

ISLAMIC EXTREMISM: CAUSES, CHARACTERISTICS, DIVERSITY, AND CHALLENGES

INTRODUCTION

Al-Qaeda, Abu Sayyaf, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab, ISIS, Khorasan, Al-Nusra, the list continues! History has always seen one religious extremist group or another coming up. However, there is something that is particular about Islamic extremism as we see it today: the proliferation of militant extremist groups and their capacity to do harm is unprecedented. While it is true that the means of doing harm are more sophisticated than in centuries past¹ the question is : how do we understand this phenomenon; not just the phenomenon of extremist Islam in general, but its resurgence with a force not seen before?

We have to admit that it is we who name certain groups or trends of Islam as "extremists". It is important to ask ourselves how a so-called extremist Muslim understands himself? There is great likelihood that what the infidel calls "extremism" is just total submission in the proper sense of the word. It is purely ISLAM. And the moderates? The so called extremist sees the so called moderates as half-baked Muslims, people who need help to become better Muslims or else face the sort reserved for the infidels.

Given that the world's increasing awareness of the reality of Islamic extremism has come mainly through the terrorist attacks and wars waged against governments by extremist groups, our reflection on the above theme will dwell mainly on modern Islamic extremism, this without denying the fact that some roots of this phenomenon go centuries into the history of Islam.

From the onset, some points need clarification: Extremism can be found in other religions and not only in Islam. Secondly, not all extremist groups are armed or terrorist groups. However, Islamic armed groups have always found their driving force in extremist theology and propaganda. Extremist theological and ideological positions have often given birth to extremist armed groups.

Since we are becoming more aware of Islamic extremism through its militancy, our reflection will tend to bend more towards militant extremism than merely theological extremism.

A) SOME OF THE CAUSES OF ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

1. The doctrinal causes of extremism.

A number of gullible commentators have sought to talk of extremism but distancing it from religion. Faced with the atrocities committed by extremist groups but avoiding to hurt feelings, comments have been heard such as this: "What we are seeing belongs to no religion because no religion condones the killing of innocent people". Whatever the case, the history of humanity has shown that while religion has been a motivating force in creating wonderful monuments such as the pyramids, wonderful pieces of art such as the Pietà of Michelangelo, religion has also been a

¹ Note for example how sophisticated a mission was the 11th September bombing of the twin towers.

force behind the human sacrifices of the Aztecs, the burning of heretics and witches during the inquisition and of course, the bombing of the twin towers as well as the kidnapping of hundreds of girls in northern Nigeria.

Islamic extremism, at a doctrinal level can be traced to the distant past, finding some of its seeds in the Kharijite movement, those men who chose to withdraw their support from the Khalif 'Ali for having opted for human arbitration during the first intra-islamic wars. As in modern times although Islamic extremism has come and still comes dressed in different colours with different leaders and sometimes feigning doctrinal difference, there is a common doctrinal denominator which can be traced generally either in Wahhabism or in Salafism. Mention may be made of Shi'a extremist groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon but if taken at an international level, we discover that Sunni (Salafist and Wahhabist) extremism is more notable than any other.

Established in the eighteenth century by ibn Abdul Wahhab, wahhabism remains a doctrinal well from which different extremist movements drink though at different degrees. A number of Islamic scholars in the Islamic world itself contend that religious extremism cannot but be, to a great extent, traced to wahhabism. After the 2002 bombing which claimed more than 180 victims in Bali (Indonesia), an Indonesian writer Yusuf Wanandi had this to say: "Perhaps the most important thing is the ideological struggle against radicalism and terrorism in the name of Islam. Although Muslims in Indonesia are mainly moderate, they need help and assistance in expanding their educational systems which have been so far been able to withstand the extremist influences of wahhabism from Saudi Arabia".²

2. The absence of a forum or space to question doctrine³

Extremism in Islam is closely related to an abiding conflict if not a lack of conjugation between doctrine and faith as a personal experience of God. Looking back at the history of Islam, we note that while being a Muslim was at the beginning⁴ something spontaneous and free to the extent that some collaborators of Muhammad such as Ibn Waraqa remained unconverted, there came a moment (at Medina) when not being a Muslim meant that one was an enemy. According to Malek Chebel, it is at this moment that Muslims lost the freedom to adhere to any faith as may suggest his/her conscience.

