

# The Dogs of Hell?

## *A discourse analysis of the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings*

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# Abstract

This thesis takes a closer look at Dr. Muhammed Tahir-ul Qadri's *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombing*. It attempts to answer questions about what message the fatwa presents, in what way this message is presented, and whether or not the message has had an effect on the social world. These questions are answered by analyzing the fatwa in light of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA), which employs three distinctive analytical dimensions: text, discursive and social practice. Through the text analysis I assert that the fatwa supports its stance against terrorism through four main discourses: the normative basis of Islam, the sanctity of human life, rebellion is illegal, and terrorists are modern-day Kharijites. Through the discursive practice analysis I analyze if and in what way these discourses are employed by other, like mined, works by influential Muslim scholars. This analysis revealed that while Qadri's fatwa employs the same discourses as these other works, it does so in a more comprehensive fashion. The social practice analysis uses the theory of countering violent extremism (CVE) through which to analyze the fatwa. Viewing the fatwa as a counter-narrative, one of the many initiatives that CVE employs, I attempt to say something about the possibilities it has for effecting change on its social surroundings. While definitive proof of such change is outside the scope of this thesis, it does determine that on the basis of CVE and the fatwa's extensive availability and use in different platforms, it would not be unreasonable to assume it has had a social effect.



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# 1 Introduction

The post 9/11 world is one in which the emphasis on terrorism and counter-extremism is a main focus for many sectors of society. From the political and military, to media and social networking, and into the religious and cultural arenas, combating radicalization has been cemented as a goal for society's institutions on all levels. Different institutions employ different tactics in this fight, and for the most part the discourse has been saturated by ideas on military and political solutions. Some institutions have also put a spotlight on the social and religious aspects that should be highlighted. One of these is Minhaj-ul-Qur'an (MQI), a multi-national NGO with headquarters in Lahore, Pakistan. Working in over 90 countries, this organization focuses on areas such as education, women's rights, social welfare, integration, and religious organization. In early 2010, the founder and spiritual leader of Minhaj-ul-Qur'an, Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul Qadri wrote and published the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* (FTSB). This fatwa, while not being the first nor only to denounce terrorism in the name of Islam, is promoted as the only fatwa that removes any and all caveats or loopholes that would allow extremist ideologues to employ Islam in the name of violence.

## 1.1 Aim and Scope

This thesis intends to review and analyze the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* and the claims made by Dr. Qadri about its significance and individuality. There are several fields of inquiry that this research hopes to contribute to. Mainly, the focus is the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombing*, and the implications of its arguments, both on the counter-extremism order of discourse, as well as within the social sphere. When discussing the social sphere it is necessary to restrict the scope of the research to the Norwegian context due to length, as well as data collection. In order to gain any insightful meaning from the social research, it must be situated in a context which can be realistically defined and identified.

Through the nuanced and thorough investigation of the FTSB in particular, this thesis also hopes to contribute to the field of fatwa analysis in general. Alexandre Caeiro and Hussein Agarma have both discussed the field of fatwa analysis, and shown that it has been largely dominated by investigations into the new interpretation and reinvention of legalistic and

dogmatic understandings of *fiqh*.<sup>1</sup> Very little research has been done on the fatwa's ethical and social status, and in what ways the fatwa has had an effect on or been effected by its situated place. Ethnographic questions surrounding the way in which a fatwa has been written and read, or who performed these interpretative acts have found little space in the academic literature on fatwas, despite the vast amount written on them. This thesis hopes to help fill this gap.

Alix Philippon, in her contribution to *South Asian Sufis: Devotion, Deviation, and Destiny*, has shown that Minhaj-ul-Qur'an adheres to a distinct theological school of Islam, Barelvi,<sup>2</sup> which has often been overlooked by scholars.<sup>3</sup> More often than not when attention has been given to reformist theological schools in Pakistan, it has often been directed at what Philippon terms "sectarian and jihadi" groups, and has overlooked other reformist schools such as the Barelvi. By investigating the FTSB, this research hopes to contribute to this area of inquiry.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The research questions that this thesis intends to answer are as follows:

- What are the arguments that the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* make use of?
- In what way has the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* affected and contributed to the discourses surrounding counter-extremism?
- How is the message conveyed, and has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?

As the research questions suggest, the main objective of this thesis is an analysis of the FTSB and its implications for the society in which it is utilized. However, since the FTSB is a product of Minhaj-ul-Qur'an, analyzing the fatwa will also be an opportunity to analyze one of the initiatives that MQI has actively promoted. In doing so this thesis hopes to contribute both to the literature surrounding fatwa research, but also to the discourse on how Muslim organizations are contributing to the counter-extremism narrative.

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<sup>1</sup> (Caeiro, 2006) and (Agrama, 2010)

<sup>2</sup> See section 2.1 for an overview of who the Barelvi are, and the conflict between them and other reformist schools such as the Deobandi.

<sup>3</sup> (Philippon, 2012, p. 111)

## 1.3 Analytical Framework

The theoretical and methodological framework used in this thesis is based on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), including a text, discourse and social analysis. This thesis views the FTSB as a contribution to the counter-extremism order of discourse, as well as the current hegemonic struggle for the "correct" interpretation of Islam. It seeks to understand how the FTSB and its rhetoric have impacted the field and social reality in which it is situated. Fairclough's approach provides a comprehensive way of researching these phenomena; by investigating the FTSB's textual dimension it will be possible to identify which discourses are employed and how. Through the analysis of these discourses it will be possible to determine if and in what way the FTSB has contributed to the counter-extremism discourse. Finally, the social analysis will provide insight into how this has affected the social field.

The combination of text, discourse, and social analysis allows for a thorough and nuanced investigation of the data provided, and provides relevant avenues for drawing conclusions. While text, discursive practice, and social practice are considered to be three different analytical dimensions, and will be investigated as such, they are, in fact, mutually constitutive of one another, and there will be overlap at times. As there is no one way in which to conduct discourse analysis, I have chosen an eclectic set of analytical tools, presented in Chapter 4, from the myriad that Fairclough suggests in his *Analysing Discourse; Textual Analysis for Social Research*.

### 1.3.1 Data

The main data used in this thesis is the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings*. While the discourses that are represented within this 512-page edict are the main object of analysis, studying the intertextuality of these discourses will provide tentative conclusions to my stated research questions. In that regard three other pieces of literature by influential Muslim scholars will be analyzed in connection to the FTSB: *The Amman Message*<sup>4</sup>, *An Open Letter to Baghdadi*<sup>5</sup>, and *Refuting ISIS: A Rebuttal of its Religious and Ideological Foundations*<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009)

<sup>5</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014)

<sup>6</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015)

These pieces of literature represent a diverse contribution to the counter-extremism discourse within Islam.

*The Amman Message* is an intra-Muslim collaboration in which questions were answered about who a Muslim is, and who can legitimately issue fatwas. It has been hailed as an important document for conflict resolution, and it calls for inter-religious dialogue. *An Open Letter to Baghdadi* is also an intra-Muslim collaboration, written as an open letter to the leader of ISIS<sup>7</sup>, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in an attempt to persuade him of the error of his ways. *Refuting ISIS* is a fatwa written by Syrian Islamic scholar, Muhammad al-Yaqoubi in an attempt to directly denounce ISIS' ideology and actions.

Interviews with members of the Minhaj-ul-Qur'an center in Norway, as well as media articles and political briefings will also be used to inform the thesis on the social practice that the FTSB is a part of and helps to constitute.

## 1.4 Terminology

A brief note on terminology is required before moving on. This thesis uses terms such as "extremist", "radical", and "terrorist." It is not possible to say that these terms are used without value judgments, as they are hotly contested concepts that carry with them a wealth of meaning and bias. How we name things effects how we think about them; one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter. One of the aims of CDA is to uncover and unpack the use of terms that carry meaning and power; terms such as "terrorist" and "extremist" for example. It is through the analysis of the use of these terms in the literature that an indication of how they are employed, and what meaning they carry can be discovered.

Therefore, unless otherwise stated, this thesis uses these terms in the same way in which the literature being discussed uses them, thus the values associated with them are not representative of my personal beliefs, and it remains possible to analyze them. As the FTSB is the main focus of investigation, these terms are most often used as they are used therein. The FTSB does not name a specific group or ideology as extremists or terrorists, but rather uses the terms in a general manner to indicate those who use violence or promote the use of violence in pursuit of their goals.

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<sup>7</sup> A transnational Sunni insurgent group, known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) since June 2014. (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018)



## 1.5 Structure

This thesis is divided into 2 parts. The first part, containing chapters 1-4, is made up of contextual and theoretical considerations that are imperative to the overall coherence of this thesis. Chapter 2 provides contextual background for the rest of the thesis. It gives a short presentation on the background of Minhaj-ul-Qur'an, and its founder Dr. Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri, as well the FTSB itself. It also explores the ideological and political conflict between the Barelvi and Deobandi groups in Pakistan, due to the influence this conflict has had on the establishment of MQI, as Philippon has shown.<sup>8</sup> An introduction to the "War of the Fatwas" and some of its implications, as well as a short overview of the research that has already been done on fatwa research in general, and the FTSB specifically, is also discussed.

Chapter 3 presents an introduction to the fatwa as a concept, as well as the current debate concerning methodological considerations of its analysis. Chapter 4 presents the theoretical and methodological process for the thesis. Presenting Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model, it examines the theoretical underpinnings of the model and thus this thesis. From there it describes the way in which the model will be applied to the research questions presented above.

The second part, containing chapters 5-8, consists of the analysis of the fatwa itself, and my final conclusions. Chapter 5 analyzes the textual dimension of the fatwa. The discourses and arguments established in this analysis will be further examined through the lens of intertextuality in Chapter 6, which is the analysis of the discursive practice. Chapter 7 uses the theory of countering violent extremism to utilize the information from the textual and discursive practice dimensions of analysis in an attempt to say something about the social impact of the text itself. Chapter 8 presents my final conclusions, and possibilities for further research.

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<sup>8</sup> (Philippon, 2012, p. 352)

## 2 Contextual Background

This chapter is devoted to explaining the background for the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombing* that will be analyzed in chapters 5-7. In section 2.1 I discuss the conflict between the Barelvi and Deobandi groups in Pakistan, as this conflict is important for understanding the development and establishment of MQI. Section 2.2 gives a brief overview of the author of the fatwa, Dr. Muhammad Tahir- ul-Qadri, and the NGO that Qadri established and which published the fatwa: Minhaj-ul-Qur'an. In section 2.3 a short description of the context in which the fatwa was written, and in what way this thesis will view the fatwa is presented. Section 2.4 delves deeper into the current narrative that there is a hegemonic struggle taking place for the right to claim a "correct" Islam, and what role the FTSB may have in this struggle. Finally, section 2.5 introduces the previous research done on both the general study of fatwas, and also the few articles written on the FTSB itself.

### 2.1 Barelvi vs. Deobandi

The ongoing struggle between the Deobandi and Barelvi groups is an important aspect of the background for the FTSB, as MQI and Dr. Qadri hail from the Barelvi school of thought. A short introduction to this conflict is thus necessary in order to understand why and how the MQI was established, as well as the discourses used within the FTSB.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century several reformist movements developed in colonial India, which continue as basic divisions between Sunni Muslims in South Asia today.<sup>9</sup> Two of the most prominent were the Barelvi and Deobandi. The Deobandi movement developed after the establishment of a theological school in the city of Deoband; emphasizing personal responsibility for one's religious development, and a restrained stance toward traditional religion in the form of Sufism.<sup>10</sup> The Barelvis were the last of the reformist movements to develop, differentiating themselves through their attitude toward the transcendent which they embraced wholeheartedly, without reservations.<sup>11</sup> However, these movements do share several characteristics; their concern with the correct practice of Islamic law, and a strong focus on the Prophet Muhammad being but a few. Despite being dedicated to many of the

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<sup>9</sup> (Metcalf, 1982, p. 13)

<sup>10</sup> (Metcalf, 1982, p. 265)

<sup>11</sup> (Sanyal, 2005, p. XI)

same goals, these groups viewed themselves as radically different, and a great deal of competition has existed between them from the very beginning.<sup>12</sup> According to Barbara Metcalf, Ahmad Riza Khan's, the Barelvi movement's founder and ideological head, main concern and object for his work was opposing the Deobandi and other reformist Sunnis; the Barelvi ulama thus emerged due to their opposition to these other groups, rather than out of a specific desire to change standards of practice.<sup>13</sup>

In 1906<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Riza published a fatwa in which he accused three Deobandi groups, as well as the Ahmadiyya, of being "Wahhabi" and apostates from Islam. The fatwa gained quite a bit of recognition and support, both by Indian ulama, as well by some prominent ulama in Medina and Mecca where Ahmad Riza was on pilgrimage at the time of the fatwa's publication. Being associated with the Wahhabi title was politically detrimental at the time, and the Deobandi wasted no time in writing their own fatwa that responded to Ahmad Riza's. This exchange issued in a "fatwa war," and to a large extent has been characteristic of the relationship between the Barelvis and Deobandis to this day.<sup>15</sup>

## **2.2 Minhaj-ul-Qur'an & Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul Qadri**

Minhaj-ul-Qur'an (MQI) was founded in 1981 by Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri in Lahore, Pakistan. As a Barelvi Muslim, Qadri was inspired by the loss of members throughout the 70's to found an institution in the hope of renewing the Barelvi theological school.<sup>16</sup> Established as a purely religious institution, MQI has, over the last 35 years, developed into a multi-national NGO, with programs focusing on education, health services, counter-extremism, urban development, and religious activity.

With centers in over 90 countries, MQI has a little over half a million members worldwide. In Norway it has centers in Oslo, Stavanger, Drammen and Skedsmo. Established in 1995, they have since worked for a fully integrated Muslim community within Norway, and have

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<sup>12</sup> (Metcalf, 1982, pp. 313-314)

<sup>13</sup> (Metcalf, 1982, pp. 265, 308)

<sup>14</sup> There seems to be some disagreement on the year of publication of this fatwa. Metcalf (1982) claims the fatwa was published in 1903, while Sanyal (2005) claims it was written in 1906.

<sup>15</sup> (Metcalf, 1982, pp. 309-310) (Sanyal, 2005, p. 108)

<sup>16</sup> (Philippon, 2011, p. 352)

several forums focusing on education, women's issues, social welfare, and conflict resolution.<sup>17</sup>

MQI's founder and spiritual leader, Dr. Tahir-ul-Qadri was born in Jhang, Pakistan on February 19, 1951. He began his formal education at the age of 12, and was practicing law in Jhang by 1974. Eventually earning his Ph.D. in Islamic Law, Qadri worked at the University of Punjab, and eventually entered politics. He has over 400 published works, and is considered to be an authority within the Islamic world.<sup>18</sup> In 2004 he was endowed with the title of *shayk-ul islam* by Arab *shaiks*, increasing his legitimization among both Pakistani Muslims, as well as Muslims abroad.<sup>19</sup>

Philippon describes Qadri as being the charismatic leader of the MQI, working for Islamic revival that equates humanism, Islamic awakening, and reform. Positing that MQI's aim is "clearly" to fight against all forms of extremism, she claims that Qadri has been one of the most critical ulama of Osama Bin Laden, for example. She also describes MQI as employing a conciliatory discourse toward the West (albeit critical at times), and an understanding of Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and love.<sup>20</sup>

Qadri has visited Norway several times since his first visit in 1984, with his most recent visit being in August of last year at a conference held by Minhaj-ul-Qur'an's youth forum on extremism. Several Norwegian politicians also took part in the conference, Norway's then Minister of Immigration, Sylvi Listhaug among them. In her speech to the conference she pointed out that Qadri has been attached to Pakistan's disputed blasphemy laws, and asked him to clarify his stance. His speech afterward clearly and definitely distanced himself and his interpretation of Islam from extremism, but left Listhaug's questions unanswered.<sup>21</sup>

## 2.3 The Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings

On March 2, 2010, the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* was released at a launch in London organized by MQI's UK branch. Through the promotion of the launch, the fatwa was able to attract a good deal of international media attention. Major newspapers from around

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<sup>17</sup> (Hvem er vi?, 2017) (Argon, 2011, p. 1)

<sup>18</sup> (A Profile of Shayk-ul-Islam Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri, 2017)

<sup>19</sup> (Philippon, 2012, p. 118)

<sup>20</sup> (Philippon, 2012, p. 114)

<sup>21</sup> (Christiansen, 2017)

the world, as well as prominent magazines covered the launch.<sup>22</sup> Along with the media-hype surrounding the fatwa, prominent organizations also gave their support to the fatwa. The Quilliam Foundation, a counter-extremism think-tank based in the UK, endorsed the fatwa, saying that “Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri’s fatwa will set an important precedent and will allow other scholars to similarly condemn the ideas behind terrorism.” A spokesperson for the organization said “this fatwa has the potential to be a highly significant step towards eradicating Islamist terrorism.”<sup>23</sup>

Although the fatwa is seen as having international applicability in its arguments, some have commented on the specific context from which it stems; namely the increased sectarian violence that took place in Pakistan in the years leading up to the FTSB’s publication.<sup>24</sup> The violence between the Barelvi and Deobandi groups within Pakistan has been an ongoing struggle since the late 1800’s. In many ways it can be seen as mirroring the struggle taking place within the Islamic world in general; the hegemonic struggle between groups for the “correct” Islam.<sup>25</sup> Itzhak Weisman notes, in his contribution to *Sufis and Salafis in the Contemporary Age*, that fundamentalist Islamism has constructed itself in opposition to something other, specifically the external other – the West, but also the internal other in the form of tradition, most especially the mystical tradition of Sufism. Sufism has taken on this characteristic as something other than Islamic fundamentalism, and is attempting to gain legitimacy for its interpretation of Islam as the “true” Islam.<sup>26</sup>

In the foreword to the FTSB, Esposito points out that the FTSB is part of the inter-religious dialogue discourse that has been ongoing, with *A Common Word Between Us and You* and the *Amman Message* being the prime examples of this initiative. These works represent a collaborative effort by Muslim religious scholars to actively address and denounce religious extremism and terrorism by highlighting the common ground between Islam and other religions.<sup>27</sup> However, due to the scope of this thesis it does not have room to devote attention to the inter-religious dialogue discourse, and focuses exclusively on the counter-extremism discourse.

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<sup>22</sup> (Porter, 2010) (Khalid, 2010) (Taylor, 2010) (Krale, 2010)

<sup>23</sup> (Anti-terrorism fawa launch in London tomorrow, 2017)

<sup>24</sup> (Argon, 2011, p. 6)

<sup>25</sup> (Philippon, 2011, p. 348)

<sup>26</sup> (Weismann, 2015, p. 12)

<sup>27</sup> (Esposito, 2010, p. xxvi)

## 2.4 War of Fatwas?

The writing of fatwas by different schools of thought in attempts to delegitimize one another is nothing new; one example of such a situation has already been discussed earlier in section 2.1. The FTSB can be situated within such rhetoric and in the foreword to the FTSB John Esposito does just that.<sup>28</sup> He shows that a “war of fatwas” is possible between both what he calls “mainstream” Muslims vs. extremists, but also between different groups within “mainstream” Islam as well.

In the “war of fatwas” taking place between mainstream Muslims vs. extremists, the FTSB is by no means the only, nor the first fatwa to be issued by a Muslim scholar in response to terrorist activities committed by people who claim Islam as legitimization. After 9/11 especially, the discourse began to be dominated by discussions about to what extent Islam justified and promoted violent extremism. In *Arguing the Just War in Islam*, John Kelsay cites certain manifestos as sources of militant argumentation, namely Osama bin Laden’s *The Declaration on Armed Struggle against Jews and Crusaders*, Muhammad Al-Faraj’s *The Neglected Duty*, and M. Maqdisi’s *The Charter of Hamas*. In response to these works, authoritative Muslim scholars such as Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi and Yusuf al-Qaradawi issued fatwas that condemned the use of violence promoted by these works, although as Kelsay shows, “they did not criticize th(e) argument directly”.<sup>29</sup>

In western media and political arenas there is a growing rhetoric that Muslims, as a collective whole, should distance themselves from terrorism, due to the fact that some Muslim individuals have perpetrated violent attacks. According to Caeiro several fatwas have been produced within this context such as those from ‘Abd Allah al-Juday’ of the European Council for Fatwa Research (ECFR), who issued a fatwa in November 2001, in response to British Muslims fighting against British military forces in Afghanistan. Also, a group of 40 scholars associated with the Muslim Council of Britain issued a statement in condemnation of the July 7<sup>th</sup> bombings, and the Islamic Conference of Spain issued a fatwa that condemned Osama bin Laden as an apostate after the bombing in Madrid.<sup>30</sup> These are only but a few of the fatwas that European Muslim scholars have issued in response to an act of terrorism in the West.

