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Nabeel Qureshi, *Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward*¹

The reviewed book is dedicated to Islam and not directly to security and the terrorism phenomenon. It was published two years ago but it is worth describing because of two reasons. First, it has been written by an ex-Muslim who had abandoned Islam and converted to Christianity. Second, he sets some views on Islam as the religion of tolerance and peace straight and views on terrorism as the phenomenon inconsistent with Islam. The views are propagated by most Muslims, numerous non-Muslims, some politicians, supporters of migrations to Europe. It is not the first work of this kind. A book by a Swiss journalist, Sylvain Besson, *The Conquest of the west: The Secret Project of the Islamists*² should be mentioned here as an example. It is based mostly on court records, analyses and special services materials declassified after the 9/11 attacks. Four years later, Thilo Sarrazin, former senator and a Bundesbank executive board member published a book *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen*.³ Although he cited publicly known facts on the lack of migrant integration with the receiving country society, German politicians and media attacked him acknowledging his arguments as heresy. Sarrazin was pressured to resign from the post in Bundesbank in a scandal. Although he was a left-wing supporter, not only Angela Merkel's CDU dissented from him but also his own SPD party did. Some Muslim organizations in Germany sued him. Accusations of being anti-Semitic (although unfounded) caused the most damage to him. If Qureshi was a national of western Europe, not the US, he would probably be ostracized as well. Despite the fact that German politicians did everything they could to hush up the debate on immigration and Islam, Sarrazin's book was a bestseller with 2 million items sold. Luckily, another French writer, Michel Houellebecq did not meet such attacks for his novel *Soumission*⁴, which describes a future situation in France (2022) when a Muslim party becomes probably a ruling party in the country. The novel was published on the date of the Charlie Hebdo shooting, i.e. on 7 January 2015. Some Polish writers like Bogdan Dobosz⁵, Paweł Lisicki⁶ and Marek Orzechowski⁷ take up this topic as well. The study of a priest, Krzysztof Kościelniak⁸ and analysis of Islam and its legal system by Mirosław Sadowski⁹ are the closest works to Qureshi's book.

¹ N. Qureshi, *W odpowiedzi na dżihad. Lepsza droga ku przyszłości*, Ustroń 2016, p. 211.

² S. Besson, *Islamizacja Zachodu? Historia pewnego spisku*, Warszawa 2006.

³ T. Sarrazin *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen*, Munich 2010.

⁴ M. Houellebecq, *Uległość*, Warszawa 2015.

⁵ B. Dobosz, *Emiraty francuskie*, Warszawa 2016.

⁶ P. Lisicki, *Dżihad i samozagłada Zachodu*, Lublin 2015.

⁷ M. Orzechowski, *Mój sąsiad islamista. Kalifat u drzwi Europy*, Warszawa 2015 and *Mój sąsiad islamista*. Tunis-Paryż-Bruksela. Second updated edition, Warszawa 2016.

⁸ K. Kościelniak, *Dżihad, święta wojna w islamie*, Kraków 2001.

⁹ M. Sadowski, *Islam. Religia i prawo*, Warszawa 2017.

Nabeel Qureshi studies Islam in depth and clarifies the issues of jihad, Islamic terrorism and the ISIS/IS origins. Paris attacks of 13 November 2015, in which 137 people were shot dead and over 300 were wounded, and San Bernardino (California) shooting of 2 December 2015, in which a Muslim married couple Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik killed 14 people and wounded 21 others, and eventually got away from the spot, inspired the American author to write *Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward*. They were killed in a police shootout. Qureshi is also the author of a *New York Times* bestseller, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*, in which his conversion to Christianity at the age of 22 was chronicled. Nabeel Qureshi was the Ahmadiyya believer, an Islamic religious movement accused of heresy because of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who claimed to have been divinely appointed as the Prophet. Because Muhammad is viewed as the final prophet of God in Islam and is called the Seal of the Prophets (Khatam an-Nabiyyin), most Muslims consider Ahmadi Muslims as heretics.¹⁰

