for waging wars against others with the sole purpose of coercing them into embracing Islam. However, while it is true that the Muslims launched many military campaigns with the aim of either protecting the Islamic state or spreading the Islamic religion, there is no truth whatsoever in the claim that they brutalised others through war into accepting Islam as a religion. The Muslims carried swords to defend the right and eradicate oppression but never forced anyone to enter Islam, for their campaigns in the cause of the Islamic faith were guided by the principles of a religion that commands universal justice and tolerance.

The Muslims did not force anyone to embrace Islam for the Islamic scriptures command, "Let there be no compulsion in religion.' (2: 256) and "Will thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?" (10: 99)

It was reported in connection with the revelation of the last verse that Abū Ḥusayn, a man of the Anṣār, had two sons who were met by some merchants from al-Shām leaving al- Madinah after trading oil. The merchants invited them to embrace Christianity and the two sons accepted the invitation and left al- Madinah with the two merchants. Their father came to the Prophet, MPBUH, seeking help in getting his two

sons back and hence the revelation of the verse "Let there be no compulsion in religion". (2: 256)

Zayd b. Aslam reports the following: "I heard `Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb say to an old Christian woman, "If you embrace Islam, you will be safe. God sent Muḥammad with the truth". The woman said, "I am an old woman and I do not have long to live" and `Umar said, "O God, bear witness to this" and recited the verse, "Let there be no compulsion in religion". (2: 256)

How, then, could it be said in light of this that the Muslims compelled others to embrace Islam? [47]

The psychological and emotional welfare of prisoners of war

One of the basic characteristics of Islamic military strategy was a deep concern for the psychological and emotional welfare of women and children prisoners of war. This sprang from the Muslims' commitment to their faith and the orders issued to them by those in charge amongst them. Thus, the general rule in the treatment of prisoners of war was that the mother was not to be separated from her child under any circumstances. The good Companion Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī said that he heard the Prophet say, "Whoever separates a mother from her son, God will separate him from those he loves on the Day of Judgement."[48] The Prophet, MPBUH, was also reported to have said: "Don't separate a mother from her child". Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal comments on the necessity of not separating a mother from her child thus: "a mother should not be separated from her child even when she desires such a separation because of the damage such separation might cause to the child and because a mother might desire a separation only to realise her error later and regret it."[49]

In the same way as a mother should not be separated from her child, a father should also not be separated from his child. However, were circumstances to arise in which either of the parents would need to be separated from a child, priority should be

granted to the mother. This should be the case whether the son was a child or an adult, on account of the mother suffering more as a result of a separation from an elder or eldest son. It is for this reason that Islam requires that adults should not join a fighting army unless they secure permission from their mothers. Abū Saʿīd al-Khidrī reports that a man came to the Prophet from Yemen and the Prophet, MPBUH, asked him, "Do you have a family in Yemen?" The man said, "Yes, my parents". The Prophet, MPBUH, then asked, "Did you seek their permission to come here?" The man said, "No". The Prophet, MPBUH, said, "Then go back and ask for their permission. If they allow you [to join the army], you may then take part in fighting. If they did not, stay with them and take care of them ."[50]

ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit records that the Prophet, MPBUH, said: "The mother and her child should not be separated." And when it was asked: "Till what age?", the Prophet, MPBUH, replied: Till the boy reaches maturity and the girl begins menstruating. If their separation is caused by an act of selling, then the selling is null and void." This Ḥadīth was corroborated by al-Shāfiʿī on account of another Ḥadīth reported by Abū Dawūd in his Sunan to the effect that when ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib separated a mother from her son, the Prophet, MPBUH, advised him against actions of that kind and declared the selling null and void.[51]

No doubt, when the Muslim striking force came out of Arabia, its aim was neither killing, nor domination nor oppression. Rather, the aim behind the Islamic conquests was to spread the Islamic religion and convey its message of universal justice, tolerance and the spiritual equality of mankind as one creation to all, with no discrimination as to race, colour, sex, birth or wealth etc., and to eradicate all aspects of inhumanity and oppression.

Notes:

1. 14 Ibn Qudāmah, <u>al-Mughnī</u>, 5:291 and al-Bayhaqī, <u>al-Sunan</u>,.9:164

2. Sulṭān, <u>al-Qānūn al-Duwalī al-ʿĀmm fī Waqt al-Silm</u>.

3. IBID.

4. Junaynah, <u>Qānūn al-Ḥarb wa al-Hiyād</u>, p. 277.

5 Wahbah, <u>al-Jihād fī al-Islām</u>, p. 185.

6. IBID., p. 186

7. IBID

8. al-Bayhaqī, <u>al-Sunan</u>, 9: 89.

9. al-Zuḥaylī, <u>Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī</u>, p. 401.

10. Abū Dāwud, <u>Sunan Abū Dāwud</u>, 3: 76.

11. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, <u>Sīrat Ibn Hishām</u>.

12. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Bukhārī, 6: 108.

13. Ḥātim b. Abdullāh al-Ṭāʾī al-Qaḥṭānī, an Arab knight and poet, died in the eighth

    year after the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad, MPBUH.

14. al-Haythamī, <u>Majmaʿ al-Zawāʾid wa Manbaʾ al-Fawāʾid</u>, 5: 335.

15. Junaynah, <u>Qānūn al-Ḥarb wa al-Hiyād</u>, p. 279.

16. Ibn Qudāmah, <u>al-Mughnī</u>, 8:377.

17. <u>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</u>, 12: 48.

