RELIGIOUS TERRORISM: ASYMMETRIC WARFARE AND ITS USE BY RELIGIOUS BASED TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Successful terrorist organizations use asymmetric warfare to achieve their goals, and the only way for conventional armies to defeat terrorist organizations is through the use of asymmetric warfare. Asymmetric warfare is not just finding unconventional methods to wage war, but also finding unconventional methods to wage peace. Asymmetric warfare is utilized when the combatants have markedly different military capabilities and the weaker side uses non-standard tactics such as terrorism; it is warfare in which an opponent leverages inferior tactical or operational strength against the vulnerabilities of a superior opponent to achieve disproportionate effect with the aim of undermining the opponent's will. Combating terrorism is a difficult and complex task. Terrorists are not always a defined and structured enemy and their elusive nature makes them difficult to combat. Combating religious terrorist organizations is a multifaceted; and a task that has to involve multiple different departments within the United States government, each with a unique role to play. Inter-department support within the government, along with international cooperation, is vital to developing a plan that combats religious terrorism. Combating religious terrorism has to be a national, as well as international priority.
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CHAPTER 1: HISTORY OF TERRORISM

Introduction

Successful terrorist organizations use asymmetric warfare to achieve their goals, and the only way for conventional armies to defeat terrorist organizations is through the use of asymmetric warfare. Asymmetric warfare is not just finding unconventional methods to wage war, but also finding unconventional methods to wage peace. Asymmetric warfare is utilized when the combatants have markedly different military capabilities and the weaker side uses non-standard tactics such as terrorism; it is warfare in which an opponent leverages inferior tactical or operational strength against the vulnerabilities of a superior opponent to achieve disproportionate effect with the aim of undermining the opponent's will.

Combating terrorism is a difficult and complex task. Terrorists are not always a defined and structured enemy and their elusive nature makes them difficult to combat. Combating religious terrorist organizations is a multifaceted; and a task that has to involve multiple departments within the United States government, each with a unique role to play. Inter-department support within the government, along with international cooperation, is vital to developing a plan that combats religious terrorism. Combating religious terrorism has to be a national, as well as international priority.

Modern democracies, particularly liberal democracies are vulnerable to terrorism. Democratic states, therefore, need a well-defined policy and approach to combat religious terrorist organizations, and diplomacy plays a crucial role in developing an international approach to combating these groups. In order to implement policies against religious terrorism the state needs well defined and well-articulated procedures. The state also
needs to develop and muster the resources to implement the policies. The resources include financing for special units and programs. Well laid out security arrangements are also necessary to deter terrorists, and deny them freedom of action. The state must also develop a path for the members of these organizations to take to assimilate back into normal society as law abiding citizens.

Acts of violence committed by terrorists are perpetrated in response to religious obligation or demand; therefore, religion is most certainly a motivating factor in the perpetration of such terrorist acts. In this paper I compare religious terrorist organizations and the tactics and techniques they employ to carry out their activities. This paper will address successful terrorist organizations use asymmetric style warfare to achieve their goals. Religion as a motivator moves terrorist organizations in a way that makes them more lethal and dangerous than militaries. Terrorism is a form of asymmetric warfare and needs to be recognized as such in order to effectively combat it. Chapter two makes clear the difference between territorial based conflict and Religious based conflict but explains that in both types of conflicts, the end goal is war and victory. Religious warfare gives the religious the will to win mentality because the consequences for losing equate to eternal damnation. The idea of damnation moves the religious fighter past the point of self-preservation and allows them to overcome the fear of death. In traditional territorial war, the consequences for losing are generally economic. Chapter three lays out why religion is the primary motivator in extremist and asymmetric based war. As chapter three explains, religion goes beyond the suffering of today, and promises eventual victory to those fighting; the loyalty and commitment to religion, makes the fighter willing to die to defend their religion. Chapter four will discuss the effect of the
information age on modern terrorist organizations; the access to the internet and the media as a way of spreading their message and propaganda and the use of technology for economic warfare. Finally, chapter five will discuss the most effective way to combat asymmetric warfare waged by religious terrorist organizations who themselves employ asymmetric warfare.

**Terrorism**

Terrorist use of asymmetric warfare is the future of the modern battlefield. Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and roadside bombs planted by local “freedom fighters” have been devastating modern conventional armies while simultaneously winning the hearts of the local populations. Terrorism has evolved in the face of opposition, but so has conventional warfare. The evolution of Western policies and strategies to stay ahead of terrorist organizations will allow us to adapt and combat terrorism and terrorist groups. The modern evolution of terrorism has begun to plague western governments, to include the United States, and is currently the most dangerous and immediate security threat. Technology and the rise of the Information Age have connected terrorists and terrorist organizations and raised them to a level of efficiency and lethality never before seen in history. The Internet has made recruitment, fundraising, and communication to mass, impressionable, audiences easy and effective, and the difficulty faced by governments to track and defend against modern terrorism has turned the battlefield from trenches of mud to trenches of fiber optic cables. Religion is the primary motivator in extremist and asymmetric based war, because emotion is a more effective motivator than gaining wealth for ones country. Religious based conflict has a psychological impact on the fighters that does not exist in territorial based warfare.
The changing tactics and techniques used by terrorist organizations make terrorism relatively hard to define. Terrorism has been described as a tactic and strategy; a crime and a holy duty; a justified reaction to oppression and an inexcusable abomination; much of the way terrorism is described depends on whose point of view is being represented. There is no agreed upon definition for terrorism by the international community because the term "terrorism" is politically and emotionally charged. Terrorism can essentially be defined as deliberate acts of violence against persons or infrastructure to induce fear in a targeted population in order to achieve political, social and economic power and objectives.

The term terrorism has been defined in different ways, mostly depending upon the point of view that a person finds themselves on the issue. The most famous quote being, “one man’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter.” Terrorism involves acts of violence by groups of people with a political motive or purpose. Terrorism has existed in different forms since the early days of human civilization. What has dramatically changed is the population proliferation that has taken place and the ways every person is able to feel and see terrorism as it occurs. Terrorism has also become more rampant and its acts more lethal because of the spread of technology. What was once small and isolated acts of terror can now become large scale death and destruction. Although most terrorist groups may have some similarities, they differ according to their background and motive. Since the 1960s which is generally seen as the turning point of modern day terrorism, a wide variety of terrorist groups have sprung up around the world. The rise of ethnic movements and religious based movements has made terrorism all the more appealing.
The threat posed by these terrorist groups is manifested by their tactics and approach to violence.

**Asymmetric Warfare**

Successful terrorist organizations use asymmetric style warfare to achieve their goals. The only way for conventional armies to combat terrorist organizations is through asymmetric warfare. Asymmetric warfare is not just about finding unconventional ways to wage war but also about finding unconventional ways to wage peace. Religious terrorist organizations use asymmetric warfare therefore creating the need for their opponent to also use asymmetric warfare. Asymmetric warfare is warfare in which the combatants have markedly different military capabilities and the weaker side uses non-standard tactics such as terrorism. It is warfare in which an opponent leverages inferior tactical or operational strength against the vulnerabilities of a superior opponent to achieve disproportionate effect with the aim of undermining the opponent's will.

The United States and Al Qaeda represent two fundamentally different styles of warfare. The US, with its basis in the Western way of warfare, relies on an almost totally instrumental and conventional form of warfare. Groups like Al Qaeda gut an expressive, existential form of warfare that guarantees the fighters a place in heaven if they are killed.¹ This difference in attitude and style of warfare makes groups like Al Qaeda the biggest threat to the security of America at home as well as abroad.

There is no agreed upon definition on what constitutes terrorism; one American government study found 109 different definitions. The FBI defines terrorism as

committing a crime that endangers another person or is violent with a broader intent to intimidate, influence or change policy or opinion.²

The concept of terrorism as a global problem has become the norm since the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States and the subsequent “war on terrorism” and the more recent attacks in Europe and Asia. It appears that there is no place on the planet that is not affected by terrorism. In some areas terrorism represents a “new security threat” and in others it has given new meaning to continuing domestic conflicts. Terrorism has become the central feature of the way we understand the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but other regional and local conflicts involving previously considered indigenous terrorist groups are now also often perceived to be linked to the Al-Qaeda organization.³

Terrorism has become a part of everyday vocabulary because of the spread of terrorism and the coverage in the media terrorist acts receives. September 11, 2001 and the terrorist activities of the last two decades have proven that there are people who are prepared to use violence to achieve their goals. Terrorism is a weapon of coercive intimidation designed to make established authority and governments to submit to demands.⁴ As demonstrated by September 11, 2011, terrorism is often undeclared covert warfare and has advanced over the years with the advancement of technology. Today’s


terrorist has moved beyond simple assassinations and bombings and has developed its capability to kill hundreds or thousands while threatening entire nations.

Terrorism is an issue that has moved to the forefront of the international agenda. The development of plastic explosives and compact automatic weapons gave terrorists the ability to exploit their targets and maximize their efforts. In countries like the United States, arms are readily accessible and movement is free, which allows terrorist organizations the access to weapons and the mobility to move throughout the state to organize an attack.

The use of these strategies has proved effective beginning with the Beirut Barracks bombing in 1983, in which two truck bombs attacked the military barracks in Beirut killing 241 America servicemen. The bombings directly led to the withdrawal of peacekeeping forces from Lebanon and are still used to demonstrate that if Americans have enough casualties, they will retreat.

**September 11 and Its Effect on Terrorism**

Most Americans know what and understand terrorism because of September 11, 2001. Understanding why a group of hijackers led by Osama Bin Laden got to the point where they were willing to kill themselves in order to inflict as much damage as possible requires that we understand Religion, emotion, human behavior as well as the history of the countries in which they connect to.

Afghanistan has long been considered the hub and training grounds of Al-Qaeda because of the relative lawlessness as well as conservative oppressed government that was in place before 9/11. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to the collapse of the Afghan government in 1979, power began to scatter into the hands of local warlords,
who multiplied exponentially during the initial invasion period. To generate income, the warlords began promoting poppy cultivation, opium production and welcoming wealthy Arabs into their country, which provided “a lucrative and virtually risk-free resource base . . . to resist central control.”

The US, in an attempt to undermine the Soviet influence in the region, quietly supported the Mujahedeen, or Afghani Freedom Fighters. Cold War concerns soon outweighed those of narco-trafficking and the potential for future terrorism against the United States. Whether or not America played an active role in the trafficking and active militarization of these warlords, by the time the Soviets withdrew in 1989, Afghanistan was producing 35% of the world’s opium and training terrorists to fight around the world.

The power vacuum created by the Soviet withdrawal allowed for destructive Mujahedeen in fighting for control of Afghanistan. With the loss of US and Western support, the warlords found themselves relying on poppy cultivation and wealthy Arab donors, like Osama Bin Laden, more heavily to finance their battles. This period was marked with high levels of unrest, poverty, paving the way for the rise of the Taliban to power in 1994. The fighting within Afghanistan became an ideal location for foreign fighters to come and train as religious warriors.


While Al-Qaeda has had the most attention over the years other organizations are smaller with less organizations structure. These terrorist organizations remain small and relatively unorganized but their willingness to employ terror and develop close working ties to other terrorist organizations allows them to leverage their strength and therefore makes them more troubling. Working together allows different organizations to build up their technical capacity, in terms of bomb making as well as information warfare. The Afghan conflict beginning with the Soviet Union was asymmetric warfare with the Afghans (the weaker side) fighting the Soviets (the more conventional stronger military)? The asymmetric conflict/war between the Soviets and the Afghans laid the groundwork for terrorist organizations and allowed terrorists from all over the world to train in asymmetric warfare.

