



## Nothing Is True, Everything Is Permitted: Premodern Religious Terrorism

Jeffrey Kaplan

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# Nothing Is True, Everything Is Permitted: Premodern Religious Terrorism

Jeffrey Kaplan

Jilin University, International Relations and Public Policy, Changchun, China

## ABSTRACT

In the beginning faith was the alpha and omega of revolutionary dreams and terrorist actions. This article will examine case studies among the Peoples of the Book—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—for religious terrorism is not the product of one faith. It argues that the cultural resonance of each movement examined offers a blank slate on which contemporary seekers, dreamers, and fighters may write. The title, borrowed from a popular novel, is the leitmotif of this form of violence. By all objective forms of analysis, the movements chronicled in these pages are a parade of seemingly stupid ideas held by idealists, fools, and fanatics who dreamed that, with God at their side, they could bring perfection to a fallen world. In such a cause, antinomian violence is inevitable and genocide its logical outcome. Yet these early movements are not to be despised, for together it was they, not the huddled masses cowering before the powers that be, that created the modern world.

## KEYWORDS

Adamites; Alamut; al-Ghazzali; bay'a; Devil's Bargain; Hassan i-Sabah; Hellenization; Zealots; houris; Hussites; ibn Taymiyya; Ja'far al-Sadiq; Jan Žižka; Josephus; Karta 77; Kharajites; Masada; Nizari Ismaili Shi'ites; Old Man of the Mountain; Phinehas Priesthood; shura; Sicarii; Taborites; tribalism

## Introduction

In the age of the Islamic State, the mere mention of the word *terrorism* instantly commands visions of murderous jihadists, of burka-clad women, of sex slaves for the taking, and a golden post-mortem future filled with beautiful virgins eager to fulfill the slightest whims of the martyrs of the faith. Such is the New Orientalism—a violent fever dream unimagined by such genteel academics as Edward Said.<sup>1</sup>

Before the eighteenth century and the Age of Enlightenment, religion was an inherent component of every thought and every action. Secularity did not exist, but terrorism certainly did. David C. Rapoport was the first scholar of terrorism to demonstrate the historicity of religious terrorism, whose roots far predate Mohammad and the birth of Islam.<sup>2</sup> The first terrorist group in the modern sense of the word appeared in the Holy Land in the time of Jesus. The Jewish Sicarii, named for the daggers which were their signature weapon, may be credited with the invention of terrorism as we understand it today in the first century CE. It ended rather badly, with the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE and the Diaspora—the exile of the Jewish people, which would not officially end until 1948. Muslims and Christians would in subsequent centuries independently adopt terrorism as a means of fighting against the power of the State.

Terrorism is after all a court of last resort. It is always an action of those who perceive themselves to be weak against an enemy perceived to be infinitely stronger. What hope is there

for the weak, even if they resort to terrorist violence? How can they possibly overcome the overwhelming might of their enemies? In the Western world, the answer is invariably the same: God. If it is always darkest before the dawn, goes the logic, we need only make our world hopelessly dark to induce God to at the last moment intervene in a process the rabbis came to call “Forcing the End.” The Sicarii knew this. Surrounded by the Roman legions, the final Jewish survivors in Masada were said to have dumped all their remaining water into the ground and burned the final provisions of food so as to hurry the Hand of God to smite their enemies and make their victory complete. God yet tarried however, and the first mass suicide—some 900 souls—followed. This is the power of religiously motivated terrorism. And this is where we will begin.

## **In the beginning, the Sicarii and their successors**

The twenty-first century mind does not easily adapt to the warp and woof of the ancient world, where magic was everywhere, where the gods commonly had intercourse, verbal and physical, with humans, and where temples and their priests and priestesses vied for the favor of pharaoh or king with ever more creative rituals and stories. A simple matter of imperial expansion was for the defeated not simply an exchange of leaders and languages. Rather, pantheons took primacy over pantheons and civilizations either adapted or crumbled.

The Roman conquest of Jerusalem brought emperor worship to a Jewish population deeply divided by the cultural primacy of Greek learning. By the first century CE, Jew fought Jew as those who held fast to Talmudic learning and Semitic languages turned against Hellenized Jews who spoke Greek in their homes and whose sons were educated by Greek tutors.<sup>3</sup> The defense of tradition often took the form of religious terrorism as we understand the term today.

For Rome, the Jews were the most puzzling, stubborn, frustrating, and fascinating of the occupied nations that comprised the Roman Empire. Their intense religiosity, militant monotheism, and the seemingly irrational voice of prophesy were so mystifying that the Romans hired history’s first true political consultant, Josephus, to try to explain the inexplicable to successive Roman consuls.<sup>4</sup> What we know of the Sicarii is primarily from Josephus, whose accounts are not always entirely consistent.<sup>5</sup>

What is clear is that they were a radical branch of the Zealots, who themselves were one of a welter of Second Temple-era Jewish sects whose diversity and sheer number only became clear with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the first of which were found in 1946.<sup>6</sup> The Zealots were the most militant opponents of Roman rule. They appear in the New Testament several times, often urging Jesus to oppose Rome.<sup>7</sup> Simon the Zealot was an apostle of Christ, although Jesus in his famous declaration “Render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and unto God what is God’s” not only rejected their council, but also laid the basis for the separation of Church and state which was enshrined in the U.S. Constitution almost two millennia later.

The Sicarii demanded revolution now, and their actions would have dire consequences. The failure of the Sicarii terror campaign ended with the mass suicide at Masada in which more than 900 Jews lost their lives and the Diaspora that followed.<sup>8</sup> The Jewish Second Temple was burned to the ground, ending the phase in which Judaism was based on Temple worship as administered by a hereditary priesthood in which animal sacrifice was the primary ritual.<sup>9</sup> Failed religious terrorism has consequences.

There were three distinct phases of the Sicarii campaign,<sup>10</sup> and in them we see the emergence of terrorism as it is practiced today. In a very real sense, terrorism was a Jewish

invention.<sup>11</sup> In the first phase, Sicarii fighters discovered the effect of random victimization in catalyzing a state of terror in a population. Sicarii fighters would enter the market on a Friday afternoon when it is most crowded with shoppers eager to get food before the Sabbath, just as they would attack festivals and popular gatherings.<sup>12</sup> They would then murder a victim at random and fade back into the crowd. Suicide terrorism was definitely not on the Sicarii agenda. The Sicarii thus discovered that the public could identify with a random victim, thinking “but for the Grace of God that could be I.”

They soon discovered, however, that inducing terror is easy, but recruitment is much harder. Undoubtedly with this in mind, the Sicarii entered phase two of their operations. Moving from random attacks to focused assassination, they brazenly stabbed the High Priest Jonathan to death. This intensified the loathing the public felt for the Sicarii, but sacrificed both the state of fear that they had engendered and any hope for a significant influx of recruits.

The final phase of the Sicarii campaign might be considered a foundation of terrorism as we understand it today: get the government to overreact so as to force people to make a choice rather than to remain passive spectators. To accomplish this end, the Sicarii for the first time directly attacked the Romans, killing a number and causing a literal military riot in which for three days and nights Roman soldiers killed a number of Jews in reprisal. That few Jews understood the motivation for the Roman violence considerably added to its impact. The Sicarii were now emboldened to stand up to both the Romans and the Temple priests.<sup>13</sup> It is not for nothing that the rabbis would teach that messianism—forcing the End—was the greatest disaster that could befall the Jewish people!<sup>14</sup>

Before leaving the subject of the Sicarii, it is important to reiterate the importance of the ethnic dimension to the Sicarii fight. By the time of the Maccabean Revolt (c. 165 BCE), there was a deep schism in the Jewish people—a schism that recurs throughout Jewish history. A significant number of Jews had become Hellenized, a recurrence of the problem of assimilation that has been a constant throughout Jewish history. Judaism is a demanding faith. Every Jew is obligated to obey no less than 613 laws (Halacha), many of which involve Temple service and are no longer required in the absence of a putative Third Temple.<sup>15</sup> By contrast, the Gentile to be righteous is expected to obey no more than the seven Noahide Laws.<sup>16</sup> Other faiths require considerably less, and some, such as those which offer such amenities as the Cult of Isis’s Temple prostitutes or the ever-exciting world of the ecstatic and orgiastic violence which marked the Dionysian Bacchanals, are more alluring still.<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, a recurrent theme of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament is the violence that is often triggered by the threat of religious miscegenation. The primary model of this sacred murder is the cautionary tale of Phinehas (Numbers 25:7–13), who ended one such passionate affair between an Israelite man and Gentile woman by the sexually redolent means of running them both through with the same spear, and in so doing averting the wrath of God against the Israelites.<sup>18</sup> The modern-day Phinehas Priesthood that arose among the American radical right in the 1980s and among the Israeli settlement movement to this day is based on this model.<sup>19</sup>

The Hellenization of the Jews was quite advanced at the dawn of Roman rule. Educated Jews spoke Greek at home with their children, took Greek names, and even more scandalously wrestled with naked Greeks at the local version of the Olympic Games. Even in this, however, the Jews were unique in that they combined Greek and later Roman

ideas with Hebrew ones, emerging with a syncretic form of Hellenism that nonetheless separated them from their pious countrymen and evoked strong opposition.<sup>20</sup>

A violent reaction among Jews who rejected pagan influences was inevitable, exploding into revolutionary violence under the Maccabees and continuing in less extreme forms through the destruction of the Second Temple and the diaspora after 70 CE. This internecine struggle continued and undoubtedly was a leitmotif of the Zealot and Sicarii struggle.

Indeed, as the divisions between Israeli Jews within the pre-1967 borders and those in “Indian Country”—as the West Bank beyond the *cordon sanitaire* belt of suburban settlements which since 1977 have come to ring Jerusalem—have grown, they uncannily mirror the tensions of Maccabean Israel. Include the militancy of the Haredi world within the state of Israel, and the view of many Israeli intellectuals that the confrontation with the Arab world is a blessing in disguise is well taken.<sup>21</sup>

### Islam from the Kharajites to the Old Man of the Mountain

Critics argue that terrorism is inherent in the Islamic faith, often pointing to the life of Mohammad and the content of the Qu’ran, which was in part revealed to the Prophet during the internecine war between the Muslims and the pagan Meccans.<sup>22</sup> In his Four Waves theory, David C. Rapoport posits Islam as the epicenter of terrorism’s fourth or religious wave.<sup>23</sup>

The contention is largely rejected by scholars specializing in Islamic Studies in its myriad branches.<sup>24</sup> This article takes no position on this, but demonstrates that violence is inherent in all religions to varying degrees.<sup>25</sup> What is important from the perspective of this article is that popular Western conceptions, including the press, Hollywood products, and literature, reflect Rapoport’s perception.

