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외교학석사 학위논문

**A Religious Rationality of Terrorism:  
From Weber to Al Qaeda**

테러리즘의 종교적 합리성에 관한 연구:  
베버에서 알카에다까지

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# A Religious Rationality of Terrorism: From Weber to Al Qaeda

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이 논문을 외교학 학위논문으로 제출함

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## **Abstract**

The rationality of terrorism has been a subject of academic investigation since the nineteenth century, in terms of both individual actors and organizations. Yet throughout these analyses, it is assumed that the rationality by which individuals and groups are being judged is that found in rational choice theory, termed instrumental rationality. While this type of rationality is the most common in the West, this does not mean that other cultures and societies follow the same rationality. Judging terrorist organizations – especially those that act on religious motivations – by this type of rationality has led many scholars to conclude that terrorists are either irrational or, at the very least, make poor decisions. Therefore, this paper investigates whether there are other types of rationality possible, and if so, if another type of rationality can better explain terrorism from an organizational perspective.

The paper focuses theoretically on the typology of rationality developed by Max Weber, in particular his ideas regarding substantive, or value-based, rationality. Substantive rationality is applied specifically to the field of terrorism, with the argument that while religiously-motivated terrorist organizations may not be rational in an instrumental, means-ends way, they can be rational in a value-based way. As such, though religious and secular terrorist groups have similar goals, the ways that they reach these goals can be different; however, both types of organization can be assessed as rational, potentially affecting the way that they are viewed and dealt with in the foreign policy community, especially in the West.

Furthermore, this paper in particular analyzes the difference in lethality of terrorist attacks based on group motivation, classified as religious or secular. Two case studies are investigated in depth – al Qaeda and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) – focusing on ideological pronouncements made on behalf of the organization by the leadership. This is followed by a statistical analysis that utilizes the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) and the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) database,

measuring the lethality of attacks based on a group's coded categorization as religious or secular. Various iterations were undertaken to support the validity of the hypothesis that religiously-motivated terrorist groups are more lethal in their attacks than groups motivated by more secular ideas. The paper concludes with the implications of this research for policymakers and counterterrorism strategies.

**Keywords:** Terrorism; Religion; Rationality; Al Qaeda; Max Weber; Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP); counterterrorism; ITERATE; GTD

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“So we call upon every rational American and Westerner to conduct a personal soul-search, and ask themselves several clear and honest questions.... Are the Muslims really terrorists, a crazy bunch, or are they honorable defenders of their religion, freedom, and sanctities? Why did the Muslims attack us in particular? Why didn't they attack the Swiss or Vietnamese, for instance?”

– Ayman al Zawahiri (2007 [2005], 188)

## **I. Introduction**

Scholars have long debated whether or not terrorists can be seen as rational – both individually and organizationally. As Brian Jenkins once famously extolled, “Terrorists want a lot of people watching and a lot of people listening and not a lot of people dead” (in Coll 2004, 138). Yet, among the many difficulties in explaining terrorism as an organizational strategy, one of the primary questions is why these organizations would kill, especially in the geographical area in which the terrorist organization is operating and thus should wish to gain public support. For example, evidence from Iraq shows that out of all the attacks perpetrated by al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic terrorist groups, Muslims were attacked 84.6% of the time and Iraqi nationals 58.3% of the time during the 1998-2005 period (Piazza 2009, 74). This does not seem instrumentally, or means-end, rational,<sup>1</sup> and many analysts – in the public sector, in academia, and in the government – have judged al Qaeda's actions to lack rationality, good judgment, or sense. However, as Crenshaw notes, “the concepts of rationality and irrationality commonly employed in social science are culture-bound” (Crenshaw 1985, 2). When looking at the motivations of al Qaeda in particular, and terrorists in general, analysts risk imposing Western notions of rationality and human psychology onto the events and actors, which does not help in understanding why terrorists are acting in certain ways (Smith 2002, 48).

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<sup>1</sup> Instrumental rationality is synonymous with rational choice theory; this terminology will be discussed further in Chapter II.

To explain such discrepancies, this paper suggests that religiously-inspired terrorist groups can be analyzed by applying Max Weber's<sup>2</sup> writings on value-based rationality (*wertrational*), which differs significantly from means-end rationality. Analyzed in this way, the apparent paradox of organizations choosing terrorism and engaging in lethal attacks that appear to alienate the local populace can be explained as a rational decision. Although we cannot necessarily assume that terrorists "act in terms of a consistent rationality based on accurate perceptions of reality" – at least, not an instrumental rationality, as is generally assumed by Western scholars in their writings on terrorism – it is important to try to analyze the perceptions terrorists have of both themselves and their environment (Crenshaw 1985, 1).

While instrumental rationality might explain the actions of secular terrorist groups, religious terrorist groups have disparate motivations and employ a different rationality. As two Clinton White House officials remarked, according to one account, it would seem that al Qaeda and its allies "want a lot of people watching *and* a lot of people dead" (Coll 2004, 435). And as Hoffman has noted,

...[T]errorism motivated either in whole or in part by a religious imperative, where violence is regarded by its practitioners as a divine duty or sacramental act, embraces markedly different means of legitimation and justification than that committed by secular terrorists, and these distinguishing features lead, in turn, to yet greater bloodshed and destruction (Hoffman 2006, 83).

As such, applying Weber's writing on value-based rationality (*wertrational*), as opposed to instrumental rationality (*zweckrational*) (Kalberg 1980; Sharot 2002; Varshney 2003), can allow us to analyze the actions of religious terrorist groups as rational – explicable in terms of the values upon which they are based. As has been noted, "religion and rationality cannot be separated, at least not without fatal consequences for religion" (Trigg 1998, 2).

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<sup>2</sup> Weber's typology of rationality will be discussed at length in Chapter II.

Though “modern, international terrorism” is generally acknowledged to date from 1968, the most recent wave of terrorism is usually dated from the early 1980s, when suicide attacks became a more common tactic used by terrorist groups, starting with Hezbollah and followed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE), several Palestinian groups such as the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and Hamas, and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) (Hoffman 2006, 19, 85). During the 1990s, the number of religious international terrorist groups increased proportionally, from 32% in 1994 to 46% in 2004. This century has seen a large increase in attacks by al Qaeda and associated groups, often termed ‘Salafi-Jihadist’ and argued by scholars such as Moghadam (2008; 2009), Sageman (2004; 2008a; 2008b), and Kepel (2006, 2008) to lead to increased suicide attacks and lethality. In particular, Moghadam argues that, “more Muslims than non-Muslims have died or been maimed by Salafi jihadist terror in the last three decades”: more than 100,000 Muslims were killed in Algeria due in large part to the Salafi jihadist Armed Islamic Group, while in Iraq, more Iraqi civilians than foreign civilian or military personnel have died in suicide missions (Moghadam 2008, 77). The growth in radical Islamic terrorism has occurred while leftist and Communist state-sponsored terrorism has declined worldwide (Moghadam 2009; Sageman 2008; Barros and Proenca 2005).

In assessing the academic body of work on terrorism, the majority of analyses look at terrorism in terms of the individual motivations that lead people to become terrorists. Of those that do assess terrorism from an organizational perspective, most analyze either the world as a whole or only one country, such as Israel-Palestine or Iraq. Other studies assess transnational terrorism only, or disaggregate terrorism and attempt to explain the strategic rationale behind suicide terrorism. Much of the work assesses all terrorists – from Palestinian nationalist to al Qaeda – as one grouped-together enemy in the so-called War on Terror. However, terrorist organizations fight for different reasons and based on differing motivations, and it is important not to use datasets that are too small, assessing only a few groups or those in one country,

or to assume that there are no differences between groups in motivation and rationality (Crenshaw 2000; Strindberg and Warn 2005). It should also be noted at the outset that unlike many studies in this field, this paper will focus on terrorism in general, not solely suicide on terrorism. While the motivations of the individual suicide attacker and his or her organization might differ significantly, the motivation and rationality of a group as a whole is likely similar throughout various types of terrorist attacks.

Studying and trying to understand the motivation behind terrorist attacks from an organizational standpoint is valuable because different motivations would suggest different types of counterterrorism strategies. As has been argued, “If it is possible to identify the ‘true’ determinants of terrorism, then it is also possible to ‘drain the swamp’ by applying respective policy actions. Such actions should help to reduce terrorism, thus also reducing the first-order (direct) and second-order (indirect) effects of terrorism...” (Schneider et al 2010, 5).

Indeed, “effective counterstrategies cannot be designed without first understanding the strategic logic that drives terrorist violence;” terror works by instilling fear in a target population and causing individuals and governments to respond in ways that help a terrorist group’s cause (Kydd and Walter 2006, 50). Several prominent Western scholars of the Middle East and Islam, such as Bernard Lewis, contribute significantly to the Western perception of terrorism. As Strinberg and Warn note, they present images of Muslims as irrational, fanatically religious, belligerent, irresponsible, and prey to wicked desires. These images “differ in degree, not in kind, from the anthropological treatises that once spoke of the ‘childlike’ or ‘primitive Negro’ in order to legitimize colonial domination of Africa under the guise if a *grande mission civilisatrice*” (2005, 25). Although it is understandable that those in the government may respond to terrorism by seeing the perpetrators as irrational fanatics and thus not make a serious attempt to understand their motivations or pronouncements (Kellen 1998, Hermann and Hermann 1998) – such as Senator John Warner supporting preemptive assaults on terrorists and their supporters by arguing,

“Those who would commit suicide in their assaults on the free world are not rational and are not deterred by rational concepts” (in Atran 2003, 1535) – this does not necessarily produce effective counterterror policies.

Furthermore, the belief that all terrorism is of one type (Crenshaw 1998b) – lumping together al Qaeda with Hezbollah and Palestinian rejectionist groups (Strindberg and Warn 2005, 23) – and thus requires only one counterterror policy is flawed. As Reich notes,

...[T]errorism is a complicated, diverse, and multidetermined phenomenon that resists simple definition, undermines all efforts at objectivity, forces upon all researchers moral riddles of confounding complexity, and is as challenging to our intellectual efforts to understand it as it is to our collective efforts to control it. It is an example and product of human interaction gone awry and is worth studying and understanding in the human terms that befit it: as conflict, struggle, passion, drama, myth, history, reality, and, not least, psychology (Reich 1998b, 279).

In a similar vein, Piazza argues that it is useful to distinguish between different types of terrorist organizations when deciding how to distribute finite counterterrorism resources (2008, 38).

In the terrorism literature, many authors simply assume the instrumental rationality of both individuals and groups, as terrorists’ “goals may be different than those of most of us, but from an economist’s point of view, rationality just means that, whatever the goal, a person chooses the best means to achieve it. The goals themselves are neither rational nor irrational, we just take them as given” (Wintrobe 2006, 170). If terrorists are understood to be rational, rather than irrational fanatics, this would have repercussions for counterterrorism. Using Weber’s idea of value-based rationality, this paper argues that a good case can be made for a religious-based rationality. Looking at how this type of rationality has different operational effects when compared with instrumentally-rational groups would imply that we should employ different counterterrorism strategies when dealing with the two distinct categories of terrorism, secular and religious. Seeing religious terrorist groups as rational is an important step in

formulating counterterrorism policies to successfully understand, contain, and perhaps even predict their actions.

The primary research question of this paper is: Can terrorism be considered rational? In particular, are there different types of rationality that can be applied to different terrorist groups and their actions? In answering this question, the paper's basic argument will investigate Weber's four types of rationality – instrumental, formal, theoretical, and substantive, concentrating on the application of the latter to religious terrorism. This typology of rationality takes into account different values, beliefs, and processes of both individuals and groups, and as such can successfully be applied to the issues analyzed in this paper. Assessing different types of rationality then leads to several sub-research questions: How can Weber's typologies of rationality be applied to terrorism? While instrumental rationality is often used by Western academics, analysts, and politicians to judge terrorist organizations' actions, perhaps substantive rationality can better explain certain terrorist groups' use of terrorism as a strategy. Furthermore, how can an application of Weber's typologies help us better understand terrorism? Terrorist motivations and rationalities have implications for both the academic discipline of terrorism studies and for the practical discipline of counterterrorism. In the paper, the relationship between Weber's value rationality and religion will be explicated; and, after developing a religiously-based substantive rationality concept, this will be applied to two case studies, in which the paper investigates the organization's values, beliefs, culture, world views, and goals, explaining what rational theory cannot in terms of a religious terrorist organization's goals and actions. Given that terrorism is a worldwide phenomenon that has a 2,000-year history, the scope of this paper must be limited significantly. As such, this research will look at terrorism in the Middle East, roughly over the period 1970-2011.