**Changing Tactics of Battle Field**

Asymmetric warfare is generally defined as warfare in which the combatants have markedly different military capabilities and the weaker side uses non-standard tactics to level the playing field. Non-standard tactics include anything from guerrilla warfare to acts of terrorism. Asymmetric warfare is when a weaker combatant uses nontraditional weapons and strategy in order to obtain a fighting advantage over the stronger opponent.

The nature of war and conflict has changed since the end of the cold war. Through asymmetric warfare radical groups and weak state actors are using creative tools to deal stunning blows to more powerful opponents. The United States needs to find ways to deal with terrorist organizations that employ asymmetric methods. The United States must find ways to combat religious extremism which makes recruitment, fundraising, and communication to mass audiences easy to do and more difficult for governments to track.
Since the end of the Cold War, terrorism and the wars we are fighting have changed, and we must adapt to combat the changing enemy.

Enders, states that religion is the single most defining characteristic of terrorist organizations. He also argues that religion is the reason for the exponential increase in lethality of terrorist acts. According to Hoffman, it no longer seems to be the focus of terrorists to have the large audience watching. Their concern has now become creating more damage and destruction than in the past, and a lesser focus on sending a message to the community. He suggests this is also why the new era of terrorists has more of a tendency to threaten with the use of weapons of mass destruction. The development of this type of destructive warfare points to an increase in fatalities by terrorist acts. Hoffman states that religious terrorists contend that, “violence is first and foremost a sacramental act or divine duty executed in direct response to some theological demand or imperative.”7 Essentially, this is stating that the acts of violence committed by terrorists are perpetrated in response to some religious obligation or demand. That is, religion, in this instance, is most certainly a motivating factor in the perpetration of terrorist acts.

Research has supported Hoffman’s arguments about the increased lethality of terrorist attacks. For instance, Enders and Sandler used the ITERATE database to determine the current and potential threat of terrorist attacks across nations and discovered that although the overall number of terrorist attacks has declined since the Cold-War era, there is a 17% higher chance of death or injury in each terrorist attack.

committed. Moreover, they attribute that the events associated with the Iranian Revolution in 1979 to be contributed to the lethality of these terrorist attacks. \(^8\)

Furthermore, it seems from other research that religious motivations behind terrorist attacks do not apply explicitly to those of Islamic backgrounds. Juergensmeyer states that terrorist attacks around the world are perpetrated with religion, as a driving factor and it cannot be pinpointed to a specific country of origin. Some of the examples he gave were the Jewish assassins of Israel, the Buddhist terrorist sect in Japan, radical Hindus and Sikhs in India, and the Christian militants in the United States. \(^9\) It is clear that each and every religion is potentially subject to the manipulations of terrorists in order to create a justification for their heinous crimes.

It has also been argued that the only way to understand why these acts of religious terrorism are occurring is to have a firm grasp of eschatology.

The primary concept behind eschatology is the battle between good and evil. These groups believe that there is a cosmic war waging on among countries and their religions. White sums up the concept of eschatology in the following statement, “on a cosmic battlefield, Armageddon’s warrior needs no further justification to bear arms. They fight for a holy cause, and all actions are justified.” \(^10\) White also argues that in order for these groups to be able to commit these acts against humans, they have to

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“dehumanize” and “demonize” the individuals in order to see them as objects and not people. This makes the crimes against innocent victims a part of a bigger picture and not a personal crime. It fits into the concept of the “cosmic war” where the elimination of these groups of people is represented as the destruction of evil and not the destruction of human beings. White suggests that this is how terrorist organizations justify their actions as necessary for the development of mankind.

Moreover, it has been suggested that certain beliefs reward those who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the greater good of their religion. For instance, Ghorayeb has observed that the elimination of injustice and humiliation are behind the centrality of martyrdom in Shi’a Islam. The idea of martyrdom is used to demonstrate high prestige and status within society. Those who are willing to sacrifice their life are looked upon as iconic within their culture. Ghorayeb claim that they are worshipped by family and friends for their willingness to continue the fight for their belief and complete selfless disregard for their personal life.  

CHAPTER 2: TERRITORIAL BASED AND RELIGIOUS BASED CONFLICT

Researchers have suggested that religiously motivated terrorism is of far greater threat than terrorist of political means. Caleb Carr claims that these religiously motivated terrorists believe they are fighting in a cosmic battle that defines the battle of good versus evil. The outcome of this type of war is greater than the individual and therefore justifies the sacrifice of lives.¹ Those individuals that perpetrate religiously affiliated terrorist acts are more willing to kill themselves and those around them as opposed to the political terrorists who want their message to be known but without massive fatalities. Hoffman, who examines the differences between religious terrorists and other terrorists, claims that the politically motivated terrorist wanted their message to be heard and they viewed killing as a sad necessity where as the religiously motivated terrorists believed that killing is a sacramental act. Religion is a far more dangerous motivator for conflict when compared to just acquiring land.²

The highest level of recruitment for the United States Army in recent history was after 9/11; an overwhelming sense of pride is not unique to Americans though. No one is willing to fight harder than when their people or homeland is in danger, except when they feel their religion or God is threatened. Ideology and religious based conflict is more aggressive than territorial based conflict. The aggressive mentality of fighting to defend God’s honor and your afterlife generates stronger emotions and therefore more


aggressive action than the defensive mentality of fighting to defend your country and the soldier fighting next to you. Territorial war’s end on the battlefield, whereas religious wars do not end until everyone is either dead, converted or forced to flee. Wars, such as the Gulf War, World War I and many other wars, have been waged over political differences, alliances, natural resources or access to those resources throughout the course of history.

These battles have been aggressive and bloody, however, territorial wars have historically ended after the conquest. When the Romans conquered a land, the battle was over. The subjects under the Roman Empire were given an option to become a part of the Roman Empire and pay taxes or be killed. The conquered usually chose to be a part of the Roman Empire and this led to the expansion of one of the greatest empires in history. Religious war is different though. Religion gives the faithful a reason to fight that surpasses the natural instinct to survive. The idea of eternal salvation moves fighters beyond the world we live in and gives them the incentive to fight at any expense. The Spanish inquisition, the Crusades and current religious terrorism and religious wars in general are aggressive and end violently and aggressively, if they end at all. According to Bruce Hoffman, secular terrorists rarely engage in indiscriminate killing on a major scale and see it as counterproductive, if not immoral; whereas religious terrorists regard indiscriminate violence as justified and necessary to their objectives.3 Religion is used as a weapon in war and results in the escalation of the conflict. Religious conflict makes the fight more aggressive, deadly and bloody.

3. Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, 94.
Difference of Objectives

Territorial based conflict and religious conflict have differing objectives. Religious fighters use the word of God to sanction their actions. The Holy Quran states “Fight them. May God punish them by your hands, humiliate them, give you victory over them, delight the hearts of the believers and appease their anger. God forgives whomever He wants and He is all-knowing and all wise” (9:14-15). Religious fighters use verses such as this from the holy books to justify their actions. Religious based fighters are governed by an ideology that calls for war against their enemy as a religious duty, which determines their eternal fate. Religion sanctions all of the actions of fighters in religious conflict. The word of God gives the fighter authorization to do whatever it takes to achieve victory. Religious fighters develop a “will to win” mentality because the consequence for giving up in a battle is falling out of good graces with God and therefore eternal damnation. The idea of damnation moves the religious fighter past the point of self-preservation and allows them to overcome the fear of death. Suicide terrorists are ten times more likely to come from Muslim countries where the American military is present, or, in the case of Palestine, where an active Israeli occupation remains. These fighters are willing to use their bodies as weapons in order to make the ultimate sacrifice to God. The objectives of Religious fighters go beyond the world we live in today and look to the afterlife.

In territorial based conflict, fighters defending their homeland from attack simply want to survive long enough to go back to their families. With territorial based conflict,

the soldier fights with the idea that they will eventually return home to their families. The objectives of a fighter in territorial based conflict are to protect his family and home and survive long enough to get back to them. The aggressor in territorial based conflict wants to accomplish the mission. The mission in territorial based conflict can be gaining access to natural resources such as oil or taking over an area of land. The successful completion of the mission usually leads to the end of fighting. Territorial based conflict or conventional war is usually motivated by economics and financial gain. Individual nation states have defining political, cultural, economic or social characteristics, which influence their foreign policy and war agendas. Nation states have organized militaries that are used in conventional warfare to advance the agenda of that country. Territorial based conflict usually has a set objective for going to war such as access to a port or natural resources. The finite resources, which include oil, water, and other resources must come from other nations, and this has historically led to territorial based warfare. The British Empire conquered lands and went to war purely for financial gain. The objective to conquering land was to have access to trading posts and resources from throughout the land. The objectives of territorial based conflict are tangible and cause a more rational response by those fighting as well as defending the land. With territorial conflict there is always a need for self-preservation throughout the conflict. The concept of self-preservation amongst those fighting, leads to a more rational and logical way of fighting.

Zawahiri defines America’s objectives in the region as being opposed to Islam, when in fact the United States is clearly motivated by economics. Zawahiri interprets the United States actions as being anti-Islamic and therefore uses the religion to encourage the use of force and violence against the United States. In his fatwa the grievances are
perpetuated by Americans and Israelis as a clear declaration of war against Muslims. The fatwa declared that it is the duty of every Muslim to kill Americans and their allies, which included military personnel as well as civilians. Zawahiri uses America’s policies in the Middle East as being anti-Islamic which makes fighting against them the religious duty of every Muslim.

**Loyalty and Commitment in Religion Based Conflict**

Religion gives a sense of hope and gives people the incentive to mobilize that goes beyond worldly incentive. The loyalty and commitment to religion and God transcends any other commitment. This loyalty is what makes the fighter willing to die to defend their religion. Groups like, Hamas are governed by an ideology that calls for war against Israel as a national, moral and religious duty. Their religious duty transcends their commitment to the state or any other organization. The fighter becomes willing to do whatever it takes to defend their religion. Hoffman states violence becomes a divine duty in which the faithful have a divine duty to commit indiscriminate killing. They act out of an apocalyptic worldview.⁵

Emotions inspired by religion are the sole reason for religious conflict. One religious group begins to feel threatened and the end result is violence in the name of God. Muslims have developed hatred toward Jews since the creation of the State of Israel and because of their belief that they are on the side of right, they have developed a belief the conflict will eventually end positively for them because God is on their side. The emotions that people feel in religion are so strong that they will burn human beings at the stake, behead people, and attach a suicide bomb to themselves in order to inflict the most

damage as well as absolutely anything they can think of to protect their religion from any real or perceived attacks. Religious terrorists are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to defend their religion and for the greater good of fellow followers of that religion.

Religious fighters and combatants view themselves as defenders of their faith. These combatants feel that as though no other options exist other than to fight in order to defend their religion because of fear and hatred. “The strong feeling of being robbed of one’s dignity due to the illegitimate actions of the western world is a shared feature among nationalist and global jihadist. Even those in the Muslim world who is successful and belong to the Middle classes share this deep feeling of mental despondency in regard to the West.”

The feelings of losing one’s dignity lead individuals to fight in the name of their God and religion in order to regain their dignity.

