URBANIZATION AND MILITANT NETWORKS: AN ALTERNATIVE FUTURES ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the convergence of two phenomena that act as drivers to world conditions and events: urbanization and militant networks. Urbanization is the migration of a population from the rural to the urban. Especially in the developing world, numerous cities are experiencing a surge in population that is straining basic services and security. At the same time, western democracies are faced with a new threat in the form of the militant network. Militant networks are non-state actors that include terrorist organizations, insurgencies, guerilla armies, organized crime, and, at times, street level gangs. As embodied by Al Qaeda and Hizballah, militant networks have proven to be an effective model to gain influence and evade conventional security service tactics.

This thesis identifies the problem as being militant networks that exploit the conditions created by rapid population in already strained cities. Urbanization will create a number of conditions that militant networks will use to their advantage: alienated migrants; black markets; failed city utilities; disenfranchised young men; government corruption; ethnic and racial resentments. As a result, these mega-cities are susceptible to being dominated by militant networks that can, in turn, jeopardize regional and international security.
The methodology utilized is an industry and government standard called, alternative futures analysis. This is a conceptual exercise in which the drivers “militant networks” and “urbanization” are combined to form alternative futures. The result is four themes that are categorized and examined: Police on the Beat; Bull in the China Shop; Warlord Paradise; and, Lord of the Flies. These scenarios stimulate a dialogue in understanding and planning security policies. In an urbanized world susceptible to militant networks, alternative futures analysis is an aid in recognizing the dynamics of these drivers and related indicators.

The conclusion is that future security dilemmas will most likely originate from urban settings where government and essential services have failed in full or in part. For western democracies, conventional and unconventional security services need to be adept and knowledgeable of complex urban environments. Finally, intelligence threat analysis is best practiced in a manner that incorporates imagination, historical perspective, and cultural appreciation.
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To my wife, Michi, who was a source of support and encouragement throughout this endeavor.
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT iv

ILLUSTRATIONS vi

INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter 1. MILITANT NETWORKS 5

Chapter 2. A WORLD OF CITIES 17

Chapter 3. PATTERNS IN URBAN CONFLICT 32

Chapter 4. INTELLIGENCE AND METHODOLOGY 49

Chapter 5. ALTERNATIVE FUTURES 62

Chapter 6. IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS 83

CONCLUSION 89

ENDNOTES 92

BIBLIOGRAPHY 98
ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

1. Urban and rural populations, 1950-2050 ........................................ 23
2. Distribution of world population ................................................. 24
3. Relationship & context ................................................................. 52
4. Capacity to manage urbanization ............................................... 68
5. Militant network sophistication ................................................... 72
6. Preliminary matrix ....................................................................... 74
7. Alternative futures matrix ........................................................... 76

Tables

1. Population of urban agglomerations ............................................ 25
INTRODUCTION

Context

Whether it is the personal, the political, or the spiritual, there is one question that applies to all and with equal gravity: what brings tomorrow?

To know the events and machinations of tomorrow, or of the next decade, is to possess a precious commodity. It’s a knowledge that, when properly applied, can be the difference between satisfaction and regret; triumph and debacle; hope and despair. We are constantly endeavoring to find a means “to see” beyond the immediate.

In the realm of public policy and security, this quest to anticipate events, trends, and movements is a critical necessity. More often than not, it is relegated to organizations and capabilities known as, “intelligence.” In general, intelligence consists of two distinct processes. First, to observe and to record the world as it is; to discern between the significant and the trivial. Secondly, to analyze these observations and to draw conclusions that facilitate prudent decisions. This is not a question of so boldly predicting the future; but rather, as such in the case of foreign intelligence collection, identifying potential threats and developments (political, social, technological) that can damage a nation’s interests.

The Problem

After ten years of a “global war on terrorism,” democratic nations remain targeted by an elusive, and ever-transforming, threat. Insurgent and militant groups, transnational criminal organizations, and ideological zealots move in a netherworld where national credentials mean little. And, increasingly, they are forming covert,
mutually supportive, alliances. This trend, or movement, towards clandestine conflict will likely be accelerated-reinforced by the phenomenon of urbanization.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine militant clandestine networks in the context of urbanization in order to identify and to understand the particular properties of this threat. It is a threat that has the ability to fracture global lines of communication and transportation; instigate regional conflicts; and, shatter public confidence. An increasingly urban-centric world will exacerbate this issue of international militant and criminal groups. In light of these circumstances, developing and evolving, it’s prudent to investigate the how and the why of this international undercurrent. In doing so, we can anticipate and possibly avert humanitarian crises and cataclysms.

The Methodology

This paper is framed as an intelligence threat study. The orientation is to the future. How will the world change if the aforementioned trends continue and what are the security implications? The central theme is the convergence of two narratives: militant networks and urbanization. Because there is a high degree of uncertainty in how these two axes will interact, this paper will posit a model of inquiry practiced by both industry and government. Alternative futures analysis is a methodology by which several alternative scenarios are developed to assist in choosing suitable courses of action. It is used in circumstances where drivers and influences (political upheaval; economic distress; technology transfers) are erratic and difficult to forecast. For the purposes of this thesis, and taking in consideration its limited scope, a modified version of alternative futures analysis will be utilized.
This inquiry will lean more towards the conceptual rather than the practical. Security challenges – law enforcement; military; intelligence – often demand an operational mindset that produces a tangible result. But prior to that raid or that missile being launched, there must be a firm appreciation of how that particular threat is sustained and functions. It is not enough to just disrupt an enemy activity. There must be a clear link between the tactical action and the strategic objective. Disjointed and meandering operations that are not synchronized to an overarching plan are counterproductive and consume valuable assets. Consequently, this thesis strives for a comprehensive and, perhaps, unconventional understanding of militant groups. And more specifically, how these groups will interact within cities of populations of over 15 million – megacities.

The ideas and commentaries of classic thinkers will be injected into this discussion to highlight the universality of these issues. Their contributions are still relevant despite the passage of time. The ethical dimension of a government's response to clandestine groups will also be considered. This thesis will limit itself to the role of liberal democracies.

Contributions to the Field of Study

In addition to the central thesis, this paper will posit two sub-themes. First, that non-state violent groups come in many forms. We are accustomed to categorizing: terrorist; militant; insurgent; guerilla; international criminal. This paper suggests that a better approach is to declare all these organizations as, militant networks. Secondly, urbanization will continue into the next century. The degrees and rates of this urbanization will vary by country and global region. However, the overall result will be
a “world of cities.” The urban experience will become the predominant reality for the majority of people. Coupled with the acceleration of technology transfers, urban centers will become social and political focal points more so than they are today. In other words, urban governments and their populations may overwhelm the primacy of national governments.
CHAPTER I

MILITANT NETWORKS

... the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who ... is without a state, ... he is like the Tribeless, lawless, hearthless one.1

-- Politics, Aristotle

Reexamining and Defining

Violent, non-state actors occupy a drifting zone of disruption and interference on the world stage. For liberal democratic governments, these groups present a threat that remains in motion and transforming. Of utmost concern is the prospect of a devastating attack that results in mass casualties and/or political instability. The aim of this chapter is to reconsider the varieties of violence and disorder that have emerged as an international threat. In doing so, posit a descriptive term that is applicable, and more useful to the current state of affairs. And finally, to review how security paradigms have shifted from conventional, industrial based structures, to small-scale networks.

In March 2004, four commuter trains were bombed in Madrid, Spain, resulting in 191 deaths and over 1,800 injured. A previously unknown cell of homegrown Islamic extremists would eventually be uncovered and prosecuted.2 The ensuing domestic crisis impacted the results of a national election and abruptly ended the deployment of Spanish troops to Iraq. Thus, a single act of coordinated violence, committed with no warning or immediate tactical value, has the ability to alter the national and international politics of a nation. What violent extremist groups have learned is that these particular tactics are expedient, difficult to detect, and effective. The threat persists because it works. Ten years after the 9/11 attacks upon the United States (US), and despite two
military campaigns, the nation’s national security policy remains focused on defeating Al Qaeda and its extremist affiliates.

This peculiar form of conflict is unrevealing and ambiguous. It persists in the face of mass expenditures in technology, manpower, and even multi-national expeditions. What are we to call it? In order to counter or mitigate this threat, how are we to define it? The international community’s efforts in this regard have been hampered by an inability of the United Nations (UN) to even agree on a definition of terrorism. Under the administration of President George W. Bush, America’s post 9/11 conflict was deemed a Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). President Obama’s administration has stricken GWOT in exchange for a combination of “countering violent extremism” and “overseas contingency operations.” In the defense establishment, a number of terms have circulated: “low-intensity conflict”; “unconventional warfare”; and, “asymmetric warfare.” Terminology and nomenclature do matter. It is never too late to step back and to reexamine the assumptions that drive policy. Correctly categorizing a threat is the first step in developing a strategy that is focused, economical, and effective. The strategist Carl von Clausewitz emphasized that the first duty of a leader is to correctly assess the nature of the conflict at hand - and not to mistake it for another. That was vividly on display in Iraq between 2004 and 2007. During that period, the steady rise in violence prompted a politically charged debate of what to call the sporadic ambushes and car bombings killing US troops: terrorist; insurgent; counter-occupation; sectarian; or, criminal. The United States and the coalition’s inability to properly assess these violent trends allowed them to thrive.
Non-state violent groups have traditionally been designated by familiar terms: guerilla; insurgent; and, terrorist. And within those categories there are further subsets particular to specific interests: e.g., narco-terrorist; sovereign militia; neo-nazi; animal rights. Also, most recently, the designation of Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) has been adopted to describe globalized crime syndicates. Generally accepted definitions include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guerilla</td>
<td>Irregular warfare carried on by small bodies of men acting independently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurgent</td>
<td>To rise in revolt against constituted authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist</td>
<td>A group that attempts to further their views by a system of coercive intimidation; to awaken or spread a feeling of terror or alarm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnational Organized Criminal</td>
<td>A group that partakes in a number of criminal activities for financial gain and influence that that has international impact; narcotics, weapons, and human traffickers; enlists support of corrupt government officials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What becomes evident is that the preceding descriptions contain shades and nuances of meaning that commingle with one another. A terrorist’s activities can often appear to be that of an insurgent or guerilla. In addition, the word, terrorism, is pejorative and value-laden as in contrast to the more antiseptic, insurgency. The Irish Republican Army (to include its multiple iterations) has, at times, embodied all four of the preceding definitions. This consternation in establishing a proper lexicon can be attributable to relying on anachronistic descriptors that may no longer apply to contemporary circumstances. It is a dilemma that contributes to misguided security assessments and
policy miscues. What is needed is a term that covers a wide breadth of behaviors and activities, neutral in application, and plainly descriptive. The task is not simply to rename. It’s to establish a contemporary lexicon that is appropriate to the conflict at hand and in the near future.

To that end, an Aristotelian approach is an appropriate method for inquiry. In the context of this paper, the object considered is an organization that makes itself known to the world via violent acts. How is it formed? What does it do? What are its most fundamental properties? Non-state violent groups can be subjected to the same inquisitiveness as any other object or phenomenon. The following preliminary questions are a starting point:

1. How does this body appear and interact with its surroundings?
2. What are its internal mechanisms?
3. What drives its movement, its direction?

These questions stimulate discussion and analysis. In addition, each question is a description of a quality or characteristic that can be observed and measured. Terrorist, insurgent, guerilla, and international criminal groups all have common qualities that provide a degree of focus with respect to mitigating these threats. In the most general sense, human organizations comprise of three fundamental qualities - each corresponding to the previous questions:

- (Q#1) Form – The manner by which an object impacts or influences the environment; the distinguishing attribute(s) that makes one object differ from another.
- (Q#2) Function – The systems and operations that sustain; internal functions that produce form.
• (Q#3) Culture – Ideas, themes, narratives that provide motivation and direction; the internal purpose that turns individuals into a community.

These three qualities have a cyclical, self-reinforcing relationship that binds the group. 

Culture brings people together, establishes relationships, and aligns purpose. Function is the organizing principle(s) decided upon to achieve an end. The desired end-state is made reality by the form engineered by the group. Form is the action or the tool that interacts and shapes the environment; form is where there is friction and heat. The form has the potential of reinforcing and contributing to the group’s culture.

How are these categories useful in furthering our knowledge? Initially, they provide focus in our efforts to analyze. Depending on one’s interest or discipline, one category may demand more attention than the others. For the intelligence analyst or investigator, form is of chief concern. The act of detonating a car bomb or ambushing a rival group is the form by which violent groups manifest their culture. Form exposes a group that is normally covert. Especially as it applies to extremist groups, form allows the analyst insight into the tactics, techniques, and procedures, or functions, of that particular group. Culture, while important for the group, is not as significant because, strictly speaking, ideas are not a destructive force unto themselves. For example, there are a number of political groups and major parties in the United States who support the reform or dismantling of various government agencies / functions. However, their chosen form usually consists of an advocacy or due process approach to their goal. When a group decides to close a government agency by detonating a car bomb at a downtown headquarters, then they are expressing a form (violent; destructive; shocking) that can best be described as, militant. Militant connotes the extremes of behavior; “…
those who seek political or industrial change by employing or advocating the use of
direct action, demonstrations.” Culture can be useful in deciphering alliances and
supporting relationships among non-state actors. But it is form that acts as the ultimate
defining quality as it is applied to violent extremist groups.

In almost all cases, non-state violent groups self-organize / function by means of
a network. A network being a flat versus hierarchal management system in which sub-units may be dispersed by geography and / or function. Dr. Marc Sageman describes a
Global Salafi Network consisting of Maghreb Arabs, Core Arabs, Southeast Asians, and a
Central Staff once headed by Osama bin Laden. The network construct is found
throughout criminal organizations, insurgencies, guerilla formations, and terrorist
groups. The United States National Security Strategy, 2010, speaks of extremist and
criminal networks as threats to America’s security. An essential element to these
networks is their clandestine properties. Non-state operatives utilize sophisticated
operational security techniques to cover their movements, activities, and
communications.

For the purpose of this thesis, “militant network” will be used to describe the
current non-state violent threat confronting the international community. A militant
network is a non-state group that operates covertly and utilizes destructive and violent
methods to further a political or criminal agenda. This definition is intentionally broad
to cover a large spectrum of political, social, cultural, environmental, and criminal
organizations. It takes into consideration the transforming nature of these organizations
regarding their motivations, tactics, structure, and affiliations. A guerilla army can evolve
into a criminal organization; an insurgent group can transform itself into terrorists. A
standard, overarching term allows a law enforcement or an intelligence agency to develop standard protocols for investigation or disruption. Militant network is descriptive with respect to the chief attributes of these groups: militant (form) and network based (function). Also, “militant network,” by itself, lacks the burden of emotional or political interpretations.