The case studies were chosen to follow the crucial and most likely case study designation (George and Bennett 2005, 121-2); al Qaeda – the predominant and preeminent religious terrorist organization operating in the

Middle East for whom, as Hoffman notes, “the religious motive is overriding” (Hoffman 2006, 82) – will be the crucial case in that in order for this paper’s arguments to have any validity, it must explain the case of al Qaeda. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is a most likely case, in that as a secular organization, their actions should follow an instrumental, not a religious, rationality, despite cultural affiliation – and therefore not show any type of religious rationality. If it turns out that the paper’s theoretic assumptions apply to their strategic actions as well, then the theoretic assumption has failed. The observable differences between the two organizations assessed in this paper are in their actions and goals – these are the points of comparisons between the two cases. I will also utilize George’s ‘structured, focused comparison’ method (George and Bennett 2005).

While direct research on terrorists would be ideal, this has not been possible. As Reich notes, whenever this type of research is not possible, “attention should be paid to the words that terrorists issue – memoirs, pronouncements, rationales. Although these words may be self-serving, that does not mean that they are not also, in some significant way, revealing” (Reich 1998b, 277). Therefore, as part of the case studies, organizational goals will be determined primarily by a content analysis of leaders’ personal documents, such as interviews, speeches, and writings, along with organizational outputs – such as publications and manuals. A quantitative analysis is also undertaken after the two brief case studies, assessing the validity of these arguments statistically.

This paper argues that religious and secular groups’ goals are actually similar – certain political outcomes – and it is the strategy itself in which a group’s operation under an instrumental or religious rationality is manifested; and again, these designations will be explained more fully in Chapter II. Thus, the “best means to achieve” the same goal are not necessarily the same for all. In order to explain the actions of both secular and religious terrorist organizations as rational – yet, different types of rationality – the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. *Religious and secular terrorist groups will have similar goals but they will not take identical paths in their attempts to reach those goals.*
2. *Secular terrorist groups will try to reach their goals based on instrumental rationality, choosing a goal and then doing a cost-benefit analysis of what seems to be the most efficient way of reaching that goal.*
3. *Religious terrorist groups will try to reach their goals based on substantive rationality, acting according to a set of religious values that promote certain perceptions, ways of thinking, and actions that are not in accordance with instrumentally rational actions.*
4. *Religiously-motivated terrorist groups engage in terrorist attacks that result in higher casualties than secular groups do in their terrorist attacks.*

Of course, it is also entirely true that it is likely impossible to know with certainty every motivation that drives an individual terrorist or a group, and that any research done based on dividing groups into categories such as “religious” and “secular” vastly simplifies the widely differing motivating factors both for each terrorist and for multiple attacks undertaken by the same group – and these motivations can be different in different attacks (Quillen 2002, 217). Furthermore, it is also possible that some secular terrorist groups, if not many, also are evincing a type of substantive rationality, though motivated by different values than religious terrorists. As the case study will show, the values of leftist groups motivate these organizations to try to preserve lives, not disregard them. Moreover, trying to know what another human is thinking or what is motivating them – especially when it is impossible to talk with them, or know if what they are telling you is true – makes the arguments set forth in this paper provisional at best. I would like to emphasize that the provisionality of this argument – and the vast majority of research done on the subject of terrorist motivations – should be kept in mind. It is virtually impossible to prove the link between religious rationality and lethality of attack in terms of a cause and effect relationship because it is impossible to know for certain what terrorists actually

think and what actually motivates them, especially when the study is done from afar. However, I believe that an attempt to understand the broad motivation behind certain terrorist groups' thinking can be a useful pursuit, both academically and in terms of counterterrorism policies, as discussed above.

It should be noted that the issue of terminology and meanings must be addressed, especially as this paper purports to look at Islamic terrorism. Islam – or any religion – can mean a variety of things in a variety of contexts; Islam can be a political movement, a spiritual response, or a religious force. Assessing one particular religion as a motivation for killing civilians is very controversial and liable to offend many people. For many Muslims, including religious leaders, the groups associated with al Qaeda are not true Muslims, while al Qaeda and its allies – a distinct minority – in turn denounce these Muslims for their weak following of the religion as they are not engaged in *jihad*. Islam is a global religion, but there is no universal interpretation of the religion. As in Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism, there are numerous religious textual examples of a God that is merciful, diplomatic, merciless, and warlike, allowing groups to selectively chose texts that fit their prioritized religious sentiments. These issues will be discussed further throughout the following chapters. For social scientists, deciding which group is Muslim, or if there are degrees of Muslim, is a problematic formulation. However, following W.I. Thomas (1928), this paper regards how people self-define as how they will be assessed: if people define situations as real, then the consequences are real. If a certain group of people feels that they are Muslim and identifies themselves as such, and if they believe this identification to be an integral part of their identities, then their self-classification will be respected and utilized (Vertigans 2009, 4-10). And while this paper makes a large effort to be objective and assess these issues based on the words of the group leaders as well as their actions, it should also be acknowledged that, as Trigg notes, “our concepts are always going to be rooted in our own way of life, and the notion of a scientific ‘neutrality’ or ‘objectivity’ is a myth. We can never stand outside our own conceptual system to see things as they are” (Trigg 1998, 40).

This paper next looks more deeply at the available literature on religion, rationality, and terrorism in Chapter II before developing an argument for value-based rationality in Chapter III. Then, Chapter IV develops several quantitative propositions to be tested, providing descriptions of the variables and methodology behind their selection, followed by an analysis of the results. Finally, a short concluding section in Chapter V will discuss the findings of the paper and offer several suggestions for further research, as well as some implications of the research for counterterrorism.

## **Literature**

The attempt to study and understand terrorism is a difficult task at best; there is no one theory that can explain every type of terrorist motivation at both an organizational and an individual level. As Reich noted in a key edited volume in the field,

Terrorism is a complex problem: Its origins are diverse; and those who engage in it, even more so. Any attempt to understand the motivations and actions of terrorist individuals and groups must obviously take into account that enormous diversity. But no single psychological theory, and no single field of scholarly study, can possibly do that (Reich 1998a, 1).

This paper does not attempt to explain all terrorism and all terrorists throughout history with one unified theory. Instead, the paper looks at scholarship in religious studies, international relations, sociology, political science, psychology, and economics in order to attempt an explanation of terrorism at an organizational level that is informed by work in many different fields.

It should also be noted at the outset that terrorism literature and study is generally divided into two subfields: suicide terrorism and non-suicide terrorism. Those who write on suicide terrorism – the scholarship of which will be discussed later in this chapter – argue that it is a significantly different phenomenon than “regular” terrorism (ie, attacks in which the perpetrator does not intend to kill himself). From the individual standpoint, this is likely to be

true. However, because this paper looks at terrorism from an organizational standpoint, suicide terrorism will be assessed as simply one type of terrorist tactic, not as a separate type of terrorism that has separate explanations. At the same time, in this literature review, many scholars have not followed this categorization; as such, the review will mix together scholarship on both “regular” and suicide terrorism.

Defining terrorism is a very tricky task; there are over 150 definitions but no consensus. Stern, in acknowledging the multitude of definitions, focuses on two critical distinguishing aspects of terrorism: it is aimed at noncombatants, and the violence is used for a dramatic purpose of instilling fear (Stern 2003, xx). Most scholars agree that it involves the use or threat of violence, has political objectives or character and is performed publically, is non-state (even if supported by a state), intends to target innocents with the aim of creating fear, and involves actors who are violating international norms and laws in order to maximize the psychological effect of the attack. Beyond these generalities, definitions often differ. Some emphasize the symbolism of terrorism as being used to modify political behavior, others focus on revolutionary terrorism, others look at terrorism from a relativist point of view, others emphasize the arbitrary character of terrorism, others look at the terrorists’ desire to harm or alter government policy, others stress that the violence is directed against civilians, others look in particular at the abnormal character of the violence or as criminal activity. There are many forms of terrorism, and all definitions have shortcomings because reality is more complicated and richer than a generalized definition can possibly be; furthermore, terrorism is neither unchanging nor fixed (Laqueur 1987, 143-5).

Despite all these uncertainties, the attempt must be made to provide a more formal definition. In the qualitative chapter of this paper, the issue of definitions will be investigated more concretely. Here, instead of trying to create a new definitional phrasing, I have chosen to follow Cronin: “specialists in the area of terrorism studies have devoted hundreds of pages toward trying to

develop an unassailable definition of the term, only to realize the fruitlessness of their efforts: Terrorism is intended to be a matter of perception and thus seen differently by different observers” (2002, 32). Yet, there remains a need to give further boundaries to different types of terrorism in order to analyze the subject matter.

Domestic terrorism is that in which the incident location, perpetrators, and target are all from the same country; as such, the consequences of such an attack are considered to only be domestic. Most terrorist acts are domestic and often in the context of an independence struggle. Occasionally such attacks by chance become transnational in that a foreign bystander is killed or injured, though not as part of the plan. Conversely, transnational terrorism involves targets, perpetrators, and/or attack locations that are international – more than one country is involved. Multiple victim nationalities, different victim and terrorist nationalities, or attacks against foreign diplomats or embassies are all transnational terrorism. Skyjackings and other transportation-related events that start in one country and end in another are also classified as transnational terrorism, as are attacks against international organizations or their personnel – such as UN peacekeepers (Endler et al 2011).

### ***Religion and Rationality***

Religion has often been minimized as a significant causal factor in international relations and the social sciences in general; Iannaccone, Stark, and Fink noted, “for nearly two centuries, political philosophers and social scientists approached religion as a dying vestige of our primitive, pre-scientific past. Religious commitment was seen as independent of, and largely antithetical to, the rational calculus” – examples include David Hume, Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Edward B. Tylor, Lucien Levy-Bruhl, Freud, and Kingsley Davis, the last of whom Iannaccone et al noted once said that “religious behavior is nonrational” (1998, 373-5). Especially during the 1950s and 1960s, “political scientists believed that modernization would reduce the political

significance of primordial phenomena such as ethnicity and religion,” the latter of which was no longer believed to be a significant causal factor in war, which is in itself one of the primary foci of international relations research (Fox 2001, 54-5). Trigg argues that the social sciences treat religion as well as religious institutions and beliefs as social facts that can contribute to social stability and solidarity. Thus, social science has generally ignored the rationality behind any religious beliefs, concentrating instead on the role that these beliefs play in a society (Trigg 2007, 14). Furthermore, early social science established the discipline as based on a rejection of theocratic explanations and guidelines for human behavior, instead seeking the rational. As such, though there are some significant exceptions – such as Weber, Durkheim, and Marx – “the influence of religion has received comparatively little attention in international relations” (Fox 2001, 53-4). And while contemporary research is less overtly anti-religious, “it has tended to retain the antirational assumption... Traditional theories of religious behavior have accorded privileged status to the assumption of non-rationality” (Iannaccone et al 1998, 373).

In terms of definitions of religion, Weber wrote that giving a definition of religion could only be done at the conclusion of studies into the concept – though it appears he never concluded his studies, as he never did define the concept. Weber’s ideas of religion will be investigated more fully in a subsequent chapter. According to Hamilton, Durkheim (1915), discussed further below, saw religion as “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single Moral community called a Church all those who adhere to them” (Hamilton 2009, 12-14).

Since Stark and Bainbridge first discussed the concept in the early 1980s, rational choice theory has often been applied to religion in explaining an individual’s religious actions – looking at the supply side, rather than the demand side. Rational choice theory, derived from economics, is based on three basic assumptions: individuals maximize their net benefits, their ultimate preferences to assess costs and benefits do not vary over time, and social

outcomes emerge from an aggregation of individual assumptions (Iannaccone 1995, 1997).

