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THE MULTIPLE NATURE OF THE ISLAMIC *DA'WA*

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be publicly discussed, by due permission of the Faculty of Arts
at the University of Helsinki in auditorium XII,
Unioninkatu 34, on the 23rd of October, 2004 at 10 o'clock

ISBN 952-10-0489-4 (printed)
ISBN 952-10-0490-8 (pdf)

ISSN 1458-5359

Valopaino Oy
Helsinki 2004

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INTRODUCTION

The word "*da'wa*" (Arabic دعوة) is basic to a study of Islam. The word commonly appears in the Quran, its commentaries, classical Muslim texts, and contemporary theological or ideological texts, written and spoken. Through mass media and other channels of communication, even non-academic non-Muslims are increasingly familiar with the term and its diverse connotations.

Muslims have known and used the word "*da'wa*" throughout the history of Islam. The multiple perceptions, as it will be shown in this study, of what *da'wa* means have been elaborated upon since the early centuries of Islam. Muslims have applied the term to various specific activities of theirs. The broadly known explanation in Europe and North America for *da'wa* is that it constitutes activities which, in the Christian context, fall under the terms 'missions' or 'missionary activities'. Virtually all students of Islam, as well as Muslims themselves, acknowledge that Islam *is* a missionary religion. Indeed, Islam fits the definition of a missionary religion provided by Max Müller in 1873. According to Müller, a missionary religion is one "in which the spreading of the truth and the conversion of unbelievers are raised to the rank of a sacred duty by the founder or his immediate successors" (Arnold: 1). This is the case of Islam, for Muhammad's very life constituted this sacred duty Müller speaks of. The question, though, remains whether this sacred duty extends, and in what capacity, to Muhammad's followers.

Peter Heine argues that, from a historical perspective, "the Islamic mission" was composed of two consecutive phases. The first was the spreading of Muslim supremacy through conquest, which Heine identifies with jihad. The second, to supplant the first once conquests ceased, was missionary activities, which themselves were born of a reaction to Christian missionary activities in Muslim lands, with only marginal Muslim quasi-missionary activities carried out by traders taking place between the two phases (Heine, 2: 527). Though Heine correctly points to the relation between jihad and missionary activities of Muslims, his presentation of *da'wa* development is oversimplified. First of all, Heine underestimates Quranic pronouncements regarding missionary activities. Secondly, his portrayal of *da'wa*

ignores the fact that Muslims employed *da'wa* as much toward fellow Muslims as to non-Muslims. Thirdly, peaceful "non-jihadic" *da'wa* was practiced by Muslims as early as the 9th and 10th centuries.

Recently, moreover, there has been much discussion whether *da'wa* at all can be rendered as "missionary activity," for it is argued by some Muslims as well as non-Muslim scholars that *da'wa* distinctly differs from what, in the Christian tradition, missions have encompassed. (*Christian Mission*, 1982) Among other things, it is pointed out that *da'wa* has, at least until quite recently, lacked authoritative centralized institutions such as Christian missions had. Frequently, Christian missions are seen by Muslims (and not only them) as a tool of imperialism and colonialism, something the Islamic *da'wa* arguably has never been. Therefore, it has been argued that since the relation between the two is a highly dense issue, though the ultimate aim of both the Islamic *da'wa* and Christian missions has been spreading of the message of their respective faith and subsequent conversion of people to that faith, it is only with caution that terms like "missionary activity," "missionaries" and similar can be applied to denote the Islamic *da'wa* and those engaged in it.

Kate Zebiri approaches *da'wa* from a completely opposite perspective as Heine does. She holds that "while in the past *da'wah* has most often been directed at lax or heterodox Muslims, it now increasingly targets non-Muslims, especially in the Western context." (Zebiri, 1997: 29) This observation is only partially true – Muslims have since long been practicing *da'wa* toward non-Muslims, though, it is true, their efforts have not always been concerted or institutionalized. The fourteen-centuries-long history of *da'wa* has been much more multifaceted than Zebiri seems to imply. First of all, the Islamic *da'wa* was first formulated as a principle of inviting non-Muslims to embrace Islam; this is how it is found in the Quran. Soon afterwards, however, it became a key term for forming organized sectarian structures for propagation of tenets of given parties (e.g., 'Abbasid *da'wa*) and sects (e.g., Fatimid Isma'ili *da'wa*) within the Muslim *Umma*.[1] In the Middle Ages, Muslim missionary activities towards non-Muslims proliferated beyond the borders of the Muslim world (especially the Sufi kind in Africa and South East Asia). Although the specific term "*da'wa*" was not always used, it was, however, used as a term denoting religio-political ideology of separate Muslim groups. And only in recent history, much in

[1] I use the term *Umma* in accordance with the Islamic tradition, which holds that all Muslims make an exclusive entity, called *Umma*. Though many Muslims themselves have questioned the existence of such an entity in the history of Islam, I abstain from discussion of the ideal versus the historic *Umma* and use the word rather as a generic term.

connection with revivalist movements in the Muslim countries and as a reaction to Christian missions of the 19th century, *da'wa* (the term itself and the various activities it denotes) became associated with duty of concerned Muslims to call back fellow believers to the true path of God from which they are seen to have gone astray (such as Salafi *da'wa*, or *da'wa* of the *Tablighi Jama'at*). Currently, Muslim missionary efforts once again are being turned toward winning converts to Islam, while the "calling back" of fellow Muslims has not ceased either.

One has to make a distinction between the term "*da'wa*" and the actual missionary/proselytizing efforts of Muslims. The term encompasses more than 'missionary/proselytizing' activity.[2] In the religious domain, it can mean prayer, while it also can refer to rather mundane activities, like addressing and calling. The missionary/ proselytizing activities of Muslims have not always been wrapped in *da'wa* terminology. In fact, in many instances, the very term was not employed. This, however, did not make the efforts less missionary/proselytizing. Therefore, though there is a direct connection between the two, none fully falls within the other. Moreover, Zebiri correctly implies a distinction between two sets of activities, both in the course of history characterized as *da'wa*. The first set is what in this study will be called "extra-*ummaic da'wa*," and the second "intra-*ummaic da'wa*"[3] The difference between the two lies as much in addressee as in motivation, contents, and methodology, which inevitably are circumscribed by the former. The extra-*ummaic da'wa* sees as its addressee non-Muslims (recent converts could also be included in this category), while the intra-*ummaic da'wa* confines itself to Muslims.[4]

Since jihad by at least some Muslim activists is related to *da'wa*, a deeper look into the relation between *da'wa* and jihad is made in the present study. However, the concept of jihad is in itself a complex one, over which Muslims have been arguing as long as over *da'wa*. There are differing, and at times radically, opinions as to what the concept of jihad implies and calls for. Depending on the definition of jihad, its relation to *da'wa* is determined accordingly. Thus, to some Muslim activists, jihad as

[2] One can also make a distinction between "mission" and "proselytism." Christians, taking part in Christian-Muslim dialogue, have been making this distinction – while proselytism is tied to coerciveness and thus regarded unacceptable, mission as sharing one's faith is marked with a positive sign.

[3] Abedin distinguishes three as he calls "aspects" of *da'wa*: the "inner-directed" (within one's self), "interactive" (addressed toward fellow Muslims), and other-directed (addressed to non-Muslims). (Abedin, 1989: 46–47).

[4] al-Mu'taz makes a clear distinction between the intra and extra-*ummaic* forms of *da'wa*: he calls the extra-*ummaic da'wa* "the grounding *da'wa* (دعوة تأسيس)" and the intra-*ummaic da'wa* "the *da'wa* of renewal and correction (دعوة تجديد وتحصيص)" (al-Mu'taz, 2002: 18). Mendel goes so far as to suggest that "*da'wa* has become a synonymum [*sic*] of *Umma*" (Mendel, 1995: 289).

a peaceful effort adds to *da'wa*, whereas for those who perceive jihad as a physical struggle, it might substitute for *da'wa*.

Though *da'wa* has been known and vastly employed by Muslims throughout the Islamic history, *da'wa* as an institutionalized and organized missionary activity for converting non-Muslims (or for bringing back of "lax and heterodox" Muslims, to use Zebiri's expression) to Islam is indeed a recent phenomenon. Fatimid Isma'ili *da'wa* could be considered a prototype of contemporary *da'wa* due to its having been highly institutionalized and bureaucratized in the Fatimid state of Egypt (and later in Alamut). However, as it is shown in Chapter 7, the contents, means and objectives of the Fatimid *da'wa* differed radically from those of the contemporary *da'wa*. Thomas W. Arnold, writing at the turn of the 20th century, noticed that "the formation of societies carrying on propaganda in an organized and systematic manner is a recent development in the missionary history of Islam." (Arnold: 443) The institutionalization of contemporary *da'wa* developed in great part (though not exclusively) in reaction to Christian missions of the 19th century, influencing the Muslim perception of missionary activity in general, and of *da'wa* in particular. This study touches upon the possible impact of Christian missions on *da'wa* development.

The second half of the 20th century has been marked by an ever increasing scope of Muslim missionary activities, ranging from publications, tapes and public seminars to preaching, in mosques and on street corners. Until recently (to be sure, it has continued to the present), a face-to-face meeting was an inevitable initial step in a mission. Those seeking deeper knowledge of Islam and having thoughts of converting to it had to turn to people spreading that knowledge, something that basically meant physically contacting the missionaries. Likewise, missionaries, in order to have longer and more meaningful discussions, had to look for potential converts in places of gathering or in people's living or working space. Though there are now numerous Islamic missionary institutions in Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia, they were and are still often difficult to reach by travel.

However, in the last decade or so things have been changing radically. Now, one needs not leave his or her home or office in order to contact Muslim missionaries and immediately receive information on Islam, while staying in permanent live contact. The Internet has enabled people to obtain enormous amount of information with the least effort. Answers sought to concrete questions can be obtained almost instantaneously by sending an e-mail message at virtually no cost. Online conferences and discussions on Islam have become common and there abounds information on

both *da'wa* and converting to Islam. In sum, physical contact has been increasingly paralleled by virtual contact. In face of these developments, Muzammil Siddiqi argues that

> Da`wah in this kind of global exchange medium takes on a whole new flavor. It is no longer sufficient to meet on a one-on-one basis: we are talking about mass appeal and an approach to mass communication. Despite this aspect, da`wah remains a communication between hearts and thus the global information technology is only a door for individuals to introduce themselves to other individuals. (Siddiqi, M., 1998a)

The contemporary Muslim missionary activities have not yet been fully appreciated by scholars and students of Islam. The Internet version of the Islamic *da'wa* (in this study I shall call the Internet version of Muslim missionary activities "virtual *da'wa*") has been left outside scholarly analysis altogether.[5] Yet, it is precisely this sort of Muslim missionary activity, which, in my opinion, is getting impetus and in the near future might become a very fruitful enterprise. The present study includes analysis of the Internet sites, which are specifically designed for spreading Islam, to make a fuller picture of the scope of *da'wa* activities in the contemporary world and delineate the tendencies and trends pertaining to these activities.

The number of *da'wa* sites on the Internet must be around one thousand (with the overall number of "Islamic" sites on the Internet running into tens of thousands).[6] These sites serve basically two goals as far as *da'wa* is concerned: one, to help those interested in Islam to get more attractive and welcoming information and, two, to give advice to fellow Muslims on how to conduct *da'wa* and be proper believers. Most of the sites are in English (with a fair number in French and some in German, Malay, Indonesian, Arabic, Urdu, and other languages). Majority of them are manintained in the United States and Great Britain, but there also are those maintained in the Arab/Muslim lands (though generally in English for communicating to the widest set of potential converts, as well as to the newly converted, who have yet to learn Arabic). Most of the sites have a list of publications either on *da'wa* or Islam in general. Some of those publications are distributed freely, whereas others can be purchased online. For those who do not want to wait for hardcopy editions of the

[5] The only semi-scholarly inquiry into virtual *da'wa* I am aware of was made by Shahid Athar. (Athar, 1998: 25).

[6] Search engine like *Google* produces some 15,800 links to sites in which the word *da'wa* in relation to Islam is mentioned. Out of these, 5,560 are in English. In another 29,900 sites word *da'wah* is present, of which 19,100 are in English. However, in majority of those sites *da'wa* is just mentioned in some other context and is not a prioritized subject. (June 14, 2004).

pamphlets, sites abound with online articles on Islam and *da'wa* that can be immediately downloaded locally and/or printed to paper.

The creators of virtual *da'wa* make use of all available advanced communication means and software. One could say that at least some sites maintained by Muslim *da'is* (*da'i*, داعي, means a missionary or propagandist) are above average on the Internet for their technical sophistication. With appropriate software, a visitor to such a site can easily download an audio recitation of the whole Quran, listen to preachers, or watch documentaries. Several Islamic sites have huge databases that can be used by Muslims and students of Islam alike.[7] Additionally, online muftis are at visitor's disposal. The very existence of virtual *da'wa* proves that Muslim missionaries who aim at converting people to Islam (and usually a strict form of it) are not opposed to modern techniques and technologies.[8]

The virtual *da'wa* is mostly intended for European and North American audiences, which the majority of *da'is* consider Christian (even if nominal or secularized). Printed *da'wa* materials also almost exclusively deal with Christianity. However, in appealing to Christians, *da'is*, both in a virtual and physical reality, are posed with a crucial task of how to at once debase Christianity and advance Islam ahead of it. In their approach to Christians, Muslim missionaries employ a vast array of concepts and images of Christianity, Christians, and the so-called Christian cultures. Those images, true and invented, serve the purpose of putting the Christian dogmas, beliefs, traditions, customs, and social practices into opposition to their Islamic polemical counterparts and of conveying these images of Christians and Christianity to fellow Muslims. If *da'wa* activists have any impact on general Muslim audiences, their perceived understanding of Christians could serve as a reference point for common believers, maintaining stereotypical images of Christianity, Christians and their cultures.

What is Christianity? Is it any "worse" than Islam? How? Has it and how failed in the eyes of *da'wa* ideologies? Have modern Christians become un-religious? Is there anything wrong with the present-day social and religious situation of the Christian cultures? What has the secularization done to the Christian world? Is the Christian world doomed if it holds to its perceived un-religiousness? How should Muslims deal with Christians? These and similar questions are being raised by *da'is*, who seem to have ready answers to most of them. Therefore, the issue of how Muslim

[7] For a list of major virtual *da'wa* sites, see Appendix III.
[8] In fact, earlier Muslim *da'is* had employed audiocassettes, video tapes and other contemporary technologies and techniques.

activists engaged in *da'wa* have perceived Christianity and "Christian" cultures of Europe and North America is worth a separate analysis, of course within the whole picture of contemporary *da'wa* activities. In Chapter 6 attention is paid to perception of Christianity and "Western/ Christian" cultures among contemporary Muslim activists pursuing *da'wa*.

Though many *da'is* are concerned with spreading Islam among non-Muslims, large numbers of Islamic "workers," as *da'is* are sometimes called by Muslims themselves, turn their attention to and devote their work to fellow Muslims. *Da'wa* toward fellow Muslims – that is, within the *Umma* – seeks to increase religious awareness among the Muslim masses and induce them to comply with the Islamic injunctions extracted, foremost, from the Quran and Sunna of Muhammad. The ultimate goal of such *da'wa* is to bring about total Islamization of both public and private spheres of the already existing Muslim societies. This can be achieved only through nurturing individual and social Islamicity – a conscious all-embracing commitment to Islam.

Da'wa has always been at least partly political. The relationship of *da'wa* to politics can be studied on two levels: on the level of non-governmental Muslim organizations engaged in *da'wa* and on the level of state-sponsored and -directed activities. Apart from purely religious missionary activities, many *da'wa* organizations and individual *da'is* have been politically engaged. A discussion of the inseparability between the religious-sacred and socio-political-profane realms in Islam is of relevance in the context of *da'wa* analysis: indeed, as the investigations of writings of Muslim activists on *da'wa* reveal, *da'wa* promulgators consciously fuse these two realms into one idealized frame into which they wish to squeeze any and all human activity. Religion and politics thus are effectively made one, with *da'wa* becoming a complex of political activities by way of religion.

On the governmental level, a sort of *da'wa* is being implemented by states in their various socio-cultural and political projects, which this study has generically termed "cultural reislamization." Many Muslim governments (most explicitly the Persian Gulf states, but also Libya, Pakistan, Iran, and the Sudan) have been pursuing reislamization, since the 1970s, through legislation and other means. Though in itself "cultural reislamization" could hardly be equated to *da'wa*, activities of governments pertaining to regulating the Islamicity of citizenry can be studied against the intra-*ummaic da'wa* undertaken by Muslim activists first of all in the Muslim world itself, but also around the world. The inter-relatedness between *da'wa* organizations in one

country and the government of another country is but one of the features of contemporary *da'wa*, attesting to the political aspect of *da'wa*: while one can speak about *da'wa* organization, it is also possible to speak about "*da'wa* states." Saudi Arabia, but also Iran, Libya and several others to a lesser extent, would be the most evident cases of states in which *da'wa* is at least publicly (e.g., formally by governments) "raised to the rank of a sacred duty," to use Müller's definition of a missionary religion. These countries can also be termed "missionary."

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON *DA'WA*

Though research on the Islamic *da'wa* is becoming more and more noticeable, there still are only a handful of studies on the subject by scholars of Islam published so far.[9] Texts dealing specifically with missionary aspects of Islam or at least touching upon them appeared in Europe in the mid-19th century (especially in the journals of Christian missionary societies), though mention of Muslim missionary activities had been made in various texts by European writers well before the 19th century.

The earliest comprehensive study of the Islamic *da'wa* by a non-Muslim scholar available to me is Thomas W. Arnold's *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, the first edition of which was published in 1897. Arnold attempts to present the historical spread of Islam through Muslim missionary work and other peaceful activities. Arguing that Islam is essentially a missionary faith, he traces *da'wa* from its origins in the Quran and Muhammad to his own time. The second (1913) edition even contains a list of Muslim organizations, which Arnold considered to be missionary at the turn of the century. Arnold also provides an extensive list of original literature on Islam as a missionary religion and its spread as such.

Arnold's study is useful in several respects. He gives an insight into forms and methods of Muslim missionary activities in different times and various regions. And he distinguishes between conquests as territorial expansion of the Muslim rule and spreading of Islam as a faith in result of *da'wa* activities. Arnold even gives an appendix on the concept of jihad, in which, unfortunately, he does not elaborate on inter-relatedness between jihad and *da'wa*. Yet, the very fact that such an appendix is provided implies that Arnold saw some relatedness between these two concepts.

[9] In 1991, Yvonne Haddad lamented that there were no studies of the contemporary *da'wa* phenomenon. (Haddad & Esposito & Voll, 1991: 15). The situation has of course improved over the last dozen years.

However, the study has also numerous shortcomings. First, having been written over a century ago, it is outdated for it naturally does not cover the latest phase of development of Muslim missionary activities. Indeed, it is in the 20th century when the scope, methods, techniques and even addressees of *da'wa* changed to a degree, which some argue has essentially transformed the very concept of *da'wa*. Though Arnold realized that the structures of Muslim missionary activities were changing in the time of his writing, he could not have guessed how radically they would transform within a mere 70–80 years. Second, Arnold does not discuss the theoretical level of Muslim missionary activities – he does not make the difference between missionary activities of separate Muslim groups, which at times were warring among themselves. For him, all Muslims represent Islam and their *da'wa* is equally valid, no matter to what brand of Islam it solicits. Such an approach could be taken to imply that Islam is something monolithic and Muslims have stayed united throughout the history, even if only in their missionary activities. The very fact that various Muslim groups used *da'wa* rhetoric and methods on fellow Muslims invalidates such stance. Third, Arnold, by omitting the intra-community *da'wa*, presents only a part of the history of Islamic *da'wa*, narrowing it to Muslim activities directed toward non-Muslims. For Arnold, Isma'ili *da'wa*, for instance, was of interest only inasmuch as it was directed at converting non-Muslims to Islam. Thus, the whole tradition of the Fatimid *da'wa* is but omitted in his study. Though this is not a deficiency within the frame of Arnold's study itself (after all, he was only interested in extra-*ummaic da'wa*), the reader is provided only a partial picture of the otherwise colorful history of *da'wa*. Fourth, another shortcoming is that Arnold tends to portray the Islamic *da'wa* as an activity of almost exclusively individual zealots, be they true religious missionaries or rulers of a given territory. Moreover, Arnold overemphasizes the impact the intermarriage between Muslim males and non-Muslim females had on the spread of Islam in Africa and Asia.

Nevertheless, Arnold's study has been positively referred to by many Muslim propagandists and even scholars, who, though aware that Arnold was a "missionary and colonist," still consider his book to be a fair account of Muslim missionary activities and rely on it.[10] The book, in fact, has been translated into several Middle Eastern languages.

[10] Among them is a rather well-known Syrian Muslim scholar Wahbah al-Zuhayli. (al-Zuhayli, 1981: 66–68).

What Arnold deliberately or accidentally had left outside the scope of his study, Heinz Halm's *The Fatimids and their Traditions of Learning* commissioned by the Institute of Isma'ili Studies (IIS) analyzes in depth. This study, along with several others published by the Institute, makes a core of scholarly research on the Isma'ili *da'wa*. It is praiseworthy that the IIS has undertaken the task of exploring and publishing the history of the Isma'ili *da'wa*. However, there is the danger of bringing certain frames and potential limitations on authors writing for the IIS from the side of the Institute's decision-making bodies, which can easily be susceptible to subjectivity.

Halm's study of the Fatimid *da'wa* is carried out in light of the idealized Isma'ilism. Though this does not necessarily imply that the account of this given period of *da'wa* history is somehow distorted, the reader is left to feel that Halm sides with the Fatimids in their efforts at spreading their faith by openly sympathizing with the Isma'ili cause. This makes one wonder, to what extent Halm is impartial in his writing. After all, Halm is on the Editorial Board of the Isma'ili Texts and Translations Series of the IIS. All this has to be considered while taking into account the uneasiness Sunnis have felt about the Shi'i Isma'ilis.

Notwithstanding the aforesaid, Halm's study gives invaluable insights into not only the Fatimid *da'wa* but also the general development of the Islamic *da'wa*. Halm traces the very beginnings of the Isma'ili Fatimid *da'wa* back to the end of the 8th century and then shows the process of institutionalization of the Fatimid *da'wa* in the Egyptian state founded by them. The usefulness of Halm's arguments lies in the fact that he has been working on original texts, both Isma'ili and non-Isma'ili, for some three decades and has extracted what he considers to be the essence of Isma'ili Fatimid *da'wa*. Still, he himself acknowledges that not much has survived from the original textbooks, handbooks and treatises written by the Isma'ili *da'is* of the time.

Another study worth mentioning is Farhad Daftary's *The Isma'ilis: their History and Doctrines*, also published by the Institute of Isma'ili Studies. Daftary is the leading scholar at the IIS and has published extensively on Isma'ili history. His *The Isma'ilis* does not directly deal with *da'wa*, however. Nonetheless, the study touches upon it in the broader perspective of Isma'ili history. Daftary almost exclusively uses original texts, which lends to the credibility of his account.

A separate mention should be made of the Chambesy Dialogue Consultation, which took place in 1976, the proceedings of which, entitled *Christian Mission and*

Islamic Da'wa, were subsequently published several times.[11] The meeting, which lasted five days, was attended by both prominent Christian and Muslim thinkers and religious authorities, among them, David Kerr, whose input in academic research on *da'wa* is treated further below. Its proceedings reveal the work of both Muslims and Christians to understand each other's missionary activities as much as possible while founding a more solid dialogue between the followers of the two faiths on such issues as the spreading of their respective faiths, conversion, and tolerance. The *Proceedings* are especially useful for presenting the view of contemporary Muslim activists and authorities on the history of the encounter between Muslims and Christians, in general, and of the Islamic *da'wa*, in particular. The present study heavily draws on the *Proceedings*.

Since the *Proceedings* is a collection of presentations and discussions of a number of persons, it naturally lacks a continuous analytical logic and is thus short of conclusions. Its *Statement of the Conference* is more of a political declaration than an expression of ideas of independent thinkers. Notwithstanding this shortcoming, the *Proceedings* is a treasure for students of Islamic *da'wa*.

The already-mentioned David Kerr, who took part in the Chambesy Consultations, is himself a scholarly authority on the Islamic *da'wa*. He has been involved in studies and discussions of *da'wa* for some three decades now. Though he has not published much on *da'wa*, his articles (especially a recent one, Islamic Da'wa and Christian Mission: Towards a Comparative Analysis, in *International Review of Mission*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000, volume 89, no. 353) are full of challenging ideas that make one look at *da'wa* from an ecumenical perspective.

A rather comprehensive attempt to look into the origins and methodologies of contemporary *da'wa* has been made by Larry Poston. Poston's *Islamic Da'wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and Dynamics of Conversion to Islam*, which covers Muslim missionary activities in North America, also gives some profound insights into the general history of *da'wa*. Unfortunately, though his bibliography lists almost a dozen titles in Arabic, he does not seem to have made use of Arabic sources and thus has not grasped the complexity of historical and, more importantly, contemporary *da'wa*, cultivated by numerous Muslim activists today in Arabic writings. This can be excused, however, because Poston concentrates on

[11] The proceedings were first published in the *International Review of Mission*, 1976, vol. LXV, and then in 1982, by the Islamic Foundation of Leicester under the title *Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wa* (Proceedings of the Chambesy Dialogue Consultation).

contemporary *da‘is* primarily residing in the Northern Hemisphere and writing in English or whose writings have been translated into English.

Poston’s study of *da‘wa* depends on his comparing *da‘wa* with the Christian missions. This has both advantages and shortcomings. As has already been pointed out above, many Muslims insist that the Islamic *da‘wa* cannot be compared to Christian missions. On the other hand, certain theoretical frames that can be applied in the analysis of Christian missions can also positively be transferred to the Islamic milieu, even if only because Muslims themselves have practically not studied *da‘wa* from a scholarly perspective and theoretical patterns for study of *da‘wa* are lacking. Despite shortcomings and limitations, Poston’s study remains if not a reference book than at least a source of insights into the analysis of the Islamic *da‘wa*, especially for Muslim missionary activities in North America and, to a lesser extent, in Europe. While Kerr in his writings dwells upon *da‘wa* theology, Poston analyses *da‘wa* methodologies. Thus they complement each other. Both authors are devout Christians.

Finaly, the most recent inquiry into *da‘wa’s* working nature has been conducted by Torsten Janson. His recently published volume, *Your Cradle is Green: the Islamic Foundation and the Call to Islam in Children’s Literature*, on the activities of one of the best known Muslim missionary institutions in Europe, the Islamic Foundation of Leicester, contextualizes Muslim missionary activities of recent decades within the socio-political developments of the Muslim world and host societies, like the British one. More specifically, in his study Janson deals with *da‘wa*’s place overall in Muslim life, and through a case study of children’s materials published and distributed by the Islamic Foundation, he reveals how *da‘wa* works in practice for Muslims in the United Kingdom.

Though the case study itself is revealing, Janson’s study is valuable foremost for its theoretical and methodological approach to the study of *da‘wa*. No one before him has studied *da‘wa* through the perspective of literary critique or discourse analysis. Janson employs what he calls a “genealogical perspective on *da‘wa*” and positions himself within the “‘tradition’ of recent studies that explore the intersections of Islamic terminology and contemporary social experience (and its modes of expression) as synthesised in Muslim discourses” (Janson, 2003: 35). By doing this Janson looks at *da‘wa* as a social phenomenon rather than a theological issue. His focus throughout the study remains within the realm of social reality, thus striping *da‘wa* of almost all theological attributes and rhetoric afforded it by most Muslim

activists themselves. In his book, *da'wa* shifts from an almost sacred activity (as it is perceived by Muslim activists) to a mere profane endeavor.

Use of *da'wa* in children's literature is a totally new phenomenon in *da'wa* history, and it definitely deserves a separate analysis which the present study does not attempt. The portrait drawn by Janson of *da'wa* at work today in a British setting is very compelling. Yet, it reveals just one facet of the multifaceted nature of contemporary *da'wa*. Therefore, an in-depth study, as is Janson's research, is an invaluable addition to a still very thin corpus of research in the academic field of *da'wa* studies.

However, Janson's argument that "today it (*da'wa*) primarily refers to such tendencies: education, information, commercial publication, inter-faith dialogue, charity and, in certain contexts, polemics and proselytising" (Janson, 2003: 55) betrays his perspective on *da'wa* as rather limited. While what he enumerates to constitute the contemporary *da'wa* is correct in the case of the Islamic Foundation, these different activities do not or at least do not explicitly cover the politically motivated intra-*ummaic da'wa* pursued by such organizations as the Muslim Brotherhood and their likes. As will be revealed in this study, *da'wa* among other things has become a political ideology on which programs to restructure Muslim societies and the whole world are built. Moreover, *da'wa's* involvement in violence, exposes a totally different aspect of *da'wa* than that provided by Janson.

Janson also surveys the previous research on *da'wa* and comes to almost identical conclusions to mine through my inquiries into the earlier scholarly contributions in the field. However, Janson is bemused by the absence of published research on *da'wa* between the 11th and 19th centuries. He challenges scholars that "the silence of *da'wa* (between the 11th and 19th centuries – *my insertion*) may partly be 'an academic silence on *da'wa*'" (Janson, 2003: 58). Though I share his wonderment at this, I would not subscribe to Janson's proposed hypothesis. On the other hand, Janson's challenge could be taken as an invitation to explore, and hopefully one day there will be someone to pick up the gauntlet of this challenge.

If studies done on *da'wa* by non-Muslims are easy to come upon, scholarly inquiries into *da'wa* from the Muslim side are hardly available. Though many Muslim scholars have written books on *da'wa*, almost invariably their minds revolve either around somewhat apologetic and propagandist history of *da'wa* during Muhammed or his followers' lifetimes, or the ideologized and heavily politicized *da'wa* of *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, which in these cases is not critically assessed but rather enthusiastically

endorsed. It appears that *da'wa* for Muslims still remains more a practical activity than an object of academic scrutiny. Attempts to examine *da'wa* (both as a missionary activity and a political mission) in scholarly terms have been made so far by just a few Muslim scholars. One of them is Badlihisham Mohammad Nasir, whose article, *An Introduction to the Methodology of Da'wah in Islam*, published in *The Islamic Quaterly*, is of particular interest, not so much for its depth of analysis as for revealing symptoms of Muslim academic writing on *da'wa*. Nasir is a priori convinced that *da'wa* is a must for Muslims; it is a given and evidently simple. By browsing through the Quran he picks verses that supposedly imply, explain, or even command *da'wa* to Muslims. Being a devout Muslim, Nasir, unfortunately looks at *da'wa* very uncritically and rather sticks to a commonly held position on *da'wa* by *da'wa* practitioners themselves. Thus his article becomes a sort of apologetic *da'wa* guide instead of a scholarly examination of it. On the other hand, Nasir's text provides a Muslim view (possibly shared by many) of *da'wa*, which can be studied on its own.

Another Muslim author who has attempted to address *da'wa* on a scholarly level, is Ataullah Siddiqui. His "The Presence of 'Secular' in Christian-Muslim Relations: Reflections on the *Da'wah* 'Mission' and 'Dialogue'" (in O'Mahony, Anthony and Siddiqui, Ataullah (eds.) *Christians and Muslims in the Commonwealth: a Dynamic Role in the Future*), and *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century* are examples of an emerging Muslim scholarship on *da'wa*.

Studies of polemics between Muslims and Christians and, indirectly, the polemics itself contribute to the field of study of Islamic *da'wa*. Such prolific writers as Ahmad Deedat and S.A.H.A. Nadwi, in their writings on Christianity, reveal their specific perceptions of Christianity as a religion as well as those Christian cultures of Europe and North America.

THE LOCATION OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is not a comprehensive history of the Islamic *da'wa* – it was not my objective to cover everything and all pertaining to the rich history of Muslim missionary activities. My aim was much more modest – going through various periods of Muslim (and *da'wa*) history and texts corresponding to those periods, I aimed to show how *da'wa* has gone through different stages and transformed in acquiring not only different methods for missionary activities but has also constantly changed its object from, in my opinion, one extreme to another – either non-Muslims or fellow

Muslims. Secondly, it is the aim of this study to expose the relationship between the politics and the concept of *da'wa* (both in its intra- and extra–*ummaic* forms) as used by Muslims throughout history.

In this study, it is maintained that *da'wa* as activity addressed toward non-Muslims is the primary *da'wa* envisioned in the Quran and Sunna, whereas *da'wa* toward fellow Muslims is a post-Quranic development. The distinction between the two forms of *da'wa* (with possibly three phases of *da'wa* evolution, namely, extra-*ummaic*, sectarian, and orthopractic, that is, turned against popular beliefs and practices of Muslims) brings about a separate approach to the different concepts of *da'wa* and thus different conclusions. The historical, theological and ideological complexity of activities termed "*da'wa*" poses a problem of what should be regarded and studied as *da'wa* and what, even if carrying the label of *da'wa*, should be treated as something else, namely, an ideology or political program (like reislamization, for example). The answer, of course, depends on who gives it – a Fatimid, an orthodox Sunni, a radical Islamist, or a Muslim scholar – the range goes from a common believer to an activist to religious jurist to secular academic. As a non-Muslim, I have no commitments to one or another Muslim point of view and rather have sought to come to independent conclusions free from the biases common to Muslims. Therefore, my findings may not necessarily correspond to Muslim view of the subject under investigation.

The perception that the geographical distribution of *da'wa* bears on its motivation as well as on its actual contents is correct but problematic. Indeed, in different cultural contexts *da'wa* is and works differently, and not only along the extra and intra-*ummaic* lines. Until recently, Islamists distinguished what traditionally has been refered to as the "Muslim world" – countries with predominantly Muslim populations governed at times by only nominal Muslim governments – and the rest of world. The so-called "West" – Europe and North America – would be singled out as the representative of the "non-Muslim world," creating a dichotomy and tension. Even if in the historical perspective this could have been a valid separation, two factors in the past fifty years have been altering the situation decisively – mass migration of Muslims to formerly non-Muslim countries and global, mass communication, especially over the Internet.

The consequence of the first is that with 15 to 20 million Muslims in Europe and 3 to 4 million in North America, and with the numbers ever growing, these two continents can hardly longer be treated as "non-Muslim." The impact of the second is

so pervasive that it almost does not matter any more where ideas and texts are produced – their reach can be instant and global. What matters, however, is the target audience of these ideas and texts. Thus, an intra-*ummaic* text, published somewhere in an Arab country, might find its reader on the shelf of a bookstore in London, Paris or New York. Likewise a *da'wa* related text can be posted on the Internet somewhere in, say, Australia and read in Asia, Europe and Americas. In other words, globalization (in this case, its demographic and communications aspects) has been having an impact on *da'wa* development. Therefore, in the present study a distinction between Muslim countries on the one hand and Europe and North America on the other hand will be maintained only for geographical reasons and not with an intention to distinguish between Muslim activities, namely, the kinds of *da'wa* Muslims are engaged in.

On the other hand, most of Muslims, much along the lines of the *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-harb* dichotomy ("Abode of Islam" and "Abode of War," respectively, and discussed more in detail in Chapter 5), even to the present day perpetuate the distinction between "the Islamic world" (العالم الإسلامي) and "the West." In the contemporary context of the extra-*ummaic da'wa*, it is commonly spoken of in terms of *da'wa* toward Christians, with its geographical location in "the West." Thus, the extra-*ummaic da'wa* can be identified with *da'wa* toward "Westerners." Though by nature *da'wa* is and should be addressed toward any and all non-Muslims, contemporary polemical literature and other *da'wa* literature is predominantly Christian/"Westerner" oriented. The texts in Arabic addressed to *da'is* engaged in extra-*ummaic da'wa* also refer mainly to the so-called Judeo-Christian cultures. Given the long-standing and complex interaction (especially in theology, religion and, of course, mission work) between Christians and Muslims, it becomes more natural that the extra-*ummaic da'wa* is perceived first of all as the Christian-oriented *da'wa*. And this *da'wa* can be carried out most efficiently in the "West" itself, the "West" being North America and the European Union, but also, increasingly, Central and Eastern Europe. This is not to say that there exist no Hindu-, Japanese-, or Chinese-oriented *da'wa* efforts and publications. They are, however, circumscribed by language and geography; i.e., they tend to be limited. Due to language constraints and for practical reasons, this part of contemporary *da'wa* development is omitted in the present study.

Recent development of the inner structures of *da'wa* mirrors that of Islam itself. Both are subject in the contemporary world to objectification, functionalization and commoditization. Throughout the 20th century, Islam, with the Islamic revival, has been codified into a set of rules and regulations, detached from the believer,

placed in front of him, and made into an object of study. Islam became a matter of conscious and reflected choice requiring constant affirmation of commitment – what in this study is called Islamicity. This consequently has led to a search for applications of Islamic rules to society out of an a priori conviction of a chronic spiritual (and therefore social, political, and economic) illness. An inevitable side effect of this process is Islam's becoming a commodity to be marketed. More than anything else *da'wa* – the device intended to spread Islam – shows this trend. One literally can buy *da'wa* products intended for mass consumption – pamphlets, books, audio and video material, and even computer games, some of which are available over the Internet. A more thorough study of Islam's evolution as an object of mass consumption would be worthwhile. However, apart from Janson's insights (Janson 2000; 2003), I have not come across any critical assessment of this phenomenon. In this study, I abstained from going into analysis of this general development in contemporary Islam and rather proceeded to chart the field of one of its integral parts, *da'wa*. However, since *da'wa's* history in a way is a mirror of Islam's history: the objectification, functionalization and commoditization of Islam will be felt thoughout the study.

I see the novelty and value of the present study, first of all, in the conscious distinction between different types of *da'wa*, which are here studied one against the other, something that, to the best of my knowledge, has not previously been done. While a number of brilliant scholars have contributed to the field with studies of one or another aspect of the Islamic *da'wa*, none of them has assayed to relate these different manifestations of *da'wa* to each other. Consequently, no one has yet tried to answer the question of how these diverse forms of *da'wa* correspond to the ideal of *da'wa* envisioned in the Quran and Sunna of Muhammad. Likewise, the question of *da'wa* as a religious missionary activity versus political enterprise had not yet been tackled in any comprehensive manner. I hope that the present study fills in at least some of the gaps and answers some of the questions, quite possibly raising many other questions for subsequent inquiries into the history of the development of the *da'wa* concept.

The sources of this study are several. First, there are the primary texts no serious analysis of historical and contemporary Muslim religious thought can do without, namely the Quran and Hadith compilations. Since for an overwhelming majority of Muslims the Quran is the "word of God" and was compiled rather early in the history of Islam, I tend to take it at face value, and desist from looking at it as a mere historically developed document. In this study, the Quran is taken as the

reference against which all later Muslim ideas and activities are judged. The other primary source, the Hadith, on the contrary, is viewed as a solely "man-made" document, which, although elevated by some Muslims to the level of quasi-Scripture, deserves critical scrutiny both against the Quran (as it will be shown, the concepts of *da'wa* and jihad as developed in the Hadith differ from the Quranic concepts) and factual historical events (of course, being fully aware of their questionability). *Tafsirs* are another primary source employed in the analysis. They are helpful for both a deeper perception of *da'wa* connotations in the Quran and as philological and ideological interpretations of the term *da'wa* and its derivatives.

Another category, one may say, of also primary sources, is the various writings by Muslims on the issue of *da'wa*. These fall into two types – those in English and those in Arabic. The ones written in English are primarily printed materials of *da'wa* institutions in Europe and North America, and texts on the Internet.

A note on Internet sources. As previously mentioned, there are numerous sites on the Internet where *da'wa* is given varied degrees of attention. In many of these sites both the organization maintaining the site and authors writing for it are clearly identified. Yet for many of them, either one or both are missing, consigning the texts to anonymity. Even with a name attached to the text it is not always clear if this might be a nickname or pseudonym. In such cases it is often not immediately obvious what ideology the authors espouse. However, the biggest difficulty with the Internet sources is their impermanence. As seen in Appendix III, many of the sites used in the present study have already been moved or shut down. Moreover, with no proper titles, pages, or dates indicated, citation from Internet sources is problematic where even possible.

The intended audience of the English texts ranges from non-Muslims to common lay Muslims, from Muslim activists/propagandists to professional *da'is*. The texts in Arabic analyzed in this study are books and brochures published in Arab countries though also distributed in Europe. The bulk of them were bought in London's Islamic book stores, while others were obtained from mosques and libraries around Europe (in the United Kingdom, Germany, Finland, Lithuania, Hungary, and Czech Republic). The publications in Arabic are of two basic types: 1) theological writings on virtues of *da'wa* (including a superficial presentation of *da'wa* in the Quran and in Muslim history) usually written by *'ulama*, and 2) politically-charged writings of thinkers affiliated with or sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood. Almost

the entire corpus of these texts, in both languages, is polemical and not academic/scientific. In the present study, these writings are evaluated through comparison with each other and with the Quran and Hadiths.

This particular category of sources is of primary importance in this study, especially the texts on the Internet and printed materials in Arabic. It is this material which gives a direct insight into what Muslim activists consider the proper Islamic *da'wa*. They therefore constitute a significant part of the object of my study.

Finally, the analysis covers secondary sources like academic writings of both Muslims and non-Muslims in which *da'wa* is addressed from an academic (and therefore more critical) point of view. The main texts have already been referred to, but there are a number of others which approach *da'wa* only as an aspect of some broader topic covered.

The analysis of the contemporary *da'wa* and *da'wa*-related texts, both in English and Arabic, revealed a clear break in the ranks of *da'wa* activists with regard to the purpose of *da'wa*. One group, consisting mostly of independent individuals (either "Western"-educated or working in the "West") argue for *da'wa* as a dialogue that would benefit both Muslims and non-Muslims by keeping their beliefs active and strong – for Muslims that means keeping their Islamicity as alive as possible. The other much larger group is made up of organizations and those *da'wa* advocates who mainly study, live, and operate in Muslim countries. The first group accepts a diversity of religions, beliefs, ideologies, and ways of living not only as the *de facto* present situation, but also as an essential feature of the future world. The latter group, meanwhile, does not allow for different interpretations than pattern of action proposed in their *da'wa*. This follows the thesis that the majority of 20th-century Muslim activists, beginning with Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949), engaged in *da'wa* to preserve the idea "one truth." Their stance demonstrates an exclusivist approach to the world, and this is especially vivid in the socio-political sphere where these *da'wa* theoreticians today arrogate to themselves an exclusive knowledge in organizing society for the individual and greater good.

It may be appropriate here to elaborate the distinction between inclusivism and exclusivism. The present study is conducted with a view toward the tension between the religious inclusivism and exclusivism that has shaped the Muslim conceptualization of *da'wa* throughout Islam's history. Indeed, this tension has been so pervasive that one can but wonder if the whole history of *da'wa* is not just an expression of it. The inclusivist stance entails personal openness and tolerance toward

other religious traditions and an acceptance of them as legitimate systems to lead the believer to salvation. Inclusivism should not necessitate relativism, imply an "anything goes" lifestyle, or degrade Islam vis-à-vis other religions – inclusivists are, after all, still Muslims. They merely accept religious pluralism as the de facto situation in which Muslims live. In other words, inclusivism does not seek sweeping change but rather settles for small victories, like a gradual change in attitudes of non-Muslims toward Muslims and Islam, creating (through *da'wa* as dialogue) a mutually beneficial atmosphere. If someone chooses to accept the invitation of Islam (*da'wa*), so much the better for him or her. Inclusivism abstains from open proselytism and any sort of religious coercion. It manifests itself in interfaith dialogue between Muslims and other religious practitioners, especially that initiated by Christian counterparts. This is dealt with in Chapter 6.

Though inclusivism is a authentic part of the Islamic *da'wa*, exclusivism has been more favored by Muslims in *da'wa* writing. The essence of exclusivism is that only Islam offers the correct way of life – the one leading to salvation. To use the Latin, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, where belonging to a distinct Muslim grouping assumes the place of the Church. Explaining its popularity, Aslan argues that "the reason why a Muslim believes in Islamic exclusivism is that Islam makes such absolute truth claims and convinces its adherents to believe that is so" (Aslan, 1998: 103). In fact, the Quran, the Hadiths, and most Islamic theological and legal thought based on these primary texts is ripe with exclusivism – that God, through Muhammad, unequivocally speaks about the unique position of Islam as the culmination of the "true path" – *sirat al-mustaqim*. In the words of Gellner, Islam claims "to complete and round off the Abrahamic tradition and its Prophets, and to do so with finality. Muhammad is the *Seal* of the Prophets" (Gellner, 1992: 6). With this completion and finality of prophethood, Islam claims a monopoly on the "truth," or, "real" (Arabic حقّ , *haqq*). Naturally, "an Islamic exclusivism by definition must rule out the possibility of the occurrence of truth and salvation in other traditions. That is to say, an Islamic exclusivism, instead of endorsing that other religions can have the same right, by definition must invalidate any other religion's religious exclusivism" (Aslan, 1998: 103).

Aslan's reasoning is valid when considering Islam as whole against other religious traditions. However, in the case of intra-*ummaic da'wa*, this "Islamic exclusivism" has a more complex palette of colors – it is a particular Muslim exclusivism set against the exclusivisms of other Muslims. Like the general Islamic

exclusivism described by Aslan, the exclusivism among different Muslim groups is fed by their claim to possess the "true knowledge": to tell *good* from *bad*, allowing them to "enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong."[12] However, each Muslim group tends to appropriate this exclusive right to true knowledge to itself and to deny it to others. In this way, there is a secondary tension, one between mutually exclusive Muslim exclusivisms within the *Ummah*.

The knowledge claimed by these various Muslim groups, however, is not a "gained knowledge" but a "given knowledge" (Aslan, 1998: 80), to use Aslan's distinction. This especially applies to the groups engaged in intra-*ummaic da'wa*, like Tablighi Jama'at, Ahmadiya, and the Muslim Brotherhood. Even though for them the attainment of knowledge involves study and education, knowledge arrived at solely through reason and intellectual effort is viewed with suspicion. Most needed, rather, is the intuition of truth that is manifest in one's proper affiliation with some or another religious group. Faith itself becomes less important than one's social and spiritual affiliation. Gellner, when speaking about Muslim revivalists, put it this way: "Faith can be seen, not so much as commitment, as the celebration of community. Affirmation of the supernatural is de-coded as expression of loyalty to a social order and its values. The doctrine de-coded along these lines is no longer haunted by doubt – for there really isn't any doctrine, only a *membership*..." (Gellner, 1992: 3). Perhaps Gellner is too strong about absence of doctrine, but he is definitely right about sanctification of membership, which is an evident feature of Muslim organizations pursuing *da'wa* today.

Such a position of exclusivism by its nature denies pluralism and relativism and "is committed to the view that there *is* external, objective, culture-transcending knowledge: there *is* indeed 'knowledge beyond culture'" (Gellner, 1992: 75). Although a critic might argue that on the contrary, it is very much the culture here that circumscribes, either positively or negatively, the perception of what is knowledge, most Muslim activists in their writings indirectly subscribe to this notion of "knowledge beyond culture." As a "knowledge beyond culture," the true knowledge is not a mere scientific (historic) knowledge but rather a sacred (eternal) knowledge, corresponding to Aslan's "gained" and "given" forms of knowledge: "What makes sacred knowledge distinctive from other forms of knowledge is that, it transforms the person who acquires it; it is related to the ethical perfection of the person who wants to attain it" (Aslan, 1998: 93). Muslims like Mawdudi, Qutb, and their followers

[12] On the notion of "enjoin[ing] what is right and forbidd[ing] what is wrong," see Chapter 1.

oppose their perceived true (sacred) knowledge against ignorance (Arabic *jahiliyya*), an ontological state that they find contemporary Muslim societies to be in.[13] Gelven argues that "the opposite of knowledge is ignorance; the opposite of the true is the untrue or the false....Knowledge presupposes truth in the sense that one cannot be said to know what is false. In other words, to know is to know what is true" (Gelven, 1990: 29). Yet Gelven ignores the possibility that one might assume to "know truth," when actually he or she "knows untruth" or, in other words, "does not know." True and false have to be measurable. In the case of Islamic sacred knowledge, truthfulness is measured by the membership of the groups claiming to possess this knowledge. As a consequence, knowledge and truth validate each other in a vicious circle, while all other knowledge and truths are relegated to the status of ignorance and untruth. Only the knowledge accepted by the group as true is awarded the status of salvific knowledge. Aslan has succinctly grasped this when he concludes that "attaining salvific-knowledge is very much related to acquiring virtues which can be defined as 'our way of participating in the truth'" (Aslan, 1998: 94).

If Islam is the way to salvation, *da'wa* is its invitation card. Yet, as it is shown in the present study, Muslim *da'is* do not award salvation after merely accepting the "invitation." To attain salvation, one needs wholeheartedly to proceed on the path of creating, of himself, an ideal man. The next step is the creation of a perfect society, which can be achieved only through, to use Molnar's expression, "collective self-purification" (Molnar, 1993: 163). Creation of a perfect society is the ultimate aim of most contemporary Muslim activists, starting with al-Banna and continuing on to Mashhour, Yakan, Muhalhal, al-Qutan, etc. Yet, from a critical perspective, their vision is as utopian as those provided by European utopists centuries ago. This is not to imply that Muslim utopists lag behind Christian utopists – the respective visions are grounded on different premises and expectations – but merely to illustrate a similarity in the effort itself. The utopian visions of contemporary *da'is* (foremost those engaged in politically motivated intra-*ummaic da'wa*) consider the reference point of their arguments to be scripture, to which they make constant reference in the attempt to legitimize their claims. Against this claim to legitimacy, Aslan reiterates the contemporary philosopher of religion, John Hick, in writing, "the absolute truth claims of each religion do not originate from the Absolute but from each religion's self-validating development within its closed spheres; they stem from human subjectivity not 'divine objectivity'" (Aslan, 1998: 106). The perfect Islamic society,

[13] Perceptions of *jahiliyya* among contemporary Muslim thinkers are analyzed in detail in Chapter 8.

envisioned by today's *da'is*, would comprise citizens who are doubtless in their religious convictions. They would be total *muslimun* – those who submit to God's will. But curiously, such citizens are destined to loose their very humanness, for as Molnar states,

> In all these religious utopias the citizens have been purged of selfishness….It is enough to read any representative sample of this literature to realize that the citizen of utopia is not an ordinary human being, but one stripped of common human frailties and existing in a kind of rarefied atmosphere….the utopian citizens lack passions and ambitions. (Molnar, 1993: 161–162)

Apparently, contemporary Muslim *da'is* are not worried about such matters. In fact, their aim includes the abolition of passions and unhealthy ambitions, which are seen as obstacles to man's becoming a perfect Muslim. *Da'wa* manuals on the character of *da'is* (and ultimately all Muslims) abound with exhortations to purge one's soul of any passion and ambition save what strengthens one's Islamicity.

