

# A Broader Conceptualization of Islam and Terrorism

By J. KEITH AKINS

Islamist terrorism has received a great deal of scrutiny recently, but many researchers have failed to include the historical and theological dimensions of Islam in their analyses. This has led to counterterrorism policies that focus on specific groups, such as al Qaeda, rather than on the *sociocultural phenomenon* of jihad. If America had followed a similar policy in December 1941, the Nation would have declared war on Vice Admiral Nagumo's Pearl Harbor Striking Force rather than on the imperial government of Japan.

To wage America's war on terror effectively, Islamist terrorism must be reconceptualized as part of a worldwide movement of jihad—a phenomenon that Western governments and scholars failed or refused to acknowledge until the attacks of September 11. Jihad has evolved into new forms as war itself has changed. Jihad has become the epitome of fourth-generation warfare (4GW), a point on the spectrum of war that includes terrorism, propaganda, infiltration and sabotage, guerrilla war, insurgency, and conventional warfare.

Jihad is a global movement occurring everywhere there are Muslim populations. It has been present through all of Islamic history. Islamist terrorism is merely one part of jihad, or struggle, to bring the entire world under the dominion of Islamic law and to restore the Islamic Caliphate.

## Definitions

A review of the literature concerning terrorism reveals that *terrorism* itself is dif-

ficult to define.<sup>1</sup> While clear, objective definitions of terrorism are easy to develop, simple definitions get complicated by two main factors. First, every terrorist commits his actions in support of a cause that many others also support, and people find it difficult to acknowledge that actions taken in support of their pet cause could be terrorist acts. Second, governments and media outlets consistently apply, misapply, or refuse to apply the term *terrorism* based on political factors.

Bruce Hoffman defines *terrorism* as "the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change. . . . Terrorism is specially designed to have far-reaching psychological effects beyond the immediate victim(s) or object of the terrorist attack."<sup>2</sup> The Department of Defense defines *terrorism* as "the unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives."<sup>3</sup>

Both of these definitions share critical elements, including the use or threatened use of force; attacks against primary targets with the intent of causing fear in secondary targets; and a goal of changing government or government policies. Terrorism is a tactic, a method of applying violence. It is one of many methods of using violence to change behavior, some of which are legal and some of which are not.

Various attempts have been made to develop typologies of terrorism, and Reuven Paz argues that any typology must include

Muslim women and children leaving mosque in London



AP/Wide World Photo (Remy De La Mauviniere)

Islamist terrorism as a distinct division.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, David Rapoport argues that modern terrorism has gone through evolutionary phases and that the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1989 initiated a "fourth wave" of terrorism based on religion. He emphasizes that "Islam produced the most active and potentially appealing religious groups."<sup>5</sup>

According to Bard O'Neill, "The essence of *guerrilla warfare* is highly mobile hit-and-run attacks by lightly to moderately armed groups that seek to harass the enemy and gradually erode his will."<sup>6</sup> One thing that distinguishes guerrilla warfare from terrorism is that "its primary targets are the government's armed forces, police, or their superior units, and in some cases, key economic targets, rather than unarmed civilians."<sup>7</sup> According to Hoffman, guerrilla soldiers "operate as a military unit, attack enemy forces, and seize and hold territory (even if only ephemerally during daylight hours), while also exercising some form of sovereignty either over territory or population."<sup>8</sup> Martha Crenshaw explains the difference as one of legitimacy: if the perpetrators use military methods, or attack military targets, or have a realistic chance of military success, they are not terrorists.<sup>9</sup> Guerrilla warfare is one type of asymmetric

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warfare. It is also closely related to, and often confused with, insurgency warfare.

An *insurgency* is “a struggle between a nonruling group and the ruling authorities in which the nonruling groups consciously use political resources and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics.”<sup>10</sup> Insurgency is typically an asymmetric conflict because of the distribution of resources between the ruling powers and their opposition. But this is not always the case. Insurgencies can include guerrilla operations, terrorism, electoral mobilization, passive resistance, or, occasionally, conventional warfare. Guerrilla conflict is insurgency, but insurgency is not necessarily guerrilla conflict.