Religion goes beyond the suffering of today, and promises eventual victory to those fighting. In the eyes of the faithful, fighting for religion brings about some justice on earth but eventually leads to divine justice. The religious believe that humans will be judged upon death by God for the moral sins they commit and their suffering in Hell will be commensurate with the suffering they caused on earth, the faithful and devout will be sent to Heaven for eternal salvation. The faithful believe that God is just and on their side, and the suffering in the world will be vindicated because God is just. The belief in a just God leads the faithful to view themselves as victims and these victims need assurance that their oppressors will eventually suffer for inflicting pain. It is the belief that judgment will be rendered and every time you have been wronged will somehow be

set right. The belief in God’s justice and the idea that He will set wrongs back to right is what motivates the Religious fighter. The notion of eternal salvation and God eventually making right is a strong motivator for religious violence. Religious fighters believe God is on their side and God will ultimately declare victory in their favor.

**Self Preservation and Overcomes the Fear of Death**

Martyrdom is a religious man’s tool to defend his religion and do good for the survivors of the faith. Since death is considered the step into the next life, martyrdom is often celebrated as the step that leads directly to Paradise. Violent religious movements have a belief that they are fighting evil on earth in order to restore justice and ultimately be in the good graces of God. When discussing the 9/11 bombers Bruce Lincoln states “As men of unshakable faith, armed only with the most humble tools, they presented themselves as metonymic images of a people whose strength lies in their religion, to which all other concerns – economy, politics, technology, and the rest are distinctly subordinated. The buildings against which they hurled themselves are likewise tropes for a people preoccupied with money, machines and armies, but shockingly unconcerned with religion.”

The supporters of the 9/11 terrorist’s attacks believed that divine intervention facilitated the terrorists’ successful attack on the greatest super power in the world. On October 7, 2001 before the US invasion into Afghanistan, Osama Bin Laden stated, “We seek refuge with the lord of our bad and evildoing. He whom God guides are rightly guided but he whom God leaves to stray, for him wilt thou find protector to lead him to the right way. I witness that there is no God but God and Muhammad is his slave

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and prophet. God almighty hit the United States at its most vulnerable spot. He destroyed its greater buildings. Praise is to God. Here is the United States. It was filled with terror from its north to its south and from its east to its west. Praise is to God.”

Osama Bin Laden framed the war in the context of religion based on theology and set the stage for a battle of evil against the defenders of the faith. Those that died fighting evil would be considered martyrs and would go straight to paradise.

Religion evokes emotion, and because of the emotion religious fighters can be mobilized overnight. The Shia community in Southern Lebanon greeted the Israelis who invaded Lebanon with rice and flowers because they were there to rid the region of the Palestinians. The Shia community was initially supportive of the Israeli invasion into Lebanon until it directly impacted their religious practices and rituals. This was the beginning of one of the most lethal religious fighting organizations in modern times, Hezbollah. This event in Southern Lebanon rallied people around Hezbollah because their religious rituals were damaged.

**Concept of Damnation in Religious Conflict**

The belief that the city of Jerusalem was divinely given to Jews by God creates an environment where any violent action is sanctioned because God is in control. Muslims believe that God will eventually restore Jerusalem to the Muslims, which puts Jews and Muslims directly at odds on the idea of Jerusalem and what God has given to each group. When different religious “missions” overlap, (live exclusively in the same city) the conflict is not allowed to end until an entire religious faith is exterminated or displaced. The status of Jerusalem creates intense emotion for Muslims and Jews because of the

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religious history. The beliefs of both groups that God is on their side and is the ultimate decision maker on the issue of Jerusalem makes rationality and negotiations unfeasible with the only option being violence. This belief was demonstrated in May of 1948, when the British withdrew from Palestine, the Zionist movement in Palestine successfully assaulted the local population expelling 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and ensuring a greater area of land as the homeland of the Jews. The belief that God had promised the land to the Jews caused the Zionists to wage war to gain control of the land.

In Israel, Jews and Arabs (both Muslim and Christian) have been in conflict for hundreds of years because they all claim religious grounds in Israel. Since the founding of Israel in 1948, religious beliefs have brought the peace process to the brink of annihilation. The Religious belief that Israel was promised to the Jews led Orthodox Jew, Yigal Amir to assassinate Yitzhak Rabin for signing the Oslo accords. Another religious conflict was the very bloody Crusades, which were medieval military expeditions undertaken by European Christians to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims. The Crusaders who were on the side of God wore a red cloth that was sewn on their tunics to show they were soldiers of Christ. The conflicts in Palestine, Kashmir, the Balkans, Northern Ireland and the slew of other places reveals that some of the bloodiest wars are fought by Religious extremists in the name of God.

Influence of Leader in Religious Conflict

Religion appears to be a means for fighters and leaders to garner support for their cause. Religion evokes strong emotions among the faithful, and tapping into that emotion

is what groups like Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah have successfully achieved. The driving force in religious conflict is the defense of God and the religion and that makes the faithful willing to go beyond self-preservation and fight to the death. Religion is used as a weapon in war and results in the escalation of the conflict. Religious conflict makes the fight more aggressive, deadly and bloody. Muqtada Al-Sadr of Iraq had political ambitions and was able to form a militia and garner support from the Shi’a community in order to do so. While his personal motivations may have been political ambitions, he used religion as a tool to further his goals. He was able to garner support from the faithful and lead an insurgency. The name of his militia was “Jaysh al-Mahdi,” The Army of Mahdi, which is a reference to the army that will fight for Islam during the time of the Apocalypse. According to Shi’a doctrine, Imam al-Mahdi is the twelfth Imam in occultation who will be the ultimate savior of mankind after a brutal war against the non-believers. The Army of Mahdi will stand by his side and fight the non-believers and will ultimately go straight to heaven. The Army of Mahdi was fighting to help bring the Mahdi to earth in order to bring justice that will eventually lead to the end of the world. Muqtada al-Sadr was able to use this religious belief to further his political agenda.¹⁰

Fighters and extremists use religion to gain support for their causes. The causes they fight for are not strictly religious but can be political, economic or social. Fighters have learned to use religion to garner popular support for a cause that people may not otherwise support. Appealing to people’s faith makes the fight and struggle about God

and not about the world we live in. Fighting for God is a much more noble fight than fighting for political control.

The emotional bond that is developed with a particular text, idea, or spiritual image ignites emotional feelings that translate into conflict. When a terrorist organization invokes a verse from a holy book to justify their armed conflict, they do it in order to justify their actions and appeal to the emotions of their fellow religious peers. They do this in order to mobilize their fellow religious followers. Emotion invokes a need for action, and that action is violence or some sort of conflict. They use the emotions that are attached to the religion to recruit and gain sympathy for their cause.

**Exploitation of Emotions in Religious Conflict**

Religion is used to evoke emotion and those emotions are exploited in order to escalate conflict. The only emotion that can lead to conflict resolution is fear. Fear is the most powerful emotion; the only emotion that can overcome fear is greater fear. The Palestinians and Israelis will not stop fighting as long as they both view the other as an existential threat; the fear of being annihilated is the strongest emotion. The fear of economic, financial or even physical destruction does not compare to the fear of extermination. The Muslims and Jews in the region are currently afraid of an existential threat, and as long as that fear remains, no other emotion can overcome and lead to conflict resolution. Combating the fear of annihilation with emotions such as love, forgiveness and hope can never lead to conflict resolution because fear overpowers all other emotions. Emotions escalate religious violence and aren’t a means for conflict resolution.
The pen continues to be more powerful than the sword. In order to combat extremist religious ideology, there has to be an all-encompassing policy, which combats the religious ideology and not just the physical struggle. There are numerous nationally and internationally based organizations that provide services with the intention of transforming lives and strengthening the capacities of communities and institutions in an effort to address religious based warfare. Similarly, public diplomacy is an effort by state governments to accomplish such goals, while also building state relationships and breaking down cultural barriers. In his seminal work, Hans Tuch describes public diplomacy as a “government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies.” Tuch also points out that as opposed to traditional diplomacy, in which governments negotiate often behind closed doors, public diplomacy is necessarily "an open process." Where traditional diplomacy is often confidential, public diplomacy is played out in the public space where the free exchange of ideas is key to its success. Using public diplomacy with religious leaders and not just state actors is the only way for governments to combat extreme religious ideologies. Promoting the development of less-developed nations by way of educating and training people who have the access, skills, and power to instill change in their communities, while at the same time exposing them to religious tolerance, will eventually effect change.


12. Ibid.
Religious violence does not come solely from an individual but rather from a group or religious community as a whole. Religious tolerance and communication are the keys to prevent the emergence of violent religious movements. Religious leaders must condemn violence committed by their own people. Religious leaders tend to focus on the injustices faced by their own people. Religious leaders must stress the significance of all life and must preach tolerance of all people.

After World War I, the term terrorism began to be used to define not only these nationalistic political groups but also to define the actions of violent left wing groups. The author continues by suggesting that in the beginning of the 1970's, international and domestic terrorism became acknowledged across the world as a major threat to all countries. Terrorism has affected every continent around the world. The United States also became aware of the severity of terrorism beginning in the 1990s with acts such as the Oklahoma City Bombing and the World Trade Center attacks on September 11 in 2001. By the turn of the century, many countries around the world fully understood the damage that happens to a nation from a single act of terrorism.

Terrorism has become a subject of great interest to the general public and that is evident by the significant increase in articles published in the recent decades regarding terrorism. Given the fact that the reason for this large increase has not yet been identified, the following implications should be taken with caution. More research examining the reporting of terrorism should be undertaken to determine if these patterns are seen in other news sources. Since the past few decades have revealed an increase in the percentage of reported terrorist attacks being religiously associated, and if in fact reporting of terrorist acts correspond to the actual amount of terrorist activities, it is
necessary to develop methods in order to prevent this increase from escalating even further.

Researchers have suggested that religiously motivated terrorism is of far greater threat than terrorist of political means. Carr claims that these religiously motivated terrorists believe they are fighting in a cosmic battle that defines the battle of good versus evil.\textsuperscript{13} The outcome of this type of war is greater than the individual and therefore justifies the sacrifice of lives. As discussed earlier in this paper, it is known that those individuals that perpetrate religiously affiliated terrorist acts are more willing to kill themselves and those around them as opposed to the political terrorists who want their message to be known but without massive fatalities. Hoffman, who examines the differences between religious terrorists and other terrorists, claims that the politically motivated terrorist wanted their message to be heard and they viewed killing as a sad necessity where as the religiously motivated terrorists believed that killing is a sacramental act. He also states that another major difference between the politically driven and religiously driven is that those of political means believed that they spoke for the good of the group where the religiously driven believed they were speaking on behalf of God and all his holiness.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} Carr, \textit{Lessons}, 168.

\textsuperscript{14} Hoffman, \textit{Inside Terrorism}, 90.
CHAPTER 3: RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND CONVENTIONAL WAR

God does not rule this earth, emotions rule this earth; and the leaders who have learned to control people’s emotions have learned to tap into that power. Emotions play a compelling and driving role in global religious conflict today, and because of mass media, leaders of religious movements can spread their messages of conflict, and command the emotions of the masses by using religion. Gopin is correct in stating, “In the context of religion, it is clear that emotions, in religious communities across the world, play a central role in the processes by which people prevent conflict or resolve it.”

