

Book Review: Terrorists are born when the Pairs Break

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Abstract

The author Engineer Abdul Ghafoor Khan did his post-graduation in Electrical Engineering from United Kingdom. He provides consultancy services to companies across Saudi Arabia, France, Switzerland, UK, Germany, Japan, Morocco, Egypt, Spain and UAE. Although associated with a field considered far from the arts, Mr. Khan is an avid follower of nature, philosophy and physics and believes that the conflict between science and religion exists because of lack of knowledge and ignorance of humans. He also believes that it is not possible for one portion of the mankind to survive while other portions suffer from destruction in the form of malnourishment or terrorism. The atrocities being committed in the world today led Mr. Khan, a seasoned thinker, to ponder over the roots of terrorism and produce his book "Terrorists are born when the Pairs break".

Key Words: Terrorism, Pairs, Islam, Science, complementariness

Based upon verse 49, chapter 51 of the Holy Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims, which states "And of everything we have created pairs; that you may receive instructions," "Terrorists are Born When the Pairs Break" is an attempt to scientifically explain the role of pairs, both living and non-living, in the existence and stable survival and progress of the universe. It also attempts to explain and evaluate the reasons that the terrorists are able to kill other innocent human beings without remorse or regret. He states that if he hits his desk, it will hurt him back and the logic behind this equal and opposite reaction theory is that the he and the desk both are constituents of the same Universe. However, when terrorists hurt fellow human beings, why are they indifferent? Why are they not hurt by the unnecessary spillage of innocent blood? This question is the basis for the research which drove him to write this book.

The book is divided into 17 chapters which follow a logical sequence starting from definitions, backgrounds, explanation of the concept of pairs as realized by the author and from there the explanation of how terrorism occurs when these pairs are disrupted. The chapters are short and easy to read. The book starts with exploring the definition of terrorism and its undefined status in the global context. It explains the importance of having a defined meaning for terrorism which should be acceptable by the leading organizations created to maintain peace such as United Nations.

The author then moves on to explain the interaction between faith and science. He states that to "keep faith in one pocket and science and logic in the other" is not the way forward towards understanding the afflictions faced by the civilization. He believes that both science and faith need to be understood together in complement to each other, and that rigidity and exclusion are the traits that have led to extremism and intolerance in society. He further describes the essential aspects of terrorism and divides them into four; namely pair, complementariness, body and balance. The author then describes about the essential nature of pairs in the universe. He observes that there is no thing or function in existence without its pair complementing it. Examples of pairs have been provided in terms of living things i.e. humans, animals, plants and bacteria and even other things such as chromosomes, molecules, sub atomic particles such as protons, electrons, even clarks, the smallest particles of matter. When there is disruption in the complementariness of these pairs, it gives birth to chaos and terrorism. Similarly, he describes complementariness as being of three types: good, bad or none at all. Good is in the scenario where all the factors involved are healthy, bad when the factors are unbalanced giving rise to problems or disability, and no complementariness wreaking havoc in the form of extremism, where an entire factor has been excluded from consideration. The author has researched well and given references of the works he has used to derive the conclusions reached.

It was surprising to see some of the scientific discoveries in the light of this book such as the concept of space and time keeping the earth into orbit and causing the expansion of the universe, the technology of atom interferometer to identify oil or metal ores and giving an extract from the article Black Hole Computers, wherein the authors of the article have likened universe to a computer system and mentioned how even this acts in the form of a pair. The comparison of the instability of the human societies to the instabilities caused within the supernova and the creation of terrorism because the breakdown of family system was interesting, to say the least and can lead to further detailed discussion on what is one of the greatest plights of society today. Another unique concept explored by this book is that a being coming into existence and then the process of its sustenance is also a pair which is necessary for the survival of any being in this universe. This is represented through the AG Two Stage Theory of the Universe which has been developed and named by the author.

According to the author, creation of peace can also be achieved by the implementation of this theory while terrorism is created when the pair breaks. He claims that if the factors he explains in this theory would have been rightly implemented and taken into account in recent wars and conflicts throughout the world, bloodshed and destruction of human life, property and the environment could have been avoided. It was the absence of consideration of these factors that has led to the recent condition in Afghanistan, the relationship of Israel with its neighbours and the longstanding disagreement between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. Mr Khan also explains that while God has created harmony and balance in the universe through the existence of pairs, it is man's actions that break this balance and upturn the reign of peace. An interesting conclusion has been drawn by the author based on this theory that any particular existence cannot exist at the expense of the others; rather destruction of one would affect the others too because of their complementing nature. In line with his discussion on complementariness, the author also explores and answers the question as to whether it could be justifiable to suspend or ignore human rights when fighting a war: a delicate question but it has been addressed as sensitively although the researcher believes that this has not been adequately justified and could have been further elaborated. At this point it appeared a half-hearted attempt to answer a very important question, though the author states that human rights and ethics need to be upheld under all circumstances.