From the above, the resulting trend is that anyone who claims to be custodian of doctrinal truth will as well claim power over other believers. What is to be noted is that extremist groups and movements claim, each in its way to be the true custodians of Islam or at least to be the right representatives of the interests of the Islamic community. In other words, it is generally accepted that the truth and validity of doctrine has to be guaranteed by power and control of believers. This helps understand why extremist armed groups will put in the category of unbelievers even those Muslims who do not hold their own doctrine.

Put in other words, extremism is fruit of the fact that what is acclaimed as orthodoxy especially by the extremists themselves cannot be questioned or debated. This is, as noted already, aggravated by the fact that those who claim to be custodians of orthodoxy reserve themselves a God-given mandate to control believers and annihilate whoever is judged an enemy of religion.

² DORE GOLD, *Hatred's Kingdom*, Regnery Publishing, Inc, 2003, p.5.

³ Cf. MALEK CHEBEL, *L'Islam et la raison: Le combat des idées*, Ed. Perrin, 2005, p.17

⁴ Here we refer mainly to the first Mecca period; that is, before Muhammad possessed political power.

3. Modern historical factors

While it is possible to delve into the causes of extremism right from the first days of Islam, here we note what has come out in modern history as historical factors which have contributed (not solely) in one way or another to Islamic extremism.

It must be noted that the abolishing of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 and the founding of the Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Ataturk was a turning point in the history of Islam and also in the sentiments of many a Muslim. Having suffered the shame of seeing many Muslim territories colonized by infidels, the disappearance of the caliphate was the last thing that many Muslims would have expected. This resulted in nostalgia for the "good old days" when Islam manifested its power and dominance. This situation, for many Muslims had to be reversed in a way or another. In fact, many extremist groups have had as one of their main objectives to reestablish the Caliphate, a political space where only Islam rules and commands; a place where a powerful Islam can be seen. Boko Haram in Nigeria and The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria are doing just that.

Between the years 1968 and 1979, when many states were basking in the post-colonial sun, many Arabic states tried and failed to establish democratic states. Failure to establish democratic institutions led to the growth of Islamic-nationalist groups. Secondly, the war between Israel and Arabs was going on. This was also the moment when groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Al-Fatah appeared on the scene. As Palestinian groups, which borrowed not a few things from other revolutionary movements especially in Latin America carried on their struggle through kidnappings and hi-jacking, they became models for other movements in the region.

While it can be argued that Palestinian groups were not motivated by doctrinal reasons as such, other religiously motivated groups learnt much from the former. With time, these religiously motivated groups established themselves strongly in different countries and got financial support from conservative Islamic regimes such as Saudi Arabia to counter nationalist movements.

The years between 1979 and 1991 were marked by, among other things, two events which will later have a great influence on militant extremism. We have, in 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Islamic revolution of Iran. The anti-soviet war in Afghanistan for which many fighters were trained by USA and Western powers, provided not only the basis for what we can name the modern "mujahideen culture" but also a good number of well trained men who became key fighters in subsequent armed groups such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Volunteers for the anti-soviet war in Afghanistan had been from many origins and played roles in setting up armed groups in other parts of the world such as North Africa, Chechnya, Philippines, etc.

As for the Iranian revolution, though Iran is, by doctrine, an enemy of Sunni Islam, the anti-western propaganda (from Iran) found its way in the mind of many Sunni extremist groups.

4. Geopolitics and the ignorance of western powers

A close look at modern geopolitical forces behind conflicts in the modern world cannot exclude the case we are treating. In other words, while we can talk of dormant extremism in some cases, we can as well mention that certain foreign political powers have fueled extremism. An example is that of the birth of the Taliban. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan had to be countered by the Americans by training young zealous people into a force which the Soviets had to reckon with.

However, although the "young theology students" needed arms and training, their religious zeal was more of a determining factor in the war than the arsenal of arms received from the Americans. After the departure of the Soviets from Afghanistan, the students were to become (later) a real problem for their western masters.