*Asymmetric warfare* “describes a military situation in which two belligerents of unequal strength interact and take advantage of their respective strengths and weaknesses.”<sup>11</sup> The essence of asymmetric warfare is that there are two unequal groups in conflict. They can be nations, ethnic groups, tribes, or any other recognizable

body of people. If one group is modern and industrial with a professional military and the other is not, they are fighting asymmetric warfare.

*Fourth-generation warfare* occurs when a militarily disadvantaged belligerent seeks “to convince enemy political leaders that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. The fundamental concept is that superior political will, when properly employed, can defeat great economic and military power.”<sup>12</sup> Fourth-generation warfare is designed to “ensure political rather than military success.”<sup>13</sup> Another new development is that in 4GW, “fighting will not be limited to nation-state relationships. Rather, opposing factions will be divided by race, religion, or class.”<sup>14</sup>

Fourth-generation warfare and asymmetric warfare are similar and overlapping concepts. Fourth-generation warfare is asymmetric, but asymmetric warfare is not necessarily fourth generation.<sup>15</sup> Asymmetric warfare has existed since the first band of *Homo erectus* made clubs with which to strike those without them, but 4GW began to evolve with

the development of modern communications, transportation, and weapons technologies.<sup>16</sup>

### Global Jihad

Various authors have discussed the existence of a global jihad movement. Quintan Wiktorowicz, for example, argues for the reality of a global *Salafist* jihad but fails to extend his analysis to other Islamic sects.<sup>17</sup> Fidel Sendagorta expands on this idea, contending that “we face not a string of isolated small groups but a transnational community of activists indoctrinated via the Internet, whose leaders are intent on Islam’s ideological hegemony worldwide—in other words, a global-scale insurgency that uses religious resources to serve a political strategy.”<sup>18</sup> Like Wiktorowicz, however, he limits the players by referring to “three main groups . . . linked to state Islam, which is controlled by government in the countries of origin; salafists; and movements operating under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood.”<sup>19</sup> Crenshaw also describes a worldwide “civil war,” or reaction to American foreign policy, but fails to address the

Fleet Combat Camera Group, Pacific (Edward G. Martens)



Damage from suicide bomber in Musayib, Iraq, that killed 60 civilians and destroyed several vehicles and shops

theological underpinnings of this movement.

The existence of a global jihadist movement using 4GW to spread Islam around the world can be demonstrated by examining the:

- continuum of conflict in Islam
- theological basis of jihad
- omnipresence of jihad
- concatenation of Islamist organizations.

*Continuum of Conflict in Islam.* The U.S. Army conceptualizes warfare as part of a spectrum of violence.<sup>20</sup> As part of this spectrum, *war* includes conventional war, guerrilla war,<sup>21</sup> terrorism,<sup>22</sup> infiltration and sabotage,<sup>23</sup> and media war, or propaganda.<sup>24</sup> Fourth-generation warfare incorporates all of these forms of conflict, as does the global jihad.

Muslim armies have fought those of non-Muslims in modern times, most notably in World War I, the Sinai Campaign of 1956, the Six-Day War of 1967, the Yom Kippur War of 1973, and the Gulf War of 1991. Muslim leaders took their people to war for standard economic and political reasons, but how did they motivate their troops? Why did individual Muslim soldiers fight?

In November 1913, the last Caliph of Islam “proclaimed a jihad, or Holy War, calling on all Muslims in British, Russian, and French territories to rise up and smite the Infidel.” The Khedive of Egypt immediately backed the Caliph, calling on all Egyptians to rebel against British rule in the name of Allah.<sup>25</sup> These calls to jihad ultimately led to the complete destruction of the Ottoman Empire by Western armies and an end to the almost 1,300-year-old Caliphate.

The story of the Arab-Israeli wars of 1956, 1967, and 1973 is one of repeated and stunningly complete defeats of Muslim armies on conventional battlefields. Arab nations were incapable of producing modern weaponry, so their leaders either purchased arms or were supplied with arms as foreign aid. These same leaders incited their peoples with calls to jihad. Muslim nations combined forces so that multiple armies simultaneously attacked Israel, yet despite their numerical advantages they proved incapable of achieving victory.