221

18. Sunan al-Bayhaqī, 9: 82; al-Haythamī, Majma` al-Zawā'id wa Manba' al-Fawā'id, 5: 316.

19. Al-Zuhaylī, Āthār al-Harb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī, p. 419.

20. Ibn Qudāmah, al-Mughnī, 8:376.

21. Sunan al-Bayhaqī, 9: 63.

22. Sahīh al-Bukhārī, 5: 154; al-Haythamī, Majma` al-Zawā'id wa Manba' al-Fawā'id, 6: 187.

23. Abū Dāwud in al-Jihād, 2679.

24. This Hadīth is cited by al-Tirmidhī.

25. This Hadīth is cited in Musnad Ibn Hanbal.

26. `Abd al-Hamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 658.

27. This Hadīth is cited by Muslim in al-Jihād, 1808, and by al-Tirmidhī in al-Tafsīr, 3260.

28. This Hadīth is cited by Abū Dāwud in al-Jihād, 2692.

29. `Abd al-Hamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 287.

30. Sayyid al-Ahl, Hadārat al-Islām, 1: 116.

31. This Hadīth is cited in Tafsīr al-Qurtubī, 16: 226.

32. Al-Sharbīnī, Mughnī al-Muhtāj ilā Sharh al-Minhāj, 4: 223.

33. Junaynah, Qānūn al-Harb wa al-Hiyād, p. 275.

34. Al-`Umarī, al-`Alāqāt al-Siyāsiyyah wa al-Duwaliyyah. p. 49ff.

35. Al-Zuhaylī, Āthār al-Harb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī, from Albdra'wy, Al-Qanwn Al-Dwalī, p. 174.

36. Musnad Ibn Hanbal, 4:45.

37. This Hadith is cited in Fath al-Bārī: Sahīh al-Bukhārī, 1: 64

38. This Hadith is cited by Muslim in al-Jihād, 2: 1731.

39. This Hadith is cited by Muslim in al-Jihād (al-Tahrīm: 4).

40. This Hadith is cited by Muslim in al-Jihād, 24: 1744.

41. 'Abd al-Hamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 94-95.

42. IBID., 2: 91-96.

43. This Hadīth is cited by Muslim in Sharh al-Nawawī, 12: 37.

44. 'Abd al-Hamīd, Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2: 96.

45. IBID., 2:649; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, 3: 310.

46. This Hadīth is cited by Muslim in Sharh al-Nawawī, 8: 160.

47. Al-Qurtubī, Tafsīr al-Qurtubī, 3: 280.

48. This Hadīth is cited by by al-Tirmidhī.

49. Ibn Qudāmah, al-Mughnī, 7:422.

50. This Hadīth is cited by Abū Dāwūd in al-Jihād, 2530.

51. IBID., 2696.

CHAPTER 5

The Basic Principles of Islamic Military Strategy in Times of War and Peace

The Basic Principles of Islamic Military Strategy in Times of War and Peace

1- Fulfilment of Covenants:

Islam interdicts the practice of all forms of treachery and deception, whether that be in public or in secret. The Islamic scriptures command in this regard: "Fulfil the covenant of God when ye have entered into it, and break not your oaths after you have confirmed them; indeed ye have made God your surety; for God knoweth all that ye do." (16: 91) From the viewpoint of the Islamic religion, the fulfilment of covenants is the mortar and bricks that holds a society together and the foundation for establishing and preserving confidence and trust in dealings among people; without mutual trust, normal societal interactions would soon break down and peace and stability among nations would at best be a precarious state of affairs. The Qur'ān ic scriptures condemn in strong terms those who do not fulfil covenants and break promises, irrespective of the faith of those to whom they made those promises.

The Islamic scriptures enjoin upon Muslims the necessity of a strong and unswerving commitment to the fulfilment of covenants and repeatedly remind them of the importance of this to the preservation of trust between people and peace amongst nations. The Qur'ān compares those who renege against their pledges to the the foolish act of a woman who spins her yarn only later to break "it into untwisted strands": "And be not like a woman who breaks into untwisted strands the yarn which she has spun after it has become strong, nor take your oaths to practise deception between yourselves." (16: 92)

The commitment of Islam – and, by implication, the Islamic war strategy – to the fulfilment of covenants is such that such a commitment is prioritised even over Muslim fraternity. God, be He raised far above, orders: "But if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom ye have a treaty of mutual alliance". (8: 72) In accordance with the Islamic scriptures, a strong Muslim party should not assist a second weak Muslim party if the latter is fighting against a party with whom the strong Muslim party has previously entered into a treaty or alliance. To stress the

importance of fulfilling covenants, the Prophet, MPBUH, warned of the dire consequences of breaking them: "On the Day of Judgement every treacherous person will have an emblem by which his treachery will be known."[1] He is also reported by Abu Bakr to have similarly declared: "Whoever kills someone with whom he has a covenant, God will not admit him into Paradise."[2]

All this goes to show clearly that Islam called for peaceful co-existence long before modern internal laws, conventions and treaties did. Islam's call for peace, coexistence, amity and transparency in relations and dealings between both individuals and nations is grounded in one of the major Islamic scriptural principles: the spiritual equality of mankind as one single and unique creation. As is clear from the Qur'ānic verses quoted above, Islam calls upon Muslims to base their relations with non-Muslims on a mutual respect of treaties, a strong commitment to honouring agreements and pledges and a concerted effort in avoiding wars.

2- Respect for human rights and the call for universal fraternity:

The Islamic scriptures declare: "O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is [he who is] the most righteous of you." (49: 13) Thus, from the perspective of the Islamic religion, all people, irrespective of race, colour or nationality, have one single and unique origin, and as such they are all equal.

In his Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān, Qutb states, in connection with the equality of all humans: "Thus, all causes of disputes and disagreements disappear and all sources of dispute become insignificant. There is a powerful reason for fraternity and co-operation [among people]: Divine creation. God created all people from one source and as such all stand [before him] equal, unburdened by race or state fanaticism. All kinds of fanaticism should be replaced by love, fraternity and co-operation."[3]

3. Virtue and humanity as the basis of international relations in times of peace and war:

Islam strictly forbids Muslims from waging a war against unarmed civilians and outlaws sabotage, violations of honour, and (arbitrary) destruction of property, possessions and the like even against enemies guilty of atrocities of this very kind against Muslims.

`Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, when ruler of the Islamic state, sent a message to his army commander Sa`d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, in which he stated: 'I command you and those serving under you to avoid committing sins because sins are more dangerous than the enemies themselves. The Muslims are granted victory because their enemies disobey God, and, but for their disobedience [and sins], the Muslims would not be able to defeat them because of their greater number and their far superior military equipment. If we equal them in the commission of sins, they will (most certainly) excel us (in fighting). Never presume that our enemies are more evil than we and will therefore not defeat us even when we also commit sins. Those who are evil will be defeated by others who are even more evil. [4]

Similarly, Abū Bakr, the first Muslim Caliph (may God be pleased with him), used to instruct his army thus: "Go and the blessing of God be with you. Do not kill a child, an old man or a woman. Do not cut a tree or kill a camel, a cow or a sheep, except for food. You will pass by people who worship God in churches. So, leave them in peace." [5]

4- The Concept of Absolute Justice:

The Islamic scriptures enjoin upon Muslims that "God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition." (16: 90) The Islamic scriptures call for the establishment and practice of a system of justice that treats everyone fairly, victimises no one, favours no one and is totally uninfluenced by feelings of hatred or otherwise. Favouritism, poverty, wealth or power should have no impact on

justice. All people should be treated equally and there should be no room for prejudice, bias or discrimination when dispensing justice.

In addition to practising justice, God commands the doing of good. This alleviates the strictness of justice and opens the door for such acts as waiving (some of) one's rights for the benefit of others or performing deeds aimed at winning the hearts of others or a favour from them.

A good example of the kind of justice that the Islamic scriptures urge Muslims to practice comes from the way ˋUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, at the time ruler of the Islamic state, treated the killer of his brother, Zayd b. al-Khaṭṭāb. The latter, a soldier in the Islamic army fighting a war against the renegades, was killed by one of the unbelievers. As soon as the battle was over, the man who killed Zayd embraced Islam, repented, and later joined the Muslim army heading for Persia. When ˋUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was dividing the booty among the soldiers after the return of the army from its campaign in Persia, he saw the man who had killed his brother and turned his face away. The man asked ˋUmar, "Do you hate me, ˋUmar?" and ˋUmar replied: "I hate you as much as the earth hates blood." Then the man said: 'Won't you then give me my share in the booty?" and ˋUmar replied: "I cannot deny you your right, for God, be He raised far above, said, 'Let not the hatred of others for you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety'." (5: 8) [6]

ˋUmar's attitude represents the highest level of self-control, justice, and tolerance of which humans are capable; such a level of justice and tolerance can only be reached if one's commitment to the will and orders of his creator is deep and unfaltering. God commands the believers to practise justice even with those for whom they might harbour feelings of hate and resentment. This is by no means an easy task for any human and requires a total acceptance and commitment to the scriptural notion of universal justice, a system that transcends all human feelings of hate, revenge, and resentment. The human soul can only reach this state if it submits totally to its creator and accepts the fundamental scriptural conception that God is omniscient and therefore knows all about His creation.

The scriptures remind the believers in this regard: "And fear God, for God is well-acquainted with all that ye do." (5: 8)

5- Equal treatment:

The Qur'ān lays down specific rules and guidelines of justice and punishment for evil deeds: "We ordained therein for them: life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal. But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself." (5: 45) These judgements were first set out in the Old Testament and were later retained in the Qur'ān, becoming thereby part of the Islamic law. There is, however, a major difference between the Qur'ān and the Old Testament in this regard: the additional command in the Qur'ān -"If anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself." (5: 45) - has no equivalent in the Old Testament. Thus, while Islam has within its own scriptural provisions a concept, atonement as a result of charity, and a recognition based on it, the Old Testament made retaliation an inevitable act and never contemplated the option of remitting the retaliation by way of charity or as a concession.

The principle of "life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal" constitutes the basic foundation of the Islamic notion of justice. Within this system of justice there is no room for discrimination, racism or favouritism. All people, both those governed and those governing, are equal before the law. The application of this system of justice ensures that every individual enjoys the right of equal treatment before the law of God and that every individual is judged according to one basic and overarching principle of justice.

Let us at this point illustrate this system of justice and the notion of universal equality on which it is based by an incident from the early days of the Islamic state. When one of the Prophet's Companions pleaded with him not to cut off the hand of a woman who was from a famous tribe and who was guilty of an act of theft, the Prophet, MPBUH, was furious and made his famous declaration: "By God, if Fāṭimah, my daughter, stole something, I would cut off her hand."[7]

229

Determined on this universal and equal basis, punishment is both an unequivocal affirmation of the equality of humans and a deterrent policy against wanton acts of killing, torturing, harming or assaulting of others. In the presence of a merciless but just system of punishment that treats all equally and fairly, irrespective of considerations of social class, descent and race, persons would no doubt have a reason to ponder the implications of their evil intentions before they act upon them. The settling of disputes on the basis of an unambiguous and fair principle of justice that resists considerations of nationalism, racism, social status and the like will no doubt contribute substantially towards a world where peace will replace war, and fraternity will replace enmity.

The concept of justice in Islam, on the whole, does not merely derive from a humanistic commitment to human rights and tolerance of others, nor from a specific set of concrete rules and laws regulating inter-human relationships, but from the fundamental principles that govern the totality of the Islamic perspective on the universe and human creation, namely the spiritual equality of all mankind as one creation and consequently the equality of all members of this creation before the law and in terms of rights. A system of justice that treats all humans fairly and equally is, from the perspective of the Islamic scriptures, the basis of affirming and bearing testimony to all of them as issuing from the same source.