In the recent Arab spring that saw the toppling of Mubarak of Egypt, Hilary Clinton, the secretary of State of the USA expressed readiness to work with the Muslim Brothers. USA has continued to despise the current Egyptian government for they still recognize Morsi (a Muslim Brother) as the rightfully elected president.

While Assad of Syria is fighting for his survival, the forces fighting him, which are of diverse extremist tendencies, have received much material and moral support from Western countries. In the same way, USA and western governments have continued to maintain political correctness by not talking of the help extremist groups are having from some Arabic countries. In fact, while Saudi Arabia and Qatar are major American allies, they stand as a main source of finances for extremist movements.⁵

Successive American presidents have always tried to be politically correct by talking of Islamic extremism as a reality that is at the periphery of true Islam. While doing so, they have, at the same time portrayed a certain degree of ignorance about the subject of their talk. At a recent conference of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) which was held in Detroit, Jimmy Carter (former president of the USA) assured the gathering that "The principles of Allah are there to bring peace and justice to all". What he did not know is that "peace and justice" for an Islamic extremist is not what it is for an American. Following the extremist way of understanding, you can only talk of peace and justice for all when "all" have embraced Islam and the sharia.

The ignorance of western powers is what prevented them to foresee the danger which lay behind extremist groups taking power during the so called Arab spring. As NATO jet fighters helped in smoking out the forces of Muammar Gaddafi, they contributed, at the same time to the confusion in Libya and worse, to the expansion of the influence of Al-Qaeda in North Africa.

B) CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

Islamic extremism is characterized by a certain diversity between groups; however, there are certain things which run through all these groups like common denominators. These common characteristics are mainly based on theological orientation, political or social objectives and others. Here we point out some of those general characteristics which are common to most of the extremist groups.

1. A strictly literal interpretation of the Qur'an

The Qur'an, believed to be the revealed word of God has to be taken as literally as possible. Obedience to God is to be measured, among other things, by the strict observance of the letters of the Qur'an. However, a question may rise as to why extremists do not take literally those

⁵ Cf. DORE GOLD, *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia supports the new global terrorism*, Regnery Publishing, Inc, 19

verses which seem to promote openness to Christians. An example of such verses is : "Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians.... whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor shall they grieve" (2:62).

Among the issues about which Muslim theologians have no unanimous position is the exegetical approach to the text of the Qur'an. What can be said as far as extremist groups are concerned is that they follow the dominant exegetical trend which gives priority to a verse "revealed" at a later date in cases where there are two apparently conflicting verses. In other words, later verses abrogate earlier verses.⁶ Given that verses which carry a degree of violence and exclusiveness are generally "late comers", the Islamic extremist naturally gives priority to these than to any other.

Noteworthy is the fact that not all extremist individuals have the ability to read a verse in relationship with another. If we are to speak of an extremist exegesis, this is founded, usually, on an individual or a few individual self-styled scholars who come out stressing the importance of certain verses without reading the others. No wonder that extremism is fueled mainly by Friday homilies, publications of individual spiritual leaders and in our days, extremist media. The problem has to be looked at in terms of the inability of many individuals (in Islam) to read the text objectively by themselves and have a personal way of living according to it. It is the problem of a space where people can debate freely about exegetical issues.

2. The stress on the Jihad.

Although not all extremist groups are militant groups and although differences can be traced between extremist movements and organizations, the jihad is one of those realities which are stressed by all.

From Arabic **j-h-d** meaning to endeavor, strive or labour; the term is commonly used to refer to a struggle. Although struggle can be of many forms (spiritual, economical, political) extremist ideologists have tended to use the term *jihad* for war against all un-Islamic individuals, societies and systems. While advocates of a "moderate Islam" argue that 'Jihad' is more of a spiritual struggle than a physical one, a number of historians agree that the concept has been greatly used to refer to that duty which is of every Muslim believer, to take action against infidels or non believers whether these are individuals, governments or social structures.