That said, terrorism in its contemporary forms has been a marked part of Islamic history from the time of ‘Ali, the fourth and last of the Rightly Guided Imams who succeeded Mohammad (656–661 CE), just as it has in the history of the Jews since the Sicarii. Since ‘Ali’s time, the Islamic world has been marked by oppositional groups for whom terrorism has been the only recourse to surrender or death.

The very survival of Islam came into question in the immediate aftermath of the death of Prophet Mohammad in 632 CE.<sup>26</sup> The Prophet’s death came as a catastrophic shock to the new Muslims. Many believed that, like prophets of the Hebrew Bible, he would live for perhaps 950 years as did Noah, or at least the 175 years allotted to Abraham. Instead, he survived only two years from the conquest of Mecca and the consecration of the Qa’ba to the One God. On a deeper level, Mohammad’s teachings were always twofold; he had one foot firmly planted in Arab tribal tradition and the other in a visionary future in which all Muslims would form one great tribal *umma* (community) in which differences of tribe, skin color, language, and gender would disappear.<sup>27</sup>

For all but a few Muslims, however, Mohammad was seen in purely tribal terms in which men bound themselves to him through the *bay’a* (oath of allegiance), which was freely given and could just as freely be withdrawn. The death of a tribal chief dissolved the *bay’a* and upon Mohammad’s death many departed for their homes and families. Abu Bakr, the first successor to Mohammad, returned the *arif* (lost camels) to the fold, often by force, and the faith survived. The *bay’a* relationship too survived and governs the relationships between Islamist movements to this day.<sup>28</sup>

The tribes rose against ‘Ali. They were led by Muawiya, a man of the tribes, having emerged from the Kalb rather than the wealthy and powerful tribe of the Prophet, the Quraysh. His revolution was many sided, but he would emerge as the first dynastic ruler in Islamic history, bringing to an end the chaotic but inherently democratic succession by *shura* (consensus). His violent opposition to ‘Ali and the death of ‘Ali’s sons Hassan and Hossein is the genesis of Shi’ite history.<sup>29</sup>

Terrorism was not a part of the violent struggle between the followers of Muawiya and his son Yazid and ‘Ali and his progeny. These battles, though often one-sided, were conventional in nature. Rather, terrorism entered Islamic history in the wake of the Battle of Siffin (657 CE), in which ‘Ali’s mercy for the defeated forces of Muawiya (which against law and precedent included the Prophet’s widow A’isha, the Mother of the Faithful) allowed them to depart unharmed, only to return with greater force to defeat first the forces of ‘Ali and later those of Hossein at Kerbela in Southern Iraq.

‘Ali’s decision to pardon his enemies split his followers, with an embittered minority recalling their *bay’a*, swearing enmity against both ‘Ali and Muawiya, Shi’ite and Sunni alike. These radical dissenters, the Kharajites,<sup>30</sup> repaired to the hinterland of Syria and Iraq where they constructed fortifications and successfully waged war, primarily through terrorism rather than set piece battles, until they were finally dislodged and wiped out by the invading Mongols in the thirteenth century CE.<sup>31</sup>

Although the Kharajites as a movement disappeared in the wake of the Mongol conquest, their ideas lived on and come to us in this day through the teachings of Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328). Ibn Taymiyya’s views, formed by the chaos and destruction of the Mongol invasions, were no more welcome by the leaders of his time than they are by the kings, princes, and presidents today, so he was duly imprisoned and tortured—a fate of radical Islamists through the ages.<sup>32</sup> Ibn Taymiyya’s writings are vital sources for all modern Islamist movements today.<sup>33</sup>

What emerged from the Battle of Siffin was a Girardian Three Party Thesis, holding that there will always be three contending forces in the Islamic Umma. The majority Sunnis (about 87–90% of Muslims today) are seen as content to compromise with kings, however corrupt, in the interest of peace, prosperity, protection, and stability. Theirs is al-Ghazzali’s “Devil’s Bargain” in which a king, however dissolute and corrupt, must be obeyed so long as he protects the borders, enforces *sharia* law, and respects the *ulamma* (men of religion).<sup>34</sup> One wishing to understand the motivation for Islamist attacks on the most liberal, Westernized societies in the Islamic world and the most conservative, theocratic states need look no further than the Devil’s Bargain. No state in the modern world is able to fully implement sharia as the sole governing authority in a modern, globalized world of trade and commerce. Nor in Sunni societies is there anything resembling a centralized, unified *ulamma*. By definition, no contemporary state is able to fulfill the three requirements for legitimacy set forth by al-Ghazzali.<sup>35</sup>

The Shi’a (about 10–13% of Muslims today)<sup>36</sup> carry with them the twin burdens of historic guilt at having abandoned Hossein to his fate at the hands of Yazid, the hated son of Muawiya, and the pain of historic persecution at the hands of the Sunnis. Shi’ites have their own set of rituals, holidays, and an eschatology that reflects both their guilt and their hope of eschatological expiation. The Sunni/Shi’a divide is as bitter today as ever, as the Iraqi civil wars in the wake of the American invasion, as well as the engagement of

Hezbollah and Iran against the Islamic State and the forces seeking to overthrow the Assad regime in Syria, well demonstrate.

What both parties, Sunni and Shi'a alike must share, however, is the eternal enmity of the Kharajites and their modern successors. The neo-Kharajites as they are sometimes called are small in number but may best be seen as radical purists who have pledged their lives and eternal souls to restore the Islamic *Umma* to the timeless dream of the Prophet as a global, mutually supportive tribe in which distinctions of race, language, and gender would be erased. Their seemingly quixotic quest to return Islam to a putative Golden Age purity is as timeless as it is futile. These "neo-Kharajites" are of many kinds, belong to many often bitterly oppositional organizations, or act as individual seekers whom we today refer to as lone wolves. But since the battle of Siffin, they have been a permanent feature of the Islamic world and have thus been a force to contend with for the last 1,500 years.<sup>37</sup>

At its apex, the Kharajite campaign of assassination and violence against Sunni and Shi'a alike had a remarkably long run of more than 200 years. Their history parallels that of the classic Islamic empires, the Damascus-based Umayyads and the Baghdad-based Abbasids. The former was Sunni—the empire founded by Muawiya which saw the dramatic rise of Islam as an empire and as a faith. The Abbasids, by contrast, began as a revolution that had heavy Shi'ite influences, reportedly even asking the great sixth Imam of Shi'ite Islam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, to assume power should the uprising succeed. It did succeed, al-Sadiq refused, and he would, like the first eleven of the Twelver Shi'ite Imams, suffer violent death at the hands of the Sunni state. That refusal was prescient: "Whoever seeks leadership shall perish. Cursed is he that begins to lead and cursed is he that resolves to lead."<sup>38</sup>

The Twelfth Imam apparently avoided this fate, disappearing as a young child (or infant in some traditions). Thus began the Lesser *Ghuyba*, the time of occultation, which today is the Greater *Ghuyba* with the murder of the *Babis* (doors) who for a time channeled the wishes of the departed Imams to the Shi'ite faithful. Today, the Twelfth Imam waits at the side of God for the appointed time when, with Jesus at his side, he will return to bring an end to history.<sup>39</sup>

The Abbasid Caliphs soon turned the empire back to the stability of Sunnism. The brunt of the Kharajite attacks were therefore born disproportionately by the Sunni states, although Shi'ites were also struck. As noted, though, the Kharajite legacy of violent opposition to the powers that be, whoever they may be, lived on and thrives in the modern world.

## The legend of the Old Man of the Mountain and the eaters of hashish

No narrative in the history of terrorism is more epic or more often romanticized than that of Hassan i-Sabah, the Old Man of the Mountain, whose assassins were said to be trained from early childhood in the beliefs of the Nizari Ismailis, a medieval Shi'ite sect that survives today in a much more world-friendly incarnation. The Ismailis were a radical branch of the Nizaris, themselves a radical offshoot of Shi'ism who were very much influenced by Kharajite ideas.<sup>40</sup> Shi'ism is a notoriously fissiparous faith. Literally hundreds of sectarian groups grew from the tree of what would become normative Twelver Shi'ism. Many of them are extinct, and many more like the Nizaris still exist today. None is more celebrated than the myth of the Old Man of the Mountain.<sup>41</sup>

In its popular form, the tale goes like this. The name Hassan al-Sabah, the Old Man of the Mountain, for centuries struck terror in the hearts of Sunni and Shi'a alike. The Crusaders too learned to fear and hate Old Man of the Mountain, although others of their number came to

know and express admiration for the person of Hassan i-Sabah. From his impregnable mountain fastness, the leader, believed by most to be centuries old, sent his *hashishin*—hashish eaters or assassins—to plunge their daggers into his widely scattered enemies.<sup>42</sup>

Born to violence, the *hashishin* in the contemporary conception were trained from early childhood to accomplish their deadly task. When the time comes they are given their targets. Before being sent forth to hunt down their enemies, they are given a taste of the Paradise of the *shahid* (martyr). They are taken to a secluded garden, offered the delights of hashish and it is said alcohol as well, and allowed to partake of the delights of the *houris*, the doe-eyed beauties who bestow their favors on the *shahid* throughout the night.<sup>43</sup> Unlike mere mortal women, they are gone by morning light, only to return the following evening with their virginity miraculously restored. Then, with the taste of paradise on their lips, the assassins are sent forth to seek out and often befriend their intended victim until such time as a messenger from the Mountain gives them the code word, activating their deadly mission imperative.

In the popular imagination of the time, the Old Man of the Mountain unleashed a reign of terror perpetrated from Alamut and its sister redoubts in Syria and Persia. It is a scene that lives in our cultural memory and became a Hollywood hit in the film *The Manchurian Candidate*.<sup>44</sup>

The legend has deep historical roots in both East and West. Given the Nizari success, there was no shortage of invective cloaked as myth in the Islamic world. The Christian Crusaders at first evinced little interest in the world they were entering, but the Old Man of the Mountain certainly caught their attention and the stories filtered West through them. Their relations with the Nizaris were complex and deserve some attention. Assassination being the Nizari leitmotif, it is unsurprising that i-Sabah attempted to assassinate Conrad, the Crusader King of Jerusalem, after the conquest of the city, and twice attempted to assassinate Saladin.<sup>45</sup> At other times as in the twelfth century, i-Sabah became a vassal of the Templars—who wrote well of him—and the Knights Hospitalers who were more wary.

