The Debate over "New" vs. "Old" Terrorism*

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Since 9/11, many policy makers, journalists, consultants, and scholars have

become convinced that the world confronts a "new" terrorism unlike the terrorism of the

past.[1] Thus the government and policy elites have been blamed for not recognizing the

danger of the "new" terrorism in the 1990s and therefore failing to prevent the disaster of

9/11.[2] Knowledge of the "old" or traditional terrorism is sometimes considered irrelevant

at best, and obsolete and anachronistic, even harmful, at worst. Some of those who argue

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[1] Examples include Bruce Hoffman, Inside Terrorism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), although Hoffman is sometimes ambivalent; Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam's War Against America (New York Random House, 2003); Walter Laqueur, The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Ian O. Lesser, et al., Countering the New Terrorism (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1999). Ambassador L. Paul Bremer contributed "A New Strategy for the New Face of Terrorism" to a special issue of The National Interest (Thanksgiving 2001), pp. 23-30. A recent post 9/11 overview is Matthew J. Morgan, "The Origins of the New Terrorism," Parameters (the journal of the U.S. Army War College), 34, 1 (Spring 2004), pp. 29-43. However, not all proponents of this point of view are American. See the text of a lecture by (Professor Lord) Anthony Giddens, delivered at the London School of Economics November 10, 2004, "The Future of World Society: The New Terrorism" available at Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO). Farhad Khosrokhavar also refers to "new" terrorism in Les Nouveaux Martyrs d'Allah (Paris: Flammarion, 2003).

[2] See, for example, Simon and Benjamin, p. 381. See also the 9/11 Commission report (Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States), Chapter 2, "The Foundation of the New Terrorism."

for the appearance of a "new" terrorism think that the old paradigms should be discarded

entirely and replaced with a new understanding.[3]   Other analysts, primarily from the

academic community, have challenged this interpretation.[4] This paper examines the

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[3] See Hoffman, p. 196, p. 205; Simon and Benjamin, p. 221 and p. 384; Lesser, p. 2; and Laqueur, p. 7. Hoffman concluded that "The growth of religious terrorism and its emergence in recent years as a driving force behind the increasing lethality of international terrorism shatters some of our most basic assumptions about terrorists and the violence they commit. It also raises serious questions about the continued relevance of much of the conventional wisdom on terrorism particularly as it pertains to potential future terrorist use of WMD" (pp. 204-205). He argued that assumptions that terrorism might be restrained might still apply to most secular terrorists, they appear to be dangerously anachronistic with respect to religious terrorists (p. 205). In 2000, however, in responding to Simon and Benjamin, Hoffman adjusted his views to suggest that the idea of a "profound and potentially catastrophic change in the nature of terrorism today" is "by no means as certain or even convincing as it is often portrayed. . . " ("America and the New Terrorism: An Exchange," Survival 42, 2 [Summer 2000], p. 162. He warned against threat exaggeration since however fanatical or irrational the new terrorists might seem, they remained operationally conservative, and that the era of new terrorism had not in fact materialized. Simon and Benjamin in turn responded that they were "intrigued by Hoffman's heavy reliance on arguments based on historical inference at a time of dramatic change in the ideology of important terrorist groups and rapid technological advances. To be sure, history should be consulted, but it is by no means a foolproof predictor" (p. 171).

[4] For example, David Tucker, "What is New about the New Terrorism and How Dangerous is It?" Terrorism and Political Violence 14, 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 1-14, Thomas Copeland, "Is the 'New Terrorism' Really New?: An Analysis of the New Paradigm for Terrorism," The Journal of Conflict Studies 21, 2 (Winter 2001), pp. 7-27, Isabelle Duyvesteyn, "How New is the New Terrorism? Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 27, 5 (2004), pp. 439-454, Doron Zimmerman, The Transformation Of Terrorism (Zurich: Andreas Wenger, 2003), Rik Coolsaet, Al-Qaeda: The Myth (Gent: Academia Press, 2005), and Jonny Burnett and Dave Whyte, "Embedded Expertise and the New Terrorism," Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media 1, 4 (2005), pp. 1-18. After the July 2005 bombings in London, Professor Richard Aldrich of the University of Nottingham criticized the idea in an editorial, "The new terrorism," in The Independent, July 10, 2005. Also see Olivier Roy, Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), especially pp. 41-54, "Is Jihad closer to Marx than to the Koran?" and Frederick W. Kagan, "The New Bolsheviks: Understanding Al Qaeda," a National Security Outlook report from the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, November, 2005. In addition, Audrey Kurth Cronin draws lessons from the past in "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," International Security 31, 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 7-48.

logical and empirical foundations of the "new terrorism" argument and concludes that it

is weak on both grounds.

If a new explanation of terrorism is necessary, what are the puzzles that the "old"

paradigm cannot solve? The problem that stands out in the discussions is the increasing

lethality of terrorism and the role of religion in motivating both terrorism and unusually

deadly terrorism, extending to the deliberate pursuit of appropriately catastrophic

weapons. The idea that the world confronted a "new" threat appears to have taken hold

after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, although Benjamin and Simon argue that

the phenomenon began in 1990, with the assassination of Meir Kahane in New York.[5]

The argument was well established, and had been criticized in turn, by the time of the

9/11 attacks. The idea that there was a distinctively "religious" terrorism began to

develop with the growth of radical Islamic movements after the Iranian revolution,

particularly as a reaction to the use of suicide bombings in Lebanon, which began in the

early 1980s. The 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the discovery of subsequent

ambitious plots instigated by Ramzi Youcef (such as the so-called "bojinka" plot, which

involved blowing up airliners over the Pacific) caused alarm because of the prospect of

large numbers of civilian casualties, but also because of the apparent inchoate nature of

the source of terrorism. The fear that terrorism could cause mass casualties was

exacerbated by the prospect of terrorist groups' acquiring nuclear, chemical, biological,

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Both John Mueller Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate
National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them (New York: Free Press, 2006)
and Ian S. Lustick Trapped in the War on Terror (University of Pennsylvania Press,
2006) have argued that the United States has over-reacted to the threat.

[5]Simon and Benjamin, pp. 3-4. See Tom Morgenthau, "The New Terrorism,"
Newsweek, July 5, 1993, p. 18.

or radiological weapons, especially considering the insecurity that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union.[6] The new terrorism idea gained further momentum with the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway and the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh. Growing awareness of the extent of the Al Qaeda conspiracy caused more alarm, especially after Osama Bin Laden moved from the Sudan to Afghanistan and called for jihad against the United States in 1996.[7] The 1998 bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the attack on the USS Cole in the port of Yemen in 2000, and the discovery of the millennium plots strengthened the perception of a new threat. After the September 11th attacks, the anthrax letters in the United States further heightened fears of the use of unconventional weapons. Since 2003, the global spread of suicide bombings against civilian targets has contributed to the feeling that terrorism has changed fundamentally.