NOTES:

1. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>al-Adab</u>, 99, and <u>al-Fitan</u>, 21.

2. Ibn Kathīr, <u>al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah</u>, 7:31

2. This Ḥadīth is cited by Abu Dāwud in <u>al-Wafā' lī al-Mu`āhid</u>, 165, and by al-Nisā'ī in <u>al-Qisāmah</u>, 8: 24-25.

3. See Quṭb, <u>Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān</u>, 7: 537.

4. Ibn al-Athīr, <u>al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh</u>, 2: 335.

5. IBIN.

6. This Ḥadīth is cited by al-Bukhārī in <u>Faḍā'il al-Nabī</u>, 18, and in <u>al-Ḥudūd</u>, 12.

Conclusion

We offer below a summary of the main points and arguments of this thesis.

The first chapter of part I examines the role of the new Islamic faith in the consolidation of the will and the reinforcement of the resolution of the Islamic warriors responding to the scriptural call to spread the Islamic religion within the Arabian peninsula and beyond. A major part of the discussion in this chapter is concerned with an attempt to shed light on and emphasise the enormous impact that the Islamic scriptural conception of the universe and human destiny had on the Islamic armies' spirit of fighting during the early Islamic conquests. We present in this regard detailed arguments and evidence to the effect that the fixing of the new faith in the hearts of Muslim combatants was a major factor behind, among many other early exploits, the quick defeat by the Islamic armies of two of the major powers of the time, the Byzantine and Persian empires. The discussion of the early Islamic military conquests offered in this chapter also highlights the tolerance of the Islamic military strategy towards the peoples of conquered territories. Testimonies of several historians bearing on the discipline of the Islamic army during the early Islamic conquests concludes the discussion in this chapter.

State formation and state survival depend on stable and well-organised armies. This is especially so in the case of the early Islamic empire, where the necessity of forming and maintaining an army large and adaptable enough to defend and expand the state represented the major organisational problem and concern of the new Islamic state. The capacity of the new Islamic state to support such an army is one of its most remarkable features. Chapter 2, part I, examines the formation of the early Islamic armies and the Islamic military strategy followed in the preparation of such armies during the early Islamic conquests. This chapter offers, in particular, a detailed discussion of the organisation of the Islamic army at the various stages of its development and the roles played by the early heads of the Islamic state in the formation of a stable and well-organised Islamic army and the continuous improvement of its structure through such

procedures as the introduction of compulsory recruitment and the establishment of an Army Board. The organisation and structure of the army are shown to have been continually improved with a view to maintaining an army adaptable enough successfully to discharge the duty of defending an increasingly expanding Islamic state. We also review in this chapter the type of weapons used by the Islamic army in the early days of its formation and the way in such weapons were continuously improved and modernised.

Chapter 3, part I, discusses the Islamic military leadership's conception of the qualities required in warriors, and reviews in this regard such qualities as deep-rooted faith, high morale, continuous training and discipline emphasised throughout the history of the Islamic army. The discussion in this chapter shows how the conception of the early Islamic military leadership regarding the nature of a warrior's qualities tallies with some modern military theories, in asserting that the first element of military education is the enforcement of strict, fair and permanent discipline. We also examine in this connection the quality of self-control _ the so-called 'development of self-conscience' _ which safeguards warriors from moral deviation or decline and propels them towards discharging their duties with the utmost integrity. The chapter also discusses the notion of leadership as conceived of both in modern theories of military strategy and in theories of Islamic military strategy. The chapter highlights, in particular, the qualities of leadership as defined by Islam, such as righteousness, justice, tolerance and the execution of the principle of consultation.

Chapter 1 of Part II is concerned with the crucial role of military intelligence in ensuring the stability and safety of nations in times of peace and war and the argument that the future of nations depends to a large extent on the accuracy of information they gather through their intelligence and means of reconnaissance. Intelligence expertise is shown to be a very demanding task requiring the qualities of alertness, flexibility, and the ability to unearth and preserve secrets. In our discussion of the role played by intelligence in winning wars or deciding battles, we mention and discuss the view of some military experts that the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbour and the destruction of most of the American fleet during that attack was due to defective US intelligence. The means of

reconnaissance and the aims of intelligence, as crucial elements of Islamic military strategy, are reviewed and the role played by Islamic intelligence in accelerating the fall of the Persian and Byzantium states is examined.

The role and importance of war plans and tactics are examined in Chapter 2 of Part II. It is demonstrated that the plan which leads to the defeat of the enemy is that based on a careful study of accurate information obtained about enemy forces, on a good knowledge of the battlefield, and on the high morale of soldiers and their total belief in the cause for which they are fighting. The collective plan in Islamic military strategy and the relationship between the Islamic commander and his soldiers, which was a very effective factor in raising the morale of the latter and stimulating them to execute their duties with the utmost integrity, were highlighted. We also review the argument that the spirit of fighting shown by combatants on the battlefield is defined by the leader's experience, the courage of his soldiers and their belief in the goals or cause for which they are fighting. A discussion and relevant examples are given of the strategic plans adopted by the Islamic army at different points of its history and the impact of these plans on the outcome of the various battles they fought. A comparison is made between the military strategies adopted by Napoleon at Ulm and Austerlitz and the astonishing plan of mobilisation adopted by Khālid b. al-Walīd when he had to negotiate a perilous route from Persian to Syrian territory. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the factors that contributed to the success of the military strategies of the Islamic army in its battles against enemy forces in several parts of what was later to become the Islamic Empire.