Nabeel Qureshi has divided his work into three chapters: the origin of jihad, jihad today and jihad in the Judeo-Christian context, which contain 18 questions on jihad about things the author is mostly asked about and his comprehensive answers. They show the origin of the phenomenon and present its modern face. Each answer is followed by a short summary. Qureshi does not imply that his interpretation of Islam is the only right. He wants to disclose violence which is at the root of Islam, and that the Quran and the Sunnah are its foundations. The present wave of violence is a result of Salafi movement come back. As long as Islam will be worshipped this way, i.e. calling Muslims for coming back to their roots, it will be followed by violence. Undoubtedly, there are other factors that push Muslims toward radical Islam, no matter if they are of personal (seeking their own identity) or political nature (response to governmental oppression). Nevertheless, no matter what additional factors we are dealing with, the foundation and the history of Islam not only allow to use violence for Muslim dominance, they order it indeed. In the introduction he highlighted being a Christian who abandoned Islam after deeply studying both religions. He is trying to be objective in his message of jihad. He is also trying not to introduce clear Christian opinions although such themes appeared in question number 18 and in the conclusions. The author states in the end of the introduction that the Christian teaching of love directed to enemies, even in the face of death, can be the most powerful response to jihad we poses at the moment. It allows to counteract jihad and to treat Muslims with more dignity as people made in God's image (Islam believers reject this view).

¹⁰ The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was founded in 1889. Its members believe that Jesus was not crucified but fled to India, where he died in the town of Srinagara (Kashmir region) at the age of 120. The Ahmadiyya combines the features of the fundamental and conservative Islam with modernism. Its goal is to spread restored values of the early Islam by peaceful methods and means, which are addressed to Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hinduism believers. It is the so called „sixth pillar” of Islam. Although the Ahmadiyya followers deviate from the main Sunni tradition due to a specific status of the movement founder, they fulfill major Islam orders.

It is impossible to comment here on answers to each and every question asked by the author in the following chapters. There are six questions in each chapter. Allow me to list all the questions and comment on the most important issues that include selected Quranic verses and ahadith¹¹ to support the authors' arguments. I would also like to point out a mistake either by the author, or the translator, or the editor in the identical content of questions number 17 and 18: *How Does Jihad Compare with the Crusades?* The correction of the mistake was done in the contents by giving information: question number 17, and question number 18 was constructed as above. Accordingly the table of contents:

Chapter I:

1. What is Islam?
2. Is Islam a "Religion of Peace"?
3. What is Jihad?
4. Is Jihad in the Quran and the Life of Muhammad?
5. What is Sharia?
6. Was Islam Spread by the Sword?

Chapter II:

1. What Is Radical Islam?
2. Does Islam Need a Reformation?
3. Who Are Al-Qaida, ISIS, and Boko Haram?
4. Who Are the True Muslims – Violent or Peaceful Muslims?
5. Why Are Muslims Being Radicalized?
6. Are Muslims Trying to Take Over the West with Sharia?

Chapter III:

1. Do Muslims and Christians Worship the Same God?
2. Why Do Some Christians Call God "Allah"?
3. How Does Jihad Compare with Old Testament Warfare?
4. What Does Jesus Teach about Violence?
5. How Does Jihad Compare with the Crusades?
6. What Does Jesus Have to Do with Jihad?

While describing the concept of jihad, Qureshi distinguishes between the *greater* jihad (jihad akbar) and the *lesser* jihad (jihad asghar). Unlike authors who try to prove that the *greater* jihad means struggle against one's evil inclinations, greed or egoism and deepening of one's faith in the path of God, and the second one was defined as warfare, Qureshi reverses the sequence. He claims that the main meaning of the word "jihad" has always meant physical struggle. Presenting jihad mainly in its spiritual aspect is

¹¹ The Ahadith mean the record of the words, actions, and the silent approval of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. They are classified into categories such as "authentic", i.e. fully reliable and authoritative (sahih), "good", i.e. for which there are some doubts (hasana), "weak", i.e. the authenticity of which is often questioned (da'if), and "false" (mawdu). the authority of ahadith as a source for religious law (Sharia) and moral guidance within Islam ranks second only to that of the Quran. They are often published in a multi volume works entitled *Kitab as-sitta* („Hexateuch”).

inconsistent with the Quran, the ahadith, the history of Islam and the classical Islamic hermeneutics. What is more, jihad as a military struggle was so much significant for the foundations of Islam that it sometimes was referred to as the sixth pillar of Islam (next to the Shahada – declaration of faith, the Salah – prayer, the Sawm – fasting during the month of Ramadan, the Zakāt – charity, and the Hajj – a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca). The propensity for violence and armed struggle among early Muslim societies escalated since the Hijra, i.e. Muhammad’s emigration to the city of Medina in 622. During the Muhammad’s life there were 38 military expeditions (according to some other sources 60), and the Prophet was supposed to be involved in 25 of them. They were the so called blessed attacks (maghazi al-mabruka) and raids (razzia). Their first aim was to get spoils and women, and then to control over the conquered territory. After the Prophet Muhammad’s death in 632, the military conquest of the Middle East and the North Africa became more dynamic.