At the same time, i-Sabah was renowned among Crusaders for his hospitality, and from these chronicles arise the legends of the frightening devotion of his followers:

As Count Henry was returning home, a desire to go see the Lord of the Assassins seized him, and he went there. The Old Man welcomed him with great honor, led him throughout his land, and showed him all of his castles. It happened one day that they were in one of his castles where there was a very high tower at each crenel of which stood a man dressed in white. The Old Man said to the count, “Lord, your men would not do for you what mine do for me.” The count answered, “Lord this may well be.” Then the Old Man cried out to two of those men who were on the tower. Those two threw themselves down and broke their necks. The count was astonished and said to the Old Man that, truly, he had no man who would do such a thing for him. The Old Man, for the honor paid him by the count, took him under his protection ... and gave him precious jewels. Then the count left, returning to his land.<sup>46</sup>

In short, the chronicles are indeed rife with descriptions of the Old Man of the Mountain as being a courteous host, a man of refinement and education, and a brilliant conversationalist.

For their part, the Nizaris and the Muslim world had much more to fear from the Crusaders than mere assassination. Assassination after all is a game played with and sometimes between elites.<sup>47</sup> From the time of the First Crusade, Christian Crusaders practiced a brand of violence—the killing of women and children in particular—to which Muslim armies were unaccustomed.

Worse, the practice of cannibalism, which Crusaders did first for food and later as a liminal ritual among themselves, hit on an almost atavistic loathing among Muslims, surely giving rise to stories of Hind, a pagan woman at the time of the Meccan wars who ran onto a battlefield and devoured the heart of a fallen Muslim fighter against whose family she bore a particular grudge. The act is remembered to this day and resulted in the banning of women from battlefields lest their emotional and impulsive natures again get the best of them.<sup>48</sup>

The story of the Old Man of the Mountain, created in the chronicles of the Crusades, appears to have entered European consciousness through the journals of Marco Polo in the late thirteenth century.<sup>49</sup> Polo's accounts added the most appealing parts of the legend, including the garden of delights and hashish for the faithful.<sup>50</sup> From its medieval sources the legend of the Assassins entered the romantic world of the nineteenth-century Orientalists where it joined the lurid (and no less titillating) fantasies of the Turkish harem, the magic of the Genie in the Bottle eager to grant three wishes to whoever would free him by softly rubbing his lamp until he emerged from the spout, and so much more.

Contemporary Nizari scholars complain that even Western scholars of the late twentieth century such as Bernard Lewis and Marshall Hodgson used the term "Assassin" rather than Nizari in describing the tale.<sup>51</sup> Hodgson's book came first, though considerably after Lewis's bibliographical article of 1952, and save for the use of the term "Assassin" it wins high praise for scholarly objectivity. Lewis rarely gets such praise, but even Farhad Daftary was moved to quote from Lewis's *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam*:

The Assassins differs radically both from the lurid rumours and fantasies brought back from the East by mediaeval travellers, and from the hostile and distorted image extracted by nineteenth-century orientalists from the manuscript writings of orthodox Muslim theologians and historians, whose main concern was to refute and condemn, not to understand and explain. The Assassins no longer appear as a gang of drugged dupes led by scheming impostors, as a conspiracy of nihilistic terrorists, or as a syndicate of professional murderers. They are no less interesting for that.<sup>52</sup>

The truth behind the legend is more prosaic.<sup>53</sup> Nizari history flows from the time of the great Sixth Imam of normative Shi'ism, Ja'afar al-Sadiqh. The Sixth Imam established the system of Shi'ite Islamic law (*Ja'afari*), the core doctrine of *taqqiyah* (dissimulation) that allowed the Shi'a to survive in conditions of persecution, and alone of the Shi'a Imams had a following of students from both Sunni and Shi'a backgrounds.<sup>54</sup> When al-Sadiqh met the fate of all Shi'ite Imams—martyrdom—his successor Imam Musa ibn-Ja'afar faced immediate sectarian divisions, especially over the issue of *Nās* (infallibility), which Ja'afar al-Sadiqh could claim, and the far less accomplished Musa could not in the view of many Shi'ites. Many Shi'ites supported Musa's brother Ismail and yet another split was born between two rivals for the Imamate—the Seventh in the line of Twelve.<sup>55</sup>

The followers of Ismail took the name Ismailis and in 909 CE Ubaydulla, an Ismaili, captured a small North African redoubt which would serve as the beginning of the Ismaili conquest of Egypt and the foundation of the Fatimid dynasty there. The name reflects Ubaydulla's genealogical claim to have sprung from the dynasty of Ali through his wife Fatima.<sup>56</sup>

What is most important for our purposes however is the eschatological excitement of the times. The Sixth Imam lived at the time of the revolt against Ummayyads which would eventuate in the triumph of the Abbasids and the foundation of their eponymous empire in 750 CE. The Abbasid revolution had strong Shi'ite currents and championed the cause of the "New Muslims," primarily Persians and others, isolated in distant military

commands (especially in Southern Iraq) where they lived in angry disillusionment over the unfulfilled promises of equality and brotherhood within the Islamic Umma.

Needless to say, the Fatimids were no less fissiparous than any other sect of Shi'ite Islam, which is where Nizar, spiritual patriarch of the Nizaris, enters the picture.<sup>57</sup> After a rare period of stability under the 60-year reign of Caliph Mustansir, his eldest son, the 50-year-old Nizar, was outmaneuvered by the champions of his 20-year-old brother Ahmad. Thus was born the Naziri and Ahmadi Ismai'ilis. Nizar's revolt however was short-lived and he was soon captured and killed.<sup>58</sup> His followers fell back to the now legendary castle of Alamut in present-day Iran, which is where Hassan i-Sabah at last enters the picture.<sup>59</sup> Once established at Alamut castle, i-Sabah and the Nizari faithful were impregnable. As the movement expanded to other fortifications, the legend of the Old Man of the Mountain and his band of assassins grew apace, coming into its final form in the journals of Marco Polo, who was as enraptured by the tales as he was credulous.<sup>60</sup>

The evolution of the popular image of the Assassins in the West has been yet more imaginative. If Marco Polo was credulous, Bernard Lewis is, in the view of many Muslims, predatory.<sup>61</sup> But i-Sabah's impact on the European imagination, and in particular on the Crusaders, was originally not as unreasoningly fearful as is currently believed. The stories are indeed ferocious. In one instance for example, the Old Man of the Mountain was said to have demonstrated the extent of his power by ordering several of his men to commit suicide before a visiting noble:

As Count Henry was returning home, a desire to go see the Lord of the Assassins seized him, and he went there. The Old Man welcomed him with great honor, let [sic] him throughout his land, and showed him all of his castles. It happened one day that they were in one of his castles where there was a very high tower at each crenel of which stood a man dressed in white. The Old Man said to the count, "Lord, your men would not do for you what mine do for me." The count answered, "Lord this may well be." Then the Old Man cried out to two of those men who were on the tower. Those two threw themselves down and broke their necks. The count was astonished and said to the Old Man that, truly, he had no man who would do such a thing for him. The Old Man, for the honor paid him by the count, took him under his protection ... and gave him precious jewels. Then the count left, returning to his land.<sup>62</sup>

In short, the chronicles are indeed rife with descriptions of the Old Man of the Mountain as being a courteous host, a man of refinement and education, and a brilliant conversationalist.

And if little of the legend is literally true, what of that? Human history is rife with examples of men living and dying in the name of fantasies that historians or scientists eventually prove to be wrong. This section has sought to include both the historical and the popular, arguing for the vital importance of the popular perceptions of a case which may have little to do with the historicity of the issue. In the age of the War on Terror, a time where a computer game like *Assassin's Creed* will be opened more times in a day than the complete works of Farhad Daftary or Bernard Lewis will in a lifetime, there are no shortage of cultural mediums where the legend of the Old Man of the Mountain can take root and grow. It is a process first illustrated by the great historian Johan Huizinga, who in his classic *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (also called *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*) demonstrated that even as cultural epochs wane—become ever more fantastic or grotesque—certain forms adapt and live on.<sup>63</sup> Huizinga observes:

The aggregate of all knowledge has not yet become culture in us. Rather it would seem as if, with the progressive scientific penetration and dissection of reality, the foundations of our thinking grow ever more precarious and unstable.<sup>64</sup>

How precarious and unstable, and yet how fecund? Examples are numerous, from the novel *Alamut*—a must for avid readers—to the performances of the 1960s-era psychedelic band Hawkwind, which is still going strong half a century on—hear their songs “Assassins of Allah” and “Hasan i-Sabah,” replete with dancers doing a somewhat credible imitation of the dances of the Dervishes of al-Kindi. The Old Man of the Mountain approaches a millennium of appeal to the world, East and West alike.<sup>65</sup>

## The Hussite/Taborite/Adamite trinity and the birth of the modern world

Every author should eschew his or her prejudices when engaged in academic writing. Failing this, one should at least acknowledge the existence of marked biases. In that spirit, I will say only that I lived for some time in Prague—the most beautiful city in Europe—during the dark ages of the 1970s when Gustav Husak served the Soviet Empire as head of Party and state in the aftermath of the 1968 Prague Spring. In speaking to students at Charles University, I was amazed to hear of Jan Hus, who was more of a hero to young Czechs than Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin were to their American contemporaries.

The Czech Communist party made occasional abortive attempts to co-opt the dissident Hussites and the revolutionary Taborites, who practiced what they referred to as “early communism” in their radical egalitarianism and establishment of communal distributions of resources in their seven cities, all named Tabor.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, from the beginning of communist control, the shades of Hus and the great one-eyed general Jan Žižka were duly trotted out on patriotic holidays as Czech forerunners of modern communism. Klement Gottwald, who rose rapidly to power beginning as Deputy Premier (1945–46), Premier (1946–48), and President (1948–53) began the tradition. It was an obvious choice, and a very conscious one.<sup>67</sup> On October 28, 1938 when Nazi Germany seized control of the nation, the citizens spontaneously manifested at the statue of Hus in Old Town to lay flowers of mourning at his feet.<sup>68</sup> Communist partisan groups took the names of Hus and Žižka for their units after the German withdrawal but did not hide the fact that they served Moscow as another foreign occupation took root.<sup>69</sup>

Most searing of all, and very much in the memory of Charles University students of the 1970s, was the tragic death of the Prague Spring under Soviet tanks. In a doomed protest, very much inspired by Buddhist monks in Vietnam who set themselves aflame to protest the hopeless slaughter of the War, a group of Czech students immolated themselves in 1968 at the base of the Hus statue.<sup>70</sup> One died, Jan Palech, who was still discussed and whose memory haunted the Karta 77 democratization movement that was ongoing during my residence in Prague.<sup>71</sup> Jiří Návratil, who knew Palech at the time, had this to say about the man and the time:

I have to say he was a very, fine, nice and intelligent young man. It was the beginning of 1968. We were all full of hope. That was naturally very naïve of us, because it is not possible to make a better communism. But this generation from the 1960s was of the opinion that it is possible to do something with this stupid idea.<sup>72</sup>

If this article is about anything, it is about this: by all objective forms of analysis, the movements chronicled in these pages are a parade of seemingly stupid ideas held by idealists, fools, and fanatics who dreamed that, with God at their side, they could bring perfection to a

fallen world. Most, like Jan Hus and Jan Palech, lived brief lives and suffered a painful demise. A few for a moment succeeded. They, like the Egyptian Fatimids or on a grander scale, the Abbasids before them, were invariably faced with the dawning realization that if their success was due to the Will of God, once in power they were pretty much on their own. In each case, idealism gave way to the pragmatic exigencies of power and they accommodated to the ways of the world, joining the Sunni majority and basking in the license granted by al-Ghazzali's Devil's Bargain to hold power for its own sake, unopposed so long as they performed the three minimal tasks enjoined upon them.

