IS MOHAMMED A STRATEGIC LEADER?

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Many people think great leaders still need to be alive to be considered as a strategic leader today. Deceased leaders who continue influencing others can still be considered strategic leaders. This paper will briefly review several highlights of Mohammed's life using the perspective of General George Casey, the current Chief of Staff of the United States Army, and his definition of what makes a strategic leader. Then in turn each attribute will be examined against the life of Mohamed to show that today, Mohammed is still a viable strategic leader.

IS MOHAMMED A STRATEGIC LEADER?

One of the current era's prominent social issues is the prominence and expansion of Islam. In the span of the last 30 years, the worldwide growth rate of the Muslim population was 2.61%; this figure is more than 66% more than the growth rate of the non-Muslim population.[1] This growth, spurred by higher birth rates among Muslim populations and migration is a subject of discussion and analysis among contemporary sociologists. Recently, there were several alarmist news items related to Islamic expansion, often referred to as cultural jihad.[2] A relatively recent discovery is the "Muslim Brotherhood Project," which is an Islamist manifesto for conquering the West.[3] The UK government recently granted legitimate legal authority to Sharia courts operating there, thus creating a shadow legal system based on Islamic laws.[4] Over generations, more and more Britons will be Muslim; the most popular baby name in the UK so far in 2010 was Mohammad.[5] There is a vigorous debate in the Netherlands about the population adopting Sharia law. Dutch Justice Minister Piet Hein Donner has publicly endorsed Sharia law if enacted democratically.[6] It does not require a large stretch of the imagination to project that in ten generations, there will be sufficient Muslim population in the UK to influence elections, laws, and foreign policy. This growth and Muslim migration have led some to estimate that various Western countries and indeed, Western civilization, will be Islamic as soon as 2030.[7] Mohammad Khadafi has even noted that conquering Western nations by force is no longer necessary as the populations will soon be Muslim majorities.[8] How did this come about? Was it serendipity? It is in this strategic context that we must ask what Mohammed, the central figure, and his life and teaching can tell us about the continuing expansion of Islam.

This paper posits that Mohammed was a strategic leader who undertook deliberate and methodical action to achieve his organizational vision: worldwide expansion of Islam and that this effort continues today.

Relevant Aspects of Mohammed's Life and Islamic Expansion

Mohammed was born in Mecca during the sixth century. His father died early in his life so he was raised by uncle, Abu Talib, who was an influential member of the Hashim clan of the Quraysh tribe. His family was wealthy and very well connected in Mecca. Very early in his life, there were signs that he was to be a prophet. His mother said that when he was born, "When I delivered him, there emitted a light from my womb which illuminated the palaces of Syria."[9] He met a Christian monk, Bahira, who recognized him as a prophet. He also had a mole that was considered to be a sign of the prophet.[10] As a young man, he developed a reputation for being honest and trustworthy while conducting commerce with his uncle Abu Talib.[11]   He was living a normal Arab life in Mecca when, at the age of 40, he began to receive a series of revelations from Allah delivered by the Angel Gabriel. Initially distressed by the revelations, he eventually accepted them and his role as the final prophet. He began to peacefully proselytize in Mecca gaining few followers. In Mecca, his teachings were received with hostility.   After years of persecution by the Quraysh, he departed for Medina in 622 and continued to proselytize using both peaceful and violent means.[12]

Since its establishment in 623 AD, the geographical reach of Islam has periodically changed as the religious and political system acquired lands, populations, and influence around the world. There are two major periods of expansion in the history of Islam. The first period was from 600 AD to 850 AD. The second period occurred

between 1300 AD and 1918 AD. Each of these periods of expansion was followed by a period of contraction caused by a combination of internal and external forces.

Islamic expansion, historically, was like the parable of the boiled frog: gradual change was not noticed. It is helpful to understand the teachings of Islam with regard to religions, politics, law, and other religions' right to exist. The foundational document of Islam is the Koran. It is considered to be the word of God (Allah in Arabic, and will referred to as Allah for the remainder of this document) transmitted to Mohammed by the Angel Gabriel sometime between 610 AD and 732 AD. This document is considered to be perfect. The Koran, when coupled with the Sunna (Sira and Haddith) create the doctrinal foundation of Islam. It should be noted that only 14% of Islam is Allah; 86% is Mohammed.[13] The book is considered holy; non-Muslims are not permitted to touch it and Muslims may only touch it if they are pure.[14] Two events that bear this as true and accepted are the reaction of the Muslim world to both Reverend Terry Jones's scheduled burning of the Koran on 9/11 and to the reported flushing of the Koran at Guantanamo Bay in 2005.[15]