Nevertheless, it is important to examine systematically the assumptions on which the appeal for a new paradigm is based and to question both their logic and empirical foundation before accepting them as self-evident.   Accounts of a "new" terrorism have not always been grounded in sufficient knowledge of history or understanding of contemporary terrorism. The point is not that there has been no change in terrorism over the past century but that the changes that have occurred need to be precisely delineated.

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[6] See Jessica Stern, <u>The Ultimate Terrorists</u> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

[7] See the review essay by Gideon Rose, "It Could Happen Here: Facing the New Terrorism," <u>Foreign Affairs</u> (March-April, 1999). Accessed online. Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry in <u>Preventive Defense: A New Security Strategy for America</u> (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999) warned of "catastrophic terrorism," defined as acts of an order of magnitude more severe than "ordinary" terrorism and unprecedented outside of warfare (p. 150).

An assessment of change can be completed only by careful fact-based comparisons. What is needed in the argument for a "new" terrorism is careful specification of the concept of a "new" terrorism and of the distinction between "new" and "old." What are the specific definitional attributes of the "new" terrorism? How are they different from those of the "old"? Second, a satisfactory theoretical framework needs to clarify which groups or practices belong in which category and explain how these cases satisfy the requirements of the definition.

My contention is that the departure from the past is not as pronounced as new terrorism proponents think. Today's terrorism is not a fundamentally or qualitatively "new" phenomenon but grounded in an evolving historical context.[8] Much of what we see now is familiar, and the differences are of degree rather than kind. Contemporary terrorism shares many of the characteristics of past terrorism, dating back at least to the late 19th century and the use of terrorism by groups of Russian revolutionaries, European and American anarchists, and Irish nationalists. For example, accounts of the "new" terrorism cite the common characteristic of religious doctrine as motivation.[9] However, although the "new" terrorists are all supposedly religious, not all religious groups are

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[8] For an argument about civil war that helped inspire this analysis, see Stathis N. Kalyvas, "'New' and 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" World Politics 54 (October 2001), 99-118.

[9] The classic work on religion and terrorism is Mark Juergensmeyer's Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). Although he argues that religion adds a distinctive dimension to terrorism, he does not assume that the association between religion and violence is new. Instead he refers to a reappearance at a particular historical juncture (p. 7). See also The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). It should be noted that Juergensmeyer's analysis is based on a broad cross-cultural comparison of religious movements in different societies.

deemed to be "new." The groups that are typically cited as examples are radical or

jihadist Islamists in general (e.g., Al-Qaeda, Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Jemaah al-Islamiya in

Indonesia, the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, and the Salafist Group for Preaching

and Combat in Algeria, now affiliated with Al-Qaeda), the Christian Identity movement

and its offshoots in the United States (including Timothy McVeigh, although it is not

certain that he represented an organized group, and the attribution of a religious

motivation to his violence is problematic), Ramzi Youcef and his cohort, Aum Shinrikyo,

and the Jewish radical groups that plotted to blow up the Dome of the Rock and

assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin. Hamas, however, is not included. The

case of Hezbollah is ambiguous; it is included by some (e.g., Hoffman) but not others

(e.g., Simon and Benjamin).   Laqueur includes Hezbollah, the LTTE, and the Taliban

since he considers some nationalist groups to be in the "new terrorism" category.[10]

Jessica Stern includes far-right groups and millenarian cults.[11]

Clarification of the distinction between categories is hard to find in the "new

terrorism" literature. The National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism's

Terrorism Knowledge Base (TKB), which is based on events data collected by the Rand

Corporation since 1968, lists 130 groups in the category of religious terrorism.[12] Of these

130 cases, 124 are linked to descriptive group profiles, which indicate that only 54 of the

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[10] See Laqueur, p. 82.

[11] Stern, The Ultimate Terrorists, p. 8.

[12] The Institute was established as a memorial to the victims of the 1995 Oklahoma City
bombing. See its website, mipt.org. For the period before 1998 the database only
contains international incidents, not domestic. The classification of groups was done by
DFI International, a Washington consulting firm.

cases are labeled as exclusively religious. Almost all the others are simultaneously classified as national separatist groups, although reasons for classifications are not provided. Nevertheless, if it is the case, as Simon argues, that "the explicitly religious character of the 'new terrorism' poses a profound security challenge for the United States," are we to understand the statement to mean those groups that are only religious or those groups that are both religious and nationalist?[13] Which orientation will determine their actions? Why would Hamas be considered a nationalist group when it calls for the establishment of an Islamic state?

If "old" terrorism refers to secular groups or groups existing before 1990 and the end of the Cold War, we have over 400 examples, and more if we go back to the 19th century. Accounts of the new terrorism are typically not specific or comprehensive on this score. For example, Steven Simon lists only the Irish Republican Army, the Red Brigades in Italy, and the Palestine Liberation Organization as examples of "conventional" terrorist groups.[14] At another point, Simon and Benjamin associate the old terrorism with state sponsorship.[15]

There is a further problem. Even if a conceptual distinction between two types of terrorism can be established, it is not clear whether there is a chronological dimension. Should we assume that the "new" is replacing the "old"? When was the transition? If

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[13] Steven Simon, "The New Terrorism: Securing the Nation Against a Messianic Foe," The Brookings Review (Winter 2003), Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 18. It is important to look closely at the Rand data, since it is the main source of the argument that religiously motivated terrorism is (1) increasing and (2) more lethal and indiscriminate than other forms. See Hoffman, pp. 92-94.

[14] Simon (2003).

[15] In "America and the New Terrorism," Survival 42, 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 59-75.

not, how do we explain the persistence of the "old" as well as the emergence of the "new"? David Rapoport has dealt with these questions in analyzing the historical evolution of terrorism in terms of "waves," which in his terms are "cycles of activity in a given time period" characterized by a common international "energy" or ideology.[16] All waves feature nationalist movements that take on different forms according to the nature of the "wave," whether driven by anarchism, anti-colonialism, "New Left ideology," or now religion. He sees each wave ebbing as the new wave gathers strength. Although Rapoport does not espouse the idea that the religious wave is qualitatively different from preceding waves, he does see a process of replacement rather than coexistence. Although Simon and Benjamin are among the leading proponents of the "new terrorism" point of view, they have at times referred to the old paradigm being "joined by" rather than replaced by the new.[17] Laqueur also thinks that new and old coexist.[18]

The following discussion analyzes the propositions of the "new terrorism" school concerning the goals, methods, and organizational structure and resources of groups practicing terrorism. It attempts to clarify the debate and situate current terrorism in its appropriate historical context.