Chapter 3 of Part II examines psychological warfare, showing such a military strategy to be as old as mankind itself and offering examples of psychological warfare from several different countries such as ancient Egypt and China. Different definitions of psychological warfare by military and political leaders are discussed and the goals of this type of warfare are explained in detail. Psychological warfare is shown to aim at inculcating despair in enemy forces and destroying their belief in their goals and principles as well as causing the fragmentation of their national unity. We then present a discussion of psychological warfare as a component of Islamic military strategy and the

rules on which it was based. We present in this connection several examples of the techniques and types of psychological warfare employed by the Islamic army and by the other parties opposed to it at different historical points. Evidence is given of the solid foundation and the inspired strategic planning used by the Islamic army as a protective measure against the psychological warfare waged by the enemy and of the success of the strategic techniques used by the Islamic army in thwarting this psychological warfare.

Chapters 1 and 2 of Part III explore the element of surprise as one of the earliest strategies of war. This strategy is shown still to retain its importance in modern war. We show how the strategy of surprise is practised by much experienced military leadership on account of its being one of the most powerful and effective means of managing wars and battles and its capacity both to cause confusion in the ranks of the striking force of the enemy and significantly to undermine the efficacy of such an armed force. The discussion touches on the different forms surprise attacks may take and how the strategy of surprise may differ depending on time and place, on the one hand, and the alertness of the enemy and the effectiveness of his weaponry, on the other. Examples are given of the use of the element of surprise in the wars waged by the Islamic army in the past. The military strategy of surprise attacks used by the Islamic leadership and the quick movement of the Islamic army accelerated the conquest of Egypt after seizing Babylon Fort. Undoubtedly, the application of this strategy in many of the battles played an important role in destroying the morale of the enemy and attaining victory. It is reasoned that a competent leader should not focus on the use of force only but should also resort to the strategies of evasiveness and surprise and that the more the leader is acquainted with the psychology of his enemy, the shorter the duration of combat. The effect of the element of surprise on modern battles is explored. The strategy of surprise strikes used by Israel in its short wars against the Arabs in 1948, 1956 and 1967 proved of immense efficacy and helped Israel seize Arab territory and establish its own state. According to military strategists, a future major war is more likely to start with a sudden attack. In view of this and given the abundance of modern sophisticated weaponry and the capacity of modern armies to mobilise in an unprecedentedly swift manner, the need for the armed forces of every country to be highly prepared and fully alert at all times can hardly be over-emphasised.

We have also dealt with the types of precautions that can be taken to preempt surprise and sudden attacks by enemy forces. These precautions include the establishment of positions of early warning, continuous watchfulness and a maximum state of alertness both inside and outside army positions. The views of politicians and military experts are cited with regard to the great speed with which the Islamic army mobilised and how such a quick mobilisation enabled it to achieve so many victories in so short a period of time, a feat emulated by none of the other armies of the time. Military secrecy has had an effective role in attaining victory in war, the golden rule being that nations which protect their military secrets most effectively are more likely to emerge victorious. Secrecy, as part of the Islamic military strategy, was strictly followed, in compliance with the Prophet's: "Do your things in secret."

Chapter 1 of Part IV is concerned with the formalities that normally characterise the start of a war between two belligerent parties. In connection with this question, the resolutions of the Hague Conference in 1907 bearing on the military conduct of warring parties are presented and examined. These resolutions state that war between belligerent states starts in one of three ways: a) by a declaration of war, b) after an ultimatum, or c) by immediate military action. The ultimatum and the declaration may be formal. Military actions may begin suddenly or immediately after the declaration of war. Examples of immediate military action, without either, are Germany's attack on Poland and Japan's on the American fleet in the Pacific in World War II.

Under Islamic military strategy, war also started in one of three ways. First, by carrying out military actions against the enemy if an existing truce were breached or if a convention were abrogated or not fulfilled. Relevant examples in this connection were the siege of the Jews of the Banu Qurayẓah and the waging of war against the Jews of Khaybar when the latter assisted the enemies of the Islamic state in the battle of al-Khandaq. Second, by declaration of war after notifying the enemy of the fact that he had broken an agreement. Such a declaration of war might take the following form: "We are no longer committed to the agreement and we will fight you." One of the principles guiding the conduct of the Islamic armed forces was a total commitment to an agreement.

However, in the event of fear of treachery, the Islamic leadership would absolve itself publicly from any commitment, leaving thereby no room for accusations of treachery from the other belligerent party. Third, by a call to Islam and an ultimatum to respond to this call. We have presented evidence showing that the Muslim rulers advised their army commanders not to wage war unless their enemies refused to choose either of two options: a) entering Islam, in which event no war would be waged, and b) paying the tribute. The non-Muslims enjoyed protection and security under the Islamic state and the tribute was paid, not in acknowledgement of submission, but as a price for the protection they benefited from. The equity of this tribute becomes even more apparent if we take into consideration the fact that non-Muslims were not only protected by the Islamic state but were also entitled to financial support in cases of disability and old age. Only in the event of a non-Muslim party refusing either to enter Islam or to pay the tribute would war be waged against it by the Islamic state.

This chapter also examines the ethics of war from the Islamic perspective. The discussion, however, is confined to an examination of only four of the major principles guiding and underlying the Islamic war ethics. The first of these principles is the fulfilment of promises and covenants, in accordance with God's command: "O ye who believe! Fulfil (all) obligations". (5: 1) Fulfilment of promises was deemed crucial for ensuring trust in dealings among people either in times of peace or war. Without this trust, there would be no moral or humane basis in terms of which societal interactions would be undertaken. The last of these ethics was the interdiction on maiming the bodies of dead enemies. The Islamic war ethic can be summarised in the following points:

1- A total ban on the killing of civilians, such as women, children, the handicapped and the wounded.

2- A prohibition on treacherous action against those with whom the Muslims had entered in an alliance and those to whom they granted security and protection.

3- A prohibition on the breaking of peace except after an ultimatum or a declaration of war.

4- A prohibition on the harrassment of priests and monks in churches and monasteries.

5- A prohibition on all wanton acts like the destruction of property.

6- A prohibition on the maiming of the bodies of dead enemies.