Yet in every generation there are idealists; radical purists whose faith is undimmed by the compromises and failures of the past. And so it was in the Czech lands at the turn of the fifteenth century. Hussite reforms were crushed but gave birth to the Taborite Revolution. With the death of their greatest leaders and the frustration of their ambitions, the Taborites eventually returned to their towns. Despite this apparent failure, Hussites and Taborites together planted the seeds for every social movement that followed.

Even Jaroslav Hašek's national epic, *The Good Soldier Schweik* (the first English-language book I was given having taken residence in Prague), lived and breathed the hopelessness of hope, the power of a small nation to endure under occupation while cheerfully sabotaging the occupiers with every clumsy step taken on their behalf.<sup>73</sup>

All of these sources planted the seeds for the Prague Spring which was crushed in 1968, but which in turn brought forth Karta 77. It too failed in its turn, and the intellectuals who supported it were jailed in the worst case, or given humble labor in the best cases. It was not for nothing that Czechs of the time joked that the superiority of Czech education was demonstrated by the remarkable number of Czech garbage men holding Ph.D.s. Yet one of Karta 77's leaders, Vaclav Havel, fresh from his infatuation with CBGBs in New York, returned to become the first post-communist democratic President and took up bemused residence in Hradčany Castle, over the Charles Bridge at the base of the Vltava River.<sup>74</sup> I lived for a time in a sub-cellar of Hradčany—a cold water flat with no water in a day when the hopes of Karta 77 were fading.

Which brings us back to the novel *Alamut*.<sup>75</sup> Its most famous passage, oft repeated and attributed to the Nizari Ismailis, is that nothing is true, everything is permitted, for:

More and more I began to see the supreme wisdom of the Ismaili dais. Truth is unattainable to us, it doesn't exist for us. What then is the proper response? If you've concluded that you can know nothing, if you don't believe in anything, then everything is permitted, then follow your passions.<sup>76</sup>

It is a refrain taken up by the American junkie poet Jim Carroll in the 1980s:

You get nothin' back for all you've saved  
Just eternity and a spacious grave / She said,  
"Nothing is true, everything is permitted"...Things just go from bad to worse / Starts like a  
kiss and ends like a curse / But nothing's true, she said everything is permitted<sup>77</sup>

All in this article share something else, however. Truth may be unattainable, it is surely the province of God alone, but to attain even a glimmer of that truth, to build a world that is perfectly in harmony with the Word and Will of God, absolutely anything is permitted. In the ancient and medieval worlds, death on the grand scale would follow each of the movements chronicled in these pages. And this spirit will take even deeper root in the modern world when technology would at last meet aspiration, and together they would give birth to genocide, which is the ultimate logic of apocalypse.

This is a hard truth, but there is a connection. Although few seem to apprehend it, radicalisms intersect. There are no good and bad religious revolutionaries. Each seeks to cleanse the world, and in such an endeavor, everything is permitted. The Taborites not only inspired Howard Kaminski and his academic heirs, they inspired Italian fascism and German National Socialism as well.<sup>78</sup>

Even in our day, of course, genocide is beyond the means of terrorists. It remains the province of states. But even for such as they, in dreams everything is permitted. The Serbs in the 1990s and the tribal fighters in Africa today understood this, and found in rape the ideal tool of racial genocide, believing that mixing the blood of tribe or race would accomplish what their meager technological resources could not.<sup>79</sup> In genocide, too, nothing is true and everything is permitted.

Today the unlamented communists are gone, but Hus remains. His statue still stands on Old Town Square in the Mala Strana, and many events of the democratization movement took place at his feet. I returned to the now Czech Republic to fulfill a longtime dream of my own; to lay a bouquet of flowers at the feet of one of my own heroes, Jan Žižka, in modern-day Tabor. Žižka virtually invented guerilla warfare, the battle tank, and the art of popular warfare, which may be credited with putting a full stop to the medieval world, while marking for the first time the triumph of popular forces over the power of the state. They defeated waves of crusaders sent by the Church to bring them to heel. It would not be until the widespread availability of the Kalashnikov rifle to indigenous forces that popular warfare would enjoy such an era of success. I am partial to the Hussite/Taborite revolution, although less so to the successor movement—the anarchic Adamites with their dedication to nudity, free love (often during church services), and their insistence on “liberating whatever they fancied at the moment in the name of God and the people.” They are perhaps to be admired for surviving, seemingly on faith alone, the brutally cold Central European winters, but seemed too much of a 1960s artifact to be taken seriously. In any case, they were long forgotten by the 20-something generation who were my peers in that gray and distant time.

The religious issue which catalyzed the Hussite revolution in the waning years of the fifteenth century seems hopelessly esoteric today. Utraquism, allowing the laity to have both the bread and the wine, the body and the blood of Christ, was the leading demand in Jan Hus’s reformist teachings. It was an idea that had widespread support among the nobility, if not the crown, and increasingly vocal popular support among the laity as well. It was only when Hus opposed indulgences—holy get out of purgatory free documents—that Pope John XXIII moved against Hus. The money was needed after all to pursue the Pope’s crusade against rival Pope Gregory XII.<sup>80</sup>

Howard Kaminsky, still the greatest historian and chronicler of all things Hussite, puts it well:

Hussitism is seen as beginning with a movement for reform, which then became a revolt; both then became wider and deeper, the reform passing into reformation, the revolt into revolution... . No single act can be taken as *the* revolution, not the utraquist revolt of 1414, nor the Prague insurrection of 1419, nor the Pan-Hussite defense of the Emperor Sigismund in 1420, nor finally the chiliast social revolution of that same year.<sup>81</sup>

The model of frustrated reform, revolution, and ultimate synthesis that was first demonstrated by the Hussites and Taborites would repeat itself thereafter throughout history.

Hus, like the later Martin Luther whom he deeply influenced, was a university-based theologian, giving him considerably more latitude than was enjoyed by Catholic prelates. He appeared at a time when the Church was deeply mired in scandal and when popular revulsion toward all aspects of the institutional Church was at its height. The spectacle of dueling Popes had been at the time of the Avignon Papacy a profound shock to the world of the Western Church.<sup>82</sup> That was at the turn of the fourteenth century, nearly a century before the Hussite revolt. What had been a traumatic shock was now, sadly enough, business as usual and people turned with disgust from the institutional Church.

The reforms championed by Hus were originally supported by the weak King Wenceslas IV, who backed away from his support when the Church imposed an interdict on Prague.<sup>83</sup> Hus was excommunicated by the Pope in 1411, which forced the King's hand.<sup>84</sup> Hus's popularity only grew, however, and the situation continued to destabilize until, in an apparent compromise, Hus was promised safe passage to offer his views to the Council of Constance in 1415. There, however, he was seized, tortured, and ultimately burned at the stake when he refused to abjure his views.<sup>85</sup> The news caused an explosion in Prague which the King was ill prepared to either accommodate or suppress.

The sudden popular radicalization in the wake of the burning of Jan Hus engendered the first of what would become numerous splits in the ranks of the Hussites. For all their passion, the Hussites were essentially a reformist movement, seeking to reform both the Church and crown. Faced with stalemate and a failed attempt by the King to restore the religio-political status quo, by 1419 the movement split into two primary factions: the reformist Hussites and the revolutionary Taborites. The Hussites essentially had no program beyond the reform of the Church, and no intention to go beyond working with authorities toward changes that clearly were not going to happen. This opened the door for more radical voices and more violent actions.<sup>86</sup>

That action came in the form of the first Defenestration of Prague in 1419. Meaning literally to throw out the window, an angry mob stormed the royal council chambers and threw seven of the King's councilors out the window. In reality, this was a second story window and in ordinary circumstances the fall would have hurt only the royal dignity. However, the combination of skillfully placed pikes and the presence of an enraged crowd resulted in the death of all seven of the royal vassals. King Wenceslas's reaction was apoplectic, as a result of which he soon died as well, and in the resulting vacuum the Taborite revolution was on.<sup>87</sup>

The decision to withdraw from the cities and to establish independent enclaves also grew out of the violence of 1419. Again Howard Kaminsky describes it best:

In south Bohemia, long the most active center of popular heresy and then of radical Hussitism, the radical priests organized congregations outside the parish system, on open hilltops, where they gave utraquist communion and preached vigorous evangelical sermons against the Roman system. The spirit of these congregations was a conscious imitation of evangelical and apostolic Christianity, with an emphasis on Christian pacifism, brotherly love, and such practical acts as the sharing of food. As groups of regular, perhaps even permanent, congregants took shape there emerged the rudiments of a really new life, one held together by love rather than by institutions based on force. The effect was

to create a new social foundation for the radical party; those who felt alienated from the established social system and whose religious ideas constituted a rejection of that system in principle had now taken the final step of building a kind of social existence wholly outside the feudal order. The center of these mass congregations was a hill near Bechyně castle that the radicals renamed “Mt. Tabor,” after the mountain in Galilee where Jesus was supposed to have spoken with his disciples and to have appeared to them after his death. The congregants themselves became known as Taborites.<sup>88</sup>

The Taborites created, at first, a fascinating social experiment.<sup>89</sup> Goods were held in a common pot in the town square, and were apportioned free to each according to his need. Residents were mutually supportive and lived in what in a later day would be called an ideal state of spiritual communism.<sup>90</sup> Under the leadership of Jan Žižka, each of the seven Tabors became impregnable. Successive internal crusades were sent against the Taborites and each was crushed with such an excess of violence that by the third anti-Taborite Crusade, the crusaders had only to hear the Taborite battle song to throw down their weapons and flee in terror.<sup>91</sup>