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<sup>28</sup> (Esposito, 2010, p. xxv)

<sup>29</sup> (Kelsay, 2007, p. 133)

<sup>30</sup> (Caeiro, 2011, p. 35)

Fatwas on all sides of the argument have been issued consistently over the last 15 years, with some situations garnering more attention than others. As mentioned above, this is an ongoing conflict that concerns the hegemonic struggle for “legitimate” Islam. Some have termed the situation as a “war of fatwas”, with each side trying to secure legitimacy for themselves, while at the same time delegitimizing the other. It is within this context that the FTSB is evaluated in Chapter 6: Discursive Practice Analysis; does the FTSB participate in this struggle, and if so, how?

## 2.5 Previous Research

In the West, fatwa analysis has been taking place for over 100 years, and it is not within the scope of this thesis to recount all of the literature written on fatwas. However, a short account of the different ways in which fatwa research has been conducted and in what direction such research is heading is necessary. Dutch Orientalist, Christian Snouck Hurgronje’s *Islam und Phonograph* is one of the first contributions to the canon of literature that exists today on the analysis and study of fatwas. Commenting on the ways in which fatwas express the lived realities of Muslims, the article also discusses how analyses of fatwas can be used to show other observations about Islamic societies and communities.<sup>31</sup>

According to Jakob Skovgaard-Peterson, a Danish religious historian, in his book *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State; Muftis and Fatwas of the Dar al-Ifta.*, while most fatwa scholarship in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century focused, like Hergronje’s, on the daily lives of Muslims, the trend since the 1970’s-80’s has been to focus on the customs and traditions that fatwa literature provides unique insight into. The combination of academic interest in social and cultural history, as well as the resurgence of religious expression and observance in many Muslim countries from the late 1960’s made the availability and relevance of fatwas more distinct for the academic community. Many studies focused on a specific topic, researching the most relevant fatwas concerning that issue. Other studies concentrated on one specific fatwa, still others on the entire collection produced by a specific mufti. However, these are often directed at situating the mufti’s ideas within a specific intellectual or political

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<sup>31</sup> (Hergronje, 1900) as cited in (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997, p. 11)

movement, and so might be better considered as a study of *ulama* (Muslim scholars) rather than of fatwa.<sup>32</sup>

Two other methods that Skovgaard-Peterson mentions as having received little to no attention are the structural analysis of major fatwa collections, and the study of the intertextuality of fatwas.<sup>33</sup> Both of these methods have gained some traction within the current academic discourse, as is presented in Chapter 3: The Fatwa.<sup>34</sup>

While the literature on fatwa research is fairly large, academic research on MQI in general, and on the FTSB specifically, has been limited. Philippon has written a few pieces on Sufi traditions in Pakistan, where she has mentioned MQI. A chapter in Charles Ramsey and Clinton Bennett's *South Asian Sufis: Devotion, Deviation, and Destiny*, written by Philippon, entitled *When Sufi Tradition Reinvents Islamic Modernity; The Minhaj-ul-Qur'an, a new Sufi order in Pakistan*, focuses on describing and highlighting some of the most important aspects of MQI. Philippon also makes the case that the Barelvi theological school has often been overlooked by the academic world.<sup>35</sup> Much of her work is directed at bringing attention to this area, as well as problematizing and giving nuance to the political discourse that has arisen in connection to the "islamists" vs. Sufis.<sup>36</sup>

Despite a moderate amount of press coverage, academically only two articles have been written on the FTSB, both being book reviews. Drawing on Philippon, Kemal Argon wrote a review of the FTSB, and its possible relevance for Pakistan.<sup>37</sup> He gives a short introduction to the fatwa, followed by a review of its content and the ways in which some of the arguments presented in the fatwa can be used, especially in the context of Pakistan. Although this review does not delve deeply into the fatwa's reasoning or content, it does provide a short and concise presentation of some of the most important points made, and contextualizes the ways in which it can be used, transforming the discursive text into social action.

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<sup>32</sup> (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997, p. 11)

<sup>33</sup> (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997, pp. 11-12)

<sup>34</sup> See also (Masud, Messick, & Powers, 1996) and (Messick, 1992)

<sup>35</sup> (Philippon, 2012)

<sup>36</sup> See (Philippon, *Sunnis Against Sunnis. The Politicalization of Doctrinal Fractures in Pakistan*) and (Philippon, *Soufisme et politique au Pakistan: le mouvement barelwi a l'heure de la "guerre contre le terrorisme"*)

<sup>37</sup> (Argon, 2011)



Mattias Guidugli wrote a review of the FTSB in 2013, with focus on the political sphere.<sup>38</sup> This review places the FTSB firmly in the sphere of the international discourse that has developed after 9/11. Situating the FTSB in relation to other interreligious and intra-Muslim relations, Guidugi gives a short overview of some of the main arguments. He attempts to employ the ideas of the FTSB by mentioning some of the ways in which the arguments can be used in counter-terrorism work, but due to the brief nature of the review, is unable to make a real case.

Both Argon and Guidugi's reviews are under 10 pages in length, which gives very limited opportunity to delve into the intricacies of a 512 page document. They do, however, provide a good overview of the arguments presented, and make some interesting conclusions about how the ideas presented can be implemented in society. Both call for a more in depth analysis of the fatwa so as to better understand the possibilities of its use.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> (Guidugli, 2013)

<sup>39</sup> (Guidugli, 2013, p. 160); (Argon, 2011, p. 1)

# 3 The Fatwa

This chapter will give an overview both of what a fatwa is, as well as the way in which it has been studied previously, so as to form a coherent background for the analysis that will take place in chapters 5 -7. The purpose is to show how and why this thesis will contribute to the literature on fatwas and their analysis. In section 3.1 will give a short introduction to what a fatwa is and the historical context for what the institution has been used for, as well as how the institution of fatwa giving has affected Islamic jurisprudence. Next, in section 3.2 I will explain how fatwas are most commonly produced today and touch on some of the difficulties the institution has faced in the globalized world. Section 3.3 discusses some of the research done on fatwas and the analysis of fatwas, providing some theoretical and methodological points of interest. Finally, section 3.4 explains how these points of interest will be used to enhance the analysis conducted in chapters 5-7, as well as provide some discussion of the way in which this thesis can contribute to the current literature surrounding fatwa production and consumption.

## 3.1 What is a Fatwa?

The institution of fatwa-giving was present already during the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and verses 4: 127 and 4:176 in the Qur'an are considered to be the establishment and justification for the practice. Simply put, a fatwa is an answer given to a question that a person has posed to a *mufti*, or jurisconsult. The questioner (*mustafti*) asks an expert (*mufti*) a question about a religious or legal matter, and the mufti issues an opinion on the subject (*fatwa*).<sup>40</sup>

While the practice of fatwa giving was established in the Qur'an, it can also be found in hadith literature. However, while within the Qur'anic discourse when the Prophet Muhammad is asked a question, he answers only after having the answer revealed to him by God, in hadith literature Muhammad answers almost immediately and on the basis of his own authority. The direct relationship between the Prophet and the Muslim community that is expressed in the hadith literature provides a nice compliment to the triangular relationship that

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<sup>40</sup> (Masud, 2009, pp. 341-344) (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997, p. 2)

is described in the Qur'an, and establishes a precedent that allowed for the Prophet's companions to continue to issue fatwas after his death.<sup>41</sup>

In the beginning the issuing of fatwas was a private affair, but the activity soon came to be seen as a source of authority and legitimacy and it quickly became a part of the public domain. The leaders of different areas wanted to control the authority that the muftis had, and so began appointing "qualified" scholars, although they did retain an independent status. The most important of the fatwas that were issued were collected into fatwa collections, and these collections are often identified with one particular school of Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.1.1 Fatwa's contribution to Islamic jurisprudence

Early Western understanding of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) was often centered on the assumption that it was very rigid and primitive. The idea that the Shari'a was absolute and unchanging stood in comparison to the idea of Western law as something that was shaped by circumstances and applicable to all. In addition, outside observers often understood the implementation of Shari'a as deficient, due to the natural difference between text and practice, and therefore believed that as a model for legal standards that it was ineffective. Fatwas have been viewed in contrast to this, as coming from a place of authentic social life and as an articulation of the needs and situations that have arisen within the community over the centuries.<sup>43</sup>

In truth, fatwas have always played a role in the development of, and expression of *fiqh*, rather than standing in opposition to it. Wael Hallaq argues that the tradition of fatwa giving has always provided the institution of *fiqh* with the ability to adapt and change in accordance with the changing social and economic circumstances of the surrounding community. Not only have fatwas been selectively incorporated into *fiqh* manuals, but fatwas have been an integral and instrumental part in Islamic jurisprudence's ability to adapt, and have had a central role in the establishment of the institution.<sup>44</sup>

Despite being considered one of the least theoretical and lowest ranked sources for the law, fatwas have often had a deciding role in its final expression. Their connection to the actual

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<sup>41</sup> (Masud, Messick, & Powers, 1996, pp. 4-8)

<sup>42</sup> (Masud, 2009, p. 357) (Masud, Messick, & Powers, 1996, p. 9)

<sup>43</sup> (Hallaq, 1994) (Messick, 1992, pp. 58-66) (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997, p. 5)

<sup>44</sup> (Hallaq, 1994)

situations within the community gives them an importance that overrode the envisioned distinction between the sources, often being incorporated into the higher levels. Fatwas have, in fact, been the primary source for Islamic substantive law (*furu*). Hallaq says that:

...the crucial role played by the *fatwa* in the formation of substantive law is nowhere more evident than in the dialectical relationship between *fatwa* and *madhhab*, the established and authoritative legal doctrine of the school. It is by no means an exaggeration to state that the *madhhab* was defined by the practice of *ifta'*: what the *fatwa* determined to be the law was the *madhhab*.<sup>45</sup>

He also makes the case that it was the *mufti*, not the judge (*qadi*) who was the final expert on the law, as can be seen by, among other things, the fact that the *madrasa* institution's primary goal was the education and training of *muftis*.<sup>46</sup>

## 3.2 Contemporary Fatwa

While the case has been made that fatwas have historically always played a significant role in the judicial systems of Muslim societies as well as in the everyday lives of Muslims,<sup>47</sup> the question can be asked: In what way do fatwas have an effect on the lives of Muslims today, in the modern globalized world?

Skovgaard-Petersen claims that contemporary fatwas are fundamentally different than their predecessors. Their publication, modes of consumption and authority are all vastly different today, than they were previously. One important aspect of this is that the independent status that muftis traditionally held eventually eroded, and there now exist State Muftis that give official fatwas, and are constrained in their interpretations by the politics of the government that they are employed by. The audience that such fatwas are able to reach is another important factor in the difference between contemporary and historical fatwas. The advent of technology that allows for the quick and easy production and distribution of fatwas also means that they are subject to a complex system of ideologies and interests which combine to produce meaning from the words that are written, to a degree in which fatwas of the past were not.

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<sup>45</sup> (Hallaq, 1994, p. 57)

<sup>46</sup> (Hallaq, 1994, pp. 56, 59)

<sup>47</sup> See (Messick, 1992) and (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1997) for a more in depth discussion on this topic

Today the question of just who is allowed to write a fatwa has become a subject of quite some importance. As mentioned above, the practice of fatwa giving was a private affair in the beginning, and eventually developed into a more public situation due to the authority in which people vested in such decrees. In the beginning, due to the lack of widespread education and literacy, the only requirement for issuing a fatwa was that the issuer be “learned” and that their religious views be “recognized”.<sup>48</sup> While this may not seem like much, it is important to view these requirements through the lens of history, and recognize that being “learned” did indeed set you apart for the majority of people, and would grant a certain amount of legitimacy. Society is fundamentally different today however, and it is no longer enough to simply be “learned” and have “recognized” religious views. *The Amman Message* makes clear that the issuance of fatwa is only legitimate if it is based on the methodology and qualifications laid out by the school of jurisprudence that a Muslim adheres to. Claiming to do absolute *ijtihad*, or independent interpretation, is not permissible.<sup>49</sup>

For the purpose of this thesis, the question of what status fatwas hold, and the ways in which they are produced and distributed within Europe is of special importance. Caeiro writes that due to a number of issues there is “a social ambivalence towards the genre of fatwas” in Europe.<sup>50</sup> While the fatwa has been generally understood to be a sort of meeting place between the social and the legal sphere in earlier times, questions have been raised about what place the fatwa holds for Muslims today. Nevertheless, fatwa councils have been set up throughout Europe in the hope of producing fatwas for Muslims living as minorities in Western societies, taking into account their unique situations and circumstances. This is a clear indication that while fatwas have evolved from their earlier form, there is still an apparent demand for them.

### 3.3 Previous Research

As presented above, the general understanding of fatwas is as expressions of a meeting place between two spheres; the doctrinal/legal and the social. Islamic law has often been seen as rigid and “set in its final mold”.<sup>51</sup> Hallaq challenges this assumption in *From Fatwa to Furu: Growth and Change in Islamic Substantive Law* (1994), and establishes that the evidence

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<sup>48</sup> (Masud, Messick, & Powers, 1996, p. 8)

<sup>49</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 18)

<sup>50</sup> (Caeiro, 2006, p. 35)

<sup>51</sup> (Schacht, 1950) as cited by (Hallaq, 1994, p. 30)

shows that fatwas have been, and continue to be, used as a tool for jurists to modify and change Islamic substantive law. The observation that fatwas have played an important part in the modification of Islamic jurisprudence has been an important one in the study of Islamic jurisprudence, and has had a large influence on the research done on fatwas.

For example, *Islamic Legal Interpretation; Muftis and their Fatwas* (1996), considered to be the starting point for anyone intending to study fatwas, edited by Masud, Messick and Powers, is a volume of fatwa analyses that presents fatwas in relation to their context and internal argumentation. Covering fatwas from the formative years in Islamic history, all the way up until contemporary fatwas concerned with modern problems, this work provides a good deal of information about the development of Islamic law and authority.

In many ways this work is representative of much of the research surrounding fatwas in general. It focuses on the doctrinal aspects of fatwa production and consumption, and furthers the dominant understanding of fatwas, without giving much attention to the structures in which fatwas maneuver in the everyday lives of those who are affected by them. Another example is Skovgaard-Petersen's *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State* (1997), which shows the impact of fatwas on the social sphere, and the social sphere's impact on fatwas. He argues that fatwas should be seen as a source for the study of Islamic intellectual and social history, which means analyzing the fatwas in their social and political context. Once again, the main analysis is on how fatwas, as formal opinions on doctrine, have shaped and changed society through their innovative understandings. As important as this work is, it lacks an ethnographic or anthropologic lens.

Hussein Ali Agarma discusses this hole in the study of fatwas in his article *Ethics, Tradition, Authority: Toward an anthropology of the Fatwa* (2010). While acknowledging that the work done so far on fatwas and their influence on and by society and jurisprudence is important, he calls attention to the fact that there are certain dimensions that have either been taken for granted or simply forgotten. Agarma's article questions our assumptions about the authority that a fatwa yields, and also about the social constructs that underpin that very authority; such as tradition and creativity.

According to Agarma, Brinkley Messick's *The Calligraphic State; Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (1992) is the only attempt to consequently review fatwa literature through an ethnographic lens in an attempt to understand the daily practices of production and

consumption.<sup>52</sup> Agarma questions the assumptions we have about authority and what kind of authority the fatwa expresses and controls. In the same vein, rather than focusing on the doctrinal features of the fatwa, Messick is concerned with the modes of expression within the fatwa that combine with the other institutions that a fatwa interacts with, and produce authority and meaning through it.

This section has mentioned only some of the literature written on the subject of fatwas and their analysis; however, it highlights the current debate within this field. Earlier work has concentrated heavily on the doctrinal implications of fatwas and their innovative understanding of Islamic jurisprudence. Focusing almost exclusively on the styles of reasoning and modes of justification, most of the literature has left out the ethical and moral realms that fatwas are a part of as well. Some scholars, such as Agarma, call for an anthropological look at the ways in which fatwas effect and are affected by the everyday lives of Muslims.

### **3.4 This thesis' contribution**

This thesis continues in the same vein as much of the research already done on fatwas, researching the styles of argumentation and internal reasoning present within the fatwa itself. However, it is also my intention to locate and analyze the ethical dimensions it symbolizes and the moral complexities it represents, answering the call for more ethnographical explorations of the fatwa made by Agarma and Caeiro. How does the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* play out in people's everyday lives, in what way does it constitute and exercise authority, who is entrusted to act upon this authority and how? Chapters 5-7 intend to analyze the textual, discursive, and social spheres that the fatwa exists in. In this way it should be possible to analyze the fatwa in as thorough way as possible, thereby contributing to both the counter-extremism discourse, but also the literature surrounding the study of fatwas themselves.

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<sup>52</sup> (Agrama, 2010, pp. 15-16) see footnote 7 and 28.

# 4 Theory and Method

This thesis applies Norman Fairclough's framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings*. Fairclough's three-dimensional model for discourse analysis provides both the theoretical and methodological framework for this analysis. CDA's understanding of discourse and its effect on the social world are the theoretical foundation this thesis is based upon, and Fairclough's three-dimensional model provides the methodological process.

In section 4.1 I discuss just what "discourse" is, and how it is viewed within this analysis. Section 4.2 delves deeper into the theoretical underpinnings of CDA, providing context in order to understand the theoretical basis on which this thesis is built. Next, in section 4.3 I discuss Fairclough's framework and how it allows for the operationalization of the theoretical concepts discussed in the previous sections. Section 4.4 discusses how this framework is applied specifically to the FTSB. As Fairclough's model calls for the inclusion of social or cultural theory in order to analyze the social dimension of discourse, I discuss the theory used in this analysis in section 4.5, namely Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). Finally, I discuss some of the challenges that the use of a social constructionist theory poses, and why CDA in combination with CVE are used in this thesis.

## 4.1 Definition of discourse

CDA is the attempt to use language analysis for the study of social change.<sup>53</sup> It is built on the epistemological tenet that the meaning of the social world and reality can never be understood outside of discourse, and therefore discourse is also part of the analysis.<sup>54</sup> This obliges the specification of exactly what *discourse* is.

Michel Foucault, one of the leading theorists in the development of discourse analysis, recognized that different eras in history have fostered different worldviews, and thus was interested in discovering what different historical era's rules were for considering something meaningful and truthful. Foucault saw discourse as a particular knowledge regime that determined what was true or false, and his aim was to analyze the structure of those knowledge regimes, or discourses. He considered "discourse" to be what structured what is,

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<sup>53</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 1) (Wodak, 2009, p. 2)

<sup>54</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 21)



or is not, meaningful to say. Therefore, through his interpretation, while there are any number of potential formulations possible, the structure restricts what is possible to say by determining what is meaningful or not.<sup>55</sup>

Jørgensen and Phillips, in *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, offer another conceptualization of discourse as “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world).”<sup>56</sup> This reflects the idea that it is discourse that creates meaning, and that language does not simply reflect our world. It also reflects the fact that different people understand the world in different ways, and the establishment of different discourses is the way in which they are able to express these different understandings of reality.

These two definitions of discourse place most emphasis on the way in which discourse should be understood in relation to society and conceptual ideas of reality. Fairclough subscribes to these basic social-theoretical tenets, but includes what he describes as a text-and-interaction sense as well. In addition, Fairclough understands discourse as operating on three levels; textual, discursive, and social practice.<sup>57</sup> This means that while Fairclough sees discourse as being constitutive of meaning and our social reality, he also recognizes that there can be several discourses contributing to the meaning-making process at the same time. This is in opposition to Foucault, who believed that a single hegemonic discourse controlled that particular social field until a new discourse gained authority.<sup>58</sup>

The three levels that discourse functions on correlate directly to Fairclough’s methodological framework for analysis. I will present this framework and how it will be used in this thesis later in the chapter. For now I turn to the social constructionist theoretical underpinnings that this framework is built upon.

## 4.2 Theoretical underpinnings of CDA

Jørgensen & Phillips make clear that the CDA methodological framework cannot be used appropriately without also being informed by the theoretical background that it stems from.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 13)

<sup>56</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1)

<sup>57</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 4)

<sup>58</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 13); (Fairclough, 1992, p. 64)

<sup>59</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 4)

In the sections under I attempt to highlight the most salient points that CDA has been built upon, so as to give a clear and concrete description of the theoretical and philosophical values this thesis is molded by. These include the structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophy about the role of language.

Discourse analysis has a specific view of language, and its role, that is connected to the schools of structuralism and poststructuralism.<sup>60</sup> The basic assumption is that access to reality is always through language. This means that it is not that the physical reality does not exist, but rather that the emphasis is on the understanding that the meaning given to the physical reality is created through language and discourse.

Jørgensen & Phillips explain that it is through this system of language that the constitution of meaning, or the social world, is constructed.<sup>61</sup> Different meanings are constructed through different discourses, and these provide different possibilities for appropriate action. When the discourse changes, new constructions of meaning are possible, and thus new possibilities for action become available and suitable; it is through this process that the social world is also affected and changed, as well as reproduced.