However, Spickard (1998) and many others argue that these assumptions are false and/or vague; thus, rational choice theory does not explain individual human actions well, especially religious acts. Other criticisms include that such a systematic deductive structure of rational choice theory is not able to provide much knowledge and instead many substantive assumptions and propositions are necessary – which might not be valid in themselves. It has been argued that economic models obscure more than they explain; “by ignoring culture, the economic approach produces such a distorted view of religious behavior that the only context in which it could be viable is a thoroughly secular society,” meaning the US in particular and the West in general (Bruce 1993, 194). Bruce further quotes Elster (1986), who noted that “[t]o the extent that we cannot tell, or cannot tell uniquely, what the rational choice would be, the theory fails... In a word rational-choice theory can fail because it does not tell us what rationality requires” (Bruce 1993, 203). Others have argued that Stark and Bainbridge do not pay attention to political, social, or historical factors and give no cultural or social context to the theory (Hamilton 2009, 222). Overall, rational choice models “do not tell us about how individuals act in religious or other settings.... Rational-choice theorists cannot argue that real, empirical people are goal-rational at the subjective level” (Spickard 1998, 110; Bruce 1993; Demerath III 1995). Rationality in an instrumental way – weighing costs and benefits, ends and means – “is not relevant when the means are clearly prescribed by the religious tradition” (Sharot 2002, 432).

Other branches of academia have long argued for the existence of different types of rationality. Buchowski (1997) explains that Hanson (1979, 1981) argued for the distinction between intentional (rational choice) and institutional (including religion) rationalities and also maintained, following Wittgenstein, that “subjects in various cultures are rational according to different types of rationality” (Buchowski 1997, 33). Buchowski supports a

different definition of rationality than that proposed by rational choice theorists: for an action to be rational, it must relate to and follow the rules of a system of beliefs. An individual is rational as long as that person “undertakes an activity which is guided by his/her convictions concerning the possibilities of accomplishing intended goals. These convictions consist of a hierarchy of values and knowledge concerning ways of accomplishing goals” (Buchowski 1997, 39). Actions that are consistent in reference to shared values are rational. Judging another’s action as condemnable – or laudable – is not a judgment of the actor’s rationality, per se, but is instead an ethical evaluation that is based on personal moral standards. Thus, terrorism can be judged by many people to be terrible, but that does not mean that those who undertake it are irrational – just that, based on the observer’s ethical system, their actions are lacking in morality (Buchowski 1997, 39-42). As explained by Kamppinen (1997), Rescher (1988) advocated three varieties of rationality – epistemic (beliefs), practical (optimally maximizing expected utility, and evaluative (desires, goals, and values). Spickard also discusses three primary types of rational action, based on Weber and Niebuhr: teleological (means-ends), deontological (action with regard to values or ideals), and cathekontic (consideration of responsibilities that grow out of social relations).

Referencing Weber’s work on rationality, Jensen explains that “religiously motivated actions can be accounted for as rational” and that this type of rationality can be called ‘emic’ rationality, which is “intrinsic to holistic systems of beliefs and values... The common view of rationality as exclusively linked to practical and scientific procedures is simply misguided” (1997a, 19). Furthermore, rationality is a key aspect of religion, including in religious values - “no worldview, of any kind, could function or make sense if proposition, including values statements, were not logically or structurally integrated (Jensen 1997a, 15). Religious systems, comprised of actions, ideas, institutions, representation, imagery, and history are social realities, and “religious facts are social facts;” as such, a certain religion and the values it prioritizes can be studied as social facts (Jensen 1997b, 117). Religion is a social reality and a

semantic notion – it is simply what the adherents of the religion do and say in specific situations. The transmission, symbolism, and meaning of these social facts can be studied as an academic pursuit, setting aside whether or not the religious belief is actually a scientifically verifiable fact or not (Jensen 1997b, 118-22).

Freud saw religion as an illusion, a psychological process that is a form of self-delusion or wish fulfillment, based on an overwhelming need, stronger than reason, to believe in something. Marx, too, saw religion as a comforting and compensating illusion that ultimately can be discarded, though Marx's theory of religion was more sociological (Hamilton 2009, 68, 91). As explained by Hamilton, Marx wrote,

...[R]eligion is the self-consciousness of man who has either not yet found himself or has already lost himself again.... Man is *the world of man*, the state, society. This state, this society, produce religion, a *reversed world-consciousness*, because they are a *reversed world*. Religion is the general theory of that world, its encyclopedic compendium, its logic in a popular form, its spiritualistic *point d'honneur*, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn completion, its universal ground for consolation and justification. It is the *fantastic realization* of the *human essence* because the human essence has no true reality.... Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the *opium* of the people. The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is required for their *real* happiness.... Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves round man as long as he does not revolve round himself (Hamilton 2009, 92-3).

Durkheim as well writes on religion and values; he was especially concerned with challenging this notion of religion as illusory and false. He believed that even the most primitive societies and their religions were expressing a kind of truth, even if the truth was not actually scientifically realistic – for the believer, at least, it was true. Hamilton notes that Durkheim (1915) wrote, “In reality there are no religions which are false. All are true in their own fashion” (Hamilton 2009, 110). For Durkheim, one of the primary functions performed by religion is to link people to things and people outside of themselves, creating social integration through a bond between the spiritual

world and the religion's community of believers. Religion links individuals to a common doctrine with strong bonds – depending on the strength of the religious doctrine, of course – and is a type of social cement, as opposed to Marx's social opium (Turner 1991; Hamilton 2009, 115). The stronger the doctrine and the stronger the religion's belief system, the stronger the individual's bond is to his or her religious community. Durkheim also discusses the idea of altruistic suicide, in which those who commit suicide for an accepted social reason, one that is valued by a society, are honored. People can take their own lives because society imposes such a social duty on them – such as the concept of martyrdom in Islam (Morrison 1996, 169-70, 177-8; Durkheim 2006 [1897], 234-261).

Another famous sociologist who looks at religion is Geertz, who analyzed religion as part of a cultural system; for him, noted Hamilton, culture meant “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms” (Hamilton 2009, 177). Religion used sacred symbols that synthesized a group's ethos and worldview. Religious symbols can shape a group's social world through “inducing dispositions to behave in certain ways by inducing certain moods.... Religion does this by formulating concepts of a general order of existence. People... need to see the world as meaningful and ordered. They cannot tolerate the view that it is fundamentally chaotic...” (Hamilton 2009, 178). Religious perspectives provide unique ways of approaching the world and seem sensible and practical to those who believe in them. The fact that a religion remains safe from doubt amongst those who believe it gives each religious perspective the ability and power to profoundly affect a society (Hamilton 2009, 180).

Furthermore, Berger also looks at the sociology of religion, arguing that groups create their own social worlds both physically and mentally and experience this world as an independent and external reality, at the same time being shaped by it. This is, for Berger, a meaningful order – termed *nomos* – that is imposed on experience. This order is socially constructed and protects the social group from the terror that would come from believing the world to be

a place of chaos and without meaning or order. According to Hamilton, Berger argued, “One may say therefore, that religion appears in history both as a world-maintaining and as a world-shaking force” (Hamilton 2009, 181-183).

The sociology of religion as a discipline, and as the discipline from which the literature on religion used in this paper comes, does not

depend upon any resolution of the question of the truth or validity of religions claims, nor is its essential concern with such questions. Nor does it need to adopt any particular position on this matter, either sympathetic, opposed, or neutral. It all depends on what the beliefs are and the circumstances of each case (Hamilton 2009, 12).

As such, this paper does not attempt to understand whether religions, in particular Islam, are right or wrong; instead, the paper accepts that a certain set of people believe in the religion and the claims it makes, and a certain subset of these people believe in a particularly violent interpretation.

Kalberg (1980) distinguishes four types of rationality as expounded by Weber: practical, substantive, theoretical, and formal. In particular, substantive rationality, based on goals and values, can explain religious actions; and, when combined with an ethical system (such as that provided by religion), substantive rationality can penetrate and even subsume practical rational action, resulting in a ‘practical-ethical’ rationality that is both value-driven and instrumental. Weber argued that there is no rationality standard from which anyone can judge another’s actions – there are many rationalities and irrationalities, it all depends on where you stand. As argued by Sharot, “for Weber, *wert*rational [value-rational] action was of great importance in the analysis of religion, and it is significant that rational choice theory has no parallel to the distinction that Weber made between *wert*rational and *zweck*rational (instrumental-rational) types of action” (2002, 431). Along similar lines, Varshney (2003) argues that Weber’s value rationalism can best explain a broadly defined ethno-nationalism – including that based on religious identity – especially in situations of conflict. Furthermore, Fox argues that religious belief systems can influence a decisionmaker’s behavior and general outlook. Referencing an analysis of

Weber by Kalberg, Fox eloquently states that Weber “argues that religions place psychological premiums on actions that serve as filters for evaluating how one should behave” (2001, 61-2). Fox also notes that religion can be used to legitimate governments or opposition groups, such as in the concept of “just war” (Fox 2001, 65-6) – or, for the purposes of this paper, Islam’s concept of *jihad*. And as Sharot concludes, “the failure to address the implications of *wertrational* for a discussion of rationality in religion is a major lacuna in rational choice theory. The analytical division between rational and irrational, with the conflation of the nonrational with the irrational, is an unhelpful simplification” (2002, 450). Weber’s typology of rationality will be discussed further in Chapter II.

The idea that beliefs and values are important in a person’s choices and actions has also become relatively accepted. The ‘culturalist’ approach argues that culture provides a ‘tool kit’ of resources that can be used by an individual or group (Swidler 1986; Hafez 2006). Drake also argues that ideology, to which religion is one contributor, is important to terrorist groups in that it defines the range of target possibilities and can also be used as a means of justification to the terrorists themselves and to the outside world (1998). Bernholz (2004, 2006) argues that ‘supreme values,’ a bundle of aims or ideologies expressed through a preference function and held as an absolute truth, compel people holding these values to undertake certain actions – such as terrorism. Overall, there has been much scholarship outside or on the edges of the international relations field that is relevant to the discussion on religion, rationality, and terrorism.

### ***Terrorism and Rationality***

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, terrorism was considered to be a psychological or physical disorder, and research was conducted on the connections between terrorism and epilepsy, tuberculosis, vitamin deficiencies, moon phases, droughts, barometric pressure, inner ear malfunctions, and cranial

measurements (Laqueur 1987, 150-1; Jenkins 1979, 3; Bandura 1990; 1999; 2002). More recent research has concentrated on environmental and social factors. While there is a profusion of literature assessing individual terrorists' rationality, the issue has also been analyzed at the organizational level. And, although looking at suicide terrorism in particular, Crenshaw notes, "Individuals are motivated differently. There is no single pattern. The organization that recruits and directs the suicide bomber remains the most important agent" (Crenshaw 2007, 157). In order to best account for terrorist actions, groups, and individuals, both psychology and strategy must be analyzed (Reich 1998a, 3). Terrorism is often described as a tactic of the weak, used by groups that are unable to otherwise gain political support or, if they have support, are without any alternative means of political expression (Kydd and Walter 2006; Hafez 2006).

Terrorism is a political phenomenon, involving a group of believers who go through a process of development that results in their actions becoming terroristic. This progression through which ideological terrorism is formed is called a process of delegitimation and occurs in three stages: a crisis of confidence, a conflict of legitimacy, and a crisis of legitimacy. As radicalization proceeds, the group identity changes quickly and takes over much of each individual members' identity, combining "political-behavioral components, ideological and symbolic tenets, and psychological traits" (Sprinzak 1998, 78-9). As such, and as Crenshaw has noted, while individual-level rationalities and motivations are important for understanding terrorism to a certain degree, the group ideology and motivations are much more important, as the group is what directs attacks, choosing targets and deciding how to carry out a strike. It should also be remembered that terrorist groups often reflect, though in a distorted way, the political and social beliefs, aspirations, and grievances of a larger society, which provides a supportive climate of belief that a terrorist group emerges from and lives within (Gurr 1998, 86).