Members of Islamic Jihad marching in funeral procession for leader killed by Israeli missile strike

AP/Wide World Photo (Khalil Hamra)

During the Gulf War of 1991, leaders of both Iraq and Kuwait declared jihad against the other.<sup>26</sup> When U.S. and coalition troops prepared to drive the Iraqi occupiers from Kuwait, Saddam Hussein called for jihad to rid Saudi Arabia of the American infidel.<sup>27</sup> Osama bin Laden would echo the call to jihad for the same reasons a decade later. When the coalition attacked, however, the Iraqi military (the fourth-largest in the world) was driven into submission almost instantly.

The lesson of these conflicts is clear: modern Muslim armies are incapable of competing with Western armies on a conventional battlefield. The reasons for this inability are less clear and involve questions of education, authority, motivation, economics, and corruption, but there are few Western military leaders today who consider Muslim conventional forces a viable threat. Conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, however, have demonstrated the ability of Muslim societies to field effective guerrilla and insurgent forces.

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the call for jihad went out around the world. Muslims from every continent responded, sending money and young men to Pakistan<sup>28</sup> and then on to Afghanistan to fight.<sup>29</sup> For 10 long years, peasants on foot or on horseback fought against the largest and most heavily equipped army in the world, and eventually emerged victorious as the Soviet

Union withdrew its troops. In the eyes of the mujahideen, or holy warriors, they had not only driven the superpower out of Afghanistan but also directly caused the breakup of the Soviet Union.<sup>30</sup>

In 2003, American forces again rolled over the Iraqi army. Only 41 days elapsed between America’s invasion of Iraqi territory and President George W. Bush’s declaration of an “end to major combat operations.”<sup>31</sup> Now, after 3 years of insurgent warfare and over 3,000 dead U.S. troops, American citizens are beginning to question the ability to defeat the subsequent insurgency. One of the main goals of 4GW is to cause the enemy to doubt its ability to win.<sup>32</sup> It is also worth noting that another goal of insurgency is to cause political leaders to weigh the impact of war on their careers.<sup>33</sup>

Sabotage is an element of almost all forms of warfare but is particularly connected with various subsets of asymmetric war.<sup>34</sup> Infiltration is the act of covertly moving individuals or small units into enemy-controlled territory or even into the enemy’s military, which opens “widened possibilities for . . . attack by saboteurs, terrorists, and special forces units, given easier transport and more effective, compact weapons, even if they do not possess weapons of mass destruction.”<sup>35</sup>

Examples of jihadist infiltration and sabotage can be found in both law

enforcement and military organizations. For example, FBI special agent Gamal Abdel-Hafiz refused to record secret conversations with a suspect under investigation in a terrorism case in 1998 and was accused of doing so again in another terrorism investigation in 2002, telling his superiors that “a Muslim does not record another Muslim.”<sup>36</sup> Sergeant Hasan Akbar, USA, was deployed with his unit in early 2003, and on the eve of battle against Iraq destroyed his camp’s power generator, threw three fragmentation grenades into tents occupied by his officers, and then fired into tents occupied by his fellow Soldiers. He killed 1 and wounded 15. He stated at the time, “You guys are coming into our countries, and you’re going to rape our women and kill our children.”<sup>37</sup>

These are but two of a far larger number of incidents in which Muslims have placed their loyalty to Islam above their loyalty to America and have sabotaged legal or military efforts to oppose Islamic jihad.<sup>38</sup>

Propaganda is a carefully calculated and designed series of messages “that attempts to change the target’s perceptions, cognition, and behavior in ways that further the objective of the propagandist.”<sup>39</sup> Jihadist propaganda is designed to convince Westerners that:

- Jihad has nothing to do with war.
- Any Muslim arrested on terrorism charges is a victim of unconstitutional profiling and is not guilty.
- All religions produce terrorism, so Islam is no different from Christianity.
- There is a moral equivalence between the deliberate targeting of children and military operations against enemy forces.
- All antiterrorism efforts are unconstitutional or racist.