This growing need for a military action by the first Muslims has its reflection in the Quran. There are numerous verses calling for violence, which had been created between 622 and 632, when the Prophet lived in Medina. Nabeel Qureshi focused on the ninth surah of the Quran, Al Tawbah, which, according to him, is chronologically the last main chapter of the Holy Book of Islam. The author translates its title as *the Ultimatum*, while Polish edition of the Quran by Józef Bielawski translates it as *the Repentance*.¹² It is the same name in the well known English translation (*Repentance*) and other translations into English.¹³ Bilingual Arab-Polish edition by the Muslim Society Ahmadiyya does not contain any translation of the titles of the Quran’s chapters into Polish.¹⁴ The word “at Tawba” can also be translated as “expiation”. Anyhow this chapter seems to refer to violence the most. Because of the authoritative regulations and uncompromising nature its content is vied as the ultimate commandment of the Allah his envoy should obey. At the same time, it shall repeal earlier peaceful passages of the Quran of the Muhammad’s Mecca period, when a small group of Islam followers living in an unwilling environment had to respect what the hostile majority had to say. After Muhammad had entered Mecca in 630, all previous agreements with polytheists were canceled and an ultimatum was issued, either they would convert to Islam, or they would be killed. The ninth surah orders dropping all agreements with polytheists and subordinating Jews and Christians. According to this surah Muslims should fight, if not their faith is questioned and they are called hypocrites (*munafiqun*

¹² The ninth surah is rarely called *Al-Bara’a* (“The Repudiation”). But this name appears in the ahadith. In his commentary to the Polish edition of the Quran, Józef Bielawski writes that the name of the ninth surah (“Repentance”) came from the word „tawbah”. Apart from this commonly accepted title another one is also accepted, the title coming from the first word of the first verse, i.e. „al-bara’a”. The surah Repentance is one of the last ones and the majority of its content concerns the big war expedition of the Prophet to the north, stopped by Tabuk, the place the battle with Byzantine troops was taken. See. J. Bielawski, *Koran*, Warszawa 1986, pp. 875–876.

¹³ Bilingual Arab-English text: M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of The Glorious Qur’an*, Kuala Lumpur 2002.

¹⁴ AMS, Święty Koran. Tekst arabski i tłumaczenie polskie, Surrey 1996.

– it is the biggest insult being called *munafiq* in the Muslim world). If Muslims fight they are promised two types of reward: either spoils of war or paradise via martyrdom (the best example is the activity of the Islamic State and other terrorist organizations). Allah made a deal with the Mujahedeen (jihad fighters): either kill or being killed in a fight for the glory of Allah and Islam. The author of the book claims that *despite the fact that the Quran does probably not provide for something like terrorism of the 21st century¹⁵, it orders Muslims the use of terror and spreading fear: “Make ready for them all thou canst of [armed] force and of horses tethered, that thereby ye may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others beside them whom ye know not.” The Quran teaching is confirmed by the hadiths. As Muhammad says: I have been made victorious with terror (Sahih al-Buchari 4.52.220). Spreading fear in the hearts of Allah enemies is ordered by the Quran and is reflected in the Muhammad’s life.*

The ninth surah confirms the author’s opinion on the jihad as an offensive struggle, while many Muslims, being aware of Muhammad participation in numerous fights, believe and claim that the fights were of defensive nature although the Battle of Badr (624) was the ordinary interception of the caravan from Mecca. The surah Repentance orders Muslims also to fight with Jews and Christians because of their religion, not because of any aggression on the part of them. This reasoning was confirmed by sending fighters by Muhammad against the Byzantines for the Tabouk Expedition (630), despite the fact that Byzantine Christians had never threatened Muslim society. John of Nikiû’s *Chronicle* is another testament of the offensive jihad in the period of the first Muslims. The Egyptian town was abandoned by Byzantine soldiers after the Arab forces under Amr ibn al-As had approached it and all the civilians there, including children, were killed. Residents of other cities of the then Christian Egypt suffered the same fate. Modern Muslims believe that the obedience of the first generation of Islam followers allowed the Muslim empire to expand so much. It was the time of the Islamic Golden Age perceived by the Muslims as the time of the allegiance to Allah. That was the time when Islam followers were at the height of their power. In the result Muslims are proud of their past, they praise former values and recollect the first generations of their noble ancestors *al-salaf al-Sālih* for their sacrifice. If they follow their example and follow the Prophet in unity, Allah will praise them again and restore their might. The wait for the hegemony of Islam and the notion of the Islamic Golden Age have become the source of the faith radicalisation.