Some authors doubt the rationality or logic of terrorism from an organization's standpoint; one expert notes, "the very idea of a rational or expedient terror may be contradictory, since by definition terror entails extranormal violence, and as such, is almost guaranteed to evoke wild and uncontrollable emotions" (Rapoport 1984, 675). For example, Abrahms (2008), explicitly basing his arguments on rational actor models and economic rational choice theory, argues that terrorism is almost never successful and often puts terrorists even further from their goals, and it is thus a very poor strategic choice. Abrahms claims that (1) terrorists never achieve their political goals; (2) there are always other options; (3) terrorists refuse to compromise, even to their advantage; (4) terrorist groups often contradictorily change their political platforms; (5) many terrorist attacks are anonymous, without policy demands; (6) terrorists often spend energy and resources killing terrorists from other, similar groups; and (7) terrorist groups continue to fight despite constant failure to achieve their political goals, while if they actually achieve a goal, they will formulate new agendas that allow them to continue fighting. Looking at a study of 28 terrorist groups, some of which have been active since the 1960s, Abrahms concludes that the groups achieved their policy objectives only 7% of the time (three out of 42 total policy goals) and that this success was based on target selection, in that groups attacking civilian targets more than military targets failed to achieve their policy goals – making terrorism strategically not a rational choice. (2006, 43-51). As Abrahms writes, "Clearly, political scientist need to reexamine their reflexive assumption that suicide terrorist groups behave as rational political actors" (2006; 2010, 157).

Therefore, according to Abrahms, because it is politically ineffective and rarely achieves any political goals, suicide terrorism is a poor strategic choice for a group – though it does provide benefits to individual group members. In fact, both suicide and conventional terrorism are equally ineffective in forcing political concessions, as governments often do the political opposite of what the terrorists are demanding. Furthermore, suicide terrorism can actually be counterproductive politically, especially when the

attack is anonymous – since 1968, 64% of attacks worldwide have been undertaken by unknown groups or people, while 75% have been unclaimed since 9/11. Even if the group is known, it often does not follow up on the attack by providing specific political demands. Groups often target each other or civilians, killing potential strategic allies and reducing local support. As Abrahms reports, Crenshaw has argued that terrorist groups do not obtain “the long-term ideological objectives they claim to seek, and therefore one must conclude that terrorism is objectively a failure” (Abrahms 2010, 147-55). It has also been argued that, while terrorist organizations have stated goals, they do not actually expect to bring them about (Lomasky 1991). Other scholars simply believe that al Qaeda, in particular, only has a goal of creating chaos and does not actually seek any specific policy objectives (Roy 2008, Morgan 2004).

Conversely, many scholars hold that terrorism has been rationally chosen by an organization as a strategy and has in several instances been shown to be ‘successful,’<sup>3</sup> resulting in other local, national, or transnational groups pursuing the same strategy; as Kydd and Walter argue, “Terrorism often works” (2006, 49). McCormick and Fritz cite a RAND study that found approximately 10% of the 268 terrorist groups since 1968 that have disbanded did so after achieving at least some of their political aims (2010, 144). Nacos argues that success is in the eye of the beholder, and “although perceptions are often far removed from reality, most terrorists make rational choices and cost-benefit calculations”; Bin Laden repeatedly called the 9/11 attacks a success and has argued that terrorism works, in particular against America – citing Lebanon, Beirut, and Somalia (Nacos 2003, 2; Hoffman 2002, 310). Al Qaeda has also portrayed 9/11 as a great victory in its propaganda (Hoffman 2006, 290). The Congressional research service noted that al Qaeda had three goals in 9/11 – to damage the US, signal the emergence of an Islamic vanguard of a larger global

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<sup>3</sup> In particular, cases cited feature Beirut (1983), Somalia (1993), Lebanon (2000), and Gaza (2005); further examples are the Irgun Zvai Leumi in Israel, the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria, and the Ethniki Organosis Kypriou (EOKA) in Cyprus (McCormick and Fritz 2010, 144).

movement, and provoke the US into attacking Muslim territory (Blanchard 2007, 5). Doran (2002) argues that al Qaeda is practicing realpolitik. Even if individual terrorists are “irrational or fanatical, the leadership groups that recruit and direct them are not;” Pape finds that, from 1980-2003, of the 11 terrorist groups in his study, six achieved significant policy changes from the targeted state (2003, 9, 344; 2005, 64-5). In particular, these groups have specific political goals in that they are attempting to force certain governments to change policies while at the same time attracting new recruits and funding. In a seminal article, Crenshaw (1981) argues that terrorism can best be understood as a strategy, and that the groups themselves have an internally consistent set of beliefs, values, and worldviews that logically promote certain ends which terrorism can be used to achieve. Though on the surface terrorism, in particular suicide terrorism, may seem irrational, it is a tactic that can be effective and rational in certain situations.

It should also be noted that Ganor argues that Islamic radical terrorists do utilize rational decision making with cost-benefit analyses, but that their version of rationality is different from the Western version – so to Westerners it seems non-rational. Islamic terrorists are performing their cost-benefit analyses looking at different issues than what would be used in a Western analysis. It is hard to deter such actors because their motivations and the rules that structure this cost-benefit analyses can only be understood by fully understanding the minds and hearts of these terrorists. As such, Ganor believes that the terrorist threat is a larger danger than the US faced in the Cold War (Ganor 2005).

There are many reasons that extremist organizations turn to terrorism, such as: the group has limited popular appeal, has been unable to mobilize popular support, is resisting authoritarianism, misperceives conditions, has a small number of members, is under time constraints, experiences a change in the its outlook because the regime has weakened militarily or morally and politically, or has acquired new resources or innovations. Terrorism has a number of benefits – it is useful in an agenda-setting function, can prepare the

ground for a mass popular revolt, and provokes repression that reinforces popular dissatisfaction as well as shows the justice of the terrorists' claims and the attractiveness of terrorism as a political alternative. However, there are also a number of costs, such as the punitive government action that results in the death or imprisonment of members and potential loss of popular support (Crenshaw 1981 386-9; 1998a, 10-20).

In the short-term, at least, there are a variety of objectives terrorist groups can have, aside from their long-term ones:

...[S]uch objectives include advertising a group's presence and political agenda; raising popular consciousness about the terms of the struggle; discrediting the target regime; revealing the "inner contradictions" of the state; creating fissures and confusion within the governing bodies of the state and between the government and its internal and external political constituencies; finding outside allies to support the inside struggle; and polarizing popular political attitudes and creating the conditions needed to mobilize popular support. As the record of the past fifty years has demonstrated, terrorism – including suicide terrorism – is a well-established means of achieving such goals. Even when a group ultimately fails, it frequently succeeds in achieving many of its intermediate objectives along the way (McCormick and Fritz 2010, 145).

Walter and Kydd discuss several principal strategic logics of terrorist organizations: attrition, intimidation, provocation, spoiling, and outbidding (2006). Organizations use terrorism to induce disorientation and alienate the authorities from the citizens, create a target response favorable to the terrorist cause, and exploit the impact of violence to gain legitimacy through an alternate political message; however, there are inherent limitations in this strategy and the organization is very vulnerable throughout this process (Neumann and Smith 2005). As one scholar put it, terrorists want revenge, renown, and reaction (Richardson 2007).

Terrorism can be used as an instrumental tactic to support the political interests of a group by "signaling," as part of a multistage game, to coercively force negotiation or to result in political mobilization. Terrorism can be used to support a strategy of coercion in that it can be a means of gaining negotiating leverage over the state by attacking high-value targets and then offering to end

the campaign of violence in return for political concessions. Alternatively, terrorism can be used to support a strategy of political mobilization by using attacks as signals to bring attention to a group's existence and issues, refine popular views of the struggle, show the group's increasing strength and corresponding weakness of the regime in power, and promote others to support the group in its end-goals. This can be achieved by utilizing attacks that show the weakness of the state and the terrorist group's ability to be victorious (McCormick and Fritz 2010, 135-6; Landi and Colucci 2008). Terrorist organizations also pursue instrumental goals like maximizing expected income, such as power sharing; the ideology of the movement is an instrumental tool used simply to make a group appealing to a constituency and for recruitment (Ferrero 2005, 203). One theory argues that, at the very least, terrorists evince "rational irrationality" in which they rationally chose irrational decisions. When irrationality is too costly in decision-making outcomes, the leaders of organizations adjust their convictions accordingly (Caplan 2006; Landi and Colucci 2008).

The idea of terrorism as an instrumentally rational strategy assumes that "decision makers have an established and stable set of preferences, look forward in time to evaluate the probable consequences of their actions, and select the operation alternative that offers the highest expected return" (Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 248). These organizations are presumed to have an internally consistent set of beliefs, values, and images of the environment (Crenshaw 1981). These groups choose terrorism as the most effective means of achieving political goals, and this choice is reached collectively by an organization that has assessed different strategies of opposition based on experience, observation, and strategic conceptions based on ideology (Crenshaw 1998a, 8). Terrorists are often thought to have one of five goals: policy change, territorial change, social control, regime change, or status quo maintenance (Kydd and Walter 2006).

As two scholars phrased it, "if a car bomb goes off in the forest and there is no one around to hear it, does it make any (political) noise? The answer,

of course, is no. Terrorists, through their actions, either succeed in staying in the headlines or are out of the game.” In order to keep the attention of both the public and the government from whom the group wants short-term concessions, terrorist organizations must continually innovate and escalate – often leading to higher levels of violence; terrorism can be seen as strategically rational in an instrumental way. Yet, they face a paradox: in order to achieve their political program, they have to appear strong, but they are in reality weak. Thus, they have to operate in a way – through terrorist attacks – that makes them look strong. At the same time, they must carry out these plans in a way that does not cause the state to overreact and eradicate the group; as such, significant secrecy about the group must be achieved. In a situation of constrained resources, terrorism can balance the needs for influence and security. And in particular, suicide attacks are more reliably lethal; more effective in garnering attention; can provide a way to build solidarity with the group’s political base through cultural and social context and norms; can reduce civilian backlash; have high propaganda value in defining and personifying a group’s collective identity, mission, and ideology; can be used in an interorganizational competition; are cheap; and can allow rational actors to appear irrational, enhancing both reputation and negotiating leverage (McCormick and Fritz 2010, 138-43; Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 249-51).

Many academics have argued that religion may influence terrorists to engage in more attacks that kill more people for several reasons. The first is because they are motivated by cultural identities and thus fight against a dehumanized, adversary “other” (i.e. Berman and Laitin 2006; Juergensmeyer 1996). Often this is linked with deep-seated cultural associations and is seen as a way of battling globalization or military occupation by another country – usually a democracy (Pape 2005). However, Pape has been criticized for his assumption that all terrorism has the same motivation – a mistake that this paper does not make – as well as his ignoring of terrorists’ own multitude of statements regarding their motivations as being religiously-based, not looking at the many groups struggling against occupation that do not use suicide attacks as

well as the groups that are not struggling against occupation that do use suicide attacks, and his underestimation of the Salafi ideology, which was found to be independently important to suicide terrorism (Rubin 2010, 223; Atran 2006, 32-34; Piazza 2008, 30).

Second, while secular groups need sympathy and local or international support for their cause, religious terrorists only need God's support and approval of their actions – and, as such, often perpetrate attacks that do not meet with popular approval, such as killing many innocent civilians as the collateral damage of an attack (i.e. Stern 2003; Juergensmeyer 2008). Religion and terrorism have had a long relationship. Bernholz notes that “true believers do not see themselves as criminals but as self-denying idealistic or holy men or women sacrificing a comfortable life, a career or even their lives in the service of the most valuable and truthful goals (2004, 320). These terrorists are ready to sacrifice both their own lives and the lives of others in following what they perceive as religious demands, and they experience no guilt while they do so (Bernholz 2004, 325-6). For the religiously-motivated terrorist, his or her deity is the primary audience. Rapoport argues that religious and secular terrorist groups' difference in means is due to different precedents and justifications. Thus, for sacred terrorists, the ends and means were sanctified by a deity and humans have no right to alter this pronouncement. They see the past – precedents from the religion's most holy founding period – as producing the basic rules of action today. These actions became sanctified over time, reinterpreted through history – and often in ways that the orthodox religious community does not agree with (1998, 107-20; Brown 2002, 294). Combs points out that religious terrorists have two audiences – god and the state; religious and political goals become inextricably entangled and this often makes resolution of the political issues almost impossible to achieve (2009, 36).