A Transforming Threat Environment

Mistakenly, the phrase “survival of the fittest” is often attributed to the British naturalist, Charles Darwin. In common usage, “survival of the fittest” usually refers to possessing a large degree of strength, power, agility, and perhaps mass to overcome any hardship or assault. In Darwin’s seminal work, On the Origin of the Species, the theory of natural selection does not equate survival with strength. Rather, a species, an organism, remains active due to an adaptability advantage (genetic variation) to environmental change. Size, mass and strength do not matter. What matters is the ability to be flexible; to adjust quickly to an adverse environment.14 Or, in another context, survival is based on adapting to surroundings that can change with little notice or pattern. This theory of natural selection is just as applicable to the world of international relations. Species, actors, nations, and peoples are in constant motion in a world that changes physically, politically, and culturally. It is a competition of sorts in which the advantage goes to those who are predisposed to, and anticipate, change.

There was a time when the idea of national security was rather simple; one nation’s army overpowering another nation’s army. The enemy could easily be observed and identified: troops in barracks; tanks rumbling across fields; patrolling ships. These standing armies and warships still remain lethal. However, now, the firepower
and sheer mass of these formations have proven to be inconsequential against a whole
new set of threats.

With the end of the Cold War, and the subsequent shift in national power
relationships, the east-west dynamic that dominated world affairs was essentially gone.
Simultaneously, free trade agreements, the formation of the European Union, and the
phenomenon of globalization all contributed to a more fluid international environment.
This fluidity would also apply to national and international security situations.
Specifically, ethnic, religious, and nationalist passions have become more apparent and
active. International criminal activities are facilitated through immediate
communications and “borderless” international travel. Globalization cannot be
understated. In the year 2012, numerous individuals, unknown to one another, based in
separate continents, can meet via the internet and form their own virtual interest group;
exchange megabytes of data, documents, and photographs; and communicate through
full motion video in a matter of minutes. Humanitarian crises, political upheavals, and
wars are now live-streamed and available to tens of millions. A resulting effect of these
developments is empowerment for individuals and groups. There is a sense of
immediacy to the world community and events. And correspondingly, there is the
perception that one can have impact upon the world, and instantly see the
consequences.

Militant networks have taken quick advantage of these international
developments. These networks have properly assessed the new environment and
leveraged it to their advantage. In the Darwinian sense, they have a greater capacity to
adapt and to be flexible; power and strength are of less importance. Meanwhile,
traditional national security and intelligence services are burdened by structural and cultural functions that make them vulnerable. Although a national security service may have impressive firepower and resources, their functions are prone to be anachronistic and inflexible.

Mumbai 2008

On November 26, 2008, ten heavily armed men conducted a series of attacks in Mumbai, India. In two days of urban fighting, 184 people would be killed and over 300 injured. This attack, later attributed to the Pakistan Islamic fundamentalist group, Lashkar-e-Taïyiba (LeT), is emblematic of a 21st century militant network. A review of pertinent facts and circumstances reveal how a small number of men can wreak havoc upon a major metropolitan area.

1. Armaments per operative: 1x AK-47 w/ 8x loaded magazines; 1x pistol w/ 2 loaded magazines; 8-10 hand grenades; 1x high-grade improvised explosive device (IED); 1x combat knife.

2. Tactics: 10 operatives split into 5x 2 man teams; mobility on foot / vehicle; indiscriminate gunfire upon people in public space; carjacking; seized hostages; IED’s detonated in mobile taxis; grenade attacks; arson; barricades.

3. Technology: Each operative had a cellphone and headphone; each team had a GPS device and there was one satellite phone; consistent communications between teams and LeT representatives in Pakistan.

4. Targets: Central railway station; Cama Hospital; Nariman House (Jewish center); Café Leopold; Hotels Taj Mahal and Trident.

5. Tradecraft: Operatives attired in typical tourist clothing to include Hindu wristbands; conventional haircuts; alias identifications cards to Indian universities.15

For the Indian and Mumbai government security services, the overall impact of these sequential and diverse attacks was confusion and an inability to make a clear assessment.
of the situation. Each operative, on his person, was capable of three fatal attack modes: assault rifle-pistol; hand grenades; and, IED. Combine this lethality to five separate sites with peripheral targets of opportunity and it was impossible to make an estimate of the number of gunmen. Indian authorities were faced with an uncontainable series of events. As a consequence, it took nearly sixty hours until all sites were declared secure.

The Mumbai attacks were conducted by a non-state adversary that has limited resources to damage the Indian government and economy. LeT is not in any position, nor does it possess the combat power, to directly engage the Indian government base. Rather, it adapts and conforms its tactics to make an emotional and dramatic impact exponentially greater than their conventional capabilities. The LeT operatives possessed conventional small arms and commercially available communications technology. But, a combination of target selection and free-form violence was a force-multiplier that gave the appearance of Mumbai being in a state of siege by hundreds of gunmen.

Beyond the human toll of these attacks, the overall impact of such events is psychological and symbolic. The Indian government and its security services are perceived to be inept. Both national and international commerce can suffer if corporations regard Mumbai (India’s financial center) too unstable to conduct business transactions. Ethnic frictions are exacerbated between Hindu-Muslim and, in turn, India-Pakistan. Of note, communications intercepted between the Pakistan handlers and the operatives specified the killing of Jewish hostages to undermine India-Israeli relations. The synergistic effect of all these elements – randomness and lethality of the killing; ethnic and religious implications; commerce interrupted; and, the fear quotient raised – is an ideal outcome for a 21st century militant network.
Government Security Structures

Governments ensure security though military, law enforcement, and intelligence institutions. The military focuses on theater warfare; law enforcement arrests violators of the law; and, intelligence institutions strive to collect foreign government secrets. Militant networks find gaps between these functions wherein they can maneuver and exploit. Militant operatives don’t easily fit into a single category of soldier, criminal, or intelligence agent. They are actually a blend of all three characterizations and that is why they are so difficult to identify, track, and intercept. The LeT operatives were soldiers adept at small arms and IED’s. Their criminal face was in the deliberate killing of almost any person in the range of their weapons. Their intelligence training was evident in their tradecraft skills: attired in urban style clothing; possessing false identifications; and, redundant communication planning. Modern governing practices are dominated by bureaucracy and institutional inertia. Or, in other words, there is a strong interest not to change, not to adapt to a new environment. To their advantage, militant networks skillfully leverage new globalization trends and concurrently recognize the vulnerabilities of national bureaucracies. These networks understand the power of media exposure, shock value, and nodes of critical vulnerability – New York City; Mumbai; London.

Towards a New Understanding

The world changes as so do the threats faced by liberal democracies. As the threat of global war between superpowers has waned, parochial causes and grievances have emerged to replace the once familiar. Whether by choice or default, democratic powers have become a party to these conflicts. Militant networks are able to flourish in
the current globalized environment: open borders; technology transfers; multiple communication portals; a blurring of identity. In these circumstances, the normal categories of insurgent, guerilla, and terrorist do not readily apply. The more appropriate term is militant network. This narrative of a transforming threat from nation-state to non-state militant network will inevitably meet another evolving narrative. That is, the urbanization of the world.
CHAPTER 2

A WORLD OF CITIES

Behind the walls of the city life rested on a common foundation, set as deep as the universe itself: the city was nothing less than the home of a powerful god.1

-- Lewis Mumford, The City in History

The Urban Experience

The Shibuya District of Tokyo, Japan, is a popular commercial and transit hub dominated by a major street intersection. As traffic lights turn red and vehicles halt, well over a thousand pedestrians traverse this intersection in a “scramble” crosswalk pattern; people are corralled onto collisions from the front, the right, and the left. This three minute ballet is performed every day with nary a scuffle, a hard shove, or harsh words. Appropriate and accommodating behavior is simply understood.

Shibuya is a slice of the wonderment that is Tokyo. The world’s most populous city is a marvel of engineering and humanity. The transportation infrastructure is an advanced array of twisting, turning, undulating subways, light rail tracks, buses, and cable cars; it moves more people per day than any other system. City services such as water, sewage, and power are pervasive and very reliable for over 30 million residents. In all practical sense, there are no pockets of poverty or ghettoized communities. Despite a high population density and limited living spaces, violent street crime is practically nonexistent. Tokyo residents consistently have access to the most advanced versions of personal technology products. The education system is superior by any standard. All of this despite Tokyo’s near total destruction at the end of World War II. More than just
it’s dramatic scope and dimension, Tokyo represents a transcendent urban experience. Almost all endeavors of human experience are greatly magnified in Tokyo.

How does a Tokyo come to be? Where once there was rubble, there is now an edifice of concrete, steel, and light; wherein, tens of millions live, work, socialize, reproduce, and die. How is it that we organize ourselves into these dense, seemingly uncomfortable, formations? Is there a moral order to the city?

For the first time in history, more people reside in cities than not. This migration of people from the rural to the urban is continuing and shows no signs of abating. The predominant experience of the world is to be an urban one. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the phenomenon of urbanization and its implications. Urbanization is a process that turns towns into cities and cities into megacities. This is occurring throughout the world, on almost every continent. As megacities and city clusters form, traditional notions of governance and security may become obsolete.

Structural and Cultural Organizing Principles of the City:

Why the city? How does it become? It has been suggested that the first cities were a result of the unification of Neolithic and Paleolithic peoples. In a most simplistic version, the Neolithic farmer would welcome the Paleolithic hunter into the first villages for protection from beast and rivals. The hunter, leading a desperate and wandering life, would find solace in the relative comfort and stability of the village. This merging of talents, tradesmen, and specialists would set the stage for the first cities. The concentration of varied skills and backgrounds begets hierarchies, divisions of labor, and innovation. And, to follow, a governing body to administer the interests of the city.
The very nature of the city is one that demands a degree of order for the multitude of activities therein. For the city to function there must be shared assumptions and recognized authorities for residents and institutions. Or, in other words, there must be recognized structural and cultural organizing principles. Structural organizing principles are the contrived human organizations that provide the city and its residents a combination of essential benefits and services. Cultural organizing principles are often spontaneous informal expressions that provide a community unique traditions, observances, language, and outlook. Structural and cultural organizing principles are a framework by which to understand the mechanics and the spirit of a city. An assessment of a city’s viability can be determined by identifying and evaluating the various elements that make up these structural and cultural organizing principles.

**Structural Organizing Principles** - Commercial and industrial enterprises, education centers, and non-profit institutions form the backbone of the city and its ability to attract, and to retain, people. Industries need a source of workers and a complementary infrastructure that a city provides. And likewise, the city receives revenue from taxes and regulatory fees. Universities and non-profit organizations foster talent and innovation. In a healthy city, a synergy is created in which various industries and commercial interests mutually support one another – factories attract people that in turn attract small businesses. Not to be overlooked, the role of government in the city is critical. Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes all addressed the necessity of a governing body to bring order, structure, and a measure of justice to the city/society. Although they may have disagreed on a specific authoritative model, they all viewed government as essential for security and the common good (Hobbes)³, for the
administration of justice (Plato)⁴, and to even promote a good life (Aristotle.)⁵ The city, more than other civic arrangements, requires substantial government presence and involvement. The concentration of people, market space, living arrangements, lines of communication, supporting utilities, all require an authority that can reconcile and facilitate.

*Cultural Organizing Principles:* The following attributes contribute to a city's cultural identity: sacred places⁶; historical sites; artistic visions; festivals; distinguishing clothing and styles; language. These cultural practices are often spontaneous but also derive from government or institutional sponsorship (museums; monuments). The desired effect is an experience that instills civic pride. A city becomes identified with iconic symbols: Paris – the sidewalk café; New York City – Central Park; Beijing – the Imperial City; Rio de Janeiro – Christ the Redeemer; Rome – the ruins of the Forum. These are conspicuous examples. But in all cities, there are sites and traditions that play a vital role in the life of a city. At times, the government may have a role in establishing these cultural sites. Although they are not an absolute necessity; nevertheless, cultural experiences provide people a sense of communion with others, a civic pride that enhances urban life; an attraction for people to partake.

*Urban Life and Government Presence:* There is a correlation between the proximity of peoples’ living arrangements and the degree of government involvement. In the most rural of communities, the need / desire for government services is limited. Households in wide-open country often depend on ground water, live off the land, and secure their own property lines. Although government may have a jurisdictional responsibility over these rural residents, their reach and ability to enforce law,
regulations and standards is considerably diminished. However, in the most densely populated city precincts, government presence is ubiquitous – street signs; traffic signals; zoning ordinances; sanitation crews; building inspectors; utility tunnels; roving security; and, posted surveillance cameras. A substantial governing apparatus is required to manage the many interests. Regulations are established to determine how precious open space is utilized: residential; workspace; recreation; and, cultural. An authority must manage canals, bay traffic, and shipping docks. A shopkeeper can’t serve customers if just outside his store there are loitering street gangs. Thus, in urban settings, government authority has a strong and pervasive presence.

Urbanization

In understanding the urbanization process, a number of key terms must be identified and defined in context:

- **Urban** Pertaining to or characteristic of, occurring or taking place in, a city or town; constituting, forming, or including a city, town, or burgh.\(^7\)

- **Rural** Of persons living in the country; having the standing, qualities, or manners of peasants or country-folk; engaged in country occupations; agricultural or pastoral.\(^8\)

- **City** A town or other inhabited place; a town or collective body of inhabitants incorporated and governed by a mayor or alderman.\(^9\)

- **Megacity** An urban agglomeration of over 10 million people.\(^10\)

These are generally accepted definitions. However, there are varying interpretations depending on cultural and legal traditions. There is not a clear, universally accepted, delineation between urban and rural. A city may have a distinct jurisdictional boundary beyond which is still considered an urban area. In other words,
one may reside outside a city proper, but still remain in a dense, urban environment. Populations and infrastructure are fluid. Suburbs and exurbs can quickly be transformed into a single homogenous urban zone. For the purpose of this thesis, “urban agglomeration” is the more appropriate term to be used. An urban agglomeration is a cluster of cities, communities, and locales in general proximity; throughout which there is a moderate to high density of population and infrastructure. It is in this context that “urbanization” can be properly understood. Urbanization is the process of a geographic area shifting from a rural character to an urban one; or, an urban area dramatically increasing in population. The primary metric by which to gauge urbanization is population numbers.