Chapter 2 of Part IV addresses the issue of the protection of non-Muslims living under Muslim rule. The concept of 'Islamic protection' is defined as "a promise that the Muslim, whether he was an ordinary person or the ruler of the state, would provide protection and safety for a person or a minority community that did not adhere to the Islamic faith". The rights of foreigners (or minorities) in Islam are then compared to the rights they are granted in international law. It is made clear that Islam proscribes killing or attacking a person or a community benefiting from Muslim protection and that the protection of non-Muslims living within the Muslim community, including past enemies, was one of the sublime principles advocated by Islam and one of the great pillars of the Islamic religion.

A comparison is made in this chapter between the concept of security as enshrined in Islam and as understood by Islamic military strategy and as advocated in Judaism and modern international law. It is shown that modern international law states that war entails the suspension of all peaceful relations between the two belligerent parties as well as all sort of communication between them except for what is authorised by international conventions like the use of the white flag and the stopping of war for a limited period of time to allow for the wounded to be evacuated for treatment and the dead for burial.

The rights of and obligations incumbent upon individuals granted protection under Islamic law are explored. The point is made that the person granted protection by the Islamic state is entitled to a safe and dignified life under the same Islamic rules and laws to which Muslim citizens are subject. The person granted protection in an Islamic country has to fulfil certain obligations, such as observing the rights of others and acting in accordance with the Islamic laws of the state. A comparison is made between the position

of the person granted protection in Islam and the rights of obtaining and losing citizenship in modern international laws.

Chapter 3 of Part IV deals with the ending of a war or the making of peace from the viewpoint of Islamic military strategy. War, from the Islamic perspective, is a temporary state of affairs and an act to be undertaken only when absolutely necessary, whereas peace is in principle the condition that should normally permanently prevail in the world: "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou incline towards peace, and trust in God." (8: 53) War should stop as soon as the enemy chooses to enter Islam or alternatively pay the tribute, for no one is compelled to accept Islam: "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error." (2: 256)

We noted that, under Islam, the tribute is abolished under two conditions: a) in the case of those adhering to a faith other than the Islamic one participating in the defence of the Muslim realm against enemies, and b) in the event of Muslims failing to protect non-Muslims. Relevant examples illustrating the cancellation of the tribute are given from the early years of Islam.

Chapter 4 of Part IV examines the treatment of prisoners of war and presents a comparison between the treatment of captives in ancient and modern times. In ancient times, the Persians and the Greeks treated prisoners of war with the utmost cruelty; prisoners of war were slain, offered as sacrifices to the gods or traded as slaves. In contrast, Muslims treated their prisoners of war with the utmost humanity and mercy, in compliance with the scriptural principle 'And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the Orphan, and the captive' and the Prophet's advice: "Do good unto the captives".

A comparison is made between the ethical principles outlined by the Islamic scriptures for the treatment of captives and prisoners of war and the principles of modern international law as enshrined in the Hague convention on land war in 1907 and the 1949 Geneva Convention. Article 12 and the following article of the Hague Convention state that prisoners of war should be protected: "Prisoners of war are under the authority of the enemy and not the authority of the individuals or the military units that arrested them.

The state holding the prisoners of war is considered responsible for the way they are treated'. We argue that these humane principles for the treatment of prisoners of war were outlined by Islam and enforced by the Islamic army fourteen centuries before they were instituted as part of modern international law. The obligations of captors towards their captives with regard to the provision of food, clothing and shelter is also one of the Islamic principles guiding the treatment of prisoners of war: "And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the Orphan, and the captive". (76: 8) In regard to the question of compelling prisoners of war to divulge information against their will, a comparison is made between the principles of Islam and the principles of the international law ratified in 1949. Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War states that grave breaches are such acts committed against protected persons and property as willful killing, torture or inhumane treatment, willful causing of great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful confinement of a protected person, compelling a protected person to serve in forces of a hostile Power, willfully depriving a protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial, taking of hostages and extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly. We argue that the humane treatment of prisoners of war and respect of human rights and safety of civilians during the time of war was the norm for the Islamic army throughout its conquests some fourteen centuries before these international rights came into existence.

The discussion also deals with the different categories of captives as defined by Islam and the penal sanctions relevant to each category. Women and children were not taken captives on account of their non-involvement in fighting. A comparison is made between the relevant Islamic principles and the principles outlined by the 1949 Geneva Convention whereby "Doctors, nurses and men of religion should not be taken prisoners because they offer humane services to the sick and the wounded of both fighting parties".

We argue in this chapter that throughout its military history the Islamic army did not follow the practices that were prevalent in the Middle Ages such as killing or mistreating prisoners of war. Whereas in old times the mutilation of dead bodies of

240

enemy combatants was a widespread war practice, Islam strictly prohibited such a practice in compliance with the Qur'ānic scriptures: "And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: but if you show patience, that is indeed the best for those who are patient." (16: 126-127) When ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, for instance, wanted to maim the dead body of Ṣuhayl b. ʿAmr, the Prophet strongly protested.

Under Islamic military ethics, no one was forced to enter Islam, nor was anyone tortured or slain for declining to embrace the Islamic faith, in accordance with the Islamic scriptures: "Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?" (10: 99) and "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error". (2: 256) Islam showed utmost tolerance and unparalleled humanity in the treatment of captives. The emotional and psychological welfare of these captives was never overlooked. For instance, women and children were not separated from each other during their captivity, in accordance with the Prophet's reminder that "If anyone separated a mother from her child, God would separate him from those he loved on the Day of Judgement."