Third, they are waging war on entire cultures, political situations, or societies, not just individual, local, or national governments (Sandler and Enders 2002). While secular terrorists might be trying to appeal to prospective sympathizers or members, attune their goals to popular opinion, and defend or

promote a disenfranchised population, religious terrorists are argued to see violence as an end in itself, as opposed to a means to an end; this makes lethality desirable or at least acceptable (Morgan 2004, 30). Based on organization and goal structure, al Qaeda (“universal/abstract”) is argued to commit more casualties than other terrorist groups, and is therefore defined as “strategic” (Piazza 2009).

Throughout this discussion on the causes and rationality of terrorist organizations, the underlying assumption is that there is a single type of rationality – instrumental rationality. As Hafez explains, rationalist theories “maintain that groups employing terrorism calculate costs and benefits of different courses of action, act with purpose, adapt to incentives and opportunities, and pursue means that are logically connected to their ends” (2006, 167). Thus, he continues, in certain circumstances, groups would chose terrorism as a strategy because it can increase allies, induce compromise, enhance credibility, show determination, advertise a regime’s weakness while challenging its legitimacy, polarize élites, raise status quo costs, show potential for future violence, and publicize their grievances. Pape shows that democracies are especially sensitive to terrorism, especially if casualty rates are high (2003). Suicide terrorism in particular, is inexpensive, more accurate, guarantees extensive damage and casualties, less likely to be foiled, and has a greater psychological impact (Sprinzak 2000).

As part of a larger framework, terrorism today has often been argued to be a response to processes of globalization and modernization (Cronin 2002). Cultural insularism, resentment, and grievances have been brought on by globalization, which has led to a clash in values and beliefs between developing and developed countries (Mousseau 2002). Terrorism is a defensive, solidaristic, reactionary movement that is struggling against globalizing forces of economic and cultural change (Hoffman 2002). Fox (2001, 56-7) presents several processes associated with modernization, such as a backlash against local traditions and community values undermined by globalization, that have led to a revitalization of religion in many areas of the world. Stern (2003) also

argues that terrorism is a response to modernity and globalization – terrorists feel left behind, and respond by blaming those who are driving modernity (the West) and stealing their cultural and religious identities. Terrorist leaders tell their recruits to blame their personal and cultural humiliation on international institutions and the West imposing secular ideas and capitalism, trying to exterminate traditional values. Many are attracted to militant Islam and want to “replace Western military, political and cultural influences in Muslim territories with Islamic tenets based upon a synthesis of contemporary and historical discourse, images and symbols” (Vertigans 2009, 84).

Religious terrorism started with the Zealots-Sicarii, a Jewish group that lasted approximately 25 years in approximately the first century. They worked to create a mass uprising against the Greeks and Romans in Judea, adhering to messianic doctrines and apocalyptic prophecies. The group used daggers to assassinate prominent Jews who were seen as traitors to the culture and religion, as well as non-Jews living on Jewish land, in crowded places in the middle of the day on holy days; the assassins were never discovered as they would immediately join the crowds in decrying the murder, working to create panic. They also took hostages, engaged military forces openly, slaughtered their prisoners, and terrorized wealthy Jewish landowners. Several different groups existed, encouraging each other to compete and become more atrocious in their attacks, ultimately destroying each other (Rapoport 1984, 668-672).

The Assassins, or Ismailis-Nizari, were a terrorist group that existed from approximately 1090-1275. The group had political objectives in that they threatened the governments of the Turkish Persian Empire and Syria, working to purify and fulfill Islam. They carried out assassinations via dagger of religious and political leaders who were deemed traitors to the religion, with the assailants prepared to give themselves up to religious sacrifice and martyrdom. They established their own state of scattered fortresses and maintained cells in sympathetic urban centers. Other Muslim assassination cults include the Khunnag in the eight century that strangled victims with scarves and the

Kaysaniyya that beat victims to death with cudgels (Rapoport 1984, 664-668; 1998, 122).

The Thugs, likely in existence from the seventh century to approximately 1850, were a terrorist group in India that strangled travelers on behalf of the goddess Kali. The thugs murdered more than any known terrorist group; one estimate was one million people during the last 300 years of their existence, while this might seem to be a bit high, at least 500,000 is very likely to be true (Rapoport 1984, 660-664). In the present day, both Shi'a and Sunni strands of Islam – which will be further explained in Chapter III – have produced terrorists, Sikh terrorists in India have been trying to create an independent state, Jewish terrorists in Israel have attacked and plotted to bomb Muslims and their holy sites as well as the secular nature of the Israeli state, and in the US Christian terrorists have bombed abortion clinics and congregated in messianic terrorist groups such as “The Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord” (Rapoport 1998, 102-3).

There are a number of quantitative studies related more specifically to this research agenda. Several show that the political and organizational structure of terrorist groups is important in their lethality (Piazza 2008; Asal and Rethemeyer 2008). In particular, they demonstrate that organizational size, ideology, and territorial control are important predictors of attack lethality, while they find that host country characteristics, organization age, and state sponsorship are not important predictors. Killing more people results in more media attention and publicity for the group’s grievances; however, if an organization wishes to convert the population to its cause, then killing fewer innocent bystanders would be more endearing (Asal and Rethemeyer 2008).

One project investigated terrorism over 1981-2003 using the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism’s database to look at the social service provision of a terrorist organization as being linked to both the incidence of suicide attacks and the lethality of such attacks (Berman and Laitin 2006). Assessing several major groups in Lebanon and Israel/Palestine, the authors found that the two organizations that provided social services had much

higher fatalities-per-attack ratios (both religious: Hamas – 7.2, Hezbollah - 17.4) than non-service providing groups like the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (secular, 2.8). Looking specifically at suicide attacks from 1980-2002, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (a religious group that does not provide social services) had the highest proportion of suicide attacks, comprising 35% of their total attacks, whereas al Aqsa had 24% and other organizations had 6% or less (Berman and Laitin 2006). Their typology was often very similar to a religious/secular categorization – the religious groups included also seemed to be those that provided the most social services. Thus, a focus on religion as the independent variable in a regional analysis could be useful in further assessment of the lethality of terrorist attacks.

One research project looked at Palestinian terrorist attacks in Israel and found that an increase in terrorist strikes resulted in right-wing Israeli governments being voted into office, while these parties themselves moved left in their political platforms and ideologies. Thus, attacks resulted in the political spectrum as a whole moving to the left, despite the accession to office of right-wing parties. Overall, attacks led the Israeli public to becoming more willing to give Palestinians territorial concessions. However, strikes beyond a certain threshold became counterproductive, with Israelis becoming less accommodating (Gould and Klor 2010). Similarly, Kydd and Walter (2002) showed that in Israel and Palestine, suicide attacks are timed around key home and opposition elections to influence voters against a peace accord. In a different project, Drakos and Gofas (2006) analyze the countries that are attacked, finding that the “average terrorist attack venue” has low economic openness, a high level of international disputes, high demographic distress, and a strong element of regional contagion, while the link between democracy and terrorism is weak.

A further study in 2000 used ITERATE and time series techniques to test the current threat of transnational terrorist incidents compared with past threat levels, in a test of the ‘old’ versus ‘new’ terrorism paradigm. Enders and Sandler found that while the number of incidents has, since the end of the Cold

War, decreased significantly, the incidents have also grown more dangerous to the victims – “each incident is almost 17 percentage points more likely to result in death or injuries” (Enders and Sandler 2000, 329). They propose that the growth of religious terrorism since the early 1980s parallels this increase in casualties, supporting Hoffman’s arguments at the same time. Similarly, Capell and Sahliyah look at suicide attacks and the number of resulting fatalities, categorized by religious groups, finding that non-religious suicide bombing attacks have approximately 11 more deaths than ‘old terrorism’ groups that did not employ the tactic (over the 1980-2002 period). Religiously-inspired suicide attacks are associated with 5.6 more deaths than ‘old’ terrorist groups – suggesting that non-religious groups actually have more casualties associated with their terrorist attacks. At the same time, religious terrorist groups are more indiscriminate in their targets – civilian casualties are .206 higher per attack than for non-religious terrorist groups (2007, 275-8).

Piazza compares “abstract/universal groups,” which have different goals and are primarily driven by ideology (basically, al Qaeda and affiliates), with “strategic groups,” which have more limited and discrete goals (basically, secular groups), using the RAND Terrorism Knowledge Database. He finds that “abstract/universal” organizations are both more lethal and engage in attacks that result in higher casualties, over 1998-2005. He controls for the effects of religion and nationality differences in the victims and attackers. Horowitz (2010), assessing only organizations that used suicide attacks during 1968-2006, found a strong statistically significant link to religious terrorist organizations – and in particular, to Islam.

Finally, a report that compiled data from 2007-2010 showed that al Aqsa had 2 attacks (1 dead) in the Gaza strip ( Hamas: 406 attacks, 90 dead), 207 attacks (0 dead) in Israel ( Hamas: 28 attacks, 2 dead), and 32 attacks (5 dead) in the West Bank ( Hamas: 5 attacks, 1 dead). There were also a multitude of unknown/unclaimed attacks in all three areas: 296 in the West Bank, 1158 in Israel, and 182 in Gaza (Gagel 2011). Although it would seem that the religious organization Hamas engaged in more fatal attacks than the

secular al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, the distribution of victims was not reported nor was there any statistical analysis.

## II. Theoretical Arguments

The motivations and rationality of the most recent wave of terrorism have been debated since the 1970s. In explaining an individual's motivation, scholars have argued psychological, ideological, political, social, and cultural theories. As discussed in the previous section, the motivations of organizations that turn to terrorism have also been studied: some scholars maintain that terrorism as a strategy has been a rational choice and has proven 'successful' in at least several instances; others argue that there are other, better strategic options, that terrorism is in fact very rarely successful, and thus these organizations have made a poor choice. Throughout these debates, the underlying assumption is that there is a single type of rationality – specifically, an instrumental rationality derived from rational choice theory, in which an actor analyzes the costs and benefits of various options and choose to maximize net benefits. But is this the only type of rationality? Are we imposing Western definitions and standards of rationality on others?

Rational choice theory makes several assumptions – primarily, that humans approach all actions the same, evaluating costs and benefits and acting accordingly, and working to maximize the net benefit received. In more detail, especially as related to religion, the three rational choice assumptions are:

1. Individuals act rationally, weighing the costs and benefits of potential actions, and choosing those actions that maximize their net benefits.
2. The ultimate preferences (or “needs”) that individuals use to assess costs and benefits tend not to vary much from person to person or time to time.
3. Social outcomes constitute the equilibria that emerge from the aggregation and interaction of individual actions (Iannaccone 1997, 26-7).

Rational choice theory omits value-rationality from its axioms (Sharot 2002, 430). Instrumental rationality, synonymous with rational choice theory, is more focused on outcomes, not on the process that gets one to an outcome. It must

also be mentioned that rational choice assumptions have, in controlled experiments at least, been refuted (Neitz and Mueser 1997, 115).

Weber also looks at economic rationality, categorized as instrumental rationality in his typology – which will be discussed thoroughly in the following section:

Action will be said to be ‘economically oriented’ so far as, according to its subjective meaning, it is concerned with the satisfaction of a desire for ‘utilities (*Nutzleistungen*). ‘Economic action’ (*Wirtschaften*) is any peaceful exercise of an actor’s control over resources which is in its main impulse oriented towards economic ends. ‘Rational economic action’ requires instrumental rationality in its orientation, that is, deliberate planning... all ‘economic’ processes and objects are characterized as such entirely by the *meaning* they have for human action in such roles as ends, means, obstacles, and by-products (Weber 1978, 63-4).

Traditionally, it has been collectively acknowledged that it was not possible to understand religious behavior as the result of an individually rational action (Hechter 1997, 147). Contrary to Weber’s value-rationality arguments, people are rational if they calculate and pursue the most efficient means to a given end; the key is instrumentality. Pursuing a course without a thought to the consequences of actions is irrational; as one theorist notes, “It cannot be rational, therefore, to ‘value for its own sake some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success’ (Weber, [1992] 1968: 24-25)” – orientations to action based only on emotions and value-rationality are excluded (Hechter 1997, 148, 152). The next section will look more closely at Weber’s analysis of rationality.