As reported by the United Nations, as of 2009, the majority of the world population currently resides in urban agglomerations. The reasons for this development are varied. Fertility rates play a minor role. The primary driver for modern urbanization is the simple relocation of people, individuals and families, from rural communities to the cities. The purpose here is not to dwell on the “why” of this trend but to establish that it is a reality of recent arrival.

The most comprehensive record of global population statistics and records is maintained by the UN. The following graphical representations depict urbanization in several manners:
Table 1. Population of urban agglomerations with 10 million inhabitants or more, 1950, 1975, 2009, 2025 (millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Urban agglomeration</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Urban agglomeration</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ciudad de Mexico (Mexico City), Mexico</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rank</th>
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<th>Population</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Urban agglomeration</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Mumbai (Bombay), India</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mumbai (Bombay), India</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>São Paulo, Brazil</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ciudad de México (Mexico City), Mexico</td>
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<td>New York-Newark, United States</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15.3</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Istanbul, Turkey</td>
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<td>Osaka-Kobe, Japan</td>
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<td>Lagos, Nigeria</td>
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<td>Guangzhou, Guangdong, China</td>
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<td>Paris, France</td>
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<td>Lahore, Pakistan</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

The UN projections are based on national statistics that include censuses and population registers. Fertility rate projections are also considered. In this 2009 revision report, the UN projects a steady drop in the fertility rate in developing countries. Employment opportunities, capital access, and access to services are some of the primary reasons that people are being attracted to urban areas. Figure 1 displays the inverse proportional relationship between urban and rural populations in a one hundred year span. The urban metric is projected to increase three times to the rural metric’s more gradual decrease. Figure 2 details the projected distribution of urban populations. By 2050, Asian cities will account for 54% of the world urban population. African cities will jump to a 20% share.

Table 1 forecasts the dramatic increase in the number of megacities – populations of over 10 million. In 1950, it was only New York City and Tokyo. Projections for 2025 have 29 cities topping 10 million. Tokyo still remains on top at 37 million. Asian countries will contribute most led by China and India.

In addition to the numbers projections by the UN, international organizations and government entities recognize the looming issue of urbanization. From an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) document dated June of 2010:

“Today’s mass urbanization is accompanied by a growing sense of vulnerability among city dwellers … violence in many cities is reaching unprecedented levels, and is making daily life in some places almost like living in a war zone.”

The National Security Strategy of the United States (2010) describes “… profound cultural and demographic tensions, rising demand for resources, and rapid urbanization could reshape single countries and entire regions.”
Urbanization can be depicted by charts, numbers, and maps. But the reality of urbanization is found in streets, alleys, and tenements. The implications of urbanization can be understood in the previously discussed structural and cultural frameworks. Urbanization is not just an addition of people in a geographic space. The structural impact is immediate. How are cities to cope with these new arrivals? Infrastructure and power grids must be modified. Sewage and water services need to be available and safe. Investments must be made into housing units and mass transit to working districts. The structural implication is that city services will be stressed to the breaking point. As depicted in figure 2, by 2050, the majority of the urban population of the world will reside in developing countries in Asia and Africa. In table 1, by 2025, cities such as, Lagos, Dhaka, Karachi, and Mumbai will all have to cope with population increases in the multiples of millions. In the developing world, what will happen when government cannot provide for adequate housing and sanitation services?

The cultural implications of urbanization revolve around the universal concept of the “outsider” or the “other.” In almost all cultures, there has been an accepted delineation between city and rural people. As described by the Oxford English Dictionary, people from rural areas are referred to as, “peasants” or “country-folk.” The word, “urbane,” connotes sophistication, refined, elegant. This stereotype of city people being educated and advanced while those from the country-side are uneducated and crude is, unfortunately, quite common. This dichotomy is exacerbated when racial, ethnic, and religious categories further separate city residents and new arrivals. Such is the case in Paris and London.
In both cities, Muslim immigrants from South Asia and North Africa came to Europe under the benevolent guise of post-World War II guest-worker programs. Today, Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and North Africa have been involved in a number of urban conflicts and controversies. Periodic riots just outside of Paris are perpetrated by mostly unemployed, alienated Muslim youths. French conservatives accuse North Africans of not properly assimilating into French culture and mores. French Muslim youths complain of police harassment, poor housing conditions, and underemployment. This disconnect between recent immigrants and the prevailing culture is most glaring in the French government’s banning of Muslim full-face veils displayed in public. In London, there are periodic outbursts of racist gang violence upon Pakistanis in the streets.

The structural and cultural implications of urbanization are linked. The assimilation of hundreds of thousands (or, millions) of people in a give timeframe within a given space is a challenge for city services. If basic subsistence needs are inadequate or employment opportunities unavailable, the new arrivals can become ghettoized – an underserved community often made up of a minority group isolated from the larger society. A structural segregation can be a precursor to cultural alienation, dissatisfaction, and resentments. Unfortunately, this sequence of structural inadequacy and cultural alienation may become a prevailing pattern most pronounced in developing countries.

The Moral Order of the City

Does the city have a moral order? Should the city be celebrated or denounced? Does the city intrinsically bring out the best or the worst in people? In the United
States, the city has been both idealized and demonized. Early Americans envisioned a “city upon the hill.” But, more often, the traditional narrative of America has been that of rural romanticism; the rugged individual, or family, clearing land and surviving harsh climates, bears, hostile tribes. The city contains elements that can be both attractive and repellent depending on individual taste and background. Some are awed by massive structures and architecture; others desire more sun and sky. Crowded sidewalks and streets energize some while others feel suffocated. Political leaders have also used the city as a symbol of both civic pride (monuments, skylines) and policy failures (public housing, crime). But beyond these issues of taste and politics, there are more fundamental questions of the city as a force for good, or for evil. The following themes illustrate the conflicting views of the city through history. They also provide insight into the moral dimension of urban communities:

**Broken windows, broken communities** - The issue is whether the actual city itself and its associated structural and cultural elements can influence peoples’ dispositions towards good or bad behaviors. The recently deceased John Q. Wilson observed that in certain urban environments, seemingly minor transgressions can disproportionately add to a state of fear and to more serious crime.\(^{15}\) Wilson’s position is that decaying urban blocks can contribute to moral breakdowns among residents – criminal behavior. Instances of loitering, drunks, and idling teenagers should not be dismissed as mere inconveniences of living in the city. Infrastructure in disrepair, disorderly behavior, and lack of city services accelerate more serious criminal behavior.

**Corruptor of the Soul** - In his seminal work, *The Decline of the West*, Oswald Spengler considers the city as a foreboding symbol of a civilization’s eventual demise:
I see, long after A.D. 2000, cities laid out for ten to twenty million inhabitants, spread over enormous countryside, with buildings that will dwarf the biggest of today’s and notions of traffic and communications that we should regard as fantastic to the point of madness.16

A prophetic statement made sublime in that it was written circa 1922. The Decline of the West is history as meditation. Spengler takes the reader on a meandering, but detailed, voyage through ancient cultures, art, music, and philosophy. In this work, the “world-city”, as a modern construct, is viewed as a corruption of all that is good and meaningful. A city’s death doesn’t necessarily bother Spengler. For him, the values of the city were opposite to that of the pastoral and traditional. The city inherently corrupted and perverted the best qualities of humanity (i.e., women should remain home, bear children, be silent.) Spengler’s version of world history is organic. Civilizations are born, mature, and eventually fade into dust. Large, sophisticated cities represent the beginning of the end.

Stability and Prosperity - Spengler’s dark vision is not shared in Adam Smith’s, The Wealth of Nations. Smith viewed cities as engines of commerce with multiple benefits. Cities of manufacture enriched countries and had efficient, progressive governments. But, more significantly, cities, by their very nature, enhance the liberty and security of its residents. Smith implies that the city, in and of itself, intrinsically improves humanity.17

The Ideal City - Pericles’ Funeral Oration18 is a tribute not only to a fallen soldier but to Athens itself. In this classic tract, Athens is extolled as a culture that has imbued its citizens with the best of qualities: kindness; respect; friendship; equality; grace. It is, quite literally, a city to die for. Although Pericles’ Athens was certainly not a paragon of
human rights, his description of Athens is one where governance and the citizenry are in perfect harmony.

Urbanization is not about overpopulation. Urbanization is a global shift in how and where people live. It has several implications. First, in conjunction with globalization, megacities will become dominant actors on the globe to the point of possibly supplanting national interests; a return, perhaps, to city-states. Simultaneously, and depending on governance capabilities, the structural and cultural frameworks of these cities will be stressed to near failure. In light of these circumstances, militant networks will view distressed megacities as ideal locales to either exploit or, as safe-havens from which to operate. Are national and urban governments prepared for a convergence of these trends?
CHAPTER 3

PATTERNS IN URBAN CONFLICT

The urban guerilla must know how to live among the people, and he must be careful not to appear strange and different from ordinary city life.¹

-- Carlos Marighella, Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla

Explosions in Bangkok

The publicly known facts –

1. The position of the Israeli Government is that the development of a nuclear weapon by Iran is a direct threat to Israel’s national security.²

2. Israeli intelligence officers are in Bangkok, Thailand, assisting government authorities in identifying Hizballah operatives.

3. January 12, 2012, via an Israeli tip, a Lebanese national is arrested at Bangkok airport as he attempts to depart. He is later linked to a warehouse containing bulk amounts of explosive precursor chemicals; Thai authorities identify him as a Hizballah operative.³

4. January 13, 2012, the US State Department issues a travel advisory stating that there is a potential of terrorist attacks in Thailand.⁴

5. February 14, 2012, an apparent errant explosion in a Bangkok house is followed by four fleeing subjects including one who detonates grenades. Three Iranian nationals are eventually arrested by Thai police. A Thai police official announced that the detained Iranians were targeting Israeli diplomats.

6. Israeli government officials state that this incident in Bangkok is linked with similar attacks upon Israeli embassies in Georgia and India.⁵

What conclusions can be drawn from these incidents? Even to the most casual observer, there appears to be a conflict of sorts between Israel’s intelligence service, the Mossad, and the Iran backed, militant network, Hizballah. Inexplicably, this cat and mouse game-skirmish, is being played out in Bangkok, Thailand. Why Bangkok? Bangkok is over 4,000 miles from the traditional Israel-Hizballah battleground of
southern Lebanon. Centrally located in Southeast Asia, Bangkok is a modern city with a capable international airport; it’s a hub for tourists and business people alike. The city is a dense metropolis with an eclectic mix of modern buildings and traditional structures; there’s capable communication network, street vendors, vibrant nightlife, and twisting alleys. Bangkok’s a place where any Hizballah or Mossad operative would feel right at home. This string of incidents in Bangkok is indicative of a pattern of conflict that may increase in the coming decades: militant networks operating in a large metropolis actively pursued by a third-country intelligence service.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the range of disorders and violence that may afflict the cities of tomorrow. How do militant networks impact cities? What activities and methods characterize these groups? What strategies exist to mitigate these threats? A city cannot exist nor can civic traditions be practiced if people are in a perpetual state of fear. Fear in the sense of impending attack from others (domestic or foreign) or that one’s property is at risk. It is as true today as it was a thousand years ago; people will not live and work where there is chaos, violence, and uncertainty. The government has a moral responsibility to prevent violence and to protect citizens. But, it must do so without policies that result in oppressive tactics: comprehensive monitoring; curfews; raids; and, checkpoints.

Disorder and Fractured Relationships

In the early 1990’s, at the northeast corner of Georgia Avenue and Jefferson Street, NW, Washington, DC, there was a small commercial space in which there cycled through a number businesses. Despite an ideal location along the busy thoroughfare of Georgia Avenue, every dry cleaner and retail shop that attempted to
make a profit failed and closed down within 6 months. These business failures were a
not reflection of poor quality service or an unneeded product. But rather, the problem
existed between the street curb and the store entrance. There was an impediment.
That impediment was in the form of clusters of young men selling packets of marijuana.
Some of these men were armed or had firearms readily available. For several years,
hand-to-hand transactions of currency for marijuana regularly occurred right at the
corner of Georgia Avenue and Jefferson Street. Inevitably, there were occasional
disputes, intimidating gestures-challenges, scuffles, and even gunfire. Murders occurred
at this corner. As a result, the small businesses at Georgia Avenue and Jefferson Street
routinely folded. Potential customers were not willing to enter this confined zone of
disorder and potential violence. This critical connection between merchant and
customer was never consistently established.

The revolving commercial space on Georgia Avenue is an example of a
dysfunctional pattern that, in one form or another, occurs multitudes of times
throughout many cities. It displays how commerce, a fundamental element of civic life,
can be degraded or just snuffed out by a threatening environment. Modern cities are
built upon the concept of relationships between, and amongst, individuals, government,
commercial entities, communities, and institutions. Secure and open relationships act as
the lubricant for the engine that drives the city. Instances of violence and disorder have
a dramatic impact upon these critical relationships.

In almost all cases, violent acts, or even the threat, precipitate a series of
“effects” that can transform a community. These effects are can be obvious and
temporary (physical damage from a bombing) while others are invisible and sustaining
(malaise and isolation). Understanding these effects is a prerequisite in fully appreciating
the causal relationship between security and the vitality of a city. For the purpose of
this thesis, these effects can be categorized as primary, secondary, and tertiary orders-
of-effect. The following descriptions are offered:

Primary order-of-effect: The immediate destruction to property and human lives
as a result of an act(s) of violence; or, acts that infer a potential for violence;
relationships and lines of communication that are severed.

Secondary order-of-effect: The initial response to a specific violent act or
threatening condition. The response comes in several forms to include
government security presence and counter-measures; emergency services
response; freedom of movement disruptions; public panic and shock; organized
and sporadic retaliation targeting perceived perpetrators.

Tertiary order-of-effect: Residual conditions that remain, or linger, as a result of
primary and secondary order-of-effects. Relationships are strained or severed
between public and government authority; ethnic frictions are exacerbated. An
increased emphasis on security and identifying perpetrators creates a climate of
paranoia and mistrust. Commerce suffers as people are not willing to frequent
particular markets. Freedom of movement is limited or made difficult.