Muslim *da'is* distinguish an ideal Islamic state of affairs that is directly derived from the Quran, Sunna, or normative (established in Islamic jurisprudence, or *fiqh*) code from "Muslim" cultural practice, which is considered often to ignore (consciously or not) the normative regulations found in the Quran, Sunna, and strictures established by Muslim jurists. Most Muslim activists of the 20th century make this distinction by marking things "Muslim" with a negative sign and juxtaposing them against the positively marked "Islamic," with the implication that the desired ideal should supplant the deficient culture. In this way, the culture is opposed to the ideal. However, as will be shown in the present study, Muslim perceptions of what constitutes the ideal and the culture vary greatly, making it difficult if not altogether impossible to find a meeting point for the two concepts.

The present study cuts across a number of fields and concepts, and methods from theology, history, sociology and political science are all employed to make the study more comprehensive.

The text of the present study is composed of four parts, the third and fourth of which are to be read against the background provided in the first two. In Part I, the concepts of the Quranic and the Hadith (as found in Muhammad's Sunna) *da'wa* are explored. This part investigates what meanings the Quran and Sunna attach to the term "*da'wa*" and what place *da'wa*, in these usages, occupies as a missionary activity. The question of who are to be the subjects and objects of *da'wa* is especially significant here. Then the relation between *da'wa* and jihad is addressed. The problem of coercion/compulsion in spreading Islam is analyzed from a theoretical perspective

by scrutinizing the notions of jihad propounded both in the founding Islamic texts (the Quran and Sunna) and by Muslim activists in the course of history.

Part II analyzes the methodology of *da'wa*. In this part, *da'wa* treatises and manuals (in Arabic and English) by contemporary Muslim propagandists are scrutinized.

Part III is devoted to the extra-*ummaic da'wa* – Muslim missionary activities addressed toward non-Muslims. The research is limited to *da'wa* to Christians with an emphasis on missionary work of Muslims on the European and North American continents. The perception of Christianity and the understanding of Christians and their cultures are of critical importance for Muslim *da'is* in Europe and North America, and this perception and understanding is addressed. More important is the dialogue between Muslims and Christians when viewed from the perspective of the missionary activities of of both faiths – Islamic *da'wa* and Christian missions.

In Part IV, attention turns to the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. It is endeavored to discover the *raison d'être* of *da'wa* turned toward fellow Muslims. Moreover, the effective politicization of the concept of *da'wa*, especially in its intra-*ummaic* form, takes up most of this part of the study. The development of the politically charged intra-*ummaic da'wa* in contemporary times is analyzed in the broader perspective of what is argued to be the process of (re)-islamization, undertaken by governments of some Muslim countries and advocated by independent Muslim activists and non-governmental agents.

In the conclusion, the two trends in *da'wa* development, i.e., the extra- and intra-*ummaic*, analyzed respectively in Parts III and IV, are compared against the backdrop of the findings arrived at in Parts I and II.

PART I

ISLAMIC *DA'WA*: THE TERM AND ITS SOURCES

1. THE *DA'WA* IN THE QURAN AND SUNNA

Invite to the Path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice.
Quran, 16:125

Since the Quran urges Muslims to avoid compulsion in persuading non-believers to convert to Islam ("No coercion in religion," 2:256), it would follow that the most acceptable way to convert someone to Islam would be to convince him or her of Islam's superiority. And Muslims should do this by explanation and example suggested in the Quran: "Invite to the Path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice" (16:125). The explanations and practical actions that lead to conversion constitute an activity required of Muslims – the spreading of Islam to others. Such an activity is called "*da'wa*," an Arabic word meaning a "call, summon, invitation." Though *da'wa* was not made a pillar[14] of the Islamic faith, in the holy scripture of Islam, Muslims (or Muhammad, as it actually is in the text of the Quran and Hadith collections) are urged to invite non-believers to join their faith. One may even say that all Muslims are, by definition, missionaries/preachers. The Quranic injunctions for *da'wa* are further confirmed by the prophetic practice – Muhammad himself was above all a *da'i*.

In the Quran, the word "*da'wa*" and its derivatives are used in different contexts over a hundred times[15] (for example, in 2:186, 2:221, 3:104, 7:193, 10:25, 10:106, 12:108, 13:36, 14:22, 14:44, 16:125, 17:52, 21:45, 22:67, 23:73, 26:72, 27:80, 28:87, 35:14, 40:10, 40:41–43, 41:33, 42:15, 70:17, 71:5–8, etc.), while in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim* and other Hadith collections they are also present.[16] Though neither the Quran nor the Hadith collections presupposes institutionalized structures

[14] Pillar here refers to *arkan al-din*: *shahada*, *salla*, *saum*, *zaka*, and *hajj*.
[15] See, for example, Fluegel, 1898, or other Quranic indexes. In this study, Fluegel's Index, though composed more than a century ago, is used for no other reason than it appears to be comprehensive and reliable.
[16] Janson writes that on the English-language MSA-USC Hadith Database his search for the word "invite yielded 34 references in the translation of *Sahih al-Bukhari* and 12 in *Sahih Muslim* (Janson, 2003: 59).

of or methods for *da'wa* – the invitation to Islam – they laid groundwork for the historical development of Islamic missionary activities, which are still taking place all over the world.

Yet, before proceeding with an analysis of how *da'wa* actually works, one has to explore the crucial issue of whether Islam was originally seen by Muslims (Muhammad foremost among them) as a religion of and for Arabs, or rather as a world religion from its very inception. In other words, was Islam meant to be a universal missionary religion? It is hardly possible that the spreading of Islam beyond the confines of Arabia was of any concern for Muhammad while he was still in Mecca. He seems to have preached exclusively to Arabs, both settled and nomadic. But once he relocated to Yathrib, his attention, even if only partially, turned to non-Arabs: He preached to Jews, and he is also reported to have argued with local Christians in attempts to convert them, though these reports are impossible to verify.[17]

There is yet another issue: Is *da'wa* to be directed exclusively toward non-believers, or is it, in certain circumstances, also to be addressed to fellow Muslims? This question becomes crucial when one realizes that the term "*da'wa*" has been extensively used throughout the history by Muslims (Abbasids in the 8th century, Ismai'lis in the 9th through 13th centuries, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* in the 20th century) who directed their activities toward fellow Muslims, be it from a sectarian or an orthopractic perspective. Does the Quran consider, approve, or even encourage such kind of *da'wa*?

This chapter is aimed at providing the Quranic expressions and notions of "*da'wa*" (emphasizing its meaning an "invitation to Islam") in their variety and complexity, with a relevant analysis of the most significant of them. The spectrum of meanings of "*da'wa*," as used in the Quran and the Hadith collections, and their relation to the practical missionary activities of Muslims, is sought. This chapter also seeks to show that whatever "*da'wa*," as an invitation to Islam, meant to Muhammad, it was eventually included (in the making of the Hadith collections) in the range of duties prescribed to Muslims, even if only as an advisable activity (Arabic فرض كفاية, *fard kifaya*). The distinction will also be drawn and the common believer's *da'wa* on the other.

[17] Poston, basing his argument on secondary sources, also distinguishes two phases in Muhammad's activities: the Arab-nationalist, when his efforts were devoted exclusively toward Arabs, and the international, when he turned to non-Arabs, which started soon after the migration to Yathrib and gained impetus toward the very end of Muhammad's life (Poston, 1992: 12). A more elaborate discussion on the periodization of Muhammad's *da'wa* is elaborated in the chapter on jihad to come.

As *da'wa* in the course of history became a well-organized activity among certain Muslim groups, one would expect the commentators of the Quran – the *mufassirs* (Arabic مفسر) – to have elaborated upon this concept. Therefore, it is worth inquiring what *mufassirs* have actually said regarding the Quranic passages containing the term "*da'wa*." Major classical *mufassirs* such as al-Tabarsi (d. 1153), al-Baidawi (d. 1286), and Ibn Kathir (d. 1372) and contemporary ones such as Abduh (d. 1905), Rida (d. 1935), Qutb (d. 1966), and Mawdudi (d. 1979)[18] all touched upon the term and concept of "*da'wa*" in their commentaries. Since in the Quran the word "*da'wa*" appears numerous times, only those verses that speak of or imply the preaching and spreading of Islam are dealt with in the present study. The following lines of the Quran contain the word "*da'wa*" with this connotation.

2:186 *If some servants of mine asked you about Me, I am indeed close and I respond to the call of a suppliant if he calls upon Me. So let them respond to My (invitation), so that they believe in Me and may be on the right side.*

2:221 *Those (unbelievers) invite to fire, and God invites to paradise.*

3:104 *Let there be a group of people among you who invite to goodness, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.*

10:25 *And God invites to the abode of peace and guides those whom He pleases to the straight path.*

12:108 *Say: this is my way, I invite to God.*

13:36 *Say: I was commanded to worship God, and not to associate anyone with Him. I invite and my return is to Him.*

14:44 *And those who did wrong will say: Our Lord, ..., we will answer your invitation and will follow the messengers.*

16:125 *Invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice.*

23:73 *Indeed you invite them to a straight path.*

40:10 *You were invited to faith and you refuse. And God invites to the abode of peace, and guides those whom He pleases to the straight path.*

41:33 *Who is better in speech than the one who invites to God.*

70:17 *Invite those who turn back and turn away face.*

[18] Although there are many more contemporary commentators, only Abduh/Rida's, Qutb's and Mawdudi's tafsirs are included for the specific attachment to the *da'wa* cause these men had.

71:5–6 *He said: I have been inviting my people day and night, but my invitation increased but flight*.[19]

From a close scrutiny of the major *tafsirs*, it becomes evident that most *mufassirs* did not at all venture to consider the ideological or practical aspects of "*da'wa*." Most of the classical *mufassirs* merely explained the word "*da'wa*" through its synonyms, and only some go beyond the philological level. It is difficult to assess why they stayed aloof of the ideological implications of the term as used in the Quran. One may guess that for *mufassirs* (especially of the classical period), the word "*da'wa*" was not especially religiously charged and did not have the sense of missionary activity. Whatever the reason, it is disturbing to realize that the major *mufassirs* of classical times paid so little attention to the ideological as well as practical dimensions of *da'wa*. The implication would be that institutionalization of *da'wa* is a relatively recent phenomenon. However, as it will be shown further below, this is not the case – *da'wa* acquired a high level of institutionalization rather early in Muslim history. With this in mind, it becomes even more odd why *mufassirs* abstained from devoting more attention to "*da'wa*."

Modern commentators of the Quran such as Abduh/Rida and Qutb, unlike their predecessors, pondered "*da'wa*" verses to a much more considerable extent. But for these authors, *da'wa*, and indeed the *tafsir* itself, was more of a political endeavor than a theological one. So, for example, Qutb, in his commentaries on 3:104 and 12:108, advocates a total reislamization of the Muslim *Ummah* through political means, while Rida stresses education in revitalizing Muslim religious consciousness. Yet, however little the *mufassirs* had to say about *da'wa*, in the present chapter they provide a fuller picture of the conception of *da'wa* in the Quran.

SCOPE OF *"DA'WA"* MEANINGS

Etymologically, word "*da'wa*" covers meanings ranging from addressing, calling, appealing, requesting, demanding, to worshiping. Paul Walker provides an even more inclusive array of meanings for "*da'wa*" as "concepts of summoning, calling on, appealing to, invocation, prayer (for and against something or someone), propaganda, missionary activity, and finally legal proceedings and claims" (Walker, 1995: 343).

[19] The English rendering the Quranic verses is Abdullah Yusuf Ali's. See Yusuf Ali, 1989

In the Quran, the word "*da'wa*" has three primary meanings: 1) worshiping God or idols, 2) addressing, asking and calling (God, idols, people), 3) inviting to religion (Islam or other).[20] All of these meanings have religious connotations. However, the third one, in addition to reflecting a direct relationship between humans and deities, or among humans, also implies an intermediary agent – an inviter, or *da'i*. I concentrate on this third meaning of "*da'wa*" as an is invitation to Islam in the present study.

The first two meanings of "*da'wa*," worshiping and calling, are frequent in the Quran (e.g., in 2:186, 3:38, 6:40, 11:22, 11:106, 19:48, 19:91, 22:12, 72:18, etc.). In this holy book of Muslims, "*da'wa*" as worship includes the worshiping of other deities, not exclusively God (Allah): "Say, are we to worship some other [deity] besides God?" (6:71). *Da'wa* as calling does not always have a religious meaning: it could mean people addressing God, or an idol, as well as each other. The Quran warns against worshiping/ addressing any deity other than God. Thus, the only acceptable *da'wa* as worshiping is the one directed towards God (Allah), as in 2:186: "If some servants of mine asked you about Me, I am indeed close and I respond to the call of a suppliant (*da'wa*) if he calls upon Me." Paul Walker, in his article on *da'wa* for the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, believes *da'wa* found in this verse to be "a basic meaning for *da'wah*, perhaps its cardinal meaning" found in the Quran (Walker, 1995: 343).

From what has been said about *da'wa* as prayer it follows that such *da'wa* can be both right and wrong. As it will be shown below, the same applies to *da'wa* as an invitation to religion. In addition to worshiping and addressing, *da'wa*, as used in the Quran, means an invitation to religion. This invitation in the Quran is construed as a sort of activity.

"*Da'wa*," however, is not the only Arabic word for "calling." "*Nada*" (Arabic نادى), for instance, also means "to call." This term or its derivatives are also used in the Quran (in 3:193, 5:58, etc.). In 3:193, for example, "*nada*" is used to mean "inviting people to faith," whereas in 5:58 it means "to say in a loud voice, loud speaking." *Mufassirs*, in their commentaries, provide other Arabic synonyms for "*da'wa*," with "*nada*" being the most common. As will be shown in later chapters, in the contemporary setting of Muslim missionary activities, the term "*tabligh*" (Arabic تبليغ, "conveyance"), which does not appear in the Quran (an etymologically similar

[20] See Janson's findings regarding the meanings of "*da'wa*" in the Quran, which correspond with those in this study. Janson, 2003: 59–61.

word, "*balagh*," arguably a synonym of "*tabligh*," is there, though), often substitutes for "*da'wa*." (Masud, 1995: 162–165) In his analysis of "*da'wa*" concepts, Walker nonetheless concludes that "*tabligh*" and "*da'wa*" are not synonymous but rather complementary:

> Unlike the term *tabligh*, meaning to "fulfill" or "implement" a mission – that is, to cause or bring about a given task, or to convey successfully a specific message – which is an active requirement, *da'wah* is a passive invitation invitation, a summons, a call, or a prayer. It is perfectly possible, therefore, to speak of the "implementation" of the *da'wah* that is, *tabligh al-da'wah*. (Walker, 1995: 345.)

Walker's suggested contraposition, though at the first sight appealing, is not correct. First of all, Muhammad's *da'wa* was not always been a passive invitation – he must have worked hard to attract followers, especially, while still in Mecca. But then, after having moved to Medina, and having become the leader of the nascent Muslim state, he pursued an even more aggressive *da'wa* (not necessarily with force or coercion but neither entirely abstaining from it) among Arab tribes of the Peninsula. Moreover, Muhammad in his capacity as a prophet of God has always had a "given task" which he sought to bring about and a "specific message" to convey: his revelation of the Islamic belief and way of life. Masud argues that "the Quranic usage of *balagh* signifies that the mere proclamation of the message is sufficient for the fulfillment of the mission; a preacher is not responsible for conversion" (1995: 162), which he supports by verses 3:20 and 6:106, altogether negates Walker's distinction. Therefore, Walker's reasoning does not stand up to the historical situation Muhammad lived in and received the "Revelation" in, or textual analysis of the Quran. In conclusion, Walker's division is useless – "*da'wa*," as history has shown, has been both passive and active, with multiple connotations to these. In this study, the words "*tabligh*" and "*da'wa*" will be used as synonyms, though preference remains with "*da'wa*."

The Arabic word for what in English is "missionary activity" is "*tabshir*" (Arabic تبشير). In Islamic history it has been usually used to define non-Islamic (Christian) missions. The word "*tabshir*" does not appear in the Quran at all.[21] Historically, Muslim missionaries have instead used "*nashr al-da'wa*" (Arabic نشر الدعوة, "spreading the *da'wa*") to define their activity.

[21] Fluegel does not provide any entry for "*tabshir*" in his *Concordantiae Corani Arabicae*. Fluegel, 1898.

"DA'WA" AS AN INVITATION TO ISLAM

"*Da'wa*" as a religious invitation in the Quran is directed primarily to non-Muslims. In numerous verses (for example, 12:108, 13:36, 16:125, 23:73, 40:10, 41:33, 70:17), it is Muhammad is urged to appeal to pagan Arabs and (occasionally) Jews and Christians. On the other hand, in no Quranic verse are Muhammad, or Muslims in general, commanded to exercise *da'wa* (invitation) toward fellow Muslims. This is reasonable, given that in the time of Muhammad's preaching, "*da'wa*" as a verbal invitation must have been considered successful and complete once the invited person accepted Islam, declared to believe in the one God, and accepted Muhammad apostolic leadership. Religious instruction into what constituted Islamic behavior and belief in the Quran is not shrouded in "*da'wa*" terminology. In the Revelation, dealing with hypocrites and renegades among Muslims themselves is not considered "*da'wa*" either.

Yet, it could be inferred from verse 3:104, "Let there be a group of people among you who invite to goodness, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," that to invite, "*da'a*," takes as its object any and all people who act wrongly (not just according to Islamic principles).[22] Its object could be lax or heterogeneous, unorthodox Muslims. In such a case, it would follow that *da'wa* can be addressed to fellow, gone-astray, Muslims. However, such a conclusion can only be drawn by extension, and it is not supported by any other verse in the Quran – at least not directly. Michael Cook, in his fundamental study on the concept of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," admits that he does not see

> who is the target of the duty or what the duty is about: in none of the (Quranic – *my note*) verses we have considered is there any further indication as to what concrete activities are subsumed under the rubric of commanding right and forbidding wrong. We might suspect from this that we have to do with a general duty of ethical affirmation to the community, or to the world at large, but this is by no means clear. (Cook, 2000: 14.)

The verse, then, allows two possible, though not mutually exclusive, inferences: One the one hand, the duty of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is an intra-*ummaic* matter, while, on the other hand, it goes beyond the limits of the Muslim *Ummah* to encompass the whole of humanity. Since the true message of the verse is ambivalent, it has been interpreted by Muslims in ways to

[22] Other verses containing the expression "*enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong*" are 3:110, 3:114, 7:157, 9:71, 9:112, 22:41, 31:17.

better meet their objectives, or, rather, to support them. In history, this verse served as "proof" that at least some Muslims are to do *da'wa* toward fellow Muslims who have fallen prey to "wrong." Throughout this history, Muslims blended the two notions, "*da'wa*" and "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," virtually upgrading the latter to the level of the former. Ezzati, for example, sees the two concepts just as synonyms:

> the doctrine of Da'wah is linked with the doctrine of Amr bil ma'roof wa nahi anil munkar (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil). The two are identical in the sense that Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Muslims have never been asked by Allah to invite people to Islam itself but to the Truth, to enjoin good and forbid evil, which, in fact, Islam is, and thus lead people to accept Islam as the embodiment of the Truth. (Ezzati)

Rida, on the other hand, puts "*da'wa*" and "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" in chronological sequence: First comes "*da'wa*" as invitation; and if the invitation is accepted, "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (Rida: 28) follows. Fadlullah also makes a distinction between "*da'wa*" and "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," though he does not opine whether they can be simultaneous or successive. To him, "*da'wa*" covers more than just "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong": the latter has "certain limits and restrictions, which *da'wa* does not encounter on its long path" (Fadlullah, 1994: 33). One of the major differences between the two concepts, according to Rida and Fadlullah, is that *da'wa* focuses on non-Muslims, while "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is addressed primarily to fellow Muslims. (Fadlullah, 1994: 34) The two, then, imply different methods. In this vein, Qutb argues that no power (Arabic سلطة, *sulta)* is needed for *da'wa*, implying *da'wa* is no more than preaching. While for "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," power (legal, political) is, in fact, necessary (Qutb, 1967, I: 444). The distinction made by both Rida and Fadlullah (and implied by al-'Ameri), separates the two *da'was* ideally: The extra-*ummaic da'wa* geared to non-Muslims is the proper *da'wa*, while any other activities, especially intended for Muslims, should not be regarded as *da'wa* but rather "the enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong."

Cook, in his investigation of Muslim writings on the concept of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong", identifies at least two broad periods: the "old" and the "new," where "the core of old conception was a personal duty to right wrongs committed by fellow-believers as and when one encountered them; the core of the new conception is a systematic and organised propagation of Islamic values both

within and outside the community" (Cook, 2000: 515). Although he focuses exclusively on the development of the concept of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," Cook actually speaks about the development of *da'wa*, where the "old" conception is the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, while the "new" conception is the extra-*ummaic da'wa*. However, his assessment is only partially correct, for as will be shown in subsequent chapters, in the "new" period Muslims devote as much if not more attention to other Muslims as to non-Muslims in the effort in "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong." Cook, is however, correct about the institutionalization of *da'wa* "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" – it is indeed a recent phenomenon. Thus, even though there has not been consensus among Muslims as to what verse 3:104 assumes as "a group of people" (especially important in the contemporary context), it is this and similar Quranic passages through which Muslims seek to justify their institutionalized and organized *da'wa* practice, both extra-*ummaic* and intra-*ummaic*.

The verse 3:104 is one of those rare cases where the Quran speaks about a "group" of people who would be entrusted with a certain task, namely, implementing what is considered right and banishing what is found to be wrong.[23] Among the Muslim scholars of the classical times, al-Ghazali maintains that "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is *fard kifaya* and not *fard 'ayn* (Arabic فرض عين) (*Imam Gazzali's*, 1978?: 225). He distinguishes five forms of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong": giving simple advice; giving sermons with "sweet words;" "abusing and meting out harsh treatment;" applying force and preventing one from "doing a sinful act;" and finally, assaulting, beating, and threatening not to do a "sinful act." Only in this fifth form one is required to obtain permission from authorities for his actions (*Imam Gazzali's*, 1978?: 233). Al-Ghazali sees force as an integral part of the duty, something that inevitably clashes with the injunction of verse 2:256 – "No compulsion in religion." Later Muslim scholars do not dissociate the duty of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" from the use of force. On compulsion and coercion in religious matters, see further below.

[23] Verse 3:104 is rather problematic, and the original " ولتكن منكم أمة" has been translated differently. Yusuf Ali renders this part as, "*Let there be a group of people among you…*," and J. M. Rodwell as, "*And that there may be among you a people*." In Paret's translation it is "*Aus euch soll eine Gemeinschaft (von Leuten) werden…*" P. Walker assumes the verse to mean that "*da'wah* is an activity of the whole community; it is the command to promote good and fight injustice at large" (Walker, 1995: 344), while a few pages further another contributor on *da'wa* to the same publication, R. Schulze, provides the the following translation: "Let there arise out of you a band of people…" (Schulze, 1995: 346). For an elaborate discussion on this issue, see Cook, 2000: 12–20, esp. 17–20.

Baidawi subscribes to the position that "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is a collective activity and explains it by saying that not all would be capable of fulfilling the duty of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" since there are rules and conditions that not everyone can meet (Beidhawii, 1846, 1: 169). He, however, does not elaborate upon these rules and conditions. Thus, his commentary is not very informative, though the basic argument is clear – the duty of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is a *fard kifaya*. A Shi'i al-Tabarsi justifies the such a collective duty by the fact it would keep the Muslim *Ummah* from splitting into factions, something Muhammad supposedly had foreseen (al-Tabarsi, 1953, 2: 484). Explaining this same verse, Ibn Kathir thinks the word "group" denotes *mujahids* and *'ulama*, upholding the idea that this activity is reserved for a specially charged category of men and barred to the untrained general public (Ibn Kathir, 1989, 1: 398).

The modern *mufassirs* are more or less in agreement with their predecessors. Rashid Rida argues that the verse deals with intra-community matters. According to him, it could be a group of Muslims who might address their fellow believers, if there is a need to correct and change certain unacceptable actions or conduct of Muslims, according to Islam (Rida, 4: 28–32). For Rida, like many other *mufassirs*, "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is *fard kifaya* – a group duty. Rida's position is echoed in Mustafa al-Tahan, who also implies that Muslims are to "enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong" within the Muslim *Ummah* (al-Tahan, 1999: 232–243). Al-Tahan also provides ample examples from the Hadith collections and writings of Muslim *'ulama* that support the belief that "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is a must, i.e., *fard*, and not merely *nafl* (Arabic نفل, "supererogatory performance") for Muslims (al-Tahan, 1999: 235). Al-Tahan, moreover, contends that "enjoining the good and forbidding the evil includes, in principle, two types of actions: making Da'wah as well as the Tarbiyah (education) and the organization" (al-Tahan, 1999: 236).[24]

Jalal al-Din al-'Ameri notes that "the task which has been placed on the shoulders of the Ummah by Allah, the Almighty, is expressed in this glorious verse in two terms; the first of them is calling to excellence and the second is enjoining the good and forbidding the evil."[25] His observation also suggests that there should be a group of concerned Muslims who would be charged with a double task: *da'wa*

[24] The relation of *tarbiya* (Arabic تربية), or education, to *da'wa* is dealt with in detail in Part II.
[25] al-'Ameri, Jalal al-Din. *Amr b'il Ma'aruf wa Nahiy 'anil Munkar*, p. 17, quoted in al-Tahan, 1999: 233.

through knowledge plus practical action. This way, the group would encompass both the extra-*ummaic* and intra-*ummaic* activities. Yet, it is only by transplanting the meaning of *da'wa* prevalent elsewhere in the Quran that *da'wa* can be said to be applicable toward fellow Muslims.

Cook, after having investigated a number of *tafsirs*, also comes to the conclusion that the majority of *mufassirs* believed the verse to imply a group of concerned (and learned) Muslims rather than the whole Muslim population (Cook, 2000: 18–19). Cook, however, contends that the verse means not merely a group of concerned Muslims but rather the whole *Ummah*. He argues that "the context of the verse is an appeal for the unity of the community of believers, with contrasting reference to earlier communities (3:105 and 3:100)" (Cook, 2000: 13). Indeed, some of contemporary Muslim writers are agree. For example, al-Khatib contends that *amr bil-ma'ruf wa nahy 'an al-munkar* is *fard kifaya* for the Islamic *Ummah*. He believes that 3:104 includes the whole Muslim commonwealth and not merely a group of Muslims. (al-Khatib, 1982, 6: 41; see Nufal, 1977: 31, for a similar view)

Da'wa subjects, as used in the Quran, are numerous: God, Muhammad (and other of God's messengers), ordinary people, and even Satan. One could even say that there are two competing camps employing *da'wa* (inviting people): on the one it is God, His prophets, and believers – and on the other, Satan (14:22, 31:21) and idolaters (2:221). M. Canard refers to the *da'wa* of false prophets. (Canard, 1965, 2: 168) There is even a hadith in which Muhammad is reported to have warned his followers not to fall prey to al-Dajjal's (anti-Christ in the Islamic apocalyptic tradition) *da'wa* (Muslim, 195–, II, 8: 196–198). Since Satan and infidels invite people to go astray (Muslim, 195–, II, 6: 20), the Quran and hadiths reject this kind of *da'wa* as anti-*da'wa*. Thus, in the Quran, *da'wa* as an invitation to religion can be both negative (*da'wa* to any other faith but Islam) and positive (to Islam). Under the theological and historical perspective, the satanic and non-believer *da'wa* is not really a *da'wa* at all, as was already mentioned regarding the *tabshir* of the Christians. Thus, the proper Quranic *da'wa*, in the technical sense, only invites people to embrace Islam and faithfully follow its requirements.[26] In later historical usage it usually is put as *al-da'wa al-islamiya* (Arabic الدعوة الإسلامية).

Among the *da'wa* subjects, God is the first and most important – it is He who invites to His path: "And God invites to the abode of peace, and guides those whom

[26] As Canard puts it, "In the religious sense, the da'wa is the invitation, addressed to men by God and the prophets to believe in the true religion, Islam" (Canard, 1965, 2: 168).

He pleases to the straight path" (10:25, also implied in 2:186, 2:221). He is the ultimate inviter to whom everyone will have to be accountable: "... and those who did wrong will say: our Lord, ..., we will answer your invitation and will follow the messengers" (14:44). God is not an acting *da'i* on the Earth itself – He invites through His messengers and prophets, whom he supplies with revelations for help. All of these humans did the job of *da'i*; however, it was Muhammad who, in the eyes of the Quran and Muslims, was most successful.

The Quran implies that *da'wa* was continuously exercised by God's messengers, up to Muhammad.[27] However, since Muhammad was the last prophet (*khatm al-anbiya*, Arabic خاتم الأنبياء) sent to mankind by its Creator, his mission as a *da'i* is of crucial importance. In many instances in the Quran God addresses Muhammad and commands him to embrace *da'wa*: "Invite to the Path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice." (16:125) and "Say, this is my way – I invite unto the God with clear evidence, I and whoever follows me" (12:108, also 23:73, 70:17). As Canard has put it, "Muhammad's mission was to repeat the call and invitation: it is the da'wat al-Islam or da'wat al-Rasul" (Canard, 1965, 2: 168). Therefore, what Muhammed did was *da'wa*-related (13:36). According to al-Tabarsi, Muhammad was inviting people all the time and in all circumstances (al-Tabarsi, 1953: 269). Al-Tabarsi in his *tafsir* also explains that the "way" in 12:108 is "the religion of Islam which leads to Paradise" (al-Tabarsi, 1953: 268).

Muhammad was no *da'wa* theoretician – we possess no reports of him explaining the means, methods, meaning, and or of *da'wa* to be performed, if at all, by ordinary believers. Although there exist a number of hadiths where Muhammad is supposed to have used the term "*da'wa,*" in none of them does he elaborate upon the details of *da'wa* practice.[28] The only hadith that gives *da'wa* instructions (and is

[27] Noah (in 71:5) tells that he has been inviting (داع) people night and day. Similarly Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Jesus and others are also spoken of in the Quran as those who invited to God. See McAuliffe, 2002, 2: 558.

[28] There are several problems related to hadith literature. First of all, as almost all non-Muslim scholars of Islam are in agreement, there are no means for verifying the authenticity of a given hadith, consequently, no one can be sure that Muhammad indeed did or said the reported "fact". Even committed Muslims themselves are increasingly growing critical about the origins of the Hadiths. Consider Kassim Ahmad's strong opinion: "the so-called Prophetic traditions did not originate from the Prophet. They grew from the politico-religious conflicts that arouse in the Muslim society then, in the first and second centuries. It constituted a new teaching altogether, seriously deviating from the Quran that Prophet Muhammad brought to them. It was done against his will, but skillfully attributed to him." Ahmad, 1997: 50. See also Abdul Ghaffar, 1986, and Juynboll, 1983.

Another problem to be taken into consideration is that Muhammad might have said or did so, but in different words; in such a case, he might have not used the word *da'wa*, though in a given hadith this word is used. The word might have been introduced by narrators of the hadith. All in all, although one finds the term *da'wa* in all major hadith compilations, one has to be cautious in dealing with it.

referred to by virtually all Muslims concerned with *da'wa*) is the following: "He who amongst you sees something abominable should change it with his hand; but if he cannot, then he should do this with his tongue; but he cannot, then he should do this in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith" (Muslim, 195–, I, 1: 50). It is certainly true that Muhammad performed *da'wa*/invitation to Islam as a practitioner, not a theoretician. Notwithstanding this, many a Muslim *da'wa* activist find what they call a "method of *da'wa*" (Arabic أسلوب الدعوة, *uslub al-da'wa*) in the Quran (Fadlullah, 1994; Nasir, 2000), or rather read a method into the Quran. Ayatullah al-Sayyid Fadlullah even argues that the Quran is a "complete da'wa book, in which we find all its (*da'wa*) scope, directions, and general aims" (Fadlullah, 1994: 32).

Muhammad's *da'wa*, as far as it can be interpreted from the Quran and Hadith collections, constituted two types of activities. The first one was direct preaching and was applied first of all, though not exclusively, to Arabs. This direct preaching, as commanded in 16:125, presupposes the Quran as the main tool: the "wisdom" in 16:125 is interpreted by al-Tabarsi to be nothing but the Quran itself, for "the Quran is called wisdom, since it commands good and forbids repulsive" (Tabarsi, 1953, 6: 392). Moreover, this wisdom is revealed by God, therefore, by possessing it Muhammad was ready to invite others to embrace Islam. The Arabs Muhammad preached to constituted two broad religious groups: non-Muslims and Muslims. Yet, as Griffel poignantly observes, the "words 'Muslim' (Arabic مسلم) and 'believer' (Arabic مؤمن) in the Medinan chapters of the Quran are not synonyms, but also are not in contraposition to each other. They point to two distinct aspects in the life of the new religious community" (Griffel, 2000: 42). Indeed, not all Muslims of Muhammad's time (especially in the Medinan period of his life) could be considered true believers in his message – many were only outwardly Muslims (submitting to Muhammad's political authority) while in their hearts they remained pagan. Such people in the Quran (2:217, 4:38, 5:61) and Hadith Collections (al-Bukhari, 1981, I, 2: 92; 3, 6: 207) are called hypocrites (*munafiqun*, Arabic منافقون). Muhammad, as attested to in the Quran, repeatedly warned the hypocrites among Muslims of the grave consequences of their behavior/belief.

The second form of Muhammed's *da'wa* – still believed by majority of Muslims and generally rejected by non-Muslim scholars as later falsification – was letter-writing, inviting the rulers of Byzantine and Persia to convert to Islam. A number of hadiths "convey" the report by Abu Sufyan of Muhammad's letter to the Byzantine ruler of the time (al-Bukhari, 1981, I, 1: 5–7; Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 163–

166). Even though not genuine, this text has been used by Muslims as a prototype, the mode and model for Islamic *da'wa*: Muhammad (a *da'i*) invites the Byzantine ruler (a non-Muslim) to convert to Islam. The argument for conversion in the Hadiths is a simple one – the one who becomes a Muslim is promised safety in this life and salvation in the hereafter. Muhammad's letter is especially useful for *da'wa* towards Christians and Jews, for Muhammad invokes a Quranic passage (3:64) that assumes Jews and Christians (*ahl al-Kitab*) and Muslims, if they agree upon the most essential matter in faith – that of God's oneness (*tawhid*, Arabic توحيد) – then they are all *muslimun* ("those who submit to God"). From this, it follows that for *ahl al-Kitab* there should be no difficulties to accept Islam – they only have to be invited.

Though most of the passages in the Quran that command *da'wa* directed at Muhammad (the verb and pronoun forms used in the text are for masculine pronoun "you" in singular), verses like 41:33 ("Who is better in speech than the one who invites to God and does good?") and the previously mentioned verse 3:104 suggest that inviting to God is a very good deed to be done by Muslims generally. If taken literally, these verses can be seen as commanding Muslims to pursue broad activities that would fall under the concept of *da'wa*. For al-Tabarsi, the answer to the rhetorical question of 41:33 is obvious: "No-one is better in speech than the one who invites to submission to God" (al-Tabarsi, 1953, 9: 13). Thus, in a way, al-Tabarsi implies that "inviting to God" is the highest duty to God. For al-Baidawi, Muhammad epitomizes the apotheosis of such a person – the inviter (Beidhawii.1846, 2: 223). Ibn Kathir links this verse to verse 3:104 and explains "doing good" as "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong." He, however, provides a sobering interpretation of verse 41:33 in interpreting these inviters as *muadhins* (Arabic مؤذن) – the callers to prayer (Ibn Kathir, 1989, 4: 90–91).

In the Hadith collections we find reports on instances of *da'wa* performed by the Prophet's followers: Abu Huraira is reported to have invited his mother to Islam (Muslim, 195–, II, 7: 165–166). However, as it is in the hadith, his attempt was not successful and only after Muhammad's supplication to God did Abu Huraira's mother convert. In this hadith Muhammed did not reprimand his follower for embarking upon missionary activity. Muhammad is reported to have said on another occasion:

> Proceed to them steadily till you approach their place and then invite them to Islam and inform them of their duties towards the God, for by God, if through you a man is guided by God on the right path, it would be better for you than red camels. (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 207.)

Moreover, Muhammad is reported to have said the following to his followers Abu Burda and Mu‘adh on dispatching them to Yemen: “Invite people and give good tidings to them, and do not repel them, make things easy for them and do not make things difficult” (Muslim, 195–, II, 6: 100).

Another example of *da‘wa* practiced by his followers in Muhammed’s own lifetime are their purportedly successful activities in the then Yathrib between the years 621 and 622, before Muhammad’s own arrival to the town. There are reports that Muhammad’s followers who preached there gained converts to his cause among the local Arabs of Yathrib, smoothing Muhammed’s later arrival (Hodgson, 1974, 1: 171, Peters, 1994: 180–183).

If these references represent or even resemble the actual history, it could be concluded that Muhammad not only allowed commoners to practice *da‘wa* but also encouraged them to do so. Notwithstanding the historical accuracy of these accounts, for Muslims they represent exemplary, somewhat ideal, cases, as well as a framework for *da‘wa*. And though the Quran does not directly call upon Muslims to perform *da‘wa*, available hadiths are in clear support of *da‘wa* practiced by commoners, which is enough precedent to convince Muslims that they should convert non-Muslims to Islam. From the last hadith quoted and others, the basics of the method of *da‘wa* can be extracted: the *da‘i* has to be friendly towards those whom he endeavors to win over to Islam. Indeed, after Muhammad’s death, it was the commoners who carried on *da‘wa* or, to put bluntly, spread Islam. For al-Tabarsi, companions of Muhammad had performed *da‘wa* as well – they were showing the example of how to proceed on the way to salvation: “Muhammad’s companions were on the best of the ways” (al-Tabarsi, 1953, 5: 268). Likewise, Ibn Kathir argues in his *tafsir* that “everyone who followed him (Muhammad) was inviting to the same as to what the Messenger of God was inviting to” (Ibn Kathir, 1989, 2: 428). Following these *mufassirs*, whose position agrees with the historical record, the *da‘wa* obligation extended to common believers and was not an exclusive perogative of the “chosen,” that is to say, the prophets and messengers.

Still, from neither the Quran nor the hadiths it is clear who can/should be a *da‘i*. Is it any Muslim or just a learned one (*‘alim* عالم)? Can women (at least in theory) be *da‘iyat*? To these questions there seem to be no direct answers in the texts under investigation. On the other hand, since there are no restrictions as to who is allowed to perform *da‘wa*, it could be assumed that any Muslim could, if not should, do it. In fact, verse 9:71 (“The believers, men and women, are protectors one of

another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil") might be grounds for women *da'iyat*, especially if "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" is considered part of or synonymous with *da'wa*. The only (implicit) condition for *da'i* is that he (or she?) know Islam well enough and be a good example in both *iman* and *'ibada* ("believing" and "practicing"). Rida speaks of two types of *da'is*, professionals and commoners. While professional *da'is* have to have profound knowledge in many fields, including the theology of Islam and other religions, history of the world, psychology, and rhetoric, among others, for commoners it is enough that they are devout believers, for the scope of their *da'wa* activities is limited with usually equally limited results. (Rida 4: 28) It is implied that *da'wa* professionals have no margin to err (to invite people to anything else than God's true path), while commoners are allowed this luxury stemming from their ignorance, which is compensated with devoutness in one's faith.

It is a separate question why Muslims should perform *da'wa*. Is there any reward for this? Though the Quran does not give any answer to this question either, it could be expected that *da'wa* would count as a good deed (as verse 41:33 implies) for which a reward is due from God. Moreover, to paraphrase the hadith cited above, to convert someone to Islam is better than any material gain (such as booty after killing the enemy). Thus, *da'wa*, though not a requirement (from the perspective of the Quran and the Hadith collections) for Muslims, it is nonetheless a very worthy activity. It should also be noted that in the Islamic environment Muslims are urged to emulate the Prophet. Since he has done *da'wa*, they by extension are to do it too. This makes Islam a missionary religion. And, of course, it is a universalist religion – in the end the whole world is to become Muslim, through *da'wa* or other means (namely, conquests, forced conversion, and extermination of enemies of Islam, which is all found in the Quran and the Hadith collections).

Yet, it is not really comprehensible in the Islamic scripture if and how God's *da'wa*, Muhammad's *da'wa*, and commoners' *da'wa* differ, if at all. As was pointed to above, it is God who is the ultimate *da'i*. Only He performs *da'wa* by tongues and actions of prophets and common believers. Therefore, it could be assumed that there is only one true *da'wa*, *al-da'wa al-islamiyya*, that of God. On the other hand, God invested His prophets with power to perform *da'wa* (this is why they are prophets after all) on His behalf – He sent revelations, angels to assist them, and even He Himself aided them with miracles. Commoners obviously lack all these qualities and means. So, can their *da'wa* be equal to that of the prophets? Unfortunately, neither

Quran nor hadiths have anything to say in this regard. In the historical perspective, Muslims have assumed that they can (and even should) perform *da'wa* as well as the prophets did. Moreover, since there will be no more prophets sent by God, Muslims have to take care of spreading Islam on the Earth. This way, *da'wa* becomes not only desired but also obligatory (but only as *fard kifaya*) upon Muslims. But once again, this is not explicit in Islam's holy scripture.

The Quranic verses containing the word "*da'wa*" or its derivatives, as we have seen above, are not very informative as to who can/should embark upon inviting people to convert to Islam and how. It should be noted that in the Quran there are a fair number of passages that, though not containing the words concerned, nonetheless speak to or imply the spreading of the Islamic faith among non-believers. Stories of the prophets in the Quran are examples of *da'wa*, for all the messengers of God are considered to have employed *da'wa* even if they did not use the term itself. To the question as to who is qualified to perform *da'wa*, one can find an answer in the numerous passages in the Quran which tell us what a God-fearing Muslim should be like and, by extension, apply these requirements to aspiring *da'is*. Therefore, in Islamic history those concerned with missionary activities always could and indeed did use Quranic passages, not only to promote the necessity for *da'wa*, but also to elaborate upon its conditions, goals, and means. Since this chapter limits itself to the use of the term "*da'wa*" and its derivatives, all other Quranic verses dealing directly or indirectly with the spreading of Islam have been left out. This, however, should not be taken to mean that spreading of Islam or missionary activity is discussed exclusively in these verses cited.

CONCLUSION

Da'wa, the word with a meaning of invitation to Islam among other meanings is used in the Islamic holy scripture – Quran, as well as Hadith collections – a fair number of times. In the Islamic tradition it came to define Islamic missionary activities. However, the word is equally used to describe the religious propaganda of Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Moreover, Satan is said to use *da'wa* (inviting people) to the path of disbelief. Nonetheless, according to the Quran, the proper *da'wa* is inviting people to Islam, that is, *al-da'wa al-islamiya*. *Da'wa* toward fellow Muslims is dealt with nowhere in either the Quran or hadiths and it is only by extension that it can be assumed to be implied in the Quran that Muslims could possibly practice *da'wa*

toward other Muslims. On the other hand, verse 3:104 urges the emergence of a group of Muslims to be in charge of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," which might be taken to call for some form of intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

Though the holy text abounds with examples of messengers of God, Muhammad foremost among them, performing *da'wa*, and there are indirect injunctions for commoners to employ *da'wa*, these Quranic verses and hadiths lack any consistent elaboration as to how and by whom it should be done. The Quran establishes *da'wa* as a main activity of Muhammad; however, this holy text of Islam leaves it open whether any Muslim could (or even should) perform *da'wa*. The gender issue regarding *da'wa* is not reflected anywhere in the Quran[29]. The Quran does not explicitly exclude women from preaching their faith to non-believers; however, in reality women until the last century of Islam took part in Muslim missionary activities only to a very limited extent. Of course, there are objective reasons for this – it always was men who in Muslim societies made social transactions while women were much more confined to their domestic space. Thus, historically, *da'wa* became an occupation of males.

Unfortunately, neither the Quran, nor the Hadiths allow us to draw any credible conclusions as to how Muhammad had envisioned *da'wa* to be practiced. Such odd hadiths as the one reporting that Muhammad had forbidden Muslims to travel to a hostile country carrying copies of the Quran (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 4: 8) would not be of much missionary convenience, for such a ban would make preaching among non-Muslims more difficult.

Nevertheless, Quranic lines gave generations of *da'is* ground to think of new *da'wa* methods that have been applied in the course of some fourteen centuries of *da'wa* history. Classical *mufassirs* paid only lip service to the Quranic *da'wa*. Contemporary Muslim activists and commentators, on the other hand, as will be shown in the following chapters, have much more to say about those Quranic passages with the word "*da'wa*."

[29] Throughout the Quran the addressees are male.

2. *DA'WA* VERSUS JIHAD

JIHAD IN THE QURAN AND HADITH COLLECTIONS

The term "*da'wa*," in the sense of an invitation to Islam, is used more than a dozen times in the Quran. The term "*jihad*" (Arabic جهاد), and especially its corresponding verbal forms, are even more common. Though *da'wa* and jihad are not directly related to each other in the holy book of Islam, they have a common aim: to spread Islamic and Muslim rule.

Etymologically, the noun "*jihad*" has the meanings "effort, struggle, striving, exertion" and is derived from the verb "*jahada*" (Arabic جهد), the basic meaning of which is "to put effort, to strive, to exert oneself." As Firestone argues, "the semantic meaning of the Arabic term *jihad* has no relation to holy war or even war in general" (Firestone, 1999: 16). In the Islamic juridico-religious sense, it has a number of meanings, all of which fall under a rather loose concept of "exertion of one's power to the utmost of one's capacity in the cause of God." Some of these meanings are directly derived from the Quran itself,[30] while others have been formulated based on Muhammad's Sunna. The term has two broad meanings. One is an internal struggle to overcome one's weaknesses and perfect oneself to become and remain a true God-fearing Muslim. This, in the Muslim tradition, has come to be called "the greater jihad" (*al-jihad al-akbar*, Arabic الجهاد الأكبر). The second is an external (physical) struggling against those who oppose the Islamic principles and rule. This is called "the lesser jihad" (*al-jihad al-asghar*, Arabic الجهاد الأصغر).[31] In other words, jihad can be either personal (limited to the individual) or social (encompassing social groups or society at large).

In the scholarship (especially in the realm of social sciences), jihad traditionally has been viewed through the prism of violence – it has become associated with armed struggle and fighting and usually described in negative terms. Most Muslims, among them religious scholars, have forcefully contested such an approach – they

[30] From such verses as 25:52, 9:20, 9:81, 22:78, 29:69, 61:11, etc. For the full list, see http://quran.ajeeb.com or other Quranic indexes.

[31] Peters insists that it is the later rather than classical authors who emphasize the moral and spiritual aspects of jihad. See Peters, 1979: 117–121.

insisted that Islam is in general a peaceful religion and jihad in particular exemplifies this.[32] Yet, within the Muslim *Umma* there have always been those who advocate the jihad-as-fighting concept. They have done and still do so for reasons quite different from those non-Muslim scholars of Islam who emphasize jihad's violent nature.

Thus, the relation of "jihad" to violence has been the focal point in the still-ongoing and ages-long polemic, not only between Muslims and non-Muslims, but also among Muslims themselves. In this polemics, however, one has to appreciate the distinction between the original sources (the Quran and Hadith collections) as eternal and universal (this especially applies to the Quran) and elaborations made later in the history. The text of the Quran is, no doubt, the point of reference for the discussion of jihad and its relation to violence. Yet, while some simply derive their arguments from the Quran, others, on the contrary, force their premeditated arguments on the holy book of Muslims. By stretching their interpretations of their Quranic readings, some Muslims projected a framework for their particular world view onto a document which did not justify it. This, naturally, has brought discrepancies among Muslims in perception of the notion of "jihad."[33]

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, in his widely-used English translation of the text of the Quran, makes a distinction between fighting (*qital*, Arabic قتال) and striving (*jihad*): he desists from using the two words as synonyms.[34] Indeed, in the Quran, jihad is not equated with armed struggle or any other type of violence. On the other hand, the Quran speaks at length about *qital*. *Qital* is not only permitted, it has even been commanded: "Fighting (*qital*) is prescribed to you, though you do not like it. Still, it can be that you do not like a thing which is good for you, and it can be that you like a thing which is bad for you. And God knows and you do not know" (2:216), though certain conditions must always be fulfilled.[35] These conditions are comprehensively set in the *Sura al-Tauba* (Chapter 9 of the Quran): Wrongdoing and hostility against Muslims must be resisted, if there be need, even by armed struggle; only combatants should be fought against, while civilians (the elderly, children, women, monks, and priests) have to be spared; fighting should cease as soon as hostilities from the adversary's side cease; those adversaries, who submit to the Muslim rule, should be

[32] For an elaborate analysis of the concept of jihad, see Boisard, 1991.
[33] For interpretation and use of the concept of jihad by contemporary Muslim political activists, see Kepel, 2002.
[34] Yet, in footnote 4820 to verse 47:4, he equates fighting to jihad. Yusuf Ali, 1989: 1315.
[35] One has always to bear in mind the specific historical situation to which a certain Quranic verse corresponds. However, some Muslims insist that the commandment found in 2:216 is a general command applicable to other times as well.

granted certain rights in exchange for duties; concluded truces have to be observed, and so on. Anyway, the Quran vigorously praises the Islamic fighter (*qatil*, Arabic قاتل), and the slain fighter (*maqtul*, Arabic مقتول) gets an enormous reward from God. It only remains unclear whether *qital* is a *fard 'ayn* or *fard kifaya*. In any case, *qital fi sabili allah* (fighting in God's path) is a virtue in the eyes of God, as it is asserted in numerous verses of the Quran.[36] Yet, relation between *qital* and jihad remains ambiguous in the whole of the Quran. In any case, there is more to jihad than just *qital*.