Goals

First, the _ends_ of the "new" terrorism are presumed to be both unlimited and nonnegotiable. These aims are also considered largely incomprehensible and amorphous.

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[16] "The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism," in Audrey Kurth Cronin and James M. Ludes, eds., <u>Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy</u> (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2004), p. 47.

[17] See "America and the New Terrorism," p. 59 and p. 66.

[18] For example, Laqueur, pp. 80-81.

From the perspective of most of the exponents of a "new" terrorism, the goals of "new"

terrorists are derived from religious doctrines that emphasize transformational and

apocalyptic beliefs, usually associated with Islam although they are assumed to be

present in all monotheistic religions. Millenarianism is a key belief. Walter Laqueur, for

example, characterizes the "new terrorists" as religious fanatics who suffer from delusion

and persecution mania.[19] As his views indicate, some confusion exists over levels of

analysis, since it is not clear whether it is individual motivation or group purpose that is

being described.

In the world of politics, the "new" terrorists are presumed to hate Western and

especially American values, culture, civilization, and existence. As Ambassador L. Paul

Bremer expressed it, it is not that they do not understand us: "They hate America

precisely because they *do* understand our society; they hate its freedoms, its commitment

to equal rights and universal suffrage, its material successes and its appeals. . . ."[20]

President Bush described the enemy thus: "we face an enemy which cannot stand

freedom. It's an enemy which has an ideology that does not believe in free speech, free

religion, free dissent, does not believe in women's rights, and they have a desire to

impose their ideology on much of the world."[21] Further, "we're not facing a set of

grievances that can be soothed and addressed. We're facing a radical ideology with

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[19] "Left, Right, and Beyond: The Changing Face of Terror," in <u>How Did This Happen?
Terrorism and the New War</u> edited by James F. Hoge, Jr., and Gideon Rose (New York:
Public Affairs Press, 2001), p. 80.

[20] Bremer, "A New Strategy," p. 24.

[21] White House, Office of the Press Secretary, January 11, 2006, "President Participates
in Discussion on the Global War on Terror," Kentucky International Convention Center,
Louisville, Kentucky.

inalterable objectives: to enslave whole nations and intimidate the world. No act of ours invited the rage of the killers -- and no concession, bribe, or act of appeasement would change or limit their plans for murder."[22] The new terrorism threat is compared to the existential threat of Communism during the Cold War, not past terrorism.[23] In terms of this analogy, it is described as totalitarian and compared to the fascism that led to World War II.

The goals of terrorism are inextricably linked to the means, according to the "new terrorism" argument. The new terrorists are fanatics unconstrained by any respect for human life. Violence is at the heart of their beliefs. There is some ambiguity about whether violence is "strategic," since Simon and Benjamin argue that for the new actors terrorism is used strategically and not tactically, by which they mean killing is an end in itself.[24] If destruction is an end in itself rather than the means to an end, then it is not strategic but expressive. Nevertheless, the assumption of the "new terrorism" school of thought is that rather than choosing among alternative ways of achieving political ends, the new terrorists seek primarily to kill. Lethality is their aim rather than their means. As Benjamin and Simon explained in an editorial in the New York Times in early 2000, "The terrorists allied with Mr. bin Laden do not want a place at the table: they want to shatter the table. They are not constrained by secular political concerns. Their objective is not to influence, but to kill, and in large numbers—hence their declared interest in

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[22] Graduation Speech, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, June 1, 2002.

[23] October 6, 2005, address to the National Endowment for Democracy, "The Nature of the Enemy We Face and the Strategy for Victory."

[24] See for example Simon and Benjamin, p. 419.

acquiring chemical and even nuclear weapons. It is just this combination—religious

motivation and a desire to inflict catastrophic damage—that is new to terrorism."[25]

The goals of the "old" terrorism, by contrast, are thought to have been negotiable

and limited. Their ambitions were local, not global.[26] The aims of "old" terrorists were

understandable and tangible, typically related to issues of nationalism and territorial

autonomy. Deals could be struck. The state could bargain with the "old" terrorists.

Conflicts could be resolved. In effect, these were presumably sensible terrorists whose

objectives were realistic and pragmatic. As Laqueur describes the comparison, even the

most indiscriminate of the "old" terrorists, which he locates in the second half of the

twentieth century, hesitated at true mass murder because they feared a backlash and

because such actions were alien to their traditions. He continues, "They hated their

enemies, but they had not been totally blinded by their hate. For the radical religious

practitioners of the new terrorism, however, murder and destruction on an unprecedented

scale did not pose much of a problem."[27] Hoffman explains that "Whereas secular

terrorists regard violence either as a way of instigating the correction of a flaw in a

system that is basically good or as a means to foment the creation of a new system,

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[25] "The New Face of Terrorism," The New York Times, January 4, 2000. This indicates
perhaps that the new terrorists must be more than religious.

[26] Anthony Giddens, for example, explains that "old style terrorism is fundamentally local
therefore because its ambitions are local" and that violence thus tends to be "relatively
limited." See his LSE lecture, "The Future of World Society: the new terrorism." Cited
above.

[27] Laqueur, "Left, Right, and Beyond," p. 74.

religious terrorists see themselves not as components of a system worth preserving but as 'outsiders,' seeking fundamental changes in the existing system."[28]

Is this an accurate depiction of the old terrorism? Unobtainable ends and flamboyantly bloodthirsty rhetoric are not unique to religion or to the contemporary political environment. The European anarchist movement of the late nineteenth century (of which the proponents of terrorism were a fringe) sought to abolish all government as well as capitalist society. Sendero Luminoso wished to establish a Maoist regime in Peru. Its leader, Abimael Guzman, launched the war in 1980 with a speech titled "We are the Initiators," which asserts that "we begin the strategic offensive for world revolution, the next 50 years will see imperialism's dominion swept away along with all exploiters. . . . The people's war will grow every day until the old order is pulled down, the world is entering a new era." The speech continues, "The people rear up, arm themselves, and rise in revolution to put the noose around the neck of imperialism and the reactionaries, seizing them by the throat and garroting them. They are strangled, necessarily. The flesh of the reactionaries will rot away, converted into ragged threads, and this black filth will sink into the mud; that which remains will be burned and the ashes scattered by the earth's winds so that only the sinister memory will remain of that which will never return, because it neither can nor should return."[29] In the 1970s, revolutionary organizations in Germany (the Red Army faction) and Italy (the Red Brigades), with little to no popular support, thought that they could overthrow well-established liberal democracies, bring

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[28] Hoffman, p. 95. [Note: this passage is also in the revised edition of the book, p. 89.]