In Chapter 5 of Part IV, the basic principles of Islamic military strategy in peace and war are examined. The most notable of these principles is the fulfilment of covenants. Such a principle is regarded, from the perspective of Islam, as the bricks and mortar that holds a society together and ensures a permanent peace and amity between different sates and nations. In the absence of mutual trust and confidence, societal interactions would soon break down and states would permanently live in the fear of wars. Another principle was absolute justice as commanded by the Islamic scriptures: "God commands justice, the doing of good." (16: 90) Some examples illustrating the application of these principles by the Islamic army are given from the history of the Islamic wars.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abd al-Ḥamīd, Muḥyi al-Dīn. Sīrat Ibn Hishām. Makkah. n.d.

Abd al-Ḥamīd, Ṣubḥī. Nazarāt fī al-Ḥarb al-Ḥadīthah. n.p., n.d.

Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān bin al-Ashʿath. Sunan Abū Dāwūd, n.p., n.d.

Abū Zayd, Maḥmūd. al-Shāʾiʿ āt wa al-Dabṭ al-Ijtimāʿī. Cairo, 1980.

Al-ʿAjlūnī, Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad. Kashf al-Khafāʾ wa Muzīl al-Ilbās. n.p., n.d.

Aliyū, al-Sayyid. Istrātijiyyat al-Iʿlām al-ʿArabī. Cairo, 1978.

Amīn, Aḥmad. Duḥā al-Islām. 10th ed., Beirut, n.d.

Anān, Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh. Dawlat al-Islām fī al-Andalus. Cairo, 1960.

Arjūn, Ṣadīq. Khālid b. al-Walīd. Jeddah, n.d.

Al-ʿAsqalānī, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥajar. al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah.

 Beirut, 1995.

Al-ʿAsqalānī, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥajar. Fatḥ al-bārī: Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-

 Bukhārī. Beirut, 1989.

ʿAwdah, ʿAbd al-Qādir. al-Tashrīʿ al-Jināʾī. 1378H.

ʿAwn, ʿAbd al-Raʾūf. al-Fann al-Ḥarbī fī Ṣadr al-Islām. Egypt, 1961.

Al-ʿAẓm, Rafīq. Ashhar Mashāhīr al-Islām fī al-Ḥurūb wa al-Siyāsah. n.p., n.d.

Al-Badrī, Ḥasan Aḥmad & Ṭāha b. ʿUthmān al-Farrāʾ. Jughrāfiyyat Fann al-Ḥarb.

 Riyadh, 1986.

Al-Baghdādī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abī ʿAbd al-Allāh. Muʿjam al-Buldān. Beirut, 1993.

Al-Baghdādī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abī ʿAbd al-Allāh. Khizānat al-Adab. n.p., n.d.

Ibn. Taghry Bardī, Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Mahāsin Yūsuf. al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk
Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah. n.p., n.d.

Al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn. Sunan al-Bayhaqī. Hyderabad, 1354H.

Al-Bukhārī, Abū ʿAbdullāh b. ʾIsmāʿīl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Beirut, n.d.

Clausewitz, Carl von. 1832. On War. Trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret.

Princeton, 1976.

Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad. Tārīkh al-Islām. Beirut, 1988.

Al-Durrah, Mahmūd. Maʿārik al-ʿArab al-Kubrā. Riyadh, n.d.

Faraj, Muḥammad. al-Istrātijiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al-Islāmiyyah bayna al-Naẓariyyah
wa al-Taṭbīq. n.p., n.d.

Faraj, Muḥammad. Fann Idārat al-Maʿrakah. Cairo, 1995.

Al-Farrāʿ, Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn. al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah. Cairo, 1357H.

Geneva Conventions (1907-1949).

Ghanīm, Ḥāfiẓ. Mabādiʾ al-Qānūn al-ʿĀmm. n.p., 1959.

Hānī, Aḥmad. al-Jāsūsiyyah bayna al-Wiqāyah wa al-ʿIlāj. n.p., n.d.

Al-Harthamī, Abū Saʿīd al-Shaʿrānī. Mukhtaṣar Siyāsat al-Ḥurūb. Ed. ʿAbd al-Raʾūf
ʿAwn and Revised by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah. n.p., n.d.

Hārūn, Ḥamīd ʿAbd al-Salām. ʿIlm al-Nafs al-Ijtimāʿī. Cairo, n.d.

Al-Haythamī, Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Abī Bakr. Majmaʿ al-Zawāʾid wa Manbaʾ al-Fawāʾid.
Cairo, 1353 A.H.

243

Ibn ʿAsākir, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan. Tahdhīb Tārīkh Dimashq. Damascus, 1981.

Ibn al-Athīr. al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh. Beirut. 1965-1966.

Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad al-Shaybānī. Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad. Beirut, n.d.

Ibn Hāzil, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Kitāb Hilyat al-Fursān. Ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ghānī Ḥasan, Cairo, 1949.

Ibn al-Jawzī, Abī al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. al-Muntaḍam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam. Beirut, n.d.

Ibn Kathīr, ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar. al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah. Cairo, 1932-1939.

Ibn Kathīr, ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar. Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm. Riyadh, 1996.

Ibn Khaldūn. Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn: al-ʿIbar wa Diwān al-Mubtadaʾ wa al-Khabar fī Ayyām al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam wa al-Barbar. Cairo, 1384 A.H.

Ibn Khallikān, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm. Wafayāt al-Aʿyān. Beirut, 1972.

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. Kitāb al-Furūsiyyah. Damascus, 1942.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. Ahkām Ahl al-Dhimmah. Beirut, 1966.

Ibn Qudāmā, Abu Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Allāh b. Aḥmad. al-Mughnī. Cairo, n.d.

Ibn Qutayba, ʿAbd al-Allāh bin Muslim. ʿUyūn al-Akhbār. Cairo, 1925.

Ibn Saʿd, Abū ʿAbd al-Allāh Muḥammad. al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā. Beirut, 1968.

Ibrāhīm, Ḥasan. Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyāsī. n.d.

Al-Iṣfahānī, Abūl Faraj. Kitāb al-Aghānī. Cairo, 1927.