In the Quran, "jihad," besides its other meanings, is an all-encompassing effort to make the Islamic rule prevail. It includes one's time, property and health, and even life (4:95, 9:20). Though there is no clear-cut distinction, the Quran speaks of, on the one hand, private (personal) jihad as a life-long endeavor (almost a synonym of piety, *taqwa*, Arabic تقوة) (:35 ,17:19 ,22:78 ,25:52 ,29:6) and, on the other hand, occasional communal activity, which might even amount to armed struggle (4:95, 9:81). Hence, the notions of *jihad al-akbar* and *jihad al-asghar* are implied in the Quran itself.

From the Quranic perspective, it is rather easy to link *da'wa* and jihad to each other: Both refer to "striving in the path of God." From a theoretical perspective, as a contemporary commentator, Fadlullah, suggests, *qital* is for defending Muslim lives and property and by this preparing the ground for *da'wa*, as *da'wa* can properly operate only in a peaceful environment (Fadlullah, 1994: 100). *Qital* and *da'wa*, thus, stay separate. Therefore, it can be said that jihad (as long as it is not in the form of armed struggle, *qital*) can be taken for a form of *da'wa*. Conversely, it can be argued that jihad comprises several forms – *qital* (armed defense of religion), *da'wa* (offense, albeit peaceful, of religion), as well as personal piety, *taqwa*.

In the Hadith collections (the *Sahihs* of al-Bukhari and Muslim, most notably), military jihad takes up almost all the space of the chapters on jihad. Here Muhammad's military expeditions (*ghazawat*, Arabic غزوات) are treated as jihad. As Hadith collections suggest, Muhammad's companions were very much concerned with military activities of the Muslim community, be they defensive or, even more, offensive. In the English language *Summarized Sahih al-Bukhari*, its compiler, Zain-ud-Din al-Zubaidi, elevates jihad to the rank of a pillar of Islam, "on which Islam stands." According to al-Zubaidi, "By Jihad Islam is established, Allah's Word is made superior, (…) and His Religion (Islam) is propagated" (al-Zubaidi, 1994: 580).

[36] Fighting verses appear more frequently in the Suras of the Medinan period, which was a much more aggressive one than the Meccan phase of Muhammad as prophet-*da'i's* activities.

In the Hadith collections, *mujahidun* (those who perform jihad) are further admired: in several hadiths, Muhammad is reported to have said that *mujahid* (the one who strives in God's path with his self and his wealth) is the best among the "people" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 201). Reward for jihad, as it is promised in the Islamic sources, is not superceeded by the reward for any other activity Muslims can do. Jihad is the third-best deed after prayer and being dutiful to one's own parents (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 200). Yahya al-Nawawi reproduces a hadith from Tirmidhi's hadith compilation in which Muhammad says: "Shall I tell you of the peak of the matter, its pillar and its topmost part (*ra's al-amr wa 'amuduhu wa dhirwat sanamihi*)? … The peak of the matter is Islam; the pillar is prayer; and its topmost part is jihad" (al-Nawawi, 1992: 100). Armed jihad is the activity that guarantees its actor eternal salvation: "Know that Paradise is under the shades of swords" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 208; also Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 143). Muhammad supposedly has said: "Setting off on God's path in the morning and coming back in the evening is better than the world and whatever is in it" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 202). On the other hand, serving one's parents passes for jihad: "A man came to the Prophet asking his permission to take part in Jihad. The Prophet asked him, 'Are your parents alive?' He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said to him, 'Then exert yourself in their service'" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 4: 11). As it is pronounced in the Hadith collections, for women, hajj takes the place of jihad.

There is a hadith, reported in both *Sahihs* and also reiterated by al-Nawawi in his *Forty Hadith*, which is based on the verse 2:193 and in which Muhammad says that he has been ordered "to fight (*qatala*) against people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah..." (al-Nawawi, 1992: 46). This hadith in itself provides some insights into how Muslims perceived the acceptable and most appropriate ways of spreading their faith. First of all, this hadith can be read to suggest that Muslims should have hostile relations that amount to armed struggle with non-believers. Second, the hostility should remain until the non-believers become Muslims – pronounce the *shahadatain* – "There is no other deity but God; Muhammad is God's messenger." In this hadith, *qital* takes the place of *da'wa*. The reader might be left with the impression that Muhammad propagated violence. Translators of al-Nawawi hurried to extirpate him of this misimpression by adding a note to the above hadith: "Islam advocates that conversion be by conviction. (…) The waging of war is enjoined against certain categories of persons, such as those who attack a Muslim country, those who prevent the preaching and spread of Islam by

peaceful means, and apostates" (al-Nawawi, 1992: 46). However, this hadith is only a replication of verse 9:29: "Fight against those who do not believe in God nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by God and His Messenger and who do not practice the religion of truth among those who were given the Book, until they pay the jizya with willing submission and feel themselves subdued," with the only difference being that here non-believers (implying Christians, Jews, and, as some Muslim scholars argue, Zoroastrians) are allowed to retain their original faith but are taxed for living in a Muslim state. From both the Quranic verse and the hadith cited above, it can be assumed that fighting (armed jihad), at least in certain instances, is commanded of Muslims until non-believers either convert (applicable to all non-Muslims) or accept a tax, *jizya* (applicable to the *ahl al-Kitab*).

From the Hadith collections, it appears that military enterprises of the first two or three generations after Muhammad, rather than the peaceful (among them missionary) activities of Muslims, eventually started being identified with jihad. This is precisely how military expeditions and conquests are treated in both the *Kitab al-jihad* (the chapter on jihad) of the *Sahih al-Bukhari* and the *Kitab al-jihad wa al-siyar* (the chapter on jihad and expeditions) of the *Sahih Muslim*. (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3; Muslim, 195–, II, 5). On the other hand, such hadiths as the one of Muhammad writing letters inviting other rulers to embrace Islam are also included in the same chapters.[37] Moreover, as a previously mentioned hadith suggests, peaceful invitation (*da'wa*) to convert to Islam should take precedent over physical struggle:

> Ali said, "Oh Prophet of God, should I fight them till they become like us?" The Prophet said, "Proceed to them steadily till you approach their place and then invite them to Islam and inform them of their duties towards the God, for by God, if through you a man is guided by God on the right path, it would be better for you than red camels." (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 207; also Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 140)

The rather loose use of the term "jihad" in the Hadith collections includes both violent and peaceful actions, so that it becomes virtually impossible to give a comprehensive definition of "jihad." "*Qital*," "*ghazwa*" and "jihad" in the Hadith literature all seem to denote the same activity – fighting.[38] Thus, in the Sunna "jihad" and "*da'wa*" do not complement each other as much as in the Quran. However, the few hadiths cited above link the two words to a certain degree. Therefore, it can be concluded that both the Quran and Sunna allow a certain relationshp between the two

[37] Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 166 reports that Muhammad had written letters to the King of Persia, Emperor of Byzantine and King of Abyssinia inviting them to embrace Islam.
[38] Many Muslim scholars have uncritically endorsed the perception that the three terms are synonyms. See, for example, al-Zuhayli, 1981: 31.

concepts, enabling further elaborations linking the two concepts. In fact, as it is shown below, many Muslim scholars argue that one is a part of the other: *Da'wa* cannot be fulfilled without jihad, and jihad includes *da'wa* activities.

JIHAD IN HISTORICAL – THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Practicing jihad is argued by some Muslim activists to bring enormous rewards from God:

> as regards the reward and blessing, there is one deed which is very great in comparison to all the acts of worship and all the good deeds – and that is Jihad! Jihad is regarded as the best thing, one can offer voluntarily. It is superior to non-obligatory prayers, fasting, Zakat, Umra and Hajj as mentioned in the Qur'an and the Ahadith of the Prophet. (Mujahid)

The majority of Muslims, however, are not this radical and do not necessarily prioritize jihad. Yet, they also see it as one of the fundamental duties of Muslims. A Shi'i scholar, Ayatullah Mutahhari's position is representative of the stance among moderate Shi'is and, with some modification, Sunnis: "We know jihad to be one of the principle duties of Islam. When we are asked what the principle duties are, we say, "There are ten: prayer, fasting, *khums*, *zakat*, *hajj*, *jihad*, etc" (Mutahhari, 1986: 86).

It has to be taken into consideration that Muslim jurists distinguished up to four types of jihad – those of "heart, tongue, hand, and sword." The first three make up the "greater jihad," and the last one the "lesser jihad." All, however, are interlinked and can be performed simultaneously. All four meanings of "jihad" distinguished by Muslim jurists can also one or the other way be related to "*da'wa*." The first one (heart) is related because to become a *da'i* a Muslim has to perfect himself/herself, and this process is precisely what "the greater jihad" stands for. In order to inform non-believers of one's own faith, one has to have not only a profound knowledge of that faith but has to live up to the principles of that faith – to be faithful in word and deed. In this way, a *da'i* has to be (ideally) a perfect Muslim, or at least someone who aspires to become one. Then, since perfection in the sense of being a true Muslim is a permanent process rather than a state, a Muslim has to be continuously engaged in the "greater jihad" with and within himself/herself. Quoting Ismail al-Faruqi, a prominent Muslim activist, "Islamicity is never a *fait accompli*. Islamicity is a process" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 35). Islamicity here is to be understood as an ideal of Islamic perfection – both personal and social. This kind of jihad can be viewed as a form of *da'wa* within oneself. Much in the same vein, Khurram Murad, another Muslim activist,

insists that "Islam is not a once-in-a-lifetime decision; it is a process, a life long pursuit....To be a Muslim means to continually strive to become Muslim, that means to do Da'wah" (Murad, 1986: 12). In other words, putting efforts into being a Muslim is taken by some as a sort of *da'wa*, albeit personal and inner.

Jihad by tongue and hand could be regarded as just different names for *da'wa*: *Da'wa* is both preaching about and exemplifying in one's life the perfection of the Islamic way. Moreover, as verse 3:104 urges, there should arise a group of those who "enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong," letting others know (by advice and practical example) what is right (enjoined and recommended) and what is wrong (disliked and forbidden). Peters in his analysis of the concept of jihad even speaks about the double nature of this kind of jihad: Efforts addressed toward fellow Muslims are called the "home mission," whereas activities directed at non-Muslims are termed "external mission." He calls this "external mission" *jihad al-da'wa* (Peters, 1979: 119). In such a case, *da'wa* is peaceful and patient efforts on the part of those who engage in it. This type of *da'wa* is social, outer, for it is addressed to other individuals or groups. This is the *da'wa* that the Quran and Sunna enjoin upon Muslims. It constitutes the principle methods of the missionary activities in Islam.

The fourth meaning of jihad, that of armed struggle (sword) against infidels and all those who oppose the Islamic principles and rule (*shari'a*) – as well as against apostates or renegades – can also be taken for a form of *da'wa* or even "post-*da'wa*." As has been pointed to above, there are several hadiths that permit Muslims to engage in military assault against non-believers only after they have invited them to convert to Islam (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 207; also Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 139). This is why for a top contemporary Muslim propagandist, Ali Nadwi, jihad, the fighting, is what comes after *da'wa*, the preaching, and only if the latter fails (Nadwi, 1983: 126).

On the other hand, the armed jihad is seen by some to precede *da'wa*. Poston, drawing on analysis of several scholars, advances the idea that jihad of the early Muslim conquests was meant to set the stage for successful *da'wa*: "The political conquests were designed to create a milieu, an environment in which the Muslim faith could be planted, tended and harvested," since the "capture of executive, judicial, and legislative control by those with an interest in missionary activity ensures that such activity can go forward unhindered" (Poston, 1992: 14). Poston's assumption, however, is a simplification – as will be argued below, the early Muslims hardly had any designs on missionary work in the conquered lands. Therefore, though Poston's idea that jihad can precede *da'wa* is theoretically appealing and might be useful when

analyzing later conquests and wars of Muslims, it can hardly be applicable to the first wave of Muslim expansion.

According to David Kerr, contrary to Poston's asumption, jihad-as-military-encounter was merely meant to open new territories for Muslim rule. *Da'wa* and conversion of the conquered population was a separate concern for Muslims (Kerr, 2000: 153). Kerr is altogether categorical in his belief that *da'wa* and armed jihad have been separated by classical *mufassirs*: he argues that "the classical exegetes generally distinguished *da'wa*…from *jihad* that applies to the territorial expansion of the Caliphate" (Kerr, 2000: 153). My own scrutiny of several *tafsirs* supports this conclusion of Kerr – *mufassirs* do not relate armed offensive jihad to *da'wa*. Marcel Boisard also seems to separate jihad (in its military form) from *da'wa*: Jihad, in his opinion, was for the sake of imposing formal political Muslim rule on a given territory and had nothing to do with converting indigenous peoples to Islam: The "holy war" is in reality an instrument used to impose the "world of Islam," understood as harmony, order, and peace, which is both spiritual and material, individual and collective. Yet, this "war does not have the aim of imposing the religion by force" (Boisard, 1991: 23). Richard Bulliet, in his study of conversion to Islam in the first centuries of the Islamic era, convincingly shows that military expansion of the boarders of the Muslim Empire had little correlation with the conversion rate among the indigenous populations of the conquered lands. Moreover, mass conversions to Islam that took place a century or two later, were provoked by rather mundane motives, like the economic and social ones (Bulliet, 1979).[39]

Thus the "jihad first, *da'wa* second" pattern can only be applicable in an environment with strong Muslim missionary drive already in existence, as in modern times. Ayatullah Mutahhari explains the theoretical conditions for this pattern: He speaks of the "oppressor" who "has positioned a people in a vacuum and blocks the call of Islam. Islam reserves the right to spread its message throughout the world, but this depends upon there being the freedom for it to spread" (Mutahhari, 1986: 96) and further argues that "if a barrier hinders the call, such as some power having arisen as an obstacle, denying permission … then it is permissible to fight against it until it falls and the barrier against the caller crumbles" (Mutahhari, 1986: 111; similarly, al-Zuhayli, 1981: 37). Mutahhari's position, moreover, is highly politicized – it argues

[39] See also Janson's remark on *da'wa's* "curious dual quality in relation to military conquest" (Janson, 2003: 67).

for removal of political power which in one way or another hinders the spread of the Islamic message.

The two opposite positions described above, namely that armed jihad either follows (Nadwi) or precedes (Mutahhari) *da'wa*, should be analyzed in light of the definition and meaning of the armed, i.e. "lesser," jihad. First of all, one has to decide whether the armed jihad is a defensive or offensive activity. If it is a defensive one, it in no way can precede the "inviting," for it would be limited to protecting the already existing Islamic milieu. If, however, jihad is considered to be offensive, then it naturally can precede any preaching. In such a case, as Poston and others argue, it indeed can prepare the ground for potentially successful preaching and conversion of the conquered peoples to Islam. On the other hand, should the Islamic conquests, especially those made in the 7th through 9th centuries, be considered as jihad? For most Muslims they likely are a form, if not the essence, of jihad. However, for researchers of Islam, they hardly are so. After all, military encounter in Islam does not always imply jihad – "*harb*" (Arabic حرب), "*ghazw*," "*sira'*" (Arabic صراع), "*qital*" and other terms denote armed struggle as well. Al-Zuhayli insists that only religiously motivated fighting, that is, fighting for Islamic religious ideals, can be called "jihad" (al-Zuhayli, 1981: 34). In the Sunna, there is only a faint distinction between "jihad" and "*ghazawat*" – military raids and expeditions carried out by Muhammad and his immediate successors – and practically no distinction between "jihad" and "*qital*." It can be inferred that Muhammad himself saw no difference between the two, or indeed between the different types of armed struggle in general.

Arnold holds that "the common, popular meaning of 'warfare against unbelievers' attached to the word Jihad, is post-Quranic" (Arnold: 445–446). Moreover, he argues that jihad as a military activity has little, if anything, to do with the initial meaning of the term "jihad" as envisioned by God and Muhammad. Though Arnold does not pursue this idea of his to its logical end, it may be assumed that he implies that the military jihad is invalid and baseless *vis-a-vis* the Quran. There is some sense in this line of argument: The jihad of the Hadith collections, which were themselves finalized more than 150 years after the death of Muhammad, reflects a post-Quranic and, one may say, offensive and expansionist phase in the development of the Islamic concepts. There can also be a diametrically opposite approach: Once the victories ceased to be self-evident and conquests came to a halt, there arose a need to boost the spirits and look for a justification for fighting. Hence, appropriate hadiths

were circulated.[40] In any case, one can argue that the jihad of the Quran is not congruent with the jihad of the Sunna.

Contemporary Muslim activist and leader of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, Mustafa Mashhour, at first blush may seem to support Arnold's position when he declares that "the authentic understanding of the meaning of *Jihad* at that stage of the Revelation was represented as endurance in face of oppression, steadfastness in upholding the Truth, and insistence on proclaiming the *Da'wah*" (Mashhour, 1999: 53). Yet, Mashhour here actually implies a separation between the two phases of Muhammad's activities and thus of the nature of revelations themselves: While in Mecca, Muhammad employed peaceful *da'wa*. However, once in Yathrib, he pursued a more radical approach – military struggle, jihad, one may say. Another member of the *al-Ikhwan*, the well-known Egyptian scholar Sayyid Qutb, noted several decades prior to Mashhour (whose spiritual leader was Qutb) four stages in the development of jihad:

> 1. While the earliest Muslims remained in Mecca before fleeing to Medina, God did not allow them to fight; 2. Permission is given to Muslims to fight against their oppressors; 3. God commands Muslims to fight those fighting them; 4. God commands the Muslims to fight against all polytheists. (Qutb, n.d.: 53–76)

Qutb suggests that jihad was defensive only in the initial period of Muhammad's mission. Then, Muslims were not only allowed to fight aggressors, but were even commanded to attack non-believers. This last mandate is to continue as long as there are non-Muslims on the Earth.[41]

A much more moderate thinker than Qutb, and a distinguished contemporary Pakistani scholar, Fazlur Rahman, while recognizing the extensive presence of jihad in the Quran, rejects the stance of those modern Muslim apologists who have tried to explain the jihad of the early Muslim community in purely defensive terms (Rahman, 1979: 37). Following these Muslim advocates, jihad of the Meccan period should not be identified with jihad of the Medinan period, which became the ideal of and the theoretical ground for historical jihad for centuries following Muhammad's death.[42] Consequently, the Quranic verses that urge Muslims to be patient and perseverant in the face of hostilities from the non-believer's side and engage in peaceful preaching of

[40] This possibility was suggested to me by Professor Jaakko-Hämeen Anttila, to whom I am grateful.
[41] Firestone, in his analysis of the Quranic passages on warring, challenges this line of reasoning common to many (classical) Muslim thinkers. He questions the chronology and conditions under which verses on fighting could have been articulated by Muhammad, and which of them abrogated which. Firestone, 1999: 50–64.
[42] Peters claims that this line of reasoning and distinction has been common among Muslim scholars. Peters, 1979: 13.

their Islamic faith are argued to have been abrogated by militarily inclined verses of the later, Medinan, period. This way, the jihad in Mecca (whatever it was) is peaceful, while the jihad in Medina becomes violent.

Even if separation of the two phases of Muhammadan jihad are taken at face value and held as legally binding, one still remains faced with the dilemma of defining what makes a physical (armed) struggle a jihad. In other words, what are the conditions for a military encounter to be considered as jihad? In his lifetime, Muhammad as a sole leader of the embryonic Muslim society made the decisions himself – whatever he called to be jihad/*ghazw*/*qital*, that was it. However, the greatest Muslim encounters with non-Muslims took place after Muhammad's death. Though Muslims insist that the expeditions and subsequent occupations of the first few centuries after Muhammad's death were religiously motivated (hence they are argued by Muslims to have been essentially jihad), it is beyond a doubt that many military expeditions, battles, or occupations then and in later centuries took place without religious motives at all. Many of them have been and still are politically and economically motivated.

Yet, as it is explicitly stated in at least one hadith (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 206), there can be no true jihad for political or economic ends. From other hadiths (cited above), it is clear that the legitimizing motivation for jihad has to be religious. Throughout their history Muslims have been in agreement on this, at least in theory, and would invariably clad their "jihad"-dubbed armed struggles in religious terminology. They, however, have not come to a consensus as to what and who defines "religiousness" and, thus, the validity of an armed struggle. While the defensive jihad remains a must (*fard 'ayn*) to every and all able Muslims, even without a call to arms by the religious or secular authorities of the land, classical theories of jihad speak of the leader (*khalifa*, for Sunnis, *imam*, for Shi'is) who has the right to declare offensive jihad. After Muhammad, the legitimate formal leader of the community is entrusted with the decision-making and responsibility-taking. But who should perform the offensive jihad? Some Muslim jurists consider it a *fard kifaya*, that if a sufficient number of Muslims engage in it, others are absolved of the duty to fight. Additionally, Muslims, who supply the *mujahidin* with ammunition and food, are also considered by some Muslim scholars to be themselves *mujahidin*.

An extreme opinion on the issue of jihad is expressed by Hasan al-Banna,[43] who insists that even the offensive armed jihad is obligatory for every Muslim, a *fard ʻayn*. The whole Muslim community should fight in spreading Islam by all means: "Jihad is a communal obligation imposed upon the Islamic umma in order to broadcast the summons (to embrace Islam)" (*Five Tracts*, 1978: 150). Though al-Banna accepts the possibility of "broadcasting the mission and propagating it among men with argument and proof" (in the vein of the commandment found in the Quran, 16:125), for him, if *daʻwa* (understood here as the peaceful means of spreading Islam, especially by word and exemplary behavior) is obstructed, armed jihad steps into its place:

> He (God) commanded them (Muslims) to strive to their utmost for Allah's sake, by broadcasting the mission and propagating it among men with argument and proof. But if they should persist in rash acts, outrages, and rebellion, then with the sword and the spear! But if men abjure proof and stray from the path, then war more avails upon earth than peace. (*Five Tracts*, 1978: 80)

For al-Banna, the lesser jihad is the proper jihad, and he advocates it more than any other form of jihad (*Five Tracts*, 1978: 155). Al-Banna's way of reasoning is echoed in the writing of Abu Fadl, who insists that there is no "greater" or "lesser" jihad, that jihad is of one kind – namely, armed (Fadl, 1999). Following al-Banna and Abu Fadl's argument, *daʻwa* and jihad would not have much in common, for their immediate objectives differ quite significantly – while *daʻwa* is aimed at saving "souls," al-Banna and Abu Fadl's jihad is aimed at subduing or even exterminating the recalcitrant non-Muslim (those who do not submit to the Muslim rule, who do not accept the status of *dhimmis* – protected non-Muslim political minority).

The diverging reasoning on the nature and rationale of jihad,[44] even among Muslims, makes the relationship between *daʻwa* and jihad a peculiar one. On the one hand, as some argue, jihad in a sense of physical struggle for the sake of Islam, the "lesser" jihad, is what comes after *daʻwa* has been exhausted, or, as some argue, is what precedes it. In such a case, the aims of the two differ, as do the methods. On the other hand, jihad as constant perfection of one's Islamicity, the "greater" jihad, is a part of *daʻwa* (or, as for some, *daʻwa* is a part of jihad) – both activities are aimed at establishing Islamic principles as the ruling principles in individual, then in society

[43] On al-Banna's and his followers' (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) ideas about *daʻwa*, see below in Chapter 8.

[44] As Peters has correctly observed, "the word *jihad* in modern Arabic stands for rather a vague concept. In accordance with its original meaning, it can denote any effort towards a subjectively praiseworthy aim, which need not necessarily have anything to do with religion" (Peters, 1979: 3).

and ultimately in the whole world. The goal, then, appears to be the same, yet the approaches differ.

Though some separate *da'wa* and jihad, other contemporary Muslim activists hold firm to the opinion that *da'wa* and jihad are inter-linked, if not one and the same. However, there is a difference of opinion as to whether to consider jihad as a part of *da'wa* or vice versa. Peters in his investigation of the evolution of jihad theory argues that for Muslims, "the aim of jihad is the subjection of the unbelievers," and continues that this can be achieved either by converting the conquered peoples to Islam of making them into *dhimmis* (Peters, 1979: 36). Peters' reading of Muslim theories implies that for Muslims *da'wa* (missionary activities) has been a part of jihad. Another non-Muslim scholar, Lars Pedersen, investigating contemporary *da'wa* also believes that for Muslims *da'wa* is a part of jihad and as such is an integral part of contemporary Muslim activist groups, especially those pursuing their activities in Europe (Pedersen, 1991: 147 and further). The observation that *da'wa* is considered to be a part of jihad undertaken by Muslim organizations and individual activists in Europe (and by extension in North America) deserves some attention. The peculiarities of "*da'wa* in the West" are dealt with in Chapter 5.

Murad, one of such Muslims described by Pedersen as actively engaged in Europe (the United Kingdom), confirms Pedersen's hypothesis in believing *da'wa* a part of what he calls "total endeavour and struggle (Jihad)" (Murad, 1986: 6). Murad transfers the two meanings of "jihad," "the greater jihad" and "the lesser jihad," onto *da'wa*: "Da'wah has to be addressed to the 'self' as well as to the 'other', to the individual as well as to the society" (Murad, 1986: 13). Similarly, in a *khutba* reproduced on the Internet, the *khatib*, identified as A. Bewley, argues that "Da'wa leads to Jihad, and like Jihad there is no end to it. It is an ongoing obligation. We must establish and call, establish more and call more" (Bewley). A Muslim activist organization addresses its potential followers with the following words:

> Those who have the time and inclination, please join Muttaqun Foundation for opportunities of *jihad*, and this starts with spreading the *da'wah* to the straying Muslims first, to build up the Muslim communities so we can best be prepared to bring in the new Muslims as they are coming in, and they surely are coming in, masha'Allah. It STARTS with the *daw'ah* in its many forms, but in its "END" or more appropriately, "down the road", come many tests and trials. (*What is the Muslimah's role)*

Likewise, for some contemporary formal Muslim authorities,

> Calling people to Islam and making them acquainted with it in all its aspects through dialogue and kind persuasion is the first type of Jihad in Islam, in contrast to the imagined

> belief that Jihad is only of the combative form. Hence, da`wah – performing the activities of propagating Islam and its related fields of knowledge – is the cornerstone of the 'building' of Jihad and its rules; and any attempt to build without this 'stone' would damage the meaning and reality of Jihad. (Kabbani & Hendricks)

The late Saudi Grand Mufti Ibn Baz put the relation between *da'wa* and *jihad* in the following words: "There are different kinds of *Jihad* – with one's self, wealth, supplication, teaching, giving guidance, or helping others in good in any form. The highest form of *Jihad*, however, is with one's life; then comes *Jihad* with one's wealth and *Jihad* with teaching and guidance, and in this way *Da'wah* is a form of *Jihad*, but *Jihad* with one's life is the highest form.' (*Fatawa Islamiyah*, 2002, 8: 24)

Tablighi Jama'at, an Indian-based transnational Muslim organization devoted to *da'wa*, is reported to consider jihad as a highest part of *da'wa*. In the words of Khalid Masud,

> *da'wa* movements often define *Jihad* as one of the methods of implementing the Islamic principle of Amr b'il ma'aruf wa nahiy 'anil munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil). Tablighi Jama'at also conceives of its *Da'wa* within the framework of this principle, which derives its justification from a *hadith* that prescribes the use of force to prevent evil. Frequently, Jihad is considered as the highest form of this method of prevention. (Masud, 2000b: 105)

Miloš Mendel, after scrutinizing the publications of al-Azhar ulama, has come to conclusion that for most of them, "*jihad* is an integral part of the Islamic mission (*da'wa*), which should be implemented by individuals and the state alike" (Mendel, 1998: 94).

The authors cited above seem to have no difficulties in relating *da'wa* to jihad, something that barely is implied in the Quran and Sunna. This they do by "pacifying" jihad – making it into a peaceful missionary venture, totally disregarding the implications of the "lesser" jihad/*qital*. Though this is logically possible – the "greater" jihad can indeed be equated to *da'wa* (this does not overtly contradict the Quran or Sunna) – this still departs from the notions of jihad found in the Quranic text and, more so, in the Hadiths. As has been shown above, in both texts jihad is not necessarily peaceful, nor is it spoken of as a missionary activity. Moreover, contemporary Muslim activists are rather liberal and selective in their approach to the holy text of Islam to the extent that they come up with conclusions contradicting not only each other, but the founding texts as well. The concept of jihad has been and continues to be one of the most contested spaces among Muslims and with new attention being paid to it by non-Muslims. Thus, the range of interpretations has vastly

expanded to become beyond the scope of inquiry of the present study. Speaking about relation between jihad and *da'wa*, which is the prime concern here, and by linking the "lesser" jihad to *da'wa*, the concerned Muslims fall into two broad categories – the offensive and pacifist activists. This is dealt with in the following section.

"NO COERCION IN RELIGION"

Every invitation, *da'wa* among them, can be turned down. What do the Quran and hadiths have to say about unfulfilled *da'wa*? There is no exact line in the holy scripture or Hadith collections where it speaks to the case when *da'wa* is not accepted. However, as several hadiths hold, Muslims should not fight non-believers before they have been invited to convert to Islam (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 207; Muslim, 195–, II, 5: 139). Again, there is another, a more moderate attitude attested to both in the Quran and Sunna: those non-Muslims who do not fight Muslims should not be fought against, especially if they accept the political rulership of Muslims. In any case, Muslims are to convey the information on Islam, and it is up to non-Muslims to decide and choose what next.

Muslim activists debate the question of the extent of *da'wa* – is it just an invitation or does it encompass the very act of successful converting? In other words, are Muslims to persist in their *da'wa* efforts till people actually convert to Islam, or are they only to invite them "with wisdom and good advice" – that is, simply to convey the message? The Quranic injunctions create some tension, for verse 2:256 warns against any compulsion in forcing one's religious convictions over others, while verse 16:125 commands communicating those convictions to those who are not aware of them or who do not share and abide by them. Verse 3:104 even encourages "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong." But, then, if verses 16:125 and 2:256 argue for "wisdom and good advice" and not compulsion to be used in inviting people to accept Islam, where does jihad as use of force (implicit in verse 3:104) fit in? Of course, defensive jihad is automatically justified, but jihad as a continuation, or outgrowth, of *da'wa* seems to clash with the injunction found in 2:256.

The Quranic text does not directly or explicitly elaborate upon the supposed contradiction. Al-Tabarsi allows that verse 16:125 was revealed before verse 2:256 and abrogated by the latter (al-Tabarsi, 1953, 6: 393). Indeed, there has been some discussion among *mufassirs* as to whether verse 2:256 itself has not been abrogated

(al-Zuhayli, 1981: 78–80). Some of the *mufassirs* consider 16:125 to have been abrogated by the so-called "sword verse" of 9:5: "When the sacred months have passed, kill the polytheists wherever you find them…." This basically retrospectively justified the use of force in the history of Islam against non-Muslims at expense of peaceful persuasion. Firestone does not accept the argument of *mufassirs* and puts it another way – though formal abrogation of 16:125 is hard to conclude in the Quran itself, 16:125 was practically ignored by Muslims throughout the history (Firestone, 1999: 16). One may add that in the history of the spread of Islam this often enough meant that force preceded if not supplanted the "wisdom and good advice" spoken of in verse 16:125.

Sheikh al-Azhar Mahmud Shaltut denies that there is any contradiction in the Quran. To him, there cannot be and is no compulsion (coercion) in Muslim missionary activities (Shaltut, 1977: 28–39). Shaltut argues that the mission of all messengers sent by God was the same, namely, to "proclaim the unity of God,...require the worship of God, ... command to do what is good and forbid what is reprehensible,...recommand virtue and preach against evil" (Shaltut, 1977: 29). That is to say, they were just "callers and warners." Shaltut ignores the case that "commanding to do what is good and forbidding what is reprehensible" might entail using force. Miloš Mendel interprets Shaltut's position in the following manner:

> The Islamic call, being implemented through *jihad*, is nothing but a product of divinely inspired natural human reason and intellect. Therefore, there is no contradiction between the God's order for Muslims "to enforce the good and to oppose the evil" (*al-amr bi-al-ma'ruf wa an-nahy'an al-munkar*) and the principles which the Westerners use to name "humanism" or "human rights." (Mendel, 1998: 91)

Shaltut is not unique in this attitude – many contemporary Muslim activists of *da'wa* emphasize that *da'is* must by no means exercise coercion in whatever form they practice their *da'wa*. According to one of the most outspoken contemporary advocates of *da'wa*, al-Faruqi, "humanistic ethic regards coerced da'wah as a grave violation of the human person, second only to homicide, if not equal to it" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 33). He, on the other hand, seems to separate *da'wa* from jihad (any physical force). For al-Faruqi, if, after being exposed to the invitation to Islam, a "non-Muslim is still not convinced, the Muslim is to rest his case with God" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 33).

A Shi'i Ezzati in his own way espouses practically the same opinion as al-Faruqi:

> Islam is an all inclusive religion covering all aspects of life: both physical and spiritual. Islam is first and foremost a belief system on which the entire edifice of action and practice is based. Although a religion may officially be established as the religion of a land or a nation, a religion with no faith is like a body with no soul. That is why Islam has totally rejected coercion in religion and has consequently established its own approach towards spreading the Truth, the word of Allah. The approach and method is termed in Islamic literature as Da'wah meaning preaching, spreading, inviting, asking, leading, encouraging and enjoining good and forbidding evil. (Ezzati)

Ezzati emphasizes the faith factor, which in its nature is anathema to coercion. Thus, coercion, though it might bring territorial gains, is not a means to attain faith. Yet, Ezzati fails to specify, how this "enjoining good and forbidding evil" is to be practically implemented so as to avoid sliding into coercive methods.

Such Muslims and others are clearly on the pacifist side – *da'wa* for them ends with the invitation and occasional example. What follows thereafter, even if the Quran and/or Sunna sanction it, is of a different nature and with different methods from those of *da'wa*. These pacifists brush aside the historically violent methods used to enlarge Muslim-ruled territories, methods that had supplanted the peaceful dissemination of the Islamic faith. They dissociate *da'wa* from any aggressive action (even if called "jihad" or one for good religious intentions) undertaken by Muslims. Though they might not deny the aspect of violence in Islam, they deny it in *da'wa*. To them, jihad, as long as it is a peaceful enterprise, fits within the scope of *da'wa* activities, otherwise it has nothing to do with *da'wa*, for in *da'wa* there can be no coercion, something a military activity cannot do without.

However, there are those who, like the already-mentioned al-Banna, assume that the *da'i* is a *mujahid* as well (al-Banna, 1990: 18). Indeed, *da'wa* as al-Banna perceived it was a true jihad – Egypt, he argued, needed jihad to clear up the perceived religious, social, and political messes of his time. Al-Banna, speaking of the "mission" of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, used the very word "*da'wa*." This "mission," however, was turned toward fellow Muslims rather than non-Muslims. And the most significant part of it was to be jihad. As has already been pointed out, al-Banna conceived of jihad solely as an armed struggle, with only bare rudiments of what would be the "greater" jihad. Moreover, this armed struggle was to be the highest means of implementing the perceived Truth. Therefore, it is not surprising that he fully subscribes to the maxim that "Force is the surest way of implementing the right, and how beautiful it is that force and right should march side by side" (*Five Tracts*, 1978: 80).[45] Since al-Banna does not separate the political and religious

[45] Miloš Mendel distinguishes two phases of al-Banna's *da'wa* activities, with a turning point accuring

realms, for him coercion in political matters can by extension be applied in religious matters as well.

Al-Banna's position is radical but not exceptional – the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* and their likes hold fast to it and spread it further. An ardent follower of al-Banna, Mustafa Mashhour, declares, "Such are characteristic features of their *Da'wah*: *Jihad* (striving) is our way, and death in the cause of Allah is the highest objective of our aspiration" (Mashhour, 1999: 138). Two others of the *al-Ikhwan*, Ahmed al-Qutan and Jasim Muhalhal, argue that "jihad (understood here as the combat (*ma'raka*, Arabic معركة) between 'God's helpers' and the 'party of Satan' – *my insertion*) is an essential characteristic in the program of the inviters (*du'a*, Arabic دعاة) to God" (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 53). Moreover, the *mujahidun* struggle not for their own sake, or for the sake of their nations or homelands, but for the sake of God, "in God's path, to realize God's program, to establish His rule, and to implement His Law." Further down, al-Qutan and Muhalhal speak of jihad in an idealized and somewhat poetic manner: jihad is that step in formation of the true Islamic personality, which enables the *mujahid* to loosen his spirit (*ruh*, Arabic روح) from the heavy ties to the earth (get rid of fear, selfishness and self-love, as well as material worries) and with this light spirit to turn and work with lightness toward achieving the set goals (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 108). Jihad can be of several types: jihad by tongue, jihad by learning/teaching, jihad by hand, jihad by soul (*nafs*, Arabic نفس), jihad in a movement (*haraki*, Arabic حركي), political jihad, and financial jihad (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 163). Furthermore, the *mujahid* has to be always ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of the cause he is pursuing. As al-Qutan and Muhalhal preach, *mujahid* has to love, prefer and expect martyrdom (*shahada*, Arabic شهادة) (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 162). This way, at least among some Muslims, *da'wa* is supplanted by jihad, the physical coercive striving not unusually in the fighting sense. More so, it can be said that this type of *da'wa* (if this at all can be considered *da'wa*) is millenarian and self-destructive, something which the Quranic *da'wa* hardly implies. For the objective of *da'wa* is to win over converts, and not just merely to die "in God's path."

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sometime around 1936: "Perhaps somewhere in this period of his activity can be found his ideological turning-point from *da'wa* in the sense of the moderate patient infiltration and disintegration of the society's (Umma's) secularist-lie consciousness towards the promotion of *da'wa* by force, because it is, in al-Bannā's mind, useful for *Umma* even if its members would refuse such means" (Mendel, 1995: 298).

A spiritual heir to al-Banna, the radical Islamic thinker Qutb propounded jihad as the means of implementing Islamic principles on the Earth. Yvonne Haddad thus summarizes Qutb's position:

> It is the duty of Muslims to protect the believers that they do not stray from the religion, permitting the use of force to repel force. 2) Islam must be guaranteed freedom of propagation, otherwise it becomes incumbent on Muslims to "eradicate" any oppressive powers on the earth which impede the *dawah* of Islam. 3) Muslims must be able to affirm God's sovereignty on earth and remove those who usurp this sovereignty by legislating laws. (Haddad, 1983: 84)

While moderate Muslims advocate an opinion that jihad – a physical struggle – should be exercised only in event of an external threat, "jihad for Qutb is a practical matter which should not be renounced" (Haddad, 1983: 84). In Qutb's opinion,

> those who say that Islamic Jihad was merely for the defense of the 'home land of Islam' diminish the greatness of the Islamic way of life and consider it less important than their 'homeland'. This is not the Islamic point of view, and their view is a creation of modern age and is completely alien to Islamic consciousness. (…), the defense of the 'homeland of Islam' is the defense of the Islamic beliefs, the Islamic way of life, and the Islamic community. However, its defense is not the ultimate objective of the Islamic movement of Jihad but it is a mean of establishing the Divine authority within it so that it becomes the headquarters for the movement of Islam, which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind, as the object of this religion is all humanity and its sphere of action is the whole earth. (Qutb, 1998)

In other words, according to Qutb, Muslims are to be in a permanent state of jihad. For Qutb, (offensive) jihad continues to be an integral part of the Islamic way of living. His position echoes the Quranic verse 2:193 and the hadith based on it, both cited above, in which Muhammad pledges to pursue fighting (*qital*) as long as there are non-Muslim adversaries in the world. Qutb is not uncomfortable to acknowledge that jihad is offensive. And the objective of jihad is not merely to defend certain territory but rather to spread Islamic beliefs and norms all over the earth. This radical tradition of reasoning initiated by al-Banna and elaborated upon by Qutb is definitely marginal and in the minority. Yet, this very minority is loud and outspoken, and it naturally takes up much space in the currently ongoing debate among Muslims on the meaning of both "*da'wa*" and "jihad," and its voice should therefore be taken seriously.

Another Muslim activist, Abdul Hakim Tabibi, speaking of *da'wa* and jihad, also justifies fighting by saying that "if the laws of Allah cannot be enforced except by establishing the Muslim Nations, then this becomes a duty and if its establishment requires that we fight in the cause of Allah, then we must fight" (Tabibi, 1984 (?): v). According to Tabibi's logic, *da'wa* as a peaceful means is adequate as long as it

works. If and when it fails, an offensive jihad must be undertaken. He implies that *da'wa* can be applied to Muslims in order to revive their Islamicity, and these "born again" Muslims would continue the fight against non-believers: "There is no alternative to Da'wah and Jihad. Some say we must first obey Allah and teach the Muslims true Islam, and form a great base from a large number of Muslims and then carry Jihad against our enemies to achieve our past glory and wash out our humiliation of the present age" (Tabibi, 1984 (?): v).

To radically inclined Muslim activists, the coerciveness of the armed jihad, which they idealistically perceive as an integral part of daily Muslim life, is not a shortcoming but rather a guarantee for its success. The conviction that only through force the "Truth" can be inculcated into society has become the established component in their broader religio-political discourse to minimize the role of peaceful preaching and other *da'wa* activities. Moreover, as has become evident, force (the "lesser" jihad) can and indeed should be applied equally to both non-Muslims and Muslims who do not subscribe to a given ideology and way of life.

A middle position is represented by Ibn Baz, the now-deceased grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, who authorizes *da'is* to employ physical force in some instances: "a dhaalim (one who commits injustice) who opposes the da`wah with evil and enmity and seeks to cause harm is to be dealt with in a different manner. If possible, such a person should be imprisoned, or something similar to that. This depends on the kind of opposition to the da`wah" (ibn Baz (b)). Though not of itself *da'wa*, clearing of the path for *da'wa*, even by force, is not rejected outright. Ibn Baz here does not refer to verse 3:104, but his argument must be based on it. As shown earlier, for Ibn Baz *da'wa* is a part of an all-encompassing jihad. The use of force permitted by Ibn Baz might not, however, necessarily qualify as jihad; it might merely be some sort of legal sanctions. Moreover, the situation implied by Ibn Baz presupposes that the society is Muslim, or at least governed by Muslims. In such a case, the *da'i's* activities, in Ibn Baz's reasoning, would be some sort of jihad.

A separate case only to a certain degree related to both *da'wa* and jihad is apostasy (*ridda*, Arabic ردة). In the Quran (2:217, 3:86–88, 3:91, 4:137, 9:74, 16:106), as well as in the Hadith collections (al-Bukhari, 1981, IV, 8: 38), abandoning Islam is regarded as a grave crime, but only in the Hadiths does it warrant the death penalty.[46]

[46] Griffel argues that the Hadiths are in contradiction to the Quran on the punishment for apostasy: while in the Quran it is maintained that the apostates will be punished by God Himself, the Hadiths insist on death penalty being applied to apostate while still on Earth. For the discussion and analysis, see Griffel, 2000: 50–57.

The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have ordered apostates killed: "If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 4: 17). He also supposedly said that "the blood of a Muslim who confesses that there is no other deity but God and that I am His Apostle cannot be shed except in one of the three cases: in retribution for murder, for commiting illegal sexual intercourse, and in case one reverts from the religion and abandons the community" (al-Bukhari, 1981, IV, 8: 38). The sanctioning of such drastic measures – in the Islamic legal tradition classified as fixed punishment (*hadd,* Arabic حدّ) found in the Quran or hadiths – must have been falsely attributed to Mohammed after the *ridda* wars, waged by Muhammad's heir Abu Bakr against the rebellious tribes of the Arabian Peninsula who refused to pay taxes to Madina after Muhammad's death, as well as after other schisms and ensuing civil wars in the first century or so of Islam.

One may ask, what about *da'*wa toward apostates, especially individuals with no political agenda behind their apostasy? Are they to be invited back into the fold of Islam? Generally, on the one hand, Muslim jurists do not apply *da'wa* with regard to renegades, for they are considered to have previously accepted *da'wa* (at conversion to Islam) and now reject it (even if born Muslim). Thus, in this case, legal measures take precedence over *da'wa*.

On the other hand, *da'wa* can bring about repentance, which is one of the most debated issues among Muslim scholars regarding apostasy: Does repentance in any way affect the outcome of the sentencing? Most of the scholars would argue that even if a positive sign, it nevertheless does not influence the punishment itself, unless it had occurred before the sentencing, capture, or arrival of the accused to the *Shari'a* court. Of course, there are certain conditions when the *ridda* crime does not warrant *hadd* punishment. An insane person's declarations of conversion to another religion or child's claims of this sort would not qualify as *ridda*. As for adult person of sound intellect, he or she has to face the punishment once guilt is established. Even successful *da'wa* would not help. Muhammad Tulbah Zaid is but one of those contemporary scholars calling for the strictest application of the *hadd* punishment for *ridda* (Zaid, 1982: 435–444). The issue of repentance is not solved even today, though a quarter-century old project by the "High Committee for the development of laws meeting Shari'a regulations" (*Al-lajna al-'aliya litatwir al-qawanin wafqa ahkam ash-shari'a al-islamiya*) gives repentance importance: "The application of *hadd* is canceled by defendant's repentance at any stage of the investigation or trial" (Khamis, 1977: 147).

Another debated issue is the period of time that could/should be given for apostate to reconsider his/her decision to abandon the Islamic faith. Scholars greatly differ on this period and there seems to be no consensus. Zaid is one of the strictest. For him, there should be no period allocated for the reconsideration, and the convicted should be executed immediately, for the apostate must have deliberately considered and chosen their conversion. According to Zaid, since the act of conversion is a conscious move, there is no need to allocate any time for the reconsideration or *da'wa* efforts (Zaid, 1982: 443–444).

The punishment for apostasy runs into the contradiction to the above discussed Quranic verse, 2:256: "No compulsion in religion." Although this Quranic command was revealed in a different context (regarding non-Muslims by birth, not converts from Islam), the message is still valid – one should become or remain Muslim only through belief and conviction, and not due to external factors. It would follow that no action should be taken against him/her as long as such a person does not pose a threat to Muslims or Islam. Muslim scholars tend to insist that punishment for *ridda* does not have anything to do with compulsion or coercion, though they not always make their argument clear (Isma'il, 1983: 402–403; Zaid, 1982: 451–459). Zaid's argument is that "from the point of the shari'a, the killing (of apostate) is legal as a *hadd* for *ridda*, not because of compulsion in the religion" (Zaid, 1982: 455). He goes even further and insists that there was a choice for the convert – he or she could have chosen not to abandon Islam in the first place" (Zaid, 1982: 453).

From the legal perspective, *da'wa* cannot intervene with or prevent legal measures being taken against individuals or groups deemed apostate and criminal. This is especially the case with *hadd* punishments prescribed in the Quran and meted out by Muslim authorities. *Hadd* for *ridda* is exceptionally unique in its severe punishment for an act of conscience, which, though Muslims discount it, is an infringement on the religious freedom affirmed in verse 2:256.

CONCLUSION

While the discussion of whether *da'wa* is a part of jihad or vice versa remains within the theoretical realm of the whole issue of *da'wa*, the question of use of compulsion, coercion, and violence in propagating Islam makes is real and practical. Indeed, in the history of Islam, violence has been a common feature in the spreading of the rule of Islam. While most contemporary Muslims (both religious scholars and lay activists)

make a clear distinction between armed offensive jihad and *da'wa*, some (mostly the more radically inclined activists) argue that the two are intertwined. Those on the pacifist side prefer the idealized version of non-coercive *da'wa*, whereas those on the offensive side allow a degree of coerciveness and aggressive violence. The latter consider the cause, as well as the means, a *fard*.

I have attempted to show the difficulty, in the discussion of the relationship between *da'wa* and jihad, of defining jihad – are there one, two, or even more kinds of it? Depending on how jihad is perceived, one can position *da'wa* in relation to it. The very question of jihad's relation to violence poses the biggest difficulty. Moreover, at least in the opinion of some Muslims, both *da'wa* and jihad are seen to be applicable within the Muslim commonwealth – the *Ummah*. This last observation is of great importance when analyzing the intra-*ummaic da'wa* and especially its contemporary phase. Initiated by Abd al-Wahhab and later developed and nurtured by al-Banna, the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa* dwells on definitions and perceptions of jihad, in particular, and its relation to *da'wa*, in general. The relation of compulsion and violence (in as much as jihad can be associated with compulsion and violence) to the intra-*ummaic da'wa* is analyzed in Chapter 8.

Another observation is that jihad and its relation to *da'wa* have come to be seen through a political prism. This especially applies to non-state actors – individual Muslim activists and organizations. If in the earlier centuries it was *'ulama* who assumed the role of defining meanings of terms like *jihad*, this prerogative has been increasingly appropriated by Muslims with no formal education in religious sciences and for whom the driving principle is the political, in addition to theological, applicability of one or another term. This way, the same term comes to be applied to diverse socio-political activities. This is the case with "jihad." Its conversion from a theologico-juridical concept into a purely political one (albeit with multiple shades and connotations) has been recorded and analyzed by a fare number of scholars. This, however, though less observed, has also happened to "*da'wa*," and not only because of its conceptual proximity to "jihad."