By reviewing these orders-of-effect, one can find similarities between the violence
perpetrated on Georgia Avenue in the 1990’s and the devastation of the World Trade
Center towers on September 11, 2001 (9/11). Both disrupt bonds that allow a
community, a city, to function and to be productive. However, obviously, there is one
glaring difference – scale. Al Qaeda’s attacks upon New York and the Pentagon had
orders-of-effects that are still active and resonating. U.S. troops are committed to
global operations from east Africa across South Asia and into Southeast Asia. Billions of
dollars have been committed to reconfigure the military, law enforcement, and
intelligence communities. Across the globe, a million or more lives have been lost,
maimed, or displaced as a result of military action, sectarian fighting, and peripheral
conflicts. International alliances have been strained as member countries cope with the vagaries of overseas military deployments and frustrated publics. The architecture of cities has been transformed with “layered defenses” and concrete “security elements.” Government legislatures and courts, once open and transparent, now resemble fortresses for the powerful. New technologies have been developed to identify and track personal communications. These are all tertiary order-of-effects that are history changing in scope.

Militant networks have another element that distinguishes them from other, more conventional, urban disorders. There is an “existential threat” dimension that many militant networks share. In other words, select militant networks are intent on the absolute destruction of a particular government, institution, industry, or culture. Couple this intent with the availability / proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and it’s abundantly evident how the scale of risk escalates. Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCO), a type of militant network, are usually motivated by profits but even they exhibit “existential threat” intentions. The violence perpetrated by Mexican narcotic TCO’s now includes direct assaults on local police and assassinations of local elected leaders. Mexican TCO’s are bold and powerful enough to attempt to eliminate government authority within their operating areas.

Themes and Tactics of the Threat

It is October of 1961 at the Copacabana nightclub in midtown Manhattan. Two off-duty New York City Police Department (NYPD) detectives are having drinks and enjoying the entertainment. However, their attention is diverted by a boisterous group of men at a nearby table. Money is being flashed and there is a certain tough-guy quality
to this celebratory party. The detectives quickly recognize several as minor players in the New York heroin trade and gambling rackets. Of note, one well-dressed young man, previously unknown to the detectives, is garnering all the attention and “respect” from the others; he’s referred to as, Patsy. As the evening ends and people begin to depart, the detectives make a critical decision to follow and subsequently surveil this Patsy.

The subsequent investigation would be international in scope and require intensive physical surveillance. Shipments of heroin would be intercepted. After a year of investigation by the NYPD and federal investigators, arrests would be made of Mafia members and French drug traffickers.7

The French Connection conspiracy, as it would be popularly known, would be one of the first take-downs of a narcotic TCO in the US. Despite it being over fifty years ago, the French Connection embodies some of the fundamentals in identifying and mitigating militant networks in urban areas. Moreover, it touches on a central theme of all militant networks – covert operations.

Of significance to this discussion is the manner by which this particular clandestine organization was exposed. The NYPD detectives behaved more as intelligence officers than conventional police. They positioned themselves in settings where they were most likely to observe operatives in plain sight. They possessed significant knowledge of the cultural terrain that, in this case, constituted street level heroin distributors. Despite not having the use of sophisticated electronic monitoring, they were able to recognize nefarious activity and readily identify key personalities. These are human intelligence skill sets. Militant networks, unlike conventional formations, are
greatly dependent on personal, vice bureaucratic, relationships. Furthermore, the militant network is essentially a covert enterprise. Its activities are secret and internally compartmentalized. What is required to reveal such networks is a hyper-awareness and cultural knowledge of select domains.

Almost all militant networks operate with a high degree of operational security. Operational security is a series of methods and procedures utilized to prevent an organization’s activities from being exposed or revealed to a competitor. In the intelligence domain, operational security is often referred to as, tradecraft. Almost all militant groups employ various degrees of tradecraft. In Manchester, United Kingdom, in 2000, an Al Qaeda operations manual was recovered in a police raid. The Manchester Manual, as it would be known, provided elementary instructions to Al Qaeda operatives in how to behave in a manner that did not reveal their true identities or intentions. The manual emphasized the establishment of a safe-house in an area where there is steady transient traffic; residents will not be too inquisitive of strangers passing through. Topics discussed included: compartmentalizing funds; forging identification and travel documents; use of aliases and cover stories (a false explanation of an operative’s activity and location); safe-house procedures; and, secure communication protocols.

The following activities are characteristic of a variety of militant and criminal groups and performed in preparation of operations or attacks; effective tradecraft prevents detection:

- Procuring weapons and equipment
- Establishing training areas
- Securing lines of communication
• Establishing safe-houses
• Assembling explosive devices
• Kidnapping and hostage for negotiation
• Procuring explosive precursors
• Preoperational surveillance and dry-runs to select targets
• Corruption of government officials
• Front companies and non-profit organizations

These tactics and activities are performed in secrecy or, on occasion, under the guise of organizations, front companies. The ability to uncover these activities is the leading impediment to mitigating such threats. The modus operandi of militant networks allows them to maneuver between the seams of law enforcement, military, and intelligence efforts. Especially in the international realm, militants are able to quickly transform themselves from one mode (apparent university student) to another (heavily armed soldier). Law enforcement methods often prove ineffective when militants travel from one country to another or into a conflict zone. And military units are not necessarily suited to search and engage small groups of militants living as, and amongst, civilians in urban areas. This propensity to maneuver between security agency jurisdictions was recently highlighted with the arrest and prosecution of a Russian named Viktor Bout.

On November 2, 2011, Viktor Bout was convicted of conspiring to sell millions of dollars of sophisticated weaponry to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Columbia (FARC) or the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Columbia. FARC is designated a terrorist organization by both the U.S. and the European Union. Although its origins are as a Marxist guerilla army, FARC has transformed itself into the world’s largest cocaine distributor. Bout’s intent was to sell to the FARC anti-aircraft missiles
for the specific purpose of destroying Blackhawk helicopters operated by the U.S. Army and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Columbia.

By utilizing confidential informants and electronic monitoring, the DEA was able to lure Bout to Thailand where he was placed in custody by Thai authorities and eventually turned over to U.S. law enforcement authorities. Bout represents a breed of international criminal who is able to ply his trade worldwide. Fluent in five languages and the owner of a number of quasi-legitimate cargo airlines, Bout spent years moving and delivering weapons to terrorist groups, dictators, and criminal syndicates. He would become known as the world’s Merchant of Death. His financial assets would eventually be frozen or restricted; he knew that police agencies were in active pursuit of him.

US Government Exhibit 1002-T is a transcript of the monitored conversation between Bout and co-conspirators. This document provides insight into some of the tradecraft methods of a modern arms trafficking network. The following issues are discussed:

- **Financial Structuring**: Readily available currency is stored in separate bank accounts in Romania, Greece, and Spain.

- **Front Companies**: Bout speaks of the necessity of having support companies in Venezuela and Ecuador to deliver weapons into Columbia.

- **Communication Security**: Bout is instructed to purchase preloaded SIM cards in combination with multiple disposable cellphones to avoid government monitoring.

- **Pre-operation Dry-Runs**: There is a discussion of the requirement to simulate the movement of funds to determine if there would be any bank or international blocks.\(^\text{10}\)
Bout’s demise would come in Bangkok, Thailand. Like the operatives of Hezbollah, Bout was comfortable in the turbulence of a large, open, capital city. In this case, instead of the Israeli Mossad, the United States DEA would request the assistance of the Royal Thailand Police to place Bout in custody. Bout was a man from the netherworld of international logistics flights and arms trafficking. The difficulty in isolating him was that he was always a moving target. And, he wasn’t a common criminal, per se, nor was he a mercenary. The case against Bout was difficult but only made possible through the use of confidential informants and undercover agents.

A significant trend in militant networks is the utilization of social networks and the internet. Militants now routinely establish websites to facilitate discussions, indoctrinate, recruit, and provide guidance. The most blatant example is Al Qaeda’s online publication of the magazine, Inspire. Inspire is disseminated periodically and is in essence a communiqué from Al Qaeda to its allies, enemies, and followers. A portion of every Inspire issue is devoted to what it calls, Open Source Jihad: “… a resource manual for those who loathe the tyrants; includes bomb making techniques, security measures, guerilla tactics, weapons training and other jihad related activities.” Included in this section are detail instructions, diagrams, and photographs on a variety of attack methods from small arms tactics and constructing IED’s to using vehicles as weapons. There are tutorials on encrypting and decrypting emails and documents. Militant groups are adept at the utilization of proxy-servers and anonymizers to prevent traces back to originators.  

The internet provides a wealth of resources for militants. Google maps and ground imagery and public available traffic cameras show details of sites and movement.
patterns. The obscure practices of urban pioneering or infiltration consist of thrill-seeking individuals trespassing on significant structures in cities. Bridges, skyscrapers, and tunnels become challenges for curiosity. Innocent as it may be, videos are posted on websites that show how to compromise security measures of the exact structures militants target.

The clandestine quality of militant groups is a theme that proves to be their chief strength. Accordingly, the tactics emphasize small groups attacking specific targets and immediate disengagement. Within the confines of a megacity, this theme and tactic can be devastating. For a liberal democracy, how does a conventional police or security force approach a militant network in its midst?

Strategies and Approaches to Mitigate

City police forces and security organizations devote the majority of their efforts to preventing street crime. Robberies, burglaries, assaults, loitering, and disorderly drunks in public space are common fears among city residents and result in localized primary order-of-effects. Police organizations are structured and equipped to address these street crime issues. The first line of prevention is the mere presence of a uniform officer posted in public space. If prevention is not possible, then immediate response to an incident is called for in an attempt to assist the victim(s) and apprehend the suspects. And, finally, a formal investigation is then initiated. This general sequence of 1) presence, 2) response, and 3) investigation is a paradigm that is reflected in the culture and structure of police organizations. The goal is to keep these street crimes to only a primary order-of-effects level and not beyond.
Militant networks do not follow this pattern of criminal behavior. Members do not loiter on street corners nor commit common street robberies. For an operative, the goal is to be invisible, to take on a camouflage that complements the urban surroundings. Activities and operations are performed with the sole intent of not bringing attention from the authorities. Public and dramatic acts of violence are often without public attribution or apparent suspects. Being that the case, what should security services do to best expose and counter these networks? This task is made difficult because it demands a law enforcement organization to augment itself with a significant intelligence capability.

The presence of a militant network in a city is more of an intelligence problem than one of law enforcement. If an organization is intent on being “invisible”, how can it be exposed or made visible? The fact is that these networks actually do surface and make themselves known but only in the most subtle of ways. And, these subtle ways are usually, in and of themselves, legal. The key for a security service is that they must be hyper-aware of specific activities in their domain. Militant networks routinely perform basic functions that can alert a properly trained, sensitized, government agency.

The following categories and indicator-behaviors (suspicious but legal) provide law enforcement-intelligence agencies with knowledge that a militant network may be present in their area of responsibility:

- **Travel Patterns:** presence of person(s) who travel to, or through, countries with known militant training camps; inconsistency between a person’s background-profession and travel countries; multiple loss of passport and reissues; extensive travel without reasonable financial means; payment in currency; one-way airline tickets.
• Communication: a person who is adept at repeated purchasing-discarding cellphones; frequent use of publicly accessible internet portals; speech and written communications in which apparent brevity code words are used; possession of unusual electronics and radio equipment; lengthy and meandering movements-travel that culminate in brief one on one meetings.

• Procurement: a person(s) in possession of chemical precursors and items used in assembly of IED’s; chemistry equipment with personal protection safeguards; use of front companies to purchase items and transfer to another company; purchase of bulk communications equipment to be transferred overseas; legal purchase of weapons, related equipment.

• Preoperational Surveillance and Dry-runs: a person(s) frequent presence in vicinity of sensitive sites or critical infrastructure; photographing or note-taking in vicinity of such sites; engaging in innocuous conversation with posted security personnel; attempts to enter secure areas to gauge security response.

The above behaviors are, in and of themselves, legal and most not necessarily suspicious. The average law enforcement officer doesn’t have the time or the training to adequately investigate such incidents. What is required is an intelligence driven methodology that takes the above indicators and places them in a suitable context for understanding. The aim is to expose militant networks prior to their violent acts. Such a methodology has two intelligence based lines of action: community engagement and human source development.

Community engagement is the process of government security agencies initiating contacts with a variety of industries and communities. Industries such as airlines, travel agents, hotels, hardware, specialty retailers, and gun dealers all have an interest to militant networks. Employees of these industries may be the first to unknowingly encounter an operative. It behooves the government to establish some dialogue with these industries. The purpose of such a dialogue is to educate industries of particular indicators and then to provide a means by which they can notify authorities. This
engagement also extends to the public, as well. This is currently exemplified by the
NYPD’s, “See Something, Say Something” information campaign. Citizens are asked to
contact the NYPD in cases where they observe unusual behavior that may suggest
terrorism. Regarding industries, in the U.S., both local and federal agencies have made
contacts with a number of critical industry leaders to thwart militant activity.

A complementary strategy in the quest to uncover militant networks is the
emphasis and deployment of human intelligence assets. Human intelligence, also
referred to as HUMINT, has a number of other common terms: confidential informant;
agent; spy; undercover officer. It consists of security service officers, or cooperating
civilians, assuming a false identity to close with, to observe, or to infiltrate a militant
network. There are number of variations in HUMINT operations. The most
advantageous to a security service is when one of its own members gains membership
to a militant network and allowed to be an active participant. Another variant is to
recruit an operative who is already ensconced in the militant group. There are also
advantages in recruiting those who because of their profession or cultural inclinations
may become in contact with militants or sympathizers.

All law enforcement and intelligence services have some capacity for HUMINT
operations. However, these capacities vary widely in intent and sophistication. For law
enforcement, HUMINT has mostly been devoted to vice related crimes (narcotics,
gambling, prostitution) and organized crime. At the other end of the spectrum is the
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in which decades of countering the former Soviet
Union has placed an emphasis, and expertise, in recruiting agents to infiltrate an enemy
government / military. The penetration of a sophisticated militant network is a daunting
task for either law enforcement or intelligence agencies. In the last ten years, there have been very few publicly known instances wherein a government agent was able to gain full access to a network.

Ethical Issues

In many intelligence driven efforts, ethical dilemmas quickly become apparent. Especially as it applies to liberal democracies, there is the critical balance between a government’s responsibility to protect and an individual’s right to privacy; to be free of government interference.

A government program to engage industries and communities can quickly evolve into something undesirable. That is, institutions acting at the behest of government agencies. The same applies to a neighbor who observes suspicious behavior in a nearby residence and reports the same to the police. Are these companies and citizens acting as benevolent government partners or have they’ve become, in essence, agents of the state? In addition, when the government initiates a dialogue, is an industry or a community under any obligation to cooperate?