Emotions in global religious conflict today play the most significant role in escalating and increasing the number of people involved in the conflict. While Gopin views emotion as a vehicle for conflict resolution, emotions within religion are also the driving force behind conflict escalation. Fear is the strongest emotion and it will always overpower all other emotions. Negative emotions such as fear are more powerful than positive emotions like love and hope which makes it difficult to prevent conflict if the negative emotions are already present.

Love, hate, hope, fear, pride, and anger are emotions that overwhelm all peoples’ sense of reason. People have a tendency to be overrun by emotion and use emotion as the sole driving force for their actions. People desperately cling to religion in order to fulfill their longing for feelings of unity, love, belonging, justice and hope. Emotion is more powerful than the ability to reason; therefore, when people are faced with outside


2. Ibid.
conflicting religious views that threaten their religious community, the emotions they long for quickly turn to fear, hatred, and anger.

**Emotions in Religious Conflict**

The emotional appeal of religion is overwhelming because belief in God is rooted in faith, not logic. Due to the fact that each religion is the only path to eternal salvation, the idea of their God’s divine justice requires followers of that faith to enforce their religious doctrine. The emotional appeal of eternal salvation creates a sense of community among the followers of the faith. The community has a belief in God’s master plan that ends with the followers of the chosen religion prevailing. The belief that they are following the chosen religion and God is on their side invokes irrational emotion. The emotion that comes along with the belief that they are on the side of God, leads to religious conflict and the loss of reasoning when dealing with conflict.

Emotions inspired by religion are the sole reason for religious conflict. One religious group begins to feel threatened and the end result is violence in the name of God. Muslims have developed hatred toward Jews since the creation of the State of Israel and because of their belief that they are on the side of right, they have developed a belief that conflict will bring about a positive outcome because God is on their side. The emotions that people feel in religion are so strong that they will burn human beings at the stake, behead people, and attach a suicide bomb to themselves in order to inflict the most damage as well as absolutely anything they can think of to protect their religion from any real or perceived attacks. Religious terrorists are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to defend their religion and for the greater good of fellow followers of that religion. Religious fighters and combatants view themselves as defenders of their religion. These
combatants feel that as though no other options exist other than to fight in order to defend their religion because of fear and hatred.

Religious terrorists exploit the emotions of people in order to get responses such as anger, hatred, frustration and humiliation. These are powerful feelings that lead otherwise rational people to participate in conflict. Religious terrorists use mass media to spread messages about the humiliation of their fellow religious man in order to invoke an emotional response that leads to conflict. The feelings of anger, humiliation, hatred and frustration lead individuals to seek a way to act on those emotions. This can lead to direct conflict with the individuals who are inflicting these emotions on the individual.

Positive emotions such as love, compassion, loyalty, solidarity and pride also lead to religious conflict. Love and loyalty for religion and for the fellow religious man invokes emotions that lead to conflict. Ones love and loyalty for his religion leads him to protect it from being destroyed by outsiders. Positive emotions are powerful feelings that lead otherwise rational people to become jealous, possessive, protective and irrational. Loyalty and solidarity within a religious context evoke strong emotions that lead to irrational behavior.

The emotional bond that is developed with a particular text, idea, or spiritual image ignites emotional feelings that translate into conflict. When a terrorist organization invokes a verse from a holy book to justify their armed conflict, they do it in order to justify their actions and appeal to the emotions of their fellow religious peers. They do this in order to mobilize their fellow religious followers. Emotion invokes a need for action, and that action is violence or some sort of conflict. They use the emotions that are attached to the religion to recruit and gain sympathy for their cause.
While Gopin views emotion as a means for conflict resolution, emotion is actually attributed to the expansion of religious conflict.\textsuperscript{3} Emotions in global religious conflict today play the most significant role in escalating and increasing the number of people involved in war. Religion is used to evoke emotion and those emotions are exploited in order to escalate conflict. The only emotion that can lead to conflict resolution is fear. Fear is the most powerful emotion; the only emotion that can overcome fear is greater fear. The Palestinians and Israelis will not stop fighting as long as they both view the other as an existential threat; the fear of being annihilated is the strongest emotion. The fear of economic, financial or even physical destruction does not compare to the fear of extermination. The Muslims and Jews in the region are currently afraid of an existential threat, and as long as that fear remains, no other emotion can overcome and lead to conflict resolution. Combating the fear of annihilation with emotions such as love, forgiveness and hope can never lead to conflict resolution because fear overpowers all other emotions. Emotions play a negative role in conflict resolution. Emotions escalate religious violence and aren’t a means for conflict resolution.

**Violence in Religious Conflict**

In life, every human is constructed with similar attributes and components, yet they are distinctively unique. A wise man once said that “art is about perception,” and life indeed is an art. Humans have a strange desire to belong to a certain group. Religious ethics distinguish between right and wrong. This differentiation stems from moral values. Moral values come about based on actions taken by the divine. They are somehow linked to mimic the lifestyles of the divine.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 50.
Religious beliefs and values are critical forces, which play a major role in cultures and societies. Ethics are derived from what society perceives to be morally correct, or incorrect. Religion plays a major role on social norms. Humans have always had the desire to belong to something. The religious terrorist organizations give the individual a sense of belonging to something that is much bigger than one person. The individual who joins these groups feels empowered and has a sense of belonging. The use of religion as a justification for violence is seen in all three monotheistic religions. Muslims have used it as demonstrated by September 11, Christians have used it as demonstrated by the IRA and the Crusades, and the Jews have used it to justify wars in defense of Israel.

Islam and Judaism have rules and justifications for going to war legally. The commandment “thou shall not kill,” is not followed one hundred percent of the time because of stipulations on when one can kill. The Bible, the Quran, Talmud and Hadith give the faithful exemption from that commandment in certain circumstances. Killing in the case of war is permitted in Jewish law under specific circumstances. Wars that are fought today not only have to be legally justified but they must also be morally justified.

Unlike Islam’s Jihad, the Jewish Talmud has no specific term for holy war. A holy war is managed by God, in which the faithful, the soldiers of God, ultimately succeed as long as they trust in God. Jews have a history of holy wars, beginning with the war against the idolatrous Canaanites. Talmudic literature presents three types of wars in which killing is accepted: milhemet hova, milhemet mitzvah, and milhemet reshut. The Talmud, however, differentiates between milhemet mitzvah which is a war commanded by God, a milhemet hovah which is a required or necessary war and milhemet reshut which is a discretionary war. According to Gopin, only milhemet reshut is non-obligatory
because it is discretionary war and not something that is mandatory for the faithful.

Milhemet hova and milhemet mitsvah are similar in that they are both obligatory as they are interpreted today.

**Obligatory War and Self Defense**

Milhemet mitzvah is a defensive response that is mandatory. Individuals are required to defend their nations and families from immediate attack. The wars against the Amalekites or Canaanites were considered obligatory or mitzvah. It is still customary for Orthodox Jews to annually recite their hatred and continued war against Amalek and people who are considered to be like Amalekites. Amalekites are regarded as enemies of the Jews whose purpose was to destroy the Israelites. Some people believe the Amalekites were not exterminated like the Canaanites and therefore they continue to exist today and continue to be the enemies of the Jews. The struggles that Jewish Israelis face today reinforce the idea that Palestinians are the modern day Amalekites. Suicide bombings and bombs within Israel which aim to kill as many Jews as possible, reinforces the idea that the Palestinians are Amalekites and it is mandatory to go to war and kill them. It is obligatory to kill the Amalekites because they are the enemies of the Jews.

A form of obligatory war is self-defense. Military action thus becomes permissible, or obligatory, when it is defensive in nature, or undertaken to aid the victim of aggression. War, if it is to exist legally as a religiously sanctioned event, allows for the defense but does not sanction preemptive strikes. Since preemptive strikes are not sanctioned the 1967 War and the 1982 Lebanon War are difficult to justify as mitzvah.

The milhemet reshut is a discretionary war, which requires approval from a Jewish king of Davidic descent, the Sanhedrin (council), and a breastplate worn by a high
priest whom would give a blessing. This makes milhemut reshut impossible because those things do not exist in current times. Milhemet reshut was applicable in Jewish law until the destruction of the Second Temple. The requirements for Milhemet reshut make it impossible to have a discretionary war legally in modern times. With the destruction of the Temple, the end of the kingdom, and no universally recognized Sanhedrin, there is no longer any institution with sufficient legal authority to initiate a milhemet reshut.

In addition to the three laws of war in the Talmud, two other principals authorize killing in Jewish law. Pikuah nifesh is the authorization to kill someone if you are saving a life. This principal allows a person to do almost anything to save a life. The second principal is the obligation to kill a person if they try to kill you. With this principal the individual is obligated to kill him or her first. These two principals cannot be applied to modern warfare because there are civilian casualties in modern warfare. These principals give the authority to kill a limited number of people who threaten an individual. Killing is accepted in the case of self-defense, which is applicable to the defense of an individual or the defense of a group of people and can be applied to times of war. The Talmud states that a person is permitted to kill an individual to save his own life or to save the lives of others.

The type of war that is permitted by the Talmud has become more relevant in the last century than any other time. With the creation of the state of Israel, the laws and ethics of war became an issue that Israeli Jews must deal with. Until 1948, Jewish religious scholars have regarded their national wars as hypothetical when discussing the legality of wars. The legality and ethics of war for Israeli Jews is very much an issue in modern times. Hostile forces surround the state of Israel and the State of Israel has built
the greatest military force in the Middle East. Wars have become a regular part of the history of Israel. While defending Israel from the enemies is obligatory, where does the line get drawn between defensive wars and discretionary wars? The legality of wars, such as the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, can be manipulated to fit within the boundaries of the Talmud’s rules on legal warfare.

The origins of the different religious terrorist organization are multi-faceted and exemplify the challenges of these movements. Key individuals and world events contributed to these groups founding, and developments in technologies have contributed their ability to sustain themselves. The origins of the Islamic terrorist group, Al-Qaeda trace back to the father of modern Islamic nationalism Sayyid Qutb and Abd Al-Salam Faraj, leaders who proclaimed Quranic justification for acts of violence and thus terrorism.

**Use of Asymmetric Strategies**

A number of asymmetric strategies could be used to disrupt U.S. economic, strategic and military capabilities and bring the conflict to the U.S. homeland as was demonstrated on September 11, 2001. The only limiting factor is the imagination of the terrorist employing the tactics. Information and technological warfare could exploit the vulnerabilities of advanced U.S. weapons and their supporting systems. Information warfare and hacking into computer systems could be used to disable computer networks, paralyzing communications, transportation, power systems, and industrial enterprises. Computer hacking would require little money and equipment and would only require a savvy individual who can hack into a secure open network. Given the United State’s heavy reliance on technology, terrorist organizations only have to develop relatively
simple countermeasures designed to turn sophisticated U.S. military assets into wartime liabilities. Low-tech countermeasures, such as box cutters to take over an airplane have proven to be incredibly effective and cost very little.

Terrorist organizations have been extremely successful at media warfare, getting their message out to the public using media outlets such as news networks and the Internet. Media Warfare allows terrorist organizations to exploit the international news media to pursued public opinion toward their cause. Osama Bin Laden would send recorded messages directly to media outlets who would broadcast the message to the world.

With the information age comes the need to protect that technology and information from terrorism. Hacking or using malicious programs to shut down or disable key military computer systems is a vulnerability that terrorists can go after. Hackers have been able to break into the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) computers which suggest that determined terrorist with the cyber knowledge could inflict serious damage on the computer systems. Weapons systems and computer programs that are not on closed networks are vulnerable to cyber attacks.