PART II

ISLAMIC *DA'WA*: THEOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. CONTENTS AND METHODOLOGIES OF *DA'WA*

UNDERLYING THE NEED FOR *DA'WA*

As has been argued in Chapter 1, neither the Quran nor Sunna explicitly calls for *da'wa* on the part of all Muslims – *da'wa* was never officially proclaimed by Muhammad (or God) as an obligation or duty for Muslims, like the *arkan al-din* (أركان الدين). Muslim activists and *da'wa* advocates nonetheless make every effort to convince fellow-believers that it is indeed an obligation. Some *da'wa* activists, like Mustafa Mashhour, base their argument on the legal traditions and their elaborations, thus insisting that

> it is well known that Islamic Law has made it our responsibility to invite others to Allah, and to permit the good and forbid the wrong. Everyone of us will be questioned by Allah as to whether he actually did invite his family, neighbors, friends and acquaintances to Allah, to adopt the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah.…As for inviting people to Islam, a Muslim will be rewarded for it, and will be penalized for negligence in this respect. (Mashhour, 1999: 56–57)

On another occasion, speaking about the importance of *da'wa* in today's setting, he says, "Da'wah to Allah is a duty on every Muslim in every age, and in our time this Da'wah is particularly important in light of the vicious attacks the enemies of Allah are waging to remove the importance of Da'wah from the hearts of Muslims" (Mashhour). A convert to Islam Abdal Hakim Murad passionately laments that

> Islam is in its theology and its historical practice a missionary faith - one of the great missionary faiths, along with Christianity and Buddhism. And yet while Christianity and Buddhism are today brilliantly organised for conversion, Islam has no such operation, at least to my knowledge, (Convey my message, even though a single verse) is a Prophetic commandment that binds us all. It is a fard ayn, and a fard kifaya - and we are disobeying it on both counts. (Murad, A.)

Ezzati is altogether categorical when he claims that

> Islam regards the preaching of Truth (Da'wah ila al-Haqq) as the responsibility of the entire Muslim community. It is a communal and social responsibility of the entire Muslim community. It is a communal and social responsibility and thus not a purely professional duty of the Ulama. The leadership in Islam derives its authority from the doctrine of Da'wah and is not the other way round. (Ezzati)

For another *da'wa* theoretician, 'Abd al-'Aziz, *da'wa* is *fard kifaya* if in a given territory a sufficient number of *da'is* operate ('Abd al-'Aziz, 1989: 20). However, in today's environment, when there are but a few *da'is* and "reprehensible actions (منكرات) in abundance and ignorance (جهل) prevail, *da'wa* has become *fard 'ayn*" ('Abd al-'Aziz, 1989: 21).

The insistence that all Muslims, especially the *'ulama* and *da'wa* professionals, should perform *da'wa*, does not, however, imply that *da'wa* efforts of every Muslim are of the same value. As Rushdi Ahmad Ta'ima and 'Abd al-Rahman Salih 'Abd Allah, both professors at the Department of Islamic Education and Sciences of the Sultan Qabus University, Oman, argue, "da'wa to God is an obligation on every Muslim, male and female, in the limits of one's knowledge" (Ta'ima, 1998: 116). The "limits of knowledge" is the theoretical ceiling that determines what level of *da'wa* an individual Muslim can attain. Knowledge here is understood as expertise in matters of belief and religious practice: the less the knowledge, the more limited the scope of *da'wa* activities. The bottom line, conversely, is knowing by heart some Quranic lines, the sharing of which does not require any special training. 'Abd al-'Aziz, however, cautions that one of the biggest mistakes the young *da'is* make is a straightforward, literal application the religious texts – the *da'i* instead needs to get a deeper grip of the ideas contained in those texts. And it is the *'ulama* who can assist here. They can explain the true meanings of the texts ('Abd al-'Aziz, 1989: 229).

Abu 'Abdil Kareem, basing his argument on the Quranic passages 16:125, 3:104, 41:33, and 12:108, insists that *da'wa*, at least on a basic level, should be performed by all Muslims and notes that "conveying the message (a verse of the Quran – *my note*) therefore does not require a high level of scholarship, it is in fact a responsibility of each and every Muslim, according to his or her ability" (Kareem (b)). Moreover, according to Abu 'Abdil Kareem, not to spread the message of the Quran is a sin: "Hiding knowledge – is disobedience to Allah that causes Allah's curse to descend upon such people, which shows that such a sin leads to the Hellfire" (Kareem (b)). Similarly, Mohammad Sami Ullah reasons that

> there is no denying the fact that the responsibilities of a person vary with his mental attainments as well as with his station in life or society. Viewed from this angle, even in the matter of *tabligh* (missionary work), the duties of the *Ulema* (the learned) in religion are certainly heavier and more onerous. But we must not forget that *tabligh* is the duty of all Muslims and not merely of a group or class among them. The difference, if any, is one of degree only; while the responsibility is common by all means. Thus *tabligh* is the universal duty of all Muslims and aims at bringing home to all humanity, irrespective of caste or creed, her relations with the common Creator, viz. Allah. (Sami Ullah)

Sami Ullah not only authorizes *da'wa* (called by him *tabligh*) activities for lay untrained Muslims, he even globalizes the whole issue of *da'wa* by asserting that

> it is our duty as Muslims to undertake *tabligh* (missionary work), to spread Islam in all the four corners of the world. It will be no exaggeration to say that *tablighi* activities are the barometer of our own convictions. The more we are imbued with the spirit of truth and love for Allah and His creation, the greater will be the urge to bear witness of Him and His revelation, the more enthusiastic we will be to spread His teachings and thus help our ignorant or misled brothers and sisters, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. (Sami Ullah)

Sami Ullah's maxim, then, is "at all times, in all places." Other authors reiterate this opinion: A "*da'i* is obliged to call to God all the time, in all cases and circumstances."[47]

Ezzati complements both Abu 'Abdil Kareem and Sami Ullah: "It is not enough for the Muslims to come to the truth. They are expected to lead others to the Truth, too. Truth is not the monopoly of certain sections of humanity" (Ezzati). The underlying idea in Ezzati's reasoning, who can be said to speak for all *da'is*, is that the Islamic *da'wa* is an invitation to the "Truth," which is conceived of as universal. Most contemporary Muslim activists are trapped in a "one-truth" theory that excludes alternative truths. Moreover, Muslim campaigners are prone to believe that it is natural that people should seek after this, their "Truth." Thus, every Muslim should first seek it for him/herself and then convey it to others or help others come to it.

Contemporary Muslim activists have effectively removed the responsibility of *da'wa* from the shoulders of the learned men of the *Ummah*, the *'ulama* and professional *da'is*, and delegated it across the commoners. In today's setting, *da'wa* is a way of living, and to be a *da'i* implies to live as a *da'i*, and to live a *da'i* is to lead a devout Muslim's way of life. Moreover, in the opinion of many Muslim activists, it is an obligation of every Muslim to be a *da'i* in the sense that the mere leading of an Islamic way of life constitutes *da'wa* – the notion, which Poston very fittingly termed "lifestyle evangelism." In words of Murad, "Da'wah in Islam...is not a profession. It is not a subsidiary occupation that one may or may not engage" (Murad, 1986: 11). And further, "Every Muslim is a Da'iya. Da'wah cannot be given up or be a part-time occupation; it must become the life he lives" (Murad, 1986: 13). Khurshid fully supports his fellow believer: "Every Muslim is responsible for the da'wah whatever be his vocation in life" (Ahmad, 1982: 44). Tabibi, an ardent Muslim activist, pushes this position to an extreme: "A Muslim is a Da'i all his life and must propagate Islam no matter how limited or extensive his knowledge is of the Quran or Sunnah" (Tabibi,

[47] Anonymous leaflet in Arabic, circulated at a mosque in Budapest.

1984 (?): iv). Tabibi's insistence that every, even an uneducated, Muslim must engage in *da'wa* is quite alarming, for this implies that there should be no formal requirement either for *da'i* or *da'wa* itself. Thus, *da'wa* becomes whatever one puts into it.

The above-quoted ideas of contemporary Muslim campaigners take liberties with the Quran. As was argued in Chapter 1 on the concept of *da'wa* in the Quran, the holy book of Muslims nowhere directly commands that common (non-educated and non-professional) Muslims be *da'is*. Though the Quran speaks of spreading the Islamic faith to nonbelievers, it does not say explicitly that this must be done by every Muslim. On the other hand, the Quran nowhere prohibits any group or individual from *da'wa*. In verse 3:104, the Quran speaks of a group (أمة) of people who are to "invite to goodness, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," which could, among other things, imply a category of learned professionals.[48] Intra-*ummaic da'wa* in the history of Islam was practiced mainly by semi-professionals, or at least by the educated. As will be shown below, to be a Fatimid *da'i*, for example, one had to be well educated in such diverse fields as theology, jurisprudence, geography, physics, astronomy, and language sciences. In other words, to become a proper *da'i* one had to earn the title and position. On the other hand, in the extra-*ummaic da'wa*, the exemplary life of ordinary Muslims who did not perceive themselves as missionaries might have had the same effect as the professional missionary efforts (not to mention the impact of Muslim sages and wandering Sufis).

The contemporary Muslim propagandists are preceded by Arnold in the notion that *da'wa* should be and was practiced by Muhammad's followers even in his lifetime. Arnold, although himself not a Muslim, enthusiastically argues that "the duty of missionary work is no after-thought in the history of Islam, but was enjoined on believers from the beginning" (Arnold: 3). He supports this argument of his by a story of the first Yathribi converts to Islam, who became champions of the cause of Muhammad in their native city: "These twelve men now returned to Yathrib as missionaries of Islam, and so well was prepared the ground, and with such zeal did they prosecute their mission, that the new faith spread rapidly from house to house and from tribe to tribe" (Arnold: 22). However, since Arnold finds this story in Ibn Ishaq's biography of Muhammad, the optimism of both Ibn Ishaq and Arnold should be treated with caution – as in other similar cases regarding early Islamic history, we have no means to either verify or falsify this account. Notwithstanding the dubious nature of the story, Muslims can always refer to it as an example that Muslims had

[48] Refer to footnote 23 on page 39 for other possible meanings of the word أمة in the verse.

been charged with the duty of missionary activity as early as Muhammad's lifetime – he either himself instructed them to undertake the task or at least approved of it. Thus, the first argument in favor of *da'wa* is the perceived prescription (direct or not) by God and his messenger Muhammad for Muslims to invite people to Islam. Muhammad, moreover, constituted a living example of *da'i*, to be emulated by all Muslims.

The Quranic passage, "God invites to the abode of peace and he guides those whom he wishes to the Straight Path" (10:25), is often invoked by *da'wa* activists to encourage the *da'is*. They argue that it is not people alone, who invite to Islam, but God himself through *da'is* and by other means invites people to his chosen religion for humankind, Islam (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 6). The responsibility of carrying out *da'wa* is thus elevated to a sacred duty: Those who invite to Islam become God's helpers (*awliya*, Arabic أولياء). Furthermore, the hadith declaration, "If through you a man is guided by God on the right path, it would be better for you than red camels" (al-Bukhari, 1981, II, 3: 207), also supports the notion that missionary work is considered a welcome deed by the God.

Doubtlessly most Muslims believe that non-Muslims are in the need of *da'wa* – it is *da'wa* through which they can perceive the truthfulness of Islam and eventually attain salvation by converting to it and observing its precepts. But are the Muslims in need of it? Isma'il al-Faruqi's answer is straightforward: D*a'wa* "is as much intended for the benefit of Muslims as non-Muslims" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 35; see also Altalib, 1993: 10). He insists that "da'wah is necessarily addressed to both, to the Muslim to press forward toward actualization and to the non-Muslim to join the ranks of those who make the pursuit of God's pattern supreme" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 35). Al-Faruqi speaks about the actualization, through *da'wa*, of one's Islamicity. As Poston observes, al-Faruqi implies "that distinctions may be made between Muslims on a scale of 'Islamicity' and that one aspect of da'wah is the extension of an 'invitation' to Muslims to attain the 'higher' end of the scale" (Poston, 1992: 6). Poston, however, finds this implication to lead to a pitfall, for "it fails to specify the authority that is to determine the standards by which Islamicity is to be measured and the aspects that characterize the 'higher' reaches of the scale" (Poston, 1992: 6). This observation is very much to the point: Islam lacks any formal authority that could gradate levels on the scale of Islamicity. Therefore, "for Muslims to engage in da'wah among other Muslims implies that those doing the calling believe that they have progressed further along the scale than those who are being called, and in extreme cases, Muslims are

invited to actually convert to Islam (or at least to some particular form of the faith)" (Poston, 1992: 6). While in the case of the extra-*ummaic da'wa* the issue of level on the scale of Islamicity is not pertinent, intra-*ummah* it is the single criterion for judging others in religious and, by extension, political affairs. An arbitrarily configured scale of Islamicity is imposed onto the others and those who fall short become the targets of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

Use of term "*da'wa*" for the intra-*ummaic* activities raises the question of whether *da'wa* toward fellow Muslims is not a contradiction in terms. Indeed, there are such terms as "*ihya*" (Arabic إحياء), "*tajdid*" (Arabic تجديد), and "*tabligh*" that have been used to denote activities by Muslims toward fellow Muslims in guiding them back to a truer religious life, to revive their Islamicity. Apparently, as found in the texts both in English and Arabic, the concept of "*da'wa*" for many Muslim activists has been expanded to include very different notions and activities, which at times might even contradict each other. They use it indiscriminately. So, for example, for some, the leading of an Islamic way of life in correspondence to verse 3:104 constitutes a sort of intra-*ummaic da'wa*: "Da'wah should also be directed toward the Muslims. It is called as indirect da'wah or Islamic lifestyle (al-Da'wah bi al-Hal)" (Nasir, 2000: 500). A Muslim activist tries to reconcile the tension between the concepts of extra- and intra-*ummaic da'wa* by stating that:

> Our da'wa therefore is necessarily two-fold. One is urging Ummatul-Ijaabah (those who have answered the call to Islam, i.e. Muslims) to learn, and adhere to the religion of Allah that their forefathers (as-salaf) practiced and through which, by the grace of Allah, they attained leadership and ascendancy and happiness in the world and more importantly attained the pleasure of Allah. Two is calling those who have not yet answered the call (Ummatud-Da'wah) to the very same religion no matter what their position in life may be because the attainment of Allah's pleasure and reward far outweighs any other consideration. (Editor's Word)

The urgency for and need of *da'wa* is justified by Muslim propagandists through its multiple purposes, which extend from personal spiritual development to ethical, moral, legal, and political communal obligations, to universal mission. The purpose of *da'wa* is succinctly summarized by Jama'a Amin 'Abd al-'Aziz. According to him, *da'wa*'s purpose is threefold: 1) to create an Islamic society (تأسيس مجتمع إسلامي), 2) to correct Muslim societies (دعوة الإصلاح في المجتمعات المسلمة), 3) to safeguard the existing Islamic societies (إستمرار الدعوة في المجتمعات القائمة بالحق) ('Abd al-'Aziz, 1989: 16). Though all three phases apply to intra-*ummaic da'wa*, the first one also applies to extra-*ummaic da'wa*. The first two purposes can be said to refer to historical reality, while the third one refers to an ideal to be attained in the future, for

virtually no Muslim scholar or activist finds a true Islamic society in existence yet. Anyhow, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz foresees a future for *da‘wa* even in a truly Islamic society.

The need for *da‘wa* and its being a personal obligation of every Muslim are the fundamental initial arguments of most *da‘wa* advocates. Muslim activists spare no effort in convincing fellow Muslims of the virtue of *da‘wa* and do not fail to note that there is reward for it in the hereafter, while negligence of it would cause punishment or reprimand by God. Once the need for *da‘wa* is established, *da‘wa* theoreticians proceed to the personality of a *da‘i*.

QUALITIES AND CHARACTER OF *DA‘IS*

To be a Muslim does not necessarily mean “to have faith,” for as Mutahhari argues, to be a Muslim means to submit oneself, something which can be done without a real belief in Islamic tenets (Mutahhari, 1986: 109–110. c.f. Griffel’s note on distinction between “Muslim” and “believer” above) Determination and belief are seen by Muslim activists to be the foundations for successful *da‘wa*: “This strong belief in which there is no doubt is a must for the carrier of dawah” (*Requirements)*. For *da‘wa* proponents, then, any doubt as to one’s own conviction of the ultimate truth-ness of the Islamic faith and its precepts invalidates *da‘wa – da‘wa* is not a searching for the “Truth”; it is spreading of the known “Truth”. The one who believes to possess the knowledge of the true essence of Islam and who then embarks upon *da‘wa* has to be of a certain moral caliber. Salman al-Awdah, when speaking of the “moral character of *da‘i*,” rhetorically asks, “if embellishing oneself with moral excellence is obligatory for the Muslims... then what about the daa'iya who carries the banner of dawa and calls the people to it?” (al-Awdah (a)). Al-Awdah answers himself, “His dawa has to be a reflection of how he is. That is why possessing moral integrity is obligatory and essential, for carrying out properly that which Allah burdened him with….” Though al-Awdah does not elaborate upon what moral excellence or moral integrity is, it can be detected from his message that the main condition for *da‘i* is that he has to be virtuous in all respects, to be a Muslim *par excellence*. To use al-Faruqi’s concept, the *da‘i* must have attained (or at least be on the way to) the heights of Islamicity. From this, it could be assumed that, before preaching Islam to others, the would-be *da‘i* has to purify himself of all un-Islamic or even non-Islamic beliefs and ideas. “The purification [tazkiyah]…includes the purification of the nafs [self], exalting it through high morals and cleansing it from wickedness” (al-Awdah (a)).

This makes da*‘wa*, in a way, first of all oriented toward the *da‘i* himself, just like the “greater” jihad. This is where *da‘wa* and jihad can be seen to grow into one. Murad, however, notes that “we cannot wait to become ‘purified’ and ‘perfect’. For at no point in time can one consider oneself to have become purified and perfect” (Murad, 1986: 13). The belief of most contemporary Muslim campaigners follows, that *da‘wa* can and should be performed by every Muslim, no matter his/her level of being “purified” and perfect.

Yet, belief alone is not sufficient, for to Muslim activists being a Muslim means much more than belief, however sincere. After belief (conscious Islamicity) – the very fundamental component – is established, actual outward *da‘wa* begins with knowledge. Knowledge in itself, as Ibn Baz says, “is a Fardh obligation in da`wah” (Ibn Baz (b)). But what constitutes true knowledge and how do we distinguish it from false knowledge? Put simply, how is one to learn what is right and what is wrong? The Quranic verses 3:104 and 3:110 are commonly believed by Muslims to provide the method of *da‘wa*: “Let there be a group of people among you who invite to goodness, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong,” and “You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong,” respectively. Yet, neither of these verses tells what is the content or nature of right and wrong. Ezzati maintains, “Allah is the only source of knowledge, goodness and salvation, as well as the source of creation and power. He alone knows what is good and bad for men and Man is only responsible to find and fulfill what Allah has desired for him” (Ezzati). It thus follows that the Quran and Sunna themselves are, if not the sole, then at least the primary sources of knowledge. Most *mufassirs* contend that in the Quran, Hadiths, and Sira the distinction between the good and bad is made obvious. Thus, one only needs to profoundly study these three sources to come up with a clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. After all, it is taken for granted that there can be only one Truth, which is contained nowhere else but in the holy book of Islam and prophet Muhammad’s exemplary life, which, in turn, are perceived as plain and free of possible self-contradictions: “The truth is one, straight, free from distortion, doubt or skepticism. Anyone who steps outside this sole straight way is bound to err” (el-Gharib, 2001: 4).

Opposed to non-Muslims, learned Muslims, versed in the Quran and hadiths, can be said to posses the knowledge of what is “right and wrong” – they know the tenets and principles of Islam. In the historical perspective, the learned men of Islam were the *‘ulama*. To become an *‘alim* – “the learned one” – one needed to invest

much effort into formal learning and training at Islamic religious educational establishments, followed by employment in certain positions. An *‘alim* was first of all a person versed in religious sciences. *‘Ulama* enjoyed, if not political power, then at least formal spiritual authority. Yet, at times they had to share that authority with informal charismatic saints, marabouts, dervishes, and their likes. It also could be said that *‘ulama* possessed exoteric knowledge of “right and wrong” – the *zahir* (Arabic ظاهر) – while mystics claimed rights to the *batin* (Arabic باطن) – the esoteric truths. But even among the *‘ulama*, there have always been differing theological, legal and ideological trends that, in the course of history, made the intellectual heritage of Muslims very mosaic, with no single group, ideology, or theory holding a monopoly. In other words, there was no monopoly over what is “right and wrong.” There was instead a fluctuating balance between the secularly inclined state, formal religious authority (*‘ulama*), and informal religious authorities, with influence shifting dependent on circumstances.

With the advance of modern secular education, especially in the late-colonial and post-colonial periods, more and more Muslims have graduated from colleges and universities with degrees in social, natural, or physical sciences and little or no formal education in religion. At the same time, the number of religious educational establishments have drastically declined throughout the Muslim world.[49] These lay (non-*‘ulama*) Muslims more than ever are embarking upon *da‘wa* activities. By their devout – though oftentimes unguided – studies and interpretations of the founding Islamic texts, they *de facto* position themselves in the place of *‘ulama* by claiming the true knowledge of Islam and the discernment between the “right” and “wrong.”

Muhammad Salih al-‘Uthaimin makes a distinction in his *fatwa* between *‘alim* and *da‘i*: An *‘alim* (possessor of the knowledge) may not be a *da‘i* – i.e., he may not be spread that knowledge. On the other hand, not all *da‘is* can be *‘ulama* – the little knowledge they possess might suffice for *da‘wa*, *y*et it is best that an *‘alim* also be a *da‘i*, and a *da‘i* an *‘alim* (al-‘Uthaimin). As to the question of whether “it is permissible for the average person to do da‘wa,” al-Uthaimin answers that “it is not a condition upon the daa‘ee (caller) to attain a great amount of knowledge but the condition is that one must have knowledge of what one is calling to.…the common person…must not call to Allah if he does not have knowledge.…It is obligatory for a person to first acquire knowledge, then to do da‘wa” (al-‘Uthaimin). Al-‘Uthaimin,

[49] This situation started changing once again with the proliferation of Islamic education in the 1980s and 1990s, not only within the Muslim countries but also in countries with significant Muslim minorities.

though he does not rule out the possibility of commoners engaging in *da'wa*, prefers that educated and well-versed practitioners, simply *'ulama*, assume the responsibility of *da'wa*. Likewise, another Saudi *'alim*, Ibn Baz, states in one of his fatwas that "it is not a condition that the *Da'iyah* (caller) have reached a great level of knowledge, but he must be knowledgeable about what he is calling to" (*Fatawa Islamiyah*, 2002, 8: 32). Al-'Uthaimin and Ibn Baz are only mildly cautious about commoners doing *da'wa*. Yet their reasoning, if followed to its logical end, leads to the question of to what level and quality of *da'wa* do Muslims aim at the present time. If *da'wa* is allowed to be practiced by any commoner, permitting a variety of interpretations and understandings, do Muslims not run the risk of losing the focus of what they pursue under activities they call *da'wa*? The "Truth" itself spoken of by Muslim activists becomes foggy and fragmented, for the "truth" of one *da'i* might differ significantly from the "truth" of another. Yet both would claim to be calling to the one and only "Truth." The dispersion of *da'wa* types brings about a multiplication of "Truths." In this way, although *da'wa* is meant to call to the one and only "Truth," it in effect has become calling to differing truths, which at times might clash at both religious and political levels.

The discussion on who is authorized to engage in *da'wa* relates closely to discussion on what constitutes "right" and "wrong." Muslims have not defined the two to the point of universal *ummaic* consensus, thus there always remain divergent views as to where the "right" ends and the "wrong" begins (Cook, 2000). This inconsistency allows the emergence of diverse practices within the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. This also led to religious and political rivalry among Muslim ideologies and groups. Thus the whole issue of knowing what is "right" and "wrong" has transcended the borders of purely theological, philosophical discussion and has entered the realm of the political, where the theory of "one truth" is as alive as in the religious sphere. As will be shown in Part IV, the quest for monopoly over the right to determine right and wrong has become urgent both in Muslim governments (in their religious policies) and non-governmental religious organizations (in their intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities). Hence, the intra- as well as extra-*ummaic da'wa* is entangled in politics to the point it has become an inseparable element of it.

Even if the nature of "right" and "wrong" was concluded, to know or possess knowledge of it is not enough – Muslims has to abide by that knowledge. As Khurshid argues, "the *what* of the Islamic da'wah means invitation to Islam as a faith and as a way of life, al-din" (Ahmad, 1982: 43). He makes the clear distinction

between faith (believing in one God, acknowledging Muhammad as His last prophet, and accepting the Quran as the final and undistorted revelation), on the one hand, and a specific, total way of life required of Muslims, on the other. From Khurshid's words (which are supported by many Muslim activists), it follows that faith alone does not make a Muslim. The idea that Islam is not only a faith but rather a total way of living (as advocated by many Muslim reformers and revivalists) is endorsed. Consequently, if *da'wa* limits itself to conveying and ultimately convincing non-Muslim of the supremacy of Islamic dogmas over those of other faiths, it is found still wanting, for its success would not imply or bring about the desired Islamization of the convert's body and soul.

To vouchsafe the quality and desired results, *da'is* "today should be well informed, follow important events, circumstances, different schools of thought and contemporary conflicting and misleading ideologies in an effective and attractive way" (Mashhour, 1999: 25). Thus, the knowledge is extended beyond religious knowledge to include literacy in "secular" sciences, social sciences, and humanities. This is why in most establishments of higher religious education throughout the Muslim world secular sciences have been added to otherwise exclusively religious curricula. As if not enough, the *da'i* is urged to

> be a dynamic individual who is committed to building up his skills and developing his talents. Some useful knowledge enhancements in the field of Da'wah, which Da'ees ought to acquire, includes skills in management and administration, public speaking, information technology, journalism and financing. (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999)

Such directives help keep a level of *da'wa* excellence at least satisfactory.

Thus in *da'wa* actions are no less important than knowledge and belief – Muslims are urged to set an example of the Islamic way of living, in its totality, before non-Muslims. *Da'wa* should manifest itself in every and all movements of Muslims – from daily interactions to acts of worship. A good example is thought to be as convincing as words. All *da'wa* advocates are in agreement that the best *da'wa* encompasses both the word and the living example: "Witnessing by word, *Shahadah bil qaul*, and reinforcing it by action, *Shahadah bil amal*, are two sides of the same coin – both are complementary and necessary to the other" (Ahsan, 1989: 14). Khurshid sums it up: "Da'wah is presented primarily through conveying the message, preaching you may call it, and by practicing it and as such presenting before the world its living example. (Ahmad, 1982: 44).

Moreover, it is argued that “social service is one of the foremost duties of every Muslim in general and of every Muslim missionary in particular. He will preach and teach and untiring will be his practical efforts to help and support those in need” (Sami Ullah). Al-Awdah advises that “the daa`iya should be a good example for others, by avoiding that which is disliked and even that which is permissible which he is in no need of. He should elevate himself from the duniya (material world – *my note*) and from competing in it in order to gain people's confidence” (al-Awdah (b)). For al-Awhah, as for many other Muslim activists, *da‘wa* fulfils itself in action that is nothing less than the implementation of the injunction in verse 3:104. He even pushes this duty to the extreme by urging the *da'i to* deny himself/herself even those things that are in themselves *ma‘aruf* (permissible, Arabic معروف) but unnecessary. Al-Awdah, as do many others, finds the ideal *da‘i* in Muhammad. Thus, the whole of the Sunna is an example of what a *da‘i* should look and be like. However, bearing in mind that the Sunna consists of a great number of individual hadiths which at times contradict each other, the *da‘i*-to-be has to be conversant in the Hadith collections and all the sciences related to it.

In sum, the basic constituents of *da‘wa* are belief, knowledge, and action that accords with both this belief and knowledge. These elements are found by Muslim propagandists to be essential to every *da‘i;* without them *da‘wa* becomes void and possibly even harmful. The harmony of these three essentials, each complex in itself, assures the proper quality quality of *da‘wa*. Two out of three are constants, the contents of which are permanent and immutable in all Muslims: Muslims are always to believe, no matter their social status, wealth, or education. They are also to always live by their faith and under all circumstances act according to Islamic injunctions. As for knowledge, varies depending on the individual, with a tendency to increase over time. Yet, as argued, little knowledge is not an obstacle to *da‘wa* – it limits its scope but does not necessarily infringe upon its quality and outcome (Daweesh).

For successful *da’wa*, in addition to meeting the minimum requirements above, the *da’i* should be extensively trained. As al-Hamawi and Abu Khalid argue, “in preaching Islam, the Da'ee should try when possible to demonstrate rhetoric and literary eloquent speech. This is the style of the Quran in addressing humanity and the Da'ees are responsible for acquiring a respectable level of language proficiency to effectively convey the Message.” Moreover, “it is very desirable that the Da'ee exhibit strong will, positive self-confidence and a capacity to control emotions. These characteristics are gained from sincerity and reliance on Allah and from knowledge

and language competency, along with extensive experience and repetition." Also, "not only does the true Da'ee exercise patience during adversities and hardships, but he also continues his mission eagerly and devotes oneself assiduously to Da'wah work even if it was little." *Da'is* are further advised: "Another really admirable characteristics of a Da'ee is exhibiting kindness, gentleness, courtesy and high manners when dealing with people. Being an active member of the society, the Da'ee would have excellent social relations and would not alienate himself from people" (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999). All these qualities attest to a the broad moral, social, and scholarly cultivation desired of a *da'i*. These injunctions paint the *da'i* akin to some sophisticated gentleman – that is, exactly the opposite of how many non-Muslims characterize Muslims (as impolite, rude, uneducated, and barbarous). Promotion and betterment of the image of Islam and Muslims is integral to the role of the *da'i*.

A separate mention may be made of physical fitness of the *da'i*. Some *da'wa* theoreticians urge *da'is* to practice physical exercise to keep their bodies fit and able to endure prolonged physical and psychological hardship. This is especially emphasized among *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*. For instance, one of *al-Ikhwan*, Fathi Yakan, calls on the *da'i* to see him- or herself as a "soldier in the battle of Islam in all senses of the word 'soldier.'" He provides a workout regimen: organized physical exercise every morning; shooting, swimming, walking, horseback riding, cycling, and car-driving everyday; proper sleep and diet; no smoking, coffee, tea, or iced beverages (Yakan, n.d.: 207). Since for *al-Ikhwan*, *da'is* are more fighters with a political agenda than religious preachers, it is no surprise that physical fitness has an important place. Moreover, as Yakan relates, many *al-Ikhwan da'is* have been imprisoned and sometimes died in captivity. But putting aside the specific nature of *al-Ikhwan da'wa*, the activities of *da'is* overall do require both physical and psychological strength. Take, for example, the Tablighis, who at times travel for long periods over great distances to foreign lands to do *da'wa* – the physically and psychologically unready would not endure such a challenge.

The gender issue in *da'wa* has been addressed by several prominent Muslim jurists. Ibn Baz, in several of his *fatwas*, argued that Muslim women can and should be *da'iyat*: "She is like man. She should call to Allah and order the good and forbid the evil" (Ibn Baz (a)). Ibn Baz did not set any specific requirements for *da'iya*, instead he only requested that women dress and act according to the Islamic regulations. Women, in Ibn Baz's opinion, can practice *da'wa* directed to both men

and women. As a form of *da'wa,* Ibn Baz suggests praying to God that he guide people to the right path of Islam. Another prominent *da'i* and member of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, Mashhour argues that "the call to Islam is in a dire need of Muslim women to take part in spreading the *Da'wah* in their communities" (Mashhour, 1999: 171). Al-Tahan also insists that women should feature prominently in *da'wa* activities and has even devoted a whole book to further his argument (al-Tahan, 1998). In his book, al-Tahan describes what a true Muslim woman should be. In addition to the known duties (be a god-fearing, devout, and obedient wife; a caring mother; a good homemaker, etc.) she is urged to share the burden of *da'wa* with her husband.

DA'WA MANUALS

The quality of *da'wa*, both intra- and extra-*ummaic*, has changed with the advance of mass communication. This very much applies to the Internet. Sites for virtual *da'wa* are but one good example of this. Many of them are maintained by concerned lay Muslims who evidently have no formal education in either *da'wa* or religious sciences. This, however, does not prevent them from embarking upon *da'wa* activities. Their sites usually, though not uniformly, duplicate texts written by others that appear on professional organizations' web pages. Since there seems not to exist any kind of copyright, the same texts are freely reproduced partially or wholesale across multiple sites. Next to texts written by known Muslim propagandists, there abound examples of what could be called amateur *da'wa*. These include individual considerations about *da'wa,* interpretations that sometimes get away from the sources (Quran, Sunna), and politically charged abuses and accusations against rival approaches to *da'wa*.

These and similar complications make contemporary *da'wa* activities difficult for Muslims to define. It is even more difficult for them to identify the correct *da'wa* and its practitioners. As Manazir Ahsan laments,

> the word *dawa* has been so used, misused and abused by Muslim and non-Muslim writers and polemicists that in the maze of discussion and counter-discussion, it has lost many of the dimensions of its true meaning. Unless the true nature, scope and significance of *dawa* is understood with all its implications and dimensions, it is not possible to chart any future plan for this noble calling. (Ahsan, 1989: 13)

Indeed, in the present-day setting it is more reasonable to speak about the plurality of *da'was*, some of which are purely theological, while others are social,

political, and even economic (*da'wa* has also become a business enterprise). Muhammad Abduh, manager of the al-Falah Foundation, for example, admits that there are "many different 'types' of *Da'wah*," most of which he considers wrong. Thus he insists that "for Islam to return to its golden age, we must return to the authentic way of calling to Allah!" (Mashhour, 1999: ix).

When speaking about methods to be employed while performing *da'wa*, one is confronted with a mass of written material, much of is widely accessible via the Internet, that can be roughly divided into two groups, depending on the kind of *da'wa* in question. The first group of *da'wa* guides and instructions is prepared for those *da'is* engaged in converting non-Muslims. The second group is of supra-theological and ideological treatises addressed to Muslims. They either appeal directly to Muslims to rediscover Islam (to seek a higher level of Islamicity) themselves or to those Muslims charged with reawakening the hearts and eyes of fellow Muslims who have gone astray or are remiss in their Muslim duties, that is, "to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong." The sites of virtual *da'wa* abound with *da'wa* guides and tips on how to make *da'wa* successful. On the other hand, the Fiqh Council of Saudi Arabia limits the list of texts to be read and followed by Muslim *da'is* to a bare minimum: Besides the Quran and Hadith collections, it suggests any writings by Ibn Taymiya, Ibn al-Qayim, and Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (*Fatawa Islamiyah*, 2002, 8: 37).

The very question of whether *da'wa* can be disseminated by means of mass communication, like over radio, television, and the Internet, is in itself worth considering. In Ibn Baz's opinion, "if the media, such as radio, newspapers and television, are used for giving da'wa, and for guiding people to Allah and what the Prophet Muhammad has brought, then this is a great thing which can benefit the Ummah wherever they are, by the permission of Allah. This can also benefit the non-Muslims in helping them to understand Islam and comprehend it, learn about its merits and know that it is the path to success in this world and in the Hereafter" (Ibn Baz (c)). Al-Hamawi and Abu Khalid complement the mufti by insisting that

> it is clear that Da'wah should be conveyed through all possible means of communication. Such means include writing, publishing and distributing books and other reading material on Islam, producing audiovisuals and computer software, utilising public media such as radio and television broadcasting stations, the press, and the Internet. Establishing Da'wah institutions, designing educational programs, conducting camps with Da'wah themes or even personal dialogue with neighbours and work or student-mates are also effective ways in which non-Muslims can embrace Islam and non-practicing Muslims can return to the truth. (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999)

They and other Muslim authorities contend that any means, the Internet among them, that does not contradict Islamic injunctions is to be employed by *da'is* in preaching Islam.[50]

Yet, the Internet so far has been the most controversial issue among religiously concerned Muslims; its near uncontrollability means not only good but also undesirable content might reach Web surfers. For this very reason, the Internet was for a while banned in several Muslim countries, and when it allowed, draconian restrictions were imposed to control access (in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Libya). On the other hand, in some other predominantly Muslim countries (like Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan) access to the Internet is relatively open and unfiltered. Still, the nations which do limit access within their borders sometimes support virtual *da'wa* aimed at surfers coming from the outside. Ministries of religious affairs and their like either create *da'wa* sites themselves or financially support affiliate organizations that maintain such sites (this is very visible in the GCC countries). However, these official and semi-official *da'wa* authorities compete with independent Muslims and their organizations based outside the reach of Muslim censorship (namely, in Europe and North America) who pursue their own version of *da'wa* activities on the Internet.

Da'wa as a complex missionary activity requires a certain methodology. To some Muslims, this methodology seems simple and obvious. Badlihisham Mohammad Nasir, for example, argues that the Quran has it all: "The basic teaching of da'wah methodology has been formally laid down by the Quran" (Nasir, 2000: 491). Al-Hamawi and Abu Khalid think that the *da'wa* method should be drawn solely from the founding texts of Islam: "The first principle in the correct approach is in the Da'ee limiting his source of reasoning and inferences to the Book of Allah (s.w.t) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (s.a.w). Truth has enough true proofs to uphold it" (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999). Though belief in the perfection and universality of these texts compels Muslims to search for moral injunctions as well as practical systematized methods, Muslims sometimes impose a perceived method of *da'wa* on the Quran and Sunna in order to legitimize the work of *da'is*. As has been shown in Chapter 1, there is little if anything in the Quran and Sunna that could qualify as *da'wa* methodology, let alone something "formally laid down," as Nasir enthusiastically maintains. (It is true, however, that the very word of "*da'wa*" is used in both texts extensively.) Notwithstanding this, theoreticians of *da'wa* have

[50] There is also an opposing position. For example, the leaders of the *Tablighi Jama'at*, one of the most successful Muslim missionary enterprises, are reported to have urged their followers to abstain from promoting their mission through the media. See Masud, 2000: 80.

elaborated upon the "how" of *da'wa* and have supplied non-professional *da'is* with *da'wa* "guides" and "tips." Unfortunately, in most cases they are anonymous with no originating author or organization provided. They are understood by Muslims as advice and not necessarily as something with weighty authority, even though the majority of *da'wa* tips have likely been either suggested by *da'wa* professionals or else approved by them.

Da'wa starts with one's self. It may be called the *jihad al-nafs* – jihad of the soul – a form of the "greater" jihad. From the self it should proceed to immediate family members:

> As an example for his community, the Da'ee should begin his Da'wah with his family, relatives and close friends. A Da'ee's household is always in the critical eye of the community. If they find his wife and children to be careless in their application of Islam, they will take the Da'ee as being incompetent at his job and turn away. The Da'ee will also be held responsible firstly for his family before his community. (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999)

Since the family is perceived as the basic unit society, and father or other male head the leader, the *da'i's* success or failure in his own family is seen to indicate his abilities and fortunes on the societal level. Afterwards, *da'wa* should go public.

A site of virtual *da'wa* (*6 tips*) advises that among public event, a wedding is a good occasion for Muslims to invite non-Muslim guests to embrace Islam. According to authors of the site, "social gatherings are an ideal place to make Dawa, and a Muslim wedding is a great example of this. Weddings are places where non-Muslims can learn about one facet of Islam in a relaxed social atmosphere without feeling they are being preached to" (*6 tips*). There are several things to say about this – first of all, the authors are aware that people might get irritated if preached to, so the preaching should be done in a subtle way. Second, during the wedding the *da'i* can explain and portray Islam in as an ideal way of life. Public events can be viewed as suitable occasions to combine the *da'wa* of living example and the *da'wa* of interpersonal engagement. Though the site claims to provide tips for successful *da'wa*, the advice it gives is of a general nature: Make guests comfortable, translate and explain everything that is going on, and so on. The only tip that actually serves the purpose of *da'wa* is to ask the imam to address the guests directly: "A short, wise speech by the Imam or someone else who is qualified to do it on Islamic social life will give a broader understanding of marriage from an Islamic perspective." Notwithstanding all this, the whole idea of spreading Islam during such happenings is attractive.

Some contemporary *da'is* in North America and Europe see school premises as promising grounds for potentially successful *da'wa* (*Da'wa in Public Schools*). They argue that youth are receptive to new ideas and that Islam could well serve as one such idea. In the view of Muslim propagandists, Muslim pupils could make an extra effort to spread information about Islam in an attempt to attract fellow schoolmates to the Islamic faith. Steps undertaken could be very simple – celebrating Muslim festivals publicly, distributing Islamic leaflets, holding public discussions, publishing a bulletin, ordering Islamic books for the school library, and putting up Islamic exhibitions.

The Muslim Students' Association of the United States and Canada (MSA) is a premier Muslim organization in North America engaged in *da'wa* activities on college and university campuses. Its Internet version of *Starter's Guide: A Guide on how to Run a Successful MSA* provides tips for *da'wa* (*MSA Starter's* Guide, 1996. This site has been discontinued and is not running as of the end of 2003). Wael Haddara, a contributor to the *Guide*, distinguishes two types of *da'wa*: individual and collective (Haddara, 1996). He argues that the living example is the core of individual *da'wa*, therefore, the very leading of an Islamic life (observing duties, wearing certain clothes, keeping a beard, etc.) constitutes *da'wa*. Next to individual *da'wa*, there is collective *da'wa*, which reaches wider audiences and is especially suitable for on-campus *da'wa* carried out by local MSAs at their colleges and universities. One of the forms of collective *da'wa* is public lectures, particularly those presenting Islam as a way of life and not just from a theological standpoint. Another contributor to the *Guide*, Aafia Siddiqui, elaborates upon organizing a public lecture on campus: Choosing a topic, a speaker, a time, a place, advertising, and estimating costs all are addressed in detail so that *da'is* of local MSAs just have to follow the provided algorithm (Siddiqui, Aafia, 1996). Besides public lectures, Siddiqui encourages holding a weekly "da'wa table" and having a booth/stand in an open space from which Islamic literature would be distributed and questions regarding Islamic beliefs and practices answered. Though in itself a rather simple undertaking, a "*da'wa* table" can be a useful tool in *da'wa* activities on campuses:

> a Da'wah Table can be as simple as a table with a few introductory brochures on Islam, or it can have an attractive display of posters, a large variety of Da'wah literature, and Qur'ans - depending on how many people one wants to attract. The concept of the Da'wah Table encompasses much more than just giving out pamphlets on Islam. Once this effort is started, with some amount of dedication and consistency, it can easily lead to the formation of an organized resource of information on Islam, an effective means of advertising other MSA

activities and services, a way of getting to know more Muslims, and a training ground for *da'iyas*. (callers to Islam)

An important aspect of contemporary *da'wa* guides is that nearly all of them, save the most radical ones (usually of an intra-*ummaic* nature), insist that there has to be no coercion of any sort in *da'wa*. According to Abu 'Abdil Kareem, *da'wa* goals are merely: "1. To guide people to the religion of Allah; 2. To establish evidence against those who decline from or oppose the religion; 3. To discharge the duty enjoined on us, the Muslims, by Allah; 4. To exalt the word of Allah on earth" (Kareem (a)). However, he immediately remarks that "it must be realized that the actual results of our efforts in guiding people to Allah's religion are not in our hands, as it is only Allah who guides. Even the Prophet himself (s) was unable to guide his uncle Aboo Taalib." "To discharge the duty" means to let nonbelievers know about Islam so as "to leave those who disbelieve without an excuse before Allah on the Day of Judgment, in case they do not respond to the call of the Messengers." Thus, the underlying motto is "Calling is our role, and responding is theirs" (Kareem (a)). Similarly, Fadlullah argues that *da'wa* ends with the last word spoken and last proof laid down (Fadlullah, 1994: 74). Muslim propagandists admit that due to the humble nature of man, *da'is'* efforts, no matter how extensive and intensive, might not bear immediate fruit – it might take years before the invited individuals open their hearts to Islam. Murad is also moderate in his forecasts in regards to results of *da'wa* when he says "it is only on the micro-level, and to a very limited extent on the intermediate level, that we can reasonably hope to achieve something" (Murad, 1986: 10). All in all, man's powers are too modest to do great deeds by his own will. He has to team with a more powerful partner, who, for Muslims, is God Himself, naturally.

The idea that it is by God whether or not people accept *da'wa* is recurrent in writings of many *da'wa* advocates: "The Da'ee must always remember that he is not entrusted with transforming people from Kufr to Imaan, for ultimate guidance is from Allah, and free will is the basis of the Divine worldly test. Nor should the Da'ee worry about the number of his followers" (Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999). This, on the one hand, makes the *da'i's* work easier, in some sense, if ultimate success or failure comes not by his own will but God's. On the other hand, seeing no immediate result might frustrate the *da'i* enough to abandon his endeavor. Strategically, some *da'wa* theoreticians distinguish different types of *mad'u* (Arabic مدعو), the invited. El-Gharib, for instance, utilizes Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziya's (d. 1350) typology. As reported, according to al-Jawziya, the invited fall into three categories: those who

seek and are interested, those who are opposed but may be convinced, and those who are "stubborn disputants."[51] El-Gharib argues that it is the first two categories *da'is* should concentrate on while letting people of the third variant go their way in peace. However, such a moderate approach, though characteristic of many *da'wa* organizations operating in Europe and North America, is not the only strategy espoused by contemporary *da'wa* advocates.

Some *da'wa* "guides" are rather aggressive, though not necessarily calling for or implying violence. The following statement found on one of the private sites of virtual *da'wa* urges Muslims to push *da'wa* to its extreme:

> The dawa should be blatant, challenging everything, challenging the customs, traditions, the defective ideas and the incorrect concepts; challenging even the public opinion if it was wrong, even if it means undertaking struggle with it, challenging the doctrines, the believes (religions) even if it means being exposed to its followers partisan attitude. That is why the Islamic dawa, which is based on the Islamic aqeeda, is distinctly characterized with frankness, boldness, strength and thought, and challenges anything, which contradicts with the thought and method. (Anonymous)

In other words, *da'wa* is meant to put the order of the things upside down. This implies, *inter alia*, that the way of living and believing which *da'wa* invites to is diametrically opposed to the one currently led by non-Muslims and perhaps by non-practicing Muslims as well. Thus, a successful *da'wa* is only a total and full-hearted *da'wa*.

It might be noted here in passing that the act of conversion to Islam has not been ritualized beyond a public profession of the formula: "I witness that there is no deity but God, and Muhammad is God's messenger." No formal rites of initiation have been institutionalized in Islam. This makes the passage to Islam from any other faith extremely simple. Yet, as has been observed, the mere "utterance of the confession of faith is not as significant as what might be termed social conversion, that is, conversion involving movement from one religiously defined social community to another" (Bulliet, 1979: 33). This is why *da'wa* theoreticians contend that *da'wa* does not end at proselyte's formal conversion to Islam, but continues in the guiding of the novice on the path to social integration, or, as Bulliet says, to social conversion. In this fashion, the extra-*ummaic da'wa* morphs towards intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

[51] al-Jawziya, Ibn Qayyim. *al-Sawa'iq al-Mursala*, Dar al-'asima, 1998, vol. 4, p. 1276, quoted in Gharib, 2002: 5.

"NATURAL RELIGION"

Muslims advocate the theory of "natural religion," *din al-fitra* (دين الفطرة). As such, *da'wa* is more than an activity to convert people to a new religion – it is "the call of man to return to himself...for the da'iyah is to do no more than the 'midwife,' to stir the intellect of the mad'u to rediscover what he already knows, the innate knowledge which God has implanted in him at birth" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 37). *Din al-fitra* includes two separate yet intertwined notions – of Islam as the original faith of humankind and of Islam as the inborn religion of every individual human being. Thus, it is quite understandable, when Murad argues that

> We (Muslim *da'is – my note*) do not invite people to a 'new' religion, we invite them to the oldest religion, indeed to their 'own' religion, the religion of living in total surrender to their Creator, in accordance with the guidance brought by all His Messengers. Indeed, if I am not misunderstood, we may be bold enough to say that we do not invite anyone to change his 'religion', to transfer his allegiance to a rival religion. For, by our own admission, Islam is not a new or rival religion among the many competing for human allegiance; it is the natural and primordial religion. All nature lives in submission to its Creator; all Messengers Adam to Muhammad brought the same religion. (Murad, 1986: 18)

The idea that Islam is not the last but first monotheistic faith is recurrent in Islamic texts of different ages. Muhammad, the last of the messengers of God, is believed to have "brought the same truth as was brought by all the earlier Messengers; he came to confirm what they had been given rather than repudiate it, to clear it of accretions and distortions rather than throw it away. Coming to Islam is like going back to one's own roots in nature, and in history" (Murad, 1986: 16). Therefore, neither Judaism nor Christianity preceded Islam – they rather are its distortions. Jews, Christians, and the rest (or their ancestors, more accurately) were once Muslims who at some point went astray.

The second notion understands that every human being is born Muslim. Even though in the course of life and under certain circumstances one assumes one or the other religion, the natural, original religion remains Islam. There is a hadith in which Muhammad says, "No child is born but upon *fitra*. It is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Polytheist" (Muslim, 195–, II, 8: 53). The Islamic religion is believed to best meet the natural requirements of people. The mission of Muslim *da'is* then is "to bring back the human being to his *fitra* so that he returns to the religion of Islam (natural religion)" (Fadlullah, 1994: 64). Mahmoud Ayoub, a Muslim activist, said that in case of someone's conversion, "The group around the new convert would

say welcome to Islam but I would say welcome back to Islam" (Siddiqui, 1997: 105). For most Muslims, and especially activists, being Muslim is a natural state of affairs and a life in harmony with human nature. Thus, by embracing Islam one does not in essence convert to a "new" faith but returns to his/her "original" faith and the original religion of humankind.