There were two noteworthy periods of Islamic expansion. The first period of Islamic expansion was from 600 AD to 850 AD. This expansion began with the initial establishment and expansion of Islam initiated by Mohammed and ended with the collapse of the Umayyad Dynasty.[16] At the height of this period of expansion, Islam spanned from northern Africa to modern day Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. See Figure 1.[17]

At this point, growth slowed because of competition between the Abbasids and Umayyad: competing kingdoms within Islam. After the collapse of the Abbasid

Caliphate at the hands of the Mongols, there was continued slow growth in the Middle

East. The second period of Islamic expansion was from 1300 AD to 1918 AD.
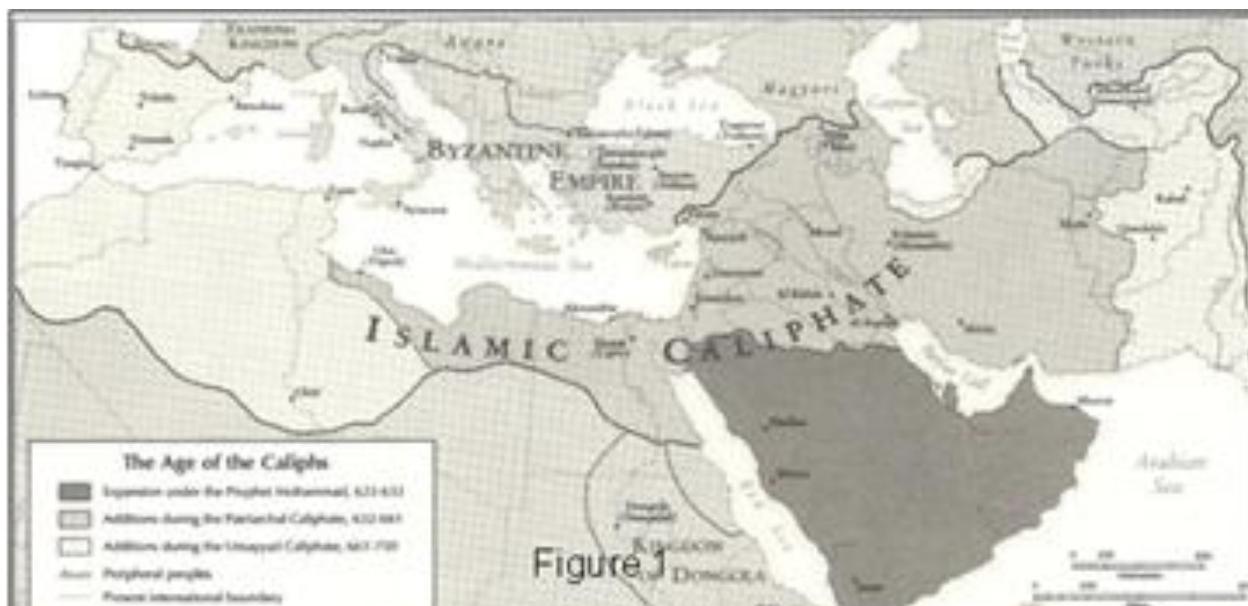
Figure 1

This expansion began with conquest of Nubia, Anatolia, and Africa and ended with the

decline and collapse of the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. At the height of this period

of expansion, Islam spanned from northern Africa and the Middle East to modern day

Spain, Russia, even to southern Europe. See Figure 2.[18]