The author has then dedicated an entire chapter on explaining the definition of terrorism and arrives at the conclusion that any unbalanced action which is not in line with universal complementariness is an act of terror. To better understand this conclusion, it is important to give a read to the whole chapter as they are filled with examples and the author's commentaries on the various definitions of terrorism in use which the author believes are politically motivated and inconclusive rather than true explanations, created to target particular groups or propagate their own agendas. The author believes that the definition of terrorism should be a simple one which caters for the act of terror carried out by anyone regardless of the state, country, political affiliation or religion the individual or group belongs to. Terrorism should simply be defined as the violation of the basic human rights by anyone without any discrimination. Any actions of violence which cause physical, mental or emotional harm to any human, regardless of whether it is by an individual, a group of people or state-sponsored, is terrorism and should be dealt with accordingly. He has in this chapter given special focus on the Islamic Jihad and how it does not allow for the killing of innocent human beings. He has supported his viewpoint by giving examples from the life of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (PBUH).

From here the book now focuses on exploring, explaining and evaluating the role of the man and woman pair for the development of a balanced individual. It attempts to explain the various facets of the unbalance caused when either one or the other is not available or does not fulfil their role in the grooming of the child. The author maintains that both the man and woman have their own strengths. A man should not take advantage of his physical strength against a woman because her strength lies in her emotional stability and in her role as the mother where no father could compete. Thus man and woman as a pair complement each other and nurture the building blocks of society of the future i.e. children. When there is unnaturalness in these roles, and either side fails to live up to their role, searching for happiness and attention outside of this pair hood, the child's wellbeing, physical and mental health and personality suffers. This child with a distorted temperament, with reduced or no concept of right from wrong leads to the terrorists and extremists of the future. When the male and female pair fail to work together, each in their own capacity, and neglect their roles within the family and rights to each other, and focus more on the material side of the world, this pair breaks and causes the domestic problems that today's society is stricken with. The author also gives examples of various elements that allow for the development of a person as a whole and what elements lead to breaking this pair.

The author has also explored in detail the concept of commitment to child; importance of the roles of both mothers and father in the emotional development of the child. The author has quoted research which shows that the emotional wellbeing of a child is more important than physical wellbeing to allow them to develop into stable individuals capable of playing a positive role in society. Parents terrorise their children, when they fail to make time for their offspring, and not nurture them emotionally by forming close bonds based on love and mutual respect. The book establishes links between acts of violence and neglect in childhood. Commitment is not restricted to providing for the material needs of the child, giving high living standards, vacations and the latest gadgets; fulfilment of emotional requirement is indispensable. The author also identified the importance of mankind as a whole in reallocating resources to areas where they are lacking, the pair in this case being power and resources. An example has been given of Ethiopia which lacks basic necessities of life while other countries round the globe are rich in them. Therefore the author believes it is the duty of each and every individual to ensure that resources reach where they are required from areas of abundance.

Another aspect explored by the author is the Islamic concept of Jihad and how it has been misrepresented in the current global scenario. Quoting Islamic scripture and the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH), he clarifies the situations Jihad combats and the rules lay down from Islam's earliest days, how Jihad does not call for any form of terrorism or the destruction of human rights, lives and property. Even other living things, such as plants and animals are not to be harmed when fighting under the banner of Jihad. This concept however has been grossly misconstrued by global media, leading to Islam phobia and a hate and fear of Islamic notions. Hence, the author has tried to clarify some of the misconceptions surrounding the Islamic warfare definitions and debunked some current laws. Overall the book is a good read and gives interesting, thought provoking ideas though not all maybe acceptable to everyone. Although the writer at times may not have been able to convey what he set out to exactly, sometimes due to vagueness and sometimes due to the sensitivity of the issue, the book has an easy to read style and is clearly written and well drafted enabling the reader to maintain focus. Further its short chapters allow readers to not tire. Frequent examples clarify the author's opinions and explanations. It would be an educational read for anyone trying to understand the current social aspects of terrorism and specially the role that broken families or non-committed parents may have had in this.