The concept of "natural religion," though not overly exploited by Muslim promulgators, has been employed in *da'wa* manuals. Yet, the concept seems to serve only Muslim *da'is*, to bolster them of value of their endeavor; it is otherwise hardly appealing to non-Muslims. Though the idea of "natural religion" in itself might seem attractive to some Muslims, its practical implementation might be more problematic than useful. Moreover, by ascribing to itself the status of *din al-fitra*, Islam puts itself outside the fold of history and historical scrutiny, while other religions are seen as nothing but historical developments, perceived as deviations from the *din al-fitra*, Islam. Such an approach stigmatizes other religions and their adherents and thus precludes possibility of any fruitful dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims, even if the latter were willing to engage in one. Thus, by clinging to the idea of *din al-fitra*, Muslim missionaries might alienate potential converts. Those for whom dialogue is not a priority would not exclude any tool (such as the concept of *din al-fitra*) in their *da'wa* endeavor.

CONCLUSION

The Quran and Sunna give only limited attention to *da'wa* – both the word "*da'wa*" and the activities associated with it are given notice only rarely and unsystematically. Muslim activists, however, have seized upon the relevant passages in the Quran and Hadith collections and have, especially in contemporary times, elaborated a sort of "*da'wa* science" with its own terminology, objects, aims, forms, and methodology.

Muslim propagandists of diverse manners and ideologies agree on the need for *da'wa*, both in its extra- or intra-*ummaic* forms. The need is traced to the founding texts of Islam as well as back in history, most critically the first centuries of Islam when the Muslim empire was rapidly expanding. The *da'wa* need is seen to be very urgent in today's world, which is perceived to be living in darkness and ignorance of the true God and His religion (implying both faith and way of life).

In the on-going discussion of who is allowed to pursue *da'wa* activities, most Muslims today veer toward the notion that virtually every male or female Muslim of

sound intellect can, if not should, be a *da'i*. The basic requirement is that the *da'i* not speak about things he or she does not understand and has no firm knowledge of.

The positive characteristics and qualities of the *da'i* occupy much thought of *da'wa* theoreticians. In their vision, the *da'i* has to be an almost perfect man and certainly an ideal Muslim, like Muhammad, who was the foremost among *da'is*. The *Da'i* of today has to be an integrated personality, with faith in and knowledge of his religion and the living proof of this faith and knowledge through his action.

Giving advice and preparing "*da'wa* manuals" has become a sort of sport among Muslim activists engaged in virtual *da'wa*. These manuals range from a smattering of unrelated suggestions on how better to do *da'wa*, to comprehensive, professionally prepared manuals. As a rule, the authors of these manuals, though cognizant of the distinction between the extra- and intra-*ummaic* forms of *da'wa*, do not emphasize it in their writings but frame *da'wa* in its totality as addressed to all, Muslims and non-Muslims the same.

4. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF *DA'WA*

Though successful *da'wa* needs *da'is* with strong personalities, *da'wa* is perceived by Muslim activists to be a collective effort: "Da'wah organisation is very important because personal qualities alone may not be enough" (Nasir, 2000: 494).[52] Al-Hamawi and Abu Khalid are even more categorical:

> To utilise the means of Da'wah efficiently and successfully, Da'wah needs organised and collective work. Obviously, an individual, or even a few individuals, can't be entrusted to perform this massive load of Da'wah work. Nor can we expect concerned team-work without organisation that correctly directs the efforts and guides to the objectives. Islam is the Deen of organisation where all forms of worship, including the pillars, are performed at certain times, in a particular way and with obedience to the Imam. Da'wah is not an exception and the Da'ees must follow this system, by choosing their leader, continuing their education, formulating and reviewing their plans, funding their means, etc. (al-Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999)

Nasir's and al-Hamawi and Abu Khalid's positions are representative of the general stance of Muslim activists on this issue even on national and pan-Islamic levels. They all are in support of strong Muslim personalities, but these personalities have to work in a disciplined team to ensure the effectiveness of their work and the best results.

Mashhour, with regard to building institutionalized *da'wa* structures, identifies three stages:

A) the stage of announcing, publicity and heralding it in order to propagate it to the masses on all national levels.
B) The stage of structuring and the choice of adherents and the educating of those enlisted from among those adhering.
C) Then there comes the stage of activity, execution and performance (Mashhour, 1999: 17; see 'Abd al-'Aziz, 1989: 175, for a practically identical itemization).

Mashhour means intra-*ummaic da'wa*; however, his tripartite division is equally valid for the extra-*ummaic* activities. Mashhour's sequence encompasses the major steps toward consolidation of *da'wa* efforts in general and making *da'wa* into a team effort: Individual *da'is* or, rather, leaders start publicizing their mission, which hopefully attracts followers who after training proceed to spreading the mission further. Of course, the inner structure of an organization might vary, but the basic model should

[52] Sha'ib al-Ghabashi's article on the Internet emphasizing unity among *da'is* is characteristic of the position of Muslim activists advocating the consolidation of *da'wa* activities (Ghabashi).

be maintained to ensure the effectiveness of the organization's *da'wa*: There should be a charismatic leader, sheikh, or imam; there should be a hierarchy of ranks, duties, and responsibilities, as well as planning and reviewing; the followers should be formally or informally educated and trained (both to become able *da'is* and to be indoctrinated into the ideology of the organization); organized and supervised *da'wa* activities should be comprehensive and use all possible means and ways in getting the message across.

Fathi Yakan is, as are many other concerned Muslim activists, dissatisfied with the current state of *da'wa*, though he has also intra-*ummaic da'wa* mostly in mind in this regard. Only judging personal education and devoutness there are many capable *da'is*, but *da'wa* still badly lacks "leaders who have organizational skills" (Yakan, n.d.: 75). For Yakan, the present state of *da'wa* is miserable, and major rethinking has to be done. He argues that because of the lack of proper organization many *da'wa* efforts are wasted, and some *da'is* suffer and even lose their lives in vain.

As will be shown below, most contemporary Muslim activist organizations operate on the pattern described by Mashhour. Such organizations are something in-between a missionary society and a political party. In fact, many of them encompass both. This has become possible by effectively blending *da'wa* and politics. Though such a phenomenon is more observable in the case of the intra-*ummaic* than extra-*ummaic da'wa*, it has been increasingly visible even in the latter.[53] The first known and best-studied Muslim organization of this sort was the Fatimid Isma'ili *da'wa* of the 9th through 12th centuries. The case of the Fatimids should be analyzed on its own, for their *da'wa* was exclusivist and closed, unlike the *da'wa* of today's Muslim organizations. On the Fatimid *da'wa*, see Chapter 7.

Speaking of contemporary times, "it is suggested that the method of da'wah through collective work or systematic organisation was started when the first organisation called Dar al-Da'wah wa al-Irshad was founded by Shaykh Rashid Rida," in Cairo in 1910 (Nasir, 2000: 497). Though for our analysis it is irrelevant which particular organization was founded the first of its sort (devoted to *da'wa* through institutionalized means), Nasir's observation that the institutionalization of *da'wa* started at the turn of the 20th century is supported by findings of other students of *da'wa* – in the *Tablighi Jama'at* of India by Masud or in a more general study by Arnold (Masud, 2000a: 9. See also Arnold: 443–444). Meanwhile, Rida's

[53] On politization of *da'wa*, see Chapter 8 below.

organization in Egypt seems to have been a true organized missionary structure; it even opened a college to train professional *da'is*.

Contemporary Muslim missionary activities with respect to the institutionalization of *da'wa* could be viewed from two broad perspectives: development of *da'wa* outside the Muslim world (both extra- and intra-*ummaic*) and within the Muslim world (chiefly intra-*ummaic*). The Islamic Foundation of Leicester, North American Muslim Student Association, *Tablighi Jama'at*, and *Ahmadiyya* are representative of the first; the *Wahhabi* movement of the 1910s and 1920s in the Arabian Peninsula, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, and *Jamaat-i-Islami* represent the latter. The division is not absolute, however, since many organizations operating outside Muslim countries are also active in Muslim countries winning recruits (notably *Tablighi Jama'at* and *Ahmadiyya*). The Islamic Foundation and Muslim Student Association, on the other hand, operate predominantly in North America and Europe.[54] Schulz proposes a further typology. He argues, "in the 1960s, Islamic *da'wah* was promoted by at least three different types of organizations: interstate or state organizations, … state sponsored transnational organizations, … and non-governmental organizations..." (Schulze, 1995: 347). Though the basic difference between state-run organizations and NGOs is critical, the first and second organizations in Schulze's typology are too often indistinguishable, as for example in the cases of al-Azhar and the Islamic Universities at Medina (later Islamabad).

These organizations sought to make fellow believers aware of the religious realities around them, no matter where they lived. They started calling them back to the perceived true path of Islam, as the basic aim of these organizations was to rouse Islamicity among Muslims. The activities which originated in Muslim countries spread to Europe and North America. However, in the case of "transplanted" Islam in Europe and North America, Muslim missionary activities lacked local organization and formal administration until as late as the 1960s (in the US) and 1970s (in Europe). *Da'wa* in Europe and North America was initially done individually or in small groups. And only in the last three decades has *da'wa* there become significantly institutionalized. *Da'wa* "went West," as Poston correctly put it. But then again, it also went global: *Da'wa* activities are carried out in South, Southeast, and East Asia as much as in Europe and North America, and they have reached the shores of South America where it has been gaining pace.

[54] For a range of activities of *da'wa* organizations, see the table in Appendix II.

Several pan-Islamic organizations, such as *Rabita al-'Alam al-Islami* (Muslim World League) and *Jam'iyat al-Da'wa al-Islamiya al-'Alamiya* (the World Islamic Call Society), were established in the second half of the 20th century to, among other things, organize and supervise the work of *da'is* around the world, in Muslim and non-Muslim countries. [55] For example, the spirit of *da'wa* is paramount in "the Covenant of Makkah for Islamic Work" adopted by the Muslim World League, which stated that:

> – Muslims must fully adhere to the Islamic Shari'ah, follow the pious Salaf of this Ummah and invite to their righteous pattern all communities and nations with wisdom and good preaching. Muslims must be aware of the dangers of some foreign attempts to influence Islamic education at all levels and should challenge them by increasing Islamic education and giving proper moral and ethical training to our Muslim generations.
> – Muslim should pay special attention to the Da'wah activities. They should improve their Da'wah methods, establish programs to prepare the Du'at who understand the challenges of the time and adhere to the proper Islamic sources, objectives, moral and universal codes. Islamic message should be presented in a balanced way without any extremism and keeping in mind the gradual approach, rules of priority and proper terminology when using the terms like terrorism, extremism, fundamentalism, globalization, clash of civilizations etc.
> – The scope of Islamic work is very vast and it has many dimensions. It is important that Muslim Da'wah and relief organizations work in cooperation with each other. They must coordinate their activities and should avoid duplication and harmful competition.
> – Muslims must make full use of modern media to serve Islam and to remove misconceptions and distortions leveled against Islam and Muslims. Muslim governments and rich Muslims should support Islamic media programs in different languages. (*Covenant*, 2002)

Likewise, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in its official documents,

> requests Member States to take the necessary steps to incorporate this Strategy (Islamic Da'wa Strategy, as stated above in the same document – *my note*) into their national policies in the educational, information, Islamic Da'wa and other fields as a methodology to be followed in Joint Islamic Action. (It also) recommends that the Committee on Co-ordination of Islamic Action develop a mechanism for the admission of Islamic organizations that satisfy appropriate membership criteria.[56]

Though both the MWL and the OIC are primarily political organizations, they give time and effort to *da'wa* activities. So far, their major contribution has been educational. They organize and finance conferences and seminars and publish brochures and pamphlets written by renowned *da'is*. However, for the OIC *da'wa* is of secondary concern.

The Libyan-based World Islamic Call Society (WICS), established with the sole purpose of spreading of Islam, is worth a more lengthy mention. The organization

[55] For a brief overview of these organizations, see Masud, 2000: lvii-lx. See also Siddiqui, 1997: 180–185. For a comprehensive overview of the Libyan Islamic Call Society, see Mattes, 1986.
[56] Articles 1 and 2 of the Resolution No. 37/8-C (IS) on Da'wa Activities and the Reactivation of the Committee on Co-ordination of Islamic Action in Resolutions on Cultural and Islamic Affairs adopted by the Eighth session of the Islamic Summit Conference (Session of Dignity, Dialogue, Participation), Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, December 9–11, 1997.

was established in 1982 in Tripoli, Libya, though its predecessor was founded a decade earlier. Although formally an NGO, it actually is accountable to and dependent on the Libyan leadership, with Mu'amar Qadhafi at the head. Qadhafi has made *da'wa* one of the priorities of his foreign policy. He has also been using the WICS to promote his political ideas.

As Mattes' analysis shows, the Society is a well organized institution with a number of offshoot organizations, branches, and offices coordinating several hundred missionaries abroad (Mattes, 1986: 114–142). The structure of the organization is reminiscent of a political party, with its mission and objectives, hierarchy, legislative and executive bodies, membership, etc. Its dependence on the state is attested to by the fact that a bulk of its annual budget comes from the coffers of the Libyan state. This means that the organization in practice is at the mercy of the state. On the other hand, state sponsorship ensures the stability of activities, especially the long-term ones.

The WICS's activities are mainly confined to education, with scientific projects being of high preference. Among the organization's objectives are spreading of the Arabic language; teaching the Quran and Muhammad's Sunna; publishing periodicals, Islamic encyclopedias, and other religious books in Arabic and other languages; organizing "student, youth and professional meetings with the aim of the presenting Islam and spreading the call;" training *da'is*; and finally, "urging Islamic States to adopt the Holy Quran as a source of legislature and to modify existing laws to conform with the principles of Islam."[57] It is evident from these objectives that the activities of WICS encompass both intra- and extra-*ummaic da'wa*. In fact, the Society appears to make no distinction between the two.

A salient feature of the Society is that its activities represent the phenomenon of "cultural reislamization" common in several Muslim states, most notably those in the Persian Gulf region. The essence of the "cultural reislamization" is the activities of state and state-sponsored agents aimed at promoting public religiosity in the given society.[58] "Cultural reislamization" is a political matter as much, if not more, a matter of religion, and the WICS's activities attest to this – it itself is at once a religious and political organization. As Siddiqui points out, the World Islamic Call Society's view of *da'wa* "is not simply the preaching and propagation of Islam but in some measure

[57] Official website of the *World Islamic Call Society*, at http://www.islamic-call.org/
[58] A discussion on "cultural reislamization" is provided in Chapter 8.

to prepare the Muslim community to counter the 'conspiracies of the enemies'" (Siddiqui, 2001: 78). In this way, *da'wa* inevitably gets entangled with politics.

FORMALIZATION OF *DA'WA* EDUCATION

Knowledge and education have already been singled out as essential requisites for potentially successful *da'is*. There abound texts in which *da'is* are urged to continuously seek knowledge and expertise in various fields of human life, including humanities and the social and even natural sciences.[59] All this is generically termed "*tarbiya*" (Arabic تربية) – education.[60] As Roald argues, among contemporary Muslims the term has come to encompass several concepts: To some, it means teaching Islamic subjects, like the Quran, Hadith, *tafsir*, and *fiqh* – what in some Muslim countries is officially called *tarbiya islamiyya* (Islamic education) – while to others it is a "complete formal educational system," or even "a complete non-formal and informal educational system" (Roald, 1994: 56). In the minds of most contemporary Muslim activists, proper *tarbiya islamiyya* includes all three notions. It definitely extends beyond dry learning (*ta'lim*, Arabic تعليم), usually done by heart, of Islamic texts either in formal (i.e. state-run) educational institutions or non-formal study circles. Roald correctly concludes from her research on the perception of education in contemporary Muslim movements that "*tarbiya* has come to signify a life-long process, encompassing all aspects of human life, and many of the Islamic movements have adapted this understanding of the term and regard the process of tarbiya as the fundament in the struggle for an Islamization of Muslim societies" (Roald, 1994: 14). Her book is especially good at revealing the attention Muslim activists have been giving to education (in the broadest sense of the word and encompassing learning, upbringing, and training) in their programs for the comprehensive societal change they seek – a total reislamization of, first, knowledge and, then, the polities.

Even the missionary experiences of Christians, though their messages be repulsive and intolerable, are seen to lend insight to the method and structure of successful missionary activities. Among the measures used by Christian missionaries, education gets heightened attention from Muslims pursuing *da'wa*. Muslims have

[59] The International Institute of Islamic Thought through its numerous publications has especially been calling on Muslims to embark upon the study of "secular" sciences. On the IIIT, see further below and for a deeper analysis Stenberg, 1996.
[60] For elaboration on the advantages of education in *da'wa* work, see al-Tahan, 1999.

realized that educational establishments are an effective tool for spreading their message (al-Tahan, 1999: 74–75). The Muslim World League, for example, as early as 1974 urged the establishment of education and training institutions to school Islamic workers.

Institutionalization of *da'wa* inevitably brought about the formalization of *da'wa* education and training, which are seen by Muslims as the foundation for successful *da'wa*. An altogether new trend in the history of *da'wa* is *da'wa*'s becoming a field of study, if not offered as a departmental degree then at least as a minor. Nufal perceives *da'wa* as a separate and complex science that feeds on, other than religious sciences, such secular sciences as history, ethics, psychology, and sociology (Nufal, 1977: 14, 18–21. Al-Ghalwash, 1978: 10–11, sees it as an altogether religious science among other religious sciences). This trend of making *da'wa* into a "science" is manifested in the establishment of educational and training centers for *da'is*. In Saudi Arabia as early as the late 1950s instruction in *da'wa* was established at the university level. The Islamic University at Madina, from 1961 onwards, has been specially training imams and *da'is* for different parts of the world. In 1985, the Dawah Academy at the International Islamic University in Islamabad was established.[61]

Rector of the famous al-Azhar University in Egypt, Fawzi al-Zafzaf, in his turn, declares his university "a *da'wa* establishment" (*mu'assasa al-da'wa*, Arabic مؤسسة الدعوة) (al-Zafzaf, 1997). For al-Zafzaf, *da'wa* consists foremost in education (*tarbiya wa ta'lim wa tadrib*) and is addressed toward Muslims. For this very purpose al-Azhar has established a structural unit devoted to "educational *da'wa*." The Faculty of Da'wa and Principles of Religion at al-Quds University is another example of a recently formed (in 1984) educational institution where *da'wa* as a field of higher education is prioritized. As information on the faculty on the Internet says,

> The Department of Da'wa and Principles of Religion has designed a program of study which qualifies students as religious leaders and specialized teachers of Da'wa.…The Faculty of Da'wa and Principles of Religion offers programs of study which lead to the award of a Bachelor of Arts degree in Da'wa and Principles of Religion or a Bachelor of Arts degree in Jurisdiction and Legislation. For both degrees the student must complete 137 credit hours according to the general requirements of the University, the Faculty, and one or the other of the departments.[62]

[61] Official website of the *Academy* at http://www.dawahacademy.org (June 14, 2004).
[62] Official website of the *Faculty of Da'wa and Principles of Religion of al-Quds University* at http://www.alquds.edu/faculties/.

The World Islamic Call Society has been running its own *da'wa* college, aka The Faculty of the Islamic Call, in Tripoli, Libya, with branches in Damascus, Beirut, and N'djamena, Chad. The college is particularly aimed at Muslim students from abroad. It admits some 300 students from over 40 countries every year.[63] The College is not exactly a theological seminary, like al-Azhar or Qum seminaries, for though "among its goals is to produce a self-reliant professional daiya who can earn a living from his knowledge," students also get trained in trade professions like carpentry, mechanics, electronics, and similar. Upon completion of the four-year program, its graduates receive a degree in *da'wa*, which is arguably equivalent to a BA degree. Recently, the College launched graduate and post-graduate programs and has changed its status from college to university with all three academic levels offered.

If there is a growing need for educated *da'is* in Muslim countries, this is the more so in the case of Europe and North America. Hence, the increasing emphasis on the formalization of Islamic, in general, and *da'wa*, in particular, education in order to bring about the Islamization of knowledge.[64] For this same purpose, the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) was founded in 1981 near Washington, DC. One of its founding fathers was Ismail al-Faruqi, a prolific proponent of *da'wa*, in both its varieties, who has been extensively cited in this study.

As stated on the institute's official website,

> The Institute promotes academic research on the methodology and philosophy of various disciplines, and gives special emphasis to the development of Islamic scholarship in contemporary social sciences. The program, which has become known as "Islamization of Knowledge", endeavors to elucidate Islamic concepts that integrate Islamic revealed knowledge with human knowledge and revives Islamic ethical and moral knowledge.[65]

The institute seeks to achieve these objectives by "directing research and studies to develop Islamic thought and the Islamization of knowledge."[66] Research and publishing are seen as pillars of the project of Islamization of knowledge, while *da'wa* – sometimes called "Islamic work" – is considered its tool.

In the words of the author of the *Training Guide for Islamic Workers*, Hisham Altalib, "By the dawn of fifteenth hijri century when the IIIT (The International Institute of Islamic Thought) was established in 1401/1981, it had become apparent that the new mode of *da'wah* was to be found in 'leadership training'" (Altalib, 1993:

[63] Official website of the *World Islamic Call Society* at http://www.islamic-call.org.
[64] Muslim ideas on the Islamization of knowledge are thoroughly investigated by Stenberg, 1996.
[65] *Mission Statement* on the official website of the International Institute of Islamic Thought, http://www.softechww.com/iiit/Overview.asp.
[66] *Mission Statement* on the official website of the International Institute of Islamic Thought, http://www.softechww.com/iiit/Overview.asp.

5). He speaks proudly of training sessions the IIIT has held for prospective leaders of American Muslim communities.

MSA, the foremost Muslim organization in North America devoted to *da'wa*, has the Islamic Teaching Center, which is reported to list "among its primary activities the arranging of lectures and study groups concerning da'wah, the preparation of correspondence courses, and the organization of training camps for aspiring da'is" (Poston, 1992: 105). The Islamic Foundation of Leicester has founded the Markfield Institute which, though in itself not a *da'wa* institution, is intended by its founders as a facilitator for *da'wa* in the UK. Separately, Leicester hosts an Islamic Da'wah Academy.[67] The recently founded Islamic American University also declares *da'wa* among its foremost goals:

> To produce a generation of Da'wa workers who understand true Islam, implement it as a way of life, and invite others to it. To establish training programs on public Da'wa (sermons), Da'wa through the Internet, Da'wa through radio and television.[68]

CONCLUSION

It can be argued that *da'wa* development has entered yet another phase – where individual *da'wa*, very much advocated by many concerned Muslims, parallels the institutionalized *da'wa* of organizations founded either solely for the purpose of spreading Islam or else employing *da'wa* among its other activities. The institutionalization of *da'wa*, which started sometime at the turn of the 20th century, has ever since the Second World War been gaining impetus on all levels – local, national, and international. This means that next to the proliferation of local *da'wa* organizations, the joining of *da'wa* forces on broader levels is sought, which in its turn leads to the formation of NGO-type *da'wa* associations that cooperate and work hand in hand with (and financed by) governmental and intergovernmental Islamic establishments. Moreover, as Janson correctly remarks, "da'wa has increasingly come to denote charity, public relations and dialogue" (Janson, 2000: 16). He puts it even more bluntly: "In several senses, *da'wa* could be seen as *marketing of Islam*. And since the purpose of all marketing is the creation of a need to consume, *da'wa* might be regarded as, to be a little blunt, the creation of the need for Islam among Muslims and non-Muslims" (Janson, 2000: 62). In his later study, he is less radical but grasps

[67] The official website of this institution is at http://www.idauk.org.
[68] *Goals of the Islamic American University*, on the official website of the Islamic American University, http://www.islamicau.org/Goals.htm.

the effects the institutionalization has had and is still having on *da'wa* more profoundly: "Today the boundaries between the theological and commercial interests are becoming less and less distinct. Accordingly, da'wa increasingly emulates organizational and pedagogical models of secular educational institutions as well as the marketing strategies and colloquial idioms of computer games and shopping malls" (Janson, 2003: 15).

Emphasis on education in *da'wa* matters can also be understood as an attempt to check the ever-spreading activities of self-proclaimed amateur *da'is*:

> The successful Da'ee recognises that his role is not merely in conveyance of the Message, but extends to the boundaries of continual Tarbiyah and education of young enthusiastic generations of believers. This role is crucial in the non-Islamic environment, where many uneducated Muslims who were raised on a shallow perception of Islam or a scant emotion towards this religion, compete to lead Muslim organisations blindly for the sake of fame or reputation leading to deep divisions and anti-Islamic practices in the community. The Da'ee must plant the seeds of goodness in the hearts of the Muslim youth and then pledge to constantly raise them progressively in accordance with Allah's Law. (al-Hamawi & Abu Khalid, 1999)

Through institutionalization, and especially education and training – *tarbiya*, *da'wa* is once again being "reprofessionalized," referring here to the Isma'ili *da'is* who were highly educated professionals. This, however, does not mean that unskilled *da'is* are to disappear altogether – it is just that *da'wa* professionals will assume a greater share of the burden of spreading Islam as well as of "enjoining right and forbidding wrong," leaving the lowest, personal level of *da'wa* to untrained yet devout Muslims.

PART III

EXTRA-*UMMAIC DA‘WA*

5. *DA'WA* TOWARD NON-MUSLIMS

HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

Islamic *da'wa*, from its very inception, was oriented, if not exclusively, then at least primarily, toward non-Muslims. Muhammad, himself the foremost *da'i*, preached Islam to them – to Arab pagans, Christians, Jews, and others. Apart from the pagan Arabs who lived all around the Arabian Peninsula and were neighbors of Muhammad's followers, Muslims gained a wider exposure to non-Muslims (non-Arab as well as Arab Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians) immediately after Muhammad's death during their military conquests of the 7th through the early 9th centuries. Muslims themselves have insisted it was religious zeal – the wish to spread the Islamic faith – that propelled the Muslim advance on Byzantine and Persian lands. However, non-Muslim researchers question the commonly held position of Muslims that it was a religious mission that drove Muslims out of Arabia to North Africa, Syria, Persia, and beyond. It is generally agreed among scholars that the initial motivation for going to war in foreign lands was a mixture of economic and political conquest, vague religious feeling, and a possible curiosity and taste for adventure (See Watt, 1968: 18–19; see also the discussion in the Chapter 2 of the present study).

Moreover, as Arab conquerors did not come into direct daily relations with local populations of newly-conquered lands for a long time (since they preferred to keep to themselves in established military garrisons than to socialize with locals), *da'wa*, in the first century or so of Islam, was limited, if even present at all – Muslims only rarely could have preached Islam to locals (the language barrier was one major obstacle), and they had few opportunities to show by example how the Islamic way of life was superior to non-Islamic ones (Bulliet, 1979; see also Arnold: 46). Thus, Bulliet is extremely skeptical about early "conversions"[69] of individuals or groups to Islam from among conquered populations, for the locals, if they had any image of Islam, it was most likely a distorted one (Bulliet, 1990: 129). In fact, the very Islamic way of life, later written into the Hadith collections in an idealized form, was itself

[69] It may be noted that there is no Arabic word meaning abstract religious conversion. For conversion to Islam, the verb "*aslama*" (أسلم) is used.

only just beginning to take shape. As Bulliet says, "When in the second half of the seventh century A.D. the Arabs conquered the Persian empire and half of the Byzantine empire, they did not bring with them the religion that is described in general books on Islam. They brought with them something far more primitive and undeveloped, a mere germ of later developments" (Bulliet, 1979: 1). Hodgson had put it the following way: "Centered on its mosque and kept in order by its commander, each garrison town formed a self-sufficient Muslim community, dominating and living from district under its military control; in the process it molded its own people into an Islamic pattern" (Hodgson, 1974, 1: 209).

Yasin Dutton argues that "Islam spread not so much *by* the sword as *with*, that is, alongside. For the purpose of Muslim armies was not so much to make everybody Muslim as to establish Islam, which meant, primarily, establishing Muslim rule" (Dutton, 1999: 158). The first century or so of the Islamic era was, then, of military and political expansion – followed in subsequent centuries by the formation of a distinctly Muslim political, legal, and social entity – rather than a religious one, though conversions to Islam, sometimes *en masse*, are thought to have taken place in parts of the then-Muslim state. Take, for example, the case of some Syrian and Iraqi Arab tribes. Some of them are believed to have converted to Islam soon after their former masters, the Byzantines and Sassanids, respectively, had suffered defeats at the hands of advancing Muslims in the middle of the 7th century (Arnold: 47). Another example is the Berbers, a number of tribes which very soon after the Arab conquest of North Africa embraced Islam. Though it can be argued that the driving force behind these conversions was not religious conviction but rather the pursuit of material gains like war booty, the fact remains that at least some non-Muslim ethnic groups did formally convert at the hands of conquering Arab Muslims as early as the beginning of the 8th century.

Bulliet laments that the eventual "great conversion experience that fundamentally changed world history by uniting the peoples of the Middle East in a new religion has had few modern chroniclers, the reason being that conversion plays so slight a role in the narratives of medieval chroniclers. Without data it is difficult to write history, and medieval Islam produced no missionaries, bishops, baptismal rites, or other indicators of conversion that could be conveniently recorded by the Muslim chronicler" (Bulliet, 1979: 4). In any case, it is obvious that the rule of Islam advanced initially by the conquest of Muslim armies above any social Islamization through *da'wa*.

The term "*da'wa*" first appeared in wide usage some one hundred years after Muhammed's death (around the 720s and 730s) during the internal factional struggles for power among the Muslim *Ummah* centered around Khurasan, in Persia. This "*da'wa*," however, had little to do with the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam. It was a political, and thus temporary, enterprise, abandoned as soon as it served its purpose of helping the 'Abbasids seize power from the Umayyads. Nonetheless, the ideological activities of the 'Abbasids, who skillfully played the Shi'i card by manipulating religious sentiment of a certain segment of the population while coupling it with promises of social justice for all Muslims, Arabs, and *mawalis* alike, fall within what has been labeled the "intra-ummaic *da'wa*." Part IV to follow deals with this sort of *da'wa*.

Not long after the 'Abbasids seized the throne, increasing numbers of subjects in the caliphate started converting (at least formally) to Islam.[70] Still, even at this time, it was not due to Muslim missionary activities that the numbers of Muslims swelled. As has been argued by scholars (Bulliet, 1979; Arnold: 46–103), early converts to Islam from among subject Christian and Zoroastrian populations declared themselves Muslims for worldly reasons – economic, social, and political. Sociopolitical pressures of the time, rather than the missionary works of Muslims, facilitated increasing rates of conversion in the caliphate. The status of *dhimmi* – the "protected" second class citizen – hindered upward social mobility and created economic burdens, with no compensation mechanisms available. One may accept Bulliet's distinction that "a convert first became a member of the Muslim community and later discovered, or tried to discover, what it meant to be a Muslim" (Bulliet, 1990: 131). Moreover, it was long before formal mass or individual conversions became social conversions.[71] Bulliet's investigations led him to the conclusion that "there was probably a change in the character of conversion sometime around the fourth Islamic century. Before that time Islam posed more of a socio-political challenge to the believer than a spiritual one. In the later period belief became more important, and resistance to conversion increased" (Bulliet, 1990: 133).

Da'wa as a missionary activity seems to have come in existence even later, some two and a half centuries after Muhammad's death, in the second half of the 9th century. Shi'i Isma'ilis practiced organized *da'wa* toward non-Muslims and fellow Muslims. It is not certain, though, to what degree their *da'wa* activities among non-

[70] For the dynamics of conversion to Islam in the early centuries of Islam, see Bulliet, 1979.
[71] For the notion of "social conversion" and contraposition of "formal conversion" and "social conversion," see Bulliet, 1979: 34–37.

Muslims were successful. As in the case of the Isma'ilis, it appears that most of the early *da'is* whose missionary activities were with non-Muslims were sectarians (Zaidis in East Africa) and heterodox Muslims (various mystics and wandering Sufis), compared to the already-emerging mainstream *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*: the Sunnis. One of the main aspects of such *da'wa* was that the faith preached by non-orthodox *da'is* to non-Muslims might was often at variance with the one espoused by the official *'ulama* and the preachers of the 'Abbasid caliphate. In fact, the whole missionary history of Islam attests to the supposition that those peoples on the fringes of Muslim-ruled lands (Central and Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, India) or outside it and converted through *da'wa* (even if coupled with physical occupation of a given land by Muslim armies) tended to be less orthodox, though not necessarily less religious. In any case, the activities of *da'is* facilitated the emergence of a great variety of "islams," or ways of life aspiring to the Islamic, that would eventually clash among themselves, bringing about the emergence of intra-*ummaic da'wa* in the 18th century and continuing to the present.

The spread of Islam between the 9th and 17th centuries is recorded by Arnold. His study, though badly outdated and in many instances dubiously sourced, remains the only comprehensive inquiry into the missionary activities of early Muslims. Arnold credits Muslim missionaries with many conversions in Africa and Asia. *Da'wa*, especially on the personal and small-group level, was present throughout these centuries. Though at times recorded in hagiographies, biographies, and chronicles, the record of *da'wa* carried out by individuals and Sufi groups is a sketchy and idealized picture of Muslim missionary endeavors. This is true until the middle of the 18th century when a new wave of Muslim religious and political activities came to light, first in the person of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in Western Arabia and soon after in the form of revivalist movements on the Indian Subcontinent. The scarcity and unreliability of recorded material on the *da'wa* of pre-modern times should not be taken to mean that conversions through *da'wa* were uncommon. Indeed, it was between the 12th and 17th centuries when Mongol and then Turk conquerors of the Middle East, as well as inhabitants of the Malay archipelago and South East Europe, became Muslim. Meanwhile, Sub-Saharan Africa, where Sufis were especially successful, was also effectively Islamized, even if Islamic beliefs and practices got mixed there with the pre-Islamic ones. On the other hand, one is always to bear in mind that in pre-modern times conversion of a subject population to a certain faith was not infrequently determined by the ruler's choice to embrace that

faith, which itself could be a political move. This applied as much to Christian as to Islamic faiths. The fact that huge populations in Africa and South East Asia are now Muslim does not necessarily mean that they all came to Islam because of *da'wa* – or because of conquest and jihad.

MUSLIMS AND THE "WEST" AND IN THE "WEST"

That Islam spread through peaceful means as much as, if not more than, by coercion, has been acknowledged by researchers. The story of Islam's march through the world is a complex one: Periods of military campaigns were followed by peaceful coexistence and lively engagement among the ruling Muslims and the subject non-Muslims, with larger- or smaller-scale conversions continually taking place. Eventually, the Muslim-ruled territories came to be identified with *Dar al-Islam* (Arabic دار الإسلام) – the Abode of Islam, where the Islamic laws were said to be in application by the authorities, or at least where the authorities themselves were Muslim.

Take the classic Muslim territorial division: 1) *Dar al-Islam* (Abode of Islam or Submission), also *Dar al-Salam* (Abode of Peace) and *Dar al-'Adl* (Abode of Justice); 2) *Dar al-Harb* (Abode of War, Arabic دار الحرب), or *Dar al-Kufr* (Abode of Unbelief); 3) the intermediary *Dar al-Sulh* (Abode of Truce) between the first two divisions. Carving up the Islamic map in this manner made it natural and desirable that Muslims should reside permanently only in the *Dar al-Islam* and justified their venturing into the *Dar al-Harb* only in certain circumstances.[72] However, intention to preach Islam in a non-Muslim (*Dar al-Harb*) land was thought by some Muslim jurists of that time to legitimize prolonged stays of Muslims "abroad": an 11th-century Maliki jurist, Yusuf Ibn 'Abd al-Barr al-Qurtubi, wrote that "a Muslim may reside there temporarily if he or she is safe and hopes to prevail over the non-believers."[73] Ibn 'Abd al-Barr here might be implying either political or religious "prevailing over non-believers," since both of which would ultimately lead to the Islamization of the existing non-Islamic land and society. A 15th-century jurist, Ahmad al-Wansharisi, on the other hand, is reported to have said that "a Muslim's willing residence in Christian

[72] For a comprehensive overview of the issue of Muslims residing in non-Muslim lands, see Fadl, 1994. See also Miller, 2000. For more on definitions and meanings of *Dar al-Islam*, *Dar al-Harb*, see al-Zuhayli, 1981: 169–181; see also Khalil. Masud reports that Ibn Arabi has permitted migration from "a land of disease and financial insecurity to a better place." Masud, 1990: 42.

[73] al-Qurtubi, Yusuf Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. *al-Kafi fi Fiqh Ahl al-Madina al-Maliki*, Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1987, p. 210, quoted in Fadl, 1994: 149.

land was manifest proof of his vile and base spirit" and that "this chosen course will cause him much frustration and disgrace."[74] Al-Wansharisi's position is typical of many jurists of the Maliki *madhhab* who addressed this issue in the 12th through 15th centuries when Muslims were rapidly becoming a minority in vast parts of what was once Muslim Andalusia and part of the *Dar al-Islam*. Jurists of other *madhhabs* held similar views as a rule, though not always so radically articulated.

Muslims – migrants, political and economic refugees, laborers, students, etc. – started flocking to Europe and North America from the second half of the 19th century on with little or no religious intention in the foreground. A quest for material and sometimes spiritual (but not necessarily religious) well-being (including higher education) was the driving force behind several waves of large-scale migration from the Muslim world to the Christian lands of Europe and America, first toward the end of the 19th century to North America and then, after the WWII, to both Western Europe and the United States. These immigrants initially either kept a low religious profile or at best satisfied their immediate religious needs by building a mosque.[75] It is much later (sometime in the 1960s) that the religious self-consciousness of Muslims residing in Europe and America awoke. The quest to keep one's Islamicity (conscious awareness of one's religious obligations) and have an active, not just nominal, identification with Islam was soon coupled with a desire to share one's religious convictions with others, namely the native non-Muslim European and North American population. It is in the 1970s that *da'wa* efforts really unfolded in North America and Europe.

The issue of living in a non-Muslim country became an increasingly relevant one for Muslims in the latter part of the 20th century. The issue is of Islamicity and Islamic identity (practical behavior). The dialogue around preserving one's Islamic identity and strengthening one's Islamicity in a non-Muslim culture is invariably apologetic and even reactionary, as illustrated in the case of Amir Abdullah, who laments that "clearly our identity is under threat as we see our ideologies, beliefs and manners give way to the ideologies, beliefs and manners of the Kuffar. The preservation of the Islamic identity has become a challenge rather than something we

[74] Quoted in Miller, 2000: 257–258 from al-Wansharisi, Ahmad, *Kitab al-Mi'yar al-Mu'rib wa'l-Jami' al-Mughrib 'an Fatawi ahl Ifriqiya wa'l-Andalus wa'l-Maghrib*, Rabat: Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs, 1981–83, vol. 2, p. 131.

[75] This is well observed by Haddad when she writes that immigrants to North America "were less likely to be actively involved in organized religious activities. Congregational prayer, if practiced at all, was often held in homes or small mosques, and proselytization was extremely limited" (Haddad, 1984: 261). It can be noted that the first purposefully built mosque appeared in North America only in the early 1930s.

can take for granted" (Abdullah, A., 1997). Yet, Islamic identity itself is not a fixed and obvious concept. What should be understood by the idea of "Islamic identity"? Is there just one, universal Islamic identity, or can there be different, yet still Islamic, identities? On a superficial level, the answer is given by Amir Abdullah himself, who argues that "the Islamic Identity is taken to mean the way of life of the Muslim – an all-encompassing set of beliefs, practices and ideologies as derived from the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad (s.a.w). The Islamic identity is that which separates us from the Kuffar" (Abdullah, A., 1997). Abdullah, unfortunately, does not flesh out the contents of this Islamic identity. Most other Muslim advocates also fail, in their explanations of the Islamic identity, to move beyond mere enumeration of the fundamental Islamic documents, where Islamic identity is thought to be found. In reality, different Muslim group and individual activists understand the concept of Islamic identity differently, ensuring a diversity of "Islamic" ways for living in non-Muslim lands, ranging from exclusivist-isolationist to inclusivist-integrationalist.

Murad, when addressing the issue of "Muslims in the West," expands the scope of the problem to identify several factors of major importance for Muslims living outside Muslim countries: negligence of Muslims toward their faith and consequent vagueness in witnessing the faith by word and deed; misperceptions and misrepresentations of the Islamic faith on both sides, by Muslims and Europeans/Americans; difficulty in keeping an Islamic identity, yet striving to make the "West" into a part of the Muslim *Ummah*; political, economic, and ideological interests preventing Muslims and non-Muslims to find common ground in the same society (Murad, 1986: 7–8). These factors can be divided into two groups, based on who is considered the subject of a given factor. In the first group, the awareness of one's Islamic background, the preservation of Islamic identity, and the strengthening one's Islamicity would be the core aspects. It is Muslims, who have to grapple with these issues and come up with satisfying results. Murad as well as other Muslim propagandists in "the West" long for joint and coordinated Muslim action in this regard. The second group of factors concerns the sphere of interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims. Murad, in true missionary spirit, favors interaction, at least for the sake of correcting misconceptions and misrepresentations common among non-Muslim Europeans and Americans and spreading of the word of Islam. He is not worried that Islamic identity might be compromised if Muslims mingle with non-Muslims.

Yet, the problem of safeguarding Islamic identity in a non-Muslim country might be seen as intrinsically related to the issue of interaction between Muslims and the non-Muslim populace. Though the interaction "is almost unavoidable given that we work, study and, unfortunately, play with them" (Abdullah, A., 1997), Muslims are urged to keep their dealings with non-Muslims to a minimum, otherwise, consciously or not, they might adopt the behavior and beliefs of non-Muslims, which would entail a surrender of Islamic identity. As Abdullah warns, "there are many ways in which too much contact with the Kuffar will lead to us losing our identities. The taking of Kuffar for close friends is something that Allah has clearly warned out in the Qur'an yet it is something so many of us do" (Abdullah, A., 1997). Abdullah has just one preventive remedy: "If we have it within our means we should therefore consider moving to a Muslim land whereby we can at least live amongst our brethren and within an Islamic society free from the contamination of the disbelievers" (Abdullah, A., 1997).

Many other radically inclined Muslims today also argue that Muslims should stick to Muslim lands and not venture abroad, namely to the non-Muslim "West." At least not for economic ends. A Muslim activist, Mahmoud Abdel-Nasir, reiterates this idea:

> It has become obvious that life in an unIslamic country can lead to a disaster in the Islamic identity of Muslims. Apart from the external, obvious shortfalls of residing in a non-Muslim country, initially there are serious Islamic consequences in terms of the legitimacy of residing in such countries. This remains true when the person favours the lands of Shirk (polytheism or associationism – *my note*) over the Islamic lands, and when he loves to live in a Shirk unIslamic environment at the presence of an Islamic State. It leaves no waivers or exceptions for those seeking a materialistically better environment either. (Abdel-Nasir, 1997)

Indeed, one can see a basis for Abdullah's and Abdel-Nasir's concern – living in a non-Muslim land poses a challenge and threat to a Muslim's integrity and Islamicity. The temptations that abound there and the absence of Muslim legal and social institutions might eventually lead a Muslim, even involuntary, to turn into a non-believer from the impossibility of leading a totally Islamic way of life. However, their reasoning is rather escapist and devoid of the *da'wa* spirit, though it conforms to the Quranic approach, which is generally negative toward Muslim interaction with *mushrikun* (polytheists, Arabic مشركون) (Quran 3:118, 5:57, 15:94, 60:1). Yet, Abdullah and Abdel-Naser's position is in the minority among Muslim activists, most of whom see *da'wa* opportunities in non-Muslim lands, "the West" in particular. Moreover, for scores of Muslims, it is precisely in the non-Muslim "West" where they

feel they can practice Islam how they see fit; the civic and human rights that are cherished in "the West" grant them such liberty. Therefore, for some Muslims, "the West" opens opportunities they could not realize in their Muslim home countries.

One of such Muslim is Tariq Ramadan, who himself lives and works in Europe. In his writings and most notably in *To be a European Muslim*, published by the Islamic Foundation of Leicester, Ramadan displays a positive attitude toward the European cultural milieu and Muslims' living there. The grounding argument in Ramadan's book is that the old opposition of *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb* has become obsolete in many senses (Ramadan, 1999: 123–150) and using them in the contemporary geopolitical, demographic, and cultural setting is a "methodological mistake" (Ramadan, 1999: 127). Instead of viewing the "West" (here, Europe) through the prism of dated concepts, Ramadan, amplifying Faysal Mawlawi's idea, proposes to view the land as *Dar al-Da'wa*, which opens many opportunities, not the least of which in the field of *da'wa* (Ramadan, 1999: 143–150). Consequently, Muslims are perfectly welcome to settle permanently in Europe.

Ramadan further reasons an approach that could be a sort of reconciliation of the positions of the openly pro-interaction Murad and the adamantly anti-interaction Abdullah and Abdel-Naser, leaning however toward Murad's side. What Ramadan advocates is strong conscious Islamic identity (reasserted to be relevant to the identity of a European Muslim – not just a Muslim in Europe) combined with the zeal to share one's Islamicity (though Ramadan does not use the word) with others, something in between isolationism/alienation and integrationism/assimilationism (Ramadan, 1999: 179–208). In Ramadan's eyes, the very value of Muslims' living in Europe is that they strengthen their conscious commitment to their religious obligations and witness this commitment to the non-Muslims among whom they dwell. But then, Ramadan's perception of *da'wa* is rather restricted. According to him, "transmitting the Message of Islam through *da'wa* must not be confused with either proselytism or efforts to convert: the duty of the Muslim is to spread the Message and to make it known, no more no less" (Ramadan, 1999: 133).

The ambiguity in how Muslims are to behave in a non-Muslim environment is borne out by the lack of guidelines on this issue in the founding texts of Islam. In fact, situation is even worse, for Muslim–non-Muslim relations, touched upon in the Quran and Sunna and extensively in many treatises by Muslim *'ulama*, are considered from the angle of power, assumed politically and religiously held by Muslims in the society. In other words, the texts present Muslim–non-Muslim relations within the

Dar al-Islam, where Muslims were either majority or the ruling minority, and the evaluation of these relations revolved around the concept of *dhimmi*. None of this describes the contemporary setting of Muslims in "the West" and thus most proscriptions found in the classical texts are inapplicable, and new solutions must be sought. The search for these solutions inevitably brings about a diversification of approaches. As a result, numerous Muslims venture assimilating into host society to the point of becoming indistinguishable from the surrounding populace in all they do, while others opt for isolationism. Yet others, like Ramadan, consider the middle route, that of *da'wa* coupled with concern for one's Islamicity.

Some more conservatively inclined Muslims consider that only the most substantial causes legitimize migration (though even temporary) to non-Muslim countries. Muzammil Siddiqi allows Muslims leave for educational/training purposes for stretches of time (Siddiqi, 1986: 22). Most contemporary Islamic scholars (for example Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Abu Zahra, 'Abd al-Qadir al-'Awda, and Wahbah al-Zuhayli) are reported to have accepted the argument that the intention to do *da'wa* is sufficient to legitimize Muslim stays in non-Muslim lands, like Europe and the Americas.

While some desire to proselytize may be born of one's own conviction in the mission, external pressure on Muslims to become missionaries is increasing in Europe as well as North America. This pressure is exercised by fellow Muslims both back in home countries and in countries of current residence, with the revived opinion that the only excuse for Muslims to reside outside the *Dar al-Islam* is if they engage in *da'wa*. Muslim activists, such as Nadwi, argue that "your (Muslims - *my note*) stay here is not only justified, but also a Jihad if you have made sure of the preservation of Islam for yourselves and your future generations, and are carrying out the duty of the preaching and propagation of faith" (Nadwi, 1983: 129). Nadwi is supported by Abu 'Abdil Kareem, who argues that "releasing ourselves from the duty of da`wah enjoined upon us by Allah is of particular relevance to those Muslims living in non-Muslim lands, as engaging in da`wah would in shaa' Allah justify their stay among the disbelievers" (Kareem, (a)). Similarly, Sami Ullah maintains the position that

> the Muslim embassies, Muslim students, traders and businessmen etc. should bear this fact in mind that they are the ambassadors of Islam in these foreign lands. It is their moral obligation to reflect by best conduct and by ordering their lives in accordance with the sublime principles of Islam, to avail every opportunity to spread the sacred words of Allah far and wide. Their stay abroad provides them a unique scope to remove misunderstandings about Islam and to introduce it in its pure form. (Sami Ullah)

Sami Ullah not only allows Muslims outside the *Dar al-Islam*, but he also insists that *da'wa* be practiced the world over, especially abroad:

> It is not enough that we Muslims should ourselves believe in our religion, to be the most perfect code of life, the solutions of all the problems of humanity, the only panacea for all the ills from which mankind is suffering – it is also the duty of all Muslims to spread this message of Allah on Allah's earth. Not all of us can have the good fortune of going into foreign lands with the message of Allah in our hearts and on our lips. But all of us can help those who are engaged in the noble task of disseminating the word of Allah. All of us must help the soldiers of Islam on solitary outposts. Once we Muslims have perceived this as our duty and act upon it, a new chapter will be opened in the glorious history of Islam. (Sami Ullah)

Following Sami Ullah's logic, by virtue of going to a non-Muslim country, a Muslim becomes a missionary. Moreover, it is a fortune to be a *da'i* abroad. Sami Ullah's enthusiasm is representative of a kind of contemporary Muslim activist for whom the whole world is a field for *da'wa*. For these activists, as for Muhammad al-Ghazali, both Europe and America live in separation from God and estrangement from the "Revelation," despite the innumerable church steeples that rise over these continents. Materialism proved to be the stronger faith. All in all, Europeans and Americans are supposedly spiritually destitute and, even if not yet rationally comprehended, in need of rescue (al-Ghazali, 1965: 26).

These and similar urgings clearly indicate that *da'wa* toward non-Muslims, next to maintaining one's own and the community's Islamicity/Islamic identity, is of prime concern for Muslims living in Europe or North America. If Muslims want to keep their Islamicity, they are to aspire continuously to create and keep these conditions, which would satisfy the injunctions set out in the Sunna. The Sunna assumes a socio-political environment in which Muslims can fully exercise their religion. Therefore, living in Europe or America enjoins that Muslims build up a Muslim society there. This should be done along the lines suggested in the first half of the 20th century by Hasan al-Banna: First, Muslims should develop strong religious personalities, then make their families pious, then see that their neighborhoods completely abide by the Quranic and Sunna injunctions, and then, finally, in effect build an Islamic society in the middle of the non-Muslim society of the majority population. Members of this Islamic society would then proceed to Islamizing the whole society of an as yet non-Muslim country. Meanwhile, the two isolated societies would exist alongside each other, the only contact between the two being *da'wa*. Extreme though it may be, this position reflects the ultimate wish of many if not most Muslims – to make the whole of humanity Muslim.