Violence was a Taborite vice, and if their idealized “spiritual communism” within Tabor is to be admired in the context of the fifteenth century, not so their tactics. It is here that the element of terrorism emerges most clearly. Estates were burned and the families that owned them put to the sword—man, woman, and child. At first, the Taborites were exceedingly kind to the peasantry, viewed as freed from the oppression and toil of the estates. But Tabor had little need of them and after a time the dues paid to their former masters was rendered to Tabor upon pain of death. For them, little had changed and Taborite terror now ran unchecked throughout the lands under their control.<sup>92</sup> The irony of the movement that in effect ended the Middle Ages is that, in the end, they very much accepted the threefold aspects of medieval society—those who fought, those who prayed, and those who toiled.<sup>93</sup> They rejected both rival popes and despoiled monasteries, while assuming seigniorial rights outside of Tabor.<sup>94</sup>

Howard Kaminsky quotes a rabidly anti-Taborite source of the time, Master John Přebram, on the Taborite evolution toward violence, finding his account credible:

The people, thus seduced [by the chiliast summons to leave everything, congregate, and pool their money], saw how they had evidently been deceived and how they had been deprived of their estates. And, seeing that nothing had come or was coming of the things that their prophets had prophesied, and suffering hunger, misery, and want, they began to grumble and complain greatly against the prophets. At this point the false seducers thought up a new lie somehow to console the people, and they said that the whole Christian church was to be reformed in such a way that all the sinners and evil people were to perish completely, and that only God’s elect were to remain on the earth—those who had fled to the mountains. And they said that the elect of God would rule in the world for a thousand years with Christ, visibly and tangibly. And they preached that the elect of God who fled to the mountains would themselves possess all the goods of the destroyed evil ones and rule over all their estates and villages. [They would enjoy a superabundance of wealth and would not have to pay dues or rents, or render services.]

Then the seducers, wanting to bring the people to that freedom and somehow to substantiate their lies, began to preach enormous cruelty, unheard-of violence, and injustice to man. They said that now was the time of vengeance, the time of destruction of all sinners and the time of God’s wrath ... in which all the evil and sinful ones were to perish by sudden death, on one day... . And when this did not happen and God did not bring about what they had preached, then they themselves knew how to bring it about and again thought up new and most evil cruelties ..., that all the sinners were to be killed by the afflictions described in Ecclesiasticus [xxxix, 35–36]... . And again those cruel beasts, the Taborite priests, wanting to excite and work up the people so that they would not shrink from these afflictions,

preached ... that it was no longer the time of mercy but the time of vengeance ... so that the people should strike and kill all sinners.<sup>95</sup>

Peter Chelčický, another contemporary who was very much in sympathy with Taborite ideals, was also appalled by the antinomian violence of which they were capable. Mathew Spinka notes:

Peter Chelčick, although he refers to this extreme of the Taborites as “our brethren,” was also repelled by immoralities and the fanaticisms of this group. The antinomian features of their ethics, and their denial of the real presence [of] the Lord’s Supper, blinded him to their basic principles which he, as a strict biblicist, should have shared.<sup>96</sup>

The evolution from dreamy idealism to antinomian violence that is the common currency of each group examined in these pages was now all but complete. The Taborites, who had at first protected and supported peasants after killing or frightening off their feudal lords, came to replace those lords and exact payments no less onerous than those of the lords they displaced. Spiritual communism came to be replaced by a surfeit of goods taken from raids on peaceful towns and villages.

Jan Žižka died in 1424 of plague rather than in battle, and the Taborites never recovered from his loss. In the end, though, the Taborites fell victim to the malady of every popular revolution that does not reach its objectives in a man’s lifetime: the believers got tired, discouraged, and homesick. Most eventually took up offers of amnesty and an agreement to allow individual churches to serve both parts, the body and the blood, if they wished, thus eliminating the utraquist issue and offering an honorable way out to all but the most determined of the true believers.<sup>97</sup> The model of pardon and reintegration into society has changed in the modern world hardly a whit.

In 1434 a final battle took place. The Taborite army, commanded by Prokop the Great and Prokop the Lesser, were crushed at Lipany and both commanders were killed. The Taborite Revolution was now at an end, leaving the field to a group of Free Spirit Adamite believers.<sup>98</sup> The Free Spirit Adamites were convinced that Jesus was indeed on the Earth and thus the believers should revert to the life of the Garden of Eden before the sin of Eve led to the Fall. Their sexual adventures and ritual nudity plagued the later Taborites, but time and the Czech winter accomplished for the nudists what Lipany had done for the holdout Taborites and the Czechs returned to their normal way of life, having put an end to the Middle Ages and the medieval world.

## Conclusion

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ, Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.<sup>99</sup>

For each case presented, nothing they believed proved to be true, and for them, for a season, everything was permitted. The quote from Omar Kayyam above was perhaps once true, but it was the product of a simpler, more credulous time. The legacy which each, Sicarii and Taborite, Kharajite and Nizari, have left behind is a blank slate upon which all can write. The Czech communists and the young democracy dreamers wrote their dreams on the Hussites and Taborites, young westerners and Shi’ite extremists all found a model in Hassan i-Sabah, and the interpretations of ibn Taymiyya are as many as there are dreamers in the Islamic world.

With this sad commentary, the author too comes full circle. Memories of a séance (you have no idea how dead the time was in the deep winter in communist Czechoslovakia) where a room full of 20-something Charles University students struggled with English while trying to evoke the shade of Jan Hus), the catacombs under Tabor that so powerfully evoked Jan Žižka, standing at a crusader castle in rural Syria and talking to largely Christian Syrians about Hassan i-Sabah and the Crusaders, hearing Ibn Taymiyyah's name from young and old alike in so many places in the Middle East ... all of these memories suffuse this history.

The history of these movements alone would be a dead academic thing, done better by others long ago, without the cultural heritage which is their true legacy. One man's terrorist is certainly not another's freedom fighter, but their histories are a blank slate on which all may write. The Czech communists and the young democracy dreamers wrote their dreams on the Hussites and Taborites, young westerners and Shi'i extremists all found a model in Hassan i-Sabah, and the interpretations of the prophetic words of Ibn Taymiyyah are as many as there are dreamers in the Islamic world.

Yet for each case presented, nothing they believed proved to be true for the Lord tarries still. Yet for a season, everything was permitted. Antinomian violence, murder on the grand scale, and a systematic violation of the ideals and visions which drew the hearts of men to them appears to have been their common lot. Perhaps Norman Cohn's vision of dazed medieval millennialists, moved to fits of passion and violence, repentance and expiation, has more to say to us of today than we would like to credit.<sup>100</sup> Certainly it was Cohn's book, discovered quite by accident on a back shelf of the library of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, that set the course of my own academic journey.

Or are we left to merely shrug, reminding ourselves of the wisdom of Matthew 7:15–20, who presciently warns:

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn-bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is *cut down and thrown into the fire*. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. [King James Version]

And what are their fruits? The Sicarii's mass suicide at Masada marked the end of Temple Judaism and presaged nearly two millennia of diaspora. The Kharajites leave behind only a legacy of blood and a path for other radical purists to follow. Blood on blood. The Fatimids and the Abbasids survived by becoming everything that they once professed to hate and vowed to destroy. The Nizaris and their mythologized leader Hassan i-Sabah? They remain an enigma from which all, contemporary Nizari believer, Islamophobes, and teenaged boys dreaming of power, of being feared and therefore being recognized as worthy of note, may draw. And the Hussite-Taborite-Adamite triumvirate? They are the emotional heart of this meditation, and the author's admiration of them remains undimmed even if their reality turns out to be considerably bloodier than their posthumous reputation in the Czechoslovakia of yesterday or the Czech Republic of today.

For together, for good or ill, it was they, not the huddled masses cowering before the powers that be, that created the modern world. Together, they blazed a trail which the movements of today, the Al Qaedas and the ISISs of our world, slavishly follow. You know them by their fruits, and their fruits, like their ancient forbearers, have been death and the powers of this world, following Matthew, vainly seek to burn them out of existence, root and branch.

But if the logic of their actions are genocidal, the overweening hope that powers their quests is not to be despised. Each saw the ills, the evils, of their time and sought not reform or to correct, but to rectify and perfect. Who has not had such a dream? Who has not listened in skepticism or awe in synagogue or church or mosque to sermons promising exactly this surcease of terrestrial woe? Most who do so return to their homes on Friday or Saturday or Sunday and live their lives as if nothing had been said, devoting themselves to family or football or more private pursuits.

But in every generation of which we have historical record, some listened, a few heard, and a bare handful acted. If genocide is the unspoken dream, it need not be an ill-mannered one. From the 1970s a remarkable meeting of the minds, hearts, and souls has been quietly taking place in the twisting lanes of Jerusalem, the farmlands of Texas, and the overpriced suburbs of Southern California as Christian fundamentalists and messianic Jews have joined together in the Third Temple Movement. Between them there is great good fellowship, and money flows like wine into the coffers of such as the Temple Institute as it seeks to recreate a priesthood replete with authentic reproductions of the instruments of Second Temple Service.<sup>101</sup> It is not for nothing that the sage Maimonides decreed that the Temple should not be rebuilt by human hands until *after* the return of the Messiah, for it stands on the site of the Dome of the Rock and to lay hands on that sacred site would set the region on fire.<sup>102</sup>

Unspoken is the certainty on both sides that when the Judgment is upon us, the wrong religion, Jew or Christian, will be excluded from the promised paradise. The dream is frankly genocidal, but polite nonetheless. They too are the few—their numbers as paltry as their chiliastic dreams are grand, but their goals are no less apocalyptic than those of any movement of the past or present.

We should not judge the groups and individuals that these pages have sought to chronicle too harshly. They are not in essence different from their global progeny of today whose own dreams were once as gentle as those of today's Third Temple seekers. Great dreams have great costs. The eschatological imperatives of all three Peoples of the Book after all are not for the timid,<sup>103</sup> but they each offer a vision of ultimate purity; utter perfection. Is the realization of this Divine Promise not worth any price?

In striving for redemption, everything is permitted.