The Ottoman Empire
- Ottoman Turks, 1300-1359
- Expansion under Murat II, 1421-1451
- Expansion under Mehmet II and Selim I, 1451-1520
- Expansion under Suleyman the Magnificent, 1520-1566
- Expansion, 1566-1683
- Peripheral peoples
- Present international boundary
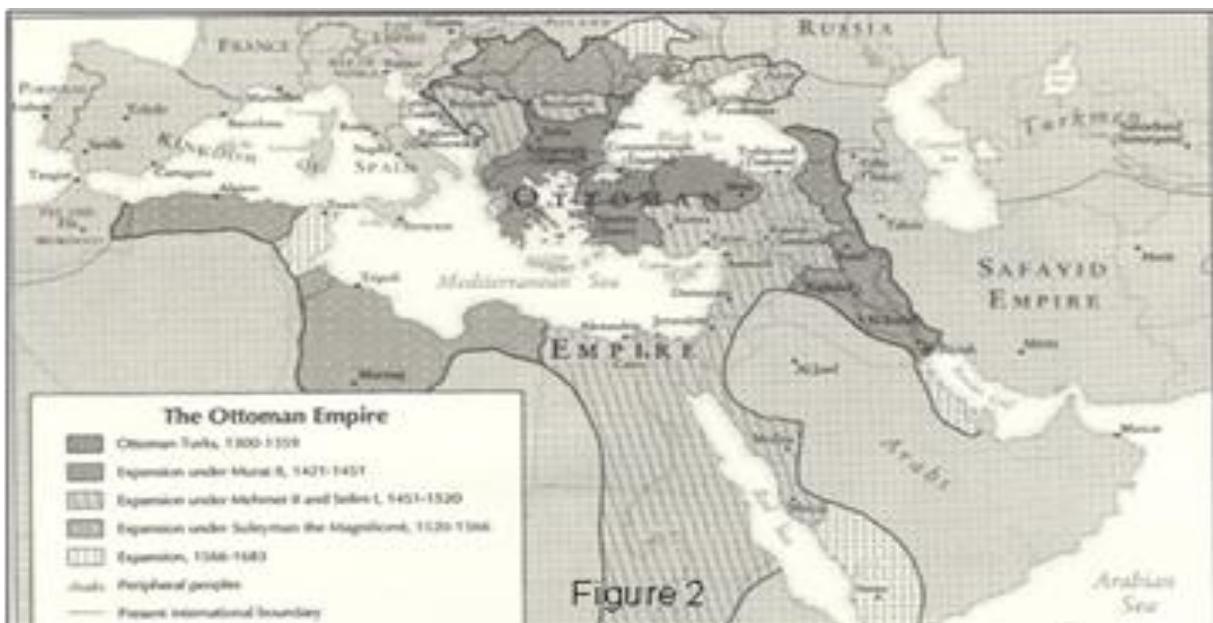
Figure 2

The primary method of expansion during both of these periods was by force of arms. Mohammed had very little success spreading Islam early in his life while in Mecca. Some have placed the estimate at 100 people converted to Islam in the first thirteen years of peaceful proselytizing.[19] In 622 AD, Mohammed conducted the Hijaz, or his migration from Mecca to Medina. Shortly after his arrival in Medina, he began to spread Islam through the sword and was infinitely more successful. The Battle of Badr in 624, the Battle of Uhud in 625, and raid after raid were successful in converting native tribes to Islam.[20] Operating militaristically during the remainder of his life, he converted over 150,000 Arabs to Islam, including the city of Mecca. After Mohammed's death, Islam continued to expand during the Orthodox Caliphate under the sword of Khalid Ibn al-Walid, Supreme Commander of the Muslim Army. Over the course of several centuries, Islam conquered Persia, Egypt, and Syria eventually encompassing the terrain in Figure 2. Contributing significantly to the success of the spread of Islam in this period was the continued war between Persia and Byzantium and the eventual collapse

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of the Byzantine Empire. The resulting power vacuum facilitated the spread of Islam. Without Christianity to serve as a foil to Muslim expansion, Islam expanded virtually unchecked. Another relevant factor was that the people targeted for conversion to Islam were usually poor.[21] Affluence seemed to diminish the appeal of Islam.

General Casey's Attributes of a Strategic Leader

General George Casey, the current Chief of Staff of the Army, defines strategic leadership as those who "guide the achievement of their organizational vision within a larger enterprise by directing policy and strategy, building consensus, acquiring and allocating resources, influencing organizational culture, and shaping complex and ambiguous external environments. They lead by example to build effective organizations, grow the next generation of leaders, energize subordinates, seek opportunities to advance organizational goals, and balance personal and professional demands."[22] Strategic leaders establish policies, strategies, and metrics that support their overall strategy and the intermediate objectives leading to the strategic end state. A key component of strategic leadership is building consensus. Field Manual 6-22: Army Leadership, refers to building consensus as "Extending influence beyond the chain of command."[23] When operating at the strategic level, many of the organizations that can facilitate and synergize achievement of the strategic ends are not subordinate organizations, but partner organizations who have competing stakeholders vying for limited resources. Building consensus is required to garner support from these organizations and essential to the achievement of strategic goals and organizational vision.[24] Strategic leaders acquire and allocate scarce resources. One constant in the strategic environment is that requirements exceed resources. Strategic leaders must be adept at prioritizing and allocating resources in a manner that facilitates achievement of