In the second chapter the author raises the topic of radical Islam and modern jihad. It is obvious for him that the industrial revolution and the European colonisation brought about an end to Islam domination in many parts of the world. Muslim academics tried to answer the question how it was possible that the world of Islam got subordinated economically and culturally to “infidels”. Some reformers tried to purify the religion of accretions skewing Islam and, in opposition to

¹⁵ The author uses the phrase intentionally because the Quran has been existing next to Allah forever and, according to Muslim clerics, its content is still current and its re-interpretation in accordance with the changing reality is forbidden.

modernists, they looked for the rebirth of the Islam might in the roots of the religion and the strict compliance with its rules. Qureshi describes the figures of the three well-known representatives of radical Islam. Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) covered a range of disciplines in his works such as, for example, the Quranic exegesis. In his work *Jihad in Islam* he maintained that due to the fact that Islam is all-encompassing, the Islamic state was for all the world and should not be limited to just the “homeland of Islam”. The non-Muslims could come into contact with Islam via jihad. Islamic warriors did not conquer new territories, did not kill, did not turn infidels into slaves, were not colonialists, in fact they were liberators and freedom fighters. He wrote that Islam is a revolutionary religion to destroy all states and governments anywhere on the face of the earth. Islam requires the earth — not just a portion, but the whole planet... because its goal is a worldwide revolution. Al Maududi’s understanding and apologetics are influential in the world of Islam to this day. It should be added that already in the 1940s, Ruhollah Khomeini, later leader of the Iranian Revolution indicated that he would be ready to use terrorist methods (and guarantee them the right material and theological support) to humiliate the enemies of Islam. *Islam says: “All the good exists because of the sword and in the shadow of the sword! People cannot be pounded into submission other than with a sword! The sword is the key to paradise, which will be opened only for holy warriors.*¹⁶” For Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966), who had spent two years in the United States (1948–1950), the West seemed as a terrifying culture of brutal and crude men with no spiritual values. After coming back to Egypt he became the Muslim Brotherhood ideologist (Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin)¹⁷ and called for bringing down the President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who became the first target for Egyptian radicals. According to the jihad teaching first thing was to tame “the near enemy” (adu karib), i.e. to clean the Muslim society. “The far enemy”, i.e. the West, could wait until the Islam would be reformed by itself. It meant the introduction of the Sharia law in Egypt at least. Qutb taught that all human governments on Earth should be overthrown and the kingdom of God should replace them. He argued that the Muslims were responsible for their actions only to God. His approach to jihad was consistent. Jihad should proceed in stages like in the prophet Muhammad’s time. First, Islam as the worldwide religion should be proclaimed peacefully. Second, some limited warfare should be introduced, then punishments for the ruler’s oppressive actions toward Islamic society should be enforced, and, in the end, endless and unlimited warfare against the non-Muslim world should be started. However, influenced by al-Mawdudi, Qutb perceived jihad as the liberation of the non-Muslim part of humankind, on condition that they were given a chance to hear and consider the message of Islam. And this cannot happen until jihad is not executed.¹⁸ Muhammad abd-al-Salam Faraj (1952–1982), the author

¹⁶ L. Wright. *Wyniosle wieże. Al-Kaida i atak na Amerykę*, Wołowiec 2018, pp. 67–68.

¹⁷ The Brotherhood’s “most frequently used slogan” is *Allah is our goal, the Prophet is our leader, the Quran is our constitution, the jihad is our path and the death in the name of Allah is our desire*.