The NYPD campaign of “see something, say something” has a logical inference that suspicious activity should be reported to the police. But are citizens accustomed, let alone trained, in assessing suspicious activity related to terrorism? The danger here is twofold. One, that citizens may profile the ethnic-religious background of a person rather than a specific behavior(s). Thus, resulting in unwarranted police interference with citizens. Two, the program gives the impression of a widespread system of free-form informants. Both circumstances are adverse to traditional democratic values. Citizen informants are reminiscent of East German internal security measures and fascist
regimes. Beyond the ethical considerations is the simple practicality of having to screen through thousands of “see something, say something” reports. The vast majority of these reports are unfounded or simply bogus. The cost-benefit return on such a program is difficult to determine.

For companies and institutions, the “obligation” to assist law enforcement agencies can be problematic. In some instances, the decision to notify law enforcement is easy: several men purchasing black powder, threaded pipe sections, end caps, nails, and screws. The notification is not an indictment or proof of guilt. It simply alerts law enforcement to a situation that may require further attention. However, when a law enforcement agency contacts an internet provider and specifically requests (no subpoena or search warrant) email accounts, content, text messages, and website activity records, then a significant threshold is being crossed. Even if records exist of a person’s activity on-line, to what extent does the government have the right to even request it from a Facebook or a Google? (The FBI currently issues requests in the form of “National Security Letters” that lack any judicial authority.) If Google refuses to cooperate with law enforcement, is the company going to face scrutiny or retaliation from federal regulatory agencies?

The answers to these questions are a reflection to what extent a democracy is willing to enforce security measures at the borders and within. The movement towards a “police state” is consistent with the enemy’s intentions. Alerts and security bulletins, airline safety protocols, body frisks, public space restrictions can be so overwhelming that they create an atmosphere of foreboding. The balance between security and freedom is more art than science. It must balance philosophical and practical realities.
The current clandestine nature of the threat prevents a typical “clear and present danger” standard of assessment. 9/11 was ten years ago. However, according to the US Government, Al Qaeda and its affiliates still pose a grave danger. The evidence to support this assertion often goes unchallenged due to the applicable intelligence is designated Top Secret. As the threat increasingly goes to ground, the government is further compelled to pry and to intrude into the public domain.
CHAPTER 4
INTELLIGENCE AND METHODOLOGY

Intelligence seeks to illuminate the unknown. Almost by definition, intelligence analysis deals with highly ambiguous situations.1

-- Richard J. Heuer, Jr., *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*

Identifying and disrupting militant networks is an intelligence-centric effort. Just as an armored division is the best weapon against another armored division, an intelligence agency is the most capable of defeating a militant network. In recognition of this, since 9/11, government bureaucracies have undergone a number of transformations. The CIA has been on an intense recruiting drive to bolster its corps of clandestine officers with an emphasis on middle-east backgrounds. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the US government’s premier criminal investigators, has rebranded itself as a national security agency (intelligence driven) with a law enforcement sub-function.2 And recently, The Department of Defense announced the formation of its own, internal, Defense Clandestine Service to better combat militant groups.3 The enemy is not a formation of tanks on an open plain. It is seemingly innocuous young men transiting national borders and settling in cities to await orders. This dramatic shift has had its own impact on the uses, and limits, of national power.

This chapter concerns itself with the primacy of the intelligence discipline in regards to mitigating the threat posed by militant networks. What is the role of intelligence in the current conflict? Why are intelligence agencies more suitable than law enforcement and military entities? What are the structured approaches by which we can better anticipate threats and uncertainty?
Relationship and Context

The business of intelligence is about finding and reporting the truth. Not just the truth of today, but also the truth of tomorrow. To know the location and activity of a particular threat or network is always essential information. What is more valuable is to know, with a degree of confidence, what that network will be doing tomorrow, next week, or next month. Smart hockey players possess an intuitiveness that sums up this simple, but difficult to execute, concept: “… skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.”4 It is not the role of intelligence to predict the future. Under ideal circumstances, it presents a leader with possible courses of action a threat may embark on. In more general terms, intelligence identifies trends, discerns patterns, and provides explanation where there is apparent chaos. And, accordingly, a leader can formulate a strategy to counter the threat. Intelligence attempts to reduce the sense of uncertainty a leader has when maneuvering against an enemy. Of note, the uncertainty can be diminished, but never eliminated.5

The word itself, “intelligence,” in the context of a professional discipline, has several applications. There are intelligence agencies, intelligence analysts, intelligence officers, intelligence operations, and even counter-intelligence units. The effort is twofold: the gathering and compiling of information (operations) and then a methodical examination (analysis). The collection of raw data and information by an intelligence organization is often by espionage or surreptitious methods. In other words, covert penetration of an opponent’s headquarters, the stealth procurement of documents, satellite-overhead imagery, communications interception, and the exploitation of human sources. Not to be minimized is the collection of publicly available material from media
sources, trade journals, social media, and archives. The accumulated material (documents, interviews, photographs, schematics, fragmentary reports) is then reviewed and evaluated to determine its veracity and intrinsic value. The final product is generally regarded as intelligence:

A body of information and the conclusions drawn there-from that is acquired and furnished in response to the known or perceived requirements of customers; it is often derived from information that may be concealed or not intended to be available … 6

The product is then communicated to an audience that usually consists of executive leaders who make critical decisions. Whether one is an army general, a Fortune 500 chairman, an ambassador, or cabinet minister, the value of an intelligence product is that it provides a competitive advantage over an adversary. The executive has before him / her pertinent and reliable information by which to make a fact-based decision. Since 9/11, recent emphasis has been to further disseminate intelligence products more broadly across the intelligence community to ensure a universal situational awareness in an effort to discourage “stovepiping” and compartmentalization. The intelligence product itself may vary in form: memorandum; cable traffic; verbal brief; field demonstration; power point; assessment reports; or, technical analysis. In the national security field, intelligence enhances understanding of the threat in order to 1) protect friendly forces and 2) inflict damage upon the enemy.

The process of intelligence analysis can vary depending on the complexity of the material and the most suitable technique. It is a combination of critical-structured thinking and inductive-deductive reasoning. Being that intelligence analysis is an all too human practice (deliberative, reason based), individual analysts must be aware of their
own personal biases, preconceptions, and cultural limitations. In its most fundamental form, basic intelligence analysis takes collected raw information and establishes relationships and context to transform mere data into intelligence. It is a process of analysis and synthesis. Data is broken down into components (a subject’s suspicious currency deposits) and then merged with context themes (that same subject’s profession / lifestyle) to result in a preliminary intelligence product. Figure 3 highlights some basic categories that can apply in a number of circumstances:

### Relationship & Context

People, events, phenomena are understood best when a relationship is established with other people and circumstances. Context provides a dimension of past and future; intentions; atmosphere and narrative construct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship modes:</th>
<th>Context themes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Social (person to person)</td>
<td>- personal drives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Person to property / ownership</td>
<td>- community interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group membership &amp; loyalties</td>
<td>- political dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Communication linkages</td>
<td>- grievances &amp; triumphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Travel / movement linkages</td>
<td>- ideological influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Family &amp; tribal affiliations</td>
<td>- historical references</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Whether examining an insurgent group or a transnational criminal organization, these categories provide a rudimentary structure to produce an intelligence product. Relationship modes are objective and deductive; context tends toward the subjective and inductive reasoning. The process starts as an analysis (breakdown) and is completed with a synthesis (combining). The goal is to transform diverse data into knowledge.

Figure 3. Relationship & context
An Intelligence Based Threat Environment

After ten years of a Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), governments have had to reexamine basic assumptions of how they operate. Traditional lines of action with respect to identifying and monitoring threats have been transformed. For military and law enforcement entities, configured for more familiar threats (infantry formations and street criminals), pursuing militant networks is not necessarily a good fit. The firepower and mass of modern military units, even light infantry, is not suitable for manhunts in dense urban zones. Most police agencies are jurisdiction bound and simply lack the authority to wield enforcement methods across borders. Additionally, police units are not adept at long-range international surveillance operations. Where military and police capabilities are lacking, intelligence can fill the gaps.

The following categories have arisen as significant challenges in countering contemporary militant networks. They represent “seams” wherein militants can avoid conventional security measures and/or exploit opportunities. Intelligence units and activities are better at addressing these issues rather than conventional military and police organizations:

1. Master Narratives: Defined as a group’s historical journey manifested in stories or vignettes that represent a particular political-cultural perspective. The narrative becomes a standard by which to understand events and to direct that group’s actions, responses. The master narratives of militant networks often center on past grievances (real or perceived), ethnic-racial rivalries, oppression by the powerful, and devotion to a religious order. Intelligence analysis can identify the fundamentals of such master narratives and recommend a counter-information campaign to discredit leaders or to expose fallacies. Such efforts are performed overseas targeting the supporters and facilitators of these networks.

2. Identity Management: A large part of defeating militant networks involves identifying key leaders and personalities via a number of methods that
include: HUMINT assets; biometrics; identification documents; pattern of life; and, electronic signatures. Networks are dispersed organizations with members moving clandestinely across borders and oceans. Intelligence organizations are suitable in collating identity information from various sources – signals intelligence, law enforcement, detention operations, and liaison with other security services – and then tracking / seizing militants.

3. Weapons Proliferation: Weapons proliferation is a process that often starts from a government’s legitimate stockpile of military ordnance and explosives. However, due to political instability, theft, incompetence, or corruption, these weapons become available to militant networks. Intelligence activities can identify such deficiencies within a country’s border and then, via sources, monitor the dispersal of material. Intelligence agencies are in position to develop relationships with government military officials who have direct access or knowledge of such weapons.

4. Center of Gravity: A Clausewitz based term that applies to that element of an enemy that when attacked / influenced can bring about a catastrophic and immediate collapse. Militant networks, because of their clandestine and dispersed qualities, and non-traditional structure, make it difficult to assess a singular center of gravity. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the US military has reconfigured tactics to align with a center of gravity that is population based vice armed insurgent. Intelligence services are in a better position to assess and to identify centers of gravity via HUMINT sources and a familiarity with countering clandestine opponents.

5. Communications: A dispersed and secret organization cannot survive long without a method to communicate. Only national level intelligence agencies have the technical means to intercept international communications. And, if need be, to decipher codes, identify brevity terms. Communication intercepts are vital to uncovering operational plans, movements of militants, and the size of the network.

6. Denial and Deception: Denial and deception (D&D) is a practice most notable among opposing intelligence agencies. It refers to how a group actively masks its intentions through concealment, misdirection, and propaganda. Clandestine operations have an element of D&D to evade and confuse the opposition. Unlike military and police units, intelligence services are already sensitized to detecting disinformation produced by networks.

Structured Analytic Techniques

In considering militant networks and urbanization, the question is how will these phenomena interact and impact the future security environment? In pondering such a
question, there is an implicit need to envision a world of the future. Can that be done in an analytic framework? It’s been attempted before but in a variety methods and traditions. Leaders, nations, and peoples have always been attracted, and mesmerized, by any person or means that can reveal destiny. Humans have always had an interest in this capacity. Mythology, scripture, and history all contain instances of both the masses and the powerful seeking a glimpse of what will be. The Greeks had the Oracle of Delphi – Apollo’s temple within the Greek city of Delphi wherein offerings were made and cryptic messages returned. Other cultures look to the stars or to mysticism. An organization with an intelligence capability must have a logical system for briefing leaders on “… where the puck will be.” For the US Intelligence Community (USIC), there are “structured analytic techniques.”

In 2005, the CIA published a publicly available document titled, A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques for Improving Intelligence Analysis. Structured analytic techniques are methods that attempt to bring clarity to an array of diverse data that often appears to be unrelated and obscure. Two key themes of this document are that, first, intelligence analysis is a very human endeavor with trapdoors that can render the resulting product flawed, distorted. Specifically, “cognitive and perceptual biases in human perception and judgment ….” Cognitive biases are the subconscious mental models that a person uses to process information and data. Biases are reinforced due to personal experiences (“I've seen this before in Iraq.”), prejudices (“Pakistani sources can't be trusted.”), or an unwarranted confidence in one’s own conclusions. For example, information is developed that a young Columbian woman has purchased a one-way airline ticket in cash from Cali, Columbia to Miami. She has no checked in luggage.
An immediate response may be that this woman is involved in a narcotics trafficking organization. Mental models built on training and experience may lead to that conclusion. However, in fact, the truth of the matter may be that this woman has no nexus to narcotics traffickers. Time and effort is wasted in monitoring this woman when narcotics organizations have evolved beyond this standard, outdated, *modus operandi* for couriers. Structured analytic techniques are meant to compensate for these biases that can infect the intelligence production process.

The second theme to be considered, the rationale for the document’s publication, is in reference to the current threat picture:

... transnational threats today pose even greater complexity, in that they involve multiple actors – including nonstate entities – that can adapt and transform themselves faster than those who seek to monitor and contain them.  

Intelligence analysis, as a profession, has been critiqued in light of the surprise attacks of 9/11 and the inability to find weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in post-war Iraq (2003). Structured analytic techniques are intended to bring objectivity to the process as well as an appreciation of alternative scenarios to intelligence analysis. The problem has been identified as an analysis culture that remains fixated on assumptions at the detriment of more imaginative thinking. A contributing factor to 9/11, despite the availability of relevant information, was that few government intelligence professionals could fathom Al Qaeda pulling off a complex and wholly successful, devastating, attack. It was assumed that Iraq had WMD based on past use (mustard gas upon Kurdish minority), the fact of Hussein’s behavior denying inspectors full access and the word of a problematic informant. But, the analysis was wrong, again.
A Tradecraft Primer categorizes analytic techniques into three broad categories: diagnostic techniques; contrarian techniques; and, imaginative thinking techniques. The purpose of these techniques is to assist analysts in organizing and making sense of the vast amounts of information, reporting and international developments that occur every 24 hours; data that can often be incorrect, incomplete, contradictory, or intentionally deceptive. Within each category are applicable methods that organize information and provide greater insight:

1. Diagnostic Techniques: Identifying and verifying collected data; identify gaps in knowledge. Similar to “relationships and context” approach.
   - Key Assumptions Check
   - Quality of Information Check
   - Indicators or Signposts of Change
   - Deception Detection
   - Analysis of Competing Hypotheses

2. Contrarian Techniques: These methods intentionally take an opposing position to conventional wisdom and IC granted assumptions.
   - Devil’s Advocacy
   - Team A / Team B
   - High-Impact / Low-probability Analysis
   - “What if” Analysis

3. Imaginative Thinking Techniques: To approach the problem from an unconventional angle; narrative driven scenarios.
   - Brainstorming
   - Outside-in Thinking
   - Red Team Analysis
   - Alternative Futures Analysis

Several of the preceding methods emphasize a critical stance to what is generally accepted as conventional wisdom. Also, these methods place a degree of value on narrative and themes as opposed to falling back upon metric-quantifiable analysis. A review of these analytic methods highlights “alternative futures analysis” as the most
appropriate in examining urbanization and militant networks. The alternative futures analysis methodology accommodates dual lines of action that fits well for this examination. A more thorough explanation of alternative futures analysis will be offered in the next chapter.