## **Max Weber’s Types of Rationality**

For Max Weber, there is no rationality standard from which anyone can judge another’s actions – there are many rationalities and irrationalities; it all depends on where you stand. For Weber, at least conceptually, the different types of rationalization processes conflict and coalesce with each other and do

so at all levels of civilization and society. Weber's thoughts on rationality are fragmented and scattered throughout many of his writings; furthermore, he often used slightly different words to refer to his conceptualization of rationality, words which are translated differently in English versions of his works. As such, this analysis relies heavily on the work of Kalberg (1980), who collected these fragments and codified a typology of Weber's conceptions of rationality.

It should also be emphasized at the outset that Weber's typology of rationality is, as Weber is famous for creating, a construction of ideal types. Weber distinguishes the classification of motivations for actions "to formulate in conceptually pure form certain sociologically important types to which actual action is more or less closely approximated or, in much the more common case, which constitute its elements" (Weber 1978, 26). He explicitly says it would be uncommon to find actions that are based entirely on only one of these rationality types.

### ***Practical/Instrumental Rationality, or Rational Choice***

According to Weber, there are four types of rationality that can be identified. Practical rationality (*zweckrational*) is what is utilized in Rational Choice theory and the 'Economic Man.' It is also called instrumental or means-end rationality. This type is concerned with a person's purely egoistic and pragmatic interests. Given realities are accepted, and the best way to reach a certain goal is calculated based on the most expedient means. Weber defines instrumental rationality as "determined by expectations as to the behavior of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as 'conditions' or 'means' for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and calculated ends" (Weber 1978, 24).

As this definition implies, Weber believes that "the most essential aspect of economic action for practical purposes is the prudent choice *between ends*. This choice is, however, oriented to the scarcity of the means which are

available or could be procured for these various ends” (Weber 1978, 65). Thus, prudently choosing the most logical ends, based in part on the different ways of achieving those ends, is part of practical rationality as well. At the same time, instrumental rationality involves taking into consideration and weighing the end, the means, and any secondary consequences that may occur. Thus, alternative means, alternative relations between the end and secondary results, and the relative importance of a variety of possible ends must all be considered. The more rational an action is, rooted in an actor’s self-interest in achieving a chosen ends based on the most effective means, the more an actor will react the same in similar situations, resulting in continuities in actions and attitudes that can actually be more stable than in a system of duties and norms that bind a group to act in a certain way (Weber 1978, 30).

Weber also differentiates economic *action* from ‘technology’ or ‘*technique*.’ Whereas instrumental rationality is a way of choosing a logical end and then the most expeditious way of reaching that end, the ‘technique’ of an action is the best way to get there – the means employed to achieve the end, not the end to which the action is actually oriented. Different means “are comparatively ‘economical’ of effort in the attainment of a *given end*” (Weber 1978, 65). For a technique to be rational, it must be one that is “consciously and systematically oriented to the experience and reflection of the actor, which consists, at the highest level of rationality, in scientific knowledge... [and] is thus variable” (Weber 1978, 65). There are a multitude of techniques for every possible action – including political domination, war, painting, and prayer. Each end has a variety of different means that can be used to get there; the ‘technique’ employed to do so is rational in as much as that it requires the least effort; “the achievement of an optimum *in the relation* between the result and the means to be expended on it” (Weber 1978, 65-66). Economically, the question of which ‘technique’ to use is a question of the comparative costs.

In assessing a ‘technique,’ the actual usefulness or desirability of the end result is of no importance; for example,

It would, for instance, be possible, as a kind of technical amusement, to apply all the most modern methods to the production of atmospheric air. And no one could take the slightest exception to the purely technical rationality of the action. Economically, on the other hand, the procedure would under normal circumstances be clearly irrational because there would be no demand for the product (Weber 1978, 66-67).

Therefore, “economic action is primarily oriented to the problem of choosing the *end* to which a thing shall be applied; technology, to the problem, given the end, of choosing the appropriate *means*” (Weber 1978, 66-67).

### ***Formal Rationality***

A second type is formal rationality, directly related to “spheres of life and a structure of domination that acquired specific and delineated boundaries only with industrialization: most significantly, the economic, legal, and scientific spheres, and the bureaucratic form of domination”: economics, politics, and law (Kalberg 1980, 1158; Kalberg 2002, lxiii). This type of rationality is neither based on ethics nor personal. Weber defines the “formal rationality of economic action” as “the extent of quantitative calculation or accounting which is technically possible and which is actually applied” (Weber 1978, 85). Thus, the degree to which human needs can be expressed numerically can be called the degree to which the need is formally rational. A sector’s or society’s universal and abstract laws, rules, or regulations (themselves often based on expediency and instrumental rationality) count as formal rationality – decision calculations based on rules or laws. In particular, laws would be followed in part because disobedience would result in punishment, but also because violating a law would go against an actor’s sense of duty (Weber 1978, 31). For example, formal rationality would see separating ownership of land and agricultural production as promoting the rationality of capital accounting – it reduces capital requirements and capital risks, separates the household from the economic mechanism, increases the liquidity of each

person's capital, and reduces irrationality in the accounting of capital (Weber 1978, 164).

### ***Theoretical Rationality***

A third type is theoretical rationality, which “involves a conscious mastery of reality through the construction of increasingly precise abstract concepts rather than through action” (Kalberg 1980, 1152). This comprises all abstract cognitive processes, logical induction and deduction, attributions of causality, and formation of symbolic meanings; examples include priests, theologians, philosophers, judges, revolutionary theorists, or scientists trying to theoretically rationalize a scientific worldview. This type of rationality is utilized in discovering interrelationships and building complete, holistic explanations (Kalberg 1980, 1153).

The development of religion can be understood based on theoretical rationality. The overall process posited is that a shaman or priest rationally deduced from experience that evil or good powers lived in natural objects, and this idea dispersed throughout a society. Gods were developed to protect men against evil, but when they failed, it was assumed that gods were egoistic and supplications might make the gods more likely to assist humans. This became codified into different types of prayer, sacrifices, priests, etc. Later, more comprehensive worldviews arose via theoretical rationalizations, describing the universe and the niche that humans occupied. Further cognitive rationalization led to more consistent doctrines explaining how to achieve a state of grace or heaven (Kalberg 1980, 1153-4).

### ***Substantive Rationality***

The final type of rationality can be termed substantive<sup>4</sup> or value-based rationality (*wertrational*), “determined by a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success” (Weber 1978, 24-25). This is the rationality type that this paper argues is embodied in religious terrorist groups. Unlike with instrumental rationality, actions are not chosen based on a means-end calculation to produce solutions to problems, but instead are chosen “in relation to a past, present, or potential ‘value postulate’ ... [which] implies entire clusters of values that vary in comprehensiveness, internal consistency, and content”; as such, this rationality type is a manifestation of the inherent human capacity for action based on a value rationale (Kalberg 1980, 1155). In some cases, traditional behavior and attachment to habitual forms can be considered value rationality (Weber 1978, 25).

An action that is based on value rationality is different than one based on pure emotion in that the former involves a “clearly self-conscious formulation of the ultimate values governing the action and the consistently planned orientation of its detailed course to these values” (Weber 1978, 25). At the same time, value-rationality and emotions both result in actions, the meaning of which “does not lie in the achievement of a result ulterior to it, but in carrying out the specific type of action for its own sake” (Weber 1978, 25). An example of a purely substantively rational orientation would be a person who, without considering personal cost, enacted their convictions of what they perceived to be their duty, religious call, personal loyalty, or other important cause. Value-rational actions always involve ‘demands’ or ‘commands’ that the actor sees as being binding or required. Only when action is based on fulfilling these unconditional demands can it be termed substantively rational (Weber 1978, 25).

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Substantive rationality,’ ‘value rationality,’ and ‘value-based rationality’ will be used interchangeably in this paper.

It is possible for a substantive rationality to only be applied to one area of life, not touching any others – meaning that a person can evince substantive rationality in one area and practical rationality in another. Examples of such areas that evince substantive rationality for different people include belief in or ideas of communism, socialism, hedonism, the Renaissance view of life, aesthetic notions of ‘the beautiful,’ and various religions, in as much as these ideologies or mind-sets can organize action based on their value content. Substantive rationality provides a canon against which empirical events can be judged, and it can order action into patterns in an infinite number of ways. Even if specific value rationalities may not be able to be seen or identified from outside a group, they can still be in use. Not only small groups, but institutions, cultures, organizations, and civilizations can also have value postulates upon which certain actions are based. There is no one global or objective standard for action or delineated superior set of values – there are a potentially infinite number of standards and sets of values. In fact, “values acquire ‘rationality’ merely from their status as consistent value postulates” (Kalberg 1980, 1156).

Weber argues that, for this type of rationality, the results of an action are measured in terms of how well it achieved the value or substantive goal that the action was seeking. In particular, he defines value-based rationality as

...[T]he degree to which the provisioning of given groups of persons (no matter how delimited) with goods is shaped by economically oriented social action under some criterion (past, present, or potential) of ultimate values (*wertende Postulate*), regardless of the nature of these ends... [which] may be of a great variety (Weber 1978, 85).

Thus, substantive rationality can include instrumental rationality based on the best technique possible in a given situation, but to this is applied a criteria of ultimate ends – which can be religious, hedonistic, feudal, ethical, etc. However formally rational the results of a certain action may be is not the primary issue – the values an action achieves are what matter. And, at least from an abstract perspective, there are an unlimited number of value scales possible by which an action can be judged. Furthermore, the *spirit* and *instruments* of an economic

activity can also be judged in a similar way – based on certain values that are more important to the observer or actor than formal or instrumental rationality. Thus, a substantively rational approach “may consider the ‘purely formal’ rationality of calculation in monetary terms as of quite secondary importance or even as fundamentally inimical to their respective ends...” (Weber 1978, 85-86).

Communities based on certain religious beliefs or a specific *Weltanschauung* (such as monastic communities) often employ substantive rationality, as members are willing to work and consume without any appreciable input-output balance – as their community is based on a non-economic attitude towards work and consumption. Weber believes that religious communities act in this manner because they feel separate from the rest of the world and thus do not need to consider economically the best way to produce and consume. In fact, Weber sees communism as the same – a community based on substantive rationality in terms of its non-economic attitude towards work and consumption, in that the two are not related to each other – everyone consumes the same amount, regardless of how hard they work or how much they produce. Communist movements, at least in his period, depended on “‘value-rational’ appeals to their disciples, and on arguments from expediency (*zweckrational*) in their [external] propaganda” (Weber 1978 153-4). Thus, communists supported their non-instrumentally-rational actions with substantive rationality – an appeal to the values of their followers. The success of each of these types of groups rests on sometimes very different subjective conditions – thus, groups that oriented to non-economic considerations, other-worldly values, or exceptional activities, for example, will all define success differently, and the means used to achieve their definition of success will vary considerably (Weber 1978, 154). Substantive rationality can also result in a state economic policy that is oriented towards ends that are not instrumentally rational – such as promotion of the arts or intellectual disciplines. Furthermore, “‘certain value-attitudes derived from ethical and religious sources’” can obstruct

the development of capitalism and promotion of a more instrumentally rational form of government and social system (Weber 1978, 200).

If something is called irrational, that means that it is incompatible with two different value sets; Kalberg notes that Weber argues, “something is not of itself ‘irrational,’ but rather becomes so when examined from a specific ‘rational’ standpoint. Every religious person is ‘irrational’ for every irreligious person” (Kalberg 1980, 1156). For the modern, Western person who believes strongly in empirical knowledge and science, a religious believer’s reliance on faith appears irrational. Substantive rationality subordinates realities to subjective values and relates directly, as opposed to indirectly, to action. For Weber, only values, especially a “unified configuration of values, are analytically capable of introducing methodological rational ways of life” that can ultimately “subjugate the practical rational way of life;” this is especially possible if the values of a particular substantive rationality have been rationalized into “internally unified value constellations that comprehensively address and order all aspects of life” (Kalberg 1980, 1164-5). Only value-based rationality can place a general ‘psychological premium’ on worldly action that complies with the given values.

Actions can be both substantively and instrumentally rational in their parts – a choice between different ends could be determined in a value-rational manner, while the choice of means is determined instrumentally. However, instrumental rationality always views substantive rationality as irrational; “the more the value to which action is oriented is elevated to the status of an absolute value, the more ‘irrational’ in this sense the corresponding action is” (Weber 1978, 26). This is because the more an actor devotes himself unreservedly to a given value, for the sake of the value, the less the actor considers his action’s consequences. An action looking only at rationally achieving ends without considering fundamental values, of course, is for Weber also an ideal type and rarely actually seen in actuality (Weber 1978, 26).