¹⁸ In the 1990s the Association of the Muslim Students in the Republic of Poland published Polish translations of works by Al-Mawdudi and Qutb in the city of Białystok, where the headquarters

of *The Neglected Duty*, followed Qutb and claimed that Muslim leaders became apostates and Muslims should come back to the concept of pure Islam. He emphasized the role of armed struggle with non-Muslims that would be praised by Allah, and that would give the Muslims new territories to establish the Islamic State and reestablish the caliphate. This is where Islam could be practiced in its pure form. Qutb's declaration on the leaders' apostasy was significantly reinforced by Faraj. This way the foundation for the Takfir criteria was laid, i.e. a concept denoting excommunication against those who do not profess their Islamic faith, applied by extremist Islamic organizations, first and foremost Al Qaeda and the Islamic State.

The criteria are as follow an open display of disbelief, ignoring the Sharia law and refusing involvement in jihad to defend the Ummah. The Islamic State has divided all Muslim people into those who are "the people of paradise", including themselves, and all the rest called "the people of hell". Any worshipper whose interpretation of the Quran and the Sharia law does not comply with the ISIS/IS model would be classified as the member of the second group – an apostate and a godless person that should be eliminated from the sacred society.

Taking the above considerations, the author argues that the radical Islam would come out of the frustration with the political inferiority of Muslim nations towards the West. Based on the Quranic promise that Allah would guarantee the victory those who fight for him, radical Muslims believe that those who are committed to the true teaching of Islam and are zealous in fulfilling its rules, would meet the next Golden Age. It is them who will see the restored glory of Islam. Radical Islam comes from the reasoning that the day-to-day practicing of Islam these days is too remote from the Quran and the teaching of Muhammad. Radicals regard the so called moderate Muslims¹⁹ as apostates quite often because of the lack of their Islam eagerness. And the Quran justifies jihad against Muslim hypocrites (the munafiqun al-muslimin). The Islamic radicalism takes also advantage of the existential crisis among young Muslims, creates an effective link between teaching radical values in mosques and in the cyber space, between the extremist ideology, revolutionary activities and accepting the faith in martyrdom rewarded with the eternal happiness in the paradise. At the same time, contrary to what numerous western Muslims say about terrorists

of the organization was. Nowadays the publication of some works would not be possible as incentive for violence.

¹⁹ The notion is too general and it is hard to say exactly what does it mean. In case it concerns non-practising, laicised Muslims, integrated or assimilated with societies of the host countries, according to the Islam doctrine they are not Islam followers any more. The reason why Muslims can be religious and peaceful despite full of violence teaching of the Quran and the ahadith is that Islam is interpreted by people of a substantial authority, according to different schools of thought and years of certain traditions. If Muslims want to circumvent the rules and come back to the roots of the faith, no matter if they are disappointed by the way Islam is expressed or they just want to please Allah and win his favour or blessing, they start to express Islam in a violent way. Those who want to foster a religious progress in Islam, no matter how few they are and how limited influence they have, are present risking quite often their lives.

as not true Islam followers, that is for Qureshi who they are indeed. Because they praise Allah, try to follow the Prophet's path, they fulfil the Islamic obligations and take care of the Ummah. Generally they make greater efforts to obey the rules of Islam than any average Muslim individual claiming that Islam is the religion of peace. The latter ones do not fulfil the order of the Quran to fight the enemies, even if they are their family members and to fight with those Muslims who do not fight other Muslims, even in the face of a martyr's death leading eventually to salvation. The ultimate goal of the constant struggle is to establish Islam the only religion in the world. Numerous peaceful Muslims ignore some traditions as if they did not exist. In spite of the fact that they consider themselves "good Muslims", there are some inconsistencies with their faith because the Quran and the Hadith contain a full of violence way of expressing Islam. Peaceful version of Islam would have to redefine the Prophet tradition to make it internally cohesive or ignore it. No matter which option the nonviolent Muslims choose, identifying Islamic terrorists as non-Muslims is totally false. One more important argument should also be pointed out here, i.e. the common factor of all radicalised Muslims is their final choice of being loyal to stricter and literally read rules of Islam than to the majority of the other Muslims.