Intelligence and Moral Ambiguity

One of the first precepts of an intelligence operation is to infiltrate an enemy organization without that enemy realizing there has been a breach. The only way to do that is to engage in a number of acts that, under normal circumstances, are generally considered to be unethical. Deception, theft, coercion, blackmail, and manipulation are traits that all intelligence agencies must be comfortable with. How does a liberal democracy rationalize sanctioned behavior that it would not tolerate of its own citizens?

The explanation is embodied in Hobbes’ concept of a commonwealth; the covenant between the individual and a governing body. We allow the government to behave in such a manner for the purpose of self-defense against invaders, and those who desire a state of war. In addition, the concept of self-defense is common and accepted by almost all cultures, faiths, and peoples. Under exigent circumstances, a person, or a government, has the legal, and moral, authority to partake in extremis acts – to destroy; to attack; to deceive; even to intentionally kill a person determined to be dangerous. However, this doctrine of self-defense is burdened by 1) the subjective values of what constitutes an imminent threat and 2) the variation of appropriate in extremis responses – proportionality.

The current conflict between western countries and Islamic fundamentalist militant groups has brought to the forefront the moral ambiguity of intelligence
operations. Intelligence agencies focus their efforts upon a known threat that has the potential of, or is actively engaging in, violent attacks upon a country or interest. What constitutes a threat can be interpreted in numerous ways. For law enforcement, a typical threat is confronting an armed gunman on public space. The soldier usually is part of a unit that is engaging another uniformed armed force within a distinct geographic corridor or area of operation. Intelligence operations are quite different. The venue can vary from a western metropolitan capital to a tribal village in a denied area. The goal may be to sabotage an enemy capability or to collect vital information. And it is done in secrecy with minimal supervision or public notice. For the most part, citizens understand that governments commit such acts in the interest of security and stability. However, the current conflict with Islamic extremist groups has exposed a number of troubling trends.

The clandestine nature of militant networks has turned the conflict with western intelligence agencies into a spy versus spy dynamic. The threat is composed of operatives, technical experts, and critical leaders who travel anonymously transiting provincial and national borders. Intelligence agencies must initiate spontaneous capture operations followed by detention and interrogation. Or, when there is a sufficient concentration of enemy, a missile launched from an unmanned aerial vehicle can be the preferred method. For US intelligence agencies, these activities have since been publicly exposed resulting in a new lexicon: “extraordinary renditions”; “enhanced interrogation techniques” (EIT); and “predator drone strikes.” Critics and international organizations have responded with their own terminology in response: kidnapping; torture; and, assassination, respectively. Especially as it applies to waterboarding, U.S. policy has
become twisted unto itself as it tries to reconcile the desperate need for information from detainees with what is legally-morally tolerable. For a period of time, waterboarding, an almost universally acknowledged form of torture, was deemed acceptable to be performed by U.S. interrogators upon militant detainees.\textsuperscript{12} That U.S. Department of Justice memorandum, and the entire EIT protocol, has since been rescinded by the Obama administration.

The crux of the matter is the concept of \textit{jus in bello} or the just conditions for conducting warfare. There are a number of international agreements and treaties (Geneva and Hague Conventions and amended protocols) that detail how to discriminate between soldier and civilian; prudent use of firepower upon legitimate targets; and, the prohibition of egregious means such as torture, genocide, and chemical weapons. The use of waterboarding by U.S. interrogators was justified in part by an argument that claimed that the current conflict was not a war, per se. And, Al Qaeda militants were not soldiers and thus were denied protections from the Geneva Convention.

These moral and legal maneuverings further amplify the unusual and peculiar nature of this conflict, or warfare. There are no vast battlefields with bunker complexes. The soldiers do not wear uniforms and have no allegiance to a sovereign power. Intelligence services have been thrust into the fray lacking certain skillsets: custodial interrogation; detainee operations; and, seizing suspects. As of today, some of the most extreme interrogation techniques are no longer practiced. There has been a conscious attempt to reset many intelligence operations to comply with democratic values. Extraordinary renditions and predator drone strikes still remain controversial.
but elected officials and the general public do not view such acts as morally reprehensible.
CHAPTER 5

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

Scenarios are stories about the way the world might turn out tomorrow, stories that can help us recognize and adapt to ... our environment.¹

-- Peter Schwartz, *The Art of the Long View*

In both classical and popular culture, the future as artistic expression has usually fallen into two categories – utopia or dystopia. Either the world will be a high-tech paradise or it will degenerate into chaos and violence. These competing visions are more often than not tinged with strong political commentary. Plato’s *Republic* is an attempt to outline an ideal civic structure in which everyone has an assigned position; arrangements are honored; order is maintained. The Republic is a utopia where peace and prosperity is a reality mainly for those fortunate to be the ruling class. In George Orwell’s, *1984*², oppressive governments snuff out any semblance of individual freedom in order to wage a global war; a war that rationalizes a perpetual state of emergency that further serves tyrannical policies. This pessimistic view is even more apparent in film where the future is often portrayed as a decaying urban core ravaged by neglect and war. The movie *Bladerunner*³ presents an unrecognizable Los Angeles in 2019. The city has absorbed a large immigrant population and become a congested milieu of cultures and poverty; crime is rampant compounded by a disintegrating infrastructure. For the Los Angeles Police Department, to protect and to serve applies only to corporate giants – ensconced in luxury skyscrapers.
These fictional depictions are examples of alternative futures. Albeit dramatized (flying cars) and lacking analytic rigor, they nonetheless provide a contribution to this discussion. It was the 9/11 Commission Report that identified a lack of imagination on the part of the USIC as a deficiency in adequately anticipating the New York and Washington attacks.\(^4\) An alternative futures analysis is to have a defined framework. But imagination and even an artistic sensibility have a role. A future description that is constructed as a narrative with texture, plot, and dramatic developments has a place in intelligence analysis.

The purpose of this chapter is to apply an alternative futures analysis to the issues of urbanization and militant networks. The methodology will be a combination of techniques from government and corporate practices applied to the current discussion.\(^5\) This analysis is scenario based with a narrative component. Alternative futures analysis is chosen when there are a number of variables that are prone to instability and thus difficult to predict.\(^6\) These variables are also referred to as, “drivers.” Drivers are phenomena, events, political and cultural movements that initiate dramatic change in an environment. In this thesis, urbanization and militant networks are the primary drivers to be examined. There are also subsidiary drivers that will be considered. This chapter will be divided into two sections. Section 1 will identify the key issues at hand to include drivers and themes. Section 2 will identify and explore specific scenario or future alternatives.

**Section 1: Building Scenarios**

The convergence of urbanization and militant networks can occur in a number of settings and circumstances. Every city that experiences a dramatic increase in
population will undergo a number of changes unique only to that community. Likewise, all militant networks come in a variety of forms each with particular behaviors. There are a number of unknowns in the course of constructing possible scenarios, or futures. This exercise can be given some structure by graphically depicting the principal drivers – urbanization and militant networks – as two axes. Each axis will represent a sliding scale from low to high of impact upon a given urban environment. These axes are combined to begin a rudimentary understanding of how these drivers may interact.\(^7\) In this case, a modification will be made to the “urbanization” axis as it relates to a city’s ability to manage urbanization.

A City’s Capacity to Govern

When we speak of urbanization and its impact upon an environment what are the essential issues at work? As detailed in Chapter 1, this process of population shift is a general trend worldwide but most pronounced in less developed regions. Each city, each region, has its own particular dynamics: political; cultural; ethnic; social. And, of course, there are the more practical concerns such as infrastructure, housing, water, sanitation, and public safety. Dhaka, Bangladesh is undergoing urbanization at a rate that will soon make it one of the most populous cities in the world. Hundreds of thousands of migrants are settling into slums in and around Dhaka (400,000 / year). The lack of potable water for these new arrivals has led to two troubling developments. First, an underground, illegal, water distribution network has come into being charging fees that few can afford. Secondly, periodic protests and violence have erupted in response to these water shortages. The former director of the Dhaka Water Authority comments that, “… a serious water crisis in this city can bring down a government.”\(^8\)
What is occurring in Dhaka is being repeated in numerous megacities across the world. Migrants, lacking formal education and financial means, inevitably settle in informal settlements: slums, squatter villages, or ghettos. Being that there is a lack of basic municipal services, black and gray markets develop that are a necessity but managed by criminal groups. Overlay such a situation with religious-ethnic disparities and the results are embodied in the megacity of Lagos, Nigeria: gangs of ethnic rivals (Muslim Hausas versus Christian Yorubas) killing one another indiscriminately and destroying homes. At times, these urban battles can last for days with scores left dead. What becomes evident is that for cities such as Lagos and Dhaka, urbanization is a contributing factor to the formation of ungoverned zones: territory where the government has little or no influence.

In examining urbanization, a counterintuitive notion arises; the population migration itself, from rural to urban, is not necessarily the central issue. The movement and resettlement of hundreds of thousands in a relatively short period of time exacerbates a number of preexisting dysfunctions within a given city. The crux of the problem is a government’s ability to **effectively manage** essential city services in proportion to these expansions in population. In the context of urbanization, effective management involves a number government functions. Chief among these is an availability of adequate housing wherein migrants can settle for a period of time or possibly permanently. Complementing this requirement for adequate housing is a capable infrastructure of sewage-water-electricity utilities. Finally, there must be an adequate security presence that is culturally attuned to arriving migrants and can monitor potential risks. These are, of course, ideal circumstances. In most of the
developing world, urban governments are falling behind in their ability to absorb these multitudes.

The formation of these informal settlements within, or in vicinity of, an already dense city has several ramifications. First, black markets, under the control of criminal enterprises, become ubiquitous to serve new arrivals and replace government deficiencies. A criminal subculture thus takes hold in these settlements that can mutate into other illegal activities – narcotics distribution, extortion, loan schemes, prostitution, human trafficking, and petty thievery. These activities are especially attractive to those who are in desperate need of quick money. Secondly, as previously mentioned, informal settlements slide into becoming ungoverned zones. A combination of new migrants, inadequate housing, and a criminal presence isolates the settlement from the norms of civic life. Underfunded police and security services avoid the problem-plagued slums to focus on tourist strips, business districts, and government centers. These characteristics – alienation, poverty, lawlessness, and crowded conditions – can combine to create pockets of vulnerability especially amongst underemployed, young men. Such young men are ripe for influence from charismatic leaders of militant networks. Idleness and a sense of not belonging, or alienation, have been cited as essential ingredients for a person to join, and abide by, violent organizations.

When cities are able to adequately provide for a surge in population the problematic issues of informal settlements are minimized. In metropolitan areas such as Tokyo, New York, and London, the formation of vast slums disconnected from life support systems has been thwarted. This is not to suggest that there are no housing problems or segregated neighborhoods in those cities. London has its own unique
history of contending with militant networks that emanate from ethnically isolated communities. But the difference between a London and a Dhaka is that London does not have vast zones where governance is practically absent.

In building this analysis framework, a more appropriate primary driver than the singular, “urbanization” is a city’s governance capacity in the midst of urbanization. The spectrum for this driver centers on a city’s ability to deliver services and resilience to changing conditions. Every city has a sliding scale from low to high of governance functions. Governance functions can be defined in a number of ways and methods. For the purposes of this exercise, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (a subsidiary of the World Bank) has six aggregate indicators to measure governance quality:  

• Voice and Accountability
• Political Stability and Absence of Violence
• Government Effectiveness
• Regulatory Quality
• Rule of Law
• Control of Corruption

The preceding categories, when applied to a given megacity, can provide some insight in that city’s ability to mitigate the frictions and complexities of accommodating mass migrations within their borders. For the purpose of diagraming this primary driver the
The following is offered:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incapable of Providing Basic Services</th>
<th>Stable &amp; Accountable Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>[capacity to manage urbanization]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Capacity to manage urbanization

The purpose of this diagram is not to begin a process of evaluating megacities via the World Bank criteria. But rather, to realize that in a scenario based analysis there is a scale of government competence that is instrumental in dampening the negative influences of urbanization. An urban government that tends towards the “plus” side of the scale is satisfactory in achieving the World Bank’s six criteria and has the institutional and professional competence to manage urbanization. And, obviously, those urban governments that tend towards the “minus” symbol are lacking. In such circumstances, ungoverned zones can materialize wherein a synergy of lawlessness and dysfunction takes hold.

All Militant Networks Are Not Created Equal

From Chapter II, a militant network is defined as a non-state group that operates covertly and utilizes destructive and violent methods to further a political or criminal agenda. It is intentionally a broad explanation that encompasses a number of groups, causes, motivations, and operating standards. But what all these non-state groups have in common is a burning desire to effect change upon a specific environment. That environment may be the length of a Brooklyn city block or perhaps an expanse that
includes continents and seas. And, it is a transformation that utilizes the imminent threat of / actual violence to achieve desired ends.

From late 1973 to 1975, the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) was responsible for a series of violent incidents from San Francisco to Los Angeles, California. A self-professed militant group intent on revolutionary warfare, the SLA blazed a trail of chaotic violence that would become a media sensation-obsession. During its lifespan of approximately 17 months, the SLA committed the following acts:

- November 6, 1973: Ambush-armed attack upon Oakland School Superintendent (killed) and Deputy (seriously wounded).
- February 4, 1974: Kidnapping of Patty Hearst, daughter of the president-editor of the San Francisco Examiner.
- April 15, 1974: San Francisco, CA, bank robbery.
- April 28, 1975: Carmichael, CA, bank robbery, one customer killed; conducted by remnants of group.11

The SLA represents politically motivated militants operating at a low level of sophistication. Despite the communiqués, and the trappings of communist insurgents, the SLA was not able to progress beyond a number of criminal acts. Their master narrative, an amalgam of Maoist Communism and Black militancy, was unable to leverage any substantive support. The SLA committed only two acts of political violence – the murder of Oakland School Superintendent Marcus Foster and the kidnapping of Patty Hearst. The kidnapping itself took a turn to the bizarre when Patty Hearst “joined” the SLA and became an active participant in two bank robberies. The bank robberies were more means to acquire quick cash than a strategic act.