The primary jihadist propagandists in the United States are the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). Most of their propaganda falls under the Islamic strategy of *Taqiyya*, or “deception” (*Hadith Sahih Bukhari*, Book 52:267–270). Many other forms of propaganda are taken directly from the al Qaeda manual.<sup>40</sup>

An example of the propaganda issued by Islamist organizations when a jihadist is arrested, convicted, or deported over terrorism charges can be found in the case of Ali al Timimi. In April 2005, al Timimi, a native-born American citizen, was found guilty in

a U.S. district court of actively recruiting Muslims to travel to Afghanistan, join the Taliban, and wage war against the United States. Witnesses testified that on September 16, 2001, he held a meeting in his home where he disconnected his telephone and closed the blinds on every window and told his followers how to get to Afghanistan. The Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation’s executive director “said that Timimi’s conviction ‘bodes ill’ for the First Amendment” and that “the bar for what constitutes free speech has shifted since the September 11 attacks. . . . Timimi was a victim of that change.” The executive director of the Shaker El Sayed Mosque said, “Ali never opened a weapon or fired a shot. . . . What kind of country are we turning the United States into today?”<sup>41</sup>

The ultimate goal of Islamist propaganda, of course, is to convince the West that there is no global jihad movement, there is no “holy war” in Islam, and Islam is inherently a peaceful religion. The violence perpetrated daily wherever there are Muslims is purely coincidental and completely unrelated to Islam, and even to mention such things is an example of prejudice against Muslims.

*Theological Basis of Jihad.* A particularly troubling aspect of Islam that most people raised in Western secular society have great difficulty accepting is that, unlike other major religions, Islam not only approves of but also requires war. We find this hard to accept largely because of an arrogant form of ethnocentrism that makes us believe that everyone in the world wants to be a middle-class American. We assume that everyone wants freedom, democracy, peace, and dialogue, that everyone is willing to negotiate and compromise, and that everyone believes in religious freedom. We are in many ways reliving the days of Kipling’s “White Man’s Burden” and find it almost incomprehensible that there are millions of people in the world who, if given a free election, would vote for a totalitarian theocratic regime.

Yet both history and current events tell us that this is exactly what we are facing. In Islamic cosmology, all the Earth is divided into two regions, the House of Islam and the House of War. The House of Islam includes all lands ruled by sharia, or Islamic law; the House of War includes those lands yet to be subdued.<sup>42</sup>

The primary textual source of authority in Islam is the Koran, the revealed messages from Allah to Mohammed. Additional authority is derived from various Hadiths, or stories written about Mohammed and the founding of Islam by his immediate followers. Mohammed’s life is of particular interest to Muslims because he is viewed as the perfect man, and all Muslims are encouraged to follow his example. Clerics in Islam are rigorously trained in Koranic literature and interpretations and are authorized to issue *fatwas*, or judgments, about the meanings of various passages. An examination of the Koran and Hadiths, the life of Mohammed, and the edicts of Islamic clerics both past and present reveals the centrality of war and jihad to Islam.

The Koran was “revealed” to Mohammed by Allah over a period of years and

*jihadist propaganda is designed to convince Westerners that jihad has nothing to do with war*

contains numerous contradictions. For example, parts of the Koran instruct Muslims to honor Jews and Christians as “People of

the Book,” and in fact Muslims were initially required to pray facing Jerusalem in honor of their alleged shared heritage. During the years that these passages were written, Mohammed was attempting to convert three tribes of Medina Jews to Islam. When the tribes refused to follow him, Mohammed forced two of them into exile and ordered the massacre of the third. Passages in the Koran written during this period are markedly different from the earlier ones: “Fight those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day, who do not forbid that which Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor follow the Religion of Truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgement of superiority and they are in a state of subjection” (9:29).

How do Muslims reconcile such obvious contradictions? They do so through the concept of *abrogation*. Allah’s plan for Mohammed and humanity was revealed gradually, in steps, so anything that contradicts an earlier message was sent to replace that earlier message. When two passages differ, the latter is to be obeyed (2:106).

How should a Muslim treat non-Muslims? “O Prophet, fight hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them. And their abode is hell, and evil is their destination” (9:73).

“Muhammad is God’s Apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another” (48:29).

“And fight them until there is no more disbelief, and the worship will all be for Allah alone” (8:39). “When the Sacred Months have passed, then kill the unbelievers wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush” (9:5). “Let not the believers take the disbelievers for friends rather than believers. And whoever does this has no connection with Allah” (3:28).