The algorithm, thus, is simple: Muslims first have to actualize their own commitment to the Islamic faith and religion, then they have to realize the need to share their convictions with non-Muslims, with the ultimate aim of Islamizing Western societies. Muslims, then, are not to integrate into the host society but, on the contrary, change and integrate it into their own Islamic creation. The late Kalim Siddiqui, founder and first chairman of the British Muslim Parliament (founded 1992), argued that "it is almost impossible to be a Muslim without either living in an Islamic state or being engaged in a struggle to establish an Islamic state. If one or the other of these conditions is not met, I fear that perhaps the bulk of the Sunnah of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, is ignored." He continued, "a Muslim cannot live the 'good life' on his own or pursue personal *taqwa* [cleanse or purify the heart and soul] in isolation" (Siddiqui, 1996: 236).

Though a Muslim presence in both Europe and North America is not a novelty,[76] Muslim religious organizations on these two continents, both indigenous and transplanted from Muslim countries, are a rather recent phenomenon. Despite the fact that there had been Muslim religious organizations established just before the 20th century on both continents (for example one established by Henry William Quilliam aka Shaykh Abdullah in 1891 in Liverpool, or one started by Muhammad Alexander Russell Webb, an American convert to Islam, in 1893 in New York City, soon followed by several others), these early missionary enterprises were mainly short-lived, though for a time they attracted converts in the several thousands.[77] In any case, it is only after the Second World War, with fresh influx of Muslims from the Middle East and Indian Subcontinent, that *da'wa* efforts increasingly approached their current scope and complexity. And though Muslim organizations have been mushrooming

[76] Muslims inhabited the Iberian Peninsula and their rule extended over certain parts of Southern Europe between the 8th and 15th centuries, while Muslim appearance in Southeastern and Northeastern Europe, namely the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, dates back to the late 14th century. The presence of Muslims in North America can be traced back to the late 17th century, when slaves from Muslim African lands were brought to American colonies, while pockets of Muslims appeared in Western Europe around the same time.

[77] There were several exceptions, however. The Ahmadiya movement, which came to the USA in the 1920s, and the Nation of Islam, a quasi-Muslim organization founded in 1930, both have been intensively using missionary techniques to attract followers. The Ahmadiya movement is dealt with in Chapter 7. For the early missionary activities of Ahmadis in the USA, see Turner, 1988.

Since the ideology and activities of the Nation of Islam are seen by most American Muslims as discrediting Islam and Muslims and receive harsh criticism from the side of mainstream Muslim organizations, this organization is omitted from the investigations in the present study. For a good analysis of the Nation of Islam, see Tsoukalas, 2001.

For an engaging account of missionary activities of the early native British converts in the late 19th to early 20th century, see Köse, 1996: 12–19. Note that these missionaries in their rhetoric portrayed Islam as just a different (better) "Christianity" (Köse, 1996: 18). Köse also briefly overviews the contemporary *da'wa* situation in Great Britain (Köse, 1996: 25–30).

since the late 1980s, very few extensive studies have yet been conducted on their activities in Europe and North America.[78]

While many Muslim organizations in Europe and North America confine themselves to intra-community affairs along ethnic lines and at the local level, a fair number of them are also outwardly oriented. Poston calls the former defensive-pacifist and the latter offensive-activist (Poston, 1992: 31–45, 93–134). He divides Muslims living in the US (this equally applies to those living in Europe or other non-Muslim countries) into

> Muslims who are introversionist in the sense that they are concerned primarily with the retention and maintenance of their Islamicity, and not with the transmission of that Islamicity to the non-Muslim environment which surrounds them, and those who are desirous of transforming the non-Muslim society of which they are part at both the individual and communal levels so that it will reflect Islamic values and beliefs. (Poston, 1992: 31)

Most of the latter pursue missionary activities, putting *da'wa* on their agenda. This, however, should not be taken to imply that the inwardly oriented organizations necessarily abstain from any sort of *da'wa*. In fact, many of them are engaged in intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

From today's perspective, Muslims in Europe and North America seem to be rather well organized at least at local and regional levels, even though coordination among various organizations on the higher regional or national levels is lacking. The absence of hierarchy and clear leadership, not only among Muslims in Europe and North America but in Islam in principle, explains the persistent fragmentation of Muslim activist organizations (including missionary ones) around the globe. Separate organizations active in a given non-Muslim country too often see themselves as exclusive carriers of the true Islam and view the activities of others with suspicion. This prevents them from coming to common ground with other Muslims active with similar goals. On the other hand, transnational pan-Islamic organizations (like the World Islamic Call Society and Muslim World League) that operate in numerous countries within and without the Muslim world to supervise global Muslim activities have not gained control of the situation either. It can be credibly argued that these pan-Islamic organizations are of a political and not a religious nature and that their following of a given political course is the cause of their relative failure in mobilizing Muslim masses for any comprehensive *da'wa* effort. Then again, the activities

[78] Next to Poston's study on *da'wa* organizations in North America, a notable contribution in this field is a book by Pedersen, 1999. Janson, 2000 and 2003, has been doing research and publishing his findings on the Islamic Foundation of Leicester, UK.

sponsored by these organizations add to the cacophony of the Muslim missionary enterprise in the West. Though there are signs of improvement, first of all in educational matters, where more and more Muslim activist groups consolidate their activities, political allegiances and financial commitments of various Muslim activist groups, even in the same region, have so far prevented Muslims in Europe and North America from achieving a comprehensive missionary advance. This is reflected in Sami Ullah when he says:

> To root out this (the unorganized nature of Muslim religious activities, and particularly *da'wa – my note*), it has become imperative that we should have a network of learned and devoted missionaries and Islamic Centers in non-Muslim countries to remove propaganda and misunderstanding about Islam and to introduce pristine Islam - Islam which stands for social justice and human values. The work of propagation of Islam in foreign lands is handicapped because of the acute shortage of funds, missionary workers, Islamic literature and Islamic centers. (Sami Ullah)

Sami Ullah implies that all that is needed is a working network of institutionalized organizations. This, though in itself not a sufficient condition, is nonetheless of urgent necessity for Muslim activists both in Europe and North America, as well as in the greater Muslim world. Murad laments that Muslims lack a conscious missionary spirit, which in his opinion is an even graver obstacle to extra-*ummaic da'wa* (Murad, 1986: 5–11, 14).

Advocates of *da'wa* urge that after having realized their mission and having set up appropriate structures to engage in this mission – and while Muslims do need to revive their Islamicity, deepen their commitment to religion, and be politically active in their adopted societies – Muslims should understand the need for different kinds of discourses for Americans and Europeans being invited to embrace Islam.

> Westerners are in the first instance seeking not a moral path, or a political ideology, or a sense of special identity - these being the three commodities on offer among the established Islamic movements. They lack one thing, and they know it – the spiritual life. Thus, handing the average educated Westerner a book by Sayyid Qutb, for instance, or Mawdudi, is likely to have no effect, and may even provoke a revulsion. But hand him or her a collection of Islamic spiritual poetry, and the reaction will be immediately more positive. It is an extraordinary fact that the best-selling religious poet in modern America is our very own Jalal al-Din Rumi. Despite the immeasurably different time and place of his origin, he outsells every Christian religious poet. (Murad, A.)

In other words, it is argued that for Americans and Europeans Islam might be appealing only as spiritual rejuvenation, not as a political program. Thus *da'is* should be flexible in exploring new styles and positions in missionary work with Western non-Muslims. On the other hand, Murad be implying a distinction between the two phases of *da'wa*, phases which should not be mixed because they are not simultaneous but consecutive. For extra-*ummaic da'wa*, in order to attract non-Muslim

Westerners, poetry and other attractive literature may be used. While for intra-*ummaic da'wa*, once people convert such authors as Qutb and Mawdudi would be appropriate.

No doubt, some Americans and Europeans have found their way to Islam through mysticism and poetry; however, for many others who convert to Islam, it is precisely a moral, social, and political program. In any event, Abdal Hakim Murad's reasoning brings up a fundamental issue – to what extent Muslims (and especially those engaged in *da'wa*) and Americans and Europeans (and especially those targeted by *da'is*) are able to understand each other, that is to say, to what extent their intellectual discourses and vocabulary are compatible? To this Murad answers:

> Those who puzzle over the da'wa issue in the West generally refuse to take this on board. All too often they follow limited, ideological versions of Islam that are relevant only to their own cultural situation, and have no relevance to the problems of educated modern Westerners. We need to overcome this. We need to capitalise on the modern Western love of Islamic spirituality – and also of Islamic art and crafts. By doing so, we can reap a rich harvest, in sha' Allah. (Murad, A.)

Abdal Hakim Murad, however, would be reprimanded by most other *da'wa* proponents for not distinguishing between what is properly "Islamic" and what are mere cultural accretions. It could be argued that poetry, music, dance, and other arts and crafts, as well as numerous costumes and traditions, though they might be intrinsic to the Muslim cultural heritage, are not, strictly speaking, Islamic. Thus, presenting them as possible foundations to build *da'wa* efforts upon might lead to inconsistencies with regard to what Islam stands for, namely submission to the will of God and living according to the precept of the Shari's. Another author, Sami Ullah, goes a step further than Murad. According to him, Westerners unconsciously long for Islam:

> If we become true Muslims and our lives and actions reflect the beauty of the universal principles of Islam we are sure to affect the outlook of non-Muslims and attract them toward Islam. Disillusioned humanity is in desperate need of the life-giving principles of Islam for her guidance. The West is sick of materialism and longing for a spiritual ideal. It is, therefore, our sacred duty that by precept and example we should spread the universal teachings of Islam in the world and to carry the message of Islam to all corners of the world to give the people the true religion of their Creator. (Sami Ullah)

Sami Ullah's reflects the position the optimistic end of the spectrum of Muslim perception of the spiritual state of the West. However, Muslims first have to become true Muslims. Khurram Murad is, in principle, in agreement with Sami Ullah on this issue by believing that Muslims should first make their own lives Islamic and only thereafter proceed to *da'wa*, which otherwise is doomed to fail. That is, if

Muslims themselves do not abide by Islamic principles, how can they expect other people to convert to Islam? (Murad, 1986: 5–11).

The seriousness of the situation is also reflected by Siddiqui, who is worried that

> the absence of a living and dynamic model of an Islamic civilization makes *da'wah* very difficult. When you invite someone to your house, you vacuum-clean the carpet, you put things right and make your house look attractive. Unless you put your own house in order, how can you invite somebody to it?....the first step in *da'wah* is to establish Islam as a working model of a civilization, of a system, and, therefore, we must use our stay in this country not to convert this country to Islam, but to establish Islam in the house of Islam. And once it is established there, then you will be able to establish Islam everywhere. That is *da'wa*h. So, if we mobilize our resources in this country in order to support an Islamic movement overseas, ultimately this is *da'wah* in the non-Muslim world. (Siddiqui, 1996: 125)

In this perspective, Muslims still have work in their *Dar al-Islam* homelands and Muslim communities in the West. They have to first reislamize themselves to prepare for the launch of their worldwide Islamization project. Yet, this homework, or Islamic work at home, is also perceived to be *da'wa*, albeit intra-*ummaic*. In this way, intra-*ummaic da'wa* can be seen as a prelude to extra-*ummaic da'wa*.

In spite of Sami Ullah, Murad, and Siddiqui's concerns, there are quite successful missionary enterprises functioning on both continents. Some of them have even become transnational. One such Muslim organization devoting a bulk of its activities to *da'wa* is worth a note. This is the Islamic Foundation of Leicester, UK (founded 1973),[79] whose former director general was Khurram Murad himself. The foundation's biggest contribution to *da'wa* is its rather extensive list of publications on Islam and, more specifically, of *da'wa*-related literature. The Foundation's publications catalogue on the Internet lists over forty titles under the *Da'wah & Islamic Movement*, *Muslim-Christian Relations*, and *Politics* categories alone, including several titles by contemporary Muslim activists like Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, and Khurram Murad – and also those by Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb.[80] Several dozen children's books published and/or sold by the Islamic Foundation also serve as *da'wa* literature for the youngest generation of British (or otherwise English-

[79] Unfortunately, not much published research on this organization has appeared so far (Janson, 2003: 30). Janson, who himself did extensive research, to this day remains one of the few whose analysis is accessible.

[80] Publications catalogue of the Islamic Foundation for 2002–2003, http://www.islamic-foundation.com/IFCatalogue.pdf. See also the *Online bookshop* of the Islamic Foundation, http://www.islamic-foundation.com.

Several of the Foundations publications have been utilized in this study, notably, the *Christian Mission*, 1982; Murad, 1986; Nadwi, 1983.

speaking) Muslims. As shown by Janson (Janson, 2003), some of the volumes are written by authors who also wrote for adults on issues of *da'wa*.

As seen from the publication dates, the Islamic Foundation has been actively concerned with *da'wa* from at least the beginning of the 1980s. In fact, compared to previous catalogues, the most recent catalogue suggests a shift to a more politicized vision of *da'wa* within the foundation, hence the very title of the publications category "*Da'wah & Islamic Movement*." This shift attests to more general trend of Muslims in Europe and elsewhere to conflate faith matters and political issues. Though this tendency should not necessarily be read as an increase in Muslim radicalism, it nonetheless signifies Muslim political awareness or an effort towards it.

The Islamic Foundation has also been active in education, both of Muslims and non-Muslims. Its education and training unit "has been holding Cultural Awareness Training Courses over the years, specially designed for non-Muslim professionals who work with Muslims at both the individual and community levels. This two-day residential course provides information and consultation to the professionals, namely Police officers, social and community workers, local government officers, teachers, and health and nursing staff."[81] Though not put in terms of *da'wa*, these Cultural Awareness Training Courses are part of the greater *da'wa* endeavor, for the first step in *da'wa* is acquainting non-Muslims with Islam, to which in due course they are invited. In addition, the foundation has recently set up the Markfield Institute of Higher Education (established 2001) with MA, MPhil, and PhD academic programs under the aegis of the University of Portsmouth. The programs are designed both to uplift the educational level of UK Muslims in the field of religious studies as well as provide first-hand expertise of Muslim scholars, both local and drawn from the Muslim world.

On the North American continent, there is a Muslim Student Association of the USA and Canada (MSA), based in the USA, that encourages, organizes and coordinates *da'wa* activities around the US and Canada.[82] Structurally, MSA is different from the Islamic Foundation of the UK. While the Islamic Foundation is geographically bound, conducting most of its activities from Leicester, MSA is dispersed all over North America. Moreover, whereas the Islamic Foundation is organized by professional staff, reminiscent of a business outfit, MSA is a mass, grassroots organization. Founded in 1963, it now has over 300 branches with some

[81] Official website of the Islamic Foundation, at http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk
[82] For information on the MSA, see organization's official website at http://www.msa-natl.org/.

50,000 members. Notwithstanding the structural differences, MSA's *da'wa* activities and especially its objectives are very similar, if not identical, to those of the Islamic Foundation.

That MSA is a true *da'wa* organization is unequivocally stated in its *Starter's Guide: A Guide on how to Run a Successful MSA*, already referred to in Chapter 3 (*MSA Starter's Guide*, 1996). The *Guide* emphasizes *da'wa* addressed toward non-Muslims as a main activity of local MSAs. Among its activities, MSA puts emphasis on publication and dissemination of Islamic literature throughout campuses in the US and abroad. It encourages on-campus *da'wa* and offers informational assistance to anyone interested in *da'wa*. MSA has a teaching unit, which is charged with training "Islamic workers," the semi-professional *da'is*. MSA also holds numerous public events (discussions, seminars, conferences, celebrations, youth camps, etc.) to attract non-Muslim as well as Muslim students studying in the US and Canada.

In two decades of operation, MSA expanded to include people remotely related or unrelated to the university environment, thus the manageability of the organization was in question. Seeking to separate its realms of activity, MSA established the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) in 1983 to address issues beyond the primary interests of MSA.[83] While MSA remains confined to student/campus affairs as a true *da'wa* organization, ISNA is charged with matters pertaining to Islam and Muslim life outside campuses, that is, among non-student residents of North America. ISNA in fact operates as an umbrella organization under which such organizations as the Association of Muslim Social Scientists, the Islamic Medical Association, and the Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers pursue their specific activities. ISNA can hardly be labeled a *da'wa* organization (though it reportedly has a "toll-free 24-hour *da'wa* hotline" to answer calls of people interested in Islam) (Mohammad-Arif, 2002: 177), but most of its constituent organizations, MSA being the most prominent, undertake *da'wa* activities.

While the Islamic Foundation in the UK and MSA/ISNA the United States are by far the best known Muslim organizations on the two to be engaged in *da'wa* toward non-Muslims, there abound smaller local and regional organizations, that, though the scope of their activities may be geographically limited, nonetheless do *da'wa* locally as the two do in a larger way. For example, in Germany practically all the bigger cities have their own Islamic Centers engage in *da'wa*, among other things. These centers, however, are not united under a single Muslim organization to

[83] For information on the ISNA, see organization's official website at http://www.isna.net.

coordinate the activities of local units. Other European countries – apart from France, where converts to Islam, by *da'wa* and not, number from 30,000 to 50,000 (Nielsen, 1995: 11) – have witnessed much less Muslim missionary activity, although there are Muslim organizations with missionary leanings in almost all European countries. Of course, local *da'wa* organizations benefit immensely from the input of by national and especially international Muslim organizations. Thus, although there is no direct control or supervision, the bigger and stronger (financially and otherwise) Muslim organizations operating in either Europe or North America do bear some effect as to the ways the smaller organizations conduct their activities.

A side issue in extra-*ummaic da'wa* is the bad reputation and image that Islam has among the majority of non-Muslims in the West. As has been observed by Muslims themselves, Islam is seen by many if not most Europeans and Americans as an archaic barbaric "foreign sect," a "foreign-looking and foreign-smelling sub-culture" (Hofmann, 1998: 19; see also Poston, 1992: 184–185). Thus, nearly all Muslim organizations, *da'wa* and non-*da'wa* alike, in the West have since their inception sought to improve the image of Islam in the West. Since the image of Islam among non-Muslims (and Christian-Muslim relations) is a topic beyond the scope of this study, it is mentioned here only in relation to *da'wa*. Many Muslim propagandists are well aware of this major hindrance on the path of *da'wa* and attempt to solve it by distinguishing between what they call "Islam as it should be" and "Islam as it is," the former being the positive ideal and the latter negative (Murad, 1986: 19; see also Poston, 1992: 185; Hofmann, 1998: 18–20). Moreover, non-Muslims are argued often to hold a distorted image of Islam, that they misconstrue historical Islam and Islamic beliefs. In view of this, *da'is* are faced with the task not only of conveying the message of Islam but also of rectifying negative stereotypes of Islam held by non-Muslims. In this fashion, any such literary/intellectual or social/practical work can be flagged as *da'wa*. Among many contemporary Muslim activists, social and political issues get included in a broadened understanding of *da'wa*.

In the contemporary setting of Muslim organizations, politics, either national or international, is increasingly becoming an inseparable part of *da'wa* or, conversely, *da'wa* is being politicized. In the words of one outspoken moderate Muslim activist in Europe, Khurram Murad, "any act performed in power perspectives – to influence others – is considered a political act…thus da'wah, tabligh, jihad and all interpersonal relations are, to some extent, political; so are relations within social institutions and structures" (Murad, 1984: 36). Murad implicitly evokes the oversimplified notion held

by most Muslims that in Islam religion and politics (*sacrum et profanum*) are inseparable, and all social transactions are both religious and political. Consequently, the *da'wa* social transaction is by definition political to some extent. On the national level, this position is maintained by some Muslim organizations who assert that the very political and social engagement of Muslims in adopted societies of Europe is *da'wa*. Addressed toward a non-Muslim base, *da'wa* is considered as inevitably political as it is overtly religious. *Da'wa* is perceived to be a tool to Islamize European societies from within. Thus, as has been observed by Kahani-Hopkins and Hopkins,

> the 'radical' nature of the Party's (Islamic Party in the UK established in 1989 – *my note*) project for Muslims was underlined through the contrast between its position and those construed as mistakenly viewing *da'wah* as distanced from practical political concerns. For example, its own strategy was explicitly contrasted from what it termed 'traditional *Da'wah* where people were called to believe in Islam first ... before any benefit of this new, and to them, strange way of life was extended' to them. In contrast, 'real' *da'wah*, as opposed to such 'academic missionary activity', demanded that Islam be debated in public in a language which addressed ordinary people's everyday concerns: 'Talking to the ordinary man and woman in the country meant talking their language ... concentrating on issues which were considered of importance by them. It meant the exact opposite of academic missionary activity'. It meant dealing 'exclusively with practicalities and experiences which are common to any member of society, irrespective of his religious belonging'. Thus the 'call to Islam' – a duty incumbent upon all Muslims – demanded practical engagement with the realities of Muslim and non-Muslim Britain. Indeed, it was through such practical engagement that respect for Islam would develop and spread: 'respect for Islam would be an automatic result once the solutions Islam had to offer proved to be beneficial for all.' (Kahani-Hopkins & Hopkins, 2002: 299)

From this excerpt, it appears that the Islamic Party in the UK has a rather peculiar approach to *da'wa*, and opposite Abdal Halim Murad's position cited above. Unlike many other *da'is* who perceive and pursue *da'wa* as an apolitical enterprise operating on theological issues such as God, creation, salvation, etc., the Islamic Party insists on *da'wa* as social work, and theology comes much later if at all. For the Party, dealing with daily social issues is the "correct" contemporary *da'wa*. The Islamic Party being first of all a true political organization no doubt embodies the most radical approach with regard to fusing *da'wa* with politics. It stands at the far end of the spectrum of postures Muslim organizations in Europe and North America have assumed on this issue. Yet the Islamic Party is not the sole Muslim organization to advocate this blending that has become more visible, especially in organizations pursuing intra-*ummaic da'wa*. Chapter 8 below deals with the blending of *da'wa* and politics in intra-*ummaic* affairs.

CONCLUSION

The development of extra-*ummaic da'wa* not only went through the stages of institutionalization in changing its methods, but also through an evolution in its contents. The most significant change in this type of *da'wa* was from an activity mainly of unorganized, yet self-asserted, individuals and groups (with the occasional political rulers) bent chiefly on converting an entire population of a given land, to an apologetic (and increasingly more organized) activity of victims of Western colonialism seeking to convert individual non-Muslims. In other words, *da'wa* moved from power-based to power-seeking.

Even more significantly, it "went West." This moving of the extra-*ummaic da'wa* to the "West," namely Europe and North America, created both new opportunities for Muslim missionaries and new challenges Muslims living in non-Muslim countries. The legality of Muslims dwelling outside the *Dar al-Islam* from the standpoint of Islamic law has been discussed by Muslims throughout the centuries, but the discussion got a new impetus with heavy Muslim immigration in the second part of the 20th century.[84] The problems of Islamicity and Islamic identity have recently become very burning among Muslim communities in "the West." And *da'wa* has been increasingly regarded as a motivation for Muslim residence in non-Muslim countries (the extra-*ummaic* aspect) while at the same time being a safeguard for Islamicity and Islamic identity (the intra-*ummaic* aspect). Moreover, extra-*ummaic da'wa* in Europe and North America has been tied to politics by some Muslim activists. For them, *da'wa* has to be part of a larger politics and also serve political ends – with the eventual rise of Muslims to power.

The post-colonial phase of the extra-ummaic *da'wa* is very related to the on-going activities of Christian missions and their perception among Muslims. The following chapter seeks to explore in some detail the intricacies of the relationship between Christian missions and *da'wa*, and its consequent effects.

[84] Seminars and conferences on Minority Fiqh, like the one organized by the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) in Leiden, April 2003, or by the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK) in London, February 2004, attest to the ever growing awareness among scholars (both Muslim and non-Muslim) and the need for a more thorough discussion of Muslim legal rights in Europe.

6. CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND *DA'WA*

CHRISTIANITY AND CHRISTIANS IN THE EYES OF MUSLIM PROPAGANDISTS

Since most of what is written, in both Arabic and English, by Muslims on *da'wa* toward non-Muslims assumes mostly Christian targets, it is natural that *da'is* have elaborated specific strategies for this group. The grounding idea among almost all Muslim activists is the insistence that Christianity has somehow failed. Despite the seeming success of European economies, these Muslims interpret the moral and religious life of Europeans and Americans as decayed.[85] Some Muslims argue that this corrosion happened because of the European mind's close association with Christianity, whereas others argue it happened precisely because this mind liberated itself from Christianity and any other form of religion. These two perspectives are both closely related to the Christian religion yet opposite each other: One speaks of the mind imprisoned in a religion, while the other speaks of the secularized mind, let loose from religious bonds and relegating religion to the private/domestic sphere or, even worse, retreating to atheism. In any case, the perceived result is the same – failure.[86]

Most Muslims, among them *da'wa* activists, have had and continue to have rather uniform opinions about Christianity as a religion. Their opinion in general is critical with ensuing arguments that are aimed at proving that there has always been something intrinsically wrong with Christianity from its inception. It is quite easy for Muslims to ground their own positions in the texts of the Quran and Sunna. As it is known, Jesus is revered in these texts as one of the greatest prophets of Islam, next only to Muhammad. As a great prophet, Jesus commands due respect of Muslims. However, from a comparative perspective one could say that Muslims appropriated Jesus and his legacy for themselves. They rendered their own version of his

[85] Consider, for example, Muhammad Ghazali's position provided in the previous chapter (Ghazali, 1965: 26). See also Nadwi, 1983: 65–80.

[86] Waardenburg points out that even academic texts on other religions written by Muslims "directly (in often blunt terms) or indirectly make it clear to the reader that Islam is the only true religion, and the true alternative to the other religions that are described," effectively killing off any (self-)critical scholarly inquiry. See Waardenburg, 2000: 97.

biography, especially the "death and resurrection" transfiguration and retooled his mission and message. According to a common Muslim belief, Jesus indeed was given a revelation, *injil* (Arabic إنجيل), only the text of this "revelation" significantly differes from the texts of the four Gospels as we know them. Thus, by definition, Christianity and Christians are criticized for 1) having failed to keep Jesus as a prophet instead of inflating him to the son of God, and 2) distorting the original revelation by making four, distorted books out of one historical event.

Of course, there are those who are conscious of essential difference between Christian ideals and realities. For example, al-Faruqi distinguishes between Christianity and Christendom and Askari between the Christian faith, Christian vision, and Christian history (Siddiqui, 1997: 119). For them, while the realities of Christian history are disapproved of, the ideals not necessarily so. They insist that it is the Church as an earthly institution that is responsible for deliberately distorting the original message of Jesus. And whatever was left of the original revelation and incorporated into the official doctrine of the Church was not lived by, thus ultimately the gap between the godly-inspired, but far from perfect religious ideals of Christianity, and the actual ungodly historical Christianity widened beyond any possibility of bridging the two. Since the situation is deemed beyond repair, the only way to save the erring Christians is to bring them into the fold of the only true religion, Islam. However, these somewhat broader-minded Muslim propagandists are in minority. The majority still continue to denounce anything Christian as wrong if not evil.

Da'is throughout the ages have elaborated on the perceived failures of Christianity, the Christian clergy, and lay Christians as a whole. Critiquing Christianity has become an obsession for some of them, dispending all their intellectual efforts to exploit the dark pages of Christian history and discredit Christianity as a faith. One of the most notorious Muslim activists of the 20th century was Ahmed Deedat, a South African of Indian (Gujarati) descent. His writings and speeches on the Bible, the divinity of Jesus, and Christian festivals and other issues have found their way into bookstores around the world, on the Internet, in embassies of Muslim countries, etc. It is even reported that young Muslim activists in the UK learn Deedat's brochures by heart and use them in their arguments and polemics with Christians (Scantlbery, 1996: 263). In his writings Deedat claims to have unveiled the true nature of Christianity, which to him is no more than a collection of forgeries and lies totally devoid of any truly religious belief. Deedat extensively uses Bible and

critical Christian sources to prove his point. Though his writings are numerous, they are circular in that they come back to several key ideas drawn from the classical Muslim sources, such as Jesus as prophet, his prophesy of the coming of Muhammad, denial of the resurrection, and the human character of the Bible. Deedat's writings epitomize the highly controversial, polemical, uncompromising, and yet naïve Muslim literature on Christianity as a faith and religion.[87] Deedat was a polemicist *par excellence* and a staunch adversary of anything Christian. He saw no use in Muslim-Christian dialogue and rather substituted it with attacks on the Christian faith and Christians themselves. Deedat's hard-line posture and work were appreciated by the authorities in Saudi Arabia, who awarded Deedat the King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam in 1986. On the other hand, many moderately inclined Muslim propagandists distance themselves from Deedat's politically incorrect and insulting outbursts against Christianity and Christians and opt rather for a somewhat more balanced approach to the issue.

For Muslim activists, Christianity and Christians pose a challenge but also offer an opportunity. It is in the so-called "Christian world" (a synonym of the West) that the *da'i*'s career can be made. When compared, Muslim and Christian societies are seen by *da'is* to be diametrically opposite on two criteria: material well-being and spiritual satis-faction. In the opinion of Muslims engaged in *da'wa* toward non-Muslims (Christians), today's Muslim societies are deprived of material wealth and well-being, but they are still better off in spiritual security and satisfaction, which Islam supposedly provides them with. By contrast, though rich and affluent, Christian societies are spiritually ignorant of the true God and thus at a loss. Some *da'is* argue that Europe and North America are ripe for conversion to Islam. However, this ripeness is not due to the achievements of Muslim educators but rather due to the perceived disillusionment of Europeans and Americans with their own religious and cultural traditions. This reasoning helps *da'is* declare the "Islam is solution" maxim and fix it on non-Muslims in their *da'wa* pursuits. Europeans and Americans are seen ready to try out remedies for the spiritual sickness tormenting these advanced societies.

[87] Deedat's writings include *Resurrection or Resuscitation?, Is the Bible God's Word?, Crucifixion or Cruci-Fiction?, Muhammad The Natural Successor To Christ, Combat Kit Against Bible Thumpers, The Choice - Islam & Christianity, The God That Never Was, The Muslim At Prayer – A Comparison To Prayer In Bible, The People Of The Book, What Is His Name?, What was the Sign of Jonah?, What the Bible Says About Muhammad,* and *Christ in Islam.*

Increasing conversions of Europeans and Americans to Islam reinforce this conviction, and Muslim propagandists spare no effort to provide as many testimonies of converts as they can lay hands on. There abound websites that stock such testimonies, most resembling each other over disillusionment with an original religious tradition, dissatisfaction with personal status in a society, and aversion to contemporary mores. This discontentment leads to the search for a religion to solve both theological questions and practical problems, first in learning about Islam (its texts, beliefs, practices, etc.) and finally in adopting Islam as the only "true" faith and a way of life. Testimonies of converts to Islam from among "Westerners" attest to this pattern of thinking, which is only natural since converting often means rejecting an old life and value system as much as accepting a new one. The accepted religion, in this case Islam, is seen in a holistic perspective. And even if the conversion decision could not have been rationally calculated necessarily, its later actualization is usually rationalized. Here, the theory of "one truth" is handy: There can be only one true way of living and that is the "Islamic way." All other ways are seen as intrinsically fallacious.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND *DA'WA*

The 18th and especially 19th centuries witnessed an onslaught of Christian missions to the Muslim lands, though there had been previous organized attempts by Christians to baptize Muslims.[88] European colonies in most Muslim Asia and Africa countries made these Christian missionary activities possible. Christian missionary societies were also active in the Ottoman Empire where authorities kept them from openly proselytizing among mainstream Muslims (though they were free to engage non-Muslim subjects of the empire as well as heterodox Muslims, like Alevis).[89]

Muslims, on the other hand, did come into occasional contact with Christian missionaries. These contacts (educational, medical, and others) had several consequences for Muslims. In fact, some converted to Christianity, while others, still nominally Muslim, embraced European lifestyles. An absolute majority of them, however, not only remained true to Islam but also made it their objective to keep Islam alive within their communities and to foster Islamicity there. Siddiqui argues

[88] Consider, for example, the age of Crusades. For Christian attempts at converting Muslims to Christianity in the Crusades period see Forey, 2002.
[89] On attitudes of Ottoman authorities toward Christian missionaries and their influence on the missionaries' work, see Kieser, 2001. See also Makdisi, 1997.

that *da'wa* was indeed a direct reaction to activities of Christian missionaries in Muslim lands, especially on the Indian Subcontinent, but also in the Levant and in Southeast Asia (Siddiqui, 2001: 69–71). It is these Muslims who held unfriendly attitudes to both Christianity and Christians as missionaries. The tendency to negatively view Christian missions, both in former (colonial) and contemporary times, has persisted to the present day. To Muslims, Christian missionaries did and continue to do an anachronistic, and thus negative, service – they drag Muslims backwards into a religion both wrong in itself and one that has been abrogated by the coming of Muhammad and the revelation of the Quran. Sometimes Christian missionaries, therefore, are identified as Satan's minions and urged to be resisted by all available means. Among other things, Christian missionaries are accused by Muslims of having reaped an ill-begotten fortune in Muslim lands: They did not gain significant numbers of converts to Christianity, and yet they lured many Muslims away from Islam, effectively secularizing Muslim societies. Ultimately, Muslims were made to suffer the loss, even as the Christian missionaries themselves were among the losers. In other words, while Christians hoped to bring God to Muslims, they instead distanced Muslims from Allah.

Organized Muslim missionary activities of the 19th century were, if not spurred by the Christian missionary advance in the predominantly Muslim lands of Asia and Africa, then at least influenced by it. Islamic revivalism and reformism alongside modernization efforts were in part invoked from the secularizing tendencies in Muslim societies, the blame for which was customarily laid on colonialists and their sidearm, the Christian missionaries. Thus, "to a considerable extent, modernization of Islam was, in form, reaction to the stimulus of Christian assault. Almost without exception, the reformers wrote their expositions of the new Islam as apologetic answers to the criticism of the missionaries."[90] But the newly emerged Muslim missionary movements, having no structural or methodological traditions of their own, in many cases turned to and borrowed from Christian missionary groups in Muslim lands. As Arnold, speaking about the Indian case, suggests, "Muslim missionary societies would appear to have been formed in conscious imitation of similar organisations in the Christian world, and are not in themselves the most characteristic expressions of the missionary spirit of Islam" (Arnold: 443). In Indonesia, for example, *Sarekat Islam*, an influential political movement founded in

[90] Smith, W. Cantwell. *Modern Islam in India*, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1963, p. 42. Cited in Siddiqui, 1997: 20.

1911, had, "though it opposed Christian mission, organized its educational and religious teachers' training on the missionary model" (Siddiqui, 1997: 13).

On the one hand, one may argue that the methods used by Christian missionaries among Muslims (and elsewhere) were unique – schools, hospitals, church-building, translations, Bible study, vocational training, and even agricultural projects – were all introduced and utilized by Christian missionaries in their endeavors to attract Muslims to their side. Thus, arguably, Muslim *da'is*, once they started their counterattack, simply borrowed these methods and techniques. On the other hand, though, one may argue that missionary methodologies and techniques are not unique to any one religious tradition but universal, with only minor variation to suit different religious traditions. By this reasoning, Muslim missionary organizations assumed methods common to missionary enterprises of many religious communities while adding their own flavor to the mix. The truth is probably somewhere in between – Muslims must have consciously taken some methods (such as publishing and distributing religious literature, setting up educational institutions, going out on preaching tours, etc.) used by Christian missionaries, and they also developed their own approach in missionary ventures.

Another crucial point is to realize the difference between the organized Muslim intra-*ummaic da'wa* in Muslim lands (the reaction to and against Christian missions there) and organized Muslim missionary activities (both intra- and extra-*ummaic*) in the West today. With *da'wa* "going West," Muslims coming into closer contact with non-Muslim Western societies, and getting even more familiar with the Church, *da'wa* activities have inevitably grown more sophisticated to acquire any worthwhile tactics from rival Christian missions. All in all today, Muslim missionary efforts (especially in the West) in many cases do resemble Christian missions.

A new type of educational establishment is one example of how a Christian missionaries practice was appropriated by Muslims. Emphasis of Christian missionaries on education in establishing schools, colleges, and other educational institutions has been well observed by contemporary Muslim propagandists who urge their co-religionists to follow the lead and establish their own centers of education. This trend, as has been pointed to above, is gaining impetus with more and more professionalized *da'wa* training centers springing up around the world.

It is not only the structures and methods of the Christian missionaries that can be utilized by Muslim *da'is*. Some Muslims, like Ali Merad, argue that the Christian missionaries exemplify zeal in the service of religion by sticking close to the founding

religious texts. In his words, "in imitation of the Protestants, the reformists (implied here are reform-inclined *'ulama* and lay Muslim activists of the early 20th century – *my note*) attached paramount importance to the scriptures, though without ever losing sight of cultural needs and working towards an ethical and spiritual renewal of Islam" (Merad, 1978: 143). Following sacred scriptures and unbending belief are, as was shown in Chapter 3, the fundaments for successful religious activities.

However, some Muslims are upset by the *da'is'* imitation of Christian missionaries in carrying out *da'wa*: "Muslims, though, have strong views about institutionalized mission; nonetheless, they are gradually entering into the same experiment of Da'wah. The methodologies of Christian mission, which they have criticized so often in the past, are increasingly enticing them to adopt the 'strategies' and 'plannings', rather than witnessing and stating that 'our task is only to pass on the message' (wa ma 'alayna illa'l-balagh)" (Siddiqui, 1997: 78). Siddiqui advocates *da'wa* as message-passing, which precludes any organized missionary activity and is reminiscent of the "lifestyle evangelism" of al-Faruqi and others, referred to earlier. In such a position, what its proponents propose is less important than what they deny. Siddiqui implicitly rejects any merit in the formalized approach to *da'wa*. Though he does not proceed any further in his argument, his attachment to the maxim "our task is only to pass on the message" might be taken as caution toward formalized *da'wa* assuming a coercive nature. Indeed, his argument implicitly raises the issue of the distinction between proselytism and mission.

As there is no Arabic word for "religious mission," nor is there one for "proselytism." Yet some Muslim activists (especially those writing in English) do draw a distinction between these two concepts. For them, a mission is un-coercive means of propagating one's faith, while proselytism includes a certain coerciveness, especially in the guise of organized efforts. However, they apply the two concepts exclusively to the realm of Christian mission: They do not call Islamic *da'wa* "mission" and deny any presence of proselytism in Muslim missionary activities, both from theoretical and historical points of view.[91]

On the other hand, Christians have lately been substituting the word "witness" for "mission" and emphasizing the witnessing aspect in mission. Witness denotes the sincere conveying of a religious message without either an explicit or hidden aim at converting others to one's faith. In other words, people are only to invite, and it is

[91] For Muslim views of proselytism, see discussions in *Christian Mission*, 1982: 82–101. See also Sperber, 2000: 162–175.

God who makes conversion happen, if at all. In this sense, both non-coercive (and not necessarily well informed) *da'wa* of common Muslims and the witnessing of Christians have much in common, and they can be taken as an essential part of being a Muslim or Christian, respectively.

The structural and methodological similarities and differences between Christian missions and *da'wa* may be of secondary importance, for as long as they do not contradict Islamic injunctions, the structures (organization, hierarchy, divisions, accountability, and financing) and methods (translation, publishing and distribution of religious literature, religious classes, educational centers, financial support for converts, etc.) of Christian missions can be freely borrowed by Muslim *da'is*. Of primary importance, however, is the question whether in its nature "*da'wah* is to Islam what mission is to Christianity," as Kerr contends (Kerr, 1982: 12). For Christians, missions have hardly ever been a grassroots activity, and though the "lifestyle evangelism" referred to earlier might be taken for a basic form of missionary practice, professional missionary activities take precedent over those ventured by unprepared lay Christians.

As has been shown in Chapter 3, many contemporary Muslim activists hold to the opinion that *da'wa* is a concern of every and all Muslims, though there is no authoritative or unanimous decision on this issue. In the Islamic environment, even non-trained Muslims are urged, albeit in a limited capacity, to engage in *da'wa* activities. Consequently, one can come to Islam through a highly-educated scholar or a totally illiterate peasant – either of them can be the "stepping stone" and final "receiver," as Arnold observes correctly, since in Islam "the would-be proselytizer has not to refer his convert to some authorized religious teacher of his creed who may formally receive the neophyte into the body of the Church" (Arnold: 414). In other words, conversion through *da'wa* does not have to be confirmed by any authority apart from the community at large, which accepts the neophyte as one of its own members. *Da'wa*, as seen by Muslim propagandists, is to be something intrinsic to the Islamic way of life, while Christian missions are hardly the same to the Christian way of life.

DA'WA AS DIALOGUE

Muslim advocates of intra-*ummaic da'wa* vehemently deny any coercion in *da'wa*, and they instead highlight the aspect of dialogue in it. Earlier a reference to the

distorted perception of Islam by Christians was made. As a means of improving the situation, Muslim-Christian dialogue is being advocated by many moderate Muslim activists who, among other things, see an opportunity for *da'wa* in such dialogue. For some Muslims, "the year 1970 marks a turning point in the history of Christian-Muslim dialogue" (Siddiqui, 1997: xvi). Indeed, it is around this time that the World Council of Churches, as well as the Vatican following its Second Vatican Council, began approaching Muslims from a post-colonial and to some extent post-missionary perspective. Though the inter-faith dialogue was first initiated by Christian institutions, it was very soon reciprocated from the Muslim side, with the Libyan based World Islamic Call Society and other pan-Islamic Muslim activist organizations embracing the dialogue.[92] For a couple of decades, it seemed that the evolution of Muslim-Christian relations was entering a new and promising phase where understanding and respect would replace misconceptions, stereotypes, and bigotry. At the dawn of this new phase, the perception and role of *da'wa* was to change.

The Chambesy Consultation of 1976 shed insights into how Muslims see Christian missions and their influence on the development of Islamic *da'wa* in the past century and a half. The *Consultation*, itself an event in a string of similar gatherings initiated by both sides during the 1970s and the early 1980s, was an example of the pro-dialogue position on both sides. The event proved to be a difficult endeavor for both parties: Tension, accusations, distrust, and stubbornness marked debates on almost all issues.[93] The Muslim side was exceptionally critical of Christian missions and any other activities (especially educational) among Muslims, both in the past and in the present. Muslim speakers were in the main given to apologias, and no true dialogue seems to have occured at the meeting. Nonetheless, participants of the *Consultation* were able to draw a common though watered-down joint declaration that, among other things, called for restraint in proselytizing activities from both sides. The *Consultation* was supposed to be followed by other similar events, however, no meetings exclusively on the issue of Christian and Muslim missionary activities were held afterwards. In other Christian-Muslim dialogues during following decade the issue of *da'wa* was hardly addressed. The only meeting that came closest to considering this issue, by paying tribute to the *Chambesy Consultation*, was the

[92] The very beginnings of the idea of dialogue between Christians and non-Christians can be traced as far back as the 1950s. However, the first instances of specifically Christian-Muslim dialogue appeared in the 1960s. The issue of proselytism and conversion was put on agenda in the end of the 1960s. See Sperber, 2000: 7–9, 25, 162.

[93] This is well seen in the *Christian Mission*, 1982. See also Sperber, 2000: 164–171.

Consultation on Religious Freedom, Community Rights and Individual Rights: a Christian-Muslim Perspective, held in Hartford, Connecticut in 1999. In practical terms, the *Chambesy Consultation* was a failure. Its initiatives were not put into practice. However, as a sign of their willingness to renew, continue, and expand the Muslim-Christian dialogue, the Islamic Foundation in Leicester re-published the original proceedings of the *Consultation* in 1982.

Nevertheless, the 10 years between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s was a slowdown and even to a halt in the development of interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians, caused by a variety of unfavorable circumstances (rise of Islamic militancy, Islamic revolution in Iran, strained relations between several Muslim states and Europe/North America, the Gulf War of 1991, etc.). However, from the second part of the 1990s onwards both sides have been increasingly showing interest in refreshing the dialogue.[94] To this end, the then-president of the Islamic Society of North America, Muzammil Siddiqi, urged that such Islamic institutions as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and al-Azhar establish structural units in charge of inter-faith dialogue. Moreover, according to Siddiqi, the "existence of such departments will help these organizations to carry out effective da'wah in the West," for dialogue is "a vital tool for da'wah" (Siddiqi, 1998b: 46).

It can be noted that Christians (both Catholic and the World Council of Churches) though have had numerous meetings on Christian-Muslim dialogue both with Muslims and among themselves. They have, though, so far not come to a definitive point where all or a majority of Christians would agree on what dialogue with Muslims means and where mission stands in this dialogue. Critical Christians and Muslims are quick to point out that the dialogue is hollow with no definite purpose and it tends to be circular. Moreover, some Muslims are worried that Muslims, when encountering Christians, are less prepared for such dialogue either on theological or philological level, or both (Muhammad).

Nonetheless, Christian churches have developed an institutionalized tradition of continuous discussions on these issues; certain church bodies have been established to supervise and coordinate the effort.[95] Muslims, for their part, have not yet come this far as to engage in permanently renewed and institutionalized discussions among themselves on these same issues. Thus, it is either inter-faith meetings organized

[94] The word "dialogue" has been in certain cases changed to "relations." Whether this is to have any practical impact remains to be seen.

[95] Sperber's 2000 book is a good account of sustained Christian effort on the institutional level to establish effective inter-faith dialogue with Muslims.

mainly from Christians or sporadic meetings of Muslims and writings of individual Muslim activists that we learn the Muslim position.

A consistent thread in the discussion of *da'wa* activities has been the question of the relationship of *da'wa* with interfaith dialogue: Is *da'wa* a form of dialogue? Or does it supplant the dialogue? (or vice versa?) Or is dialogue just a modern method of *da'wa*? So far no precise answers to these and other questions have been given. Ataullah Siddiqui, a Muslim researcher who conducted extensive interviews with contemporary Muslim activists, has come to a conclusion that "Muslims generally argue that dialogue comes under the broad spectrum of *Da'wah*" (Siddiqui, 1997: 75). For the late Isma'il al-Faruqi, a prominent *da'wa* theoretician and participant in numerous round-tables, seminars, and conferences on Christian-Muslim dialogue, "Islamic da'wah is an invitation to think, to debate and argue" (al-Faruqi, 1982: 34), thus practically a dialogue in itself. Abdullah Bin Bayyah puts it in more general terms: "We (Muslims – *my note*) have to understand that the relationship between the Muslims living in this land and the dominant authorities in this land is a relationship of peace and contractual agreement, or a treaty. This is a relationship of dialogue and a relationship of giving and taking" (bin Bayyah). Although not clear what is meant by "taking," "giving" undoubtedly implies propagation of Islam and its values – in other words, *da'wa*, which is a part of dialogue. Another prominent Muslim activist, Hasan al-Turabi of Sudan, also assigns "interfaith dialogue to the duties of da'wa – that is, it should be held in order to change the other's attitude" (Rudolph, 1999: 300). Fadlullah indirectly also supports the idea of interfaith dialogue in *da'wa*. In his opinion, the more productive approach of the Muslim *da'i* toward non-Muslims, especially Jews and Christians, would be revealing similarities between the faiths rather than their differences (Fadlullah, 1994: 70). Dialogue, then, is perceived as a search and appreciation of commonalities upon which relations should be built – still never abandoning, though, the choice prospect of eventual conversion. These Muslim propagators represent the moderate wing of Muslims engaged in the extra-*ummaic da'wa*. Most of them either live in the West or have extensively traveled in non-Muslim (Christian) countries.

There is an even more liberal trend and representatives of which, though in favor of Christian-Muslim dialogue, see a clear distinction between dialogue and *da'wa*. One of these, Abu Muhammad, argues that dialogue is not *da'wa*, for *da'wa* for him is a one-way process (einseitiger Prozess, der nicht auf Gegenseitigkeit

beruht), which dwells on rigid binary opposition of "true-false" (Muhammad). According to Abu Muhammad, while *da'wa* has an ending, dialogue is continuous.

Yet, there is another, opposite wing, represented by those like Muhammad Khurshid who adamantly declare that "nothing can be more dangerous for a *da'i* than getting entangled into a dialogue, because the very spirit of a dialogue is not to unravel the truth but to create a myriad of confusion and enigma" (Poston, 1992: 125). The anti-dialogue posture is especially strong in the Muslim world, and a survey by Islamic periodicals several decades ago about Muslim-Christian dialogue attests to this (Rudolph, 1999). What is striking about most of the articles published in these periodicals is the conviction of their authors in an ongoing (primarily indirect yet effective) "christianization" of Muslims. One of them, Abd al-Basit Izz al-Din, argued that such conferences as the one held at Chambesy did not stop or otherwise affect the process of "christianization" (Rudolph, 1999: 300).

Christianization, or proselytism, is seen by many Muslims as the gravest obstacle in genuine dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The same Muslims, however, do not consider *da'wa* to be an obstacle. This has been evident in practically all Christian-Muslim meetings over the past thirty years or so (Sperber, 2000: 167–168). For most Muslims, there can be no true dialogue as long as Christians continue to push their religion over Muslims. This basically implies that Christians have to cease any and all such activities (not only religious, but also economic, educational, social, and political) in Muslim lands and even physically withdraw from them. In the opinion of concerned Muslims, it is only then that an equally balanced inter-faith dialogue could start.