One of the most notable ideologists of Islamic extremism, the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb who is also a pillar in the pantheon of the Muslim Brothers put the Jihad as the most important duty of a Muslim after faith in God and belief in God's being one (*tawhid*). Usama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahri and other leaders of Al-Qaeda affiliated movements have preached the importance of the jihad as the only way to defend Muslims and also to raise the banner of Islam in all parts of the world.

According to Islamic extremist ideologists, the concept of the *jihad* implies seeing the world as divided into two: the believers and the infidels; the Muslims and their enemies. With this division, there is a conflict of forces which are competing to dominate the world. As long as

⁶ Technically referred to as "*al-nasikh w-al-manusukh*"

Islam and the Sharia have not covered the whole extent of planet earth, the world is in a state of war and the jihad is a duty for all believers.

3. Failure to have an objective reading of history

Extremist groups of all religions have always had a bad relationship with history. Objectivity lacks as they bend history to serve their own ideology. Just as some Christian extremists find nothing worth calling Christianity between the death of the last Apostle and the Reformation, Islamic extremist groups see "unbelief" or *jahliyya* anywhere between themselves and the so called "well-guided Khalifs".⁷ They thus have the mission to bring about an era of belief or faith which was lost centuries ago.

Another way of reading history upside down is the insistence on a "golden age" of Islam during the time of the first Khalifs. Extremist groups teach a time (past) of pure Islam and a perfect society. They fail to admit that the so called "golden age" was also a time of infighting between different factions of Islam. In fact, three of the four first Khalifs did not die a natural death, they were assassinated.

Islamic extremism writes history in such a way that Islam has always been a victim; victim of the crusades, victim of colonialism, victim of imperialism. Muslim historians, extremists or non extremists fail to admit that if Islamic invasions went as far as Spain, it was not in defense of Islam but for expansionist motives. They never write about the injustices committed by Arabic Muslim slave traders on the African continent.

4. Conspiracy theories

Islamic extremism, like other forms of extremism, has the tendency of holding conspiracy theories which are created and promoted to boost its propaganda thus appealing to the sympathy of the masses. An example of such theories is the one so dear to Usama Bin Laden: the crusade. Bin Laden and many Muslims have held, as pure truth, the fact that the West/USA is in fact doing nothing other than continuing from where the crusaders of the middle ages stopped. Western powers and their allies, according to the theory, are enemies of Islam and have a secret plot to wipe Islam from the face of the earth.

Given the fact that the dominant Arab-Islamic mindset is not famous for critical thinking, conspiracy theories which pity the West against Islam and Muslims have been so effective to the extent that even thousands of western Muslims have joined the ranks of Islamic extremist fighters in the war against western powers and their allies.

C) DIVERSITY OF EXTREMISTMOVEMENTS

Islamic extremism shows many faces as represented by the many and different groups of extremist orientation. The question is how do we understand this multiplicity of groups and their diversity? The diversity of extremist groups can be understood basing mainly on their ideological orientation and the political or geopolitical goals.

⁷ The last of the four "well guided Khalifs" was 'Ali who died in 661 AD.

i) Ideological/theological orientation

We have already affirmed that Islamic extremism is not a monolithic reality. Different theological orientations, for example, have given different theological motivations. Iraq has been and is a case that gives much light on the issue. While there is a clear war between the government and the rebels, there is also a war between the different groups mainly those of Shi'a orientation fighting against those of Sunni orientation. At present, while groups under the umbrella of the "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria" are Sunni, others such as Kataib Hezbollah (Hezbollah brigades) and Promised day Brigades are of Shi'a orientation.

Ideological and theological orientation often define and determine the source of funding. Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been very active in funding Sunni extremist groups while Iran has been the main source of funding and support for Shi'a extremist groups.

ii) Political/geo-political vision

While all extremists share the belief of a future world ruled and dominated by Islam, their respective political visions, for the present, may differ. A number of extremist groups (such as Boko Haram of Nigeria, Allied defense forces of Uganda and others) are endeavoring to establish in a definite geographical place, a strictly Islamic state ruled by the Sharia. Other groups such as Al-Qaeda are having an approach which is international or transnational.