[29] Quoted in Gustavo Gorriti, The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 34-35.

down NATO, and deal a death blow to imperialism.[30] Separatist organizations are not immune from overreaching. ETA sought to establish a Basque state that would include regions of both France and Spain. It was not particularly reasonable of Palestinian groups such as the Abu Nidal Organization or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or Libya, to believe that they could destroy the state of Israel or bring about revolution in the Arab world. Patrick Seale, in a biography of Abu Nidal, describes his terrorism as "fitful and purposeless," "incoherent, incompetent, and invariably counterproductive to Palestinian interests." There was no "strategic vision:" "His claim that he wanted to prevent a compromise between the PLO and Israel so as to recover Palestine was not a credible objective. The vast imbalance of strength between Israel and its opponents made such pursuit suicidal. By degrading the Palestinian liberation struggle to mere criminal violence, Abu Nidal offered Israel the pretext for refusing to negotiate and to giving the Palestinians nothing but the sword."[31]

Do the "new terrorism" proponents' assumptions about objectives describe the new terrorism? Are such groups led by apocalyptic visionaries with no appreciation of reality? Groups claiming to act in the name of religious doctrine may be more extreme in their rhetoric than in their preferences (although analysis of their rhetoric is certainly worthwhile). They have often shown themselves to be astute political strategists, using terrorism successfully to compel the withdrawal of foreign military forces or to disrupt peace processes. Hezbollah is an excellent example, having transformed itself into a

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[30] See the communiqués reproduced in Europe's Red Terrorists: The Fighting Communist Organizations, compiled and annotated by Yonah Alexander and Dennis Pluchinsky (London: Frank Cass, 1992).

[31] Abu Nidal: A Gun for Hire (New York: Random House, 1992), p. 231.

powerful political party as well as a resistance organization. Some regional experts have interpreted Al Qaeda's activities in pragmatic terms.[32] Bin Ladin's stated goal of expelling American military forces from Muslim territories is quite specific. He cites the encouraging historical precedents of Vietnam, Somalia, and Lebanon, as well as the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.[33] His interpretations may not be accurate, but they are not incomprehensible. Many other examples of pragmatism and strategic thinking can be found in internal Al Qaeda documents captured by American forces.[34] Just as secular nationalist groups such as ETA and even the IRA took on a Marxist-Leninist veneer when it was ideologically fashionable to do so, nationalistic or revolutionary groups today may take on an Islamist cast. The Moro National Liberation Front became the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and secular nationalist Fatah produced the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade as a rival to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

As noted above, whether these extreme motivations are individual or collective is not clear. For example, Walter Laqueur's account focuses more on the motivations or "mind-sets" of the individual than the objectives of the group. He says, for example, that

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[32] See for example Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of Al Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in Middle Eastern Politics," Political Science Quarterly 117, 2 (Summer 2002), pp. 177-90. See also Quintan Wiktorowicz and John Kaltner, "Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda's Justification for September 11," Middle East Policy X, 2 (Summer 2003), pp. 76-92. They analyze debates over the use of violence within the Salafi movement.

[33] See Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama Bin Laden, edited and introduced by Bruce Lawrence (London: Verso, 2005). The demand that the United States withdraw from all Muslim lands is constantly reiterated.

[34] Translations of a number of these documents can be found on the website of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point: http://www.ctc.usma.edu. See in particular "The Management of Savagery" by Abu Bakr Naji, translated by William McCants (2006).

the new terrorists, whose motivations include rage, aggression, sadism, paranoia as well as fanaticism, can be found on the fringes of any extremist movement.[35] At other times he is contradictory; he seems to imply that the motive for terrorism, fanaticism, has not changed but that the availability of weapons has. At yet other times he suggests that religious fanaticism is different. The "new breed" of terrorist is said to enjoy killing.[36]

Marc Sageman, while asserting that the world faces a new type of terrorism driven by networks of fanatics, actually describes the jihadists about whom he was able to acquire biographical information in terms that do not much differ from descriptions of secular revolutionary terrorists.[37] He concludes that "Members of the global Salafi jihad were generally middle-class, educated young men from caring and religious families, who grew up with strong positive values of religion, spirituality, and concern for their communities."[38] Like the groups in the West in the 1970s and 1980s, they did not come from poor backgrounds. Their education was largely modern.   They exhibited no signs of psychopathology. As is the case with the "old" terrorism, the group mattered more than the individual: "Social bonds are the critical element in this process [of joining the jihad] and precede ideological commitment."[39] They were not transformed into terrorists out of hatred for the United States.

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[35] Laqueur, p. 281.

[36] Ibid., p. 231.

[37] Understanding Terror Networks (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

[38] Sageman, p. 96.

[39] Ibid., p. 135. On the importance of the group in pre-jihadist terrorism, see Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Political Terrorism," in Political Psychology:

A finding that remains constant over time is that while some members of radical organizations are motivated by sincere beliefs in the cause, others are less committed to doctrine. Individual militants may be manipulated by their leaders. Undoubtedly all members of the groups designated as "new terrorists" are not religious "fanatics." Within Al Qaeda, the concerns of militants were often mundane and prosaic, such as salary disputes.[40]

As Stephen Holmes observes with regard to the 9/11 attacks, "Many of the key actors in the 9/11 drama, admittedly, articulate their grievances using archaic religious language. But the very fact that the code involved is ancient while the behaviour we want to explain is recent suggests the inadequacy of causal theories that overemphasize the religious element."[41] Holmes argues instead for a political explanation. He notes that Bin Laden's public statements stress secular rationales for the 9/11 attacks and that historical circumstances rather than religion led Al Qaeda to target the United States. Because the governments of Egypt and Saudi Arabia could not be overthrown by force,

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Contemporary Problems and Issues, pp. 379-413, edited by Margaret G. Hermann (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986) and "Decisions to Use Terrorism: Psychological Constraints on Instrumental Reasoning," in Social Movements and Violence: Participation in Underground Organizations, edited by Donatella della Porta. International Social Movement Research, Volume 4, pp. 29-42. (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc., 1992).

[40] See Alan Cullison, "Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive: A Fortuitous Discovery Reveals Budget Squabbles, Baby Pictures, Office Rivalries—and the Path to 9-11," The Atlantic Monthly (September 2004), pp. 55-70.