the strategic end state[25]. Strategic leaders influence their organizational culture. A definition of organizational culture is "A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems."[26] Or, put another way, "The system of shared actions, values, and beliefs that develops within an organization and guides the behavior of its members."[27] This organizational culture is developed through shared experience that allows organization members to solve two critical problems: "what needs to be accomplished and how can it be done…How do members resolved the daily problems associated with living and working together?" [28] "An organization's climate springs from its leader's attitudes, actions, and priorities. These are engrained through choices, policies, and programs."[29]

Mohammed's Application of Strategic Leadership during Peace

Mohammed directed policy and strategy for achievement of his vision of Islam. During his life, Mohammed's organizational vision for Islam was political unity of Arabia. His decisive points were peaceful conquest of Mecca and its conversion to Islam, and elimination of religious groups opposed to Islam by actively interfering with expansion.[30] However, the Koran contains guidance that outlines a broader goal. According to the Koran, Islam is divided into two component parts: the House of Islam (Dar al Islam) and the House of War (Dar al Harb). The House of Islam is the realm in which Muslims exist under Islamic governments. Other religions exist, but only under the rubric of Islamic law as provided for in the Koran. The House of War is the rest of the world, inhabited and ruled by infidels, which are non believers yet to be subjugated by Islam. "Islamic tradition holds that the world will continue to exist in a state of eternal jihad until the

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unification of the world under Islam."[31] An example of the Koran's instructions to

Muslims for Jihad is as follows:

> "Jihad is your duty under any ruler, be he Godly or wicked. A day and a night of fighting on the frontier are better than a month of fasting and prayer. The nip of an ant hurts a martyr more than the thrust of a weapon, for these are more welcome to him that sweet cold water on a hot summer day. He who dies without having taken part in a campaign dies in a kind of unbelief."[32]

If the Koran is the infallible word of Allah, and the Koran places non-believers in

the House of War mandating Muslims to strive to convert or subjugate those in the

House of War, this forms the strategic objective for a long term Islamic effort to expand

worldwide.

The decline of each of the periods of Islamic expansion can be attributed to

internal strife and war, which are anathema to the Koran and its notion of Islamic unity.

Internal strife between the Arab Abbasids, Khurramites, and the Persians in 833 left the

Abbasids vulnerable to attack from the Byzantines; the Byzantines attacked,

precipitating the Islamic decline.[33] The decline of the Ottoman Empire coincided with

the decline of the Sultanate. The Sultanate lost control of the large empire due to weak

leadership, corruption, and nepotism. This internal strife, combined with external factors

such as an ill-advised alliance with the Central Powers in World War I and changing

economic conditions accelerated the decline of the already faltering Islamic empire.[34]

Once again, one can assert that this decline was precipitated by conduct anathema to

the Koran.

One of Mohammed's principal strengths as a strategic leader was building

consensus and reaching compromise advantageous to his Muslim followers and to

Islam in general. This is primarily due to his reputation for honesty and integrity. There

are several examples of his ability to build consensus and to compromise. Shortly after his arrival in Medina, he authored the Constitution of Medina. There were eight clans in Medina and the Muslims were only one of eight. There were Jewish and Arab clans as well. By meeting with clan leaders, he was able to write the Constitution of Medina, which was viewed in Medina as fair to all. [35] Within a short amount of time, he became established as an arbitrator, entrusted by all to be impartial and just but also to reach fair compromises.[36]

Mohammed was adept at acquiring and allocating resources. The primary purpose of Mohammed's earliest expeditions following his exodus from Mecca was to gather resources. Shortly after emigration to Medina, Mohammed began a deliberate campaign to gather resources.[37] Mohammed and his followers began to raid caravans running trade between Mecca, Medina, and Syria. He had no income other than booty from the spoils of war. He established guidance on how and to whom these resources were to be allocated and supervised the execution of the program. [38] Through this method, Mohammed was able to fill his coffers and redistribute wealth in a way that would facilitate his ability to expand the reach of Islam, build an army capable of conquering Mecca, and to continue to attract the poor. Mohammed also established policy on distribution of wealth and payment of taxes in the Koran. The *zakah*, mandated by the Koran is a wealth tax and the Koran recommends giving beyond the required *zakah*. [39]