Discourse analysis often moves between the strictly structuralist and poststructuralist titles, but they all agree on four points. Firstly, they refute the understanding of language as a reflection of a pre-existing reality. Next, they see language as being structured in patterns or discourses, in which meanings of phrases and concepts change from discourse to discourse. Thirdly, these discursive patterns are maintained and transformed in discursive practices, and finally the preservation and transformation of the patterns should be explored through analysis of the specific contexts in which language is being used.<sup>62</sup>

This means that while discourse analysis may assume many forms, they are all based on the same four conceptions of the way in which language and social reality intertwine. Language is recognized as a force within the social domain, and not simply a product of it. Not only does it produce meaning, but it does so in specific ways that are possible to trace and delineate, and which can evolve over time into larger, value producing structures. The

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<sup>60</sup> This thesis operates under the understanding that structuralism and poststructuralism are subcategories of the umbrella concept of social-constructionism, as outlined by Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 6.

<sup>61</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 8)

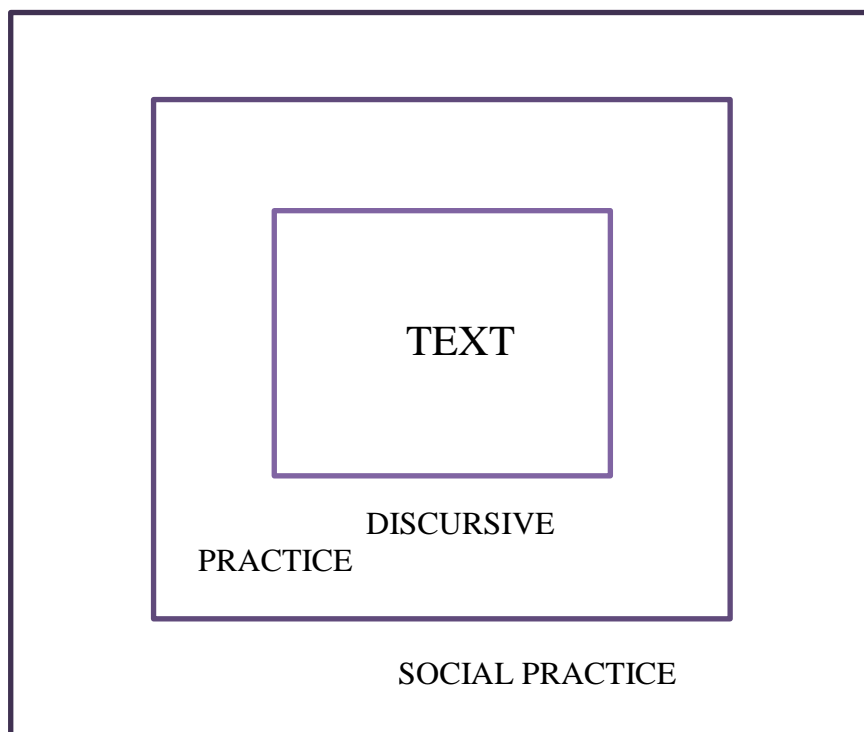
<sup>62</sup> (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 8-9)

premise for the social-scientific study of discourse analysis is that these structures should be analyzed so as to understand the values and meanings that they produce.

### 4.3 Fairclough's Framework

The objective of Norman Fairclough's analytical framework is to be "an approach to discourse analysis which could be used as one method amongst others for investigating social changes."<sup>63</sup> He does this by establishing a three-dimensional model that incorporates both the social and linguistic dimensions of discourse, so as to analyze the dialectical relationship between them. The understanding of discourse as a medium through which social reproduction and change take place is central to the framework. The reason for analysis is to discover where discourses have changed and where hegemonic struggle has taken place; where there is a change in discourse there is also a social change.<sup>64</sup> The three-dimensional framework is a clear method that allows for the operationalization of concepts in the analysis, such as hegemony and ideology.

#### *Three- Dimensional Model*



*Figure 1.1 Fairclough's three-dimensional model, adapted from Fairclough 1992: 73*

<sup>63</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 8)

<sup>64</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 70); (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 9)

Any instance of discourse, or what Fairclough terms a “discursive event”, is considered to be text, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of social practice. Discourse is both a social practice as well as a language in the form of text, and these two dimensions are mediated by the discursive practice. These three dimensions correspond to three analytically distinctive aspects of discourse that play a dialectical role on one another. The model is used to trace connections between the normative and innovative ways in which texts are built (text analysis), and how they are produced and consumed in a wider sense (discursive practice analysis), and then situate these practices in their context; the social structures and struggles that discourse is taking place within (social practice analysis).<sup>65</sup>

The dimension of text analysis is conducted through the linguistically oriented language analysis of texts.<sup>66</sup> It is concerned with the formal features of texts; the meaning and form that the text takes. CDA makes the assumption that meanings are socially motivated, and that there are social reasons for a particular combination of meaning and form.<sup>67</sup> Essentially, this dimension uses a set of specific tools to analyze the ways in which a text creates meaning; it is descriptive in nature.

The discursive practice dimension identifies the processes of text production and consumption, and how the nature of these processes differs according to particular discourses and social factors.<sup>68</sup> It involves analysis of the material non-discursive practices, such as the printing of the text, and who authored it, but is more concerned with the socio-cognitive aspects of production and consumption.<sup>69</sup> It is possible to analyze these aspects through the operationalization of the concept of *intertextuality*: “the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth.”<sup>70</sup> This dimension of discourse analysis mediates the relationship between the text itself and the social structures that the discourse is part of, it is interpretive in nature.

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<sup>65</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 72)

<sup>66</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 4)

<sup>67</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 74-75)

<sup>68</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 4,78)

<sup>69</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 81)

<sup>70</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 84)

The social practice dimension is concerned with issues surrounding the circumstances of the discursive event and how that shapes the nature of the discursive practice.<sup>71</sup> It analyzes if and how discourse practice has contributed to the reproduction or restructuring of existing structures of power in the social world.<sup>72</sup> This dimension is intricately linked with the concepts of ideology and hegemony; how they are constituted in discourse and how they in turn affect the world. Due to the non-discursive nature of this dimension of the analysis, it requires the use of a social theory. This thesis employs the use of the theory of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).

While the framework conceptualizes the three dimensions as analytically distinct, it is also apparent that they overlap and influence one another. Text analysis can never be done without some reference to its production and consumption, and so it overlaps with the dimension of discursive practice.<sup>73</sup> Discursive practice is a particular form of social practice. The analysis of the text production and consumption are inherently social; it involves reference to the economic, political and institutional settings in which the discourse being analyzed was generated in, creating an overlap of the discursive and social practice dimensions.<sup>74</sup>

### 4.3.1 Ideology

Fairclough defines ideology as:

Significations / constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms / meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination.<sup>75</sup>

CDA is interested in the ideological effects of discursive practices, and sees ideologies as most effective when they become so embedded in the discourse that they are viewed as common sense. CDA is designed to uncover these taken for granted understandings, and is critical in the sense that it intends to show the connections that are hidden from the public, and hopes to intervene where it uncovers social injustice.

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<sup>71</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 4)

<sup>72</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 95)

<sup>73</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 74)

<sup>74</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 71-72)

<sup>75</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 87)

However, Fairclough recognizes that not all discourse is necessarily ideological. Ideological discourse is a characteristic of a society that is influenced by relations of domination. To the degree that human societies can rise above such relations, it is possible for them to transcend ideology. In this respect it is also therefore possible for some discourses to be more or less ideological than others.<sup>76</sup>

### **4.3.2 Hegemony**

Fairclough understands hegemony as power, and hegemonic struggle as the evolution of power relations.<sup>77</sup> When operationalized within CDA it provides a way in which to analyze the social practice in which the discourse is situated in terms of power relations; if they in some way reproduce or restructure existing hegemonies. It also provides a way to analyze the discourse practice itself as a medium through which hegemonic struggle takes place.<sup>78</sup>

Due to the critical nature of CDA, it has a vested interest in uncovering the power relations within discourse and social institutions. Fairclough's methodology allows for the conceptualization and operationalization of these two concepts, ideology and hegemony, that provides analytical tools for uncovering these power relations. A highly effective ideology is the outcome of a hegemonic struggle between two discourses within one "order of discourse" (the arrangement of all of the discourses within one social field.)<sup>79</sup> The winner of that struggle is able to dominate the meaning making structure so that its values are reproduced, reinforcing itself overtime and eventually evolving into "common sense". It is through these hegemonic struggles and revealing of ideology that it is possible to see the social effect that language has.

These concepts and their use in analysis are highly applicable to this thesis. As mentioned in Chapter 2 and as will be shown through the analysis in chapters 5-7, one of the main aspects of this fatwa is the struggle for the claim to "correct" Islam, or ideology, and the discourse that emerges out of this hegemonic struggle.

## **4.4 Methodology Applied**

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<sup>76</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 18); (Fairclough, 1992, p. 9)

<sup>77</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 86)

<sup>78</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 92)

<sup>79</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 67)

Having given an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the framework, as well as the framework itself, it is necessary to make clear in what way Fairclough's framework is pertinent to this thesis. Under I present Fairclough's analytical framework in specific context to my thesis. I have developed specific questions within the framework that correspond directly to my research questions.

#### **4.4.1 Text Analysis**

This dimension of the analysis concentrates heavily on the text and how it produces the discursive practice. In text analysis, specific tools are used to highlight aspects of the text to give a detailed description of how the text itself activates different discourses. By using these tools, it is possible to discern the ways in which texts have contributed to a particular construction of reality and the social identities and relations within that paradigm.<sup>80</sup>

This dimension of analysis of the fatwa will focus on explaining its internal argumentation and strategy. By evaluating what the argument of the fatwa is, and to who and in what way it presents this argument it will be possible to evaluate how it has constructed meaning and in what way this might affect the discursive practice.

Questions of what standpoint is taken, in what way it is supported and in what way this standpoint is used to argue the fatwa's point are the central aspects of this analysis. More specifically, these questions relate to: What discourses are employed in support of the overarching message of the FTSB? Do these discourses rely on modernist-rationalist, sufi-spiritual, classical-dogmatic, or ethical-moral reasoning; or a combination? Who is cited and used as authoritative, and why? Are these arguments used in a contextualizing or dogmatic way?

Fairclough has developed a set of tools that textual (and discursive practice) analysis can be conducted through. Under is a presentation of some of the tools adapted from Fairclough that are prudent in this particular textual analysis.<sup>81</sup> It is important to recognize that no discourse analysis will be conducted in the exact same way, with the exact same tools, and therefore it is a naturally subjective undertaking. The set of tools presented is constrained by my understanding of the problem, and my understanding of the way in which to solve it, and

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<sup>80</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 83)

<sup>81</sup> (Fairclough, 2003, pp. 192-194)

therefore does not reflect the entire realm of possibilities. I have chosen these tools because I feel they are the most relevant in connection to the overall research questions. Several of these tools will also be utilized within the analysis of the discursive practice.

Issue	Question
Social events:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What social event, and what chain of social event, is the text a part of?</li> <li>• Is the text part of a chain or network of texts?</li> </ul>
Genre:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the text situated within a genre chain?</li> <li>• Is the text characterized by a mix of genres</li> </ul>
Intertextuality:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of relevant other texts/voices, which are included, which are significantly excluded?</li> <li>• Were other voices are included? Are they attributed, and if so, specifically or non-specifically?</li> <li>• How are other voices textured in relation to the authorial voice, and in relation to each other?</li> </ul>
Assumptions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What existential, propositional, or value assumptions are made? Is there a case for seeing any assumptions as ideological?</li> </ul>
Exchanges, speech functions and grammatical mood:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the predominant types of exchange and speech function?</li> <li>• Are there “metaphorical” relations between exchanges, speech functions, or types of statement?</li> <li>• What is the predominant grammatical mood?</li> </ul>
Discourse:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What discourses are drawn upon in the text, and how are they textured together? Is there a significant mixing of discourse?</li> </ul>

#### 4.4.2 Discursive Practice

Analysis of the discursive practice is the dimension of the analysis that concentrates on how the text is produced and consumed. In this regard the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of the text are the most important aspects. Intertextuality refers to how all communicative



events draw on earlier events. This can be expressed through manifest intertextuality: directly citing other texts; or through interdiscursivity, which analyzes the different discourses and genres of the communicative event.<sup>82</sup>

The concept of “order of discourse” developed by Fairclough’s theory of CDA allows for a conceptualization of the area where many discourses are competing in the same domain. Thus, the order of discourse encompasses many different discourses competing to establish meaning in their own way.<sup>83</sup> This concept can also be loosely equated with hegemony, in the sense that the order of discourse has a hegemonic understanding of that particular way of viewing the world. It is possible for new configurations of the order of discourse through hegemonic struggle, thus creating a new hegemony in that area of social practice.<sup>84</sup>

This thesis positions the FTSB within the counter-extremism order of discourse, and will analyze the discursive practice through this lens. Establishing in what way the FTSB relates to other texts within the counter-extremism order of discourse will allow for a tentative evaluation of if and how the FTSB has affected this order of discourse. Through this analysis it will be possible to show the role that this discursive practice has had in maintaining or changing the social order, as Fairclough’s theory of discourse says that where there is discursive change there is social change.

The intertextuality and interdiscursivity of the fatwa is thus central to this dimension of analysis, and the majority of analysis will be focused on these processes. The non-discursive aspects of text production and consumption are not deemed as pertinent to the discursive practice analysis, and thus will not receive much attention. They are seen as pertinent to the social practice analysis however, and will be discussed where appropriate.

#### **4.4.3 Social Practice**

This dimension of analysis will focus on the ways in which the discursive practice has or has not had an effect on the context in which it is situated. Through the theory that is in development on Countering Violent Extremism, I will relate the textual and discursive practice analysis to the social context. The objective of my thesis is to research the ways in which the FTSB has or has not made an impact on the social structures and institutions it is a

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<sup>82</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 73)

<sup>83</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 141)

<sup>84</sup> (Fairclough, 1992, p. 95)

part of. It is therefore necessary to view the findings from the textual and discursive practice analysis through the lens of the social practice in which they are submerged. CVE provides a way of analyzing these structures.

## 4.5 Countering Violent Extremism

Countering Violent Extremism is a fairly new term that has arisen out of policy changes within Western government's approaches to counter-terrorism. The use of the term is a conscious choice made by these governments in order to distance themselves from the "counter-terrorism" and "War on Terrorism" discourses, as it became clear that the situation has become one in which there is now a "war for hearts and minds" and a "battle of ideas".<sup>85</sup> While CVE theory and policy is, in theory, a response to all radicalization, in practice it is used almost exclusively in connection to Islamic radicalization.

This shift in language reflects a shift in policy; where before "hard" tactics such as prosecution, surveillance and force were used to crack down on suspected terrorists, now "soft" measures are employed in the hope that educators, civilians, social workers and civil society will be able to break up processes of radicalization, stopping terrorism before it has taken root.<sup>86</sup>

CVE encompasses an array of methods, and it has been shown that the understanding of CVE and Violent Extremism (VE) are mutually constitutive of one another, meaning that the methods used within CVE are theorized and operationalized based on our understanding of the methods of VE.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, those who work with a radicalization theory that says that socio-economic concerns are most pertinent in determining who becomes radicalized, recommend CVE methods that combat just such socio-economic concerns. From those who work with ideological concerns of radicalization come ideological CVE methods. However, it is widely understood that for CVE to work, a multifaceted approach is necessary; no one method is adequate enough on its own, and must be employed in combination with others.

Strategies dealing with the ideological aspects of CVE encompass efforts to keep vulnerable people from developing anti-democratic and pro- use of violence beliefs. The underlying assumption of such strategies is that thought comes before action, making it necessary to

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<sup>85</sup> (Aly, Balbi, & Jacques, 2015, p. 7)

<sup>86</sup> (Neumann, 2017, p. 19) (Gielen, 2017, p. 1) (Cohen, Kruglanski, Gelfand, Webber, & Gunaratna, 2018, p. 142)

<sup>87</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 16)

influence the thoughts and ideas of potentially vulnerable people. Such strategies might include religious counseling and mentoring, the overall aim being to “correct” misinterpretations.<sup>88</sup> Often times mentoring takes place in prisons as part of the rehabilitation process, but also in mosques, schools and on the internet.<sup>89</sup>

The prolific use of the internet and social media by terrorist groups has been identified as one of the major challenges in combating radicalization and VE.<sup>90</sup> Communicative strategies have emerged as a counter measure to the use of the media and communication services by terrorists. Such strategies are aimed at promoting counter-narratives, as well as disrupting terrorists’ narratives.<sup>91</sup>

Political approaches are seen as more and more critical in CVE work, as oftentimes political grievances are the catalyst for terrorist activities.<sup>92</sup> Conflict resolution, inclusion in the political process, and encouraging participation in democratic processes, are strategies that are supported by this understanding of CVE. State-building is also seen as political strategy that can be employed, as VE is most associated with “weak” and “failed” states.

Finally, social policy approaches to CVE address the socio-economic factors that contribute to radicalization, as well as provide disengagement strategies. Providing alternative pathways for those who are attracted to VE groups, is an important part of such work. Social inclusiveness, solidarity, financial and social support have all been cited as reasons for joining or being attracted to a VE group. By providing such things through other networks it is thought to be possible to reduce the attractiveness of VE groups.<sup>93</sup>

While CVE initiatives have been championed by both governments and civil society, others have cautioned that it might not be the ultimate solution. One of the major criticisms of CVE in general is the difficulty in measuring what effect the initiatives actually have.<sup>94</sup> It is difficult to establish whether someone who has “de-radicalized” did so due to the CVE initiative, for some other reason, or a combination. Also, there is no clear definition of exactly what CVE is or what it entails, thus resulting in conflicting or even counter-

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<sup>88</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, pp. 46-48)

<sup>89</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 47) (Neumann, 2017, p. 39)

<sup>90</sup> (Action plan against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, 2014, p. 9)

<sup>91</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 50)

<sup>92</sup> (Gielen, 2017, p. 8) (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 53)

<sup>93</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 57)

<sup>94</sup> (Neumann, 2017, p. 22)

productive programs.<sup>95</sup> A specific criticism of the CVE initiative that is most pertinent to this thesis, namely that of counter-narratives, is that the theory that extremist ideologies can be negated through counter-narratives is unproven.<sup>96</sup>

## **4.6 Challenges of social constructionism and Fairclough's CDA**

In choosing a social constructionist framework for analysis, it is important to keep in mind some of the challenges that such a framework faces. One such challenge is the interpretation of its epistemology; that if everything is contingent, then everything is unstable and there are no restraints in social life. A possible answer to this is that social constructionists recognized the social world as much more rule-bound than the above interpretation would suggest. In specific situations, knowledge and identities are relatively inflexible due to the restrictions the context places upon them.<sup>97</sup> This relates to the epistemological and ontological premises outlined in the beginning of the chapter that say that what we do and say are situated manifestations that are constrained and in some ways determined by the time and place that they are expressed in.

Another challenge for social research in general is the role the researcher and research produced plays on the discourse itself. If reality and meaning about the world are discursively produced, what effect does the research produced have on the discourse? In this respect Fairclough's understanding of ideological and non-ideological discourses is very useful, because it opens up for the possibility that the researcher can produce non-ideological discourses.<sup>98</sup> This requires the researcher to position herself in relation to the research material as transparently as possible, and make clear any ideological, political cultural or otherwise contextually relevant stance that might influence the interpretation of the data.

In that respect it is pertinent for me to mention here the fact that I am a white female, born and raised in the United States who immigrated to Norway in 2009 at the age of 18. Not claiming any specific religious affiliation does not remove the fact that I have been raised in a Christian household, and have been surrounded by Christian social institutions my entire life. I am thus

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<sup>95</sup> (Fink, Romanuik, & Barakat, 2013, p. 6)

<sup>96</sup> (Gielen, 2017, p. 14)

<sup>97</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 6)

<sup>98</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 21)

an outsider of the phenomena that I am researching, which is the intra-Muslim discourse within the context of Norway. My choice of theory and method is also affected by internal ideological standpoints on the nature of reality and human being's place within the world.

## 4.7 Why CDA

I have chosen Fairclough's CDA as the theory and methodology for this thesis for several reasons. In the beginning stages of this research I chose this particular form for CDA due to its capacity for investigating the social impact of a written document, and its clearly outlined methodology. During the course of my research it has become even more clear just how suited this theory and methodology are for this study. Firstly, the operationalization of concepts such as ideology, hegemony, and interdiscursivity as analytical tools is of great help in this thesis. As a discourse that is blatantly attempting to establish/ reaffirm the "correct" interpretation of Islam, analysis of both the "ideology" and "hegemony" of the FTSB is important. Determining in what way other texts within the FTSB's order of discourse have established their interpretations, or its interdiscursivity, also provides relevant data. Secondly, and possibly most important for this thesis, is the fact that Fairclough's CDA calls for the incorporation of a social theory in order to analyze the social dimension. The FTSB's intent, "to explain to the Western and Islamic worlds the proper Islamic stance on terrorism"<sup>99</sup> make viewing it as counter-narrative a natural deduction. As no line of research can, or should, attempt to cover every line of inquiry on a subject, being able to combine the discourse analysis with a theory that would help analyze the FTSB specifically as a counter-narrative has been vital in identifying which line of inquiry this thesis should pursue.