## Afterword

Long ago, I opened my *Encyclopedia of White Power* with a little noticed Sufi quote. That quote will close this discourse for nothing has changed; nothing is true and in the antinomian siren song, everything will always be permitted. Quoting Sultan Bahu:

Seekers of this world are like dogs, wandering from door to door in wonder / Their attention is riveted on a bone, their lives wasted in bickering / Short on intelligence and unable to

understand, they set out in search of water / Apart from recollection of the Lord, Bahu, all else is idle chatter<sup>104</sup>

## Notes

1. Said's book seems almost forty years after its appearance unremarkable, but its impact in its time on the academy is undiminished. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).
2. David Rapoport, "Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1984): 658–77. For a consideration of Rapoport's many contributions to the study of ancient and modern religious terrorism, see Jeffrey Kaplan, "David Rapoport and the Study of Religiously Motivated Terrorism," in *Terrorism, Identity and Legitimacy: Four Waves Theory and Political Violence*, edited by Jean Rosenfeld (New York: Routledge, 2011), 66–84.
3. "Ancient Jewish History: Hellenism," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/hellenism.html>; "Ancient Jewish History: The Bar-Kokhba Revolt," *Jewish Virtual Library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/revolt1.html>. For those with the ambition and love of learning, see Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003).
4. Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged*, New updated ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 2 vols.
5. Richard A. Horsley, "The Sicarii: Ancient Jewish Terrorists," *The Journal of Religion* 59, no. 4 (1979): 435.
6. For an introduction to the Scrolls, see <http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/home>. The literature that has grown up around the find is immense. They remain something of a mystery however because of the practice of assigning portions of them to particular scholars who in turn anoint chosen graduate students as successors to their portion of the treasure.
7. For an excellent introduction, see "Zealots and Sicarii," *Jewish Virtual Library*, [https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0021\\_0\\_21428.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0021_0_21428.html)
8. An early source is valuable, Solomon Zeitlin, "Masada and the Sicarii," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 55, no. 4 (1965): 299–317. It was republished in the same journal in 1967. The topic remains deeply controversial. See Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995). Cf. Louis I. Rabinowitz, "The Masada Martyrs According to the Halakhah," *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 11, no. 3 (1970): 31–7.
9. Robert M. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought: The Jewish Experience in History* (New York: Macmillan, 1980).
10. Much of this discussion is drawn from Josephus, which accords well with the fine coverage of the Jewish Virtual Library's "Zealots and Sicarii" (see note 7 above). There are several other sources which should be noted. A valuable monographic source can be found in Mark Andrew Brighton, *The Sicarii in Josephus's Judean War: Rhetorical Analysis and Historical Observations*, Early Judaism and Its Literature (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009). A more focused historical and religious study can be obtained from International Organization for Qumran Studies, Proceedings of the 5th Meeting in Groningen, Netherlands, 2004: Florentino García Martínez and Mladen Popović, eds., *Defining Identities: We, You, and the Other in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the IOQS in GröNingen*, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008). A much more controversial take is William W. Moore, *The Sicarii* (Dallas, TX: Penumbra, 1990). It can be obtained as a file download as well.
11. David C. Rapoport was the first to note the Sicarii's importance in the history of terrorism, and his 1980s articles on the subject remain paradigmatic today. Rapoport, "Fear and

- Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions” (see note 2 above). David C. Rapoport, “Why Does Messianism Produce Terror?,” in *Current Research on Terrorism* (Aberdeen, Scotland: Aberdeen University Press, 1987). David C. Rapoport, “Messianic Sanctions for Terror,” *Comparative Politics* 20 (1988). More recently, Randall D. Law’s *The Routledge History of Terrorism* contains an interesting piece on the Sicarii as a terrorist movement: Donothan Taylor and Yannick Gautron, “Pre-Modern Terrorism: The Cases of Sicari and the Assassins,” in *The Routledge History of Terrorism*, ed. Randall D. Law (New York: Routledge, 2015), 28–45.
12. Steven Weitzman, “From Feasts into Mourning: The Violence of Early Jewish Festivals,” *The Journal of Religion* 79, no. 4 (1999): 545–65.
  13. A fine folio edition of the observations of Josephus and others is available as Josephus, *Seige and Destruction of Jerusalem, Collected from the Works of Josephus and Other Historians* (Dublin, Ireland: Bentham & Hardy, 1825). It and all the works of Josephus are available on the Internet Archive, <https://ia800300.us.archive.org/31/items/historyofsiegede00jose/histor-yofsiegede00jose.pdf>
  14. Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971). Efraim Elimelech Urbach, *The Sages, Their Concepts and Beliefs* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).
  15. The Third Temple is a fascinating story in itself. It is the obsession of a very small number of Jews and a surprisingly large number of American Fundamentalist and Evangelical Christians. The Jews for their part are forbidden to rebuild the Second Temple, or even to step on the grounds of the site that now houses the third most sacred site in Islam, the Dome of the Rock. There is nonetheless the Temple Institute in Jerusalem who are recreating the artifacts of temple service and training a new priesthood. The ideas catalyzed a frightening plot to blow up the Dome of the Rock on the part of the Jewish terrorist group dubbed by the press the Jewish Underground. On the Third Temple, see Motti Inbari, *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount: Who Will Build the Third Temple?*, SUNY Series in Israeli Studies (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009). Cf. from the perspective of the Temple Institute, Israel Ariel and Chaim Richman, *The Odyssey of the Third Temple* (Jerusalem: G. Israel Publications & Productions: Temple Institute, 1993). For an insider’s perspective on the plot to destroy the Dome of the Rock, the excellent memoir Haggai Segal, *Dear Brothers: The West Bank Jewish Underground* (Woodmere, NY: Beit Shamai, 1988). Cf. Era Rapaport and William B. Helmreich, *Letters from Tel Mond Prison: An Israeli Settler Defends His Act of Terror* (New York: Free Press, 1996).
  16. Aaron Lichtenstein, *The Seven Laws of Noah* (New York: Rabbi Jacob Joseph School Press; Z. Berman Books, distributor, 1981). This has given rise to the Noahide Movement, a sect of American former Evangelical Christians who adopted the Noahide laws and sought instruction under Jewish rabbiis. Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 100–26.
  17. Sharon Kelly Heyob, *The Cult of Isis among Women in the Graeco-Roman World*, Études Préliminaires Aux Religions Orientales Dans L’empire Romain (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1975); Petra Pakkanen, *Interpreting Early Hellenistic Religion: A Study Based on the Mystery Cult of Demeter and the Cult of Isis*, Papers and Monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens (Helsinki, Finland: Suomen Ateenan-instituutin säätiö, 1996); C. O. G. Ndubokwu, *Egyptian Cult of Isis: The Mother Goddess*, Oputorubooks Monograph Series (Ibadan: Oputoru Books, 2002); Harold R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration: A Study of Mystery Initiations in the Graeco-Roman World* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1929); Viveca Olsson, *The Lenaia Vases Revisited: Image, Ritual, and Dionysian Women* (Göteborg, Sweden: Göteborg University, Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History, 2006).
  18. John J. Collins, “The Zeal of Phinehas: The Bible and the Legitimation of Violence,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122, no. 1 (2003): 3–21.
  19. Danny W. Davis, *The Phinehas Priesthood: Violent Vanguard of the Christian Identity Movement*. Psi Guides to Terrorists, Insurgents, and Armed Groups (Santa Barbara, CA:

- Praeger, 2010). Cf. “Phineas Priesthood,” in Jeffrey Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2000), 242–44. On the Israeli Phinehas priests, Gideon Aran and Ron E. Hassner, “Religious Violence in Judaism: Past and Present,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25, no. 3 (2013): 355–405.
20. “Ancient Jewish History: Hellenism,” *Jewish Virtual library*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/source/History/hellenism.html>. For a venerable but fascinating read, see George Holley Gilbert, “The Hellenization of the Jews between 334 B. C. and 70 A. D.,” *The American Journal of Theology* 13, no. 4 (1909).
  21. It is a point often noted by the late Ehud Sprinzak, from his Iceberg Model of Israeli politics through his ideas on split delegitimization. Ehud Sprinzak, “The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism,” in David Newman, ed., *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlement in the West Bank* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985), 27–45. Cf. Ehud Sprinzak, “Right Wing Terrorism in a Comparative Perspective: The Case of Split Delegitimization,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7, no. 1 (1995): 17–43. Sprinzak passed away suddenly in 2002. His acuity is sorely missed. On Heredi violence, the best introduction remains Samuel C. Heilman and Manacham Friedman, “Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the Heredim,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 197–264.
  22. For the most intolerant view of Islam, see Robert Spencer, *The Truth About Muhammad: Founder of the World’s Most Intolerant Religion* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2006). Spencer is one of the intellectual guiding lights of the Counter-Jihad movement which is most influential in Europe and the American Trump Administration.
  23. David C. Rapoport, “The Four Waves of Modern Terror,” in *Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy*, eds. Audrey Cronin and J. Ludes (Washington, DC: Georgetown Univ. Press, 2004), 17.
  24. For one such argument, see Thomas R. Mockaitis, *The “New” Terrorism: Myths and Reality* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2007), 38–52. For Rapoport’s view, see David C. Rapoport, “The Fourth Wave: September 11 in the History of Terrorism,” *Current History* 100, no. 650 (2001): 419–24.
  25. For a broad and instructive introduction, see Karen Armstrong, *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* (Toronto, Canada: Knopf Canada, 2014). Cf. the tripartite paradigm in René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977). Cf. Richard Jackson, “Constructing Enemies: ‘Islamic Terrorism’ in Political and Academic Discourse,” *Government and Opposition* 42, no. 3 (2007): 394–426.
  26. For a broad one-stop shop on Islamic history, see Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). The University of Chicago fundamentalist in me, however, strongly recommends the classic series on Islamic history by the great historian Marshall G. S. Hodgson: Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974); *The Classical Age of Islam*, his *The Venture of Islam* Vol. 1 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974); *The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*, his *The Venture of Islam* Vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974); *The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*, his *The Venture of Islam* Vol. 3 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974).
  27. There is no better known or oft-written about religious leader in the world than Mohammad. Even in the age of TMZ and paparazzi journalism, more is known of Mohammad’s public and personal life than any modern celebrity or any historical religious leader. The *Sunna* records his actions in given situations and the *Hadith*, a part of the *Sunna*, records his words as attested by his family and his companions as recorded in each *Hadith*’s Chain of Transmission (*isnad*). We thus know Mohammad as man, through the testimony of A’isha, his youngest wife, as a lover. Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time* (New York: Atlas Books/HarperCollins, 2006). Karen Armstrong has a gift for taking complex subjects and rendering them as both accessible and historically accurate.