The cyber-terrorist threat also extends beyond military and into the private sector. According to the President’s Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection, "We must learn to negotiate a new geography, where borders are irrelevant and distances
meaningless, where an enemy may be able to harm the vital systems we depend on without confronting our military power."^4

Hezbollah, the Party of God, is a Shiite militant group operating out of Lebanon with an organizational structure that is hierarchical, disciplined, and secretive. Hezbollah was put the State departments list of terrorist organizations because they committed attacks on Americans, which include the 1983 bombings of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon and the hijacking of TWA flight 847. Despite their political status in Lebanon, Hezbollah continues to be listed as a terrorist organization because it maintains radical opposition to Israel.

Hezbollah was established in the early 1980’s as a direct result of the Israeli invasion into south Lebanon. In its infancy Hezbollah was a small group of individuals inspired by Ayatollah Khomeini and trained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards whose main goal was to end Israel’s occupation of Lebanon. Hezbollah has transformed and developed into a vast organization, which provides social services, runs hospitals, operates schools, and has seats in the Lebanese Parliament and has their own media outlets. According to Jaber, “When Israel launched its invasion in June 1982, Lebanon’s leading Shia Muslim clerics were in Tehran, attending the annual Islamic conference. The timing was fateful: Iran immediately volunteered to help its Lebanese brethren and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards were swiftly dispatched to Baalbeck in the Bekaa Valley. Sheikh Subhi Tufeili and Sheikh Ragheb Harb had both attended the conference and were to be central figures in realizing Iran’s initiative: Tufeili became the first leader of the

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new Islamic movement and Harb was to die for its cause. Hezbollah had been conceived.  

Prior to the establishment of Hezbollah, the Shia of Lebanon had a history of being marginalized by the confessional system that was put into place since 1943. The confessional system led to the marginalization of the impoverished Shia community in southern Beirut and southern Lebanon. Political seats and government jobs were allocated according to the confessional system, which led to the Shia being economically and politically disadvantaged. Imam Musa al-Sadr, before his disappearance in Libya, advocated for Shia empowerment and political action. His influence and ideology early on, eventually led to the establishment of Hezbollah, as we know it today.

The Shia of Lebanon and Hezbollah have a sort of obsession with martyrdom. The Prophet Mohamed’s grandson, Imam Hussein, was martyred in order to resist and confront oppression while defending Islam and the future of the Muslim World. Shiite’s commemorate his death annually in order to remember the sacrifices that were made in the name of the preservation of Islam. The Shia view Hussein as inspirational and someone to emulate. Martyrdom is highly regarded within the Shia community. Hezbollah views their struggle as a continuation of what Imam Hussein was doing: defending Islam and confronting oppression. When Nasrallah’s son was martyred during a military operation against Israeli soldiers, Nasrallah would not accept condolences from people, and instead asked them to come and celebrate and rejoice

because his son was able to join the rest of his friends in heaven. Nasrallah emphasizes the inherent justice of Hezbollah’s cause, inspired by Imam Hussein’s quest.

The top leadership of Hezbollah is public figures that use the media to distribute their messages. Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah is Hezbollah’s Secretary General, the highest in command with only the Majlis Al-Qarar (Decision advising council) above him. Nasrallah is considered one of the most articulate and sophisticated of the region’s political voices. Until his assassination in February 2008, Imad Mughniyah was considered the military operational planner for the organization. Since becoming Secretary General of the Organization in 1992, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has transformed the organization from an insurgency group to a complex organization with a media wing, political wing, social wing as well as their military wing. The Hezbollah parliamentarians are well educated to include Ali Fayyad, who is an Oxford educated Political strategist.

Hezbollah’s current strategy as demonstrated during the 2006 Israeli Hezbollah War is to influence the media in the struggle for international political support. Hezbollah is waging a media war to gain the support of the Lebanese as well as the International community. Sayyed Nasrallah portrays the 2006 war as a divine victory and uses it as grounds for continuing the armed wing of Hezbollah. According to the Secretary General Sayyed Nasrallah, “The Israeli Air Force could destroy the Lebanese Army within hours,


or within days, but it cannot do this with us; we don’t have a traditional presence. We exercise guerilla warfare…Lebanon still needs popular resistance.”

Hezbollah has been very good at targeting the Shia youth in Lebanon in order to foster their support and groom them for recruitment. Hezbollah has the Imam Mahdi Scouts, which is equivalent to the American boys and girl scouts. According to the deputy secretary General Naim Kassim, “A nation whose children are willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of Allah is a victorious nation,” Hezbollah has also become very good at using technology to spread their message and to recruit the Lebanese youth. Hezbollah released a video game in which players can go to war with the Israelis virtually. Hezbollah records songs and music that praise the resistance and the fighters; many of these songs have children singing them. According to Jaber, “Children are drilled in the merits of self-sacrifice from an early age….Islamic religious studies, which are obligatory in all the curricula of Hezbollah schools, start introducing the tenet to the young by teaching them that paradise is their reward for death in battle.”

Hezbollah is largely funded by Iran and Syria. Hezbollah also has individual financiers as well as businesses that the organization runs throughout the world. Hezbollah also finances their operations through illegal means such as the drug trade. According to the Washington Post, a North Caroline man was conflicted for supporting and financing Hezbollah through an illegal cigarette smuggling ring. Hezbollah is funded by private donations from all over the world to include the United States.


Hezbollah has been extremely successful at winning the hearts and minds of the Lebanese Shia community. After the war in 2006, Hezbollah gave individuals whose homes had been destroyed lump sums of money to restore their homes. Hezbollah is credited with rebuilding southern Lebanon after the war. Hezbollah was given money by Iran to rebuild Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah was very successful at getting their message out to the public during and after the war. Hezbollah portrayed Israel as being overly aggressive and Hezbollah as the protectors of the Lebanese people. Hezbollah’s media and public relations campaign have been successful at winning the hearts and minds of the Lebanese populace.

Hamas is a Sunni Muslim group based in Gaza, within the Palestinian Territories. Hamas has been on the United States terrorist list since 1989, during the first Intifada in Israel. The organization was founded in 1988 with the stated aim of destroying Israel. In January 2006, the group beat out Fatah in the general elections and took control of the Gaza strip. Hamas believes that “the Palestinian people are entitled to act to restore its rights and end the occupation through all means, including armed resistance.” Hamas has an organizational structure and much like Hezbollah, has a social services wing, a political wing that is separate from the militant wing. According to Zuhur, “Hamas is headed by a political bureau with representatives for military, foreign affairs, finance, propaganda, and internal security.”

Hamas was established in 1989 as a direct result of the Intifada in Israel and was a breakaway organization from the Muslim Brotherhood. According to Zuhur, Hamas was

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initially a social and educational initiative with the aim of bringing about a more Islamic Society. Since its inception Hamas has carried out several attacks using suicide bombers, mortars and rockets against Israel and Israeli citizens. Hamas is located in Gaza and the West Bank, but is much stronger and more organized in the Gaza Strip. According to Zuhur, “Hamas’ rather late emergence evolved from Israel’s antagonism to Palestinians and the necessarily quiescent policies of the Muslim Brotherhood toward both Egypt and Jordan.”

Hamas has been providing social services in the Palestinian territories since its inception, and has been successful at doing so. Hamas has schools, provides medical services and basic assistance to the residents of Gaza. They provide much of the services that a functioning government should provide. Hamas founded the Islamic Medical Association, which operated medical, dental and blood bank services. Hamas set up schools from kindergarten to eighth grade, set up women’s and student associations and groups, and even established medical and cultural associations. Hamas

As a result of their social services and programs, they earned the trust of the populace in Gaza and were elected to office in 2006. They had grassroots political campaigns and were able to mobilize their constituent. According to Dr. Mahmoud Ramahi, an elected Hamas lawmaker from Ramallah, “If Fatah had held all these municipal elections at once, as they were supposed to, we would never have been able to

13. Ibid., 20.
compete. But first they held 10, and then 20, and by dividing them up they allowed us to concentrate our efforts and organize ourselves, village by village.”¹⁵ Their electoral victory caused the US and the European Union to stop humanitarian aid and assistance from going to the region. Their victory also led Israel to withhold tax revenue collected on behalf of the Palestinians from reaching the occupied territories. This has led to a humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The Hamas prime minister and senior Hamas figure in the Gaza Strip since 2006 is Ismail Haniyah. Hamas’ general leadership lives in Syria and includes Khalid Meshal and Musa Abu Marzouk; Meshal is the leader of Hamas while Marzouk is a financier for Hamas. Much of Hamas’ top leadership has advanced degrees and is physicians or studied the sciences. Israel has historically targeted and killed the leadership of Hamas in the Palestinian territories as well as abroad, to include the founder of Hamas, Sheik Ahmad Yassin.

In 2004, Hamas official Abdel Aziz Rantissi offered a ten-year hudna (a truce with Israel) in return for a complete withdrawal by Israel from the territories captured in 1967, and the creation of a Palestinian state. During that time, Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin concurred that the group could accept a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Several months later, Yassin was assassinated by Israel followed by the assassination of Rantissi.

Much like Hezbollah, Hamas has used to media to spread their message to Palestinians and the Arab world. Hamas has an updated website in Arabic and English

which targets adults as well as children. Hamas’ Al-Fateh.net website is for children. Although Hamas officials have denied responsibility for the site, they have stated that there are sympathizers who are responsible for the site. The site has praises martyrs and has information about the Palestinian struggle. The site uses animated figures that tell stories of martyrs and their families and the celebrations that come with martyrdom.

Al-Aqsan is the official television channel founded by Hamas. Its programming includes children’s shows, news talk, and religiously inspired entertainment. The channel was created after Hamas’ electoral victory. It appears that Hamas is emulating Hezbollah’s highly successful media strategy.

The objectives of Hamas are the liberation of Palestine, which includes the demise of the State of Israel and the establishment of an Islamic State in Palestine. Hamas has committed much of its resources to social programs in order to win the support of the Palestinians. According to Mishaul and Sela, “Hamas has directed its energies and resources primarily toward providing services to the community, especially responding to its immediate hardships and concerns. As a religious movement involved in a wide range of social activities, Hamas is deeply rooted in the Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and thus is aware of the society’s anxieties, sharing its concerns, expressing its aspirations, and tending to its needs and difficulties.”

Economic growth within the Palestinian territories, the majority of the youth in the Gaza strip have no employment opportunities because the Israeli government has completely closed off the region and destroyed most of the economic infrastructure.

According to Mishal and Sela, “Since 1967, the Gaza Strip had been a more violent society than the West Bank. Gaza was more economically distressed, demographically saturated, dense with refugees, and more religious than the west bank.”\footnote{Ibid.,155.} The economic depression in Gaza leads many of the youth to seek a means to support their families, much of the time the only available means is Hamas.
CHAPTER 4: THE EFFECT OF THE INFORMATION AGE ON MODERN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Religious Terrorism

Enders, states that religion is the single most defining characteristic of terrorist organizations. He also argues that religion is the reason for the exponential increase in lethality of terrorist acts. According to Hoffman, it no longer seems to be the focus of terrorists to have the large audience watching. Their concern has now become creating more damage and destruction than in the past, and a lesser focus on sending a message to the community. He suggests this is also why the new era of terrorists has more of a tendency to threaten with the use of weapons of mass destruction. The development of this type of destructive warfare points to an increase in fatalities by terrorist acts. Hoffman states that religious terrorists contend that, “violence is first and foremost a sacramental act or divine duty executed in direct response to some theological demand or imperative.”\(^1\) Essentially, this is stating that the acts of violence committed by terrorists are perpetrated in response to some religious obligation or demand. That is, religion, in this instance, is most certainly a motivating factor in the perpetration of terrorist acts.