[41] "Al-Qaeda, September 11, 2001," in Diego Gambetta, ed., Making Sense of Suicide Missions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 134-35. He presents a plausible argument that non-religious motivations were dominant. Steven Simon and Jonathan Stevenson admit this heterogeneity in "Thinking Outside the Tank," The National Interest 78 (Winter 2004-2005), pp. 90-98.

Al Qaeda turned to the "far enemy." He concludes: "What hit the United States on 11 September was not religion, therefore. Instead, the 9/11 terrorists represented the *pooled insurgencies* of the Arab Middle East."[42]

Journalist Terry McDermott also investigated the backgrounds of the 9/11 hijackers.[43] He concluded that these men were ordinary. The Hamburg cell that provided the pilots was bound together by affiliation with the Al Quds mosque. The group had formed well before it was recruited to the Al Qaeda plot. All but one of the other hijackers were from Saudi Arabia. As McDermott points out, we know less about them because "Saudi Arabia has been parsimonious with the information in its hands, which is considerable, and has made the discovery of information by others difficult."[44] However, he notes that they were from an isolated province that was a stronghold of conservative religious belief. They were not poor and were relatively well educated. Jobs, however, were lacking, and the tradition of leaving home to participate in jihad abroad had been well established since the 1980s and the appeal to fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. From a practical standpoint, it was easier for Saudi citizens to get American visas than it was for other nationalities from which hijackers might have been recruited.

Journalists Peter Bergen and Swati Pandey analyzed the 79 individuals responsible for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the 9/11 attacks, the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings,

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[42] Holmes, p. 168.

[43] Terry McDermott, <u>Perfect Soldiers</u> (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

[44] Ibid., p. 217.

and the 2005 London bombings. They confirmed that "History has taught that terrorism has been a largely bourgeois endeavor, from the Russian anarchists of the late nineteenth century to the German Marxists of the Bader-Meinhof gang of the 1970s to the apocalyptic Japanese terror cult Aum Shinrikyo of the 1990s. Islamist terrorists turn out to be no different."[45] The terrorists were neither poor nor under-educated. More than half of those studied had some university education. None had attended a madrassa, Islamic schools that American officials have often considered the hotbeds of Islamic extremism.

<p style="text-align:center">Methods</p>

The <u>means</u> of the "new" terrorism are also assumed to be radically different from the past. The premise is that because the ends of the new terrorism are unlimited, so, too, are the means that groups espousing these goals are willing and able, indeed eager, to use. The "new" terrorists are supposed to be dedicated to causing the largest possible number of casualties among their enemies. According to Walter Laqueur, "The new terrorism is different in character [from the old], aiming not a clearly defined political demands but at the destruction of society and the elimination of large sections of the population."[46] According to Steven Simon, "Religiously motivated terrorism, as Bruce Hoffman of the Rand Corporation first noted in 1997, is inextricably linked to pursuit of mass casualties."[47] Presumably for the "new" terrorists the means have become an end in

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[45] "The Madrassa Scapegoat," <u>The Washington Quarterly</u>, 29, 2 (Spring 2006), p. 122.

[46] Laqueur, p. 81.

[47] Simon, 2003, p. 18. Simon and Benjamin ("America and the New Terrorism: An Exchange," 2000) state that "A distinguishing characteristic of many religiously motivated terrorists. . . is their overriding interest in killing " (p. 171).

themselves, not a way of reaching an audience other than a deity. They are not concerned with public support. The "new" terrorists seek only to destroy, and their deaths will result only in the reaching of the millennium and a place in paradise, not political change in the here and now.

Thus the "new" terrorists are also thought to be significantly more inclined than traditional secular groups to use "weapons of mass destruction." Jessica Stern, for example, argues that the risk of terrorist use of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons against civilians is growing not only because of the increased availability of such weapons but because of changes in terrorist motivation: "A new breed of terrorists – including ad hoc groups motivated by religious conviction or revenge, violent right-wing extremists, and apocalyptic and millenarian cults – appears more likely than the terrorists of the past to commit acts of extreme violence."[48]

The "old" terrorism is considered to be much more restrained and specific in targeting. The traditional terrorist wanted people watching, not people dead, according to Brian Jenkins' now famous aphorism. Hoffman describes the old terrorists as selective and discriminating.[49] Benjamin and Simon say past terrorists used "carefully calibrated violence" because "they knew that excessive brutality would deny them the place they sought at the bargaining table."[50] These terrorists imposed restraints on their actions because they aimed to change the attitudes of audiences who could help them achieve

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[48] Jessica Stern, The Ultimate Terrorists (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 8.

[49] Hoffman, p. 197.

[50] In "The New Face of Terrorism," 2000.

their goals. Although capable of being more destructive, they chose not to be. Their

audiences and reference groups were tangible and present. They were limited by their

dependence on constituencies and by their political interests. Their pursuit of legitimacy,

in effect, restrained their behavior.

However, the "old" terrorists were not always discriminating in their choice of

targets. Levels of selectivity and restraint vary across groups and across time, but not

necessarily according to a religious-secular or past-present divide. A few examples show

that killing large numbers is not restricted to groups espousing religious doctrines,

although admittedly no single attack was near as deadly as 9/11.[51] The French anarchists

of the 1880s bombed restaurants frequented by the bourgeoisie in order to show the

working class who the true enemy was. "No bourgeois is innocent" was their slogan.

The history of anarchism in Spain was particularly violent. Martin Miller refers to a "will

to destroy" in the European anarchist movement.[52] Nationalist groups have also caused

mass casualties. In 1946, the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem by Zionist

extremists killed 91 and injured 45.[53] During the Algerian war, the FLN attacked

Europeans indiscriminately, leaving bombs in cafes, on beaches, in soccer stadiums, and

at bus stops in Algiers during the famous "Battle of Algiers." Their bombs often killed

Algerians as well as Europeans. (The FLN also considered bombing the Eiffel Tower, in

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[51] Also see the similar conclusions of Chris Quillen, "A Historical Analysis of Mass
Casualty Bombers," Studies in Conflict and Terrorism 25, 5 (September-October 2002),
pp. 279-302. The article provides a chronology.

[52] Martin A. Miller, "The Intellectual Origins of Modern Terrorism in Europe," in
Terrorism in Context, ed. Martha Crenshaw (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State
University Press, 1995). He also stresses the importance of rage as a motivation.

[53] J. Bowyer Bell, Terror Out of Zion (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 172.

a campaign to bring the war home to France. They did bomb oil refineries near Marseille.)

Would-be revolutionaries could also be extremely lethal. The Japanese Red Army's attack on the Tel Aviv airport in 1972 killed 24 and wounded 80 people, most Puerto Rican pilgrims. The secular regime of Colonel Qaddafi was responsible for the midair bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988, which left 270 dead.