What about a Muslim’s fellow monotheists, Christians and Jews? At first they were treated well, but when they did not convert to Islam en masse Mohammad’s opinion of them severely changed: “Abasement will be their lot wherever they are found, except under a covenant with Allah and a covenant with men, and they shall incur the wrath of Allah, and humiliation will be made to cling to them. This is because they disbelieved in the messages of Allah” (3:112). “Hast thou not seen those to whom a portion of the Book was given? . . . Those are they whom Allah has cursed” (5:51–52). And yet one more: “They desire that you should disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so that you might be [all] alike; therefore take not from among them friends until they fly their homes in Allah’s way; but if they turn back, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take not from among them a friend or a helper” (4:89).

The Hadiths are even clearer: “Allah’s Messenger said, ‘You will fight with the Jews till some of them will hide behind stones. The stones will (betray them) saying, O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him’” (*Hadith Sahih Bukhari* 4:52:176).

When Muslims are not talking to non-Muslims, though, what do Muslim scholars and their followers say to each other? The Al-Azhar University is Islam’s highest seat of learning. One of its graduates, Yusuf Qaradawi, has become one of the most influential Sunni clerics today. According to Qaradawi, “Islam will return to Europe as a conqueror and a victor after being expelled from it twice,” and Islam should recapture its “former Islamic colonies in Spain, southern Italy, Sicily, the Balkans, and the Mediterranean Islands.”<sup>43</sup> A leading Muslim cleric in England, Abu Hamza, told his followers that “We ask Muslims to bleed the enemies of

Allah anywhere by any means. You can’t do it by a nuclear weapon, you have to do it by kitchen knife, no other solution. You can’t do it by chemical weapons, you have to do it by poison,” and that “every court is a target.”<sup>44</sup>

At the 2006 pilgrimage to Mount Arafat in Saudi Arabia, the grand mufti Sheik Abdul-Aziz al-Sheik told the pilgrims from all over the world that “there is a war against our creed, against our culture under the pretext of fighting terrorism. We should stand firm and united in protecting our religion. . . . Islam’s

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*Allah’s plan for humanity was revealed in steps, so anything that contradicts an earlier message was sent to replace that earlier message*

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enemies want to empty our religion from its contents and its meaning. But the soldiers of Allah will be victorious!”<sup>45</sup> What about clerics’ thoughts on killing civilians? Dr. Hani al-Siba’I, the director of the Al-Magreze Center for Historical Studies, argues that “the term ‘civilians’ does not exist in Islamic religious law. There is no such term as ‘civilians’ in the modern Western sense. People are either of Dar al-Harb (House of War) or not.”<sup>46</sup>

*Omnipresence of Islam.* The story of Islam is a tale of war, from the first days of Mohammed through expansion across North Africa, the subcontinent, and even into Europe from both east and west. Islamic military expansion is not simply an historic tale, however, but continues today on every populated continent and in every nation with a substantial Muslim population.

Less than a year after Mohammed’s death, his successor Abu Bakr began military expansion: “At the battle of al-Aqraba the Muslims defeated a rival tribal confederation and extended their power over eastern Arabia.”<sup>47</sup> Shortly thereafter, Muslim armies burst forth onto the world scene. Within 20 years they had conquered Persia and most of North Africa and threatened the Byzantines.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the false but generally accepted assertion that the Crusades were Europe’s first conflict with Islam, the reality is that in 714 Muslim armies invaded, conquering most of Spain by the 730s and pushing into the Frankish Kingdom until their defeat at the Battle of Tours in 732.<sup>49</sup> In the east, Muslim armies captured Afghanistan, the southern half of the Caspian Sea, and the eastern side of the Aral Sea.

By the latter half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim rule had extended well into India in the east and south down the coast of east Africa.<sup>50</sup> In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim armies took control of parts of China, captured territory from the Byzantines, and extended their control south and west over most of the Saharan tribes in Africa and north into Bulgaria.<sup>51</sup>

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim armies finally took Constantinople and established the Ottoman Empire, capturing what would become Bosnia and Serbia in the process.<sup>52</sup>

The invasion of Europe from the east was stopped by force “at the gates of Vienna.”

But what about today? Have the days of Muslim military conquest ended? Certainly, the days of huge Islamic armies spilling out

of Arabia are over, but only because Muslim societies lack the cultural, technological, and industrial sophistication to equip such armies. Muslim militancy continues, however, in ever-evolving forms. Examples of 4GW are found everywhere Muslims live in proximity to non-Muslims. There is no need to examine events in the Middle East or Kashmir to see examples of the global jihad.