Research has supported Hoffman’s arguments about the increased lethality of terrorist attacks. For instance, Enders and Sandler\(^2\) used the ITERATE database to determine the current and potential threat of terrorist attacks across nations and discovered that although the overall number of terrorist attacks has declined since the Cold-War era, there is a 17% higher chance of death or injury in each terrorist attack.

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committed. Moreover, they attribute that the events associated with the Iranian Revolution in 1979 to be contributed to the lethality of these terrorist attacks.  

Furthermore, it seems from other research that religious motivations behind terrorist attacks do not apply explicitly to those of Islamic backgrounds. Juergensmeyer states that terrorist attacks around the world are perpetrated with religion as a driving factor and it cannot be pinpointed to a specific country of origin. Some of the examples he gave were the Jewish assassins of Israel, the Buddhist terrorist sect in Japan, radical Hindus and Sikhs in India, and the Christian militants in the United States. It is clear that each and every religion is potentially subject to the manipulations of terrorists in order to create a justification for their heinous crimes. It has also been argued that the only way to understand why these acts of religious terrorism are occurring is to have a firm grasp of eschatology.

The primary concept behind eschatology is the battle between good and evil. These groups believe that there is a cosmic war waging on among countries and their religions. White sums up the concept of eschatology in the following statement, “on a cosmic battlefield, Armageddon’s warrior needs no further justification to bear arms. They fight for a holy cause, and all actions are justified.” White also argues that in order for these groups to be able to commit these acts against humans, they have to “dehumanize” and “demonize” the individuals in order to see them as objects and not

3. Ibid., 307.
4. Juergensmeyer, Understanding the New Terrorism, 158.
people. This makes the crimes against innocent victims a part of a bigger picture and not a personal crime. It fits into the concept of the “cosmic war” where the elimination of these groups of people is represented as the destruction of evil and not the destruction of human beings. White suggests that this is how terrorist organizations justify their actions as necessary for the development of mankind.

Moreover, it has been suggested that certain beliefs reward those who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the greater good of their religion. For instance, Ghorayeb has observed that the elimination of injustice and humiliation are behind the centrality of martyrdom in Shi’a Islam. The idea of martyrdom is used to demonstrate high prestige and status within society. Those who are willing to sacrifice their life are looked upon as iconic within their culture. Ghorayeb claim that they are worshipped by family and friends for their willingness to continue the fight for their belief and complete selfless disregard for their personal life.

Also, Israeli, in his study of radical Islam and suicide bombers, uncovered that those individuals who choose to sacrifice themselves for the greater cause of their religion, Islam, are told that they will be rewarded in heaven by being offered forgiveness for their sins on earth. They are also told that they will be seated near God and given eternal happiness as well as multiple virgins to be at their command. According to Israeli, these types of rewards are a huge driving force in convincing followers to continue with their duty to their religion. Being offered forgiveness and eternal happiness are seen as


the ultimate reward and some would sacrifice their current life in order to reach those gifts in the afterlife. The social pressures in some communities, coupled with the lack of education of many of these young individuals, make it very difficult for people to deny the idea of forgiveness and eternal happiness in the afterlife. In addition, terrorists use writings of religious texts to justify their actions and convince others to follow them.\(^8\)

In 1981, violent Jihadis of the Al-Jihad group assassinated Egyptian ruler Anwar Saddat because of his untraditional approach regarding Islam and his allowance of Western forces to influence Egypt, which was viewed as a corruption of the interpretations of the Shariat. Once Saddat’s views and behavior were understood and accepted as an attack on God and Islam, the means for legitimizing whatever action was chosen to execute was acceptable. These violent Jihadis relied on the historical teachings of Wahhabism. Those that consider themselves Wahhabis claim that their duty to Jihad will continue “until all the world either adopts the Muslim faith or submits to Muslim rule.”\(^9\) These radical Wahhabis have resorted to extreme acts of violence such as mass-murders, assassinations, abductions, and aggressive threats in an attempt to show their loyalty to Islam and their cause to cleanse the world.

Religion has also been linked to having a connection with suicide bombings. Khashan conducted a survey of 350 Palestinians living in a refugee camp in Lebanon to try to uncover the reasons behind the suicide bombings. He found that the suicide

\(^8\) Ibid., 23.

\(^9\) Ibid.
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bombings are due to, “Palestinian collective frustration, political Islam, and poverty.”\textsuperscript{10} It seems that these feelings stem from a deep-seeded sense of “national humiliation” by Palestinian lead Islamic groups such as the Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The suicide bombings are being used as a way to convince the country of Israel to accept the request for an independent state of Palestine. Many of those who participate in the suicide bombings are recruited from the refugee camps because they are looking for a greater meaning to their life. The poverty stricken refugees are more willing to adopt the lifestyle of the suicide bombers because they have been told of the respect and honor that lies beyond their current life. If they can find a way to guarantee eternal greatness and respect, then the status of their current world does not matter.\textsuperscript{11}

Scholars who study terrorism do not always agree with that ideology that religion has become the main motivating factor of terrorist acts and is the reason for an increase in the lethality of terrorist acts. Jane’s Intelligence Review suggests that the threat posed by suicide terrorism is spreading around the globe and is not only limited to religious groups. For instance, the terrorist organization known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) are recognized across the world as one of the most lethal and destructive groups functioning today. This organization is not religiously motivated but nationalistic in its objectives and demonstrates that religion is not the only reason for the amount of destruction being caused by terrorist groups across the world. In addition, the suicide group that stems from LTTE is known as “The Black Panthers.” This group is comprised

\textsuperscript{10} Hilal Khashan, “Collective Palestinian Frustration and Suicide Bombings,” \textit{Third World Quarterly} 24, no. 6 (2003): 1052.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 1052.
of both men and women and is responsible for many deaths of both high-ranking officials and citizens.\textsuperscript{12}

Furthermore, according to Schweitzer, the Kurdish PKK is not religiously driven. Rather, it is a secular, secessionist-oriented group that wants Kurdish autonomy from the country of Turkey. This group was responsible for carrying out 16 suicide attacks as well as five attempted attacks that were foiled between 1996 and 1999. It is also believed that the reasons behind much of the bombings since the United States invaded Iraq in 2003 are not entirely religiously driven. Schweitzer suggests that the secular group that are the Ba’athist supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime could also have had a factor in the suicide bombings by offering tactical and material support.\textsuperscript{13}

Ghadbian believes that Islam as a religion is not the cause behind most of modern terrorism. He claims that Islam is neither violent nor pacifist. Ghadbian believes that there are multiple factors that contribute to the causes of terrorist attacks. He argues that the combination of the repressive political environment of the Middle East and dictatorial rule of the governments lead the citizens to take matters into their own hands when they want to be heard. Ghadbian maintains that economic inequality and rising unemployment among the semi-educated and youth create a fertile ground in which these extremist groups can recruit followers openly. These young people and people without jobs are


looking for a place to belong.\textsuperscript{14} Their desire to have some form of attachment makes them easy targets for groups that play on the idea of individuals having a “family” in which they can share with and belong to. Also, Merari studied over 50 suicide bombers and concluded that suicide bombing is, “neither an Islamic phenomenon nor a religious phenomenon: religion is just one more element in the persuasion, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient.”\textsuperscript{15} That is, Merari found that religion is just one component in what motivates terrorists. It appears that there could be a myriad of causes such as political tension, education, economic conditions and the structure of the local government that all contribute to the creation and implementation of terrorist groups in order for their message to be heard.

\textbf{Targeting of Attacks by Terrorists}

The term terrorism comes from the Latin root terrier, which means to frighten. Terrorists are those individuals and groups that violate the basic human rights in order to obtain their objective. Throughout history, groups of individuals such as the IRA, Tamil Tigers, and Al Qaeda, have used violence and other means of intimidation to make their belief system known to the public. Since every terrorist organization is different, each group will have their own means for achieving their goals. Terrorist tactics have evolved throughout history just as technology has. Most of the reasons behind terrorist acts have

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been politically or religiously associated. Regardless of the reason behind terrorist attacks, a unifying factor is the immense damage that it causes.

Walter Lacqueur, who wrote The New Terrorism and Left, Right and Beyond: The Changing Face of Terror, has spent many years researching and studying the changing face of terrorism. His research interests include Russian, German and Middle East history. Lacqueur states that the terrorism of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were not as lethal in terms of fatalities compared to the current “new age” terrorism where religion seems to be a motivating factor and the main goal is to eliminate the enemy. The ties between terrorism and religion remains an interest to researchers with the question of whether religious motivation is stronger than in the past, or whether researchers are just giving this connection between religion and terrorism more recognition and attention than in the past. To truly understand the meaning of religious terrorism, the social context in which terrorism is being defined must be understood. The social context affects the way terrorism is defined through a combination of historical, sociological and criminological circumstances.¹⁶

Regardless of which organization is defining terrorism, its existence has caused great damage to countries and individuals alike. One of the best methods for understanding a current social problem is by examining its past. Below is a brief review of the historical context of terrorism with the purpose of creating the foundation for how terrorism has evolved throughout history and why it is still utilized around the world. This literature review will also examine more recent studies that pertain to Kushner’s

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definition of “new terrorism” as well as terrorist styles of attack, objectives, and the involvement of religion within terrorism. A concluding section will investigate the impact of the media’s coverage on terrorism.\(^\text{17}\)

Jenkins argues that historically there have been six tactics of terrorism that have been utilized consistently: bombing, hijacking, arson, assault, kidnapping, and hostage taking. With the approach of the modern technological era, the methods of terrorism have become more prone to the use of bombs and other weapons of mass destruction. Anarchists have talked about the philosophy behind the use of the “bomb” as far back as the 1800s, stating that the only way to communicate with the social order is to destroy it. As history has progressed, different groups have utilized different methods or combinations of these methods to make their messages known.\(^\text{18}\)

With the change in the infrastructure of these terrorist organizations comes a change in the style of attack. Suicide missions are not a new phenomenon, but they certainly have grown in prevalence with this new age of terrorism. They have existed for many years but it seems that the use of them in excess has made it seem as if this is a new phenomenon. The use of suicide bombings has been more recently associated with religious terrorist groups. However, it should be noted that Lacqueur states these Islamic groups were created on the cusp of a few religions and that blame should not be put on any one particular religion. He goes on to state, it must be understood that those who commit these crimes are part of a small minority of religious followers and do not


constitute all those who are Islamic or devoutly religious. The Muslim religion itself is a
peaceful religion that does not condone violence unless their society is attacked first.¹⁹

Benjamin discusses the difference between the old and new goals, capabilities and
modus operandi of terrorist groups. He states that these religious groups express their
grievances by using the Koran and its verses to justify their actions.²⁰

**Success of Using Media to Further Agenda**

It is the responsibility of newspapers and media sources to share what is
happening around the world with the general public. Chermak and Gruenewald state that
although there has been some considerable debate among scholars about the influence of
the media on public attitudes, most scholars agree the media play some role, and that the
media’s influence increases as the public’s direct experience with a problem decreases.²¹

This is directly related to issues of terrorism. Most people will not be directly involved in
a terrorist attack, so it is up to media sources to present the stories and aftermath of
terrorist attacks to the public. It is a known fact that terrorism is a major social issue;
however, most news media sources do not report all terrorist events when they happen.