Far right extremists have also been willing and able to cause mass casualties; for instance, 85 people were killed in the bombing of the Bologna railroad station in 1980.[54] As the Algerian war concluded, the OAS (Organisation de l'armée secrète) adopted a scorched earth policy of indiscriminate terrorism against Muslims. For example, on May 2, 1962, a car bomb on the Algiers docks killed 62 and wounded 110 among a crowd of Algerians waiting for day work.[55] It is also fair to say that Timothy McVeigh's actions should be placed in the category of rightwing extremism rather than religion.

The issue of possible resort to weapons of mass destruction is complicated. Aum Shinrikyo is the only group so far to have employed self-manufactured chemical weapons against a civilian population.[56] Terrorists have not used nuclear or radiological weapons

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[54] Note, however, that some authors who think that there is a "new" terrorism include the far right in that category, e.g., Stern.

[55] Bernard Droz and Evelyne Lever, Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie, 1954-1962 (Paris: Seuil, 1982), p. 337. See also Alexander Harrison, Challenging De Gaulle: The O.A.S. and the Counterrevolution in Algeria, 1954-1962 (New York: Praeger, 1989).

[56] Another possible example is the LTTE's use of chlorine gas in an attack on a Sri Lankan army base, but their use appears to have been circumstantial and opportunistic, not planned. See in general Jonathan B. Tucker, ed., Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000). According to this study, there have so far been only nine instances of what might be defined as chemical or biological terrorism, which included deliberate food poisonings. The anthrax mailings of 2001 could be added to the list. See also Richard A. Falkenrath, Robert D.

to any serious destructive effect despite official concern over the prospect since at least 1976.[57] While both Aum Shinrikyo and Al Qaeda demonstrated a commitment to acquiring nuclear materials and devices, neither was successful despite their extensive resources and, in Al Qaeda's case, state sanctuary.[58] However, Al Qaeda is known to have tested nerve gas in Afghanistan, and chlorine has been used opportunistically in Iraq, probably by Al Qaeda-linked groups. Al Qaeda also planned to use chemical weapons in an attack on New York subways in 2003.[59]

While the September 11 hijackings caused the highest number of casualties of any single terrorist attack in history, other Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda-related terrorism has (fortunately) caused fewer casualties (overall and per incident) and has not involved such innovative methods or sophisticated planning. The bombings in Bali in 2002 (202 killed), Madrid in 2004 (191 killed), and London in 2005 (52 killed) were tragically destructive, but not fundamentally dissimilar to past bombings by secular groups in

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Newman, and Bradley A. Thayer, America's Achilles' Heel: Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Terrorism and Covert Attack (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998) and Jessica Stern, The Ultimate Terrorists (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999). There are also reports that Al Qaeda tried to acquire chemical weapons.

[57] See U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, "Research Study: International and Transnational Terrorism: Diagnosis and Prognosis," April, 1976.

[58] Sara Daly, John Parachini, and William Rosenau, Aum Shinrikyo, Al Qaeda, and the Kinshasha Reactor: Implications of Three Case Studies for Combating Nuclear Terrorism (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 2005).

[59] See the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies report "Manual for Producing Chemical Weapon to be Used in [2003] New York Subway Plot Available on Al-Qaeda Websites Since Late 2005" by Sammy Salama, 2006. Ron Suskind describes the proposed use of the "mubtakkar device" in The One Percent Doctrine (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006).

crowded public venues.[60] Simultaneous explosions may be a hallmark of Al Qaeda, but

such coordination was also characteristic of Palestinian nationalist groups in the 1970s.

For example, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine hijacked three airliners to

Jordan simultaneously in 1970.

Evidence of strategic discrimination in targeting is found in the July 2005 letter

from Ayman al-Zawahiri, former head of Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Bin Ladin's second

in command in Al Qaeda, to the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of the Iraqi branch or

affiliate known as "Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia." The document is sharply critical of

indiscriminate terrorism against ordinary Shia in Iraq, especially attacks on mosques.

Zawahiri warns that sectarian terrorism will undermine the popular support that is

essential to seizing power in the Sunni areas of Iraq following an anticipated American

withdrawal. He cautions that any action that the masses do not understand or approve

must be avoided, and he notes numerous questions about the wisdom and rightness of

anti-Shia terrorism that were circulating among even Zarqawi's supporters.[61]

Looking further at the association between religion and lethality, it is instructive

to evaluate the twenty most lethal of the groups classified as religious in the MIPT

Terrorism Knowledge Base. Each was responsible for over 100 total fatalities through

December of 2005. However, only nine of the twenty were classified as *exclusively*

religious. They included Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda affiliates in Europe, the Armed Islamic

Group in Algeria, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Jemaah al-Islamiya in

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[60] Figures are from the BBC Online.

[61] Text accessed on the Office of the Director of National Intelligence website, where it
was posted in October 11,2005: http://www.dni.gov/letter_in_english.pdf.

Indonesia, al-Gama'a al-Islamiya in Egypt, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and, curiously, Ansar Allah, which is regarded as an offshoot of Lebanese Hizb'allah, an organization considered to have mixed motives. (Ansar Allah is thought to have used suicide bombings against Jewish and Israeli targets in Argentina in 1992 and 1994.) Ansar al-Sunnah in Iraq is considered purely religious, while other Iraqi groups are defined as national separatist as well. The other hybrid groups are (1) in Palestine, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, (2) three associated with the struggle in Chechnya, (3) three originating in the war in Iraq, (4) Lashkar-e-Taiba in Kashmir and Pakistan, (5) the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, (6) Hizb'allah, and (7) the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the Philippines. Thus purely religious groups killed a total of 6120 people, and hybrid or mixed groups killed 4657. The database does not explain the distinction between purely religious and hybrid groups. Most Africa specialists, for example, would not necessarily consider the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda to be primarily a religious group. In hybrid groups, it is hard to tell which motive drives behavior.

There are other problems with the claim that religion is associated with increased lethality.[62] The MIPT events database did not include domestic incidents until after 1998. Thus older groups that used extensive violence at home against local targets will be underweighted in the comparisons. For example, in 2003 the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission reported that between 1980 and 2000 Sendero Luminoso was

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[62] E.g., Hoffman: "The reasons why terrorist incidents perpetrated for religious motives result in so many more deaths maybe found in the radically different value systems, mechanisms of legitimization and justification, concepts of morality, and world-view embraced by the religious terrorist, compared with his secular counterpart" (p. 94). Hoffman's calculations are based on Rand data, which is the basis of the MIPT database.

responsible for 54% of the 69,280 total deaths in the conflict, thus over 37,000 people. [63]

Although one might not define all of Sendero's violence as terrorism, the victims

included in the tally were not from the security forces but from the civilian population.