What has been noted in recent years is that sometimes, groups with a locally limited political vision are a product of bigger extremist organizations with an international or transnational vision. As a principle, there is no contradiction between groups in this area.

D) CHALLENGES LINKED TO ISLAMIC EXTREMISM

1. Security

After the 11th September bombing of the twin towers, the world has become extra security conscious. This can be noted in airports, train stations and other places. Security has become an issue in countries which have armed Islamic extremist groups. Such is the case for Kenya, Uganda, Egypt, Nigeria and others. Even in countries where there are no guerilla groups, small so called "terrorist cells" are a security threat. European countries are faced with this reality especially in France, Great Britain and Germany.

Kidnapping and piracy have become important sources of income for armed extremist groups. This has led to certain parts of the world to be marked in 'red' as far as security is concerned.

2. Displacement of populations

With the upsurge of operations carried out by the Boko Haram in Nigeria, the number of internally displaced people (in Nigeria) is estimated to be 650,000. As for the war carried out by ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the number of refugees is believed to have reached 1500,000. The same trend can be traced elsewhere.

Displacement of large numbers of people due to violent attacks by extremist groups has this in particular: Some of the displaced especially in Iraq are minority communities (Christians and Yazidis) whose future existence is in balance.

3. Social disintegration and alienation

This is a phenomenon which goes beyond a displacement of populations. Certain populations have lived together regardless of their religious differences. With religious extremism, marked by a clear discrimination of non-Muslims (for example in "salafi" Islam), people who were once good neighbours begin to be suspicious of each other. This is the case in Zanzibar, Iraq, Pakistan and other countries where extremism has drawn a wedge between Christian and Muslim communities.

In Africa, where the extended family is still an important social institution, a new phenomenon is appearing: people who were once joined by family ties become like they are unrelated. The *salafis* are supposed to limit their contacts with infidels even if they are of their kin. Cultural celebrations such as last funeral rites are not allowed by salafists and they have to avoid such gatherings.

Social cohesion goes hand in hand with certain aspects of culture such as the way people present themselves in public. Extremist Muslims are introducing something that is culturally alienating and this is the strict exclusion of women from the public. This is done by the adoption of the **Burka** (Afghan type of Islamic dress which covers the whole body of the woman allowing her to see through a net) or the complete veil (Saudi style crudely referred to as 'Ninja style') which leaves just a small opening for the eyes. In an African setting, there are realities which shock!

4. Loss of cultural heritage and treasures

The world remained dumbfounded in 2001 when the Taliban destroyed the 1700-year old Budha statues in Afghanistan. The reality has been the same where the fighters of the Islamic State have passed. Monuments treasured by Sufi Muslims have been razed to the ground not to speak of monasteries which have been ransacked. At the moment when the Muslim Brothers took power in Egypt, there were fears (never materialized) that the pyramids would be destroyed.

Beyond ravaging monuments and manuscripts (as it happened in Mali), extremists have also been unfriendly with certain cultural treasures such as traditional dances, music, theatre and games. Brief, Islamic extremism has been, in modern times, one of the greatest forces against culture and civilization.

5. Economic challenges

Given the fact that economic growth is closely linked with security, it is to be noted that certain countries have seen their economies crumble due to the activities of economic extremists. Kenya, Egypt, Yemen and Nigeria are some of the countries whose tourist industries have been greatly affected.

While the effects of extremism on economies can be looked at from the point of view of security, another area is worth mentioning: freedom. Where extremists have tried to impose strict sharia law, it is evident that the result has been a drop in tourists.

6. Growing adherence to extremism

Extremism breeds extremism! It is to be admitted that at least for the moment, Islamic extremism is reminiscent of the legendary ten-headed hydra. When one head is cut off, another one sprouts. As successive governments continue to declare war on extremism, what is observed is that it is on the increase.