The SLA’s short life span is most attributable to their inability to establish a safe-haven and poor operational discipline. After their initial assassination of Foster, the SLA was in a constant on-the-run mode that left them exposed. SLA apartments, at least
one weapon, and vehicles would be discovered / seized by authorities and directly linked
to SLA members (rental agreements and registrations with full names and identifying
information). A misguided shoplifting attempt at a Los Angeles store led to a
conspicuous brawl accompanied by covering fire from an assault rifle. This incident
would result in a string of evidence that would quickly culminate in a notorious
barricade shootout with the Los Angeles Police Department. In that siege, SLA’s leader
and core group (six in total) would all be killed.

As a militant network, the SLA was adept at mimicking what an insurgent should
look and sound like. There was the accouterment of flags, esoteric symbols, berets,
military nomenclature, and official pronouncements calling for a war against oppressors.
However, the army itself consisted of no more than 10-15 active members. There was
never any liberation of any peoples to speak of. The SLA’s impact upon the political-
social landscape was inconclusive at best. Their legacy is more about the media
sensation of their escapades and dramatic end than any lasting political or social reforms.

In contrast to the SLA, there is the Lebanon based Hizballah, or the Army of
God. Hizballah has been in existence for approximately 30 years. Hizballah is many
things to many people. To the U.S. State Department, Hizballah is currently a
designated foreign terrorist organization; a Muslim-Shia militant group in possession of
advanced weapons systems. But Hizballah is also a political party, a provider of
community and medical services, and an advocate for Palestinian rights. For thirty years,
Hizballah has waged a campaign of terrorism and guerrilla warfare against Israel. The U.S.
has also endured numerous attacks-kidnappings-skyjackings attributed to Hizballah or
their affiliates. Most notable is the attack upon the U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut in
1983. Over 240 U.S. Servicemen were killed when a suicide truck bomb crashed into a battalion headquarters that was part of a multi-national force trying to maintain the peace in Beirut. A simultaneous attack also killed scores of French troops. Since 1983, Hizballah has been a constant agitator on the world stage. Adequately funded through a worldwide structure of donations, illegal activities, non-profits, and front companies, Hizballah rarely needs to rob banks. Hizballah further has support from Syria and Iran to act as an operations proxy to minimize Israeli and western influence in Lebanon. In 2009, the Israeli Navy intercepted a ship containing 400-500 tons of weapons originating in Iran and destined for Hizballah.

The Lebanese Civil War in the 1980’s turned the capital city of Beirut into an ungoverned zone where a militant network like Hizballah was able to find roots and expand. With a safe-haven in Lebanon and “sponsorship” from Syria and Iran, Hizballah is a sophisticated organization to the point of political representation and recognition from international bodies.

Sophistication Equals Power

The SLA and Hizballah are both intent on using violence to further a political objective. However, further similarities extend no further. The SLA was erratic while Hizballah is calculating. The SLA’s cause held no mass appeal other than a limited anti-establishment community in the San Francisco bay area. Thus, their violence was viewed as criminal and unconnected to any legitimate cause. Hizballah is an organization and a force unto themselves. Their causes – a Palestinian homeland, the defeat of Israel, sanctuary and influence in Lebanon, Iranian-Shiite political goals – do resonate amongst millions to the point of wide international support. The SLA and Hizballah are on
opposite sides of a scale of sophistication. Sophistication is being defined as a militant network’s ability or capacity to bring about change. As a primary driver in this specific analysis, militant networks are best understood in their effectiveness. The greater the level of sophistication the more disruption there is upon an environment. Sophistication also includes an innate capacity to counter the tactics of security services and to adapt to new circumstances. The least sophisticated of networks are comprised of street gangs and crews acting in concert to profit from narcotics, vice, or petty crimes. A competent police department (in conjunction with a supportive government prosecutor) can usually break up a typical street gang. The most sophisticated of networks is Hizballah or FARC. These organizations have a base of popular support, a geographic safe-haven, and have multiple support streams of money and material. In addition, they have the ability to project an image that does not consist of only armed attacks or crime. They provide services the government cannot, or will not, perform. A sophisticated group has branches and interests worldwide; some are legitimate enterprises, others more nebulous. For security services, this distributed network pattern is the most challenging to identify, monitor, and mitigate.

For the primary driver of militant networks, the scale most appropriate for this analysis is one that is scaled between the negative and positive poles of levels of sophistication:

![Militant network sophistication](image)

Figure 5. Militant network sophistication

72
In this scale, the negative pole is a lack of sophisticated elements. Criminal gangs, street
dealers, illegal gambling crews, and environmental activists engaged in
vandalism are considered low in sophistication. In these cases, geographic impact areas
are relatively small. Community (civic or industry) disruptions are a nuisance but not
paralyzing. Midpoint on the scale would be found organized crime networks that
operate front companies, negatively influence commerce, and are corrupting
government officials. The high pole is where militant networks exist that have
operations, bases, and facilitating sponsors in multiple countries. What is the result
when these two primary drivers, militant networks and urbanization, are converged?
What scenarios can be developed and considered?

Section 2: Futures Matrix

Alternative futures analysis is most suitable when there is a high degree of
uncertainty and complexity given the subject matter. This is the case in contemplating
the convergence of the two principal drivers: urbanization and militant networks.
Furthermore, there are a number of other secondary drivers that can be influential and
create their own turbulences. Accordingly, it is not prudent to rely on just one scenario
in making an estimate. This particular analytic technique results in four scenarios. The
format is derived from USIC methodologies. On the corporate side, the process is
more free form and subjective, “The purpose of scenarios is to help yourself change
your view of reality – to match it up … with reality as it is, and reality as it is going to
be.” But the intention is the same, an intelligence product to support decision-making.

For the purposes of this analysis, the government-urbanization and the militant
network scales are schematically depicted in a matrix format. In this form, four distinct
quadrants become apparent. Within each are the preliminary scenarios that will be
developed. These four quadrants stimulate a conceptual process of constructing future
outcomes. Figure 6 represents this preliminary stage:

Figure 6. Preliminary matrix

From this matrix, the next step is to actually assign each quadrant a futures scenario.
The intention is to provide several alternative outcomes that can illustrate how these
selected drivers will interact. For the policymaker, being aware of these scenarios is an
executive responsibility. Having this knowledge – an intelligence estimate – at their
disposal is essential for contingency planning. When key drivers begin to activate or
“drive” an environment, it behooves a leader to already have resources (funding,
manpower, equipment, systems) identified / in place to adequately respond. An alternative futures analysis, when utilized correctly, allows strategic planners to “war-game” scenarios. Operation models can be constructed and exercised to validate assumptions and supportability. Additionally, this analysis provides a larger context to the status of international and coalition relationships, risk management, and strategic messaging – domestic and global.

Story Telling

Each quadrant represents an alternative future for the primary drivers. These alternative future scenarios are given a descriptive title that assists in the discussion process. The scenario title should evoke a common reference or an immediate recognition. For the purposes of this examination, the following scenario titles are provided:

1. Police on the Beat
2. Bull in the China Shop
3. Lord of the Flies\(^{16}\)
4. Warlord Paradise

These are general descriptions. They are arrived at from examining the primary drivers, an appreciation of the historical record, and this writer’s experience in both intact and fractured urban settings. It is an inductive and deductive reasoning process. Also, there is a nuanced quality of realizing the power of story telling. Facts and datum are helpful to a policy maker. But what resonates and captures attention is intelligence delivered as a developing story or narrative. The following matrix is offered as a starting point in the
consideration of these scenarios, or stories. Each quadrant is provided a scenario title with several bullet points as brief descriptors.

Figure 7. Alternative futures matrix

How is Figure 7 useful? The alternative futures are strategic vignettes that provide analysts, researchers, planners, and executives a start point in envisioning a changing world. Each scenario has component parts – established government, non-state actors, urbanization issues, and regional players. What is essential is that these scenarios are “alternatives” not only to themselves but to other conventional analyses as well. They should be approached with an open mind and a willingness to suspend conventional wisdom and to question established assumptions. These are not
authoritative conclusions. But, rather, conceptual narratives that prepare policy makers for extraordinary circumstances.

Once these scenarios are given some preliminary form, how do we know when these future alternatives are actually becoming reality? The answer is to apply indicators to each scenario. Indicators are observations or measurements that are evidence of a developing, overarching, trend. In this analysis, there are common and distinct indicators depending on the scenario.

The scenarios, Bull in the China Shop, Warlord Paradise, and Lord of the Flies, will be discussed. Police on the Beat, due to its generally benign outlook, will not be included. The following descriptions are intended to stimulate thought regarding the primary drivers of urbanization and militant networks. The cities portrayed – Shanghai, Karachi, Lagos – are megacities that share some elements to the respective scenarios. However, their use in this context is for illustrative purposes only. Given similar drivers in a city of over 15 million, there is the possibility that these events will materialize.

Bull in the China Shop

• Setting

Shanghai, China 2025: Shanghai has had a dramatic increase in population that has recently abated. To support a large retired population and to maintain a sizeable labor force, China has eased immigration policies as well as relocated millions of rural Chinese into housing complexes on the outskirts of cities such as Shanghai. Shanghai has become an international city and promotes itself as the “New China” – progressive; tolerant; and business friendly.
• Driver

1) Urbanization poorly managed with isolated communities.

2) Formation of gray economy and criminal groups develop.

3) Chinese authorities brutally suppress demonstrations; activist leaders are detained, harassed, and monitored.

4) Falun Gong, a spiritual and meditative discipline, was forced underground by Chinese authorities in 1999. After years underground, it reemerges with a militant arm that becomes an organizing framework for marginalized groups.

• Conflict Dynamics

The Falun Gong Protection Group opposes the Chinese Government and the influential elite of Shanghai. Their position is that Chinese officials, industrialists, and foreign companies are enriching themselves on the blood and sweat of the disenfranchised. Disciplined and organized, they attack to undermine confidence in government and to thwart foreign investments. International business headquarters, wealthy communities, and government security facilities are subjected to precision bombings and small arms ambushes. The militant network takes great care in minimizing civilian casualties. Falun Gong receives funds from its millions of global practitioners. The Chinese government responds with mass arrests and raids that result in protests and street skirmishes.

• Indicators

1) Community organizers and activists hold meetings to empower disenfranchised.

2) Political opposition leaders routinely intimidated by government authorities.

3) Organized protests lead to street violence; attacks against police units.
4) A series of anonymous attacks directed at government symbols; rehearsals to
gauge tactics and government response.

5) Falun Gong Protection Group leverages social networking and overseas
affiliates as a source of support; attacks proceed with Falun Gong claiming
responsibility and demanding concessions.

Warlord Paradise

• Setting

Karachi, Pakistan 2017: Pakistan’s largest city continues to expand as
hundreds of thousands relocate. During the US-Afghanistan war, thousands of
militants took refuge in Karachi to escape targeted raids and drone strikes.18

The US exit from Afghanistan in 2014 was viewed as a relief from a dominating
superpower. However, the power vacuum in Afghanistan and Pakistan’s
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has led to a resetting of Islamic
militant group relationships. The municipal government cannot provide adequate
services to the free form slums that have emerged. Splinter militant networks
form with their own agendas.

• Drivers

1) Urbanization has created slums that are poorly serviced.

2) Militant groups and splinter cells remain active in Karachi.

3) Unemployed, idle, young men.

4) The government, overwhelmed, cedes tracts of the city to militants thus
creating, “ungoverned zones.”

• Conflict Dynamics

Karachi maintains a core government capacity that protects institutions,
the wealthy, industry, and lines of communication – airport, seaport, and
highways. However, vast sections of the city become militant sanctuaries. Fighting between militant groups is sporadic but very violent. The secular Pakistan Army is hesitant to clean out the militant territories due to the expectation of a high number of civilian (Muslim) casualties. Karachi becomes an urban FATA with tribal leaders claiming territory and raising funds.

• Indicators

1) Government services are incapable of servicing a large disadvantaged population.

2) Armed men manning vehicle checkpoints within city; loyal to a charismatic leader; attired in makeshift uniforms.

3) A series of engagements between police and militants result in numerous killed followed by a negotiated, temporary, ceasefire.

4) Militant groups provide basic services and family support to communities in need.

Lord of the Flies

• Setting

Lagos, Nigeria 2025: In a span of 25 years, Lagos’ population has increased from three to sixteen million. Already a city on the edge, this expanse has resulted in a collapse of any semblance of a responsible government. The final fall into chaos was accelerated by the violence of Boko Haram, an Islamic militant network that has the attributes of a cult / street gang. The current situation has degenerated into a multitude of meandering, heavily armed, criminal gangs engaging in random violence. The Nigerian government has all but given up on Lagos leaving international and UN organizations to fend for themselves. Cholera and dysentery is killing thousands every week.
• Drivers
  1) Urbanization in an at-risk environment.
  2) A corrupt, failed local government.
  3) Presence of a violent, extreme militant network.
  4) A consistently high crime rate.
• Conflict Dynamics
  Lagos is infested by gangs of young men armed with assault rifles, crew served weapons, rocket propelled grenades, and an occasional armored vehicle. Their primary motivation is to obtain money, weapons, and power. The Nigerian government controls the international airport, a main highway, and some government buildings. The seaport is in the hands of an Islamic extremist group. The general security situation is one of violent engagements over territory; control of roads and waterways; and, securing fresh water and food sources. Bodies remain in the streets for days. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and non-government organizations are established at the airport and transport aid to secure sites within Lagos. Even that is becoming problematic as the UNHCR convoys are increasingly attacked despite Nigerian Army escorts.
• Indicators
  1) Armed men openly posted on roadways stopping and interrogating drivers.
  2) Street gangs / militant groups engage in open fighting.
  3) Nigerian security forces are inept at urban security operations.
  4) Nigerian forces retreat to government facilities, a main highway and the airport.
5) Looting, absence of police services, patrolling armed men harassing citizens and extorting businesses.

6) Humanitarian crises – epidemics and food/water shortages.

Alternative Futures in Context

The preceding futures utilize actual cities undergoing urbanization together with precarious security situations. They are illustrative only to simulate what may occur in any given city experiencing rapid demographic shifts. It would be misguided to suggest with certainty that these are the particular fates of Shanghai, Karachi, and Lagos. But similar sets of facts and results may occur in other cities. The object has been to contemplate the converging phenomena of militant networks and urbanization. Both of these categories are highly unpredictable and subject to a number of influences – manmade and natural.