Neither the pro- nor the anti-dialogue position should be overestimated: Though both have numerous followings, none is overriding. In fact, there are other positions in between. For example, summing up the Islamic periodical survey on Muslim-Christian dialogue, Rudolph classifies three positions:

1. *The Quranic approach*. Christians are considered as 'People of the Book' (*ahl al-kitab*), but their revelation has been superseded by the message of the Quran. Dialogue is only possible if Christians accept the truth of Islamic revelation and the temporality of their own Scriptures.
2. *The ideological approach*. Christianity insists on its missionary ('christianizing') efforts and supports the political interests of the West concerning Islam. Like Zionism on the Jewish side, their representatives' aim is to destroy Islam. Dialogue is impossible or can only be understood as a competition about truth and falsehood in the fundamentals of faith.
3. *The irenic approach*. Christianity and Judaism are monotheistic religions. They are linked to Islam by common bases and interests. Dialogue is both possible and necessary. (Rudolph, 1999: 304)

The second and third approaches typify the two extremes, while the first approach, called Quranic by Rudolph, straddles in the middle ground. Yet his typology is very crude and reflects only major approaches in the spectrum of positions Muslims hold on Muslim-Christian dialogue. Moreover, no doubt, many Muslims have ambivalent or unclear opinions vis-à-vis the interfaith dialogue and *da'wa's* role in it.

CONCLUSION

Muslims have almost invariably maintained a simplified vision of both Christianity and Christian culture. To most of them, both were and are ultimate failures. This polemical attitude has persisted to the present and indeed is an inherent part of Muslim extra-*ummaic da'wa* efforts turned toward Christians. Only a few of the most moderate and open-minded Muslim propagandists in the West today (like Tariq Ramadan) have come to appreciate the religion of Christianity or Christian cultures, though there are more who acknowledge the material achievements of these cultures.

The issues of Muslim-Christian relations and Muslim attitudes toward Christian missions have become intrinsic to the extra-*ummaic da'wa* activities of contemporary Muslims. Though numerous attempts on various levels have been made, the historically strained relations between these two faiths have improved little if at all. Even if Muslims ostensibly welcome the interfaith initiatives from the Christian side, they remain mistrustful of the true motives of Christians. Having endured the painful and offensive experiences of Christian missions during colonial times, Muslims want to make sure that Christians denounce their own former practices. The progress of interfaith dialogue is further stalled by some Muslims who oppose any dialogue with Christians. Thus the spectrum of opinions ranges from unconditional pro-dialogue, through conditional pro-dialogue, to unconditional anti-dialogue.

Consequently, the role given *da'wa* in inter-faith dialogue depends on the individual position regarding the dialogue itself. For those on one end of the spectrum, *da'wa* in itself is dialogue (or, conversely, any interfaith dialogue is *da'wa*), while for those on the other end, there can be no dialogue in *da'wa*, just calling and inviting. The two extreme positions basically differ in that in one *da'wa* is a two-way exchange, and in the other only one-way.

PART IV

INTRA-*UMMAIC DA‘WA*

7. *DA'WA* WITHIN THE *UMMA*: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The term "*da'wa*," used in the sense of inviting to Islam, is primarily applicable toward those who have never been Muslim, either by birth or by conversion. Such has the understanding of *da'wa* been throughout Islamic history. Whether organized as a group or privately, Muslims preached their faith to non-believers. However, parallel to converting to Islam, the *da'wa* concept has been used in a narrower and somewhat more specific sense: to "convert" fellow Muslims to a given Muslim ideology, branch, or denomination of Islam itself. There were times in the history of Islam when *da'wa* toward fellow Muslims was prioritized over *da'wa* efforts addressed toward non-Muslims (the 'Abbasid *da'wa* of the mid-8th century and the Isma'ili Fatimid *da'wa* of the 9th through 13th centuries being but a couple examples).

The need for invitation (*da'wa*) of non-Muslims to embrace Islam remains so long as there are non-Muslims to invite. The need is, however, not so apparent with regard to intra-*ummaic da'wa*. After verse 3:104, Muslims are urged to reproach their fellow believers for action contrary to what Islam requires and to show them proper Islamic conduct; it is, however, not self-evident when and how this should be done. The conditions for the intra-*ummaic da'wa* have not been suggested in the primary Muslim sources, and this makes it difficult to define them. On the other hand, since there are no explicit regulations laid down in either the Quran or Sunna, some Muslims feel at ease to set the conditions for intra-*ummaic da'wa* as they see fit. Of course, they base their arguments on the same original texts, the Quran and Sunna. Only they redefine the terms and reinterpret events found in them.

Apart from organized and politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa*, there has always been another kind, on an individual level. In their sermons the *khatibs* (preachers, Arabic خطيب) would continually urge Muslims to live by Islamic precepts, thus preaching the injunction found in the Quranic verse 3:104. Though the *khatibs* might have not used the exact word "*da'wa*" or perceived their sermons in the light of *da'wa*, their mission in itself can doubtlessly be regarded part of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. Muftis' *fatwas* could also be seen as a sort of intra-*ummaic da'wa*. Moreover,

individual Muslim scholars and jurists elaborate the constant need for "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" within the Muslim *Umma*.[96]

More recently, *da'wa* is argued to be applicable to all Muslims in revitalizing their Islamicity. In the words of one of the most outspoken contemporary *da'wa* theoreticians, Khurram Murad, "da'wah has to be addressed to the 'self' as well as to the 'other', to the individual as well as to the society, to the black as well as to the white, to the Muslim as well as to the non-Muslim. It cannot be restricted to any race, colour, community, or religion" (Murad, 1986: 13). In the course of history, the personhood of the object of *da'wa* has moved a number of times from one extreme to another – from non-Muslims to fellow Muslims – but in general both forms of *da'wa* have been practiced by Muslims throughout their history. Thus, one is confronted with a sort of dual history of *da'wa* development, where the two alternative set of perceptions, theories, and techniques of *da'wa* go side by side, sometimes intertwining, sometimes separating. Part IV is devoted to analysis of *da'wa* directed at Muslims, that is, *da'wa* within the *Ummah*.

SPECIFICITIES OF EARLY INTRA-*UMMAIC DA'WA*

As soon as Muslims split along political lines, their *da'wa* activities, albeit not institutionalized or formally organized, assumed a strong partisan nature. It may be argued that proto-Shi'is and Kharijis were engaged in some sort of intra-*ummaic da'wa* as early as the second half of the 7th century. However, it was the 'Abbasids in the first half of the 8th century ('Abbasid *da'wa* allegedly started around 716 around Kufa (Daniel, 1979: 29)) who used the term "*da'wa*" in the sense of political propaganda aimed at overthrowing the Umayyads. Moshe Sharon argues that "the term *da'wah* was chosen because of its association with the original call of the Prophet to Islam," but he does not provide the basis or source of his contention (Sharon, 1990: 19). The 'Abbasids had a political objective that involved a sort of religious preaching with the aim of convincing Muslims to join their ranks. The 'Abbasids managed to make use of Shi'i sentiment, something that became very handy in their propaganda. On the other hand, 'Abbasids did not attempt to "convert" anyone to any specific branch of Islam (Shi'i, in this case) or religious sect. They instead sought after wider political support (Mansurnoor, 1991). The 'Abbasid *da'wa*,

[96] Such Muslim "reformers" as al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, and more recent ones like al-Afghani, 'Abduh, and Rida are argued to have been *da'is* in the intra-*ummaic* sense. See Nufal, 1977: 13.

though itself not violent, called for the use of force. For this and other reasons, their *da'wa* could not be considered and treated as a "missionary activity" in the proper religious sense. Still, the 'Abbasid *da'wa* of the 720s through 740s is the first widespread instance of the term "*da'wa*" as inviting, though they be fellow Muslims, to submit to a specific religio-political ideology of a group of Muslims.[97] 'Abbasids were also the first to employ a formalized structure for *da'wa*: The imam would appoint a chief *da'i* (who, besides being a "missionary," was eventually to be the military leader of the revolutionaries) to a given region. Once dispatched, the *da'i*, through his emissaries and assistant *da'is*, would keep in constant contact with the imam and would occasionally meet with the imam, usually in Mecca during the time of the hajj (Daniel, 1979: 32; see also Sharon, 1990: 70–73). The structure and basic pattern of work of the 'Abbasid *da'wa* were later taken up by the Isma'ilis.

The 'Abbasid *da'wa* ceased as soon as the 'Abbasids came to power in the caliphate, and they no longer needed allegiance and support from their anti-Umayyad activities. It is reported that the 'Abbasid *da'is* themselves were among the victims of the new regime – the chief propagandist for the cause of the 'Abbasids, Abu Muslim, soon after the Abbasid accession to the throne, was put to sword by the caliph's orders in 655. It thus can be safely assumed that the 'Abbasid *da'wa* or, more precisely, the *da'wa* for 'Abbasids, was a mere political method with well-defined and immediate goals. And although the 'Abbasids ruled (at least nominally) the caliphate until the middle of the 13th century, we hear nothing of the 'Abbasid *da'wa* after the middle of the 8th century. If compared, the 'Abbasid *da'wa* and the Quranic *da'wa* have little in common if anything. Moreover, the 'Abbasid *da'wa* and contemporary *da'wa* should be studied as two distinct phenomena rather than aspects of the same essence.

THE ISMA'ILI *DA'WA*

In the early centuries of Islam, the Isma'ili Fatimids worked out a complex structure to supervise and undertake a *da'wa* toward Muslims.[98] Splitting from the Imami Shi'ism after the death of the Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 765), "by the middle of the

[97] Al-Tabari in his history, *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*, first speaks of historical post-Muhammadan *da'wa* in connection with the 'Abbasid revolution. See Tabari, 1989, 24: 87.

[98] The Fatimids were not the only ones of their time to pursue intra-*ummaic da'wa* – Zaydis, another branch of Shi'ism, and other minor groups were also active in their religious propaganda. However, they neither attained the heights of *da'wa* nor achieved the results to contest those of the Isma'ili Fatimids. Mustafa Ghalib openly admires the depth and complexity of the Isma'ili *da'wa*. According to him, the Isma'lis were the pioneers of "the art of *da'wa*" in the world (Ghalib, 1979?: 26).

third/ninth century, the Isma'ilis had organised a secret, religio-political movement designated as al-da'wa (the mission), or more precisely, al-da'wa al-hadiya (the rightly guiding mission)" (Daftary, 1999: 29). Though little is known about the initial phase of the Isma'ili *da'wa*, Farhad Daftary is certainly correct in defining the Isma'ili *da'wa* as a "religio-political movement," for it clearly encompassed political objectives as much as religious ones.[99]

The Isma'ilis are a sect within the Shi'i branch of Islam. It has to be remarked that the Isma'ilis, and specifically the Fatimid branch of them, are not and have never been regarded by the majority of Muslims as orthodox or orthopractic.[100] The Isma'ili community has never constituted more than a few percent of total Muslims, and the minority Shi'i Fatimids were not regarded by the rest of Muslims as representing the "true" spirit of Islam. Accordingly, for the greater part of Muslims, Fatimid teachings and their *da'wa*, which the Fatimids themselves proudly called "the rightly guiding mission and the true *da'wa*," were not the *da'wa* of the true path of God. Like the current Ahmadis, the Fatimids were rejected by other Muslims as un-Muslims, and their activities, regardless of the terms used, were deemed unsuitable for proper Muslims to follow and study. This is crucially important when the Fatimid missionary activities are studied from an intra-Muslim commonwealth perspective, one dominated by Sunnis. We are informed that the Fatimid libraries in Cairo and later in Alamut housed tens if not hundreds of thousands of books; unfortunately, the Sunnis who seized power from the Fatimids had strong anti-Isma'ili inclinations and purged the libraries of most of the books deemed heretical (Halm, 1997: 77–78, 94–95). With those books destroyed, vast treasures of Isma'ili teachings, among them those on *da'wa*, vanished. Still, parts of the teachings of the Isma'ilis have been preserved in private libraries or quoted in later works, many of them in the polemical writings of non-Isma'ili Muslim heresiographers.

The Fatimids did practice *da'wa* on some non-Muslims (especially on the fringes of the Islamic world, such as the Indian Subcontinent and Central Asia), but the effort was overshadowed by *da'wa* to win fellow Muslims over to Isma'ilism.

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[99] The Institute of Ismaili Studies in its glossary of terms at http://www.iis.ac.uk/glossary/glossary_dg.htm provides this definition for da'wa: "Lit. 'summons' or invitation to Islam; amongst Shi'i Muslims, it was the invitation to adopt the cause of the Imamat; mission; it also refers more specifically to the hierarchy of the Ismaili religious organisation in the pre-Fatimid, Fatimid, and Alamut periods of Ismaili history." Imamate for Shi'is is both a religious and a political institute; therefore, pledging allegiance to an Imam encompasses religious and political submission to him.

[100] Nufal's position is quintessential of this attitude among mainstream Muslims. Himself a committed contemporary *da'i*, he is critical of the Fatimid *da'wa*. See Nufal, 1977: 12.

Their *da'wa* was a continuous effort by dedicated professional *da'is* through argument and other peaceful means to demonstrate the superiority of Isma'ilism as a faith and practice for other Muslims. The neophyte had to enter the Isma'ili creed out of his/her conviction and free will, and not by force: "The Fatimids never attempted forced conversion of their subjects and the minoritarian status of the Shi'a remained unchanged in Egypt despite two centuries of Isma'ili Shi'i rule" (Daftary, 1999: 33). The Fatimid *da'is*, however, won numerous converts outside the Fatimid state (Yemen, Persia, the Indian Subcontinent), enabling the survival of Isma'ilism even after the fall of the Isma'ili states of Egypt and Alamut. For the Fatimids, *da'wa* and jihad seem to have been two distinct and separate activities. While jihad was a very earthly and physical endeavor, *da'wa* concentrated on the soul and spiritual matters.

The Fatimid *da'wa* must have started sometime at the end of the 8th century in Mashriq before moving to Maghrib, where the Fatimid state was created in the first half of the 10th century, peaking during the Egyptian phase of the Fatimid state (969–1171). Another branch of Isma'ili *da'wa* was practiced by the Nizari Isma'ilis of Alamut (1090–1256). The Nizari *da'wa* can be regarded as an outgrowth of the Fatimid *da'wa* and a continuation of the Isma'ili *da'wa* in and around Persia. However, it was in the Egyptian period when the Isma'ili *da'wa* developed and flourished most. Under the Fatimids, *da'wa* development entered a phase of high organization and institutionalization, something that had not been achieved earlier in Islamic history. The Fatimids made *da'wa* into a state institution. In the words of Daftary, "the term da'wa...referred to both the organisation of the Isma'ili mission, with its elaborate hierarchical ranks of hudud, and the functioning of that organisation, including especially the missionary activities of the da'is who were the representatives of the da'wa in different regions" (Daftary, 1999: 34).

Indeed, the Fatimid *da'wa* was a major institution with a strictly defined hierarchy in the Isma'ili state of Egypt, with the imam-caliph at its top. Directly under his guidance and supervision was the chief *da'i – da'i al-du'at*, who, at least in the early phase of the Fatimid state, was also the chief judge – *qadi al-qudat*. Directly responsible for regions where *da'wa* was undertaken were *hujjat*, or regional chief *da'is*. Every high-ranking *da'i* had his subordinates – assistant *da'is* as well as so-called *mukasirs*, the disputants.[101] The rules of command and rank were observed at all times so that all actions had to be approved by superiors, ultimately by the imam-

[101] Ghalib provides a list of 12 ranks within the Isma'ili *da'wa*, with imam at the top and novices (مستجيب), who have taken an oath at the bottom. Ghalib, 1979?: 33–34.

caliph himself. The organization of *da'wa* and especially its rank system is reminiscent of a military structure where one is gradually promoted to a higher rank because of one's experience and achievement. Heinz Halm, drawing on original sources, gives an insight into how the work of *da'is* was organized and controlled:

> The superior *da'i* examined the person he had selected as the future *da'i* by having him educate initiates in his own presence, so that his examination was a kind of trial *majlis*. If the candidate passed this test, the *da'i* raised his rank and assigned him a place in his immediate surroundings, that is, he made him into a kind of assistant who would probably accompany his chief on inspection trips and perhaps also be assigned daily administrative duties such as correspondence and dealing with couriers. Then he would gradually promote him to higher ranks until he was capable of independently assuming the *da'wa* of a village or of a comparatively large district. (Halm, 1997: 68)

From Halm's study, it is clear that the Fatimids were highly concerned with the quality of *da'is*. In the Fatimid *da'wa* organization, only the well educated could aspire to become *da'is*. The Fatimid *da'i* was above all a teacher. And to be an able teacher, he had to possess deep knowledge in such diverse fields as the natural, human, social, and religious sciences. But being knowledgeable was not enough to be a successful *da'i*: one had to posses other qualities: to be an integral member of the local society and community; to speak the local vernacular; to be an able administrator; to be courageous, moral, talented, and so on. In order to bolster these qualities, guides and manuals for *da'is* were routinely written. These belonged to a specific genre: *adab al-da'i* (Halm, 1997: 60).

The Isma'ili doctrine included two sides of religious knowledge: *zahir*, Islamic jurisprudence, and *batin*, the "inner, concealed meaning of the Islamic revelation." The ultimate purpose of the Isma'ili *da'wa* was to prepare initiates to accept and absorb the *batin*. Because of this practice, the Isma'ilis have been nicknamed "*batiniyya*" by Sunni Muslims. Only chosen adherents were revealed this hidden knowledge. In this respect, the Isma'ili *da'wa* can be seen as twofold: On the broader level, it preached the Islamic law according to the Isma'ili *madhhab*, revealing only *zahir*, and, on the narrower level, it concentrated on *batin*. On this narrower level, *da'wa* was done with *batin* staying virtually within the circles of the *da'is* who were undoubtedly intellectual and part of the political elite of Isma'ili Egypt and Alamut. The Isma'ili *da'wa* was hierarchical and elitist – the common believers participated in it only to a certain extent, namely in open sessions, called *majalis* (Arabic مجلس), where their curiosity was raised but their thirst for knowledge not fully slaked.

The Isma'ili *da'wa* is the first known instance of a highly developed structure and system to practice *da'wa*. Because of its certain distinctive features, it is in many

respects the only manifestation of such a form of *da'wa* in the whole history of Islamic *da'wa*. This is mainly due to the fact that the Isma'ili *da'wa* was a state-run enterprise – no other Muslim state has ever put *da'wa* so high in its priorities. Its being sectarian, slightly clandestine, professional, hierarchic, elitist, and otherwise strictly organized set the Isma'ili *da'wa* apart from the rest of other historical forms of *da'wa*. These features are lacking in *da'wa* efforts of practically all other Muslim *da'wa* groups and organizations that came after Isma'ilis. The latest improvements in *da'wa* (especially in its extra-*ummaic* form in the West) have so far come closest in an organizational sense to what was the Isma'ili *da'wa*. However, the contemporary world balance of power prevents current *da'wa* from matching the scope of Isma'ili *da'wa*. Even still, Isma'ili *da'is* also widely practiced *da'wa* in lands not under the rule of the Isma'ili imam-caliphs, where they could not enjoy their protection. The experiences of these *da'is* could serve as a blueprint for contemporary *da'is* engaged in the extra-*ummaic da'wa* in non-Muslim lands.

As long as there existed Isma'ili states *da'wa* was kept intact, though it enormously evolved and considerably changed. However, after the decline and disintegration of the Fatimid (in 1171) and other Isma'ili states (notably, the Nizari state of Alamut in 1256), Isma'ili *da'wa* lost its structure, scope, and appeal. Even worse, Isma'ili communities of Egypt, Syria, and North Africa almost entirely disappeared. Isma'ilis to the present day, however, have persisted on the Indian Subcontinent and in the Central Asia in the form of Nizari Isma'ili. Still, their *da'wa* efforts, revived recently, nowhere match the organization of *da'wa* under the Fatimids or even the Nizaris of Alamut.

For several centuries no single Muslim dynasty or organization developed any significant institutionalized intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities. Though Muslims continued to perform *da'wa*-like methods within the *Ummah*, the terminology changed and the term *da'wa* was not used as extensively as in Isma'ili times.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Development of *da'wa* within the *Ummah* in the last two centuries is closely connected to so-called Islamic revivalism, both religious and political. Championed by Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab[102] (d. 1792) in mid 18th-century Arabia, Islamic

[102] Abd al-Wahhab in his writings emphasized the importance of inviting people (Muslims and non-Muslims alike) to embrace Islam. See, Abd al-Wahhab, 1992: 18–19. For the early history of

revivalism in its Wahhabi form, both political-militant and religious-missionary, in the course of a century spread to other parts of the Muslim world, especially to the Indian Subcontinent. The movement commenced in the relatively undistinguished Najd region of the Arabian Peninsula when a scholar of Hanbali *madhhab*, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, around the 1740s started denouncing the then-prevalent beliefs and rituals of Muslims of his surroundings. The preaching of Abd al-Wahhab initially brought him no success and he gained a reputation as an extremist, viewed by numerous scholars of his time as beyond the pale of Islam and definitely outside the classical Islamic *madhhabs*.[103]

Abd al-Wahhab, nonetheless, saw himself as a purifier of the religion of Islam: He saw his goal in purging the Islamic faith of all elements he deemed contrary to pure submission (*islam*) to God. The central concept in Abd al-Wahhab's ideology was *tawhid* (Arabic توحيد), the unity of God. In the words of Isma'il al-Faruqi, Abd al-Wahhab's infamous tract *Kitab al-Tawhid* became "the ideational spearhead of the mighty movement" to revive Muslim Islamicity (Abd al-Wahhab, 1992: xv). Based on rigorous interpretation of this concept, Abd al-Wahhab drew a line between those whom he considered true believers, *muslimun* (his own followers, naturally), and those whom he accused of *shirk*, associationism (worshiping anything but God alone). Abd al-Wahhab appropriated the right to *takfir* (Arabic تكفير), to declare one to be a non-believer, and became obsessed with this power, becoming for him and his disciples a decisive tool in their intra-*ummaic da'wa*, if these early Wahhabi efforts are even *da'wa*. The Wahhabi movement eventually evolved into something that could be considered a sort of *da'wa* movement, despite its extreme nature. Al Sa'ud adopted and attempted to put in practice (politically) Abd al-Wahhab's theoretical (religious) polemics, in effect merging the veritable written *da'wa* of Abd al-Wahhab with politics.[104]

If the Wahhabi type of intra-*ummaic da'wa* reminds one of the historical pattern of intra-*ummaic da'wa* common to the 'Abbasids, Isma'ilis, and some other minor Muslim sects and dynasties, the development of intra-*ummaic da'wa* on the Indian Subcontinent revealed a new pattern. Since the contemporary variety of Wahhabi *da'wa* in Saudi Arabia will be addressed in a later chapter, for now we turn

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Wahhabism, see Peskes, 1993.

[103] For analysis of Abd al-Wahhab's outbursts against Sunni classical legal traditions, see Peskes, 1993: 35–47.

[104] Algar, 2002, himself a Shi'i, has written a very critical assessment of the development of both Wahhabi thought and the Saudi state.

to contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa* movements that sprang up on the Indian Subcontinent.

DEVELOPMENTS ON THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT FROM THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY

While the Islamic revivalism of the Arabian Peninsula took a rather militant form, on the Indian Subcontinent, in addition to the form applied directly from the Wahhabis, it also took a non-aggressive approach. In the South Asian context of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "*da'wa*…came to be defined not only as a missionary activity of calling non-Muslims to Islam, but more significantly, as a call to Muslims to become *good* Muslims" (Masud, 2000a: lvi). This trend manifested itself in the form of religiously concerned Muslim groups and organizations that usually adopted exclusively peaceful missionary methods to revive Islamicity in their communities and societies.

The need to revive/save one's own (Muslim) community arose not only in the face of an intense Christian missionary presence on the Subcontinent at the time. Missionary activities of reformed Hindus posed an even more acute danger to local Muslims. Of such disturbing activities to Indian Muslims the foremost was the zealous *Arya Samaj* movement. The Movement was established in 1875 with the sole purpose of (re)converting Indian Muslims, who were said to have been converted to Islam forcibly, back to Hinduism through a certain ritual – *shuddhi*. *Arya Samaj* targeted mostly nominal Muslims who were not entrenched in the Islamic faith and whose culture was more of a syncretistic mixture of Hindu and Muslim habits and practices. By the end of the 1920s, the Movement claimed to have "reconverted" some 200,000 individuals. The increasing success of *Arya Samaj* stirred up Muslim consciousness, and they reacted by propelling their own missionary counter-activities. Thus *tabligh* was born (Ahmad, 1995: 165–166). In Minault's words, "Shuddhi and Tabligh were two sides of the same coin" (Minault, 1982: 193). To support this, in his article, Yoginder Sikand provides the following thoughts of an undisclosed Muslim scholar of the time:

> For eight centuries Muslims had completely renounced their fundamental duty of tabligh. It is only thanks to the shuddhi sabha that we were forced to reach out to the Malkanas and other such brothers of ours, otherwise who could say that we would give up all our comforts and spend days on end touring villages and towns simply for the sake of the spread of Islam? The shuddhi movement, or the fitna [discord, mischief, insurrection] of apostasy, is, in some way, Allah's way of testing us. Till such time as every single Muslim does not

> make the invitation (dawat) of the Truth and the tabligh of Islam an integral part of his daily life, it will be impossible to say if we have passed this test by God or not ... The truth, however, is that the fitna of apostasy has produced a certain level of consciousness among the Muslims about the urgent need for tabligh. (Sikand, 1997: 74)

Yet, Muslim missionary reaction, though swift, was in most cases short-lived. Such organizations and individuals as *Jami'at-i-Ulama-i-Hind*, *Firangi Mahal Madrasah* of Lucknow, *Jami'at Markaziya Tabligh-ul-Islam*, and Khwaja Hasan Nizami dived into missionary effort which, however, was neither sustained for any longer period nor very successful. On the other hand, there developed several popular and powerful Muslim (missionary) movements to which we now turn our attention.

A NOTE ON THE *AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT*: *DA'WA* OR ANTI-*DA'WA*?

One of the most polemical pages in the history of the contemporary Islamic *da'wa* is the case of the *Ahmadiyya Movement*, frequently also called Qadianism, though this name covers only the Qadiani as opposed to the Lahori branch of the Movement.[105] Established in the very end of the 19th century by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India and for some three decades (since 1974) now officially declared a non-Muslim religious group where it is headquartered, in Pakistan, it is virtually ostracized by all Sunni Muslims (Saudi Arabia stopped issuing *hajj* visas to Ahmadis as Muslims). In spite of this, the *Ahmadiyya Movement* still considers itself a true (in fact, the only true) Muslim organization and pursues missionary activities, something the members of the movement have been doing for over a century since its founding. Ridicule by mainstream Muslims has served to reinforce the sectarian nature Ahmadi communities – Ahmadi authorities have prohibited members of the Movement from marrying or even praying alongside non-Ahmadi Muslims.[106]

The *Ahmadiyya Movement* can be in part seen as a reaction to proselytizing activities of both Hindu *Arya Samaj* and Christian missionaries in India, which it proceeded to counter. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself has attacked both the dogmas of Christianity and Christian missionaries on numerous occasions. However, as Poston somewhat too strongly expressed, lacking its own ingenious methods, the Movement

[105] The two branches, which split the original movement into two competing parts in 1914, have been since at odds on theological grounds. For a discussion on differences, see the official website of the *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-e-Islam Lahore* (Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement for the Propagation of Islam), at http://www.aaiil.org/text/books/others/misc/lahoreahmadiyyamovementislamvsqadianirabwahjamaat.shtml.

[106] The Movement now claims to have some 10 million adherents in over 100 countries. See Haddad & Smith, 1993: 49, 54.

"turned unashamedly to its Christian opponents and borrowed freely from the strategies of the denominations with which it was familiar" (Poston, 1992: 112). Such a statement is at least partially true, for the activities of Ahmadis are similar to those of Christian missionaries: Their translation and dissemination of the Quran and educational activities and health services, among others, all these resemble methods employed by Christian missionaries in Asia and Africa. Mohammad-Arif observes all this in the missionary work of Ahmadis in New York (Mohammad-Arif, 2002: 159).

To foster their missionary activities in a given area, Ahmadis are quick to build their own mosques, which they turn into their local base or headquarters. Ahmadis have succeeded in building these mosques in a number of European cities as well as in cities in other non-Muslim lands, often being the first to build a mosque in the vicinity. There are in excess of some 500 Ahmadi mosques around the world (Haddad & Smith, 1993: 49). Ahmadi communities are also known to be engaged in hospital building and setting up institutions of education. Ahmadis have made translations of the whole Quran into over 50 languages and translations of selected verses in over 100 languages, among them minor languages of Africa, Asia, and smaller European languages like Swedish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Catalonian, and even Yiddish.

The *Ahmadiyya Movement* makes every effort to attract followers to its creed, be they Muslim or non-Muslim. The movement at the same time is both extra-*ummaic* and intra-*ummaic*. Ahmadis came to Europe in the very beginning of the 20th century (in 1913 they acquired property rights for the Shahjehan mosque in Woking, England) and to North America in the 1920s, ahead of other *da'wa*-inclined Muslim organizations from the Middle East or the Indian Subcontinent. Yet, the activities of their missionaries around the world have been and still continue to be controlled directly from the headquarters, first in India and, since the partition of India, in Rabwa, Pakistan, a town built by Ahmadis themselves. The movement has its Missionary Training College in Rabwa to train professional *da'is* (studies last as long as seven years). The Ahmadis publish widely on Islam, both polemical and theological, espousing their version of it. Most of this literature is translated into other languages, making Ahmadis' ideas accessible to quite a large public.

The syncretism of the *Ahmadiyya* – Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, aside from the renewer (*mujaddid*) of the Islamic faith, considered himself an embodiment of the Islamic/Christian Messiah and the Hindu Krishna – appealed to the Christian and Hindu communities, first in Hindustan, and later in other parts of the world. The fact

that the Ahmadis have firmly established themselves in several European countries[107] and North America attests to a degree of success. However, since majority of the world's Muslims discard the *Ahmadiyya* as a heretical movement (especially its Qadiani branch), their missionary activities, like the *da'wa* of Isma'ilis a millennium ago, is not treated by non-Ahmadi Muslims as the proper Islamic *da'wa* and virtually unanimously rejected as harmful to Muslims.

Ahmadis claim to be pacifists and also apolitical. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad "declared that 'Jihad', as an instrument of war (defensive or offensive), was forbidden by him. His followers, Qadiyanis, continue to present themselves to the West as pacifists, anti-war 'Muslims'" (Robinson, 1990: 43). This stance of the Qadiani Ahmadis evoked furious response from the side of some non-Ahmadi Muslims, especially in regards to defensive jihad. For us here, however, it is more important to observe that for Ahmadis *da'wa* can be only peaceful. This, as has been discussed in Chapter 2 on the relation of jihad to *da'wa*, is in contradiction to a number of the most outspoken Muslim activists of the 20th century – Hasan al-Banna, Sayid Qutb, and, to a certain degree, Abu al-'Ala Mawdudi, all of whom sang the virtues of *mujahidin* as the avant-garde of the spread of Islam and whose intellectual heirs (namely, *al-Ikhwan* and *Jama'at Islami*) pursue *da'wa* both within and without the Muslim world. Though there are, of course, Muslim propagandists who separate *da'wa* and jihad, Ahmadis, by negating jihad altogether, stand at the very extreme end of the spectrum of Muslim interpretation of jihad and its relation to *da'wa*. Nevertheless, Ahmadi *da'wa* activities, despite being labeled as non- or even anti-Islamic by most orthodox Muslims, from a non-Muslim perspective its contents and methodology could be regarded as an Islamic missionary endeavor.[108]

TABLIGHI JAMA'AT

Originally founded in India in 1926 in part as reaction to the missionary activities of the Hindus and Christians and with the aim of strengthening Muslim self-awareness (originally for the Meos, or nominal Muslims of the Mewat region in India), the organization crossed over Indian borders soon after the Second World War and by the 1970s had become a true transnational movement with branches on all continents and

[107] It is reported that in Britain alone it has 10,000 members. Robinson, 1990: 43.
[108] Poston in his *Islamic Da'wah in the West* also had to grapple with the problem of positioning the *Ahmadiyya* movement within the general framework of Muslim missionary organizations. He chose to include it. See Poston, 1992: 111–114.

in, reportedly, some 80 countries. Though its constituents have remained predominantly of Indo-Pakistani origin, it has also gained followers from other ethnic groups. By now, *Tablighi Jama'at* is well established in both France – to which it came via North Africa (especially Algeria) – and the UK, which has become its European "headquarters." The famous Tunisian Islamist thinker, Rashid Ghannouchi, once led a group of Tablighis in a quarter of Paris in the late 1960s before his return to Tunisia (Tamimi, 2001: 25).

The ideology of the movement has arguably evolved from "a general idea of religious duties … to a socio-political programme … and finally to a spiritual revival of Muslim religious consciousness" (Masud, 2000b: 79). The last phase is what in this study has been called "reviving Muslim Islamicity" – the quintessence of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, which is executed by implementing the principle of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong." In its ideology and goals, *Tablighi Jama'at* is a typical contemporary Muslim activist organization. Yet in its methods and comparable success it is exceptional.

The chief method of the Tablighi *da'wa* is moving in small groups from one public place or house to another in search of Muslims. When such are found they are addressed with questions as to whether they practice Islam. If the answer is affirmative, the Tablighis invite fellow believer(s) to join them and continue the effort together. If, however, they are given negative answer to the initial question, they pursue to convince the person of virtues of performing the Islamic duties and also winning him/her to their cause. Abdar-Rahman Koya explains the principles of the *Tablighi Jama'at* in the following words:

> It is amazing that despite having no formal structure, the Tabligh's activities and methods around the world are almost uniform - from the way they dress to the way that they attract more people to come into its fold. The Tablighi's typical modus operandi is to invite people to come to the mosque for religious lectures, often by a visiting 'senior' Tablighi member from overseas. Unlike other movements, the Tablighis' targets are Muslims; they rarely preach to non-Muslims. The atmosphere in a Tablighi meeting is reasonably egalitarian; members organise themselves into small missions (jama'ats), and normally learn from and encourage each other. They quietly pay visits to Muslim homes near mosques, inviting them to join their gatherings. The Tabligh's distinguishing mark is that Tablighis are asked to volunteer their time rather than just their money, to travel to different towns, cities and countries. (Koya)

Though Koya is right in regards to *Tablighi Jama'at's* generally limited targeting of non-Muslims (until the 1950s they altogether were discouraged by their leaders from undertaking extra-*ummaic da'wa*), members of the movement in Europe and North America inevitably get sucked into desire to engage in extra-*ummaic da'wa*. Such a desire is most evident in reports sent by Tablighis to headquarters in

the Subcontinent.[109] In these reports Tablighis share their disgust at current religious and moral situation in non-Muslim societies of the Northern Hemisphere and emphasize the need for extra-*ummaic da'wa* on par with intra-*ummaic da'wa*, which until now has been almost the sole priority of the movement.

The movement can generally be labeled "anulamic" – though its founder and his successors sought approval and legitimization of the movement's activities by *'ulama*, Islamic scholars play but a little role in the development of the movement (Masud, 2000b: 100–102). As a rule, Tablighi *da'is* are non-professionals in the religious sphere and the most (usually self) educated assume the leading role in a given group. Groups are formed *ad hoc* for a fixed period upon expiration of which they disperse and might or might not meet once again in the future in a newly put up group. Women form their own groups to pursue *tabligh* among women.[110] In general, *Tablighi Jama'at* has made *da'wa* work obligatory upon all able followers, regardless of their knowledge in religious matters. Tablighis justify their *da'wa* efforts by claiming that "since Muhammad was the last Prophet of Allah, the task of inviting people toward submission to Allah lies now on the shoulders of the Muslim Umma" (Masud, 2000a: 21).

Though other Muslim groups may be sympathetic to *Tablighi Jama'at's* cause, they however question the very methods used by Tablighis. This first of all evolves around the way preaching is conducted. For example, *Ahl-i Hadith* group is reported to object to the Tablighis' *da'wa* methods on the grounds of prophetic hadiths, which they find not to support these methods. Abu al-'Ala Mawdudi, the founder of the influential *Jama'a al-Islami*, pejoratively compares *Tablighi Jama'at* to Christian missionaries, when he says, "there is no sense in applying a Christian-type mission to invite people to Islam" (Faust, 2000: 149). Even some Deobandi scholars in India and Pakistan (who usually are supportive of the Movement, which adheres to the Deoband tradition) also question the appropriateness of the *Tablighi Jama'at's* methodology (Masud, 2000b: 91, 101). Fathi Yakan, a follower of Hasan al-Banna and a prolific *da'wa* writer, is also critical of *Tablighi Jama'at's* activities, which he finds too loose, limited in scope and virtually fruitless (Yakan, n.d.: 217–218).

Tablighi Jama'at thinks of itself as a peaceful non-political movement. However, it does justify the use of force under certain even if only theoretical circumstances: "*Da'wa* movements often define *Jihad* as one of the methods of

[109] Masud provides translation of two of such reports, where inclination to preach to non-Muslims is evident. See Masud, 2000: 108–118.
[110] For the role of women in the *Tablighi Jama'at*, see Sikand, 1999.

implementing the Islamic principle of *Amr b'il ma'aruf wa nahiy 'anil munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil). *Tablighi Jama'at* also conceives of its *Da'wa* within the framework of this principle, which derives its justification from a *hadith* that prescribes the use of force to prevent evil. Frequently, Jihad is considered as the highest form of this method of prevention" (Masud, 2000b: 105). The ideologues of the Movement have employed war-like terms like "*jihad*," "*ghazwa*," but they as a rule put non-belligerent meanings into them. Any force, which under certain circumstances may be used, is allowed only within the community, that is, among Muslims. As for its perceived apolitical stance, it is true that *Tablighi Jama'at* very cautiously abstains from any activities that might incur attention of political authorities or otherwise get the members of the Movement involved in politics, even involuntarily or unaware. On the other hand, Movement's leaders have written on political issues, though they abstain from political activism. Moreover, as it is argued, "making Muslims conscious of their separate identity and aware of their social obligations from a social perspective ultimately serves as a political purpose" (Masud, 2000b: 99). Gaborieau, after pointing to the secrecy of the organization's structure and hierarchy adds to this: "it (the movement – *my insertion*) exercises considerable worldwide power, with its dynamic proselytism, which it conceives as a form of *djihad* enabling it to mobilise millions of persons on a global scale. It may be wondered whether one day it will reveal political ambitions which are for the time being disguised" (Gaborieau, 2000: 38).

Some point to *Tablighi Jama'at's* seeming likeness to Sufi brotherhoods in its escapism:

> The general belief is that the Tablighis are apolitical, with members giving all their attention to matters of faith and religious learning, and orienting Muslims toward an Islamic pattern of individual lives. This dimension of life, according to them, is the easiest to control. This view has attracted the accusation that the Tablighis are just 'pseudo-sufi' escapists who seek God for inner peace. This is partly true, yet highly debatable: it is perhaps because of its apolitical nature that the Jama'at and its activities are tolerated, indeed encouraged, by almost every Muslim regime that suppresses Islamic organisations in Muslim countries in the name of political stability. Even its transnational nature…does not make it a significant threat to the secular nation-states, as other Islamic movements are. But to equate it with retreating from the world and ignoring it would be unfair. (Koya)

Though for its escapism, the *Tablighi Jama'at's* can indeed be compared to Sufis, its activities reveal that the organization's internal structure operates not as a Sufi brotherhood but rather as a sort of sect, where members are encouraged to live together and behave in identical ways and the outsiders are viewed if not with contempt than at least with suspicion. Gaborieau depicts the organization of the

Movement in terms resembling those of Isma'ilis of a millennium ago. In his account, chiefs of districts appoint supervisors of localities, who undertake primary initiation of newcomers to the Movement, where "in order to progress they (the newcomers – *my insertion*) in the organization they are required to give pledges of their commitment devoting a portion of their time and their income to missionary ventures. Only then are they granted access to the inner circles of the movement, the functioning of which remains closed to outsiders" (Gaborieau, 2000: 38). Tablighis even have a sort of uniform to distinguish themselves from the rest of Muslims. The absence of *sheikhs, sheikh – murshid* relations, and strictly defined *tariqa* – path to God with one level of attainment progressively supplanting another, all these and many more other features clearly separate Tablighis from Sufis. Moreover, while the Sufi orientation is inward (mainly concerned with personal salvation), *Tablighi Jama'at's* activities are outwardly orientated (aiming at salvation of others). Anyhow, notwithstanding all peculiarities, *Tablighi Jama'at* can be considered as a genuinely *Muslim* missionary movement.

CONCLUSION

Though the term "*da'wa*" and its concept have been around since the 7th century, *da'wa* first became truly institutionalized by the Shi'i Isma'ili Fatimids some two centuries after Muhammad's death. Fatimid *da'wa* is the first instance not only of institutionalization of Muslim missionary activities, but also of the intra-*ummaic* form of *da'wa*. It also carried a political meaning, making the Fatimid *da'wa* a true hybrid, where religion met politics. However, Fatimid *da'wa* was unique for its hierarchical and clandestine nature.

After the fall of the Fatimid states in Egypt and Alamut, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* continued primarily on uninstitutionalized personal level with Muslim preachers (*khatibs*) and individual Sufis or their groups quietly pursuing it among fellow-Muslims around the Muslim world. However, it was the Wahhabi movement in the 18th century, that once again lifted the intra-*ummaic da'wa* onto an institutionalized and politicized level. It created precedent of aggressive and often violent trend of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, where *da'wa* and politics became indistinguishable, which was to spill out and proliferate throughout the 19th and the first half of the 20th century around the Muslim world. The blending of *da'wa* and politics is addressed in detail below in Chapter 8.

Contrary to the militant Wahhabi and the like movements, there appeared another trend of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. It was represented by decidedly antiviolence and apolitical religious organizations, most of which consciously or not were modeled in similitude to the Christian missionary societies resembling the latter in both their organizational structure (leadership, ranks, branches, etc.) and activities (setting up of educational and publishing centers, distributing religious literature, publicly preaching their message). Soon they transcended the boarders of their home countries to become truly international with branches both in the Muslim world and outside it.

Until the middle of the 20th century, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* remained within the confines of the Muslim world, something that once was *Dar al-Islam*. In the interwar and more so in the post-war era, however, with waves of Muslims moving to Europe and North America, *da'wa* crossed the borders also. As has been convincingly shown by Lars Pedersen, initially Muslims in Europe were not very much concerned about their Islamicity (Pedersen, 1999). But this changed, once Muslims started permanently settling in the host countries and brought their families with them. With establishment of such Islamically orientated organizations as *Ahmadiya Movement, Milli Göruş, Tablighi Jama'at* and others throughout Europe, *da'wa* directed at fellow Muslims not only found its ways into Europe and North America but has been intensifying since. In fact, in this latest phase of the *da'wa* development, the geography, and with it the methods and forms, of *da'wa* are being shifted from the predominantly Muslim lands to non-Muslim countries: more and more is said and written about how to stay Muslim in a non-Muslim environment and to proceed with changing that environment into an Islamic.

Though in this chapter only those contemporary organizations that appeared first on the Indian Subcontinent were dealt with, it would be misleading to assume that in other regions of the Muslim world intra-*ummaic da'wa* has not been present to any greater extent. In fact, intra-*ummaic da'wa* has been on agenda among most Muslim revivalist organizations, be it in Africa, Arab Mashriq, or South East Asia from the beginning of the 20th century. For example, *da'wa* is very much a live feature on the college and university campuses across Malaysia: Anwar, having conducted research on *da'wa* in Malaysia, maintains, "at least some 60 to 70 per cent of the Malay students are committed at some level or other to *dakwah*" (Anwar, 1987: 33). However, the movements that might be very active within a given region in the South East Asia have so far been confined to their original localities and have not yet

made such a progress on internationalizing their activities as *Ahmadiya* or *Tablighi Jama‘at* have done.

8. BLENDING OF POLITICS AND *DA'WA*

STATE POLICIES OF REISLAMIZATION

In the historical perspective, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* has been sectarian/partisan, and often with political overtones – 'Abbasids, Isma'ilis, Wahhabis, even Ahmadis – all of them saw and applied *da'wa* as a political means and method to attain their political ends. *Da'wa* has always been part of the bigger political game played among themselves by Muslim dynasties, denominations, sects, groups and fractions. This has continued into the contemporary times.

Muslim intra-community activities of the last three decades or so claimed by them to be *da'wa* should be considered against the political developments in the Muslim world. The *Dar al-Islam* since the 1970s has entered a new phase in its socio-religious development with a phenomenon which, despite its recent appearance on the cultural stage (at least in its present forms), has acquired a number of nick-names – Islamic revivalism, revitalization, upsurge, reassertion, renewal, awakening, fundamentalism, neo-fundamentalism and resurgence; or return of Islam, militant Islam and political Islam (Dessouki, 1982: 4. See also *Fundamentalisms Observed*). All these names and some more recent ones, such as Islamism or politicization of Islam, reflect the different and divergent forms and shapes of this phenomenon, but at the same time they practically all refer to the projects and attempts at *re-islamization* of respective Muslim societies.

The general term "reislamization" characterizes movements of and reforms by religiously concerned groups and governmental bodies in an effort to return a public role to religion in wider social milieu, a role, which such groups/governments think to have become restricted in the socio-political, economic and cultural processes that have been affecting Muslim countries since the 19th century. To "re-islamize," in the eyes of the concerned Muslims would basically mean to allow society to be organized and regulated on a religious (Islamic) basis rather than by non-religious systems of social organization. Such reislamization apparently bears negativistic prejudice toward the non-Islamic forms of organization of social life. Reislamization is inevitably related to, though not identical with, reviving/fostering Islamicity of

Muslims: while reislamization has to do more with formal social structures and legal system imposed on society from above, Islamicity pertains to individual level of religious consciousness.

Looking at the reislamization from a governmental perspective, it is in the the 1970s (in some instances a little bit earlier), when the policies of reaffirming Islam's public role came into use. A number of new governmental bodies to watch after religious affairs were founded in many Muslim countries, while the existing ones were restructured. Especially in the Arabian Peninsula, but also in Libya, Pakistan, Iran, and the Sudan, new laws were introduced with more emphasis on Islamic background of the cultural orientation of the society; and the overall increasing self-image of a religious state and society has been promoted since. In Halliday's words, this was

> the current that can be broadly termed 'Islamization', imposed from above by the governments, and from below by mass Islamist movements. From the 1970s onwards, this tendency has sought to alter legal codes and state practice so that they conform more closely to what is deemed 'traditional' or correct Islamic practice. (Halliday, 1995: 133)

'Traditional' is probably not an appropriate designation when speaking of socio-cultural policies of governments in the Gulf and several other Muslim countries, but 'correct Islamic practice' is exactly what the Saudi and authorities of other Muslim states imagine to have been implementing in accordance with the Quranic injunction of the verse 3:104. However, the absence of a clear-cut and detailed universally acknowledged definition of the "correct" Islamic practice, despite numerous references to and extensive use of the founding texts of Islam by Muslim scholars, prompted the local governments to define for themselves what they would consider as the 'correct' Islamic social practices and in what spheres of social life they would proceed to implement them.

The Saudi government in particular envisions the reislamization as a universal project: first to reislamize the whole Muslim *Umma* and then to embark upon the islamization of the non-Muslim world. In his speech at the OIC Summit in Tehran in December of 1996 Crown Prince Abdullah said:

> If we manage to run our affairs properly, and if we hold fast to our glorious Shari'ah and its spirit of tolerance, we would be able, by the help of Allah, to put our nation along the path of a new revival that will spread all over the vast Muslim world. An objective look at our Nation's present reality, enveloped as it is by circumstances and rocked by events, will reveal to us the extent and the depth of Islamic awakening which is being echoed wherever the name of Allah is mentioned. This is the awakening of religious faith aimed at revival of the values of Islam and solid principles derived from the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the guidance of the purified Prophet's Sunnah. (Abdullah, Crown Prince, 1996)

Saudi Arabia sees a need for a revival of the Islamic values and therefore has placed itself in a position of the legitimate promoter of reislamization and carrier of the intra-*ummaic* type of *da'wa* in the Muslim world. It tries to dominate major pan-Arab and pan-Islamic organizations and exports its version of reislamization/Islam by all possible means. Its program sounds simple but is clear and familiar to all Muslims – the *Shari'a*, based on the Quran and Sunna, must be the frame of Muslim social life. By reviving the *Shari'a,* Muslims will return the regulating power of religion in the public space, something that now supposedly exists in Saudi Arabia itself. Those Muslim countries, who submit to this program, are favored by Saudi Arabia and other GCC states with low interest loans, humanitarian, military, technological and other assistance. On international level, thus, reislamization became a sort of commodity – Muslim countries receive economic support from the Gulf on the condition of implementing the Gulf (Saudi) version of reislamization in their own societies.[111]

At home, the state-run reislamization is advanced first of all through legal means, like promulgation of penal codes, which dwell much on the classical Islamic jurisprudence with its *hudud* (fixed) punishments. Among the measures to promote re-islamization taken by governments, censorship is an outstanding feature. State-censorship is not a new appearance in most of the Muslim states. Saudi Arabia, other Gulf states, Iran and several others are well known for their strict customs regulations to prevent unwanted items from entering their respective countries. Censorship is implicitly but also sometimes explicitly linked with the maxim of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong," so recurrent in *da'wa* manuals and other writings by Muslim activists. The concept of a group of people called for in the verse 3:104 has indeed been implemented by the Saudi and the Iranian authorities: the state has entrusted special quazi-police forces with guarding the morals. In Saudi Arabia, "the state supports the Committees for Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil, whose members (known in Arabic as *mutawwa'un*) enforce the strict interpretation of Islamic social mores that is officially sanctioned in Saudi Arabia" (Gause, 1993: 16). The *Mutawwa'un* (Arabic مطاوعون) monitor the residential areas and are authorized to enter private dwellings if they observe immoral behavior being conducted inside. They may arrest, fine or punish in other ways. The zealotry of the *Mutawwa'un*, however, seems to exceed the limits of the government's envisioned reislamization. Beginning with the early 1990s Arab newspapers have been reporting on the Saudi

[111] Schulze emphasizes Saudi Arabia's accession to hegemony as the champion of Islam, defender of Muslims and promoter of the Islamic cause world-wide in the 1960s and 1970s (Schulze, 2000: 170–174, 187–189).

government's crackdowns on the *Mutawwa'un* due to their excessive harassment of the population (Kechichian, 1993: 45–48). The case of the *Mutawwa'un* is an exemplary one in exposing the tension between the Quranic injunctions found in the verses 3:104 and 16:125 ("Invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good advice"). The "morals police," as the *Mutawwa'un* are often called, are invested with power, which by definition is compulsive and coercive, thus the existing of such "morals police" complies only with one commandment and negates the other.