Islamic extremism is not only a phenomenon in predominantly Islamic countries. It is sweeping away, slowly but surely, that culture of freedom and liberty of which countries such as France used to be proud of. What we have to note here is that countries or societies which are well known for their being secular societies are slowly being radicalized. A few cases below are indicative of this trend:⁸

i) France: At a moment when it is estimated that militant extremists in Syria and Iraq have recruited at least 3,000 Europeans, 1,000 of these are French nationals.

ii) Pakistan: After the killing of Osama Bin Laden, the Gilani Foundation did a poll of Pakistanis and found that 51% of them grieved for the terrorist mastermind, with 44% of them stating that he was a martyr.

iii) Egypt: As of 2009, 87% of Egyptians said they agreed with the goals of Al Qaeda in forcing the US to withdraw forces from the Middle East. 65% said they wanted strict sharia law in every Islamic country. As of that same date, 69% of Egyptians said they had either positive or mixed feelings about Osama Bin Laden. In 2010, 95% of Egyptians said it was good that Islam is playing a major role in politics.

iii) United States: A 2013 poll showed that 13% of American Muslims said that violence against civilians is often, sometimes or rarely justified to defend Islam. A 2011 poll showed that 21 percent of Muslims are concerned about extremism among Muslim Americans. 19 percent of American Muslims as of 2011 said they were either favorable toward Al-Qaeda or didn't know.

⁸ BEN SHAPIRO, "The myth of the tiny radical Muslim minority" (art), www.breitbart.com, 14th Sept 2014.

What can be deduced from the above is that talking of "a tiny radical Muslim minority" or saying that "Islamic extremists are not representative of Islam" is to ignore the fact that extremism is not reducing but increasing. At local levels, and this has to be taken note of with seriousness, there are always a more increasing number of Madrassas or Qur'anic schools which are doing no more than sowing in small Muslims the seed of extremism. It is usually from these strict Qur'anic schools that we have the young fighters or *mujahdeen*.

CONCLUSION

The Church has endeavored and is still endeavoring to engage in dialogue with all religions, Islam included. When it comes to extremist groups, we have to admit that there is no space for real dialogue. Otherwise, if Christian communities in Iraq and Syria are being decimated, it is not due to lack of Christians specialized in interreligious dialogue.

Whatever the case, the question remains: What is there to be done at the level of the Church and its Institutions in order to counter Islamic extremism. Here I propose some avenues open to discussion and debate:

1. A good knowledge of Islam should not be limited to those who work in Islamic countries. It is high time a serious study of Islam was included in the Seminary curriculum. It is disingenuous enough to think that Islam is an issue for Islamic countries. A decade ago, no one knew that militant Islamic extremism would be an issue in countries such as Kenya and Uganda.
2. Christians in so called developed countries (especially in Europe) should be taught to come out and speak for their brothers and sisters who are victims of extremism. This is almost in the category of wishful thinking for the reason that the West has lost the Christian spirit that would influence politicians and governments to act in defense of the rights of minority communities such as the Christians in Iraq.
3. Christians especially in sub-Saharan countries should be encouraged to be more active in politics and policy making. While Christians are the majority in a number of countries, their weight is seldom felt when it comes to policy making. An example is the parliament in Uganda. The marriage bill which was to render polygamy illegal has been shelved due to the strong opposition from the caucus of Muslim members of parliament. The cafeteria of the same parliament, since some years, stopped preparing pork due to the stand of radical members of parliament. At present, a bill is in parliament to allow Sharia courts for Muslims and talk is rife to establish Islamic banking in Uganda. These sound like non issues as far as extremism is concerned. However, they prepare ground for a society where Islam commands and rules. One cannot but ask: Where are Christian politicians and how does their Christianity affect their participation in the august house?