To a certain degree, this analysis demands the recipient to imagine how human beings behave under *in extremis* circumstances. It also asks to take a leap of faith in what may appear to be highly unlikely. Could such an organization as Falun Gong transform into a violent group? Falun Gong is seemingly apolitical. But its followers are passionate and worldwide. If systematically oppressed, they may quickly become politicized … and militant. Such developments cannot be discounted. An alternative futures analysis brings attention to scenarios that have the potential to greatly impact global relationships. For the executive or policymaker, such an analysis heightens one’s awareness of the world. It provides an appreciation of how events interrelate and produce profound results.
CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The preceding alternative futures analysis has been an introduction to an urban-centric world as well as new modes of conflict. Alternative futures analysis is a method for understanding a world in constant motion and turbulence. It is a technique that takes disparate elements of our experience and reframes them into several potential outcomes. These alternative futures are possibilities that give an executive or an organization a baseline from which strategies can be devised, contingency operations drafted. In a sense, they are premonitions based on a sober assessment of the world combined with a bit of intuition; there is the implication that the world is changing towards a new set of realities that will make previous assumptions obsolete. The “so what?” of this specific examination is that urbanization and the proliferation of militant networks are prevalent in the developing world; wherein, the Lord of the Flies and Warlord Paradise type-scenarios may be the reality. This analysis has provided background on the primary drivers and associated indicators that reveal a changing cityscape. It has included a notional narrative that describes how events will transpire.

The prospect of this type of conflict, within a congested, failing, city cannot be discounted or ignored. Globalization and the advancement of communications have made the world a much smaller place. What happens in one part of the world can have an immediate, universal, impact. Especially in an era of streaming media, imagery of overseas political violence is immediate and effective (Egypt, Libya, and Syria). On a fairly regular basis, history reminds us that conflict rarely arrives scripted and
choreographed. Wars, insurgencies, and insurrections are chaotic affairs made only more so within the confines of a city amongst millions of people.

That being said, the following considerations and observations are offered. These topics are applicable to governments, institutions, international organizations, and subject matter experts that have a stake in the world's largest cities. Their inclusion here is to bring some added context to the analysis in the previous chapter.

Ethics and the Cycle of Revenge

In his Second Annual Message to Congress in 1862, Abraham Lincoln spoke of the need to "disenthrall ourselves" from the mesmerizing emotions and experiences of the Civil War: gruesome battles, death, fear, and hopelessness. His plea is for the country's leaders to do something extraordinary; to put aside their primal reactions of rage and despair and to "think anew, act anew" in order to save the country. It is a profound statement from a wartime president. Lincoln is asking the nation's leaders to separate themselves from their emotions and passions and, in this case, preserve the country by abolishing slavery.

Insurgencies, guerilla warfare, and terrorism can all be particularly brutal, shocking, and, at times, very personal. Especially when large numbers of innocents are murdered, it is easy to succumb to fantasies of revenge that verge on blood lust. Leaders may believe it proper to display such ideations in deference to the public mood; in effect, to mirror the emotions on the street – an empathetic technique. In 2012, the public record is replete with government agencies (the U.S. and western nations) involved in a number of questionable acts. These acts include interrogations techniques that constitute torture or are excessively cruel. In the Afghanistan and Iraq theatres,
there have been instances of war atrocities, mass detentions, and abusive treatment of ordinary citizens. Some of these practices-policies have since been suspended. Some have been misreported or inaccurate. Nonetheless, there have been a number of embarrassing episodes, followed by apologies, which have adequately fueled Islamic resentments. In effect, sustaining conflict. These incidents have all come to be exploited as evidence of the insincerity, the hypocrisy, of the west's battle against the Islamic world.

Presidents, Prime Ministers, Generals, and Directors of Intelligence are signal senders. Every word they utter, every gesture they make can be construed as guidance in a given situation. It can be argued that after 9/11, a number of American leaders communicated intentions that encouraged a disregard for international norms of behavior on the battlefield and elsewhere. Former President George W. Bush concedes that his own bravado talk was inappropriate and needlessly provocative.²

Lincoln’s words still hold true today. Leaders should have the presence of mind to remain rational, focused, and composed. That cannot allow themselves to be overwhelmed by waves of emotion, anger, and regret. Once democratic countries routinely engage in human rights violations then their credibility, their legitimacy to act, is in jeopardy. Globalization and technology has ensured that future conflicts will be live streamed without editing. Perhaps that’s a good thing.

Embrace the City:

Globalization, travel accessibility, and information technology have made cities critical network hubs. Beyond just containing people, a city is a system of services, technology, and infrastructure within a larger global system. This complexity is
increasing commensurate with urbanization and global connectivity. To competently operate in the city, an understanding of these intricacies is mandatory.

When it comes to security strategy, military commanders and planners have followed the dictum – “avoid cities.” Cities are everything that military strategists don’t like. Battalions become channeled in canyons of concrete, confined, and trapped. The enemy can attack from above, below, or from behind. Modern tanks, armored vehicles, artillery fire, and aircraft, the epitome of technology and power, are neutered. The geometry of cities is all wrong for modern armies.

Despite these limitations, for security and policy professionals, the city must be embraced rather than avoided. The third-world’s susceptibility to urban security problems deserves greater scrutiny and assessment. What megacities are experiencing urbanization and security lapses? What cities have failing basic services? What are the institutions, the international organizations, and western government support that can be leveraged to prevent a crisis? Greater attention needs to be brought on these matters to prevent a safe haven for militants or a catastrophic humanitarian crisis.

Disperse and Decentralize

For the past ten years, the global conflict against Islamic militants has raised a number of questions in regards to defining the enemy and how the west should organize its assets to address these militant groups. In short, who and where are these bad guys, and how should we fight them? These protracted debates are partly attributable to the many forms and modes that a threat can take. In one mode the militant is a guerilla fighting a conventional army. The next month he is an operative in an undercover status in a large city conducting a surveillance of a target; or, distributing medical aid in
Peshawar, Pakistan. In Mexico, a drug cartel member intimidates rivals one day and the next week he is ambushing government troops. This chameleon like transformation is a challenge for western democracies that, for legal and practical purposes, want a well-defined enemy. This ambiguity in defining contributes to bad fits of pursuer-versus-target: i.e., conventional army forces searching house to house for militants in urban settings. The technique or the dedicated unit must be suitable for the environment and threat being pursued.

For the government institutions responsible for combating these militant networks – intelligence, military, law enforcement – some organizational changes have occurred but more needs to be done. One recommendation can best be summarized as, disperse and decentralize. The militant threats of the 21st century are not going to be housed in large barracks within camps. Today’s militant speaks several languages, is well versed in international travel, and can blend in to any setting. Law enforcement and intelligence services need to have members who can do the same. The tendency for security bureaucracies to have strict control-supervision over undercover officers and agents is understandable. But in the pursuit of international militants, western agents need to be given a long tether. Especially with advanced communication options available, government agents should be allowed to be independent and free ranging. In military circles, this is already being considered. The U.S. Marine Corps, in direct response to experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, is developing an operation model called, “distributed operations.” Distributed Operations dispenses of the heavy footprint of companies and battalions in exchange for small, highly capable, units of Marines operating over an extensive area of operations. These squad size units will be
self-sufficient, communications savvy, skilled at fire support and able to react quickly to unconventional threats. The goal is for small units able to have the flexibility to make rapid decisions without the approval layers of headquarters entities. The New York Police Department has “dispersed” as well to the point of assigning liaison officers to critical overseas cities. These officers act as observation posts for any impending attacks in the New York City region. They interact with corresponding municipal police agencies and respond to attack sites for assessments.

From Flash Mob to Flash Attack

This analysis has concerned the two primary drivers of urbanization and militant networks. Technology is also a driver of significance. Technology has a generational component in which young militants have become very skilled at utilizing wireless devices to communicate, post-exchange information, and organize. Social networks and virtual communities have the potential of turning into militant networks. Today’s harmless and bemusing “flash mob” can become tomorrow’s “flash attack.” Cyber attacks have become real and have the potential of damaging infrastructure and pilfering valuable data. With a technology cycle that churns out new innovations and software every week, the industry’s products can become as lethal as firearms. Also, social networking sites, discussion boards, and chat rooms need to be constantly reviewed to recognize nefarious messaging that may turn into action.
CONCLUSION

This paper has made an effort to bring attention to a future dominated by mega-cities and urban matters. Additionally, conflict will increasingly involve non-state actors who are skilled at avoiding nations’ security bureaucracies. The combination-interaction of these two trends should stimulate conversation and thinking about how this will affect the world: local economies; global commerce; security; humanitarian crises; world health; food and water accessibility. These issues are not just for national and municipal governments to resolve. International organizations, non-governmental organizations, and non-profit institutions have a degree of influence on the world stage. Perhaps the proper response to a non-state actor with a gun is a non-state actor with an expertise in water purification. For the aspiring militant, his greatest fear is a population that is comfortable and secure in their community. Although this paper emphasized security agencies mitigating militant networks, it needn’t always be a gunshot solution.

The alternative futures approach of examination in this paper has been a conceptual exercise. It was intended to be thematic driven as opposed to data driven. For executives who pride themselves on making fact-based decisions, the reaction to such analyses may be skepticism. Statistics and hard metrics always appear to be more authoritative. Social trends and fringe groups are obscure and difficult to measure. Being able to observe, assess, and articulate such social-cultural drivers is a very human skill-set separate from quantitative data. It is especially a necessity when applied to militant networks, who neither want to be observed nor assessed.

The intention of this paper has not been to forewarn of apocalyptic visions. That tendency, to warn of peril and disaster, is ubiquitous in popular culture as well as
amongst alarmist organizations. The purpose here has been to examine the current state of affairs and carry it forward if trend lines were to continue. Cities are currently expanding at a high rate. What will happen if this continues? Militant networks have proven to be an effective means to challenge established authority. How will this effect the security environment of cities? This paper has given an answer to those questions within the parameters of one specific analytic technique. There are other techniques that may offer different results.

For this analysis, there are several significant themes that have been identified. First, the urbanization of the world will not be evenly distributed with respect to numbers or effect. It appears that third-world cities will increase at a much greater rate and with more debilitating results. For western democracies and international organizations, how should they respond to these potential urban crises? Secondly, militant networks have taken advantage of the gaps within traditional national security bureaucracies.

For good or for bad, contemporary culture and the historical record bend toward the dramatic. The local television news leads with last night's murder; the national broadcast news features another insurrection. More often than not, the study of history is about wars, assassinations, and calamities. To sell a book, a swastika on the cover always helps. This inclination to the morbid, to the tragedies of life, perhaps has its origins in a genetically coded survival mechanism. By availing ourselves to these events or renderings, we are subconsciously preparing ourselves for the trials and obstacles of life. A curious glance at the car wreck by the side of the highway is followed by an internal audit: What if that was me? How do I protect myself? Who was
hurt? Should I care? “… any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in
Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.”

In a way, intelligence analysis attempts to answer those questions. What is the
threat? What does it do? Where does it reside and how can it hurt us? The best
intelligence analysis is a type of literature in and of itself. It tells a story of how there
are people who wish to do harm. There is a plot, a conflict of actors, and a line of
action to resolve the threat. Effective intelligence resonates with its recipients. It
should be based on factual data and presented in a manner that prompts reflection. This
paper has attempted to show the world as changing accompanied with new threats.
The point is not to alarm but to warn of what may be. In doing so, people and policies
can be oriented to a future that is secure.
NOTES

Chapter 1


7 Ibid., Volume VII, s.v. “insurgent.”

8 Ibid., Volume XVII, s.v. “terrorist.”


15 Investigating Officer Ashok T. Duraphe, Final Report Mumbai Terror Attack Cases, http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf (accessed February 20, 2012). [This endnote is applicable to items, 1-5. The cited document is a comprehensive account of the events of that day to include recovered weapons and equipment linked to the LeT operatives.]


Chapter 2

Chapter 3


6 5401 Georgia Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC. [This description is from the writer’s personal experience as a police officer assigned to an area that included 5401 Georgia Avenue. A number of crimes occurred at this location to include drug distribution, firearms violations, and a double homicide on January 27, 1993.]


12 http://www.infiltration.org/transit.html (accessed April 22, 2012). [“Infiltration offers a mix of the practice and theory of urban exploration in areas not designed for public usage. This site is the online companion of the paper zine about going places you’re not supposed to go.”]

Chapter 4


This quotation is prominent in the public domain and attributed to the former National Hockey League player Wayne Gretzky. It appears to have been repeatedly referenced by Gretzky in regards to his instinctive style of play.


Jan Goldman, Words of Intelligence: A Dictionary (Lanham Maryland, Scarecrow Press 2006), 78.

Ibid., 37.


Ibid.

Ibid., 7-39.

U.S. Department of Justice, Memorandum for John Rizzo Acting General Counsel for the Central Intelligence Agency: Interrogation of Al Qaeda Operative, Jay S. Bybee (Washington, DC, 2002), http://www.washingto... (accessed August 12, 2012). [Within this document, waterboarding is defined as securing a subject supine upon a bench elevated at the feet. A cloth is placed over the subject’s mouth and nose. A stream of water is then poured onto the cloth that results in the subject’s breathing being impaired to simulate a near-drowning sensation.]

Ibid., 18.

Chapter 5


Primary sources include: The Art of the Long View by Peter Schwartz; A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques for Improving Intelligence Analysis, disseminated by the CIA’s Sherman Kent School; and, Structured Analytic Techniques for Intelligence Analysis by Richards J. Heuer, Jr. and Randolph H. Pherson.


Chapter 6

1 This was Lincoln’s Second Annual Message to Congress dated December 1862. It was in the form of a written communication to Congress in which the main request is for a constitutional amendment for the abolition of slavery in secessionist states. Lincoln implores legislators to “think anew and act anew” by supporting his proposal and thus end the war.


3 The Iraq War commenced in 2003 with a quick destruction of the Iraq Army. However, it took some time to assess and concede that a robust insurgency had formed. The U.S. Army’s and U.S. Marine Corps’ eventual shift to a counterinsurgency strategy was codified in 2006: Counterinsurgency, FM3-24 / MCWP 3-33.5, December 2006 by the Department of the Army.

Christopher Dickey, Securing the City (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 145-147.

For the purpose of this thesis, “flash attack” is the use of wireless devices / instant messaging to rapidly rally individuals for a concerted ambush-attack followed by quick egress.

Conclusion

BIBLIOGRAPHY