For example, jihad is waged on many 4GW fronts in Canada. Canadian and British police recently arrested Mohammad Momin Khawaja, a Canadian citizen of Pakistani heritage, for training Muslims in bomb-building, money laundering, and smuggling so they could conduct terrorism operations in Britain.<sup>53</sup> In 1999, Ahmed Ressam, an Algerian who had resided in Canada for 5 years and served as an al Qaeda bombmaker and forger, was arrested while attempting to smuggle explosives into the United States to blow up Los Angeles International Airport on the eve of the “millennium.”<sup>54</sup>

In South America, the notorious tri-border area of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay has become a haven for Islamic militants, providing security, training, and access to weaponry.<sup>55</sup> The Israeli embassy and a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires were attacked by Muslims in 1992 and 1994.<sup>56</sup>

The British have their share of Islamic jihad as well. In July 2005, Muslim terrorists conducted a multiple bombing attack in London<sup>57</sup> and attempted another 2 weeks later.<sup>58</sup> The second attack failed only because the terrorists did not build effective detonators for their explosives.<sup>59</sup> London has also been recognized as a major center

for recruiting for al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Europe<sup>60</sup> and is home to *imams* who live on British welfare while preaching the violent overthrow of British society.<sup>61</sup>

The 2004 murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands exposed the surprising extent of jihad there. Van Gogh made a film about the oppression of women in Islam and was stabbed and shot to death on a public street by a Muslim.<sup>62</sup> Since then there have been hundreds of death threats and several attacks against newspaper editors, politicians, artists, and anyone willing to speak publicly against terrorism. Police have foiled terrorist attacks and uncovered multiple links between Dutch Muslims and al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah.<sup>63</sup>

Muslims in Sydney, Australia, have been joining the ranks of al Qaeda and traveling to Iraq to wage jihad.<sup>64</sup> In December 2005, Muslims incited riots, assaults, and massive vandalism near the beaches. A prominent Australian *imam*, Wassim Doureihri, is on record stating that he is “a Muslim first and an Australian second” and that the goal of his organization is to establish a worldwide Caliphate.<sup>65</sup> Australian Muslims have attempted to attack

a nuclear power plant<sup>66</sup> and assassinate the Australian prime minister.<sup>67</sup>

The bombing of a nightclub in Bali in 2002 brought the jihad of Abu Bakar Bashir and his Jemaah Islamiyah to the world’s attention. Jemaah Islamiyah, however, is but one of several jihadist organizations operating in Indonesia; others include the Front Pembela Islam (or Defenders of Islam) and the Laskar Jihad (Holy Warriors) Islamic militia.<sup>68</sup> Most of Southeast Asia, in fact, has become a battleground between Muslims and non-Muslims.<sup>69</sup>

Russia, too, has had ongoing conflict with Muslim jihadists. In Moscow, Muslim terrorists took more than 800 theatergoers hostage in a standoff that eventually left 150 dead.<sup>70</sup> In Beslan, Muslims captured a school and wired it with explosives, eventually killing almost 350, including 186 children.<sup>71</sup>

In Africa, Muslims are slaughtering Animists by the thousands in Darfur,<sup>72</sup> Sudan provided Osama bin Laden a safe haven for years,<sup>73</sup> and Somalia has been submerged in anarchy because of infighting between jihadist militias and Muslim warlords.<sup>74</sup>

Jihad is thus a worldwide phenomenon, striking on every continent except Antarctica and in every nation with a substantial Muslim

population. Muslim jihadists are killing non-Muslims and even Muslims of differing sects everywhere they are capable of launching attacks. Even China has experienced over 250 Islamic terror attacks since the mid-1980s.<sup>75</sup>

*Concatenation of Islamist Organizations.* Perhaps the biggest mistake of most analysts when examining jihadists is to focus on individual organizations such as al Qaeda, Islamic Jihad, Hamas, or Hezbollah—thus missing the larger movement from which the groups spring. While these are separate and distinct organizations, their leaders frequently cooperate and their rank-and-file often drift from group to group as opportunities arise. The concatenation of the organizations within the jihadist movement can be observed in the intricate, transnational networks that demonstrate the pan-Islamic and global nature of jihad.