The effects of censorship are especially felt in education. Since majority of the educational institutions in most Muslim countries are run by the state, control of their curriculum and faculty is an easy task. The authorities censor the curriculum and works of professors, so that they do not include any aspects of criticism of the governmental policies, among them religious.[112] In the Gulf and several other Muslim countries, religious subjects are taught throughout all educational levels. Therefore, the overwhelming majority of young Gulf Arabs are exposed to studying of the state endorsed Islamic principles and the "correct" Islamic way of life (primary and secondary education is free and mandatory in all Gulf states). In other words, the state through censoring the education regulates both the forms and contents of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* in the Saudi Kingdom, and just to a little lesser extent in other Gulf countries. Yet, this raises objections from independently minded Saudi *da'is*. As Teitelbaum has observed,

> to a great extent, its (the Saudi state's – *my note*) confrontation with opposition preachers has been over who determines what the correct form of Islam is, and who has the right to preach Islam in the country. At a June 1999 seminar on *da'wa* in the reign of the founder of the Kingdom, 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, Interior Minister Prince Nayif bin 'Abd al-'Aziz addressed the preachers gathered. He stressed the importance of a unified message coming from preachers, and reminded them that "this is a state for *da'wa* and not a state that has been established merely for an earthly matter." He expressed his hope that the preachers would act as security men to protect Islam, and concluded with an observation that the Internet, while containing much negative matter, could be a useful tool in informing the world about Islam in Saudi Arabia. (Teitelbaum, 2002: 228)

Minister's remark about the use of the Internet for *da'wa* purposes was not a mere wishful thinking, for

> the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Da'wa and Guidance has arrogated to itself the most important domain name in Muslim Saudi Arabia: islam.org.sa. Among the many items to be found at the site was "A Work Plan for Qualifying Islamic Propagators," presented to the 6th Conference of Ministers of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, held in Jakarta in November 1997. The Islamic Studies and Research Center of the Ministry, which could be accessed from the site, proclaimed its mission as "manifesting and defending the

[112] There is an excellent study done by Gregory Starrett, which deals in-depth with religious education in schools in Egypt. See Starrett, 1998.

> correct Islamic beliefs, and clarifying the Islamic point of view on the different contemporary intellectual issues." It further set for itself the goal of "keeping a vigil watch on whatever is published…regarding Islam and Muslims." The Ministry also operates the website of the Cooperative Office of Call and Guidance *(al-Maktab al-Ta'awuni lil-Da'wa wal-Irsha*d) with offices in Jeddah. Its declared aim is to missionize in the name of Islam. The obvious purpose of such websites is to present the Saudi version of Islam to the world. (Teitelbaum, 2002: 228–229)

These last observations and what has been said above clearly indicate that the Saudi state has assumed the leading role in *da'wa* affairs (both of the intra- and extra-*ummaic* forms) among Muslim governments. Yet, its stance is not spared of criticism by religious individuals and organizations both within the Kingdom and without. The biggest criticism it receives (as in fact all other governments pursuing similar policies of reislamization) is that the state-run reislamization and whatever intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities it pursues pertain more to the formal outlook and more often than not fail to reach the depth of individual Weltanschauung, awakening one's Islamicity, thus coming short of serving their purpose. In addition, current Muslim governments, not excluding even the Saudi, are often accused by Muslim activists as non-Islamic, but rather hypocritical if not altogether non-Muslim – *kafir*. Consequently, their efforts are deemed susceptible and therefore not supported by non-governmental Muslim organizations, which opt for pursuing their own reislamization/intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL POLITICAL INTRA-*UMMAIC DA'WA*

None of the Muslim governments succeeded in imposing a unified version of the "correct" Islamic practices on the whole of their populations. There have always been opposition groups even on purely religious grounds. Over the years (in Saudi Arabia this process has been longer and therefore more diverse), in Kostiner's words, "Islamic functions developed in two different forms: a state religion, consisting of a creed controlled and exercised by the state, and 'wild' Islam of opposition, which objected to state interests and resisted state control" (Kostiner, 1997: 75). Of course, such a binary opposition is a gross simplification of the current situation in most Muslim countries, but, in a very general manner, it denotes the trend of branching of religious understanding. Though there hardly can be any talk of "wild" Islam, some of the oppositional religiously inclined groups in the Muslim world as well as outside it indeed advocate a more stringent version of the Islamic Weltanschauung. In the eyes

of these groups, the governments have failed in securing the Islamicity of their populations and their adherence to the "correct and complete" Islamic norms.

al-Qutan and Muhalhal, two contemporary radically inclined proponents of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, suggest the premise on which Muslim oppositional movements operate. They (re)divide the humankind into two parts – the party of God (*hizb Allah*, Arabic حزب الله) and the parties of the Devil (*ahzab al-Shaytan*, Arabic أحزاب الشيطان). (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992) This binary opposition is already found in the Quran: "Those who believe, fight (*yuqatiluna*, يقاتلون) on the path of God, and those who do not believe (*kafaru*, كفروا), fight on the path of idols (*al-taghut*, الطاغوت). So fight the allies (*awliya'*, أولياء) of the Satan, for the cunning of the Satan is weak" (4:76). The radicalism of the perceived opposition serves several purposes and reveals certain patterns of thinking. First of all, it assumes that there may be only one Truth. Secondly, a certain group, namely, the party of God, possesses it. Thirdly, the Truth must fight the wrong and thus be disseminated. Though this binary opposition with its ensuing theoretical consequences and practical implications may as well be applied to the extra-*ummaic da'wa*, it provides the ground for the rise of the contemporary politically charged intra-*ummaic da'wa* of non-governmental agents. Therefore the fundamental feature of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* is a conscious conviction on the side of a group of Muslims of their perceived righteousness *vis-à-vis* other Muslims, which leads to realization of one's mission – the spreading of the perceived Truth by all means. The politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa* implies rivalry and clash. Usually, this clash is a vertical one – between those who possess power, political first of all, but also religious, and those who are or feel being deprived of it. However, the latter may enjoy certain degree of informal authority. Will for power (to maintain or gain it) in most instances may be taken as the driving force behind the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. In this respect, the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa* does not differ much from the earlier appearances of this type of *da'wa*.

On the other hand, the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa* differs from the previous times in other respects. First of all, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities have proliferated to the extent that there abound at the same time various government-led and oppositional, national, regional and international activities, which all in themselves include the principles, features, and methods of *da'wa*. Secondly, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* has transcended the borders of the *Dar al-Islam* and is thriving in the non-Muslim world as much if not more as in the Muslim world. Thirdly, advancement of technology, economic and other globalizing trends sweeping the

world today also make alterations, if not so much in regards to the ultimate aims, than at least in methods used. Finally, though it is very subjective to say, a fair number of nowadays *da'is* can be suspected of being concerned more with the immediate earthly (political) ends than with the heavenly (religious) ones. All these features fluctuate depending on who the actor is – the government or non-governmental (implied, oppositional) groups.

Some of the Muslim oppositional groups have dived into politics and even violence so that there are virtually no traces of what could be termed the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. Though those groups do employ the concept of *da'wa* and frequently argue it to be the grounding idea of their operations, such groups are at the extreme end of the spectrum of activities called *da'wa*: their ideologies and ensuing actions are diametrically opposite to those Muslims who pursue peaceful extra-*ummaic da'wa*. The common feature of such groups is their aggressive and reactionary polemical nature. These are the groups that epitomize the already mentioned binary opposition in their essence: there are only two colors in the world for them – black and white. While they attribute to themselves all what they call "white" they see others and in others only "black." Consequently, the Truth is with the "white," i.e. with a given group, while the rest are ignorant if not altogether mean. Such groups as a rule employ the concept of *takfir*, which as Abdal Hakim Murad explains has come to denote "declaring other Muslims to be beyond the pale, and hence worthy of death" (Murad, A.). Murad asks, why this tendency of making use of *takfir* is growing at present, and immediately answers:

> Religious movements are the expression not just of doctrines and scriptures, but also of the hopes and fears of human collectivities. In times of confidence, theologies tend to be broad and eirenic. But when the community of believers feels itself threatened, exclusivism is the frequent result. And never has the Umma felt more threatened than today. (…) Even in the UK, the takfir phenomenon is growing steadily. There are factions in our inner cities which believe that they are the only ones going to Heaven. 99% of people who call themselves Muslims are, in this distasteful insult to Allah's moral coherence, not Muslims at all. (Murad, A.)

Murad's observation should be well taken, for he grasps the essential incentive behind the contemporary politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa*: the unconditional conviction of one's "rightness" and all others' "wrongness," which is epitomized in the concept of *takfir*. *Takfir* is often teamed up with the concept of *jahiliyya* (ignorance) by most radical Muslim groups to serve as basis for practically all the ensuing actions, which tend to be violent. The Egyptian *Takfir wa al-Hijra* is but one example.

Since the politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa* can ensue from the two categories of social players – the state/government and the non-governmental agents (individual *da'is* and Muslim organizations), as a rule, though not by definition, in opposition to the government – the relation of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* to politics can be studied not only on the level of state sponsored and undertaken activities – official reislamization, but more so on the level of non-governmental Muslim organizations engaged in *da'wa*. On the non-governmental level, oppositional religiously inclined groups make the core of the analysis of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. These groups, usually outlawed by the state, are more explicit in their rhetorics as well as actions and passionately exploit the concept of *da'wa*. They proclaim themselves the champions of the reislamization cause, claiming their sole objective to be revitalization of the Muslim Islamicity. This way, the three concepts - *da'wa*, Islamicity, and reislamization - get intertwined. While the state-run reislamization is most evident in the Arabian Peninsula, the non-governmental intra-*ummaic da'wa* and the attempts at reislamization are not confined to one or several regions – they have spread throughout the whole Muslim world and also into the non-Muslim world, where there are considerable Muslim minorities. Moreover, many of those efforts have been generously supported (directly and through itermediaries) through funds originating in the Arabian Peninsula.

HASAN AL-BANNA AND JAMA'AT AL-IKHWAN AL-MUSLIMIN

Though several major Muslim organizations involved in *da'wa* toward fellow-Muslims were set up on the Subcontinent, not less important ones were founded in the Arab Middle East. The most influential among them is *Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood) founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna (d. 1949), the statement of belief of which is put in the following words: "Islam is creed and state, book and sword, and a way of life."[113] Hasan al-Banna and his *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* with their operations in Egypt and elsewhere could be taken as the departing point for the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities lumped up with politics. Yet, this sort of *da'wa* does not limit itself to *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* and their likes – it goes far beyond, even outside the Muslim world. It is claimed that "al-Ikhwan has branches in over 70 countries all over the world. The movement is flexible enough to allow working under the 'Ikhwan' name,

[113] Homepage of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement at http://www.ummah.org.uk/ikhwan/. Also, http://atheism.about.com/library/islam/blfaq_islam_brotherhood.htm.

under other names, or working according to every country's circumstances."[114] The founder of the organization was a prolific author and preacher. Most of his writing consist of passionate letters addressed to his followers in which he ardently advocates his cause, or as he himself names it, the mission – *da'wa*. Al-Banna was a charismatic leader, who commanded not only formal respect of his followers but more so sincere admiration. To his followers he was a true imam, the supreme leader and guide, and after his assassination by agents of Egyptian security forces he acquired the title of *shahid*, the martyr, e.g. one who died in the cause of God – in jihad.

As it is evident from his letters and other writings some of which have already been referred to in the earlier chapters, al-Banna saw the use of *da'wa* first and foremost in "reconverting" Muslims to the "true" Islam (al-Banna, 1990). Mendel argues that "al-Banna's concept of *da'wa* was, in fact, the first clear-cut formulated answer to the political and ideological liberalism and all-embracing process of westernization culminating in Egypt in the twenties" (Mendel, 1995: 295). In his reasoning, however, al-Banna actually expanded and elaborated upon ideas of the Muslim reformers of a previous generation – Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad 'Abduh, Rashid Rida. Rida, for example, had founded a *da'wa* organization in Egypt in the beginning of the 20th century, considered by some to have been the first of its sort not only in Egypt but also in the whole Muslim world (Nasir, 2000: 497). Rida, moreover, called for institutionalization of *da'wa* to the extent that professional *da'is* were appointed to official posts in the state apparatus to consult policy makers (Rida, 4: 46). 'Abduh, al-Afghani, and Rida were all concerned with the state of the Muslim *Ummah* vis-a-vis the ideals and principles of Islam. They saw a dire need to revive the Islamicity of Muslims, therefore, the aim of these Muslim activists "has not so much been to gain new adherents to the faith from non-Muslim communities...as it has been to revive and reform communities that had abandoned 'true Islam'" (Poston, 1992: 25).

al-Banna can be safely considered the ideological father of the more radically inclined Muslim activists turned inwards to the *Ummah*. He has been extensively referred to and on his ideas they base their elaboration in regards to the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa*. For example, in a lengthy tract, al-Banna's follower Mashhour is preoccupied with instilling values and methods of *da'wa* in the hearts of the young generation of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*. The object of his *da'wa* is exclusively Muslims. Mashhour insists that 'the Muslim community in which we are living, and in

[114] Homepage of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement at http://www.ummah.org.uk/ikhwan/.

which we invite to Allah, to understand Islam, to act according to its tenets and to strive for its cause, are the domain of our *Da'wah.'* (Mashhour, 1999: 62) Politically engaged Muslim propagandists linked to al-Ikhwan or otherwise influenced by its ideology go beyond arguments for the need of *da'wa* – they rather make it a matter of politics. As Mashhour argues, for *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, *da'wa* is in its nature political, because the aim of *da'wa* is to establish "a universal Islamic state, for our Da'wah is universally addressed to all people" (Mashhour, 1999: 48; see also Yasin, 1987). The politicization of *da'wa* is well represented by one of the most outspoken contemporary Muslim activists, Yusuf al-Qaradawi:

> Collective work in the field of dawah is an obligatory duty, because that without which a wajib (obligation) cannot otherwise be completed is in itself a wajib. The fact that non-Muslim ideological forces work collectively in the form of blocs, parties, and associations makes it incumbent upon Muslims to counter these forces by similar techniques. Otherwise, we will continue to lag behind, totally unable to do anything while others achieve progress. For this reason, the gravest sins committed by some of the governments in Muslim countries are the censorship of the freedom to call people to Islam as a din and a system of beliefs and a way of life, and the intimidation of du'ah and those who call for the application of Shariah, the establishment of the Islamic state, the unity of the Ummah, the liberation of Muslim land, and the support of all Islamic causes. This pressure on da'wah and du'ah, and the restriction of all forms of Islamic work, especially the collective one, is one of the main causes that generate extremism. This is especially so since the adherents of secular philosophies and ideologies are allowed to organize themselves in groups and to disseminate their ideas with complete freedom and support and without any interference or restriction. It is illogical to grant complete freedom – in Muslim land – to the advocates of secularism, Marxism, liberalism, and so on, to establish parties, organizations, newspapers, and magazines, and alone censor Islam and its du'ah, who speak for the majority of the people.
>
> Dawah to Islam, as a positive and comprehensive din and a way of life, faces censorship and suppression in many Muslim countries. The only form of Islam allowed is that upheld by the dervishes and the professional traders in religion; the "Islam" of the ages of backwardness and decadence; the "Islam" which only celebrates occasions, supports despotic rulers, and prays for them to have a "long life." (Qaradawi)

In these two passages, al-Qaradawi tells much about what *da'wa* has become to politically active Muslims. First of all, it is stated as a fact that the current Muslim governments tolerate and even uphold the beliefs and practices of Muslims that are in contradiction to the *Shari'a*. *Da'is* are thus to amend these things by an organized and comprehensive action. Secondly, the ultimate goal of *da'is* is the establishment of an Islamic state, something that itself is a political objective, involving political activities. Thirdly, he testifies that the *da'is* are being harassed by the authorities of the very Muslim countries, implying that it is the political authorities themselves who drive the *da'is* underground and even into political opposition. Though al-Qaradawi does not explicitly challenge legitimacy of current ruling elites in Muslim countries, it can be felt from his irritation at the current situation that the legitimacy issue is present in his mind. All these circumstances make *da'is'* work extremely difficult, yet

even more daring. In determination al-Qaradawi represents those Muslim activists who see the intra-*ummaic da'wa* and political activism as just two intertwined tools in the pursuit of their crucial objectives, which center around eventual seizure of power in one or another way.

Other Muslim activists, even those who do not associate with *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, also argue that *da'wa* should be and is politically motivated. For Siddiqui, "the chief instrument of *da'wah* is the Islamic state" and '*da'wah* without the Islamic state is like an invitation without an address....It is the Islamic state that bears the main responsibility for *da'wa*h" (Siddiqui, 111). Al-Tahan, in his turn, states in unequivocal terms: "The ultimate goal of Islamic organizations is to establish the Muslim Government, apply the Islamic *Shar'ah*, and any deviation from this goal is a deviation from Islam itself" (al-Tahan, 1999: 249). A Shi'i Fadlullah also relates *da'wa* to state, because, for him, "Islam came to spread *da'wa* and build a state" (Fadlullah, 1994: 35). Moreover, "the nature of the state in Islam is not alienated from the spirit of *da'wa* and its currents, it is rather harmonious with it." The idea that the spread of Islam into a given non-Muslim territory is complete only when the territory becomes (a part of) an Islamic country relates the missionary (in the broadest sense of the word) activities to establishing a political body based on religion. *Da'wa*, in this case, facilitates political change, a shift from a *jahili* (ignorant) socio-political system to an Islamic one. In this line of reasoning, *da'wa* toward non-Muslims is a political enterprise, or at least it serves political ends. Since ideally in Islam religion and state might be viewed as two ends of the same social body, *da'wa* as a religious activity can be easily equated to political mission. Accepting the premise that Islam is an expansionist and globalist religion, it becomes easier to appreciate *da'wa's* political overtones. Some *da'wa* activists speak of *da'wa* in the context of exclusively political ideologies and agendas and put it in contraposition to such ideologies as Marxism, socialism, nationalism, etc. *Da'wa* is thus seen as a politically mobilizing force, which has been greatly damaged by nationalist and other secular and non-Islamic ideologies, which instead of uniting Muslims for a single cause rather divide them into warring fractions (Nufal, 1977: 6–9).

One of the major elements in the intra-*ummaic da'wa* of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* and their like was formulated based on the concept of *jahiliyya*. The term is met in several verses in the Quran (3:154, 5:50, 33:33, 48:26) and denotes both spiritual and social state of Arabs of the pre-Islamic times: the pagan Arabs are considered to have had no knowledge of the true God, himself the Light, and to have

lived in a total darkness and ignorance of ways to God and salvation. In the Islamic perspective, the Arabs of the *Jahiliyya*, that is, the pagans, were doomed. Muhammad's mission was to deliver them from *jahiliyya* to the state of Islam – belief in and obeying God. Once one had become a Muslim, he or she was no more a *jahili* – an ignorant one. After Muhammad's time, especially after the "*ridda* wars" fought by his immediate successor Abu Bakr against rebellious tribes, it was commonly held that no *jahili*/pagan Arabs survived and the application of the term was transferred to non-Arab pagans outside the Arabian Peninsula.

As has been hinted to above, al-Banna, contrary to this classical notion, considered Egyptian Muslims and by extension the whole Muslim commonwealth to be in a state of *jahiliyya* – the ignorance. He returned the term *jahiliyya* to wider usage and politicized it. He spoke of a kind of neo-*jahiliyya* among Muslims. Followers of al-Banna have since been exploiting this updated concept of *jahiliyya*. The heir to al-Banna's legacy, Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966), in words attributed to him speaks about the *jahiliyya* of his time (the 1950s and 1960s) in no metaphorical terms and rather perceives of *jahiliyya* as an actual reality:

> It is not the function of Islam to compromise with the concepts of Jahiliyyah which are current in the world or to co-exist in the same land together with a jahili system. This was not the case when it first appeared in the world, nor will it be today or in the future. Jahiliyyah, to whatever period it belongs, is Jahiliyyah; that is, deviation from the worship of One Allah and the way of life prescribed by Allah.
>
> Islam cannot accept any mixing with Jahiliyyah. Either Islam will remain, or Jahiliyyah; no half-half situation is possible.
>
> The foremost duty of Islam is to depose Jahiliyyah from the leadership of man, with the intention of raising human beings to that high position which Allah has chosen for him. (Qutb)

Since Qutb in his commentary on the Quran is mostly concerned with the intra-*ummaic* affairs (in fact, he is interested only in his own time, not that of Muhammad), for him the group spoken of in the verse 3:104 is no less than a political movement or party which assumes upon itself the task of purging the Muslim *Ummah* of ignorance (*jahiliyya*), which he perceived to have descended upon Muslims (Qutb, 1967, I: 444–445). *Jahiliyya* for Qutb is a state of affairs and not bound to a particular historical period or place – pre-Islamic Arabia: "*jahiliyya* of the 20th century does not differ in its original constituent elements" (Qutb, 1967, XIII: 2034). According to Qutb, Muslims fell back to the ways of *jahiliyya* and a rescue team in form of a formalized organization is needed to call Muslims back to God. This organization would be in charge of the renewed *da'wa* as well as "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong."

To Fathi Yakan, another of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, the despised *jahiliyya* comprises thought, governing, and morals (Yakan, 1987: 12). For other two, al-Qutan and Muhalhal, *jahiliyya* of today "is directed to the only purpose – that is establishment of the jahiliyya and destruction of Islam" (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 59). According to them, it spread, when "the corrupt parties (understood here as both political and religious factions of the Muslim social body - *my note*) deviated and lead the people astray, and the jahiliyya spread. There is a need for the return of light" (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 22). While the original *Jahiliyya* was the period preceding Islam, which the latter came to wipe out, the new *jahiliyya* is something that itself poses a grief danger to Islam and thus should be resisted at all costs. However, to fight the new *jahiliyya*, new means and methods are needed. These new means are seen in the form of a more organized and co-ordinated action to disseminate the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. *Da'wa* has to be formalized and institutionalized. As has been shown in Chapter 2, jihad (in its military form) is seen by radicals as one of the most efficient forms of *da'wa*, or it even substitutes *da'wa*.

The understanding of *da'wa* among al-Banna's followers has been transformed into a political program, with the ultimate purpose of *da'wa* becoming establishing of an Islamic state. Though the contemporary advocates of the Islamic state do not state so explicitly, in their writings they imply an existing difference between "Muslim" and "Islamic." For them, ideally, the two categories should denote one and the same. However, in reality, as they see it, Muslims have diverted from what is considered by these activists the true Islamic path and have followed wrong paths eventually to lead them to the present condition of *jahiliyya*. Yakan rhetorically asks, "Is the call to Islam a matter of partial mending or is it a movement of demolition and construction: the demolition of Jahiliyya in all its forms and the construction of the Islamic society with all its characteristics?" (Yakan, n.d.: 8). The answer is obvious to him and his comrades. Consequently, in order to salvage the ailing *Ummah*, today's *da'is* are to engage into what is termed comprehensive "Islamic work." This "Islamic work" embraces *inter alia* the intra-*ummaic da'wa* and is aimed at establishing the Islamic state (Yakan, 1987: 16). Moreover, as Yakan insists, the Islamic work is a *fard 'ayn* – obligatory upon every Muslim. Furthermore, he argues that Islam "is a call to rebel against the institutions of Jahili life in all its forms and shapes: against the customs of Jahiliyyah, against the thoughts of Jahiliyyah, and against the regimes and legislations of Jahiliyyah" (Yakan, n.d.: 13), thus virtually making *da'wa* a political agenda. *Da'i's* work is arduous and dangerous,

thus those engaged in *da'wa* are to be prepared for deadly consequences for themselves. As Yakan argues, "but it is only right for the Da'wah to pay the price – and pay it generously with blood and martyrs" (Yakan, n.d.: 44). In this perspective *da'i* and *mujahid* become indistinguishable. Yakan emphasizes the requirement that a true Muslim personality may be molded and maintained only in a pure Islamic environment. Thus, he argues that "the operation of molding the Islamic personality cannot be successful to the desired extent as long as it is not accomplished in an Islamic environment in which there is no scope for the influences of Jahiliyya to have effect" (Yakan, n.d.: 150).

al-Qutan and Muhalhal, on their part, argue for a highly institutionalized form of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*. In their opinion, Muslims should seek at forming a single unified Muslim organization, which would be charged with the task of restoration of the faith (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 22–23). They elaborate upon the stages of building such an organization (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 38). The stages are as follows: the secret (*sirriya*, Arabic سرية), the open (*'alaniya*, Arabic علنية), the separation (*muqata'a*, Arabic مقاطعة), the emigration (*hijra*), the struggling (*jihad*). The process of building up of such an organization reminds of a clandestine para-military organization. In fact, writers identified with the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* indeed called for such type of organization, which after the initial stages of growth and strengthening would embark upon political take-over of the power. Then, they should proceed according to the provided lines: "1. to shape the human personality into an Islamic one; 2. to establish an Islamic state in the whole country; 3. to unite the whole Islamic Umma; 4. to revive the office of the caliph; 5. to establish the universal Islamic state" (al-Qutan & Muhalhal, 1992: 90).

Mustafa Mashhour, in his manual on 'individual *da'wa*' provides a rather detailed periodization, encompassing seven stages of *da'wa*. It goes from establishing personal relationship with individual, who is considered a prospective recruit, and proceeds with attempting "to revive the sedated Iman" in him through indirect preaching (lectures, seminars), with the aim of "explaining the complete meaning of Ibadah." This is followed by trying to convince the recipient that "our Deen (religion of Islam – *my note*) is not restricted to individual commitment to Allah....Instead, our Islam is a collective way of life that regulates all aspects of life from jurisprudence to politics and jihad....We are obliged to fulfill the orders of Allah to establish a society based on Islamic political, economic, social, and legislative principals. We must understand that our duty to this Deen is to establish it on earth and to convey it to all

of humanity." Once the addressee is convinced of these ultimate aims, he is to be informed "that the current state of the Muslim Ummah compels us to work earnestly to reestablish the Islamic Khilapha after the enemies of Allah have plotted to abolish it....Also, we must explain that establishing the Khilapha is not the duty of the rulers or Muslim scholars alone, but rather it is the duty of every Muslim man and woman in day and age. Furthermore, all the Muslims are sinful if they do not work to establish the Islamic state." The indoctrination proceeds further when the recruit is explained that "the duty of establishing the Khilapha or an Islamic state can not be fulfilled by one individual. Rather, it must be fulfilled by a Jamaa (an organized group of Muslims working collectively) that coordinates the efforts of individuals to achieve the huge duty." Finally, the individual sought after is to be drawn to the activities of an actual Muslim organization (Mashhour).

The logic of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* and the progression of its building up in Mashhour's "manual" is given most comprehensively. First of all, as it is stated, religion as belief is inseparable from politics. Actually, one inevitably follows another – once a Muslim has reconfirmed his/her Islamicity (individual religiosity), he/she is to proceed to reislamization (social religiousness) of the society. Thus, the *da'i's* role is a two-fold – first to stress the virtues of faith and then its socio-political implications and obligations. The algorithm of individual's accession to "higher" levels of Islamicity is very simple and goes from individual spiritual efforts (*al-jihad al-akbar*, one may say) to one's physical efforts, to participation in organized activities (*al-jihad al-asghar* being one of the foremost priorities). Only socially and politically engaged person can be regarded as a true Muslim, for without action (understood here as undertakings in order to establish an Islamic state) there is no Islam. Mere faith is not sufficient. Mashhour is undoubtedly a representative of the offensive-activist wing of Muslim religious movements, to whom putting up with an un-Islamic government is betrayal of Islam. Muslim's objectives in this world, thus, are establishing and safeguarding an Islamic state of affairs. And this can be achieved only in and through an organized manner. All in all, Mashhour seeks to persuade his reader to acknowledge that the organized intra-ummaic *da'wa* is the proper *da'wa* for our times. He further proceeds to induce his audience that the most suiting organization is the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*:

> we must understand that the Jamaa most worthy of working with is the one that takes Islam in its entirety as an Aqeedah, an Ibadah, manners, a Shareeah, a rule of government, jihad, and every other aspect of life....The Jamaa must have the horizontal base across the world to facilitate the establishment of the wide base pivotal to establishing an international Islamic

> state and not an Islamic state, which is limited to a country or a region. Not only that, but the more experience the Jamaa has, the greater the trust in the hearts of workers that the goals of Islam will be fulfilled in the most time and energy efficient manner possible. Moreover, the experience of the Jamaa will keep it away from extremism, disunity, and negligence and will keep it on the path of the Prophet Salla Allahu Alyhi Wasalam and our righteous predecessors.
>
> The Jamaa must be united and organized and must work on a well-known plan away from spontaneity and haphazardness. We must be aware of the danger of division and the wasting of efforts caused by splitting ourselves into small and disunited groups. Essentially, everyone who wants to work for Islam must add his voice and effort to the Jamaa that fulfills the requirements mentioned above. Also, one should not raise the flag of a new Jamaa and should not follow the call of an inexperienced Jamaa, because doing so will disperse the efforts of Muslims. Furthermore, one should not forsake the large experienced Jamaa unless he finds that Fisq and misguidance are the norm in it.
>
> After this detailed explanation, every sincere and truthful Muslim will find that the qualities of the Jamaa are present in the Jamaa of Ikwan Al-Muslimeen (the Muslim Brotherhood). (Mashhour)

Mashhour praises the virtues of the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* in a sincere hope that it will attract Muslims (and especially youth) to this sort of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, the goal of which is not less than establishing of an international (global) Islamic state. Mashhour idealizes *al-Ikhwan*, though in reality the organization is far from ideal. It has suffered several split ups, has lacked any able leadership for prolonged periods, all of which have hindered any comprehensive and cohesive action on the side of the organization.

Yet, the activities of *al-Ikhwan* have been noted and appraised even by converts to Islam. One of them, Abdal Hakim Murad, after reviewing, in his opinion, negative trends in the contemporary intra-*ummaic da'wa*, states that "an alternative da'wa strategy already exists in a sense. In many of these countries, particularly in Egypt, the mainstream Ikhwan Muslimin operate a large-scale welfare system, which serves to remind the masses of the superior ethical status of indigenous Islamic values. That model deserves to be expanded" (Murad, A.). It is al-Banna's writings, more than actual actions of the *al-Ikhwan* that have been welcome by Muslims around the world. Al-Banna is read and appreciated not only by his followers but also by Muslims with no radical inclinations whatsoever, yet full of sincere wish to promote revitalization of the Islamicity of the Muslim *Ummah*.

al-Ikhwan have been most outspoken proponents of the politicized type of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* in word and deed, and not only in the Arab or Muslim world, but also in Europe and North America. Another Muslim organization, *Jama'at-i-Islami*[115],

[115] *Jama'at Islami* can actually be studied as two distinct organizations – the Pakistani based *Jama'at Islami* and *Jama'at Islami Hind*. The essential difference is the fact that while the Pakistani branch operates as a political party in an overwhelmingly Muslim country, the Indian branch is a non-governmental religious organization in a outwardly secular state, yet culturally, religiously and politically dominated by non-Muslims, chiefly Hindus. Consequently, the Pakistani branch is mostly

has been far less visible in its intra-*ummaic da'wa* activities. Save the writings of its founder, Abu 'Ala Mawdudi, little literature coming from under the pens of the members of the *Jama'at-i-Islami* has been disseminated any wider than the Indian subcontinent. Like its sister organization in Egypt, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, this one is also very much orientated toward "re-converting" fellow Muslims to "the true path to God," i.e. pursuing intra-*ummaic da'wa*. Though *Jama'at* might not be using the term *da'wa* itself frequently, its activities can certainly be categorized as such. The founder and long-time head of the organization, Abu al-'Ala Mawdudi in his writings discusses the state of the Muslim Umma from various aspects; however, in all of them he is concerned about the Islamicity of Muslims and sees an urgent need for revitalization of the capacities of the *Umma* as a religious commonwealth of Muslims. What Mawdudi aimed at was no less than a total reislamization of Muslims of the contemporary time. Mawdudi's project was essentially very similar to the one espoused by al-Banna, Qutb and *al-Ikhwan*. In fact, Qutb and later Ikhwan writers immensely benefited from Mawdudi's writings, who often refer to him.

CONCLUSION

As has been shown in the previous chapter, the intra-*ummaic da'wa* has been part of the evolution of Muslim societies and especially of the ideologies of either ruling elites or oppositionist groups. This way, it has been closely connected to politics. In fact, *da'wa* and politics seem to have been intertwined since as early as the 'Abbasid revolt against the Ummayads in the mid-8th century. In contemporary times, it was once again revived in the 18th century by the Wahhabis in the Arabian Peninsula and followed by their ideological brethren elsewhere in the Muslim world.

However, the 20th century constellation of socio-political processes in the Muslim world brought about first of all the theoretical considerations on the need for reislamization, and soon practical attempts at reislamization through either state-run projects or in activities of the religiously engaged Muslim activist groups, quite often in opposition to current governments.

The state-run reislamization reveals itself through legal measures the governments have been implementing since the 1970s. Penal codes in several Muslim countries are being brought into closer conformity with the classical Muslim

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taken by promoting reislamization on a state level, while the Indian branch has fully immersed itself into non-political *da'wa*, both intra- and extra-*ummaic*.

jurisprudence, censorship tightened. Religious education espouse the governmental policies of reislamization.

Yet, all these measures are not always appreciated by radically inclined Muslim activist groups and individuals, who accuse the governments of their respective countries of faking the reislamization. Instead, these groups either call onto governments to start implementing 'true' reislamization, or advocate their own version of islamization, from bottom up, through intra-*ummaic da'wa*. However, since those activist groups operate more as political movements, their *da'wa* is inevitably incorporated into their political ideologies and serves their political more than religious ends.

The best-known Muslim organization immersed in this kind of politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa* is *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*. By now, for almost eighty years, its members reiterate and work upon the pattern set by its founder, Hasan al-Banna, to whom, the ultimate mission (*da'wa*) of the organization was establishing of a universal Islamic state. The movement has had numerous ideologues, who have elaborated upon the essence of *da'wa*. Their basic argument winds down to the understanding that *da'wa* without political underpinning is incomplete and doomed to fail. Moreover, these Muslim activists argue for a highly institutionalized form of *da'wa*, for only through well structured organization it is possible to achieve the sought goal – establish an Islamic state.

So far, *al-Ikhwan* have not succeeded in gaining an upper hand in the countries they operate. Their sister movements in other regions of the Muslim world have not been successful either. Of course, one may like to point to the Taliban, which pursued some sort of reislamization in Afghanistan, but their experiment was too short-lived. Moreover, coercive policies of the Taliban as they were hardly fall within the scope of *da'wa* and only to a little degree within the 'enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong'.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The concept of *da'wa* in the sense of religious invitation is as old as Islam: it was born with the Quran. However, the Holy Book of Muslims is not precise on the meanings the word is to carry within the Islamic paradigm. Muhammad is not reported to have elaborated upon it either – Hadith Collections do not provide any definition for *da'wa*. Yet, *da'wa* is there, both in word and spirit. In the founding texts of Islam there abound sayings, where God urges Muhammad to invite people to Him. In fact, the whole mission of Muhammad was nothing else but *da'wa* – inviting people to submit to the only God (Allah). Muhammad did this as a practitioner, not a theoretician. Moreover, it was his incumbent duty to call people to God – after all, he was His messenger and prophet. In the eyes of Muslims, Muhammad was a missionary *par excellence*. After Muhammad's death, the legacy of his mission remained with his followers, Muslims, who, in due time, not only picked it up but also developed it into a multifaceted Muslim missionary tradition.

However, from the available historical evidence, it appears that Muslims did not immediately embark upon *da'wa* activities – during and after the rapid conquests of the Byzantinian and Persian lands, they little if at all ventured to preach to local non-Muslims about the virtues of Islam. *Da'wa* in the sense of inviting non-Muslims to embrace Islam, the very essence of Muhammad's mission, was not yet on conquering Muslims' agenda. The first waves of conversions to Islam from among the indigenous populations of the conquered lands took place with virtually no Muslim missionary activities in the background.

But the concept of *da'wa* was not lost even on the early Muslims. They were very much aware of it and indeed capitalized on its exploitation. Yet, this first was done on the intra-community level, among the Muslims themselves. The term *da'wa* came into wider usage almost a hundred years after Muhammad's death, in the wake of the 'Abbasid propaganda against the then ruling Ummayad clan in the 720s. Though the 'Abbasids claimed to be fighting for a true Islamic regime, they did not espouse any distinct theology of their own. Accordingly, their *da'wa* was hardly a religious pursuit. Moreover, it ceased as soon as the 'Abbasids were in power – the

fact that attests to its political nature. The ‘Abbasid *da‘wa* exhibited certain degree of institutionalization, which is believed by some scholars to have been emulated and improved by other Muslim movements, most notably the Isma‘ilis. Though ‘Abbasids were first to employ the term *da‘wa*, their activities strictly speaking do not fall within the missionary history of Muslims.

Da‘wa as a truly missionary activity, albeit still within the Muslim *Umma*, appeared in the form of the Isma‘ili *da‘wa* of the 9th through 13th centuries. *Isma‘ilis*, in many ways, can be seen as the pioneers of the organized Muslim missionary activities: their highly institutionalized and sophisticated *da‘wa* structure has hardly been repeated until today. Moreover, for the Isma‘ilis, *da‘wa* was a state priority. The Isma‘ili *da‘wa* encompassed extra- and intra-*ummaic* forms and blended both theology and politics. This was easy for the Isma‘ilis, for being Shi‘is they regarded their political leader, caliph, also as spiritual leader, imam. The Isma‘ili *da‘wa*, however, had its peculiarities – its higher ranks were closed and it preached the hidden truths, the *batin*, unattainable to uninitiated.

Through incorporation of *da‘wa* into the notion of jihad (even the non-violent forms of it), Muslim theoreticians have paved the way for politicization of *da‘wa*. Since for some of them *da‘wa* is jihad and jihad occasionally leads to force, *da‘wa* very much like jihad has become associated with forceful actions. Muslim activists have to grapple with the tension, which stems from the Quranic injunction forbidding compulsion in religion and their inclination to sanction the use of force in *da‘wa*. On this, Muslims have split into two broad categories – the pacifists (those who negate presence of force in *da‘wa*) and the offensive activists (those who allow the use of force in *da‘wa*).

The offensive activist Muslim movements (like Wahhabis and the contemporary ones, like *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, *Jama‘at Islami*) have seen *da‘wa* as an intrinsic part of the political game. In fact, for some, namely *al-Ikhwan*, *da‘wa* has become politics itself (frequently identified as jihad) and has little if at all to do with the missionary activity. Al-Banna, the founder of *al-Ikhwan*, when speaking of the mission (called by him invariably *da‘wa*) of *al-Ikhwan* actually means political goals. The God and theological concepts and issues in the ideology of *al-Ikhwan* serve exclusively political ends, the ultimate of which is seizure of power (formally, in the name of establishing a truly Islamic state). Al-*Ikhwan* and their likes pay only a lip service to the extra-*ummaic da‘wa*, which they see as a remote step in their vision of isamization of the whole world. Other, less known Muslim organizations and Muslim

activists, especially those influenced by the writings of al-Banna and other *al-Ikhwan* ideologues, follow the suit. Apparently, the contemporary movements with inclination to the politicized intra-*ummaic da'wa* tend to be preoccupied exclusively with fellow Muslims, whom they deem to have gone astray and living in ignorance, *jahiliyya*, and do not see non-Muslims as the object of their mission.

Contemporary politicized *da'wa* of non-governmental movements is only one side of the phenomenon called reislamization. The other is the policies of governments aimed at bringing (back) about a more comprehensive role of religion into the socio-cultural arena in their respective countries. Governments of several Muslim states have been pursuing these policies (especially on the legal level, but also on cultural) for some three decades by now (since the 1970s). The measures taken by governments, though not called so, to a certain extent fall within the sphere of the intra-*ummaic da'wa*.

The focal point of this study was the inter-relatedness of *da'wa* and politics on both theoretical and practical levels. As has been argued in the opening chapter, the Quran nowhere directly implies *da'wa* to be a political activity. On the other hand, Muslims made it a part of their political theory (through relating *da'wa* to jihad) and life (using the concept of *da'wa* in their political agendas). Taken in general, the intertwining of *da'wa* and politics, then, has been a feature throughout the Muslim history, though practical implications of this have been different in different ages. In this perspective, *da'wa* deserves the attention of both scholars of religion and political scientists, for it does not fully fit within one or another.

On the other hand, not all contemporary Muslim movements busy in the intra-*ummaic da'wa* should be studied in the view of their political engagement. *Ahmadiya* Movement, *Tablighi Jama'at* are the examples of apolitical Muslim missionary movements pursuing *da'wa* within the Muslim commonwealth. There is an observable tendency that precisely apolitical Muslim movements as a rule embark on both forms of *da'wa*, the intra- and extra-*ummaic*: these movements seek followers from among the fellow believers but also do not forsake efforts at converting non-Muslims to Islam.

Non-political Muslim movements engaged in both types of *da'wa* are making their way into traditionally non-Muslim lands, where they have best opportunities for their activities: in Europe and North America they can operate legally; there are increasing numbers of Muslims to pursue missionary activities among and there is abundance of non-Muslims to proselytize to.

Muslim missionary activities turned at non-Muslims (something that the Quran arguably implies in the first place), contrary to the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, saw a rather late institutionalization. Though Muslims must have been inviting non-Muslims to embrace Islam throughout the ages, initially this appears to have been done on individual and small group scale (most prominent among *da'is* have been Sufis) with only occasional help from official authorities. Institutionalization of extra-*ummaic da'wa* is a recent phenomenon. One may argue that it is a byproduct of the re-emergent intra-*ummaic da'wa*, which Muslims first revived in the 19th century in the wake of and as a reaction to Christian and Hindu (on the Indian Subcontinent) missionary activities. Indeed, *Ahmadiya* Movement and *Tabglighi Jama'at*, two most successful non-governmental Muslim missionary movements, first appeared as endeavors to keep the tide of non-Muslim missionary activities through reviving Islamicity of local Muslims and only in the course of time they expanded their activities to include non-Muslims as targets of their operations.

Contemporary extra-*ummaic da'wa* is also of two types, non-governmental and state-sponsored. The state-sponsored *da'wa* manifests itself in the form and through activities of international organizations, like *Muslim World League*, *World Islamic Call Society*, *Organization of Islamic Conference*, *World Association of Muslim Youth*. These organizations pursue extra-*ummaic da'wa* mainly through financing educational and publishing activities of affiliated institutions. As a rule, such organizations represent the version of Islam of the dominant/founding state of the organization. Thus, the WICS espouses a Libyan version, while MWL and WAMY the Saudi version.

Non-governmental extra-*ummaic da'wa*, apart from transnational organizations like *Ahmadiya* Movement, *Tablighi Jama'at*, is also pursued albeit on a geographically limited level by numerous organizations around the non-Muslim world, chiefly in the West. The MSA/ISNA in North America and the *Islamic Foundation* of Leicester, UK, are but two, best known, representatives of indigenously founded extra-*ummaic da'wa*. These organizations avoid direct involvement in political affairs and rather operate on societal level. Their relative success attests to the fact that *da'wa* has indeed come to West, to paraphrase Poston. Other, smaller organizations operate virtually in every European (and other non-Muslim) country. Efforts of *da'is* have brought to the fold of Islam tens of thousands of Europeans. Thus, today, *da'wa* has become a truly universal endeavor.

The two forms of *da'wa*, intra- and extra-*ummaic*, have been present throughout the Muslim history with one or another featuring more prominently in a given period. Both forms in themselves have acquired different features adding to the polyphony of types of *da'wa*, ranging from state-run intra-*ummaic* to non-governmental politicized intra-*ummaic* to non-governmental non-political intra-*ummaic* to non-governmental extra-*ummaic* to state-sponsored extra-*ummaic*. These, of course, are ideal types and could serve only as blueprints for the study of *da'wa* evolution. Still, even this crude typologization of *da'wa* attests to its multiplicity and complexity.

Da'wa today is growing more assertive – the proliferation of organizations pursuing it, spread of published and online material on need for and doing *da'wa*, even formalization of *da'wa* education, all indicate the ever-expanding scope of Muslim missionary activities. These activities so far are poorly coordinated, though even on this level improvements in the last decade are observable. In any case, it is plausible to expect that the works of *da'is* are to further expand (especially in the extra-*ummaic* form of *da'wa*, but very likely also in its intra-*ummaic* form) and will attract more attention from the side of scholars.

The advance of *da'wa* will moreover have practical implications to Christians – they will have to renew and redouble their efforts in the inter-faith dialogue, something that though started several decades ago has been in a lull for quite some time by now. Christian-Muslim dialogue will likely be one of the hotter social and even political issues of decades to come. Acquaintance with and knowledge of the vast tradition of the Islamic *da'wa* then could be of much help to non-Muslims aspiring to engage in any fruitful discourse with Muslims. Hopefully, this study will also serve this purpose.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: PERIODIZATION OF *DA'WA* DEVELOPMENT

Period and the main features	**Extra-*ummaic*: toward non-Muslims**	**Intra-*ummaic*: within the Umma**
Da'wa under Muhammed (610–632)		
632 – end of the 17th century, mainstream *da'wa* toward non-Muslims with the occasional denominational intra-ummaic *da'wa*	**Phase 1**. Spread of the rule of Islam into the Byzantine, North African and Sassanid lands and beyond (632 – 900s). No organized *da'wa* activities **Phase 2**. Sufi, trader, and saint *da'wa* in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, Far East, Eastern Europe (circa 10th – 17th centuries)	**Case 1**. The 'Abbasid *da'wa*. The first recorded instance of the intra-*ummaic* (political) *da'wa* (720s – 750) **Case 2**. The Isma'ili Fatimid *da'wa*. A well-elaborated and sophisticated form of the intra-*ummaic* (political as well as religious) *da'wa* (the 9th century – the middle of the 13th century)
Middle of 18th – beginning of 20th century, Islamic awakening, almost exclusively the intra-*ummaic da'wa*, reaction against *'ulama* (professional) *da'wa*, politicization of non-denominational *da'wa*	Most *da'wa* activities toward non-Muslims concentrated on the Indian Subcontinent and Africa	**Phase 1**. Rise of Islamic revivalism, both religious and political (the middle of the 18th – 19th centuries) **Phase 2**. Consolidation of *da'wa* activities within the Muslim world; appearance of political *da'wa* organizations (late 19th century – first half of 20th century)
20th century, *da'wa* "goes West"; multiple *da'wa* organizations in North America and Europe; institutionalization of *da'wa*; intensification of political intra-*ummaic da'wa*. State sponsorship of *da'wa* activities. Peak time of *da'wa* within and outside Muslim world	**Phase 1**. Appearance of *da'wa* in Europe and North America (first half of the 20th century) **Phase 2**. Consolidation and institutionalization of *da'wa* in Europe and North America (from 1960s onwards) **Subphase 1**. Beginning of virtual *da'wa* (since 1990s) **Subphase 2**. Formalization of *da'wa* education (since the mid-1980s)	Proliferation of the intra-*ummaic da'wa* organizations. Founding of several of the pan-Islamic *da'wa* organizations (1960s – 1980s) **Subphase 1**. Beginning of virtual *da'wa* (since 1990s) **Subphase 2**. Formalization of *da'wa* education (since mid-1980s)

APPENDIX II: MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN *DA'WA*

Title of organization	Political	Intra-*ummaic*	Extra-*ummaic*	Muslim world	Non-Muslim world
al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun	**X**	**X**		**X**	
Jama'at Islami (Pakistan)	**X**	**X**		**X**	
Ahmadiya Movement		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Tablighi Jama'at		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Rabita al-'Alami al-Islami	**X**		**X**		**X**
Jam'iya al-Da'wa al-Islamiya al-'Alamiya	**X**		**X**		**X**
Islamic Foundation, Leicester		**X**	**X**		**X**
Muslim Students' Association/ Islamic Society of North America		**X**	**X**		**X**
World Assembly of Muslim Youth		**X**	**X**		**X**

APPENDIX III: SOME OF THE MAJOR *DA'WA* SITES ON THE INTERNET (last accessed on September 15, 2004)

http://bismikaallahuma.org/

http://islamicsociety.ca/

http://saif_w.tripod.com/explore/dawah.htm

http://www.ahl-ul-bayt.org/ (shut down)

http://www.al-basheer.com/cgi-bin/category.cgi?category=37

http://www.al-islam.com/

http://www.alharamain.org/ (shut down)

http://www.angelfire.com/ (shut down)

http://www.beconvinced.com

http://www.dawanet.com/

http://www.discover-islam-online.com/dawah.htm

http://www.islaam.com/dawah/ (shut down)

http://www.islam.org.au/

http://www.islamfortoday.com/galvan02.htm

http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk

http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/

http://www.masyouthboston.org/

http://www.netmuslims.com/resources/dawah-intro.html

http://www.qss.org/Library/dawah.htmlhttp://www.safaar.com

http://www.softechww.com/iiit/Overview.asp

http://www.sunnah.org/

http://www.themodernreligion.com/dawah_main.htm

http://www.troid.org

http://www.ummah.org.uk/

http://www.witness-pioneer.org/ (shut down)

http://www.youngmuslims.ca/online_library/books/dawah_among_non_muslims_in_the_west/

http://www.invitationtoislam.com/index.html

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