Al-Iṣfahānī, Abūl Faraj. Hilyat al-Awliyā'. Egypt, 1351 A.H.

Junaynah, Maḥmūd Sāmī. Qānūn al-Ḥarb wa al-Ḥiyād. Cairo, 1944.

Jordan Albert, Sāykūlūjyat Al'sha'ah, Translated by Ṣalāḥ Mhhymar, Cairo, n.d.

Kamāl, Aḥmad ʿĀdil. al-Ṭarīq ilā al-Madā'in. n.p., n.d.

Keegan, John. A History of Warfare. London, Hutchinson, 1993.

Khaṭṭāb, Maḥmūd Shīt. al-Rasūl al-Qā'id. Beirut, 1974.

Khaṭṭāb, Maḥmūd Shīt. Bayna al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Qiyādah. Beirut, 1983.

Khaṭṭāb, Maḥmūd Shīt. Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ al-Shām wa Miṣr. Beirut, 1973.

Khaṭṭāb, Maḥmūd Shīt. Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ al-ʿIrāq wa al-Jazīrah. Beirut, 1973.

Khaṭṭāb, Maḥmūd Shīt. Qādat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī: Fatḥ al-Maghrib al-ʿArabī. Beirut, 1966.

Madkūr, Muḥammad Salām. al-Madkhal lī Fiqh al-Islāmī, n.d.

Maḥfūz, Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn. al-Madkhal ilā al-ʿAqīdah wa al-Istrātijiyyah al-ʿAskariyyah al-Islāmiyyah. Cairo, 1976.

Majallat al-Ḥaras al-Waṭanī al-Saʿūdī. Riyadh, No 22, 1984; No 32, 1985 and No 147, 1994.

Al-Māwardī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAli b. Muḥammad. al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah, Ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿUmayrah. Cairo. n.d.

245

Al-Murghinānī, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b.`Abd al-Wāhid b. al-Hammām al-

sakandarī. Fatḥ al-Qādir: Sharḥ al-Hidāyah. Ed. Muṣṭafā Muḥammad, Cairo, n.d.

Muslim, Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī al-Naysābūrī. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Beirut, n.d.

Al-Nisāʾī, Aḥmad b. Shuʿayb. Sunan al-Nisāʾī. Beirut, 1994.

Al-Nuwayrī, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b.`Abd al-Wahāb. Nihāyat al-Irāb fī Funūn al-

Adab. Cairo, n.d.

Paret, Peter (ed.). Makers of Modern Strategy. Princeton: Princeton University Press,

1985.

'Ali, 'Abdallah Yūsuf, al-Qurʾān al-Karīm, , Marry Land, 1983

Al-Qurṭubī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Rushd. Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (known

as al-Jamʿ li Aḥkām al-Qurʾān). Cairo, 1967.

Quṭb, Sayyid. Fī Zilāl al-Qurʾān. Beirut, n.d.

Sālim,`Abd al-ʿAzīz. Tārīkh al-Muslimīn wa Āthārihim fī al-Andalus. n.p., n.d.

Samāḥah, Ṣuhayl et al. (Trans). al-Ḥarb al-ʿĀlamiyyah al-Thāniyyah. n.p., n.d.

Sayyid al-Ahl,`Abd al-ʿAzīz. Ḥadārat al-Islām. n.p., n.d.

Al-Sharbīnī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Khatīb. Mughnī al-Muḥtāj ilā Sharḥ al-Minhāj.

Cairo, 1933.

Al-Shawkānī, Muḥammad b.`Alī. Nayl al-Awtār fī Sharḥ Muntaqā al-Akhbār. Cairo,

1957.

Sulṭān, Ḥamīd. al-Qānūn al-Duwalī al-ʿĀmm fī Waqt al-Silm. 2nd ed., n.p., 1962.

Suwayd, Yāsīn. Maʿārik Khālid b. al-Walīd. n.p., n.d.

Suwayd, Yāsīn. al-Fann al-ʿAskarī al-Islāmī: Uṣūluh wa Maṣādiruh, n.p, 1988.

Al-Ṭabarānī. al-Muʿjam al-Ṣaghīr, Egypt, 1968.

Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr. Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk. Cairo,

1966.

Al-Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Jarīr. al-Riyāḍ al-Nāḍirah fī Manāqib al-ʿAshrāh.

Beirut, 1984.

Ṭālib, ʿAlī b. Abī, Nahj al-Balāghah. Compiled by Muḥammad Abū al-Hasan al- Rāḍī.
n.d.

Al-Tuhāmī, Mukhtār. al-Raʾy al-ʿĀmm wa al-Ḥarb al-Nafsiyyah. n.p., n.d.

Al-Ṭammāwī, Sulaymān. al-Idārah fī ʿAhd ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. n.p., n.d.

Al-Tirmidhī, Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. Sūrah. Sunan al-Tirmidhī. Hims. n.d.

Al-ʿUmarī, Aḥmad Suwaylim. al-ʿAlāqāt al-Siyāsiyyah wa al-Duwaliyyah. Cairo, 1957.

ʿUmayrah, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Rijāl Anzala Allāh fīhim Qurʾānan. Riyadh, n.d.

ʿUmayrah, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Hādhā Huwa al-Ṭarīq. Riyadh, n.d.

ʿUmayrah, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. Idārat al-Maʿārik aw al-Istrātijiyah al-Ḥarbiyyah. (A lecture
to officers of the Omani Army). n.p., n.d.

Al-ʿUsaylī, Bassām. al-Muḍaffar Quṭz. n.p., n.d.

Wahbah, Tawfīq ʿAlī. al-Jihād fī al-Islām. Riyadh, n.d.

Zaydān, Jurjī. Kitāb al-Tamaddun al-Islāmī. n.p, n.d.

Al-Zuḥaylī, Wahbah. Āthār al-Ḥarb fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī. Beirut, 1981.