Mohammed had a profound influence on the culture of Islam. To establish such a culture in a population so large required Mohammed to manipulate shared assumptions and problem-solving mechanisms by implementing an all-encompassing

deliberate plan leveraging strategic communication and deliberate embedding and

reinforcing mechanism. Edward G. Schein asserts that the two main methods strategic

leaders use to change organizational culture are embedding mechanisms and

reinforcing mechanisms which include six embedding and six reinforcing mechanisms

The embedding mechanisms are what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on

a regular basis, how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises,

observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources, deliberate role modeling,

teaching, and coaching, observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status,

observed criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire, and ex-communicate

organizational members. The reinforcing mechanisms are organization design and

structure, organizational systems and procedures, organizational rites and rituals,

design of physical space, facades, and buildings, stories, legends, and myths about

people and events, formal statements of organizational philosophy, values, and creed.

Mohammed used the Koran to establish the embedding and reinforcing mechanisms;

throughout his life and the recording of his revelations in the Koran he continued to

guide Islam through embedding and reinforcing mechanisms throughout the centuries.[40]

Mohammed led by example. His very life is considered to be the perfect life.

Both during his lifetime and throughout the following centuries, Muhammad has served

a role model whose perfect conduct is the ideal for leading a good Muslim life.[41] Thus

the practices of the Prophet became a materiel source of Islamic law alongside the

Koran. Muslims look to Muhammad's example for guidance in all aspects of life: how to

treat friends as well as enemies, what to eat and drink, how to make love and war.[42]

Mohammed shaped his internal and external environment through the Koran. The text in the Koran details the angel Gabriel's revelations to Mohammed and is considered to be perfect. The impact of the Koran cannot be overstated. It is considered "the Muslim's main reference not only for matters spiritual, but also for the mundane requirements of day to day [sic] living."[43] The Koran directs that pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis; it contains guidance on "daily behaviors, interpersonal relations, rituals, and civic obligations such as paying taxes.[44] The Koran directs how scarce resources are distributed, how rewards are allocated, how status is earned by proscribing how Islamic societies, laws, and politics are to be organized.[45]

Mohammed was adept at growing the next generation of leaders. Most significantly, Mohammed's allegiance and conversion of Khalid Ibn Al Walid and his subsequent grooming of the "Sword of Islam" to continue to spread Islam after his death is an outstanding example.[46] Yet another example is his preparation of Abu Bakr as the first Caliph. Abu Bakr was one of the earliest Muslims, worshipping with Mohammed since his time in Mecca. In Mohammed's later years, Abu Bakr became extremely important to the spread of Islam. Mohammed's mentorship effectively prepared Abu Bakr to continue the spread of Islam after Mohammed's death.[47] Mohammed, through the Koran, established deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching. The first two lines of the Koran outline the concepts associated with reading, learning, and teaching.[48] The Koran establishes criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire, and ex-communicate organizational members by detailing how non-believers and believers are to be treated and the rewards for believers who fight for the cause of Allah.[49]

General Casey asserts that a component of strategic leadership is the capability to build effective organizations. The single most effective organization Mohammed built is Islam. It should be noted that there are competing sects of Islam that came to exist well after Mohammed's death. The Sunni Muslims are the largest branch of Islam. Sunni Muslims differentiate themselves by their belief that the first four caliphs are the rightful successors of Mohammed. [50] The Shia are the second largest branch of Islam. Shia Muslims believe that the succession of power within Islam remains within the descendents of Mohammed and certain descended Imams have special religious and political authority over the people.[51] Sufi Muslims believe that Sufism is a proscriptive method for turning to God. Although there are competing sects within Islam, it is considered by its followers to be one singular religious and political system.

Mohammed's Strategic Leadership in Battle

General Casey's definition of leadership includes the requirement to lead by example. This requirement is resident not only at the strategic level, but also at the organizational and direct level as well.[52] The history of Mohammed's life and the Koran are rife with examples of Mohammed's personal, direct, organizational, and strategic leadership skills. It is appropriate to analyze Mohammed's actions as a tactical commander to determine if these actions, though direct in nature, fall in the purview of strategic leadership. The principal battles Mohammed led are the Battle of Badr, the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of the Trench, and the various *razzias* or raids occurring between 623 and 628. In each one of these battles, Mohammed leveraged his strategic leadership skills to benefit his forces, and to further the cause of Islam.