Some value-rational beliefs elevate their corresponding ethical standards to what Kalberg terms an ethical substantive rationality, which can penetrate practical rational action; the actions that result from this situation are called “practical-ethical” (Kalberg 1980, 1166). A person “who value rationally orients his action to an internally unified and comprehensive ethical substantive rationality acts methodically in reference to an ethic of conviction (*Gesinnunsethik*) and rationalizes action ‘from within’ in all spheres of life to conform to its internally binding values” (Kalberg 1980, 1167). For example, magic and religious powers, along with the ethical ideas of duty based on these concepts, have been a formative practical-rational influence on the organization of life (Weber 2002a, 160). Weber, writing extensively on Calvinism as an example of a religion whose followers evinced a value-based rationality, alternatively notes, “in Calvinism, the practical-ethical action of the average believer lost its planless and unsystematic character and was molded into a consistent *methodical*<sup>5</sup> organization of his life as a whole” (Weber 1978, 71). A convent is organized, systematized, and methodically rationalized, overcoming the natural state of humans and allowing true believers to escape irrational drives and dependence up on the world, instead able to subordinate their lives to “the supremacy of organized will;” thus, the church’s methodical-rational organization of life attempted to train monks both objectively and subjectively (Weber 2002b, 72). This concept appears to lend itself directly to the followers of cults or value-idealizing terrorist organizations.

Someone for whom their values provide a comprehensive and unified world view can develop this ‘ethic of conviction,’ which rationalizes certain actions based on the given value system in all areas of life. This substantive rationality guides actions into certain channels and away from other options. Means-end rational action cannot account for ethical actions that are monitored

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<sup>5</sup> Methodical is defined as an action that is done according to an established or systematic form of procedure (Google Dictionary).

by an internalized ethical standard. Only substantive rationality can create a continuous and comprehensive rationalization of certain realities that result in certain actions. This only happens after the value-rationalization processes based on a specific ethical rationality lead to a worldview in reference to which everyday actions and routines can be qualitatively assessed and perhaps rejected as deficient (Kalberg 1980, 1164-7).

### ***Weber on Religion as Substantive Rationality***

In religion, the content of these value sets is “particularly important in regard to the potential influence of a belief system on the pragmatic action of its followers” – those who orient their religious actions to a certain religiously-based world view (Kalberg 1980, 1167). For example, Calvinism and Catholicism put high value on methodical ways of life and disciplined work. Thus, these doctrines created certain practical rational action patterns that resulted in the devoted actions of Protestants to these values. A further example would be in the Catholic institution of the monastery, which emphasized practical-ethical action in someone devoting his life to God by becoming a monk. These actions are rational because they are based on highly-internalized value systems that promote certain actions and that affect all the acts of devout believers (Kalberg 1980, 1167).

Weber argues for the importance of religion as an explanatory factor in sociological analyses – for instance, as key to any explanation of the spirit of capitalism. He acknowledges that such an argument might appear unusual, as modern scholars rarely explain human behavior by referencing religion. As Kalberg notes in his introduction to his translation of *The Protestant Ethic*,

In our epoch dominated by a worldview anchored in the social and natural sciences, belief in the supernatural is seldom viewed as a causal force. Instead, we generally award priority to structural factors (such as social class and level of education), economic and political interests, psychological and biological forces, power and external constraint, and unencumbered, rational choices. Yet Weber insists that social scientists must seek to understand the activities of others contextually by

reference to the world in which *they* lived and the nature of *their* motives for acting. Scholars must do so especially when investigating groups living in distant epochs and foreign lands, however difficult it may be to perform the indispensable leap of imagination into an unfamiliar universe (Kalberg 2002, xi-ii).

Like Freud, Weber took a psychological approach to religion, emphasizing the pursuit of meaning based on deeply-rooted emotional sources. He saw religion as supplying theodicies of bad and good fortune, and his approach integrated both emotionalist and intellectualist elements in a sociological analysis of the interrelationships between social groups and beliefs (Hamilton 2009, 164, 177).

Weber was not as concerned with explaining religion itself, instead focusing on the “connections between different types of religion and specific social groups and [on] the impact of various sorts of religious outlook upon other aspects of social life and particularly on economic behavior” (Hamilton 2009, 155). Weber rejects theories of religion that hold religion as a mere reflection of material interests and positions of social groups or those, such as Nietzsche’s, that see it as a response to deprivation and thus motivated by resentment. Instead, religion is at base “a response to the difficulties and injustices of life which attempts to make sense of them and thereby enables people to cope with and feel more confident when faced by them (Hamilton 2009,156). Religious conceptions arise as a result of the fact that life is fundamentally precarious and uncertain,” which in turn implies that people want certain things but cannot always have them. The tensions that comes from the slight difference in what we think should be – as opposed to what really is – create a religious outlook. Weber sees religious development as a type of ethical rationalization development. Ideas, and in this case those that are part of a religion, embody basic assumptions that “have been determined to a considerable extent by the particular circumstances and situation of that stratum or group and the social and psychological forces which have formed its particular outlook and conception of its own interests;” ideas are not just ideological reflections or statements regarding a group’s or stratum’s interests (Hamilton 2009, 155-64, 161).

*The Protestant Ethic* brings attention to the potential influence cultural<sup>6</sup> values can have on action – in this case, the impact of religious belief on economic activity. Even what are taken by some authors as purely instrumentally rational actions, such as the laws of the market, still possess a cultural, and thus a value-based, aspect. For Weber, sociology can promote an interpretive comprehension that attempts to understand “‘from within,’ the subjective meaning of persons through a detailed investigation of *their* milieu of values, traditions, emotions, and interests” (Kalberg 2002, 1, iv).

Many of Weber’s critics and commentators did not understand his crucial distinction between action that was utilitarian and action that was guided by values and oriented to the supernatural. Also deemphasized has been Weber’s insistence that religious beliefs can lead to motivations for action and that such beliefs can bring psychological rewards that direct action. Even after religious organizations themselves had become weaker, families and other community organizations could cultivate the values and conduct of the original organization (Kalberg 2002, xxxviii-xlv). Overall, Weber recognized the importance of religion as one type of non-materialistic value that could be a motivation for human action. His typology of rationality also allowed for this factor, in codifying values as a key source of motivation for actions.

Again, it must be emphasized that what is defined as “rational” can be different in other cultures and societies. As Weber remarked, “What may appear ‘rational’ viewed from one angle may appear ‘irrational’ when viewed from another” (Weber 2002a, 160). Thus, to conclude: Weber proposed a value-based rationality that, when a person or organization has internalized a comprehensive and internally-unified value system, can influence all actions chosen. Therefore, such a substantively-rational entity does not chose actions based on the most efficient means to reach an ends (instrumental rationality),

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<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the “culture” of a religion is defined in accordance with Clifford Geertz’s idea of the “cultural systems” of a people, which include both religious and secular ideologies – “the patterns of thought, the world views, and the meanings that are attached to the activities of a particular society” (Juergensmeyer 2003, 13).

instead choosing actions based on an internalized value set in a way that is still rational – simply a different type of rationality than what is usually thought of and applied in Western scholarly works on rational/irrational actors. Substantive, ethical rationalities can permanently suppress or intensify practical rational actions and fully subdue formal rationalization processes. Whether the value constellations themselves are rational or not is not the issue – it is the way that the person uses these value sets to choose certain actions in all areas of life that is rational. In terms of terrorism, there are particularly violent strains of Islam that are based on specific interpretations of religious texts and history, promoting martyrdom and *jihad* as acceptable and even a duty that must be undertaken. A value system of this type that has been very highly internalized can result in terrorists and terrorist organizations choosing certain actions that might not be rational in a practical, instrumental way, but which are based on internalized value systems – and thus, these actions are substantively rational. The relationship between substantive rationality and religion – in particular Islam – will be further investigated in the following sections.

## **Religious Rationality and Violence**

Most of the major religions, including Judaism, Islam, Sikh, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity have provided resources to their adherents for violent acts; violent images and ideas are not the exclusive provenance of any one religion. Violent Jewish groups have also often used religious language, history, theology, and biblical examples to justify their violence. The Christian Bible is full of bloody, violent conflict in both the Old and New Testaments; these images and the religion's history – such as the Crusades and Spanish Inquisition – have given some contemporary Christian militant groups the theological justification for violence. There is evidence that some American Christian militia groups had plans to undertake indiscriminate mass killings, such as by polluting municipal water supplies and bombings (Juergensmeyer 2003, xii, 5-46; Hoffman 2006, 112)

Religion can provide ideology, motivation, and organizational structure. Many religions involve ideas of ritual intensity, transcendent moralism, and images of struggle, transformation, and cosmic war, along with an other-worldly reward for exceptional devotion to the religion. As Juergensmeyer remarks, “all religions are inherently revolutionary. They are capable of providing the ideological resources for an alternative view of public order” (Juergensmeyer 2003, xii, 5-46; Dekmejian 2007). Bin Laden, as will be shown in the next chapter, similarly characterized al Qaeda’s fight in cosmic terms, as a struggle against evil (Juergensmeyer 2008, 214). In general, religion contains many values and ideas that can lead to prejudice and violence, has strong power to morally justify and legitimate any action or goal, provides the concept of desecration which can intensify feelings of loss, and offers myths and stories that seem to simplify situations in a way that further supports the collective meaning system, even promoting violent evangelism (Silberman 2005).

In particular, the idea of war is both an assertion of power and a world view, providing history, eschatology, cosmology, the hope of victory, a way to achieve victory, and the potential for political control. War has had a long relationship with religion – like in the many religious conflicts around the world and throughout history. Many religions utilize images of spiritual warfare, both in history and in contemporary symbolism and rhetoric. Religions usually promote the idea of order, implying that violence is necessary to overcome disorder. In general, violent imagery and symbols both been normalized and domesticated while being imbued with religious meanings (Juergensmeyer 1996; 2003). Acts of religious violence – such as terrorism –

have been sanitized by becoming symbols; they have been stripped of their horror by being invested with religious meaning. They have been justified and thereby exonerated as part of a religious template that is even larger than myth and history. They are elements of a ritual scenario that makes it possible for the people involved to experience safely the drama of cosmic war (Juergensmeyer 2003, 148-163).

As Juergensmeyer noted in a later work, throughout the developed world – including the US and Europe – religious activism has existed, along with

Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim religious movements in other areas of the world. He argues that “the underlying causes may be similar: in each of these cases religion has provided a way of thinking about public virtue, collective identity, and world order in the face of a social reality that seemed to be losing its moorings” (Juergensmeyer 2008, 152).

Juergensmeyer describes several conditions regarding when a religion is more likely to be utilized to justify actual violence: when the cosmic struggle is no longer set in a mythical time and place but instead is understood to be occurring in this world, when religious adherents personally identify with the struggle, and when there is a crisis at which time the efforts of an individual – or group - can make a huge difference in the eventual outcome of the struggle. Similarly, a confrontation in reality is susceptible to characterization as a cosmic war when it is seen to be defending basic dignity and identity, losing is unimaginable, and the struggle cannot be won in the current era. Struggles can gradually change from worldly to cosmic or cosmic to worldly, depending on the availability of solutions and the potential devastation in the case of a loss. If a struggle does become cosmitized and sacralized, what might previously have been seen as minor issues or differences become huge, the slightest incident can lead to violent attacks, and violence becomes legitimized. And, the enemy becomes satanized as part of the construction of an image of cosmic war; the idea of martyrdom as a sacrifice for religion also becomes important. Religious terrorism is highly symbolic and undertaken in very dramatic ways, involving the intensity of believers’ commitment, transhistorical goals, claims of absolutism and moral justification, and deeply-held convictions (Juergensmeyer 2003, 163-86, 220-6).