A propensity for violence is manifested by the minority of Muslims, but according to Nabeel Qureshi almost half of them would wish to enforce the Sharia law in Europe and one third would wish to enforce Sharia in the USA. The author cited the former leader of Libya, Muammar Qaddafi of April 2006 talking to Al-Jazeera: *There are ca. 50 million Muslims in Europe. They are the sign that Allah would ensure victory in Europe – without any sword, without any weapon, without any conquest[...]. They would turn it into a Muslim continent in few decades. Europe is in a perplexing situation. Just as America is. They should accept Islam in the course of time, if not, they will have to declare war on Muslims.* This statement confirmed the fears of numerous conservatives in the West, that the Muslims have started a demographic and ideological war to overthrow western systems of law and the culture. It raised discussions focusing on two main subjects: Sharia and the Muslim demography. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) works actively towards the Islam domination in Europe. It is the second largest international organisation, after the United Nations, consisting of 57 countries and having its headquarters in Saudi Arabia. It submits an annual report on the islamophobia in the West. Qureshi points out that "islamophobia" is a poorly described concept, allegedly used for determining prejudices against Muslims, but mostly used just as a general term to determine any Islam criticism or any Muslim criticism, no matter true or imaginary. By the reports and political pressure, the OIC lobbies subjectively against the freedom of speech, counting on calming criticism of Islam, which is effective quite often when we look at the situation in many EU countries. According to the OIC the freedom of speech protects people who *tend to cause unjustified tensions, suspicions and social unrest time and again, aspersing the Islamic faith by huge distortion and misinterpretations, entering the questionable terrain and offending religious feelings of Muslims.* In other words, people who criticize Islam are to blame for unrests in Muslim societies.

This OIC's statement is directly in contradiction with the freedom of speech but is completely in line with Sharia. In the USA similar efforts are made by the Council on American – Islamic Relations (CAIR) that is under the strong influence of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. The CAIR accuses those Muslims who do not agree with its decisions of islamophobia. The author cites the study by Raheel Raza, the President of The Council for Muslims Facing Tomorrow, who claims that radicalism prevails in the Muslim world, it only depends how it is understood. If only mujahideen are regarded as radical Muslims, their number will be scant, but if those who want management consistent with Sharia are taken into account as radicals, they will dominate in the Muslim world. Most Muslims reject also the western model of the secular and democratic country which is inconsistent with the universal governance based on Islam. One of its features is the submission to Allah only, the second is a dominance, i.e. enforcing their laws on all the nations and gradually imposing their power on the whole world.

In the third chapter of his book, Qureshi takes interesting considerations regarding basic differences in the God's understanding by the Muslims and the Christians, and the essence of violence in both religions. As a former Muslim follower and currently a practising Christian knowing both the Quran and the Bible, he explains the contradictions and accusations of both religions representatives, hitting numerous stereotypes in the way the Christians and the Muslims think. To begin with, the author claims that the Muslims and the Christians, contrary to what many people think, do not believe in the same God. This is supposed to be in spite of the fact that the Quran ensures that the Torah and the (Canonical) Gospels are inspired works and the Jews and the Christians are The Book's People and that the Quran tells the Muslims to communicate to the Jews and the Christians that they have the one God. But the identity of the Muslims' God is different from the identity of the Christians' God. Jesus (Isa) is called in the Quran one of the prophets, not the son of God. The Muslims reject the faith in his crucifying, his resurrection and the Holy Mother worship (docetism). Islam rejects the Trinity doctrine, and, in contrast, it asserts their own fundamental dogma of Tawhid, i.e. "the oneness of God" (monotheism). Tawhid rejects the Trinity so strenuously that it makes us to accept the concept of God in Islam totally different from the concept of the God in Christianity. They are almost contradictory. For Muslims the God is not a father of humankind because humans are only beings created by God. Those dogmatic differences in perceiving the God were reflected in one of the orders of the Higher Court in Malaysia of June 2016. The court issued a ruling that claimed illegal calling the Christian God "Allah" by local Christians. In the past the Catholic Church contested the ban because the Malaysian translation of the Bible had used the word "Allah" for ages. At the beginning the Catholic Church managed to convince the Malaysian government to lift the ban, but in response the Muslims started to attack Christian churches, which made the ban was eventually restored in October 2013. Three months later copies of the Bible were confiscated because they contained the word "Allah" as the name of God and in June 2014 judges confirmed officially uncompromising stance towards Christians.