B:Some names of militant Islamic extremist groups⁹

1. AL-QAEDA (The base/foundation): Established by Usama Bin Laden in the early 1990s. Its principle aim is to reestablish the Muslim State and to expand it world-wide. Offshoots of Al-Qaeda can be traced in many parts of the world. These include *Ansar al-Sharia* operating in Libya, *Ansar Beit al-Maqdis*, operating in Egypt, The Nusra Front (operating in Syria), *Jund-al Khilafa* (operating in Algeria) and the so called 'Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb' which is becoming an umbrella of a number of groups.
2. JAMA'AT AL-ISLAMIYYA: An Egyptian militant group. Remembered for the 1997 massacre at Luxor of 62 people of whom 58 were tourists.
3. THE EGYPTIAN ISLAMIC JIHAD: An Egyptian group which dates back to the 1970s. It is likely to have been formed by members of the Muslim Brothers who felt these latter were too soft to bring about an Islamic government. The group has become closely linked with Al-Qaeda.
4. THE HARAKAT AL-MUJAHDEEN: A Pakistani group operating mainly in Kashmir.
5. LASHKAR-TAIBA: Another Pakistani group which is the armed wing of an organization called "*Markaz al-da'wa wal-irshad*". The group is very anti-USA.
6. ALLIED DEFENCE FORCE (ADF): A Ugandan armed group closely linked with Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabab. It has its base in the forests of DRC. Its recruitment is mainly from Islamic schools of Uganda and the many unemployed Muslim youth.
7. AL-SHABAB: Militant group in Somalia which is affiliated to Al-Qaeda. While its operations were at first limited to the Somali territory, they now go beyond the Somali borders targeting especially those countries which are helping in the establishing of a government in Somalia. Kenya and Uganda have an sour experience of what Al-Shabab can accomplish.
9. BOKO HARAM (Western education is outlawed): Armed extremist group operating in Nigeria. Its activity has rendered insecure parts of Cameroon and Tchad.
10. ABU SAYYAF ('Father of the sword smith'): Filipino armed group fighting for independence of islands in the South of the country and the establishment of an Islamic state.
11. JEMAAH ISLAMIYYA: An Indonesian militant extremist group formed in the early 1990s. Its aim is to establish an Islamic state which will cover Indonesia, Southern Thailand, Brunei, Singapore, Southern Philippines and Malaysia. The groups is remembered for the bombing in Bali (2002) in which about 201 people died.
12. ARMED ISLAMIC GROUP: Operates in Algeria since 1992. It was formed mainly by veterans of the anti-soviet war in Afghanistan.
13. ADEN-ABYAN ISLAMIC ARMY: Closely affiliated to Al-Qaeda but operating in Yemen.

⁹ No order is followed

14. KHORASAN: A group of former Al-Qaeda fighters but based in Syria. They are very experienced in combat and suicide attacks. They are mainly from Afghanistan and Pakistan.
15. THE ISLAMIC STATE IN IRAQ AND SYRIA: made up of Al-Qaeda elements together with Sunni fighters of the defunct army of Saddam Hussein. They are pushing for a Caliphate which has already been proclaimed.
16. UAMSHO: A religious movement in Zanzibar registered as a nongovernmental organization. It aims at making Zanzibar secede from mainland Tanganyika. However, the extremist characteristics of this organization have made it suspect number one in the burning of churches and attacking Christian institutions on the island.
17. THE MOMBASA REPUBLICAN COUNCIL. A Kenyan group which is carrying out a campaign for the seceding of Mombasa(as an Islamic state) from Kenya. The group is suspected of having close links with the Al-Shabab of Somalia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABOU ZEID NASR, Critique du discours religieux, Ed. Sinbad, 1999.
- CHEBEL MALEK, Le sujet en Islam, Seuil, 2002.
- CHEBEL MALEK, L'Islam et la raison: Le Combat des idées, Ed. Perrin, 2005
- DELONG-BAS NATANA J., Wahbi Islam: From revival and reform to global Jihad, American University in Cairo, 2004.
- HOWARD DAMIAN Sj, "*Grim parody of a golden age*" in Tablet Magazine, 23th August 2014, ps.4-5.
- GELLES MICHAEL (and others), " The Fundamentals of Islamic extremism", <https://info.publicintelligence>, NCIS (Naval Criminal Investigative Service).
- GOLD DORE, Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia supports the new global terrorism, Regnery Publishing Inc, 2003.
- SHAPIRO BEN, "*The myth of the tiny radical Muslim minority*", www.breitbart.com, 14th Sept 2014.
- TIBENDERANA KAZENGA P., Islamic Fundamentalism: The quest for the rights of Muslims in Uganda, Fountain Publishers, Uganda, 2006.