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<sup>99</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 5)

## 5 Text analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze and present the main points presented in the FTSB. The extraordinary length of this fatwa, 512 pages, makes it necessary to summarize the fatwa and its argumentation. This chapter will undertake a text analysis of the FTSB with the intent being to show how these arguments were constructed and developed into separate discourses. It will employ Fairclough's analytical tools<sup>100</sup> as its investigative method, and through the analysis I will be able to provide insight into and answer one of my thesis questions: *What are the arguments that the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings expresses?*

I have identified 4 main points that the FTSB builds its argument on; (1) the normative understanding of Islam, (2) the sanctity and dignity of all human life, (3) terrorists are Kharijites<sup>101</sup>, and (4) reform of Islamic governments must be peaceful. These discourses represent the main argumentation that the FTSB uses to achieve its overall purpose; condemning violent actions committed in the name of Islam, and distancing Islam from the ideologies that would use it as legitimatization for such acts. This chapter's purpose is to show what discourses Qadri uses and how he builds these arguments. However, these discourses are often well established in both theological and academic literature, and it is outside of the scope of this chapter to engage these discourses beyond Qadri's discussion. Where appropriate I have noted suggestions for further reading that provide a more thorough discussion on these topics than is possible here.

In the section 5.1 I will present a general overview of the 4 main points the FTSB is built upon. In sections 5.2-5.5 I will show how these arguments are produced within the fatwa and analyze the discourses they produce. I conclude in section 5.6 by discussing the ways in which these discourses build upon one another and culminate in an overall counter-narrative, effectively situating the FTSB within the counter-extremism order of discourse. This is an important distinction as it allows for further analysis in Chapter 6.

In Chapter 6: Discursive Practice Analysis I use the findings from this chapter to discuss how the discourses have been borrowed from and used by others in the same order of discourse as

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<sup>100</sup> Every discourse analysis is different, and as such uses different tools. The tools that I have used in this analysis were presented in Chapter 4.

<sup>101</sup> Historically Kharijites were an early sectarian group that broke away from mainstream Islam during the "great *fitnah*" of 656-661 CE. (Williams & Corfield) Qadri uses the term to denote those who are extreme in their beliefs and practices, and will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

the FTSB. Through this it will be possible to see where instances of discursive struggle have taken place, and based on Fairclough's theory of discourse analysis, these instances of discursive struggle correspond to instances of social struggle and change. These further analyses will provide information necessary to answer the remaining two questions: (1) *In what way has the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings affected and contributed to the discourses surrounding counter-extremism?* and (2) *In what way does it present its message/beliefs/ views, and has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?*

## 5.1 Establishing the Main Arguments

In the preface of the book, Dr. Tahir-ul Qadri presents the reasons for, and methodology underlying, the argumentation of the fatwa. Referencing the increased, and increasingly routine, use of violence and suicide bombings by terrorists, and their attempts to justify their actions through the concept of jihad, Qadri felt it necessary to write the FTSB, as a way to explain to both the Western and Islamic world the stance that Islam holds on terrorism and suicide bombings. Qadri builds his argument by relying on the Qur'an, the prophetic traditions, and the classical books of jurisprudences and theology. This fatwa is directed at audiences in both the Western and Islamic worlds; inter-religious conflict is of concern, as well as intra-Muslim conflict.<sup>102</sup>

In the typical style of fatwas, with their specific question and specific answer, seven questions are asked in the preface. It can be assumed that these questions and their answers are indicators of the overall tone and argumentation strategy for the rest of the fatwa. These questions are answered without direct reference to the Qur'an or Hadith, but it can be assumed, and is subsequently clear, that they set the foundation for the more extensive elaboration in the rest of the fatwa. Qadri maintains a mainstream Sunni Islam approach to his answers to these questions, and relies on rational-theological and ethical arguments here, and throughout the FTSB.

The first question asks whether it is permissible for someone to use force in the promotion or implementation of their belief or doctrine, even if it is to lead another to the right path. The answer presented is that Islam forbids acts of violence against others, and that terrorism

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<sup>102</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 3-6)

amounts to disbelief. Forcing someone to believe something is not acceptable. Rather, Islam promotes negotiation and discussion in an attempt to persuade through reason, not through force.<sup>103</sup>

The second question relates to non-Muslim citizens and asks what their rights are in a Muslim state. The answer given is that non-Muslim citizens have the same rights and protections as a Muslim, and that all human beings have equal value. The use of violence and force are strictly forbidden against all peaceful and non-violent citizens, whether they are Muslim or not.<sup>104</sup> The answer is mostly theoretical, in that it specifies what non-Muslim minority rights should be, rather than discussing what actual legislation stipulates.

Question three regards the sanctity of human life in general, and whether Islam has any clear stipulations about this. In answer Qadri makes clear that Islam has strict rules regarding the sanctity of human life, outlawing all indiscriminate killing, even against peaceful troops of an army who Muslim armies are at war with.<sup>105</sup>

Question four asks whether or not armed struggle is permissible against Muslim rulers, even if it is due to the ruler's un-Islamic policies. Qadri makes clear in his answer that concord in society as a whole is seen as one of the highest priorities within Islam, as it is not simply a religion in the secular Western sense, but rather a *din* or code of life. In line with this, Islam forbids rebellion against the state, as this causes more strife and hardship than it fixes, unless there is a clear, explicit and unequivocal action of disbelief, and use of force to prevent others from performing religious rituals. However, while the bar is set very high for the possibility of legitimate violent rebellion, there is still a clear duty that Muslims have to hold their governments and rulers accountable to the truth and to fight evil. Reforming an impious Muslim leader through a peaceful, constitutionally protected manner is considered mandatory and appropriate.<sup>106</sup>

The next question, number five, asks who the Kharijites were, and how they are judged according to Islam. It also inquires about the connection between modern terrorists, and the Kharijites of old. In answer, Qadri states irrevocably that they were rebels and apostates from Islam, despite their seemingly ultra-pious behavior. Despite their outward appearance of

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<sup>103</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 7)

<sup>104</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 8)

<sup>105</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 8)

<sup>106</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 9-10)



adhering strictly to the religious norms and regulations, even more so than the companions to the Prophet, this group is not considered to be in the fold of Islam. Qadri also states that there will be people at all times of history who should be categorized as Kharijites, and that the Muslim state is compelled to wage war against them until they are decimated, or until they lay down their arms and pledge to respect the legitimacy of the Muslim state. By his interpretation, in today's world, the terrorists who commit indiscriminate murder in the name of jihad are actually Kharijites.<sup>107</sup>

Question six asks what measures an Islamic state should take to end terrorism and violence. Qadri says that a good start would be by removing stimuli that create doubt in the common man's heart about the correct understanding of how to effect change in their environment. He also lays responsibility on the "world powers" to right the wrongs they have done and remedy the situations they have created that fuel terrorist agendas, claiming that until this is done that no real peace will ever exist.<sup>108</sup>

The final question asks whether or not such evil deeds as terrorism can ever be considered good due to the intentions that they spring from. Is it possible for the indiscriminate killing of non-violent citizens to be considered good if the intention behind the killing was to bring them into the fold of Islam, or to protect the lands of Islam from further harm? Qadri states irrevocably that the ends do not justify the means, and that any evil act remains evil, despite any good intentions one has in committing it.<sup>109</sup>

This question leads into the first real explanation based on the theological sources by Qadri. Using several verses in the Qur'an, Qadri shows how in other situations, such as idol-worship (*sura* 39:3), the good intention of coming closer to God does not make the worshipping of idols a permissible endeavor. Qadri also shows how the Qur'an, in *sura* 2:204-206 and 2:11-12, has stated clearly that there will be those who try to claim good intentions and speak in a charismatic way, but that their actions which are full of violence and cause strife show that they are not in concord with Islam.<sup>110</sup>

Continuing, Qadri addresses those who use the hadith that says "actions are judged according to intentions," in an effort to defend their stance that terrorist activities committed in the name

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<sup>107</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 11)

<sup>108</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 12-13)

<sup>109</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 13)

<sup>110</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 13-15)

of jihad are permissible. In response to this Qadri shows how this hadith has been interpreted in two ways, neither of which condones the understanding that good intentions can transform evil acts into good ones. The first is that this only applies to already permissible acts; meaning that the building of a mosque, for example, while permissible, is only a righteous act if the intention behind it is also righteous and not simply for personal gain in some way. This means that an act of terrorism, which is illegal under Islamic Sacred Law, can never be considered righteous, no matter the intentions behind it.<sup>111</sup>

The second interpretation of this hadith says that the actions one takes speak to the real intentions one has, no matter what intentions one professes to have. According to this interpretation then, someone who commits acts of terrorism has the intention to cause evil and strife, no matter what they might say about their intentions to protect the land of Islam.<sup>112</sup>

From the above questions it is possible to discern 4 major themes that will subsequently concretize into 4 main discourses. The main theme of questions 1-3 have to do with the impermissibility of causing harm to another human being, regardless of religious creed, ethnicity, or political affiliation. Questions four and six have to do with Islamic governments and what avenues the citizenry has to reform, and types of reform the governments should be undertaking to stem the tide of terrorism. Question five establishes the connection between today's terrorists and the Kharijites of old. The last question, and accompanying discussion, makes clear that the oft used justification that an evil act can be made good if it was committed with righteous intentions does not hold, and is not supported by the evidence from the Qur'an. This will be shown to be in connection to the discourse on the normative understanding of Islam and how those who perpetuate terrorism are ignorant of this.

These four arguments are how the FTSB presents and enforces the stance it takes that terrorism and suicide bombing is impermissible in Islam. This is also reflected in the chapters of the fatwa itself, with chapters 2-7 dealing with the sanctity of human life and citizen rights, no matter religious or political affiliation. Chapters 8, 9, and 11-17 talk about who rebels are and their connection to terrorists today, and establishes the connection between today's terrorists and the Kharijites of old. Chapters 10 and 18 deal with questions of how, if and when social reform legal and acceptable. The fourth argument, the normative basis of the

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<sup>111</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 16)

<sup>112</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 17)

FTSB, is dealt with in the preface itself but can also be found throughout the fatwa as the supportive argument that underlies the whole of the FTSB.

## 5.2 Normative Basis Discourse

The FTSB discourses are built upon a common foundation of the normative understanding and purpose of Islam as *din* (religion). As I shall show, the different discourses have their own specific set of internal argumentation, but they rest on the same foundation which is this Normative Basis discourse. This foundation is the understanding of Islam as a “religion of peace and security” and of a *mu'min* (believer) as someone who “everyone is protected and safe from ... at all levels, individually and collectively.”<sup>113</sup> It is implied, and directly stated, that those who perpetrate terrorist actions are ignorant of this foundation.<sup>114</sup>

In support of this argument the FTSB relies upon the Hadith of Gabriel to explain three levels of Islam; actions, beliefs and inner spiritual states, or *Islam*, *Iman* and *Ihsan*, respectively.<sup>115</sup> The Hadith of Gabriel is considered to be “agreed upon,” meaning that it is reported by both of the most famous hadith scholars, Bukhari and Muslim, who are recognized as only having reported the most authentic of hadith literature. Due to this hadith being reported by the most authoritative hadith collections it is deemed that there is no dispute on the legitimacy of such a report.<sup>116</sup> This hadith is recognized as providing an overall understanding of Islam as religion (*din*), for all of its adherents.

*Islam* is derived from the root *salam*, which can have four different meanings; to be free of blemish, safety and security, a tree which is shady and evergreen, and in use as one of the beautiful names of Allah. Qadri continues in this vein, showing the many ways the root *salam* has been used in the Qur'an that connotes peace and protection.

Continuing on to the next level, *Iman*, we are told this word is derived from the root *amina*, which also indicates peace and protection. It is used both in connection to the provider of peace, as well as the one provided with protection.<sup>117</sup> In understanding of this, Qadri declares

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<sup>113</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 21)

<sup>114</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 212)

<sup>115</sup> For a thorough discussion on these dimensions of Islam, see (Cook, 2000)

<sup>116</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 21)

<sup>117</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 36)

therefore that if someone were to act in an opposing fashion, by terrorizing people for example, than that person would have no link to *Iman*.<sup>118</sup>

The third level, *Ihsan*, is said to be derived from the verb *hasana/hasuna, yahsunu, husnan*. These words are connected to beauty, balance, betterment, benevolence, piety, and goodness.<sup>119</sup> This is meant to show that a *mu'min* is a person who relates to others through the above mentioned ways of being, not through ugliness and violence.

Qadri also makes it clear that he believes that many of those who subscribe to extremist ideologies within Islam, especially young people, are sorely lacking in proper understanding of the normative teachings in Islam.<sup>120</sup> Qadri mentions how in some videos showing what the producers consider to be their martyrdom, they mention their obedience to their leader. Qadri states that this is just one example of the ignorance apparent within extremist groups, as it is clear that they do not know or recognize the boundaries that are inherent to a leader's right to obedience.<sup>121</sup> This is just one of many examples used throughout the text that make clear Qadri's standpoint on the level of knowledge and understanding of Islam and its teachings held by terrorists.

From the establishment of the definitions and use of *Islam, Iman, and Ihsan*, Qadri lays out a clear and concise normative understanding of Islam. This understanding is used as the foundation for which the rest of the FTSB's arguments are built upon, and without a clear understanding of these basic principles any further analysis of the FTSB would be futile. In Qadri's view, all interaction should be based on the understanding of Islam and its purpose as outlined above, and it is due to the ignorance of this understanding, and thus other Islamic ethics, that terrorists are able and willing to commit the actions they do.

### **5.3 Sanctity of a Human Life Discourse**

The introduction to Chapter 2, "The Unlawfulness of Indiscriminately Killing Muslims" starts with:

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<sup>118</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 42)

<sup>119</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 43)

<sup>120</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 4)

<sup>121</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 82-83)

There are some people who declare that the majority of the Muslims are disbelievers, polytheists and innovators on account of political, ideological or religious differences, and subsequently massacre them ruthlessly. They must know the sanctity and honor of a believer's life in the sight of God and His Messenger.<sup>122</sup>

This introduction to the chapter conveys clearly the purpose and intended audience for its argument; it aims to call attention to the inter-Muslim conflict that has been ongoing, and makes clear the stance that the FTSB claims Islam takes on such violent activities, speaking directly to those that would commit such acts. While the FTSB's audience includes the general population, the direct engagement of the terrorists' worldviews that is present in the example above, as well as other instances in the text, is an indication that its audience also includes those whose ideology it contradicts.

Qadri begins by establishing through the use of hadith literature the fact that a Muslim's body and possessions are considered to be as more sacred than even the Ka'ba<sup>123</sup>. A universal ethic that Qadri points to is verse 5:32, explaining that it "highlights the sanctity of human life in general."<sup>124</sup>

*Whoever kills a person (unjustly), except as a punishment for murder or (as a prescribed punishment for bloodshed, robbery and spreading) disorder in the land, it is as if he killed all of humanity.*<sup>125</sup>

In response to the caveat about capital punishment, Qadri explains that this "law of retribution" allows capital punishment in the case of murder, which is in line with the above stated intention of the verse which is to act as a safeguard for the sanctity of human life. However, he does not mention the other caveats about when capital punishment is considered appropriate; bloodshed, robbery and spreading disorder in the land. This is an interesting omission especially in light of later arguments that Qadri makes about the Terrorist-Kharijite connection, their apostasy and therefore the permissibility of capital punishment for these groups.<sup>126</sup> In the context of the discourse Qadri is attempting to establish about the sanctity of human life it may be understandable to have left out this commentary on the verse, but the question then becomes: why does Qadri not mention this verse within the later discourse on

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<sup>122</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 59)

<sup>123</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 59)

<sup>124</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 62)

<sup>125</sup> Qur'anic verse 5:32 as cited and modified in (Qadri, 2010, pp. 61-62)

<sup>126</sup> These will be discussed later in the chapter

Kharijites? The above part of verse 5:32 is only mentioned twice within the FTSB, both in connection to the discourse on the sanctity of human life.

The above general stipulations are followed up by more specific and precise examples that are used in an analogous manner as supportive arguments. Through hadith literature Qadri shows how it is impermissible to point a weapon in the direction of a Muslim, due to the possibility of grave injury,<sup>127</sup> and how even a person who converted to the Muslim faith in the midst of battle, perhaps only with the intention of saving his life, is to be spared.<sup>128</sup> Qadri then asks how, in light of these clear injunctions, a terrorist would then think it was permissible to take the lives of Muslims through bombs and suicide attacks,<sup>129</sup> once again making direct reference to terrorists' worldview.

Having made the argument that the murder of Muslims is forbidden in Islam, Qadri then devotes his attention to showing that there is no difference between the sanctity of the life of a Muslim and that of a non-Muslim; Chapter 3 is entitled "No Discrimination Between the Killings of Muslim and Non-Muslim Citizens" and begins with:

...the protection of the life, honor and property of non-Muslim citizens living in any Islamic state or any non-Muslim country is a binding duty upon the Muslims in general and the Islamic state in particular.<sup>130</sup>

The universal principle of the impermissibility of killing anyone unjustly from verse 5:32 is once again used. While having already mentioned that this verse applies to all of humanity, Qadri now discusses the use of the word "*nafs*", which he interprets as "person", used in the verse, and shows how this makes the verse applicable to everyone, regardless of "religion, language or citizenship."<sup>131</sup> This universal principle is again used as the starting point for more specific and particular examples; the impermissibility of killing non-Muslims under a treaty and foreign non-Muslim diplomats, protection of non-Muslim citizen's wealth and health from internal or external aggression, and retribution due to non-Muslim citizens being equal.<sup>132</sup> These examples from hadith literature are meant as supporting arguments to show

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<sup>127</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 60)

<sup>128</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 62-65)

<sup>129</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 61)

<sup>130</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 93)

<sup>131</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 94)

<sup>132</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 98-115)

that any and all harm done to a non-Muslim citizen, that is considered unjust, is forbidden in Islam, as per the universal principle represented in verse 5:32.

When discussing the equal value of the lives of Muslim and non-Muslims, Qadri uses a hadith to show that heaven will be forbidden to those who kill non-Muslims as well. The hadith says that “anyone who kills a non-Muslim under treaty (*mu’ahad*) will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, even though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years.”<sup>133</sup>

Recognizing that this hadith may raise some questions due to the fact that it stipulates that the murderer may reach heaven after 40 years, Qadri discusses it from the writings of Anwar Shah Kashmiri, a Deobandi scholar. In his book *Fayd al-Bari*, Kashmiri discusses the above hadith saying:

...the quintessential meaning of it, dear brother, can be expressed as such: You know the gravity of sin for killing a Muslim, for its odiousness has reached the point of disbelief, and it necessitates that (the killer abides in Hell) forever. As for killing a non-Muslim citizen (*mu’ahad*), it is similarly no small matter, for the one who does it will not smell the fragrance of Paradise.<sup>134</sup>

The fact that Qadri chooses to use this author, and this interpretation of the hadith, are telling in several ways. Firstly, Qadri’s use of a Deobandi scholar here, and elsewhere in the text, shows a desire to reach a large audience, and present a comprehensive and unified argument. Secondly, he also shows that he refers back to the stipulated universal value of peace, reading and recognizing the “quintessential meaning” of the verse, rather than taking it word for word. In this way he actively participates in the practice that he advocates in the Normative Basis discourse; reading and interpreting the text in a way that advocates peace and protection rather than highlighting difference.

Further, Qadri responds directly to those who would lessen the consequences for a Muslim who commits the murder of a non-Muslim by discussing the hadith that says “a Muslim is not to be killed in retaliation for murdering a disbeliever.”<sup>135</sup> Qadri explains this hadith by referring to jurists who have interpreted this hadith and the word “disbeliever”, noting that

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<sup>133</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari, as quoted by (Qadri, 2010, p. 98)

<sup>134</sup> Anwar Shah Kashmiri, as quoted by (Qadri, 2010, p. 99)

<sup>135</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari, as quoted by (Qadri, 2010, p. 105)

this term is not used in conjunction with peaceful citizens, but rather as a the specification of a violent combatant who is killed justly.<sup>136</sup>

The discourse established about the sanctity of human life is done so by reference to the universal norms and understanding of Islam as a provider of peace and protection that is established in the first discourse. Qadri shows that if one is a *mu'min* (believer), than causing harm to others is impermissible. Having established this fundamental understanding, Qadri employs a wealth of specific examples as well, providing ample support for his argument that no evil deed is made good by good intentions. Terrorism is terrorism, no matter the reason.