28. Assaf Moghadam, "Terrorist Affiliations in Context: A Typology of Terrorist Inter-Group Cooperation," *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2015): 22–25. Daniel Milton and Muhammad al-'Ubaydi, "Pledging Bay'A: A Benefit or Burden to the Islamic State?," *CTC Sentinel* 8, no. 3 (2015): 1–7.
29. For an intensely partisan Shi'ite perspective in textual terms, see "Muawiyah and Abusing Imam Ali (as)," *Islam.org*, <http://www.al-islam.org/shiite-encyclopedia-ahlul-bayt-dilp-team/muawiyah-and-abusing-imam-ali>. One of the best introductory texts on Shi'a Islam is Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985). For a more challenging introduction, see S. Husain M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000). None however is better than the classic Marshall G. S. Hodgson, "How Did the Early Shi'a Become Sectarian?," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75, no. 1 (1955): 1–13.
30. A highly recommended discussion of the contemporary impact of the Kharajites may be found in Hussam S. Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites*, American University Studies Series VII, Theology and Religion (New York: Peter Lang, 2008). For a remarkably good discussion of the impact of the Battle of Siffin and the emergence of the Kharajites, see the unpublished essay: Sümeyra Yakar, "What Was the Influence of Battle of Siffin over Kharijites' Doctrine and Why Did They Separate Themselves from the Muslim Community?," *Academia*, [https://www.academia.edu/5646053/What\\_was\\_the\\_influence\\_of\\_battle\\_of\\_Siffin\\_over\\_Kharijites\\_doctrine\\_and\\_why\\_did\\_they\\_seperate\\_themselves\\_from\\_the\\_Muslim\\_community](https://www.academia.edu/5646053/What_was_the_influence_of_battle_of_Siffin_over_Kharijites_doctrine_and_why_did_they_seperate_themselves_from_the_Muslim_community)
31. Ahmed E. Souaiaia, *Anatomy of Dissent in Islamic Societies: Ibadism, Rebellion, and Legitimacy* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
32. Donald P. Little, "The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 3 (1973): 311–27.
33. Ibn Taymiyya, *Enjoining Right and Forbidding Wrong*, trans. Salim Abdallah ibn Morgan (Islamic Books), <https://ia800208.us.archive.org/13/items/EnjoiningRightAndForbiddingWrong.pdf/EnjoiningRightAndForbiddingWrong.pdf>. The Internet Archives is invaluable as a source for historical texts. Cf. Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed, eds., *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Studies in Islamic Philosophy (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015).
34. al-Gazzali, *Counsel for Kings*, trans. F. R. C. Bagley (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). Cf. Ghazzālī and Claud Field, *The Confessions of Al Ghazzali, Tr. For the First Time into English, The Wisdom of the East Series* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1909). The latter is available at the Internet Archive, <https://ia800201.us.archive.org/21/items/confessionsofalg00ghaziala/confessionsofalg00ghaziala.pdf>. The former at [www.ghazali.org/books/kingcouncil.pdf](http://www.ghazali.org/books/kingcouncil.pdf)
35. The situation is even more complex. As the Sunnis closed the gates of ijihad—interpretation of sacred text in light of current events—in the eleventh century CE, it is impossible to legitimately update these requirements, making the Islamist quest in many ways an exercise in futility. Wael B. Hallaq, "Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed?," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16, no. 1 (1984): 3–41.
36. "Mapping the Global Muslim Population," *Pew Research Center*, <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population/>
37. Timani, *Modern Intellectual Readings of the Kharijites* (see note 30 above). The term "neo-Kharajite" has been used often by scholars and duly appears several times in this basic introductory text. The original Kharajites were not as monolithic as is often believed today. For an interesting example, see Adam R. Gaiser, "What Do We Learn About the Early Khārijites and Ibāḥīyya from Their Coins?," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 130, no. 2 (2010): 167–87. Similarly, early Shi'ism was remarkably fluid, which given the secrecy and the decentralized nature of the early faith was inevitable. Maria Massi Dakake, *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007).

38. Denis McEoin, "Aspects of Militancy and Quietism in Imami Shi'ism," *Bulletin (British Society for Middle Eastern Studies)* 11, no. 1 (1984): 19.
39. For a solid background on Islamic apocalyptic traditions, see Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Apocalypse in Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). For the Shi'ite traditions, see Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (see note 29 above).
40. Farhad Daftary, *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies*, Ismaili Heritage Series (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 124–5.
41. For a good background on the Hasan i-Sabah legend, see Farhad Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis* (London; New York: Tauris, 1994). For a thrilling introduction to the impact of the Assassins legend on the modern world, see the novel *Alamut* by Vladimir Bartol. Named for the strongest Ismaili Nazari castle, the book serves as the inspiration for the popular computer game Assassin's Creed. Vladimir Bartol, *Alamut*, trans. Michael Biggins (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2007). On the influence of the game, see Frank G. Bosman, "Nothing Is True, Everything Is Permitted"—the Portrayal of the Nizari Isma'ilis in the Assassin's Creed Game Series," *Online-Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 10 (2016): 6–26.
42. A brief rendition of the classical version may be found in Charles E. Nowell, "The Old Man of the Mountain," *Speculum* 22, no. 4 (1947): 497–519.
43. The houris were no small incentive to bravery on the battlefield, just as they are a controversial feature of modern Islamist terrorism. A too little remarked aspect of this is that, while male *shahids* may look forward to their devoted company in Paradise, there is no equivalent reward for female martyrs to the cause, making actions like suicide bombing by women all the more selfless, and therefore more praiseworthy. David Cook, "Women Fighting in Jihad?," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 28, no. 5 (2005): 381.
44. A fine description of the *houris* can be found in "THE HOOR AL AYN OF JANNAH PARADISE," ISLAM THE TRUE RELIGION OF ONE GOD, July 15, 2011, <https://islamreligion1.wordpress.com/2011/07/15/the-hoor-al-ayn-of-jannah-paradise/>. The popular story of the Assassins was translated to contemporary academia primarily through the 1967 book by Bernard Lewis which was released in a new edition in 2003 after 9/11 rekindled interest in terrorism and in so doing gave birth to a generation of newly minted "terrorism experts." Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (New York: Basic Books, 2003). The 1962 version of *The Manchurian Candidate* in all its Cold War glory can be seen on *Youtube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka-NTSHB0d0>, as can its defanged and overlong 2004 version with Denzel Washington, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u57Q286yS\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u57Q286yS_w). And while on *Youtube*, not to be missed is the television docudrama purporting to convey the story of Hasan i-Sabah in all its largely fictional glory. "HASAN BIN SABBAAH" THE FOUNDER AND THE SPRITUAL (sic) LEADER OF SHIA NIZARI ISMAILIS "THE HASHISHINS," [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16A\\_NibfBgs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16A_NibfBgs). History appears first as tragedy, and then as entertainment it seems.
45. Andrew Nichols Pratt, "Terrorism's Evolution: Yesterday, Today, and Forever," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 10, no. 2 (2011): 10. Saladin's relations with the Crusaders were of a different order, and women of their number enjoyed his favors. He gets better reviews in the chronicles of the time than the old Man of the Mountain. See Diana Abouali, "Saladin's Legacy in the Middle East before the Nineteenth Century," *Crusades* 10, no. 1 (2011): 175–89. Cf. "Jerusalem: Dark and Satanic," *History Today* 63, no. 1 (2011): 46–53.
46. Meriem Pagès, *From Martyr to Murderer: Representations of the Assassins in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Europe*, 1st ed. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014), 106.
47. David C. Rapoport and Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *Assassination & Terrorism* ([Toronto]: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1971).
48. On cannibalism and the Crusades, see Jay Rubenstein, "Cannibals and Crusaders," *French Historical Studies* 31, no. 4 (2008): 525–52. For a book-length treatment of the wider issues of the Crusades, including a fine discussion of the Crusaders' carnivorous zeal, see Philippe Buc, *Holy War, Martyrdom, and Terror: Christianity, Violence, and the West*, Haney Foundation Series (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). Hind's story became

- current again when a Syrian rebel was videotaped eating a soldier's heart. See "Outrage at Syrian Rebel Shown 'Eating Soldier's Heart,'" *BBC*, May 14, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-22519770>. On Hind herself: "In the battle of Uhud the Muslims were defeated. After their rout, Hinda and the other harpies she had brought with her from Makka, mutilated the bodies of the slain Muslims. Hinda cut open Hamzah's abdomen, plucked out his liver and chewed it up. Muhammad ibn Umar Waqidi, the historian, says that she made a fire in the battlefield, roasted Hamzah's heart and liver and ate them. Not satisfied with this, she cut the limbs, the ears and the nose of Hamzah, strung them into a 'necklace,' and entered Makka wearing it as a 'trophy' of victory." "Hamzah the brave, uncle of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)," *Islamicoccasions.com*, <http://www.ezsoftech.com/islamic/hamza.asp>
49. Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis* (see note 41 above). Farhad Daftary, "The 'Order of the Assassins': J. Von Hammer and the Orientalist Misrepresentations of the Nizari Ismailis (Review Article)," *Iranian Studies* 39, no. 1 (2006): 75.
  50. "The 'Order of the Assassins': J. Von Hammer and the Orientalist Misrepresentations of the Nizari Ismailis (Review Article)" (see note 50 above), 74–75. This source adds additional levels of disappointment in the tale with the suggestion that the intrepid traveler probably heard the tales in Italy rather than on his travels.
  51. *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis*, Introduction (see note 41 above). The reference is to Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Secret Order of Assassins: The Struggle of the Early Nizārī Ismā'īlīs against the Islamic World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005). Lewis, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam* (see note 44 above). The best concise deconstruction of the Orientalism at the root of the story remains Daftary, "The 'Order of the Assassins': J. Von Hammer and the Orientalist Misrepresentations of the Nizari Ismailis (Review Article)" (see note 50 above), 71–81.
  52. "The 'Order of the Assassins': J. Von Hammer and the Orientalist Misrepresentations of the Nizari Ismailis (Review Article)" (see note 50 above), 81.
  53. There are a number of sources for a more historicist view. A surprisingly good source is the self-published Ali Mohammad Rajput, *Hasan-I-Sabbah: His Life and Thought* (Xlibris, 2013). More focused and far more academic sources—used primarily for this section—are Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis*; *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), ch. 10. Bernard Lewis, though much vilified in the field, offers a very useful article on the topic. See Bernard Lewis, "The Sources for the History of the Syrian Assassins," *Speculum* 27, no. 4 (1952): 475–89.
  54. *Taqiyah* mandated that in conditions of danger, the faithful were enjoined to dissimulate (or lie in plain terms) to protect the faith. It was a lesson that scholars of Shi'ism wish George W. Bush had been aware of during his professions of trust with the Shi'ite governments of Iraq after the American invasion.
  55. Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge, England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
  56. *Ibid.*
  57. "A Major Schism in the Early Ismā'īlī Movement," *Studia Islamica*, no. 77 (1993): 123–39.
  58. W. B. Bartlett, *The Assassins: The Story of Medieval Islam's Secret Sect* (The Mill, Brimscombe Port: The History Press, 2001), ch. 2.
  59. The site remains to this day, and continues to excite historians and would-be historians alike. See for example Anthony Campbell, *The Assassins of Alamut* (Lulu, 2008). Campbell, who first visited in 1966, is a wonderful example of where the enthusiast and historian come together.
  60. Daftary, *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought* (see note 54 above), 10. For a good encapsulation of his early life, see Rajput, *Hasan-I-Sabbah: His Life and Thought* (see note 54 above), 33–79.