Chermak and Gruenwald claim that some of the more memorable terrorist attacks
that have occurred on American soil were the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the
Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and the 2001 World Trade Center and Pentagon


attacks. The authors state that in the annual Terrorism in the United States report, the FBI lists over 450 such incidents that have occurred. The media has a great amount of discretion in their choices of what events to disclose to the general public. The less people that are involved in an event, the easier it is for media sources to over-look the significance of the situation. There is a greater potential for widespread panic throughout the country’s population if citizens are exposed to the true number of terrorist attacks that occur on their country’s soil.  

Nacos stated that it is far more likely that an event will be labeled as a terrorist event if an American is involved or killed in the process of the attack. She states that it seems the news media tends to sensationalize events when it pertains to terrorism because of the extreme violence and catastrophic results. Kern, Just, and Norris concluded in their writing that the September 11 attacks were particularly surprising to the American public because media coverage of terrorism had been declining in the 1980’s. US network news covered about four terrorism stories a week but only two per week in the 1990’s.

Not surprisingly, they also conclude that media coverage of terrorism reached “record levels” following 9/11. Norris et al argues that the media’s tendency is to overemphasize and overdramatize terrorism at the expense of many other social

22. Ibid., 428.


problems. Iyengar and Kinder, for example, find that the media presented more stories about terrorism than poverty, unemployment, racial inequality, and crime. Nacos states that similarly, since terrorism fits the infotainment frame of current media focus, offering clear villains and heroes, new media will ignore other news and will tend to overemphasize terrorism.

Regardless of how long terrorism has been an influential part of history, the reasons behind the perpetration of it has changed as the relations between countries have changed. Since there is such a discrepancy in the research over religion as a motivator, both sides of the argument must be examined more thoroughly before a conclusion can be drawn about the impact of religion as a motivator on terrorist attacks. However, what can be observed from this literature review is that there is a trend that suggests terrorism is being reported more frequently as being motivated by religion. It must be recalled that from the research already discussed, not all terrorist groups are religiously driven. The Tamil Tigers and Kurdish PKK are both secular terrorist organizations with a very deadly track record. If religion is not the foundation behind these organizations, it is important to determine if other factors are contributing to the increase in lethality of terrorist attacks in the recent years.

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25. Ibid., 183.
Economical Warfare

Harvey Kushner suggests that the 1960s was the turning point where the “new terrorism” began to evolve. According to Kushner, there is a major difference between the people who spearheaded the terrorist organizations back in the 1960’s and 1970’s and today’s terrorist regimes. Specifically, he noted that during the 1960s and 1970s, many Middle Eastern terrorist groups sent their followers to the Soviet Union for training in low-intensity warfare, which is a rather benign-sounding name for terrorism, at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow. Back in the 1960's and 1970's, the leaders of these organizations were well-educated, well-trained, well-traveled, multilingual, and reasonably sophisticated middle class men and women. The people apart of the organizations were known for having characteristics of being intelligent, disciplined, and with sufficient access to resources. They were seen as this “urban revolutionary” and they looked to recruit college students and those within the social revolutionary mind frame. The goal was to bring in additional members who were educated enough to know what was happening politically and willing to do what was necessary in order to make a change.28

Kushner suggests that recently, there has been a significant shift in the type of people involved in these organizations. He claims that the prototypical foreign terrorist of the “new age” is usually poorly educated, unemployed and an ill trained male refugee of a foreign origin. The young members come from the streets and grow up with the ideals that are instilled in them from the older members of the gangs and neighbors. Young boys

are taught religious and political extremism within the context of the “gang codes.” Kushner argues that since social ties are not as strong with the poor classes in foreign countries, this becomes the perfect recruiting grounds for religious and political extremist groups. These people living in poverty are the people who feel as though they have been ignored and overlooked by the government. They are told by these idealist groups that the only way for them to be heard, is to make it impossible to be ignored.29

Also, Kushner states that throughout the history and evolution of terrorism, it is evident that the individuals involved in terrorist attacks have changed as well. The causes of terrorism have seemed to have shifted from a secular and politically oriented motivation to being religiously driven. The people who are fighting for the causes of these terrorist attacks changed from believing that this was the only way to send their message to the world to believing that they are doing the mission of holy powers by eradicating groups that are inferior to them. It is no longer for their “mother country” or for their ruler; these terrorist acts are now because of its religious connotations. The perpetrators are convinced that in order to receive religious praise and forgiveness, they must follow through with the task that has been handed down to them, regardless of the outcome. Further, Kushner claims that the members themselves have digressed from being highly educated and well traveled to being poorly educated and from impoverish conditions. It seems that the less educated the recruits are, the more susceptible they are to being convinced of the necessity of these terrorist acts. This change allowed for these

types of members to be convinced their only way to guarantee an honorable afterlife was by sacrificing their current life for their God.  

To summarize, this current transition of the types of terrorist acts have been tagged as “the new terrorism” by researchers such as Kushner\(^ \text{30} \) and Laqueur.\(^ \text{31} \) The majority of research and literature refer to this increase in religious-based terrorist groups that have emerged since the end of the Cold War. The decline of left-wing groups that were politically motivated have allowed for the religiously motivated to rise to the top. The characterized weaker structure of this group would appear to be an advantage; however, that becomes the very reason it is harder to eradicate these networks. That is, the weaker the structure of these terrorist groups, the harder it makes the tracking of these organizations. The following sections will take a deeper look into this current age of “new terrorism” by examining in more detail the methods and style of attack that have been utilized in the past couple decades by terrorists.

**Reasons for Success**

The context of terrorism and the individuals involved have evolved throughout history, starting with one of the first historically recorded events of modern terrorism during the French Revolution in the 18th century. White wrote about the historical events of the French Revolution and how it was based on the same “enlightened” principles as


\(^{31}\) Ibid., 20.  

the American Revolution\textsuperscript{33}. According to White, a revolution ensued when King Louis XVI called together the nobles in a large governmental meeting known as the Estates General in 1789. Infuriated by the lack of representation, the lower class reacted by creating their own legislative body, called the National Assembly, and revolted against the French Government. To maintain power, the French nobles began accusing members of this newly created government of being terrorists. The “Reign of Terror” was the period of time in which the French government persecuted citizens who they suspected of conspiracy and all of the conflicted citizens were labeled as terrorists.

White suggests that the context of terrorism changed and by 1848 the term terrorism was used to describe those violent revolutionaries who revolted against the government. According to White, there were three strains of radical democrats who emerged with new ideas of the government’s role. Both communists and socialists believed that wealth was not a private matter and should be shared equally with all workers. Anarchists believed that there was no need for a government at all. This idea concerned the upper classes that were at risk of losing all their financial assets if the anarchists took over. The anarchists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s believed that society should create their own communities in order to survive without the assistance of the government. Because they threatened the power of the upper class, all of the individuals who identified themselves as communists, anarchists, or socialists were defined by society during this time as being terrorists.

White also went on to discuss how the Irish came to be defined as terrorists within the context of history. He examined the Irish and their history of violence between the English that began back in the 1500s. He stated that in 1590, the English established a Protestant colony called the Plantation of Ulster in Northern Ireland. The Irish revolted but the Protestants and the English remained in control for generations. The famine in 1845 added more devastation to the Irish and many either died or fled the country. In New York City around 1857 a group of Irish immigrants created the Irish Republican Brotherhood. After the American Civil War many of the Irish soldiers who fought with the north turned their attention back home to their native land. Since they couldn’t fight the English directly, the Irish in America joined together in an attempt to create a republic of Ireland. The battle against England could not be fought directly by these soldiers so they created an underground campaign.

By 1919, this group had become what is known today as the Irish Republican Army and Michael Collins rose as the commander. After studying the methods of the Russian revolutionaries, Collins made use of bombs, murder, ambushes, and other terrorist tactics to get the British to grant the Irish their independence in 1921. After the death of Collins, the IRA was outlawed; however, it remained alive and functioning underground. The re-emergence of the IRA occurred when the British entered Northern Ireland in an attempt to quell rioting. The suppression and abuse of the Irish Catholics caused the IRA to publically activate again. The IRA became known as master bombers and from 1970 to 1990 they used bombing as their primary tactic as well as murder and kidnapping. White suggests that the social context of terrorism changed again by the beginning of the 1900's when the term was used to describe violent acts by labor
organizations, anarchists, nationalistic groups revolting against foreign powers or ultra nationalistic political organizations.  

After World War I, the term terrorism began to be used to define not only these nationalistic political groups but also to define the actions of violent left wing groups. The author continues by suggesting that in the beginning of the 1970's, international and domestic terrorism became acknowledged across the world as a major threat to all countries. Terrorism has affected every continent around the world. The United States also became aware of the severity of terrorism beginning in the 1990s with acts such as the Oklahoma City Bombing and the World Trade Center attacks on September 11 in 2001. By the turn of the century, many countries around the world fully understood the damage that happens to a nation from a single act of terrorism.

Terrorism has become a subject of great interest to the general public and that is evident by the significant increase in articles published in the recent decades regarding terrorism. Given the fact that the reason for this large increase has not yet been identified, the following implications should be taken with caution. More research examining the reporting of terrorism should be undertaken to determine if these patterns are seen in other news sources. Since the past few decades have revealed an increase in the percentage of reported terrorist attacks being religiously associated, and if in fact reporting of terrorist acts correspond to the actual amount of terrorist activities, it is necessary to develop methods in order to prevent this increase from escalating even further.

34. Ibid., 197.
Researchers have suggested that religiously motivated terrorism is of far greater threat than terrorist of political means. Carr claims that these religiously motivated terrorists believe they are fighting in a cosmic battle that defines the battle of good versus evil.\(^{35}\) The outcome of this type of war is greater than the individual and therefore justifies the sacrifice of lives. As discussed earlier in this paper, it is known that those individuals that perpetrate religiously affiliated terrorist acts are more willing to kill themselves and those around them as opposed to the political terrorists who want their message to be known but without massive fatalities.\(^{36}\) Hoffman, who examines the differences between religious terrorists and other terrorists, claims that the politically motivated terrorist wanted their message to be heard and they viewed killing as a sad necessity where as the religiously motivated terrorists believed that killing is a sacramental act. He also states that another major difference between the politically driven and religiously driven is that those of political means believed that they spoke for the good of the group where the religiously driven believed they were speaking on behalf of God and all his holiness.

Another implication that ties into the last paragraph is the actual understanding of the Muslim religion. The ability for people to understand the Muslim religion would allow for the opportunity to be able to recognize potential terrorist groups before the attacks happen. Daniel Pipes wrote a theological and political analysis of Islam


discussing how most Western attitudes are incorrect. The truth is that Islam is a legalistic religion more closely related to traditional Judaism with the basic beliefs resting upon grace and forgiveness.