The terrorists who indiscriminately murder people through bomb blasts, suicide bombings and other means of destruction, without any distinction for religion, race, color and creed, argue that, since the foreign powers are doing their utmost to occupy Muslim lands, and since the Muslims have been subjected to war, they are fully justified in adopting terrorism as a tactic. This is a false argument. The divine injunction, “*do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just*”, clearly enjoins that no nation or group of people can be allowed to abandon justice and adopt oppression as a policy. .... The condemnation of terrorism and the arguments against it are evident. If we, for a moment, accept the view of the terrorists and extremists who argue that they are waging a jihad against anti-Islamic forces, still their activities are outside of the pale of Islamic laws on war.<sup>137</sup>

The laws on war spoken about here are a set of rules and regulations laid out in the Qur'an, Hadith and through the jurisprudential tradition in Islam about what is allowed and what is forbidden during times of war and peace.<sup>138</sup> This is a central theme within the discourse, as it stipulates under what circumstances it is possible to wage war, and how to do it correctly. The fact that all life is sacred does not negate the fact that there will be times when war is necessitated, and thus rules are provided so that it may be waged in a way that maintains the sanctity of human life as much as possible. In this vein, the most important aspect of the just war concept is the differentiation between those who are actively combatant, and those who are not.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 105)

<sup>137</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 120)

<sup>138</sup> For a thorough investigation of this concept see (Kelsay, 2007)

<sup>139</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 119)



During times of war, one must take precautions so as to limit violence as much as possible to only those who are active participants in the violence themselves. Targeting those who are not combatants specifically, or through indiscriminate killing, is not supported by the laws on just war within Islam.<sup>140</sup>

### 5.3.1 Suicide

The above discourse on the sanctity of human life makes clear that a human life should be protected, and only during times of legitimate warfare through legitimate means is it permissible to take a human life. The rhetoric and argumentation used in connection to suicide is thus a part of this discourse<sup>141</sup>; it is also structurally positioned within this discourse in the FTSB, with space being dedicated to the issue of suicide in Chapter 2: The Unlawfulness of Indiscriminately Killing Muslims.

Qadri states unequivocally that “suicide is forbidden in Islam,”<sup>142</sup> and “killing oneself and others through suicide bombing is a grievous sin.”<sup>143</sup> He quotes both Qur’anic verses and their exegesis, as well as hadith that stipulate that suicide is forbidden, and even that “the one who commits suicide will go to Hell, and will keep falling into it and will abide there forever.”<sup>144</sup>

He makes special note of the fact that committing suicide during jihad will earn you the same recompense, as does committing suicide on the instructions of your leader. Both of these situations, jihad and obeying one’s leader, are in essence virtuous actions, yet the completion of these actions through suicide nullifies their righteousness and instead earns them an eternity in hell.<sup>145</sup> These are important stipulations in countering the narrative of extremists, as they have often cited both their leader’s command, as well as the belief that their suicide attacks are jihad, as reasons and justification for their attacks.

## 5.4 Illegality of Violent Rebellion

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<sup>140</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 120)

<sup>141</sup> For a thorough investigation of this concept see for example: (Litvvak, 2010) (Speckhard & Ahkmedova, 2006) and (Fierke, 2009)

<sup>142</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 77)

<sup>143</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 79)

<sup>144</sup> Narrated by al-Bukhari, as quoted by (Qadri, 2010, p. 79)

<sup>145</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 82-85)

And tribulation (*fitna*) is worse than killing.<sup>146</sup>

The discourse on the illegality of violent rebellion is an important argument for the FTSB as it establishes that violent rebellion against a lawful government is considered to be impermissible.<sup>147</sup> This discourse also establishes that unjust rulers do exist, and that Muslims do have a duty to condemn them, but only through peaceful and democratic means of protest. The FTSB supports the postulation that violent revolt against a corrupt or oppressive government is considered impermissible, with the one exception being if the government has demonstrated “manifest disbelief.”<sup>148</sup>

The FTSB presents a lexical definition of the term ‘rebellion’ (*baghyun*) as implying demand, or oppression and excess.<sup>149</sup> Through a discussion of authoritative works within each of the four major Sunni, and the largest Shia, schools of Islamic jurisprudence, Qadri shows that there is a general consensus on the description of rebellion. Qadri infers from the references that the common understanding of rebels is that they are “a group whose actions spring from extremism and who challenge the authority of the government on the basis of their self-styled interpretation.”<sup>150</sup>

The references presented, especially those from the Hanafi school, go into great detail on whom rebels were, and even delineates them from others “who rebel against the government and spread mischief,”<sup>151</sup> or “challenge the writ of the state.”<sup>152</sup> Qadri mentions the fact that some scholars have differentiated between a *muharib* (illegal fighter, or brigand) and a rebel, prescribing different punishment for them, while others have used the words interchangeably.<sup>153</sup> However, Qadri does not go into discussion about what this differentiation may mean for his argumentation, and later postulates that on the basis of *Sura al-Ma’ida* and its exegeses that brigands are also declared as rebels and are subject to capital punishment.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>Verse 2:191 (Qadri, 2010, p. 197)

<sup>147</sup> For a thorough discussion on this topic see (El-Fadl, 2001)

<sup>148</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 209)

<sup>149</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 173)

<sup>150</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 184)

<sup>151</sup>As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 178)

<sup>152</sup> As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 176)

<sup>153</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 187)

<sup>154</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 196)

At the beginning of Chapter 9: *Rebellion: Its Gravity and Punishment*, Qadri quotes the *Sura al- Ma'ida*, verse 5:33.

Indeed, those who wage war against God and His Messenger and remain engaged in creating mischief in the land (i.e., perpetrate terrorism, robbery and burglary), their punishment is that they should be slain, or crucified, or their hands and their feet on opposite sides should be cut off, or that they should be exiled from the land. That is for them a humiliation in this world, and for them there is a terrible torment in the Hereafter.<sup>155</sup>

Qadri uses this verse and its subsequent exegesis to show that the implied meaning of someone who creates turmoil and torments travellers on the road is the same of those who commit acts of terrorism today. It is the social disruption that is caused that is the reason for the punishment, and therefore modern-day terrorists can be likened to brigands and rebels in Islamic law. He states that this verse makes it clear that the government has a binding obligation to eliminate perpetrators of terrorism.<sup>156</sup> Both rebels and brigands are, according to Qadri's interpretation of the verse and its exegesis, subject to capital punishment, as it is incumbent upon the Muslim government to repress violent rebellions and terrorism, so as to maintain the peace and security of society.

Through the discussion of a hadith reported by both Muslim and Bukhari (the two most authoritative hadith collections in Sunni Islam), Qadri warns that "no Muslim is allowed to rebel against the Muslim polity."<sup>157</sup> According to Qadri, an Islamic government is considered to be legitimate, even if having usurped power and considered unjust and oppressive, so long as it does not exhibit *kufur bawah* (manifest disbelief). To do this they would have to actively disrupt believer's prayers, declare lawful that which is forbidden, or the opposite, or there would have to be unanimous consensus in the Muslim *umma* on the subject of their disbelief.<sup>158</sup>

While denouncing any form of violent rebellion, Qadri agrees that legal and constitutional means of protest are both available and encouraged in cases where the government acts unjustly. In connection with the concept of jihad, Qadri quotes a hadith by Ahmad b. Hanbal

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<sup>155</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 193)

<sup>156</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 193)

<sup>157</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 200)

<sup>158</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 209)

in which the Prophet says: “Indeed, the best jihad is a just word in the presence of an unjust ruler.”<sup>159</sup> Here, Qadri implies that correct jihad, in opposition to the terrorism some try to mask as jihad, is speaking out against unjust and oppressive rulers, and that this falls under the Qur’anic injunction of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. There is, as Qadri says, “a vast distinction between enjoining the good and forbidding the evil (*al-amr bi al-ma’ruf wa al-nahi ‘an al-munkar*) and armed struggle.”<sup>160</sup>

Here, Qadri once again challenges extremist rhetoric, as they use this Qur’anic ethic as justification for armed revolt.<sup>161</sup> When discussing in what way one should enjoin the good and forbid the evil, Qadri categorically denies the possibility of using it as a justification for violence in any form.<sup>162</sup> Rather, Qadri cites a hadith in which the Prophet says:

Whoever amongst you witnesses an evil, let him reform it (practically) with his hand; if he is unable, then (let him denounce it) verbally; and if he is unable, then (let him abhor it) in his heart – and that is the weakest form of faith.<sup>163</sup>

Discussing this hadith, Qadri says that it promotes three ways in which to forbid evil, through the hand, tongue and heart; or through action, speech, and thought, respectively. However, all three of these levels are in promotion of, and should be carried out through, non-violent means. While Qadri recognizes that people have constricted the definition of evil to a very literal and limited understanding, he stipulates that it also encompasses all instances of corruption and violence.<sup>164</sup> According to Qadri, there are several ways in which one might enjoin the good and forbid the evil in contemporary times, including peaceful demonstrations, press coverage, workshops, speeches and political involvement.<sup>165</sup>

The discourse presented above establishes that the act of rebellion against a government that is not convicted of manifest disbelief is considered illegal, and it has been determined that any and all such attempts should be eliminated. Those that perpetuate chaos and strife, or terror, are considered to be judged on the same scale as those who rebel against the government. This means that, as any act of terrorism or suicide bombing would by definition be an act of rebellion against the legitimacy of the state’s monopoly on violence, and thus anyone who so

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<sup>159</sup> As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 213)

<sup>160</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 202)

<sup>161</sup> (Cook, 2000, p. 511)

<sup>162</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 203)

<sup>163</sup> As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 403)

<sup>164</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 404)

<sup>165</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 410)

inclined to commit such acts would be by definition committing an act of rebellion, and thus the government is permitted to take action against them with full religious backing. However, while the FTSB bases itself on the understanding that violent rebellion is illegal, it does recognize that there exists governments of less than perfect ethical standing, and in such cases peaceful protests and action for change is not only a possibility, but a duty.

## **5.5 Terrorists are Modern-Day Kharijites Discourse**

The fourth discourse established in the FTSB is that the terrorists of today are the Kharijites of old. This argument is essential to the overall argument that the FTSB tries to establish, as it claims to remove terrorists who claim Islamic authority for their activities from the scope of Islam entirely. This section will first discuss how the discourse is centered on the fundamental understanding of Islam as peace and security for all of humanity that was discussed in 5.2. It will then show how Qadri builds his argument, first by explaining who the Kharijites were and what they stood for, then establishing that the Kharijites were rebels and brigands. This builds upon the third discourse (Illegality of Violent Rebellion) discussed in the above section, 5.4, and the consequences therein. After establishing this, Qadri then shows how the terrorists of today are, in fact, a modern-day embodiment of the historical Kharijite faction.

It has been shown that the FTSB claims an understanding of Islam as a religion of peace and protection for all human kind as its foundation, and promotes that any and all action or proclamations made on behalf of Islam should be in line with this worldview. However, there is a critical situation in the Islamic world, and some Muslims, lacking the correct understanding and education of Islam, are being led astray and brainwashed. Verse 3:7 says:

He is the One Who has revealed to you the Book comprising some firm and solid verses (i.e., literally clear and precise in meaning); they are the foundation of (commandments) of the Book. And other verses are figurative (i.e., containing abstract and allusive meaning). So, those who have deviation in their hearts follow only its figurative verses (just) under the urge to create disruption and with the motive to supply them self-seeking interpretation instead of their true interpretation. But none knows its true interpretation apart from God. And those who are perfectly firm in knowledge say: ‘We believe in it. The whole (book) has been revealed by our Lord’.

And direction and guidance is the share of only those who possess wisdom and insight'.<sup>166</sup>

Qadri references several Qur'anic exegesis in which the phrase "those who have deviation in their hearts" is clarified as being the Kharijites.<sup>167</sup> The Kharijites thus lack "wisdom and insight" and are not "perfectly firm in knowledge".

Quoting verse 2:143: "and likewise We have made you a moderate nation,"<sup>168</sup> Qadri explains that this verse is a reminder that Islam is a signifier of moderation, and that those who shun moderation have, in fact, drifted away from Islam. Peace and harmony is the path towards a well-functioning and prosperous society. Extremism, on the other hand, does not bring anything but hate and violence.

In defining who the Kharijites are Qadri refers to six classical scholars in seven different citations. Of the seven citations, five named Kharijites as rebels who revolted against the legitimate government, four considered Kharijites to be blameworthy innovators, three declared that Kharijites were outside of Islam, two claimed that the Kharijites considered the killing of Muslims to be legal, and one mentioned the fact that Kharijites were not a faction resigned to the dust of history, but rather would appear time and again throughout history.<sup>169</sup>

The understanding of Kharijites as rebels is an important distinction, due to the consequences of such a crime. As discussed in section 5.4, the FTSB postulates that violent rebellion is strictly forbidden within Islam, and that those who participate in such acts are committing crimes that are punishable by death. Kharijites, due to their rebel status, are thus also subject to such punishments. Although the decree that Kharijites are rebels is considered to be unanimously agreed upon, the distinction of whether or not they are apostates as well is less straightforward.

Qadri discusses the confusion surrounding whether or not Kharijites are simply rebels, or should also be charged with apostasy in Chapter 16: Mention of the Imams Who Charged the Kharijites with Disbelief and Ordered Their Elimination. The chapter includes arguments for both positions; that the Kharijites are, and are not apostates. Showing that there is no general consensus on the nature of the Kharijite's state of belief, Qadri nevertheless shows that there

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<sup>166</sup> As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 257)

<sup>167</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 258-259)

<sup>168</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 253)

<sup>169</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 254-256)

is a consensus on the duty to fight them.<sup>170</sup> However, while Qadri does show that there is not a consensus on the apostasy of the Kharijites, he repeatedly refers to them as such earlier in the FTSB,<sup>171</sup> which is indicative of a personal stance on the side of Kharijites being apostates. This stance also lends credence to Qadri's argument that the Kharijite's actions should not be affiliated with Islam in any way, as he considers them to be outside the scope of Islam and therefore in no way representative of it.

When discussing the Kharijite's beliefs, Qadri shows that especially two points are indicative of a Kharijite, quoting Ibn Taymiyya:

There are two well-known and exclusive traits by which they parted from the community of Muslims and the Islamic state: their abandonment of the Sunna and the act of declaring sinful that which is not a sin or declaring as good that which is not good. The second difference between the Kharijites and the remaining people of blameworthy innovation is that they declare people disbelievers over sins and misdeeds. Their imputation of disbelief on account of sins results in their making lawful the blood and wealth of Muslims and declaring the abode of Islam (Dar al-Islam) an abode of war (Dar al-Harb) and only the land in their control the abode of faith.<sup>172</sup>

Through the use of hadith and classical scholars' commentary, Qadri develops a view of the Kharijites as a faction of blameworthy innovators who distinguish themselves by their extremist ideology.<sup>173</sup>

Qadri considers the Kharijites to be extremist in both action and belief. The judgment on the Kharijites is that their actions are not Islamic, however, Qadri discusses how the Kharijites of old saw themselves as basing their call on the Qur'an, and insisting on religious zealotry; they were strictly dogmatic in their observance of rituals and religious law.<sup>174</sup> They even appeared religious to the Muslim community, and some members of the community felt ashamed for their lack of devotion in comparison to the Kharijite's worship.<sup>175</sup> This intensity and enthusiasm that the Kharijites espoused help them to recruit what Qadri terms the "hapless

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<sup>170</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 353)

<sup>171</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 46)

<sup>172</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, as quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 283)

<sup>173</sup> For a discussion on Kharijites historical theological and political stance see (Watt, 1965, pp. 7-13) and (Kenney, 2006, pp. 19-53)

<sup>174</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 304)

<sup>175</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 289-317)

and ignorant Muslims.”<sup>176</sup> However, despite the outward appearance of piety, Qadri states that the Kharijite’s intentions are to create turmoil and perpetuate evil, and destroy the Muslim *umma*.<sup>177</sup>

Qadri discusses the hadith “beware of extremism in the religion, for that is what destroyed those before you,”<sup>178</sup> saying that the Prophet, as is shown through this hadith, understood the state of affairs that was to come, and therefore warned the Muslim *umma* of the violence that would be perpetuated in their name. Qadri names the perpetrators of violence directly as the *Mujahidun*.<sup>179</sup> *Mujahidun* is technically “one who engages in jihad”, which does not necessitate a connection to violence. However, in modern discourse it is used as a self-description by those who understand jihad as the violent defense of Muslim lands.<sup>180</sup> Qadri employs the use of this term with a negative connotation, saying “so-called *Mujahidun*” clearly implying that he does not consider those who self-style themselves as *Mujahidun* as truly being engaged in jihad, and says that they have “heinous designs and evil intentions.”<sup>181</sup>

Having established the extremist ideology and beliefs of the Kharijites, and their condemnation, it is thus pertinent to the argument of the FTSB to show that the terrorists today can, in fact, be considered Kharijites, and thus be subject to the same conviction. To do this Qadri establishes first that the Kharijites were not a single, isolated historical sect that only lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

There shall appear a group of people from my Umma in the direction of the east. They will recite the Qur’an but it will not pass their throats. Every time a generation of them appears it will be cut down, every time a generation of them appears it will be cut down, every time a generation of them appears it will be cut down (‘Abd Allah said ‘He said that more than ten times’) – until the Anti-Christ appears from their last remnants.<sup>182</sup>

Interpreting this and other like worded hadith, Qadri uses it to show that prophetic tradition holds that the Kharijites would continue to appear over time, and were not a single

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<sup>176</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 289)

<sup>177</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 309)

<sup>178</sup> Narrated by Ibn Majah, as cited by (Qadri, 2010, p. 303)

<sup>179</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 304)

<sup>180</sup> (Esposito, *Mujahidin*)

<sup>181</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 303)

<sup>182</sup> As quoted in (Qadri, 2010, p. 319)



instance.<sup>183</sup> This is an important principle, as it allows Qadri to claim that his prescription of the terrorists today as Kharijites is not *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), but rather a stipulation based concretely upon the Qur'an and Sunna.<sup>184</sup>

Having established that the Kharijites will continue to reappear, Qadri then relies upon the evidence he has put forth regarding the beliefs and traits of who the Kharijites were, and what they stood for, to make the analogy that the terrorists of today should be recognized as the Kharijites: “this detailed discussion highlighting the signs, traits and features of the Kharijites proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the modern-day terrorists are their contemporary embodiment.”<sup>185</sup> A comprehensive list of 35 points on the description of the Kharijites can be found in the FTSB,<sup>186</sup> and as such can be considered the “signs, traits and features” that Qadri is referring to. Earlier in the FTSB Qadri stated that:

If we analyze the methodology and activities of modern-day terrorists, we see that they are mentally immature, young and brainwashed, and have the same modus operandi as the Kharijites of old. Their warped view of Islam is plain to see; on the one hand they are very devout in their worship, and on the other hand they have no compunction in killing peaceful Muslims.<sup>187</sup>

Continuing with several examples of the Kharijite's apparent piety, Qadri then says:

These historical records prove that the Kharijites considered blood a cheap commodity. They had no reservations about killing people and cared not one iota for those who were brought up with the Prophet's spiritual training.

Since the Prophet made it categorically clear that these people would continue to emerge, time and time again, it is easy to recognize the modern-day Kharijites, for they share the same traits of those of old. They too shed the blood of people; they too brutally slaughter women and children and challenge the people engaged in worship and target them in the marketplaces; and they too call their dastardly deeds jihad. All

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<sup>183</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 317-319)

<sup>184</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 392)

<sup>185</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 394)

<sup>186</sup> (Qadri, 2010, pp. 344-350)

<sup>187</sup> As cited in (Qadri, 2010, p. 291)

the current acts of terrorism committed by the so-called ‘Mujahidun’ are but a continuation of the Kharijite doctrine and ideology.<sup>188</sup>

From the list of 35 characteristics, and the comparisons made above, it is clear that the FTSB employs an understanding of terrorists as modern-day Kharijites based on their barbaric actions, their outward piety yet inward heresy, and their misinterpretation of the Islamic faith and its injunctions. The two points made above about what distinguishes a Kharijite from other groups of blameworthy innovators; their declaring a sin that which is not, and declaring those who commit sins as unbelievers, are also important characteristics that the FTSB contends can be seen being employed by terrorists today, further supporting its argument.

This discourse does not discuss whether or not extremists refer to the Kharijites themselves, or how they relate to them. It views the Kharijites as a historical sect that sowed corruption and caused chaos, employing violent means without proper authority or recourse. As such, it would have been interesting for the FTSB to discuss the ways in which modern terrorists view the Kharijites. In relation to this, the FTSB does not discuss whether or not terrorism could occur whether or not the Kharijites existed, for example.

## 5.6 Conclusion

It is through the detailed analysis of a text that is possible to illuminate how different discourses are activated textually and how these provide support for a particular interpretation.<sup>189</sup> The purpose of this chapter was therefore to present my findings of the text analysis of the FTSB, and thus also present its argumentation. Through the text analysis, I have established that there are 4 main discourses that work together in establishing the counter-narrative to extremism that the FTSB represents. These discourses have their own internal set of rules and concepts and can be viewed separately, but are also reliant upon one another to build the comprehensive argumentation of the FTSB.

The first discourse, the normative understanding of Islam, creates a foundation for the other three discourses to build upon. It presents an understanding of Islam that Qadri believes should underpin all action taken by Muslims, and pinpoints the ignorance of this normative understanding, as well as particular rules and regulations, as the crux of the problem. This

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<sup>188</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 293)

<sup>189</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 83)

lack of knowledge has manifested itself in several ways, and can be especially seen in the ways in which terrorists mistreat others. The second discourse, the sanctity of human life, discusses this and points to the ways in which terrorists misinterpret or completely disregard the Islamic injunctions on just war, and thus also suicide and suicide bombings. Through this discourse Qadri makes it clear that even if there is a legitimate war being waged, there are still unacceptable means of doing so. Terrorism and indiscriminate killing are firmly placed within this realm.