61. The heated reaction to Bernard Lewis and all his works in recent years speaks more to the fructuousness of the academy than to Lewis's alleged biases. For a reasoned discussion of an often unreasoning controversy, see Andrew G. Bostom, "What Went Wrong With Bernard Lewis?," *American Thinker*, March 17, 2013, [http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2013/03/bostom\\_interview\\_what\\_went\\_wrong\\_with\\_bernard\\_lewis.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2013/03/bostom_interview_what_went_wrong_with_bernard_lewis.html)
62. Pagès, *From Martyr to Murderer: Representations of the Assassins in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Europe* (see note 47 above), 106.
63. Johan Huizinga and Frederik Jan Hopman, *The Waning of the Middle Ages, a Study of the Forms of Life* (London: E. Arnold, 1924).
64. Johan Huizinga, *In the Shadow of Tomorrow* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1936), ch. 6.
65. Vladimir Bartol, *Alamut*, trans. Michael Biggins (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2007). On Hawkwind, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgpoyLoekv8>. For an interesting examination of the Assassins as part of a continuum of movements in the Islamic world, see William J. Brenner, *Confounding Powers: Anarchy and International Society from the Assassins to Al Qaeda* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
66. Karl Kautsky, *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation*, Reprints of Economic Classics (New York: Russell & Russell, 1959), ch. 2, "The Taborites." Hus's story has inspired Czechs through the ages. Plays, for example, were written and performed to dramatize his life and death as early as the German Reformation in the sixteenth century. Phillip Haberkern, "'After Me There Will Come Braver Men': Jan Hus and Reformation Polemics in the 1530s," *German History* 27, no. 2 (2009): 177–95.
67. Peter Morée, "Not Preaching from the Pulpit, but Marching in the Streets: The Communist Use of Jan Hus," *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* 6 (2007): 283–96. Joseph F. Zacek, "Palacky and the Marxists," *Slavic Review* 24, no. 2 (1965): 297–306.
68. Josef Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938–1948: The Failure of Co-existence* (London: Princeton University Press, 1959), 4–5. On Gottwald, see the concise biography on the Prague Castle site, <https://www.hrad.cz/en/president-of-the-cr/former-presidents/klement-gottwald>
69. *Ibid.*, 96.
70. Galia Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 1 (1970): 21–2.
71. His memory has not faded. Radio Praha did a show on him recently in fact. The English MP3 and a detailed account of his story may be found at Coilin O'Connor, "Jan Palach—the student whose self-immolation still haunts Czechs today," Radio Praha, January 21, 2009, <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/czechs/jan-palach-the-student-whose-self-immolation-still-haunts-czechs-today>.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Jaroslav Hašek and Paul Selver, *The Good Soldier: Schweik* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1930).
74. Vaclav Havel and Paul Wilson, "The Power of the Powerless," *International Journal of Politics* 15, no. 3/4 (1985): 23–96. Cf. Jeffrey Symynkywicz, *Vaclav Havel and the Velvet Revolution*, People in Focus Series (New Jersey: Dillon Press, 1995).
75. For a superior consideration of the novel and the classic story of the Old Man of the Mountain as a fine example of the New Orientalism—a point with which this article wholeheartedly agrees, see Mirt Komel, "Re-Orientalizing the Assassins in Western Historical-Fiction Literature: Orientalism and Self-Orientalism in Bartol's *Alamut*, Tarr's *Alamut*, Boschert's *Assassins of Alamut* and Oden's *Lion of Cairo*," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17, no. 5 (2014): 529–36.
76. Bartol, *Alamut* (see note 67 above), 110.
77. Jim Carroll, "Nothing Is True Lyrics," *MetroLyrics*, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/nothing-is-true-lyrics-jim-carroll.html>
78. Pavel Helan, "Mussolini Looks at Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation," *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* (2002): 309–16. Erik R. Von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, "The

- Bohemian Background of German National Socialism: The D.A.P., D.N.S.A.P. and N.S.D.A.P.,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 9, no. 3 (1948): 339–71.
79. Jeffrey Kaplan, *Terrorist Groups and the New Tribalism: Terrorism’s Fifth Wave* (London: Routledge, 2010).
  80. John M. Klassen, “The Czech Nobility’s Use of the Right of Patronage on Behalf of the Hussite Reform Movement,” *Slavic Review* 34, no. 2 (1975): 341–2.
  81. Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 3.
  82. Alighieri Dante et al., *Babylon on the Rhone: A Translation of Letters by Dante, Petrarch, and Catherine of Siena on the Avignon Papacy*, Studia Humanitatis (Potomac, MD: Distributor for U.S.A., Studia Humanitatis, 1983). Cf. an older academic source on the same theme, Yves Renouard, *The Avignon Papacy, 1305–1403* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1970).
  83. C. S. Molnar Enrico, “The Liturgical Reforms of John Hus,” *Speculum* 41, no. 2 (1966): 297–303.
  84. Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (see note 83 above), 73.
  85. For the best available recent biographical treatment of Hus and the Council of Constance’s treatment of the great reformer, see Thomas A. Fudge, *The Trial of Jan Hus: Medieval Heresy and Criminal Procedure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); *Jan Hus between Time and Eternity: Reconsidering a Medieval Heretic* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016).
  86. Howard Kaminsky, “Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution,” *Church History* (1957): 43–71.
  87. The Defenestration of 1419 was only the first such event which appears to have become something of a Czech national sport. The Defenestration of 1619 is far better remembered and the event was reprised for old times’ sake with the death of Jan Masaryk in 1948. “Prague, Defenestration of,” *Encyclopedia.com*, [http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Defenestration\\_of\\_Prague.aspx](http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Defenestration_of_Prague.aspx). For a more detailed discussion, see Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (see note 83 above), 278–80.
  88. Kaminsky, “Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution” (see note 88 above), 44–5.
  89. Robert W. Scribner and Trevor Johnson, *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400–1800* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996). Thomas A. Fudge, *Jan Hus: Religious Reform and Social Revolution in Bohemia*, International Library of Historical Studies (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010); *Heresy and Hussites in Late Medieval Europe*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).
  90. We have an abundance of records from the time, but perhaps the most remarkable was from the mission of a senior Church prelate, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who would later become Pope Pius II. He was much taken with what he saw, and his communications to the Church serve as remarkable records to this day. Howard Kaminsky, “Pius Aeneas among the Taborites,” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 28, no. 3 (1959): 281–309.
  91. Thomas A. Fudge, *The Crusade against Heretics in Bohemia, 1418–1437: Sources and Documents for the Hussite Crusades*, Crusade Texts in Translation (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002). Cf. Victor Verney, *Warrior of God: Jan Žižka and the Hussite Revolution* (London: Frontline Books, 2009). The Verney book is interesting, but contains numerous errors and inaccuracies. See the review by Alfred Thomas, *Speculum* 86, no. 2 (April 2011): 565–6. Cf. “Hussite Wars,” *New World Encyclopedia*, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hussite\\_Wars](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hussite_Wars).
  92. R. R. Betts, “Social and Constitutional Development in Bohemia in the Hussite Period,” *Past & Present*, no. 7 (1955): 46.
  93. J. H. Elliott, “Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe,” *Past & Present*, no. 42 (1969): 43.
  94. Betts, “Social and Constitutional Development in Bohemia in the Hussite Period” (see note 94 above). Rosa Congost, “Property Rights and Historical Analysis: What Rights? What History?,” *Past & Present*, no. 181 (2003): 73–106.
  95. Kaminsky, “Chiliasm and the Hussite Revolution” (see note 88 above), 55–56.
  96. Matthew Spinka, “Peter Chelčický: The Spiritual Father of the Unitas Fratrum,” *Church History* 12, no. 4 (1943): 280.

97. This long, sad history is chronicled best in Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (see note 83 above). If a reader was to choose a single text from these footnotes, it would most profitably be this one.
98. For a good introduction to the heresies of the time, see J. K. Zeman, "Restitution and Dissent in the Late Medieval Renewal Movements: The Waldensians, the Hussites and the Bohemian Brethren," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1976). On the Free Spirit heresy, no better book has been written than Robert E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972).
99. *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyam*, 1859. Full text at <https://archive.org/details/movingfingerofom00dinsrich>. For a brilliant application to Islamic eschatology, Steven Wasserstrom, "The Moving Finger Writes: Mughira B. Sa'ud's Islamic Gnosis and the Myths of Its Rejection," *HR* 25 (1985): 1–29.
100. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (London: Pimlico, 2004).
101. From the Head of the Temple Institute, Ariel and Richman, *The Odyssey of the Third Temple* (see note 15 above). From a more academic viewpoint, Inbari, *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount: Who Will Build the Third Temple?* (see note 15 above). And from the Christian view, Peter Clements, *The Third Temple* (Durham, CT: Strategic Book Group, 2009). The real meat of the story, however, is best told by Lambert Dolphin, an American physicist, Bible believer, and apocalypticist of the first order. See his powerful Ron Graff and Lambert Dolphin, *Connecting the Dots: A Handbook of Bible Prophecy* (USA: Xulon Press, 2010). If inspired, see *Lambert Dolphin's Library* for the apocalyptic mother lode on all things Third Temple, <http://ldolphin.org/>
102. Howard Kreisel, "Maimonides' Political Philosophy," *The Cambridge Companion to Maimonides* (2005): 206.
103. On the strands of Jewish eschatological thought, the most accessible source remains Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1979). On Christianity but with good coverage of Islam, Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994). And on Islam, Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Apocalypse in Islam* (see note 39 above).
104. Sultan Bahu, *Death before Dying*, trans. Jamal J. Ellias (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998). Cf., Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right* (see note 19 above), xiii. Khatam Sharif, "In Honour of the Venerable Sultan Bahu," [http://www.noorulislam.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Final\\_Article\\_Sultan\\_Bahu\\_140411.pdf](http://www.noorulislam.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Final_Article_Sultan_Bahu_140411.pdf)