By contrast, the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base credits Sendero Luminoso with only

133 fatalities and 267 injuries from 1968 to the present. This discrepancy is significant.

Furthermore, over time small group or individual access to destructive technologies as

well as their knowledge of target vulnerabilities (i.e., capability rather than motivation)

has increased. If most new groups are categorized as religious, the results will be biased

because a number of factors come together to produce increased deadliness in the

contemporary world. One cause of high numbers of civilian casualties, for example, is

the adoption of the tactic of suicide missions, which are practiced by both secular and

religious groups.[64] The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka are a prominent

illustration.

Organization and Resources

The organization of the new terrorism is also thought to be fundamentally

different from earlier structures of terrorist actors. The "new" terrorists are said to be

decentralized, with a "flat" networked apparatus rather than a hierarchical or cellular

structure.[65] Subunits are supposed to have substantial autonomy, if not complete

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[63] For the text of the report see:
http://www.cverdad.org.pe/ingles/ifinal/conclusiones.php.

[64] See Martha Crenshaw, "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay," Security Studies 6, 1 (Spring 2007), pp. 133–62.

[65] According to Ian Lesser, "This new terrorism is increasingly networked. . . . As a result, much existing counterterrorism experience may be losing its relevance as network

independence, and the scope is transnational (global reach). Much of the new terrorism is thought to be inspirational rather than directed from the top; it is diffuse rather than concentrated. The American government now says that the war on terrorism is against an ideology rather than an organized entity. Laqueur argues that the new terrorism uses smaller groups that, in his view, are more radical.[66] Hoffman adds that the new groups are likely to be composed of amateurs rather than professional terrorists who devote their lives and careers to the cause; they are likely also to be less well trained and to rely on information they collect themselves, primarily from the internet.[67] Simon and Benjamin add that the absence of state support is a key feature.[68]

By contrast, the "old" terrorist structure was considered to be centralized and top-down. As Hoffman described it, "In the past, terrorist groups were recognizable mostly as collections of individuals belonging to an organization with a well-defined command and control apparatus, who had been previously trained (in however rudimentary a fashion) in the techniques and tactics of terrorism, were engaged in conspiracy as a full-time avocation, living underground while constantly planning and plotting terrorist attacks, and who at times were under the direct control, or operated at the express behest,

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forms of organization replace the canonical terrorist hierarchies. . . ." In "Countering the New Terrorism: Implications for Strategy," p. 87, in Lesser et al., eds.

[66] Laqueur, p. 5.

[67] Hoffman, p. 197, p. 203.

[68] See "America and the New Terrorism," Survival 42, 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 59-75.

of a foreign government. . . ."[69] Hierarchies thus predominated. The classic cellular structure was paramount.

Although Al Qaeda, in the sense of Al Qaeda central directed by Osama Bin Laden and since 2001 located in Pakistan, is a transnational actor, can one assume that it is entirely different from the past, that it is necessarily a model for the future, or that secular groups might not organize themselves similarly? First, among "religious" groups, Al Qaeda is the only example of such a network or franchise/venture capital operation. Other "religious" groups are more traditional in form (Hezbollah, Hamas, or Egyptian Islamic Jihad). Aum Shinrikyo was extremely hierarchical; like Sendero Luminoso, it was dominated by a charismatic leader. Second, before the war in Afghanistan in 2001, Al Qaeda was largely a centralized organization with an elaborate structure. Its functioning depended on extensive face-to-face communication and consultation. Apparently some actions were ordered by the top leadership, but there was also some local autonomy. The importance of the shared experience, socialization, and training in Afghanistan and subsequent access to recruits from diasporas and from other conflict zones cannot be underestimated in the organizational development of Al Qaeda. Its subsequent decentralization may not have been a choice but an adaptation to the loss of sanctuary in Afghanistan, pressure from security services around the world, and the war in Iraq.

Furthermore, the organization of the "old" or "canonical" terrorism was not always as tight and hierarchical as it might now appear. Peter Merkl, for example, has argued that the apparently monolithic quality of the Red Army Faction in West Germany

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[69] Hoffman, p. 197.

was a myth.[70]   After the arrests of the top RAF leadership, subsequent groups were much

more amorphous and self-directed. The nineteenth century anarchists formed a

transnational conspiracy, linking activists in Russia, Germany, Switzerland, France,

Spain, Italy, and the United States. The essence of anarchism was antipathy to central

direction, and much terrorism was locally generated or inspirational. Well-publicized

trials of anarchists would invariably spark retaliation by sympathizers who were not

members of any organization. The secular Palestinian groups of the 1970s and 1980s

split, merged, resplit, and remerged. The relationship of Black September to Arafat and

Fatah was one of indirection and deniability. West German and Japanese groups

cooperated with Palestinians; in fact, the Japanese Red Army relocated to Lebanon after

being driven from Japan. In addition, some of the more hierarchical groups in the past

actually allowed significant local autonomy. The Italian Red Brigades were organized in

independent "columns" in different cities. The French Action Directe was actually two

groups, one limited to France and the other operating internationally and linked to groups

in Belgium.

<div align="center">The Appeal of the "New Terrorism" Idea</div>

Why is the idea of a fundamentally new terrorism attractive? One reason may be

that the conception of a "new" terrorism supports the case for major policy change -- a

justification for the global war on terrorism, the establishment of the category of "enemy

combatant," brutal interrogation methods, reliance on a strategy of military preemption,

and the use of tactics such as renditions, domestic surveillance activities, and other

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[70] See Peter Merkl, "West German Left-Wing Terrorism," in Terrorism in Context, ed.
Martha Crenshaw (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.)

homeland security measures that restrict civil liberties. Defining jihadist terrorism as

entirely new is a way of framing the threat so as to mobilize both public and elite support

for costly responses that have long-term and uncertain pay-offs. The shock of the

surprise attacks of September 11th was a turning point in the United States, especially for

officials such as Richard Clarke (and including Simon and Benjamin as former staff

members from the Clinton Administration National Security Council) who had long

warned that terrorism could be a major danger and who felt that they had been ignored.[71]

The effect of 9/11 may resemble the impact of the North Korean invasion of the South on

American policy makers, in cementing the ideas behind interpretations of the threat of

Communism and the militarization of containment.[72] It seemed and may still seem

impossible to consider terrorism a "first order threat" justifying military action unless it is

defined as unprecedented. Linking the idea of a "new" terrorism to the use of "weapons

of mass destruction" magnifies the danger even more.