The third discourse, the illegality of violent rebellion, delineates and defines the terms rebel, brigand and rebellion, and the crimes and punishments connected to them. By doing this Qadri denounces much of the violence that is/has taken place within Muslim countries, and removes any legitimization for such acts. This discourse builds on the first two, as it relies on an understanding that those who participate in violent rebellion against their lawful governments are both ignorant of the true Islamic principles regarding rebellion, as well as in the sanctity of human life.

The fourth discourse, terrorists are modern-day Kharijites, brings the argumentation to a close, as it locates the terrorists outside of the scope of Islam, thus distancing Islam from their actions and penalizing the offenders. Through this discourse Qadri is able to protect Islam from lascivious allegations, which is without a doubt one of the main purposes of the FTSB. He is also able to condemn those who perpetrate terrorist violence, and provide a plausible answer for those wondering how it is possible for some Muslims to be in doubt about whether or not the terrorists are in fact Muslims.

In many ways these discourses are essentialist; they take a complex problem that has been answered in a variety of ways over the course of Islam's 1400 year history, and present it as simple and with a clear-cut answer. These discourses and the ideas they represent have, in fact, been discussed and debated by the Muslim *ulama* and *umma* throughout its history, and have produced a wealth of interpretations and meaning during that time. Books nearly as long as the FTSB have been written on a single discourse that it employs.

However, in the context of a fatwa written with the express intent of informing "misguided" Muslims about the true nature of Islam and its view of terrorism, the question is: what purpose would it serve to delve into and present the long and complicated history of the discourses? Are the social, political and economic aspects of these discourses and their

development important for the message that is trying to be conveyed? Along with that is the question of space. At 512 pages, the FTSB is already a long book; was it at all possible to discuss these discourses in a more comprehensive fashion in the allotted space?

The next chapter, Chapter 6, presents an analysis of the fatwa in connection to other works within the counter-extremism order of discourse in an attempt to discover if, and in what ways, they present and use these discourses. Are they able to use them in a more comprehensive fashion, or less? Do they present them in a different light? Do they employ them at all? Has the FTSB's use of these discourses had an effect on their production or consumption by other works? Chapter 7 then analyzes whether or not the use of these particular discourses, and the way in which they are presented in the FTSB, is prudent in relation to the theory of countering violent extremism.

# 6 Discursive Practice Analysis

This chapter is focused on analyzing what Fairclough describes as discursive practice. The discursive practice of a communicative event is the dimension that involves the consumption and production of texts.<sup>190</sup> The main objective in this chapter is thus to investigate the ways in which the FTSB has contributed to, as well as used, discourses within the counter-extremism order of discourse that has been produced within Islam. In order to do this I have selected 3 other prominent texts that can be found within the same order of discourse. This chapter's main focus will be in discussing the ways in which these texts have used and contributed to these discourses in comparison to the ways in which the FTSB does so. Relevant scholarship on the issues will also be discussed so as to provide background and context.

I will first give a short review of the method of analysis for the discursive practice, followed by concise introductions to each of the three texts that I have used. These sections provide necessary background information and context to the analysis. The analysis begins with the normative basis discourse, followed by the sanctity of human life discourse. The last discourse I will present is the Kharijite discourse. I will discuss all three discourses in connection to the way in which they are presented in the three texts and then discuss the way in which they are presented in the FTSB. Finally, I will discuss some of the discourses that I established as central to the FTSB in the previous chapter, which are not prominent discourses in the three other texts, and what implications this has in accordance to Fairclough's theory of CDA.

## 6.1 Analysis of the Discursive Practice

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Fairclough's method of CDA is divided into three separate dimensions for analysis; the textual dimension (Chapter 5), the discursive practice dimension, and the social practice dimension (Chapter 7). The discursive practice is the dimension that analyzes the way in which a communicative event produces and consumes text.<sup>191</sup> In other words, in the analysis of the discursive practice, the point is to understand how the text that is

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<sup>190</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 68)

<sup>191</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 68)

the subject of analysis has been created, and in what way it contributes to other texts being created.

Analysis of the discursive practice dimension can be done in a number of ways, depending on the type of communicative event, and the intention of the research.<sup>192</sup> This thesis' main focus is in attempting to understand the way in which the FTSB has contributed to the counter-extremism order of discourse, and this discursive practice analysis will therefore be conducted through an examination of the inter-textuality and inter-discursivity of the FTSB in relation to other texts within the same order of discourse.

According to Fairclough's theory, it is through the inter-textuality and inter-discursivity of a text that it is possible to see a change in the order of discourse.<sup>193</sup> The investigation of the inter-textuality and inter-discursivity of the FTSB are therefore especially informative to this thesis, and will help answer one of the main thesis questions: *In what way has the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings affected and contributed to the discourses surrounding counter-extremism?* By investigating the FTSB in relation to the three other texts presented above, one of which was written before and two of which were written after the FTSB, I attempt to discern in what ways the FTSB has drawn on discourses from previous texts (text consumption), and in what ways the FTSB has contributed to discourses drawn on by later texts (text production). In doing so I also examine whether or not the FTSB has simply reproduced the discourses, or whether or not it has introduced new concepts that challenge the established understanding of the discourse. According to Fairclough's theory it is through this mechanism that it is possible to see how the text has contributed to social change.<sup>194</sup>

## 6.2 The Amman Message & Its Three Points

In November 2004 the King of Jordan, Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, issued a statement with the intention of clarifying which actions represent Islam and which do not. So as to give his statement religious legitimacy, King Abdullah then sent 3 questions to 24 of the most prominent religious scholars in Islam. These questions represented key questions that needed to be clarified in order to address what The Amman Message considered a root cause of extremism: the misinterpretation of Islam. These questions were: (1) Who is a Muslim? (2) Is

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<sup>192</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 83)

<sup>193</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 83)

<sup>194</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 70)

it permissible to declare someone an apostate (takfir)? and (3) Who has the right to undertake issuing fatwas (legal rulings)? The answers to these questions were then used as the basis in forming an international Islamic conference in July 2005, with over 200 Islamic religious scholars, representing all of the branches and schools of Islam. At this conference the “Three Points of the Amman Message” were developed in answer to the three questions posed over. At the Organization of the Islamic Conference summit in Mecca of that year Islamic world leaders adopted and endorsed the Three Points. From the first conference in July 2005 and through the course of the next year until July 2006 the Three Points were adopted by a further 6 international Islamic scholarly assemblies, including the *International Islamic Fiqh Academy* in Jeddah. As of today, over 500 Muslim scholars have unanimously endorsed the Amman Message and its Three Points.<sup>195</sup> It is worth noting that Dr. Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri (the author of the FTSB) is among those who have endorsed the Message.

The Message itself is 13 pages long, and the vast majority is made up of declaring what Islam is and the universal ethics it holds to be true. It supports its conclusions by referencing specific Qur’anic verses that support its statements.

### **6.3 Open Letter to Baghdadi**

The Open Letter to Baghdadi was published in September of 2014 in an attempt to reach out to and inform the leader of the group known as ISIS. It was released by the Council on American Islamic Relations, and originally written in Arabic. Nihad Awad, the executive director of the council characterized the Letter as aiming to offer a point-by-point refutation of the ideology ISIS uses as legitimization for their violence and terrorism.<sup>196</sup>

The executive summary of the Letter has 24 points of contention, each of which corresponds to section within the Letter itself. While the summary only states the proper understanding of the subject, the Letter itself uses Qur’anic verses, hadith literature, as well as scholarship from Muslim *ulama* that ISIS relies on, to present the a point and its correct interpretation. By doing this the Letter intends to dismantle the ideology ISIS employs.

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<sup>195</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, pp. 84-86)

<sup>196</sup> (Markoe, 2014)

The Letter is 17 pages long, and has been signed by over 100 Muslim scholars, including Dr. Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri. Since its publication it has been translated into several languages, including English, and it is the English version that has been analyzed here.

## **6.4 Refuting Isis by Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi**

Written by the Syrian scholar Muhammad al-Yaqoubi, *Refuting Isis* is an attempt to establish a counter-narrative to ISIS, which the book considers to be the greatest threat Islam has ever faced. Written and published first in Arabic in February 2015, it was then translated and published in English with a few expansions on the topics of minorities under Islamic governance. It is the English version that has been used in this analysis.

It was through the realization that there was, according to Al-Yaqoubi, a fundamental gap in what information was easily and readily accessible to the everyday reader that he was inspired to write *Refuting ISIS*.<sup>197</sup> The book is intended to provide an easily accessible and understandable collection of proofs against ISIS' ideology and actions. It is intended for both Muslims and western audiences, and claims to be the first attempt to intellectually defy ISIS.<sup>198</sup> As such it deals specifically with the ideology and actions taken by ISIS,

## **6.5 Normative Basis Discourse**

In the FTSB the first discourse established is that of the normative basis of Islam. It is used as the foundation for which the other discourses are built upon, and relies on the Hadith of Gabriel for its definition of the three levels of Islam as *din; islam, iman* and *ihsan*. The FTSB defines these three terms in a way that conveys that Islam and Muslims are known for peace and protection of society and the people in it. It implies that this understanding should be employed as a method through which adherents should approach life and their interactions with others, and that ignorance of this method is the underlying reason for the increase in extremism in the Muslim world. Along with this comes ignorance of other Qur'anic injunctions and, in general, the correct understanding of Islam.

The ideologies used by terrorists are often portrayed by them as being the correct interpretation of their faith, and therefore religiously sanctioned. This is the narrative that the

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<sup>197</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. XI)

<sup>198</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, pp. XI-XII)



FTSB and the texts above are attempting to discredit, and establishing a counter-narrative wherein which the terrorists subscribe to an ideology that is ignorant of the truth of Islam is a necessary first step. The subsequent arguments within the texts are based on a belief in the need to educate the readers about the “correct” interpretations of Islam.

The use of the Hadith of Gabriel in describing Islam is common practice within Sunni Islam; it is where a description of the five pillars of Islam, as well as the six articles of faith, can be found. The FTSB’s use of the three dimensions employs a largely ethical- moral argumentation that ignores the practical and institutional aspects that the hadith has given rise to. William C. Chittick and Sachiko Murata’s *Vision of Islam*, for example, uses the hadith as a structural blueprint through which to give an introduction to Islam as a world religion, covering everything from jurisprudence to poetry and philosophy.

However, in this fatwa the report is used to convey the meaning of the three levels of religion. The three levels of Islam are explained both lexically and literally, with the purpose being to show that through the understanding of Islam based on these three principles it should be clear that Islam implies peace, security and protection. Qur’anic verses are used in support of these understandings as well.

There is no doubt that these concepts play a large role in the ethical foundation on which Islam is built, as other scholars have also commented upon. Fazlur Rahman, in his *Some Key Ethical Concepts of the Qur’an*, discusses both *iman* and *islam*, and agrees with Qadri’s assessment that the terms infer peace, safety, and integrity on their subject.<sup>199</sup> Murata & Chittick discuss the concept of *ihsan*’s as an ethical/moral concept, showing that it focuses on what they call “people’s intentionality,” asking why people do what they do, and encouraging people in “doing the beautiful.”<sup>200</sup>

### **6.5.1 The Amman Message**

The Amman Message starts by stating that it is a message to the Muslim *umma*, made due to the vicious attacks made against them, both from those without, but also those who, despite their claim of affiliation with Islam, through their ignorance and perpetration of heinous acts

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<sup>199</sup> (Rahman, 1983, p. 174)

<sup>200</sup> (Murata & Chittick, 1994, p. 221)

harm it from the inside.<sup>201</sup> The Message then goes on to proclaim what it considers the true Islamic worldview to be, including the fact that it is “founded upon basic principles” and that among these basic principles are “peace and justice, realizing comprehensive security.”<sup>202</sup>

At the end of the message the authors state specifically that hope for the Muslim *umma* “lies in the scholars of our Nation,” and that they will “shield our youth from the danger of sliding down the paths of ignorance, corruption, close-mindedness and subordination.”<sup>203</sup>

All three of “The Three Points” of the Amman Message can also be viewed in light of this discourse. The first point has to do with who is considered a Muslim, and the impermissibility of pronouncing them as an apostate.<sup>204</sup> Terrorists have often pronounced other Muslims apostates and used this as a justification for murdering them. The first point therefore intends to educate those who would seek to do this on the impermissibility of this course of action, clearly partaking in the discourse on ignorance.

The second point of the message states that there is more “in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them.”<sup>205</sup> Recognizing this is a crucial point in being able to forbid declarations of apostasy based on what *madhab* a Muslim subscribes to. The need for this instruction stems from what is seen as the lack of knowledge those who would declare apostasy on fellow Muslims have regarding this area, and the need to educate them.

The third point of the Message has to do with who can legitimately claim to have the authority to write a fatwa. This point is deemed necessary due to the fact that there have been many who have claimed they have the legitimacy to write a fatwa without necessarily having it. As a fatwa carries authority and is generally respected by the Muslim *umma*, it has been a source of some concern that unqualified persons have taken it upon themselves to write them. For the authors of the Message, it is even more concerning that often times these illegitimate fatwas are in encouragement of a militant ideology and advocate violence. The need to educate such persons about the requirements necessary for someone to legitimately write a fatwa is therefore imperative. Both of the previous points once again point to an

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<sup>201</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 4)

<sup>202</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 5)

<sup>203</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 14)

<sup>204</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 20)

<sup>205</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 20)

understanding that there is a lack of knowledge within extremist ranks and a need to educate them on the true Islamic understanding of the subject.

### 6.5.2 Refuting ISIS

In *Refuting ISIS* the discourse about the ignorance of extremists is established early, when Yaqoubi states that those who subscribe to and participate in ISIS ideology and activities adhere to Salafist dogma, but do not adhere to the Salafi *madhab* (school of law), which he says makes them “ignorant fanatics”.<sup>206</sup> In order to rectify this situation it is necessary to return to adhering to the righteous scholars who are the “heirs” of the prophet Muhammad,<sup>207</sup> of which there are none among ISIS.<sup>208</sup>

Yaqoubi builds on this point further when discussing the actions of ISIS and how they are in conflict with what he considers true Islamic practice. When discussing what he calls the “atrocities” committed by ISIS, one of those mentioned is “belittling the sacred law”. Here he says that it is incorrect for someone who is untrained and unqualified to attempt to pass judgments and make laws for others.<sup>209</sup> The list of atrocities has 20 different crimes committed by ISIS, including several examples of their “Indiscriminate Killing & Brutality”<sup>210</sup>, as well as “Enslavement.”<sup>211</sup> It is clear simply by the fact that belittling the sacred law is included on this list of atrocities that Yaqoubi considers this to be a grave issue, and one which should be addressed with the same seriousness.

Another atrocity discussed by Yaqoubi is the anathemization of fellow Muslims.<sup>212</sup> He explains that this has come about through the hasty and ignorant application of Qur’anic verses that regard disbelievers onto believers, and that those who are pronouncing these judgments are not only misguided but also lacking in the qualifications needed in order to be competent and eligible to pronounce such a ruling.<sup>213</sup>

Yaqoubi also connects this discourse to the goals the followers of ISIS claim to have, namely that of creating the Muslim caliphate. Explaining that the creation of the caliphate is

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<sup>206</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. xii)

<sup>207</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. xxii)

<sup>208</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. xxiii)

<sup>209</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 12)

<sup>210</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 10)

<sup>211</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 15)

<sup>212</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 14)

<sup>213</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 18)

something that concerns the entire Muslim *umma*, Yaqoubi states that it can therefore not be “settled by a few juveniles, nor can the foolish engage in discussing it.”<sup>214</sup> This is a clear indication that Yaqoubi considers the followers of ISIS to be lacking in proper Islamic education, and that their worldview and the goals associated with it are a product of that fact.

### 6.5.3 Open Letter to Baghdadi

As a letter addressed to the leader of ISIS in the hopes of bringing about a change of heart, the style and formatting of this text does not allow for a direct charge of ignorance. It is understandable that authors might wish to take a more tactile approach rather than ridicule him and his followers, as this would not further their goal of inviting to conversation and change, but would rather alienate them.

However, the premise of the text itself is the contention that Baghdadi and his followers subscribe to an ideology that they claim to be Islamic. Throughout the text the authors cite an action committed, or a belief condoned, by ISIS and then proceed to show how this is in conflict with a true understanding of Islam.

The first point made in the letter, Legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) and Qur’anic exegesis, while not citing specifically a way in which ISIS has applied these incorrectly, does inform the reader on what the authors consider to be the correct way in which to apply them.<sup>215</sup> This is in conformity with the ignorance discourse, as the only reason for this point to be made is if the authors deem the intended recipients of the letter to be lacking in some way in knowledge in this area.

The authors rely not just upon what they consider to be the correct worldview presented in Islam as a tool to counter ISIS, but also on the hermeneutical and exegetical tools that are integral to Islamic theology. They present a case in which they consider ISIS to have committed a grave error and then present the textual evidence that ISIS uses in support of their actions. They then proceed to explain in what ways the evidence has been manipulated incorrectly, so as to fit the ISIS narrative.

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<sup>214</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 26)

<sup>215</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 3)

The author's argumentation is clearly reliant upon and part of the ignorance discourse, without them ever having to specifically mention that they consider the followers of ISIS to be ignorant or lacking in proper education.

#### **6.5.4 Discussion**

The normative basis of Islam discourse and its sub-discourse on the ignorance of extremists is integral to the purpose and argumentation the FTSB. While the normative basis of Islam discourse is the main foundation upon which the FTSB rests, only *The Amman Message* touches on this within its argumentation. Mainly, the three texts above rest their argumentation on the ignorance of extremists discourse. I have categorized this as a sub-discourse within the normative basis discourse of the FTSB, which in discussion with the way it is used in the three texts above I believe provides several lines of inquiry. The first of which is the very fact that within the FTSB it is a part of a discourse that takes on a much larger issue than just the specific instances where extremists misinterpret or misuse Islamic theology and jurisprudence.

The three texts discussed here use the ignorance of extremists discourse as an explanatory model for how and why extremists are able to use Islamic rhetoric and imagery in support of their beliefs, without it actually being so. The FTSB, on the other hand, goes a step further and establishes that not only are terrorists employing Islamic sources in an ignorant fashion towards specific problems, but their entire approach to Islam and their experience as Muslims is lacking, as they do not approach it through the understanding of Islam as presented in the FTSB.

The ignorance of extremists discourse is not unique to the FTSB, and can be seen being reproduced by the FTSB as well as the other texts. However, the question can be asked in what way this discourse affects the postulation that it is not simply Islam misunderstood, but also Islam used purposefully and in a particular way, which allows for extremist ideology.

In answer, it should be mentioned that the FTSB can be seen differentiating between “brainwash young people,” and those who organize and groom them, namely the “masterminds of terrorism.”<sup>216</sup> This differentiation can indicate a view that it is only the young people who are being deluded that have misunderstood, and that the leaders know

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<sup>216</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 83)

precisely what they are doing. This differentiation can also be found in al- Yaqoubi's *Refuting Isis*<sup>217</sup>, and well as the *Amman Message*.<sup>218</sup> However, none of these texts discuss this distinction in any depth, and the overall message that these texts are trying to convey is that those who perpetuate terrorism do so on the basis of the wrong interpretation of Islam. No discussion takes place on whether or not extremists have adopted their particular interpretation due to its expediency in terms of their political and social goals, or if their political and social goals developed as a natural consequence of their interpretation. The question remains: which came first, the chicken or the egg?

While the normative basis of Islam discourse is not unique to the FTSB, nor Qadri<sup>219</sup>, it is found within other orders of discourse, such as the academic and inter-religious, rather than the counter-extremism order presented here. The normative basis of Islam discourse is thus reproduced in the FTSB in a non-conventional way, which points to the possibility of socio-cultural change. However, such change is limited by power relations within the field. The creative way in which the FTSB produces the discourse is not reproduced in later texts, such as *Refuting ISIS* and the *Letter*, raising the question of whether or not such socio-cultural change has indeed taken place.

## 6.6 Sanctity of Human Life Discourse

The above discourse establishes that terrorists are severely lacking in the proper education of Islamic theology and ethics in general; the present discourse takes on a specific area, namely the sanctity of human life. While the extreme ideologies held by terrorists are an object of concern for the authors that they attempt to correct in general through the first discourse, the violent actions the terrorists perpetrate are what has drawn their - and the world's - attention. Thus it is deemed necessary and relevant to focus specifically on the discrepancy between what the terrorists claim as religious justification for their violent actions and what the authors deem as the true Islamic rules and ethics in relation to human life. In relation to this, there are clearly defined rules and regulations for legitimate warfare, or a "just war" discourse.

The sanctity of human life discourse within the FTSB relies on *sura 5:32: Whoever kills a soul for other than slaying a soul or corruption upon the earth it is as if he has killed the*

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<sup>217</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 26)

<sup>218</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 12)

<sup>219</sup> See (Murata & Chittick, 1994) and (Rahman, 1983) as discussed above.