They argue that terrorism has no place in Islam and Muslims complain that Western press does not refer to any other type of religious terrorism except for Islamic terrorism. However, when the individuals commit such acts of terrorism in the name of religion, it is difficult for the media not to categorize all those events as Islamic terrorism. With the title of Islamic terrorism being given to those perpetrators, all other people who are Islam are going to fall victim to the stereotype that all Muslims are either terrorists or sympathizers of terrorists. In order to counteract the stereotypes of all Muslims being terrorists, education must be increased in order to teach Westerners that not all those who practice Islam are going to be terrorists. The 2010 Gallup Polls indicated that of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 years of age, 49% of them rely a great deal on the information that is published in newspapers. In essence, this means that there is a great importance to what is published in newspapers since young people consider it as a resource for information. Newspapers can be crucial instruments in order to educate people with what truly represents the culture of Islam. An interesting point that Pipes (2003) brought to light is that Westerners seem to think that Muslims are violent and lashing out as a group against other groups of people. However, that is far from the case; in truth, Jihadists have killed more of their fellow Muslims than any other group they
have targeted. Some scholars claim that this Muslim stereotype has replaced the “young, black male offender” stereotype that was so prominent pre-2001.37

Information such as this is crucial to teach Westerners in order for them to understand that not all terrorists are Muslim and not all Muslims are terrorists. This type of understanding can only be achieved through an extensive education that not only teaches about the Muslim religion, but also about the Islam culture and the ways in which their society works. The more educated Westerners and people of other cultures are, the more open and understanding individuals will become in regards to issues such as terrorism. Essentially, this is stating that the acts of violence committed by terrorists are perpetrated in response to some religious obligation or demand. That is, religion, in this instance, is most certainly a motivating factor in the perpetration of terrorist acts.

CHAPTER 5: COMBAT ASYMMETRIC WARFARE

In order for the United States to counter Religious organizations that employ asymmetric warfare, the US government must take on a strategy that is much like the organization. The US government must try and win the hearts and minds of the local population in order to give them an alternative to supporting terrorist organizations. These terrorist organizations are often times seen as the liberators of the land, and that perception is what the United States needs to work against. These organizations have won the media war and have succeeded in getting their message out and having it resonate with the local population. The US government must change the perception in these areas that the policies are one-sided and don’t favor the local population. The United States government must have a public relations and media campaign to show that they support justice and equality throughout the world.

The US government must build and maintain strong relationships between the local governments and military through economic support. The US government should help local civilians meet their needs by providing social services and education assistance directly through the US government or through non-profit organizations. The US government must help to empower the local military to counter and build resiliency against violent extremist and appropriately communicate and inform the local population, the media, and the world about the positive activities of the US government.

The US government must appear to be a fair and honest broker with the goal of bringing peace to the region. During the 2006 war, the impression among the Lebanese and the Arab world in general, was that the United States was not supporting a ceasefire and was encouraging Israel to take out Hezbollah with no regard for Lebanese civilians.
The Bush administration made no public statements condemning Israel’s actions against the civilians of Lebanon. This led to wider support of the actions of Hezbollah and led many Lebanese citizens to question the role of the United States. The United States must appear as a fair neutral third country in order to gain the support and favor of the local populace.

Open dialogue is a step in the right direction to minimize these organizations. The British history with terrorist organizations comes from their experience with the IRA. The British agreed to have open dialogue and peace talks with the IRA’s political wing, Sinn Fein, and eventually came to a peace agreement with the IRA.

The United States government must also provide economic support directly to the local people. The government must ensure that the local populace knows the money is coming from the United States. This will ensure that the youth have employment opportunities and will not join terrorist organizations or similar groups for the monetary benefits. The United States must provide additional economic support to the local government in order to ensure that the government is in control.

In order to understand homegrown terrorism, policymakers must understand terrorism and the history and development of the terrorist organizations. The reason for the success of certain terrorist organizations is because people can sympathize and relate to their ideology and cause. Our inability to understand the motivations of certain terrorist groups makes it more difficult to combat the ideologies of the terrorists and the communities, which may sympathize and be supportive. The US cannot treat every terrorist group like they are Al-Qaeda. US policymakers must understand why people sympathize and support terrorist organizations in order to understand the ideology and be
able to combat that ideology. Obama was not only reaching out to Muslims overseas but also to Muslims in the United States. Since 9/11, there have been several cases of homegrown terrorists and Al-Qaeda has stated that they want to use a homegrown terrorist for their next attack.

Terrorist groups have different objectives. Hamas and Hezbollah have not been entirely successful in gaining the support of the international community and having the international community accept their objectives and change their policies. Both groups have been successful in gaining the support of the community in which they operate. Having the support of their community makes changing the group’s tactics and techniques more difficult. Both groups have shown that they are willing to compromise if they are given incentives and without outside influence. The region has been influenced politically, militarily, and financially by Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United States and other countries that feel they have a stake in the Middle East.

Terrorism is a complex issue with many causes. In order to combat their asymmetric style of warfare, the United States must understand each terrorist group individually and formulate a strategy based on the specific organization. Terrorists develop because of certain actions in a region and in their lives. A strategy for terrorism must begin with making sure we do not create or make additional terrorist. Our policies have a direct correlation with terrorism ideology and are used as justification for terrorism attacks. The United States should continue to protect the best interests of the country while ensuring that human rights and justice are preserved throughout the world.
Conclusion

In response to the obstacles that challenge institutional reform in countries where religious terrorism is flourishing, in examining England and Ireland’s response to their struggle, a lesson in political pragmatism can be learned that in the future can be adopted successfully in other countries and by the United States.

Even though the IRA retains the ability to conduct paramilitary activities, which reportedly provide the IRA and the political party Sinn Fein with millions of dollars each year, they have proven themselves to be rational actors by functioning through the Sinn Fein and partaking in the political processes of both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The United States and regional actors should capitalize on this rationality by encouraging the IRA in the political sphere and working with the IRA to pull the RIRA into politics as well.

The politicization of religious based terrorist organizations would lead to the diffusion of their military wings. While these group continues to terrorize the area, condemned the local religious leaders gives them less appeal and makes them appear to be radical and irrational. By corralling theses groups into politics, the regional actors will be able to manage the group along peaceful lines.

Progress in improving security and public service delivery will be crucial and will depend very much on gains in state building. However, with directed aid from the US that targets the causes of economic instability, and individual states following through with tackling its internal deficiencies, headway can be made in improving the civil service, law enforcement agencies, and fiscal framework that will ultimately lead to a
relatively terrorist free world and serve as success story for similar developing nations caught in a longstanding poverty trap.

On many occasions, the best intelligence has been garnered from the suspects' own communities, both in the United States and overseas. Abdul Mutallab, the Christmas underwear bomber, was turned in to US authorities by his own father who believed his son was trying to commit a terrorist activity. One can only imagine how much more effective the United States could be if its agencies could harness the information and goodwill displayed towards and received by individual Americans overseas. Individuals in vulnerable communities are less susceptible to radicalization because they have faith in the political process and trust in government; feel like government seeks out and is responsive to their concerns; recognize that terrorism and radicalization are common threats; do not feel discriminated against; embrace their identity as Americans; do not think conflicts with other identities they may have; and feel like an integrated part of the American community.

The general public recognizes the complexity of the radicalization challenge, understands that how they react to this threat can shape its future scope, has a more sophisticated understanding of the many contributions Muslims make to American life rather than just the relationship between people who purport to be Muslim and terrorism, and view American Muslims as fellow Americans first and foremost.

Terrorism has become a worldwide problem that the United States must address. The use of asymmetric warfare by small and large terrorist organizations should be a case for because these organizations will continue to target Americans and U.S. interests.
They have shown a propensity for establishing working ties with transnational terrorist groups with similar religious beliefs even if they do not have the same long term goals.

The United States government needs to assist governments that are actively fighting and working to disrupt terrorist financing. The U.S. Government must push governments like the Saudi Arabian government to monitor the activities of their charities that contribute to Muslim terror organizations. Much of the Philippine terrorist organization Abu Sayyaf Group’s funding and support came through the charities established by Osama Bin Laden’s brother-in-law, Mohammad Jamal Khalifa in the early-1990’s.

Combating terrorism is a very difficult and complex task. Terrorists are not always a defined and structured enemy; their elusive nature makes it even more difficult to counter it. Countering religious terrorist organizations is a multifaceted and multi functional task which will involve different departments within the United States government. Each should have a definite role to play in the terrorist asymmetric warfare. Inter-department support within a government and international cooperation is vital to developing a plan that combats religious terrorism. Combating religious terrorism has to be a priority at the national level as well as at and international levels.

Modern democracies, especially liberal democracies are vulnerable to the threat of terrorism. Democratic states therefore need a well defined policy and approach to counter religious terrorist organizations that employ asymmetric warfare. Diplomacy plays a crucial role in developing an international approach to combating these groups. To implement the policies against religious terrorism the state needs well articulated mechanisms and procedures. It also needs to muster the resources to implement the
policies like an efficient intelligence system skilled special units. There is also a need for well laid out security arrangements to deter and deny terrorists any freedom of action. There also needs to be a path for the members of these organizations to take in order to assimilate back into normal society as law abiding citizens.

The battle against terrorism is not all about fighting and killing or capturing all of the members of the organization. The most important battles against terrorism are fought against the minds. It is important to understand the terrorist organization and their religious views. An important tool exploited by the terrorist to advance their cause is the media. Making sure the organization has little access to media outlets for their messaging is crucial to combating asymmetric warfare. The Government must be a step ahead in the use of asymmetric warfare and must be able to predict any action in order to prevent it. Another implication that ties into the last paragraph is the actual understanding of the Muslim religion. The ability for people to understand the Muslim religion would allow for the opportunity to be able to recognize potential terrorist groups before the attacks happen. Daniel Pipes wrote a theological and political analysis of Islam discussing how most Western attitudes are incorrect. The truth is that Islam is a legalistic religion more closely related to traditional Judaism with the basic beliefs resting upon grace and forgiveness.

They argue that terrorism has no place in Islam and Muslims complain that Western press does not refer to any other type of religious terrorism except for Islamic terrorism. However, when the individuals commit such acts of terrorism in the name of religion, it is difficult for the media not to categorize all those events as Islamic terrorism. With the title of Islamic terrorism being given to those perpetrators, all other people who...
are Islam are going to fall victim to the stereotype that all Muslims are either terrorists or sympathizers of terrorists. In order to counteract the stereotypes of all Muslims being terrorists, education must be increased in order to teach Westerners that not all those who practice Islam are going to be terrorists. The 2010 Gallup Polls indicated that of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 years of age, 49% of them rely a great deal on the information that is published in newspapers. In essence, this means that there is a great importance to what is published in newspapers since young people consider it as a resource for information. Newspapers can be crucial instruments in order to educate people with what truly represents the culture of Islam. An interesting point that Pipes brought to light is that Westerners seem to think that Muslims are violent and lashing out as a group against other groups of people. However, that is far from the case; in truth, Jihadists have killed more of their fellow Muslims than any other group they have targeted. Some scholars claim that this Muslim stereotype has replaced the “young, black male offender” stereotype that was so prominent pre-2001.

Information such as this is crucial to teach Westerners in order for them to understand that not all terrorists are Muslim and not all Muslims are terrorists. This type of understanding can only be achieved through an extensive education that not only teaches about the Muslim religion, but also about the Islam culture and the ways in which their society works. The more educated Westerners and people of other cultures are the more open and understanding individuals will become in regards to issues such as terrorism. Essentially, this is stating that the acts of violence committed by terrorists are perpetrated in response to some religious obligation or demand. That is, religion, in this instance, is most certainly a motivating factor in the perpetration of terrorist acts.