Furthermore, the new terrorism model permits top-down processing of

information. If policy-makers can rely on a set of simple assumptions about terrorism,

they need not concern themselves with understanding a contradictory and confusing

reality. In the presence of incomplete and ambiguous information, policy-makers are

prone to rely on prior cognitive assumptions. Doing so saves them time, energy, and

stress. They rely on metaphors, narratives, and analogies that make sense of what might

otherwise be difficult to comprehend. For example, defining groups such as Hezbollah

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[71] Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror (New York: Free Press, 2004).

[72] Indeed Simon (2003) calls for a policy of containment, as the U.S. contained the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

and Hamas as "terrorist organizations" with whom the United States cannot negotiate saves policy makers from having to cope with the troublesome problem of how to deal successfully with hostile but democratically-elected nonstate actors.

For similar reasons, terrorism "experts," especially newcomers to the field, might find it convenient not to have to take the time to study the long and complicated history of the terrorist phenomenon.[73] If analysts and pundits can focus only on the "new" terrorism of the post Cold War world, then they can safely disregard the record of terrorism that occurred from the late nineteenth century to the 1990s. The narrowed scope of their research streamlines the task of analysis. Furthermore, if analysts can safely assume that religion is the cause of terrorism, they need not look for other more complex explanations that necessitate linking religion to other political, social, and economic factors. The appeal of radical Islam in immigrant communities in the West, for example, is a political and social question involving issues of cultural assimilation and economic integration. Processes of radicalization cannot be understood without examining background conditions and individual propensities in particular societies. There is no generic "new terrorist."

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

Rejecting our accumulated knowledge of terrorism by dismissing it as "obsolete" would be dangerous. A misdiagnosis of what the "new" actually entails could lead to

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[73] Burnett and Whyte (2005) go further to say that "It is certain that some elite groups will make a great deal of political and social capital out of this war on terror. It is equally certain that state interventions against the terrorists will continue to be supported by a manufactured conception of 'new terrorism' that is founded upon a highly questionable knowledge base" (p. 15). They are particularly critical of the role of the Rand Corporation.

mistakes of prediction and of policy as grave as those attributed to lack of recognition of the threat.   For example, the assumption that the sort of catastrophic terrorism that many defined as "new" would necessarily involve the use of "weapons of mass destruction" turned out to be mistaken. Similarly, before the September 11, 2001, attacks, many observers thought that hijackings were an outmoded tactic. They believed that terrorists had abandoned the method because governments had erected effective defense measures such as passenger screenings at airports. They did not imagine that the old terrorism tactic could be combined with suicide missions (which began in the 1980s in Lebanon) to produce such a cataclysmic effect.

Differences among groups and differences in patterns of terrorism over time do exist, but we need to look further for an explanation. Many of these shifts may be due to a changing environment, largely processes associated with what is termed globalization, in particular, such as advances in communications, access to weapons and explosives, and individual mobility. Differences can also be attributed to specific opportunity structures, such as Al Qaeda's emergence in protected spaces in Pakistan, the Sudan, and Afghanistan. The internet, for example, has proved an important resource for terrorists. It is a transnational means of communication, recruitment, indoctrination, instruction, propaganda, and fund-raising that largely escapes government control.[74] Jihadist websites, for example, have proliferated. Political and military conflicts provide further opportunities. The American invasion of Iraq and the insurgency it provoked, for example, have provided both a stimulus and a training ground for jihadi militants.

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[74] See Gabriel Weimann, Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006).

Furthermore, the development of terrorism exhibits evolutionary progression, as groups learn from their own experiences and those of others. Terrorism is highly contingent and reactive.

Thus analysis of what is new about terrorism needs to be based on systematic empirical research that compares a wide range of cases over extended time periods. Moreover, without knowing the contours of the past the shape of the present and future cannot be identified. Comparisons must take into account the historical context within which terrorism occurs. Otherwise we cannot understand adaptation and innovation in terrorist behavior.

A strictly "new terrorism" viewpoint is bound to overestimate the effect of religious beliefs as a cause of terrorism and as a cause of lethality. The distinction between religious and nationalist or secular revolutionary motivations is not clearly established or substantiated in fact. Few groups are classified as exclusively religious; most have mixed motives. The statistical data on which the association between religion and mass casualties is based are incomplete, excluding as they do domestic terrorism prior to the late 1990s.

In particular, analysts need to recognize that secular ideologies can also be fundamentalist, exclusive, and totalitarian and that secular groups, whether nationalist or revolutionary, can promote excessive killing. Sendero Luminoso (the Shining Path) in Peru in the 1980s is a case in point, and it has inspired groups as distant as the Maoist rebels in Nepal. According to Cynthia McClintock, Sendero Luminoso resembled the Khmer Rouge in ideology, strategy, and social base. Both emphasized political violence in the revolutionary process and systematically terrorized civilians. Only 17% of

Sendero's victims were military or police: "Between 1980 and 1992, Sendero murdered at least 8 ecclesiastics, 9 foreign development workers, 44 grassroots leaders, 203 businessmen, 244 teachers, 303 students, 424 workers, 502 political officials (primarily local officials such as mayors), 1,100 urban residents, and 2,196 peasants."[75] Like contemporary jihadists, the attitudes of both the Khmer Rouge and Sendero Luminoso were characterized by emotional rage, complete confidence in the rightness of their cause, and hatred for the corruption they saw around them. Sendero Luminoso was politically uncompromising, ideologically rigid, and internally authoritarian. It wished to seize power and eliminate both the government and political rivals. It did not seek a place at the bargaining table or calibrate its violence judiciously, as the "new terrorism" proponents would predict of a secular "old terrorist" organization.

The "mechanisms of moral disengagement" that Albert Bandura described over fifteen years ago operate for all worldviews.[76] We should not assume that only groups claiming religious sanction will be capable of mass killing or that they are uniformly composed of irrational fanatics who seek only to destroy. Nor should we assume that all religiously motivated groups are dedicated to killing the largest possible numbers. We might note, for example, that the Egyptian Islamic Group, in contrast to Islamic Jihad, has abandoned terrorism although the two groups shared many of the same religious beliefs.

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[75] Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), p. 68.

[76] "Mechanisms of moral disengagement," in Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Cambridge University Press, 1990).

In sum, then, a close look at the objectives, methods, and organizational structures of what is said to be "new" and what is said to be "old" terrorism reveals numerous similarities rather than firm differences.   It cannot really be said that there are two types of terrorism. The question should be reframed in broader terms, to ask why some groups cause large numbers of civilian casualties and others do not, rather than assuming that religious beliefs are the explanation for lethality.