*whole of humanity, and whoever saves a life, it is as if has revived the whole of humanity.*<sup>220</sup>

It is used as a representation of what Qadri claims is the universal understanding in Islam of the sacredness of human life, and thus is the foundation on which the discourse itself is built.

It is also through this aspect of the discourse that the FTSB approaches the subject of suicide. While it makes mention of the just war regulations that forbid the “burning” of both Muslims and non-Muslims, it is the sanctity of human life discourse that is employed in order to categorically condemn suicide. As an interesting note, the terminology used by the FTSB is that of “suicide bombings”, rather than “martyrdom operations.” As Karen Lierke notes in her article, *Agents of death: the structural logic of suicide terrorism and martyrdom*, these terms carry a wealth of meaning and a moral framework with them.<sup>221</sup> Through the use of the term “suicide”, Qadri makes the discussion about deviant behavior, rather than using the term “martyr,” which would allude to a positive behavior.

The discourse also recognizes that there are certain times and situations that will demand that life be taken, but it builds upon the understanding that the Qur’an and Hadith have laid out clearly the rules for engaging in warfare and using violence. The specifics, such as the definition of legitimate violence, who can avail themselves of the use of legitimate violence, and in what circumstances such a person may avail themselves of it are made clear, and has been called the “just war” discourse within Islam. The violence used by terrorists, and the claim of religious sanction for such violence, is categorically denied by this discourse.

John Kelsay, in his *Arguing the Just War in Islam*, gives a detailed account of the development of this discourse, from its premodern beginnings up until its present form and its implications for the “War on Terror.”<sup>222</sup> Many of his conclusions lend support to Qadri’s argumentation, and mirror some of the rhetoric used in the FTSB. He shows, for example, that through the analysis of the rules and regulations put in place to wage war, the intent extremists have to wage indiscriminate war is not justified.<sup>223</sup> He also says that “the most important weakness in the militant claim to represent true Islam is the contradiction between

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<sup>220</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 95)

<sup>221</sup> (Fierke, 2009, p. 157)

<sup>222</sup> (Kelsay, 2007)

<sup>223</sup> (Kelsay, 2007, p. 196)

the end professed and the means employed.”<sup>224</sup> This echoes the FTSB when it says “good intentions do not change vices into virtues.”<sup>225</sup>

### 6.6.1 The Amman Message

*The Message* relies heavily on the universal ethics expressed in the Qur’an about the sacredness of human life and interactions between people, regardless of religion or race. It states that Islam “honors every human being,”<sup>226</sup> and that “assault upon the life of a human being, be it murder, injury or threat, is an assault upon the right to life among all human beings. It is among the gravest of sins; for human life is the basis for the prosperity of humanity.”<sup>227</sup> In support of this understanding *sura* 5:32 is quoted. This universal understanding is presented as the main issue in confrontation with the terrorist ideology; terrorists fail to recognize that all actions should be taken with this ethic in mind and in the spirit of fulfilling its ideals.

There are some specific rules of engagement that are also mentioned. “There is to be no fighting against non-combatants, and no assault upon civilians and their properties;”<sup>228</sup> this specific stipulation regulates the direction of legitimate violence towards only those who are considered combatants. Violence perpetrated in an indiscriminate way is considered illegitimate. Along the same lines, *The Message* also reminds the readers that “there is no fighting permitted when there is no aggression,”<sup>229</sup> reinforcing the delineation of combatant and non-combatant.

The Message also mentions that terrorist actions are misguided and wrongful, and that in Islam the ends do not justify the means.<sup>230</sup> This means that while the terrorists may view the actions they have taken as a way in which to protect, support, or spread Islam, which are all worthy causes, that does not make them acceptable. *The Message* condemns the terrorist’s actions, and stipulates that the only way to reach such goals is through legitimate means.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> (Kelsay, 2007, p. 198)

<sup>225</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 13)

<sup>226</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, pp. 6-7)

<sup>227</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 9)

<sup>228</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 9)

<sup>229</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 11)

<sup>230</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 10)

<sup>231</sup> (The Amman Message, 2009, p. 11)



## 6.6.2 Refuting Isis

The discourse is presented in this book mainly through a presentation, and denouncement, of the actions and beliefs of ISIS. Early on Yaqoubi shows that while the leaders of ISIS claim to follow the Prophetic Methodology<sup>232</sup> this claim can be discredited by looking at the actions the followers of ISIS participate in. One of the main examples being the fact that the “prophetic methodology prohibits the killing of civilians.”<sup>233</sup> This is a clear reference to the difference in combatants and non-combatants that is central to the discourse.

More specifically, when discussing the many transgressions that ISIS has committed, the first mentioned is the indiscriminate murder and violence they perpetrate. Under this heading a list of nine examples are set out, ranging from “killing the innocent based on unsubstantiated evidence” to “mutilating corpses and disrespecting the bodies of the dead.”<sup>234</sup> Yaqoubi is clearly in agreement with and in use of the discourse on the sanctity of human life discourse, as well as the just war discourse when making these judgment. He rarely (if one takes the FTSB as an example) mentions any Qur’anic verse or Hadith in support of his argument. He does not employ verse 5:32, for example. Rather, it appears as if simply mentioning the fact that these acts are wrong suffices for Yaqoubi’s purpose, making clear his reliance on the discourse.

## 6.6.3 Letter to Baghdadi

*The Letter* touches on this discourse through several of its points, beginning with point six, The Killing of Innocents. The discussion under this heading is reliant upon the sanctity of human life discourse, and uses verse 5:32 in support of its message.<sup>235</sup> The use of the word “innocents” can also be understood in reference to the concept of combatants vs. non-combatants that the just war discourse is reliant upon.

*The Letter* also mentions more specific details in relation to what is acceptable when it comes to warfare within Islam; even discussing the concept of jihad in detail, something neither of the other two documents do. It is possible there are several reasons for this, one of the most

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<sup>232</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 2)

<sup>233</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 2)

<sup>234</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 10)

<sup>235</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 6)

obvious being that *The Letter* is addressed directly to Baghdadi and his followers, and thus uses their rhetoric, of which jihad is a central theme.

Within the context of speaking on the concept of jihad, the authors mention several of the notions found within the discourse, including the idea of combatant vs. non-combatant,<sup>236</sup> proper conduct in relation to prisoners of war and retreating armies,<sup>237</sup> and legitimacy.<sup>238</sup>

#### 6.6.4 Discussion

Once again the three texts discussed here employ the discourse in a more limited way than the way in which it is employed by the FTSB. The FTSB first establishes the sanctity of all human life, and thus the need to follow the rules that regulate war and peace, so as to limit the loss of life and protect those who are not participatory. While the texts above make mention of the discourse and often use the same rhetoric and sources, such as verse 5:32, the FTSB delves deeper than do the three texts presented in this chapter. It shows through a multitude of examples how it views the sanctity of human life discourse as the foundation for which the just war discourse is built upon, while the three texts above employ the just war discourse largely as a standalone argument. In many ways the fact that the FTSB develops this discourse further than the other three texts can be seen in conjunction with the normative basis the FTSB established in the first discourse, and that the texts above did not.

The normative basis establishes that Islam means peace and protection for all people, and thus the sanctity of all human life is guaranteed, regulations on war ethics are only a small part of the equation. However, while the FTSB does establish its discourse more substantially on the sanctity of human life than do the three texts discussed here, these texts do, in fact, incorporate many of the same principles. This can be seen through the use of verse 5:32, as well as the statements made in acknowledgment of Islam's recognition of all people, without bias given to race, or creed.

Just war theory within Islam is a well-studied and written about discourse that is in no way unique to these texts, nor the counter-extremism order of discourse. The concepts of jihad, martyrdom and retributive justice have been discussed and re-discussed, pointing to the

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<sup>236</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 9)

<sup>237</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 8)

<sup>238</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 6)

interpretation that this discourse has been constructed in a conventional way, reproducing the discourse as it is found elsewhere in the counter-extremism order of discourse.

## 6.7 The Terrorists are Kharijites Discourse

This discourse represents the culmination of the argumentation used in the texts; that those who adhere to and participate in the extremist ideology and actions of terrorist are not only 1) severely lacking in the correct understanding of Islamic theology and ethics, and 2) use this warped and inadequate understanding as legitimization for perpetrating violent acts and breaking with the just war concepts that are clearly evident in Islam, they also 3) share the features and characteristics of the Kharijites, thus removing them from the scope of Islam, and making it not only acceptable but mandatory for other Muslims to fight and resist them. Thus, the discourse on the terrorists being Kharijites affords those who would distance themselves and Islam from such persons an emphatic and conclusive means of doing so.

The FTSB discusses the formation of the historical Kharijite sect during the reign of ‘Ali,<sup>239</sup> and uses what it presents as their apparent extremism in both belief and action to connect them to extremists today who commit terrorism. Qadri supports this claim by quoting Hadith and Qur’anic exegesis. He also makes reference to the normative basis discourse, saying “Islam is a religion of balance and moderation” in the beginning of Chapter 13: The Tribulation of the Kharijites and Modern-Day Terrorists,<sup>240</sup> once again using it as the foundation for which he builds the rest of his argument.

The discourse itself expresses the idea that the terrorists today are the modern embodiment of the historical Kharijites in terms of their extremism. They display the same characteristics in relation to what Qadri has presented as their beliefs and temperament, and through their classification as Kharijites, it is possible to distance Islam from them.

The FTSB does not discuss the historical development of the Kharijites after their initial conception, nor does it delve into their theological or political development. Jeffery T. Kenny, in his *Muslim Rebels*, presents a concise overview of these subjects, as well as the way in which orthodox Sunni theology has developed in response to the Kharijite stance.

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<sup>239</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 253)

<sup>240</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 253)

## 6.7.1 Refuting ISIS

Yaqoubi<sup>241</sup> leans heavily on this discourse throughout the course of his fatwa. Already in the introduction he mentions that the fatwa itself should be seen as a concise and easily accessible means of fighting “Khawarji generally and ISIS specifically.”<sup>242</sup> Making even clearer his stance on the status of ISIS he states:

The comparison between the crimes and practices of ISIS and the description of the Khawarji mentioned in the words (hadith) of the Prophet proves my conclusions that ISIS is the modern-day Khawarij, implying that its followers are deviator and that fighting them is obligatory.<sup>243</sup>

Specific instances in which one can see a likeness between the actions of historical Kharijites and modern terrorists are used in support of his argument. In particular he lists three crimes (revolting against the legitimate ruler, anathematization of fellow Muslims, spreading injustice and corruption through killing and destruction) as being in strong resemblance to the crimes committed by the historical Kharijites.<sup>244</sup> He uses these as markers, which allows for the judgment of anyone who participates in these actions to be labeled a Kharijite, and therefore outside the scope of Islam.

Having established that ISIS, and others who commit the crimes stated above, are Kharijites, Yaqoubi can then condemn them and call for them to be fought on the basis of both the Qur’an and Hadith. The opening paragraph to Chapter 7: Fighting ISIS is Obligatory is the Qur’anic verse 49:9:

Hence, if two groups of believers fall to fighting, reconcile between them; but then, if one of the two groups transgresses against the other, fight against the one that transgressed until it reverts to the commandment of Allah; and if it does, reconcile again between them with justice, and deal equitably with them: for verily, Allah loves those who act equitably!<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> In quoting *Refuting Isis* I will use the spelling Khawarij, as that is what is written there, however, I use the spelling Kharijite elsewhere for the sake of consistency within this text.

<sup>242</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. XVII)

<sup>243</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. XVIII)

<sup>244</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 8)

<sup>245</sup> As quoted by (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 24)

At the end of this chapter Yaqoubi calls on the followers of ISIS to repent and return to the Sunni orthodoxy. He interprets the hadith that says “ when they emerge, kill them, then when they emerge again, kill them, then when they emerge again, kill them,” as showing that Muhammad ordered the Kharijite to be fought until they were eradicated, and that they would emerge in several times and places.<sup>246</sup>

### 6.7.2 The Amman Message & Letter to Baghdadi

Neither *The Message* nor the *Letter* employ this discourse directly. Not once do they mention the Kharijites, nor place blame upon them. The style that these texts are written in is an important consideration when discussing why this might be. Both *The Message* and the *Letter* are written to the followers of the extremist ideologies the texts are trying to counter. It is not difficult to understand, then, why the authors might have deemed it less than pertinent to condemn the intended audience as Kharijites, in light of the fact that it is used as a derogatory term that removes the accused from the Muslim *umma*.

While the texts do not use the discourse directly, it is possible to see the discourse used in an indirect way, through rhetoric and argumentation. In the *Letter* for example, the authors inform the readers that the severity of an opinion does not correlate with more piety. Rather, severity often brings with it delusion and vanity, due to the fact that those who are severe believe themselves to be more pious and thus superior to others, which is incorrect.<sup>247</sup> This argument can be found within the discourse; the Kharijites were extreme and severe in their piousness, and thus thought themselves superior to the other Muslims and declared them to be apostates. By making this point, the authors of the *Letter* employ the discourse without directly accusing the audience of being Kharijites. It can also be seen in both texts through the points made about the impermissibility of declaring another Muslim as an apostate as this is one of the main distinguishing characteristics of a Kharijite.

### 6.7.3 Discussion

This discourse is largely achieved through the same means in both the FTSB, as well as *Refuting ISIS*. *The Message* and the *Letter*, as discussed above do not employ the same

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<sup>246</sup> (Al-Yaqoubi, 2015, p. 24)

<sup>247</sup> (Open Letter to Al-Baghdadi, 2014, p. 5)

argumentation for reasons mentioned, and thus will not be given the same amount of attention here.

Both texts present Kharijites as a historical Muslim sect that broke away from orthodox teachings and held certain troublesome beliefs, such as the permissibility of declaring other Muslims apostates on the basis of a difference of opinion. They then make the case that the Kharijites were not only a historical sect, but that the Prophet Muhammad himself mentioned that they would reappear. Through a comparison of the beliefs and practices that both the historical Kharijites and terrorists endorse, both Yaqoubi and Qadri conclude that the terrorists are, in fact, modern-day Kharijites.

The use of the “terrorists are Kharijites discourse,” or Neo-Kharijite discourse, is not unique to these fatwas however. While the fatwas produce the discourse in an essentialist way, reducing the Kharijites to a sect of extremists who will reemerge and it is a duty to fight them, historians have shown a more nuanced picture. For example, while the Kharijites are a theological and political entity in their own right, the use of the term Kharijite has so often been used in connection to rebels that some historians translated the word simply as “rebel.”<sup>248</sup> Khaled Abou El-Fadl writes about the development of the laws governing rebellion in his *Rebellion and Violence in Islamic Law*, and in one example of the law of rebellion during the modern age writes about how the Hanafi jurist Ibn Abidin described the Wahhabis as the Kharijites of the modern age.<sup>249</sup> Jeffrey T. Kenney, in his *Muslim Rebels*, discusses the use of this discourse during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Egypt, in discrediting Muslim extremists. He also gives an account of how this discourse has affected and was affected by the theological and political discourses there.<sup>250</sup>

This terrorists are Kharijites discourse is a well-established discourse within the counter-extremism order, and is reproduced within the FTSB in a conventional way. The other texts, when they do employ the discourse, do not alter or enhance the discourse by offering more nuanced argumentation.

## 6.8 Conclusion

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<sup>248</sup> (Watt, 1965, p. 3) (Kenney, 2006, p. 43)

<sup>249</sup> (El-Fadl, 2001, p. 333)

<sup>250</sup> (Kenney, 2006)

This chapter has focused on presenting and discussing the ways in which three other texts within the counter-extremism order of discourse have developed and implemented their argumentation, and through which discourses they have done this. In comparison with the discourses found within the FTSB it has been shown that the four texts generally employ the same discourses, with a high degree of intertextuality; also, they both employ the same discourses and support them through the use of the same sources. Dissonance between the implementation of the discourses in the texts can often be attributed to space consideration or differences in intended audience, rather than a major socio-discursive change.

Such considerations can also account for the fact that the three texts presented here do not implement a discourse on rebellion, which the FTSB does. The discourse on the illegality of violent rebellion is a central theme within the FTSB, which points to several implications; for example, the FTSB was written after, and in response to, a surge in violence in Pakistan in 2009, and this violence was often directed at what the perpetrators deemed an illegitimate government. This specific social event provides the FTSB with a clear reason for incorporating this discourse so thoroughly into its argumentation.

However, the texts discussed above are also written in specific response to the surge in violence that has been attributed to Islam, especially in the last decade. The discourse on rebellion is in many ways built upon the idea that legitimate violence is only applicable by the state, and any and all violence used without this authority is a form of rebellion. Thus the violence used by the terrorists that these texts discuss is a form of rebellion, and it is therefore an interesting omission in their argumentation.

Another consideration when discussing the discourse on rebellion can be seen through Asma Afsaruddin's contribution to *Crescent and Dove: Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam*, which posits that the term *hirabah* or brigandage (which the FTSB equates with rebellion) is the correct term for terrorism within Islam.<sup>251</sup> This lends support to Qadri's overall argumentation, and again calls into question its omission from the other texts.

The previous chapter established that the discourses in the FTSB are presented in an essentialist manner, and therefore the question was posed about whether or not the texts presented here employed the discourses in a more nuanced way. This chapter has shown that much of the same material and discourses are employed in a conventional way, and neither

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<sup>251</sup> (Afsaruddin, 2010, p. 59)

the FTSB nor the other texts have reproduced the discourses in a non-conventional way within the counter-extremism order of discourse. It should be mentioned, however, that the FTSB does present its argument in a more comprehensive way, constantly referring back to a foundation based on a normative ethical platform. In the next chapter of this thesis these discourses and the overall argumentation of the FTSB will be analyzed through the theory of countering violent extremism.



## 7 Social Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the social dimension of the FTSB. In this dimension of the analysis the intent is to investigate the social and cultural structures the fatwa is situated within, as well as the relationship between the discursive practice and its order of discourse.<sup>252</sup> It is within this analysis that it is possible to answer questions about how the text and discursive traditions produced by the FTSB actively participate in social institutions, thus making it possible to answer my research question: *In what way does the FTSB present its message/beliefs/ views, and has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?*

The exploration of the social dimension is the final level of analysis within Fairclough's CDA, and it is in this investigation that the study draws its final conclusions. The social practice analysis is in many ways a contextualization of the text and discursive practice analyses, and as such the tentative conclusions drawn in those chapters will be used here and placed within their situated perspectives. Due to the nature of such an investigation, containing both discursive and non-discursive aspects, the theory and methodology of discourse analysis is no longer sufficient, and Fairclough's CDA calls for the use of social and cultural theory in this level of analysis.

As this thesis views the FTSB through the lens of the counter-extremism order of discourse, and as a contribution to the efforts made within the field of countering radicalization, I have determined that the most productive theory to analyze the social dimension through is that of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE).

In section 7.1 I will present a short review of the theory of CVE, section 7.2 and 7.3 follow with an analysis of the FTSB through the lens provided by CVE. One of the tools employed by CVE is that of counter-narratives, and it is through the analysis of the FTSB as such that this thesis attempts to answer the research question stated above. Section 7.2 will present this analysis, whereas section 7.3 will review the FTSB through some of the other aspects of CVE such as community outreach and education.

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<sup>252</sup> (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 86)

## 7.1 Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)

Emerging as a policy shift over the last decade, CVE has become the dominant lens through which governments view their position towards the threat of radicalization and terrorism. A diverse repertoire of methods and strategies has been developed in response to the need for governments to rely on more than just the hard tactics of counter-terrorism strategies that were so prominent post 9/11.

While CVE began as a policy shift by governments, it quickly became apparent that if governments were to succeed in their objectives they would need to incorporate other actors in the field. Civil society, NGOs and religious actors soon came to be seen as part of the solution, and have become deeply involved in implementing the CVE approaches and strategies that have been developed. This chapter thus views MQI as an actor within the CVE framework, working to implement diverse CVE strategies, one of which being the FTSB.

The FTSB is viewed as a counter-narrative in the realm of CVE, and will be assessed as such. A counter-narrative can take many forms; some literature has even delineated between a counter-narrative and an alternative-narrative, assigning different goals and modes of operation to each.<sup>253</sup> However, much of the literature sees counter-narratives as an umbrella concept for messaging that attempts to challenge extremist messages in some way.

These messages may attempt to highlight moral issues, emphasize solidarity, common causes and shared values, pick apart extremist ideologies or highlight non-violent political tactics.<sup>254</sup> These are but a few of the strategies a counter-narrative might use to reach its overarching goal, and it is through an analysis of the FTSB through this lens that it will be possible to explore the relationship between the discursive practice and its order of discourse, one of the main goals of the social analysis. A counter-narrative is just one of the approaches that are employed in CVE, and it is through the operationalization of some of the other CVE strategies as analytical tools that it will be possible to explore non-discursive structures that the FTSB is situated in, the other main goal of the social analysis.