In the year 624, Mohammed received information that a very large caravan was headed from Gaza to Mecca. Three factors motivated the Muslims to attack this

caravan. First, the Quaraysh, Mohammed's former tribe that had persistently persecuted the Muslims had incited the tribes along the caravan route to revolt against Islam. Secondly, the quantity of wealth and merchandise in this caravan and its size posed a lucrative target that could enrich the coffers of Islam.[53] A related reason is that the merchandise and property in the caravan was not only trade merchandise, but also plunder from the Muslims who had been persecuted at Mecca. Thirdly, the caravan was led by Abu Sufyan but reinforced by Abu Jahl, who was a sworn enemy of Mohammed.[54] In view of these factors and the importance of this caravan to the sustained growth of Islam, Mohammed raised the largest force possible, recruiting not only Muslims, but also the "Helpers," who were tribal residents of Medina, some of whom were not Muslims. Mohammed assembled over 300 men for this mission, the largest he had commanded to date.[55] Mohammed's force faced an enemy numbering over 1,000. In the end, Mohammed's 300 men routed the larger force suffering only 14 dead.[56] Upon completion of the battle, Mohammed divided the plunder equally among those who had taken part in the battle. Mohammed ransomed wealthy prisoners and released those prisoners without wealthy patrons. He also put a stop to poor treatment of prisoners.[57] Mohammed imparted significant religious meaning for the victory at Badr. It was treated as a "vindication of the faith that had sustained them through disappointment."[58]

Mohammed's actions before, during, and after the Battle of Badr though direct in nature, reveal his strategic leadership. In this battle alone, he assembled and allocated resources, provided moral justification for military action, lived up to and enforced Muslim values for treatment of prisoners. Most significantly, Mohammed was able to

energize and motivate subordinates and promulgate the value of adhering to Islam by recording the battle in the Koran to serve as guidance for all to follow for all of time: "Remember that two groups from among you were about to show cowardice, though Allah was there to succor them, and the Believers should trust in Allah alone. Indeed, Allah had already succored you in the Battle of Badr when you were in a much weaker position; I therefore you should refrain from showing ingratitude towards Allah…[59]

Mohammed's victory at the Battle of Badr set in motion the political and military forces leading to another key religious battle, the Battle of Uhud. Mohammed, with uncommon vision and clarity, predicted that another clash with the Quraysh was inevitable and immediately began preparations.[60] In the year 624, the Muslims operating from Medina began as series of strategic actions to prepare for the return of the Quraysh. Mohammed undertook several actions to consolidate his power gains. He orchestrated a siege of the clan of Qaynuqa, who were Jews living in Medina, finally expelling them from the city. The Jews were not going to become a part of the Muslim community, leading to their expulsion.[61] He began to arrange marriages within Medina among the leaders of the Emigrants, who were the original Muslims who accompanied Mohammed to Medina. These actions eliminated dissent by including Emigrant leaders in the family.[62] He began a series of "show of force" expeditions directed against the tribes to the east and southeast of Medina in order to deter them from supporting the Meccans. Each of these actions reveals the vision, the strategic nature of his thinking, and his ability to shape complex environments to ensure the conditions benefitted Islam.

The Battle of Uhud was a defeat for the Muslims at the hand of the Meccan tribes. The Meccan Army, numbering approximately 3,000 soldiers camped near Mount