The next important topic of Qureishi's considerations is the concept of jihad as the Islamic warfare doctrine and the Jewish wars from the Old Testament. Muslim theologians allege the Jews and the Christians that their Bible is also full of violence. However, sacred books of the Muslims and the Christians are different things. The Quran was verbally revealed by the God to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel, while the Bible and the Old Testament are different works written by people, in which there were numerous either true or untrue events included, not necessarily applauded by God. Such events should not be treated in the same way as struggles or wars ordered by Allah himself. Violence in the Old Testament ordered by the God himself started after 400 years of waiting. The God reminded Jews that banishing other peoples happened not because Jews were the best, what the Quran reminds Muslims, but because they sinned against the God. Struggling in the Old Testament is the pattern the Christians should not follow. The history of Christianity have not evolved from the peaceful and quite story to a full of violence reality but the other way round. Meantime, the life of the prophet Muhammad changed from a peaceful and quite into a full of violence. The Quran charges the Muslims to fight with the Jews and the Christians so that Allah could make Islam above any other religion. Love and mercy are the charge for the Christians, and jihad is a charge for the Muslims. Developing this strand the author compares the concept of jihad in Islam to the Holy War in Christianity. The Christians developed the concept only a thousand years after Jesus while Muhammad himself and the Quran taught that the struggle is benign. Jihad (the Holy War) lies at the heart of the Islamic faith. Nabeel Qureshi disputes with numerous politicians and authors about the crusaders, for example John Esposito, a professor of Islamic Studies at the Georgetown University, who wrote in his book *Islam: The Straight Path* that: *five years of peaceful coexistence fell apart because of political events and imperial and papal games which led to centuries-long series of the so called holy wars, directed the Christianity against the Islam and left misconception and lack of trust until these days*. However, these words are based on a fiction that dominates in a common understanding of the crusades, also by numerous western authors. They forget that it was Muhammad himself, who stood up against the Byzantine Christians, subordinating Christian lands (and not only lands), like the Quran ordered. It were the Muslims who had conquered two thirds of the Christian world before the first crusade. In Qureishi's opinion, while condemning crusades, one should remember their reasons and circumstances, i.e. defensive efforts following the conquest of the Christian world by the Muslims. Nevertheless, the author condemns crusades, during which the slaughter of the innocent Jews in Europe and the Muslims in Jerusalem was committed. This unjustified cruelty was done in the name of God. The author admits that he would feel much better if the efforts of crusaders had resulted from the orders of the leaders of the European countries and not from the Church. However, as a Christian he was grateful that it took Christians a thousand years to distort the teaching of Jesus to such an extent that the crusades became a religious order as a holy war. Christ did not envisaged any concept of it, after all. It was born only in the XIth century. By contrast,

full of violence and offensive jihad carried out today by Muslim extremist organizations, is the Quranic order. Foundations of Islam urge its followers to participate in the holy war/jihad, offering them salvation in case they die in it. It took Muslims 1300 years to move away from radical foundations of their religion.

In the conclusions the author writes: *[...] almost all Muslims, no matter if peaceful or not, believe that they adhere to the original form of Islam. Those Muslims who study Quranic texts diligently, would face eventually the conclusions, that the foundations of their religion are full of violence. That was my case as well. I kept getting them out of my mind for years but when the reality became inevitable, I hit the crossroads and had to choose: either apostasy, malaise or radicalisation.* As we know, Qureshi chose the first option because he stood against the fully violent tradition of Islam. He had a Christian friend who showed him that Islam is not the only option for him and that there are particular reasons to become a Christian. According to his experience secularity and atheism are not an alternative to Islam because they are not spiritually developed, which most Muslims stick to. At present the number of frustrated Islam believers is snowballing. The reason is the content in the web space passed via social media which are a great source of propaganda, indoctrination and recruitment. The author suggests arousing actively positive emotions of love and friendship among Muslims, acknowledging the truth of Islam at the same time. In my opinion it is impossible because the truth of Islam presented by Qureshi deprives us of the optimistic vision of the future, particularly in view of the dynamic increase of the number of Muslims in Europe and their growing radicalisation.

The edition contains four appendixes: A – timetable for jihad in Islam since Muhammad was born until the San Bernardino attack in December 2015; B – the Prophet's statements about jihad gathered in the Muhammad ibn al-Buchari's set of hadith; C – the answer for what the caliphate is?; D – information on the Ahmadiyya movement. Additionally, there is also a glossary in the end of the book. Nabeel Qureshi's book is very interesting. It presents Islam to an ordinary Westerner from the little-known perspective. It shows religious source of terrorist attacks carried out by Islamic terrorists. It is easy and nice to read, and it gives a lot of thought. I truly recommend it to all interested in Islam and to all professionally dealing with recognizing and combating terrorism.