## 7.2 Analysis of FTSB as a counter-narrative

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<sup>253</sup> (Briggs & Feve, 2013, p. 2)

<sup>254</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011)

As mentioned above, there are many characteristics that the literature points to as being important aspects of an effective counter-narrative. This section intends to evaluate the FTSB through this lens, in an attempt to say something about the relationship between the FTSB's discursive practice and the counter-extremism order-of-discourse.

One of the strategies often presented in the literature is to highlight the innocence of potential victims of violence, and the moral issues this raises.<sup>255</sup> It is possible to see this strategy employed by the FTSB through the just war, and sanctity of human life, discourse. One of the main arguments of the FTSB is the impermissibility of the use of violence against non-combatants. While the "just war" discourse recognizes the legitimate use of violence through the state apparatus, it denounces the use of both indiscriminate violence, as well as violence used in an illegitimate way. It emphasizes the clear delineation between those who are considered combatants in a legitimate war, and those who are considered innocent bystanders; women, children, the elderly, even those who were once combatants and have since laid down their arms. The sanctity of human life discourse offers a moral basis for the FTSB's clear and thorough argument that killing innocents is both morally reprehensible and religiously forbidden.

The textual analysis revealed that the FTSB's discourses were often essentialist and did not discuss or elaborate on the more nuanced aspects that these discourses are a part of. Some of the literature claims that focusing on the moral issues rather than religious or ideological is the most appropriate counter-narrative to extremism, as this approach makes it possible to distance the discussion from what is an inherently subjective understanding of religion.<sup>256</sup> It opens the discussion on extremism and what role religious actors should take to include shared morals and values, emphasizing the common traditions and solidarity amongst all people. By focusing on these common values, this approach hopes to increase inclusiveness and inter-religious cooperation. However, some critics of this approach point to the fact that it may be reductive, reducing an extremely complex situation that has political, ideological and social contexts, to one where the solution is a simple re-orientation in ethics.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> (Simi & Windisch, 2018, p. 15) (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, pp. 46,48)

<sup>256</sup> (Mroz, 2009, p. 7)

<sup>257</sup> (Zalman, 2008, p. 10)

Focusing on the specific religious or ideological arguments used as justification by extremists and eroding their intellectual framework is another method endorsed by CVE literature.<sup>258</sup> While the overall effect of the FTSB can be seen in light of this strategy, and Qadri does employ the use of direct refutation of terrorist ideology at times, it is not the main strategy of the FTSB. Critiques of the FTSB have, for example, cited the fact that it lacks a direct repudiation of the way in which terrorists use verse 9:5, or the so-called “sword verse”. In addition, some CVE literature calls for the pinpointed countering of a specific ideology, rather than the blanket refutation of a generalized creed. Cohen et.al. opines in *Al-Qaeda’s Propaganda Decoded: A Psycholinguistic System for Detecting Variations in Terrorism Ideology* that there is a dynamic of ideological splintering within terrorist groups, and that to counter their narratives effectively it is necessary to specify exactly which group one is targeting.<sup>259</sup> Both *Refuting ISIS*, and the *Open Letter to Baghdadi* can be seen in this respect, both making it clear that they are speaking about the specific ideology that ISIS adheres to. The FTSB, in contrast, does not specify who or which group’s ideology it attempts to counter, simply referring to the ideology as that used by terrorists.

One of the main critiques of ideological approaches to counter-narratives is the possibility that they may do exactly the opposite of what they set out to; that is, they may drive recruits into the arms of extremists, rather than arming them against them. To reduce this possibility it is suggested that counter-narratives should focus on the fault lines that are beginning to appear within the different terrorist networks themselves, both ideologically and practically.<sup>260</sup> The FTSB does not make use of this strategy, nor do the other three counter-narratives discussed in the previous chapter. However, it is possible to make a case that inclusion of this strategy within the FTSB could be seen as arbitrary as it does not specify one group it intends to refute, and therefore cannot illuminate any discord that might be present within.

While the FTSB is unable to highlight any splintering within a specific terrorist group, it does attempt to “mock, ridicule, or undermine the credibility/ legitimacy of violent extremist messengers.”<sup>261</sup> Through the “Kharijite” discourse, Qadri both ridicules and undermines

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<sup>258</sup> (Briggs & Feve, 2013, p. 23) (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 46) (Hassan, 2006, p. 534)

<sup>259</sup> (Cohen, Kruglanski, Gelfand, Webber, & Gunaratna, 2018, p. 143)

<sup>260</sup> (Cohen, Kruglanski, Gelfand, Webber, & Gunaratna, 2018, p. 143) (Simi & Windisch, 2018, p. 15) (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 59)

<sup>261</sup> (Briggs & Feve, 2013, p. 23)

those who subscribe to the extremist discourse he is attempting to counter. Calling them the “dogs of hell”, and establishing that they are outside the pale of Islam, he makes a compelling case. This aspect of counter-narratives should not be overlooked, as it can, and should, be seen as a major player in the battle for hegemony that takes place between the different narratives. In order for a counter-narrative to be successful, those who write and publish the narrative must be seen as legitimate and authoritative; reducing the perceived legitimacy of the authors and perpetrators of the extremist narrative is thus a necessary step in claiming authority.

Highlighting the ways in which extremist activities harm fellow Muslims is also pointed to as a possible strategy that counter-narratives should employ.<sup>262</sup> In the preface to, and elsewhere in the FTSB, Qadri notes that those who subscribe to, and act upon, extremist ideology bring disrepute to Muslims and Islam. Not only are they harming Islam’s reputation, but their victims are most often other Muslims. Qadri states that one of the reasons he wrote the FTSB is to explain the proper Islamic stance on terrorism, due to the fact that its use is leading the Muslim *Umma* towards disaster.<sup>263</sup>

A counter-narrative should employ several of the concepts and strategies recommended in the literature, and as has been shown above, the FTSB does just that. While not possible to employ all of the approaches, the FTSB makes use of religious, moral and political strategies within its narrative, covering a large portion of the areas that CVE literature has evaluated as fruitful for counter-narratives. The purpose of a counter-narrative is to challenge extremist messages, discrediting the ideologies and actions taken by terrorists. The FTSB does this on many fronts, from discrediting extremist ideologies by linking them to Kharijites, thus rejecting their legitimacy, to refutation of their use of indiscriminate violence through the discourse on “just war.”

One strategy the FTSB does not employ is delineating specifically which ideology it targets nor does it deconstruct some of the specific instances of ideology that promote violence, such as verse 9:5. However, the literature is divided on whether or not such a deconstruction is necessary, or even advisable. Some claim that such an argument may assist in driving potential recruits into the arms of extremist groups, while others assert that it would help to prevent just this problem. It is my opinion that the desire for such a deconstruction is

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<sup>262</sup> (Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino, & Caluya, 2011, p. 51) (Briggs & Feve, 2013, p. 23)

<sup>263</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 5)

dependent upon the audience of the counter-narrative. If the counter-narrative is intended to provide an alternative image of Islam to a largely Western audience, in an attempt to further inclusiveness and integration, the specific deconstruction of pinpointed instances of ideology that promote and legitimize violence are often sought. In counter-narratives that are intended for mainly Muslim audiences a discussion of the morals surrounding the use of violence may be sufficient.

The CVE method of counter-narratives can be seen as continuation of the hegemonic struggle for “correct” Islam that we saw taking place through for example the “fatwa wars.” While much of the literature views the struggle taking place between extremist narratives and counter-narratives as necessary and a positive aspect of the CVE method, some have criticized this approach, emphasizing the need to promote a multiplicity of different interpretations. Rather than teaching people what to think, the goal should be to teach them how to think. Heather Gregg, in her article *Fighting the Jihad of the Pen: Countering Revolutionary Islam’s Ideology*, encourages the use of counter-narratives to challenge the extremist ideologies, but also recognizes that there is a need for a “marketplace of ideas,” rather than one hegemonic ideology. She claims that this space would demand the use of and promote the development of a culture of open debate and critical analysis, allowing for the discussion of ideas and the possibility of agreeing to disagree. The recognition of the fact that “ontological claims are not infallible nor are the authorities that purport them” is the goal of such an undertaking.<sup>264</sup> There should also be a discussion about the use of counter-narratives in challenging radical attitudes that are non-violent, as this inherently minimizes the room for the open and critical debate that Gregg called for above.

Counter-narratives are but one initiative CVE literature advocates, and it is understood that they should be used in combination with other approaches; they are not considered to be a complete CVE program in and of themselves. In keeping with this, the FTSB should not be viewed reductively as only a counter-narrative, without the social and political initiatives it is connected to and reproduced in. This echoes the sentiments expressed by representatives of Minhaj-ul-Qur’an Norway during an interview between them and myself in March of 2017. They conveyed that the FTSB was not just a fatwa, and should not be viewed as simply a discursive work, but that it worked in a comprehensive way through both its discursive

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<sup>264</sup> (2010, p. 308)

aspects, but also through its inclusion in prison mentoring programs, religious education in schools, and participation in the political sphere.<sup>265</sup>

### **7.3 FTSB in connection with other aspects of CVE**

While Minhaj-ul-Qur'an is a world spanning organization, and the FTSB has been translated into multiple languages, this social analysis is concerned solely with the Norwegian field. It does not delve into the various social structures and institutions that the FTSB takes part in in other countries, such as Pakistan or England. In the discussion below I will highlight some of the non-discursive initiatives of CVE that the FTSB participates in.

One of the strategies promoted by CVE literature as being especially fruitful is the recognition of grievances and causes that lead to radicalization and violent extremism.<sup>266</sup> The FTSB does this discursively, stating explicitly that:

...factors underpinning global terrorism include the injustices inflicted against Muslims in certain areas, the apparent double standards displayed by the major state powers and their open-ended and the long-term military engagements in a number of countries under the pretext of combating terror.<sup>267</sup>

But it also realizes this initiative through its use at conferences and in online forums. MQI and the FTSB have never claimed to be secular or state sponsored. In fact, it is one of their points of legitimacy that they are not state sponsored and therefore not beholden to a state's foreign policy program. The FTSB can function independently, and be used in situations where there is the need to counter extremist ideology and its use of violence, yet still remain loyal to its base and their legitimate grievances. When governments and civil society institutions then use and promote the FTSB at conferences, in dialogue with others, and through social media, they are also recognizing these grievances, and thus encourage a discussion and open the possibility for critical analysis.

Civil society has been recognized within the CVE literature as an essential actor in the field, at times even being able to play a more important role than government because of their perceived legitimacy. Initiatives which create positive change through community outreach,

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<sup>265</sup> (Ali, 2017)

<sup>266</sup> (Gielen, 2017, p. 8)

<sup>267</sup> (Qadri, 2010, p. 3)

education and mass mobilization are important strategies that civil society should take the lead in.<sup>268</sup> Recognized as a NGO with special consultative status at the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Minhaj-ul-Qur'an's participation in civil society within Norway includes various undertakings, including Minhaj Skole Oslo, Minhaj Velferd, Minhaj Ungdom, Minhaj Konfliktråd, and Minhaj Kvinneforum.

Minhaj Skole Oslo offers weekend classes that are designed to educate students with knowledge of the Qur'an and Hadith, among other subjects such as ethics. It hopes to be a part of the integration and education of immigrants in Norway and help teach them how to take part in society at large. Minhaj Velferd is the Norwegian arm of Minhaj Welfare Foundation, a humanitarian and volunteer organization within the Minhaj-ul-Qur'an network. They participate in diverse campaigns, including providing clean drinking water, education and support after natural disasters. Minhaj Velferd contributes through fundraisers as well as sending crews to help on the ground.

Minhaj Ungdom and Minhaj Kvinneforum are both associations that are reserved for the development and promotion of their respective group's interests. Minhaj Ungdom works with and for Muslim youth, and Minhaj Kvinneforum is an arena for women and their interests. Both are dedicated to building bridges between the Muslim community and other religious communities as well as society in general.<sup>269</sup> Working to promote integration and positive experiences of Muslim identity, these forums are prominent in media and community relations. Leaders and members of these groups participate actively in the social discourse in media outlets such as *Aftenposten*<sup>270</sup> and *VG*<sup>271</sup> as well as take on roles within the social and political spheres in Norwegian society, the general secretary of *Islamsk Råd Norge*, for example.<sup>272</sup> Hamza Ansari, deputy director of Minhaj Ungdom, has also been a prominent lecture holder, giving lectures on the FTSB for students of education at Østfold University College.<sup>273</sup>

Minhaj Konfliktråd is a forum used in the spirit of both solving and preventing conflicts that arise within the Muslim community. They assist in everything from marital spats, to generational squabbles, and have been utilized by both schools and the police in Oslo. When

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<sup>268</sup> (Briggs & Feve, 2013, p. 18)

<sup>269</sup> (Minhaj ul Quran Norway)

<sup>270</sup> (Ansari, 2016)

<sup>271</sup> (Adil, 2017)

<sup>272</sup> (Mehtab Afsar, 2017)

<sup>273</sup> (Ali, 2017)



it comes to trying to prevent conflict and not just respond to it, Minhaj Konfliktråd has cooperated extensively with Kirkene i Gamle Oslo to increase inter-religious dialogue. In 2011 they also arranged a conference on extremism held at Folkets Hus. Much of their conflict management is directed at young people, and their intention is to create an atmosphere of inclusion and cooperation.<sup>274</sup>

While this thesis has not undertaken measures to investigate to what degree the FTSB has taken part or is included in the above measures, it is not unreasonable to assume that the FTSB is used directly or indirectly in each of the forums' work. The FTSB is recognized as a contribution to inter-religious dialogue, making it a natural talking point in the inter-religious dialogue initiatives these forums participate in and promote. Its usefulness in the initiatives that are involved with extremism and integration is apparent, and although there are most certainly circumstances in which it is not directly referenced, its connection to Minhaj-ul-Qur'an is well known, making their involvement in civil society a promotion of the FTSB by association.

The inclusion of this discussion on the social institutions that the FTSB is involved in is an important aspect of the analysis as it seeks to reveal the way in which the FTSB participates in the non-discursive social field. No definitive conclusions can be made about whether or not the FTSB has had an effect on the social field, or in what way, but the above discussion has shed light on the multi-faceted ways in which it is situated in the social field. Through the analysis of the FTSB and MQI's activities, one could believe that the FTSB has had a social impact, it is however not possible to verify this assertion at the moment.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to apply theories of CVE to the analysis of the social dimension of the FTSB. The social analysis' intent is to highlight the social and cultural structures that the FTSB is situated within, in an attempt to say something about the social effect that the instance of discourse has had. This social analysis was also undertaken in an attempt to answer my thesis question: *In what way does the FTSB present its message, and has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?*

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<sup>274</sup> (Minhaj ul Quran Norway)

In answer to this question the social analysis has shown that the FTSB expresses its message through a number of CVE initiatives. Its main presentation is that of a counter-narrative. Counter-narratives employ a variety of different tactics in an attempt to discredit and delegitimize extremist ideologies. The FTSB uses several of these tactics and can be considered a comprehensive counter-narrative.

However, while counter-narratives have become a prominent dimension of CVE policy measures, their effectiveness is not agreed upon. In fact, some literature has blatantly stated that “the hypothesis that VE (violent extremism) narratives or the real life threat of VE can be countered by an alternative set of communications is an assumption that remains unproven.”<sup>275</sup>

The inclusion of several initiatives is necessary for any CVE program, and the FTSB is included in MQI initiatives of all sorts. Ranging from education, to inter-religious dialogue, to direct use in counter-extremist conferences, the FTSB can be used in a variety of social structures and institutions. As Peter Neumann notes in his report, *Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region*, the strength of CVE lies precisely in its ability to mobilize and involve a large section of society and individuals, making the fight against extremism a collective task, not just the job of ideologues and politicians.<sup>276</sup>

However, evaluation of counter-narratives and other CVE initiatives is considered to be difficult, with few, if any reproducible results. This makes answering the second part of my thesis question difficult: *has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?* Rather, this analysis has highlighted the institutions the FTSB has come into contact with so as to illuminate the possible areas it may exert influence.

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<sup>275</sup> (Ferguson, 2016, p. 2)

<sup>276</sup> (2017, p. 22)

## 8 Conclusion

This thesis applied Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to the *Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings* published in 2010 by Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul Qadri in an attempt to answer three questions: 1) What are the arguments that the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings make use of? 2) In what way has the Fatwa on Terrorism and Suicide Bombings affected and contributed to the discourses surrounding counter-extremism? and 3) How is the message conveyed, and has it had an effect on the social world in which it has come into contact?

The analysis had three dimensions; textual, discursive, and social. The text analysis discovered that the FTSB employs four main discourses in support of its overarching message: Islam does not condone terrorism and suicide bombings. These discourses are 1) the normative basis of Islam, 2) the sanctity of human life, 3) rebellion is illegal, and 4) terrorists are modern-day Kharijites. The combination of these discourses, and the implications they have on areas such as the proper understanding of Islam, just war ethics and morals, as well as suicide, make for a solid and comprehensive support of the FTSB's message. However, these discourses were often employed in an essentialistic way, portraying the conclusions drawn as being the only available and as if they stem from a persistent Muslim mentality from the beginning of Islamic history until today. There is little discussion or interaction with the historical development of these discourses and their intricacies, rather an opinion is asserted and examples are used to show its legitimacy. However, in light of the fact that this thesis is investigating the FTSB through the lens of a counter-narrative, I ask the question of whether or not such essentialism is a hinder in the FTSB achieving its goal as an effective counter-narrative. What purpose would it serve the counter-narrative to discuss its discourses in a broader theological or historical light?

The discursive practice analysis attempts to answer this by looking at three other texts within the counter-extremism order of discourse, *The Amman Message*, *An Open Letter to Baghdadi*, and *Refuting ISI*, and through the analysis of their interdiscursivity and intertextuality with the FTSB, determine in what way the FTSB has reproduced the discourses. Have the other texts within the order of discourse used the discourses in a more comprehensive way, or less? Through the analysis of the other texts it was shown that they rely on three of the four discourses discussed in the text analysis of the FTSB. They rely on the normative basis of

Islam discourse, the sanctity of human life discourse, and the terrorists are modern-day Kharijites discourse. However, they rely on these discourses in a different way than the FTSB. The normative basis of Islam discourse within the FTSB is used as a foundation for the other discourses in general. It is the FTSB's methodology for approaching the world and its problems, and it is an ignorance of this understanding that is at the heart of terrorism. Within the other texts ignorance is also at the heart of terrorism, but the emphasis is on the rules and doctrine, rather than ethics and morals. Much attention is given to rules for waging a "just war", which is a sub-category of the sanctity of human life discourse within the FTSB. Once again, the other texts concentrate more heavily on the specific rules of conduct, while the FTSB, which also incorporating these into its argumentation, relates it back to its ethical-moral foundation. The Kharijite discourse is only employed explicitly by *Refuting ISIS*, although the other two texts can be seen making use of its rhetoric at times. This discourse is employed in much the same way in both texts.

What is interesting about this analysis is that it shows that, while the FTSB may employ its discourses in an essentialistic manner, so too do the other texts within the order of discourse. In fact, the FTSB is more comprehensive in its argumentation against extremism than the other texts reviewed here.

The social practice analysis applied theories on countering violent extremism in an attempt to say something about the FTSB's impact on the social world. This was done through the analysis of the FTSB as a counter-narrative to extremist ideologies, as well as a discussion of the social institutions which the FTSB takes part in. While no definitive conclusions can be made at this time about whether or not the FTSB has contributed to de-radicalization, it has been shown from the analysis that it has at the very least contributed to the conversation on both a local as well as national and inter-national level. No conclusive evidence has been given to prove that counter-narratives are effective in countering radicalization. However, the use of the FTSB in prison mentoring programs, religious education at public schools, and counter-radicalization seminars involving high-ranking government officials would suggest that it at least is in the right position to do so.

The question should be asked however, is that the hopeful outcome? The FTSB presents a peace loving and harmonious view of Islam that condemns violence and terrorism. This is not a bad thing in and of itself. However, it also implies that there is one "correct" interpretation, and even condemns those who disagree with its interpretation of legitimate use of violence to

death and an eternity in Hell. I think it is important to view this through Gregg's comments about the need for a "marketplace of ideas," and how ideological CVE efforts may end up producing the very situations they are trying to eliminate. I agree that a stronger focus should be on teaching how to think, rather than what to think.

## **8.1 Recommendations for further research**

While this research hoped to in some way discover if the FTSB has made a difference in the lives of those who have read it or used it in some way, I have had to be content with a more theoretical approach, merely describing the possibilities rather than the actualities. In this respect I believe research more concretely dedicated to discovering the actual impact, through interviews and participation, is needed and would contribute greatly in understanding how counter-narratives work in general and how the FTSB has impacted communities specifically.

This research has also concentrated explicitly on the FTSB as a CVE initiative and ignored other avenues of investigations, such as an inter-religious dialogue initiative, or theological work. Both of these avenues of investigation could also prove fruitful. Likewise, an analysis of the FTSB in connection to other works within the counter-extremism order of discourse written by Qadri, such as *Islamic Curriculum on Peace & Counter-Terrorism* may provide a better understanding of Qadri's standpoint.

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