Uhud, which was a small town with an oasis in the vicinity of Medina. Upon hearing this, Mohammed convened his war council. After some internal debate of whether to defend in Medina or attack at Uhud, Mohammed mustered his army of approximately 1,000 armor-clad soldiers, and departed for Uhud. Of these 1,000 soldiers, approximately 300 were "the hypocrites," who were Jews that Mohammed considered to be unbelievers.[63] Mohammed disallowed this contingent from participating in the battle, thus separating believers from non-believers. Mohammed effectively used terrain, and employed archers, swordsmen, and horsemen to quickly achieve the upper hand. However, the tide of the battle turned when his lead swordsmen and archers abandoned their posts to gather booty thereby allowing the Meccan cavalry to flank the Muslim formation and turn it to the Muslim rear. In the events immediately preceding the Battle of Uhud and during the battle itself, Mohammed was exercising strategic leadership. Mohammed built consensus in his war council, gathered and allocated resources, including preventing the Hypocrites from participating. Whereas the battle of Badr was the conformation of God's favor, many interpreted the defeat at Uhud a spiritual defeat, as an indication of God's disfavor.[64] However, Mohammed's analysis of the battle and resulting strategic communication allowed the Muslims to learn a critical lesson. Mohammed was able to place the blame not on God's disfavor, but on the conduct of the Muslims in the battle. "God was indeed faithful in his promise to you, letting you kill them; but you slacked off, and were at variance, and disobeyed, after He showed you your desire some of you wanted this world, some the next; then he distracted you from them (and let you fare badly) to test you…"[65]

In the interim between the Battle of Uhud and the forthcoming "Battle of the Trench,"[66] Mohammed made several moves to consolidate his power due to a Jew and Hypocrite-fueled perception that the Muslims were weak. He approached this problem much as he did after Badr. Mohammed began to orchestrate marriages between the widows and fatherless girls resulting from casualties at the Battle of Uhud and men of influence in the Emigrants and powerful clans in Medina.[67] He orchestrated the expulsion of the Jewish An Nadir tribe. Once again he expelled non-believers to consolidate his power. He began a series of punitive and show-of-force razzias to demonstrate his continued power in the region and to prevent attacks on Medina.

The forces set in motion by the Battles of Badr and Uhud would be laid to rest finally during the Battle of the Trench in the year 627. This was the final effort of the Meccans to finish Mohammed and the Muslims in Medina. The Meccan coalition consisted of Meccan residents, the Quraysh tribe from which Mohammed originated, nomadic tribesman, and the expelled An Nadir and Qaynuka tribes and numbered about 7,500 soldiers and 300 horses; this was about twice as many soldiers as Mohammed. Mohammed had no horses to speak of.[68] The strength of the Meccan force eliminated open-field combat as an option for Mohammed. Instead, he designed a defensive system defined by a large trench which served as a large obstacle to the attackers. The end result was a tactical victory; Mohammed was able to repel the attack of the Meccans.

However, within the context of Mohammed's tactical victory, Mohammed made several strategic decisions that affected the outcome of the battle. Mohammed directed that the grain in the fields outside of Medina be harvested 30 days early. This had a

twofold effect: the attacking Meccans had no way to provide fodder for their horses and there was no means for the Meccans to provoke Mohammed's forces into attacking outside of their prepared defenses (as they had in an identical situation in Uhud).[69] Mohammed possessed the strategic foresight to degrade the unity of the Meccan coalition prior to the battle. The coalition arrayed outside Medina was arranged through a combination of alliances, bribery, and intrigue. Mohammed offered generous bribes to specific targets in the coalition leading to dissention and disunity.[70] In a similar example of strategic vision, Mohammed was able to mitigate the effect of internal disunity in his own forces. Mohammed had a treaty with the Qurayzah clan, a Jewish clan residing in Medina. This treaty required the Qurayzah to assist or remain neutral. Mohammed became aware that the Qurayzah were negotiating with the Meccans to turn against Medina and attack Mohammed's forces from the rear. Mohammed had a spy in the negotiations who was able to sew distrust and discord in the negotiations. This was so successful that the negotiations were never completed and the attack from the rear never materialized.[71] At the conclusion of the battle, Mohammed initiated a 25 day siege of the Qurayzah, with the intent of killing the clan. The Medinan tribe of Aws intervened on the behalf of the Quarazah asking Mohammed's lenience. Mohammed referred the decision to a key Medinan Muslim ally, thus preventing the likelihood of a blood feud so close to him. In the end, all Quarayzah males were killed and all women and children enslaved. Mohammed ensured that each of the six clans in Medina executed at least two of the Quarayzah. Mohammed was able to shape his physical environment with the trench, to mitigate his peoples' attitude on attacking outside

Medina by changing the grain harvest, to shape his internal and external environment to benefit Islam, and to avoid a blood feud while preventing future betrayals.