For example, one of CAIR’s senior employees, Ismail Royer, pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting the Kashmir terrorist group Lashkar e-Taiba, helping Muslims attend a terrorist training facility in Pakistan, and participating in the so-called Virginian jihad group. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison. His attorney, Stanley Cohen,

French police rush past burning truck during riot by young Muslims near Paris

AP/Wide World Photo (B.K. Bangash)



Supporter of radical Muslim groups arrested in Pakistan

also represents Hamas. CAIR's director of community relations, Bassem Khafagi, was arrested on terrorism financing charges, pleaded guilty to visa and bank fraud, and was deported to Egypt. A business partner of Khafagi's, Rafil Dhafir, was convicted in 2005 of illegally sending money to support the Iraqi insurgency.<sup>76</sup> A cofounder of CAIR's Texas chapter, Ghassan Elashi, was also on the board of directors of the Holy Land Foundation, a false charity and front for Hamas. He was convicted of making false statements on export declarations, dealing in the property of a terrorist organization, conspiracy, and money laundering.<sup>77</sup>

Such intricate networks can be seen in other areas as well. For example, al Qaeda-linked organizations are operating in the United States, the Philippines,<sup>78</sup> Spain, Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia,<sup>79</sup> Egypt, Uzbekistan, India, Algeria, Jordan, Tunisia,<sup>80</sup> and Gaza.<sup>81</sup> Everywhere one examines a "militant" Islamist group, one finds links to others, which are linked with still others. Some organizations have become so interconnected that they are almost indistinguishable.

To fight today's international terrorism, we must fight jihad. To fight jihad, we must understand Islam, and to understand Islam, we must first put away our own ethnocentric view of religion and values and try to comprehend a culture in which women bear and raise children just so they can become suicide bombers and kill Jews.<sup>82</sup> We must also recognize that Islamist terrorism is more accurately understood as the product of the history of Islam than as the product of the history of terrorism.

As the new century begins, Islam's war against the West continues. This conflict, a fourth-generation form of war, is different from all others in the American experience. Somewhere in the world today, Muslims are conducting each and every form of 4GW. In doing so they are not falling prey to "hijackers" of Islam or a small minority of extremists; they are obeying the central tenets of their religion as laid down in the Koran and the Hadiths and practiced by Mohammed himself. They are continuing a tradition of nearly 14 centuries and are doing so on every populated continent on Earth. The orthodox wage jihad, and it is the small minority who seek, at great personal risk, to reform and modernize their religion and their cultures.

The carnage caused by suicide bombers should not distract counterterrorism professionals and policymakers from the entire movement. America is engaged in a war against an enemy with no recognizable government or territory, a war initiated centuries ago, and a war that has taken on new forms and new fronts as the evolution of warfare continues. **JFQ**

### *Islam's war against the West continues, a fourth-generation form of war different from all others in the American experience*

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Fathali M. Moghaddam and Anthony J. Marsella, *Understanding Terrorism: Psychosocial Roots, Consequences, and Interventions* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2004), 4–5; Michael R. Ronczkowski, *Terrorism and Organized Hate Crime: Intelligence Gathering, Analysis, and Investigations* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2004), 18–21; and Jonathon R. White, *Terrorism and Homeland Security*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2006), 3–8.
- <sup>2</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 43.
- <sup>3</sup> "What Is Terrorism?" available at <www.terrorism-research.com/>.
- <sup>4</sup> Reuven Paz, "Is There an 'Islamic Terrorism'?" (Herzlia, Israel: Institute for Counter-Terrorism, 1998), available at <http://radiobergen.org/terrorism/paz\_1.html>.

<sup>5</sup> David C. Rapoport, "The Fourth Wave: September 11 in the History of Terrorism," *Current History* 100, no. 650 (December 2001), 419–424.

<sup>6</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Herndon, VA: Brassey's, 1990), 25.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>8</sup> Hoffman, 41.

<sup>9</sup> Martha Crenshaw, ed., *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1983).

<sup>10</sup> O'Neill, 13.

<sup>11</sup> "Asymmetric Warfare," available at <www.answers.com/topic/asymmetric-warfare>.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas X. Hammes, *Insurgency: Modern Warfare Evolves into a Fourth Generation*, Strategic Forum No. 214 (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, January 2005), 1.

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