Mohammed's strategic planning and foresight in executing the Treaty of Hudaibiyah allowed him to achieve one of his primary objectives: the peaceful conquering of Mecca. Mohammed led one thousand unarmed Muslims dressed in pilgrim clothing to the gates of Mecca to conduct the Umrah or the lesser pilgrimage, to worship at the Ka'bah, which was the traditional Arab place of worship for all religions in Mecca. This included Islam. The leader of the Quraysh in Mecca refused them entry into the city. Mohammed was able to negotiate with the Quraysh the following details. The contingent would depart Mecca and return next year while the idolaters in Mecca evacuated the city for 3 days. Mohammed secured additional agreements to return Quraysh fugitives in Medina to the clan in Mecca without reciprocation. The last portion of the treaty was a peace agreement for ten years. At first glance, this treaty appears disadvantageous for the Muslims. However, it was not. A year later, two thousand Muslims from Medina conducted the Umrah. While in Mecca, Mohammed agreed to marry Maymunah, a well-connected woman from the Quraysh tribe in order to foster better relations between the groups. Khalid bin Walid, the most effective military leader for the Quraysh was Maymunah's nephew. Walid immediately converted to Islam and moved to Medina to join the Muslim army.[72] Ultimately, Khalid bin Walid would earn the nickname the "Sword of Islam" for his effective leadership while fighting local tribes and the army of the Byzantine Empire. In the two years of peace following the treaty, Mohammed was able to extend his religious and political influence and to gather resources for the continuance of his strategic mission. Once again, Mohammed's

strategic thinking furthered his organizational goals. His negotiation of the treaty cemented his position as an equal to the Quraysh leaders, further cemented the loyalty of the Muslims in Medina, and mitigated any personal blood feuds with the Quraysh people by returning fugitives unharmed.

Ultimately, Mohammed was able to realize his goal of peaceful conquering of Mecca due to the strategic initiatives undertaken during and after the battles of Badr, Uhud, and the Trench as well as the peaceful period occurring after the treaty of Hudaibiyah. Maneuvers to manipulate clan marriages, to prevent blood feuds among the clans and within Medina, expeditions to secure submission of tribes and clans occupying critical trade routes, and his skillful use of intelligence though seemingly disconnected when viewed in isolation, actually reveal a thoughtful, calculating effort to secure his objective: the peaceful conquering of Mecca and its conversion to Islam.

<u>Mohammed remains a Strategic Leader Even Today</u>

Even today, Mohammed's example and the Koran provide strategic influence in the world. Various interpretations of his writings motivate moderate Islam, Islamic hard liners in Iran, and Islamic extremists. Muslim religious leaders continue to leverage the Koran. Islamic issues dominate the news. The house of Islam is healthy and legitimate. The Organization of Islamic Conference established in 1969 contains in their charter the goals:

> "to be guided by the noble Islamic values of unity and fraternity, and affirming the essentiality of promoting and consolidating the unity and solidarity among the Member States in securing their common interests at the international arena; to adhere our commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter, the present Charter and International Law; to preserve and promote the lofty Islamic values of peace, compassion, tolerance, equality, justice and human dignity; to Endeavour to work for revitalizing Islam's pioneering role in the world while ensuring sustainable development, progress and prosperity for the peoples of Member States;

to enhance and strengthen the bond of unity and solidarity among the Muslim peoples and Member States; to respect, safeguard and defend the national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all Member States; to contribute to international peace and security, understanding and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions and promote and encourage friendly relations and good neighbourliness [sic], mutual respect, and cooperation; to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, rule of law, democracy and accountability in Member States in accordance with their constitutional and legal systems"[73]

Mohammed remains as relevant today as he was during his lifetime and during the first and second periods of Islamic expansion.

Mohammed: Strategic Leader

Mohammed displayed the strategic leadership skills defined by General Casey in his quest to advance Islam in Arabia and, in fact, around the world. Through his strategic maneuvering during his lifetime, primarily when in Medina, Mohammed was able to eventually peacefully conquer and convert the city of Mecca and unite Arabia under Islam, in fact leading to the first Muslim expansion which eventually reached to Europe. His revelations and his life, recorded in the Koran formed the doctrinal foundation for each subsequent Muslim expansion and in view of the cause of decline in each case, the rationale for their eventual decline in that the empires did not live up to Koranic values. Mohammed remains an extraordinary world figure and a strategic leader even almost thirteen centuries after his death. Islam continues to expand worldwide and it is possible that Mohammed's strategic goal of a world unified under Islam will be realized. Mohammed laid the strategic foundation for achieving this goal.

Endnotes

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