For religious terrorists, violence is a divine duty or sacramental act. This results in these terrorist organizations disregarding practical, political, or moral constraints that other groups might face. Hoffman discusses the recollection of one Christian militant, who described his initiation ceremony in a rural church,

It was extremely religious. There were people standing along the aisles carrying weapons rifles, a few with pistols. We all stood up and walked to the front of the church in this strange procession. We were told that it was part of the ritual of becoming “God’s soldiers” in this “holy war.” One of the organizers of the event then mounted the pulpit declaring, “Soon we will be asked to kill, but we will kill with love in our hearts because God is with us” (Hoffman 2006, 109).

Secular terrorists rarely indiscriminately kill on a large scale because this is counterproductive for many of their political aims as it drives away their support. However, religious groups see this type of violence as necessary to achieve their goals. Religion can be a way of explaining the world and legitimating violent force in pursuit of goals. Religious terrorists are outsiders that are trying to fundamentally change the system, and thus feel more able to be destructive and deadly, with many more enemies to attack. While these characteristics are common to the terrorist organizations of many different religion, they are especially evident in Islamic groups (Hoffman 2006, 88-9), as will be discussed in the next section.

### **A Religious Rationality of Islam?**

The arguments of Max Weber regarding substantive rationality can be applied directly to religion, and – in this paper – specifically Islam. However, the contention of this paper is not that Islam itself, and alone, causes terrorism; instead, the argument is that the values underlying certain types of beliefs, including religious beliefs, and how these specific religious beliefs promote certain ethical ideas and actions, are what can lead to terrorism. As Weber emphasizes, “it is not the ethical doctrine of a religion, but that form of ethical conduct upon which *premiums* are placed that matters. Such premiums operate through the form and the condition of the respective goods of salvation”; this conduct is what constitutes a believer’s specific ethics (Weber 2002b, 146).

The claim that Islam – or any religion – is the impetus to terrorism is not easy to make, and thus “many scholars resist the idea that ideology or religion actually motivates terrorism” (Rubin 2010, 223). However, religious

terrorist groups have been shown to be more likely to adopt suicide terrorism, as religion serves as a transmission mechanism for operational knowledge that can increase interlinkages and relationships between terrorist groups, promoting the adoption of this tactical innovation (Horowitz 2010). Iannaccone wrote that any religion provides a good basis for recruiting terrorists and martyrs for the cause (2004). Throughout history, we have seen many examples of religiously-motivated terrorism: examples include Muslim (the Assassins, Hamas), Hindu (Thugs, Sikh), Jewish (Zealots-Sicarii), Christian (Weather Underground), and cult (Aum Shinrikyo/Japanese). As Hoffman argues, the difference between “holy terror” and secular terror is the “radically different value systems, mechanisms of legitimization and justification, concepts of morality, and Manichean world view that the ‘holy terrorist’ embraces” (1993).

Although currently the majority of religious terrorists are Muslim, Islam or any religion in and of itself is not the sole explanation of terrorist violence. Religion is an “integral part of many Muslims’ identities, influencing family life, employment, communal loyalties and social activities,” but for most people it is not politicized and thus does not result in violence, though for most people it is not internalized to such a high degree, while the more conventional versions of Islam that are internalized are often less violent interpretations. (Vertigans 2009, 5). The majority of Muslims actively denounced bin Laden and 9/11 (Gerges 2010, Mueller 2010). It has also been argued that religious ideology is only instrumentally adopted by leaders to gain the support of a social constituency (ie, Ferrero 2005).

There are some groups – such as al Qaeda, Hezbollah (Lebanon), Islamic Jihad (Palestine), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines), Hizb ul-Mujahidin (Kashmir), Lashkar Jihad (Indonesia), Jemaah Islamiyah (Southeast Asia) – that

...[C]laim to draw their guidelines for life from Islamic scriptures that are viewed as disappearing, or have disappeared, from governance. This elimination is associated with concomitant oppression, corruption, immorality, pernicious and pervasive Western discourse and the loss of territories. Religious guidelines are considered to provide the basis for

conduct and judgment, for ideas and practice, understanding life and the universe and the rectification of contemporary problems facing Muslims. In so doing, contemporary problems would be eradicated. Islamic concepts should therefore embrace ‘all aspects of life, culture, creed, politics, economics, education, society, justice and judgment, the spreading of Islam, education, art, formation, science of the occult and conversion to Islam, and all the other domains of life’ ( Hamas 1988)... (Vertigans 2009, 10-11).

As such, for certain militant groups, religion plays a key part in their motivations and values in choosing which actions to take or not take, and how to perform those actions. Since Muhammad, violence has been used by Muslims at different times and legitimized by using religious sources; throughout Islamic history religious fervor and piety have transformed in intensity and expression (Vertigans 2009, 15). This section and the next chapter look more specifically at the values and precepts of Islam in order to understand how self-defined Islamic *jihad* groups are viewing the world and their required role in it.

Islam can be understood as a comprehensive and internally unified value system. The religion demands total adherence and promotes activism, protesting, and political revolution and expansion as ideologies (Ben-Dor and Pedahzur 2003). A person who internalizes this value system – such as a devout Muslim – then chooses actions based on the values provided in this value system, not necessarily based on instrumental rationality. Islam is composed of “religious tenants that shape day-to-day individual and societal behavior and that establish well-defined and fairly inflexible rules for personal behavior, relationships within families and between individuals, and intercourse among nations and religions” (Scheuer 2007, 32).

However, there is no one final definition of Islam – there are many sects and different beliefs that are compatible with the basic texts of the religion, just as in Christianity and Judaism. Religious individuals also have different levels of belief, which can lead them to base their actions to varying degrees on their religiously-based value rationality. Thus, religiously-motivated terrorists are those who believe very strongly in their religiously-based value

system/worldview, which they have internalized to the point that the value system guides all their actions. The value system they have internalized is a particularly intense and violent interpretation of Islam; those who base their actions on this type of Islam can, based on a high level of value internalization, come to believe that terrorism is an acceptable action – including suicide bombing or ‘martyrdom operations.’ Not everyone becomes a terrorist because there are an infinite number of value systems, people have internalized diverse value systems to various degrees, and these value systems differ in their levels of comprehensiveness, content, and unity. Ideology, or value-system, is crucial when terrorist organizations select targets; it contributes to the original motivation of terrorists as well as “provides a prism through which they view events and the actions of other people” (Drake 1998, 53).

Fundamentalist<sup>7</sup> strains of Islam have led to al Qaeda, which has had significant support in the Muslim world. Juergensmeyer (1996) argues for the rise of religious nationalism, providing worldviews and values through which the group chooses actions. Islam as a collective meaning system provides a lens through which reality is perceived and interpreted, influencing the formation of goals, emotions, and behavior. One prominent terrorism scholar provides a general description of religious terrorists and their world-view:

Religious extremists see themselves as under attack by the global spread of post-Enlightenment Western values such as secular humanism and the focus on individual liberties.... Many see American’s way of life as motivated by evil, ‘Satan,’ ‘bad for the human being,’ and overly materialistic.... they see themselves as defending sacred territory or protecting the rights of their coreligionists. They view people who practice other versions of the faith, or other faiths, as infidels or sinners.

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the term “fundamentalist” or “fundamentalism” has pejorative connotations, is imprecise for cross-cultural comparisons, and has no political meaning – and in terrorism, political issues are important for assessing motivations (Juergensmeyer 2008, 4-6). However, alternatives – such as “religious activists” (Juergensmeyer) or “praxisitioners” (Sutton and Vertigans) seem to be either too broad or too contrived. Therefore, the term “fundamentalist” seems to be the best of several not very good options and thus will be retained in this paper. But, I would like to emphasize that in my use of the word, I do not intend for any pejorative connotations, use it with quite a lot of leeway so that cross-cultural comparisons can be made, and do not imply by its use that there are not political aspects of fundamentalists or fundamentalism.

Because the true faith is purportedly in jeopardy, emergency conditions prevail, and the killing of innocents becomes, in their view, religiously and morally permissible. The point of religious terrorism is to purify the world of these corrupting influences (Stern 2003, xix).

While Stern was describing al Qaeda in particular, she also researched other religious terrorists – including Christian right-wing terrorists in America – and her description applies to them as well.

As has been noted previously, from an organizational perspective, terrorism is a strategy that is used to attain a political agenda – but, a political agenda that is informed by religious values and beliefs, as will be investigated more fully in the next chapter. Organizationally, suicide attacks are more reliably lethal; more effective in garnering attention; can provide a way to build solidarity with the group’s political base through cultural and social context and norms; can reduce civilian backlash; have high propaganda value in defining and personifying a group’s collective identity, mission, and ideology; are guaranteed to attract media attention and coverage; can be used in interorganizational competition; are cheap; are a well-established means of achieving a group’s goals of mobilization, polarizing popular attitudes, and dividing the government; and can allow rational actors to appear irrational, enhancing both reputation and negotiating leverage (McCormick and Fritz 2010, 138-45; Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 249-51; Sprinzak 2000; Hoffman 2006, 133). Hoffman writes that the 2001-2005 time period represented 78% of all suicide attacks between 1968-2005, and of the 35 terrorist groups in 2005 that used suicide tactics, 86% were Islamic groups. Since 9/11, Islamic groups have undertaken 81% of all suicide attacks. Suicide attacks kill four times as many people as other types of attacks; in Israel, suicide attacks kill six times as many people and incur 26 times the casualties of other attack types (Hoffman 2006, 131-3). In a religious context, suicide attacks are often utilized as a form of ultimate sacrifice for the sake of the attacker’s religion and his or her God as well as the induce increased horror, fear, and feelings of helplessness among the target population and the target government.

Religious individuals have different levels of belief, and this can result in them basing their actions to varying degrees on their religiously-based value rationality. Religious terrorists believe strongly in their religiously-based value system and worldview, which has been internalized to the point that the value system guides all their actions. In the case of Islamist terrorists, the case discussed in this paper, the value system they have internalized is a particularly intense and violent interpretation of Islam. These terrorists, with a high level of value internalization, see terrorism as acceptable – including suicide bombing or ‘martyrdom operations.’ And, as has been mentioned previously, religious terrorists only feel the need to please God; therefore, actions are based on what is perceived to please God most (Stern 2003; Juergensmeyer 2008). As Post has noted, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, 40% of terrorist attacks were not claimed – radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorists did not need to publically claim responsibility for a terrorist attack and garner headlines, because they were killing for God, and God knew (Post 2005, 615). This motivation can often result, according to the paper’s hypotheses and as will be shown in the following chapters, in increased civilian casualties and other actions that are not instrumentally rational, but can be substantively rational when the organization’s religious values are taken into account. While both types of groups – secular and religious – have many similar goals, the way that they use terrorism to reach these goals is different and is based on their differing rationalities. This hypothesis will be tested in the next chapters using the qualitative case studies of al Qaeda and the PFLP as well as a quantitative study of a much larger number of religious and secular groups throughout the Middle East over the past 40 years.

### **III. Case Studies**

This section compares two case studies, a crucial case of al Qaeda and a least likely case of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Al Qaeda, as a religious terrorist organization, must display signs of the concept of religious value-based rationality in order for the application of Weber's rationality types to terrorism to have value. Al Qaeda was chosen as it is the predominant terrorist group that claims religious motivations for its actions, though other large religiously-motivated groups include Amal, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and Hamas. Similarly, the PFLP, as a secular organization, should act based on an instrumental rationality, not a religious rationality, despite the fact that many in the PFLP were religious and come from a very similar culture as al Qaeda, including the leaders. The group was chosen because it has been in existence since the late 1960s, so there is a lot of information on its history and operations. The group has been an important one in the Palestinian secular nationalist movement and is self-defined as having nothing to do with religion in its ideals and motivations. Furthermore, the group's long history also means that there are some available statements and writings of key ideologues in the organization that have been translated into English. The key points of comparison between the two cases are in their goals, which should be similar, in the ways in which each group explains the motivations for these goals, and the ways in which each group commits terrorist acts. Substantive rationality – and in this paper, religious rationality – can affect both a group's purpose and tactics; as such, the influence of each group's rationality should be seen at both levels.

In this chapter, the primary method of comparison is to look at the historical record – the types of attacks committed – as well as a focus on the actual writings and speeches of the groups' leaders and ideologues. Post has noted that the leadership of a terrorist group is “extremely important in fashioning a ‘sense-making’ unifying message that conveys a religious,

political, or ideological justification to their disparate followers” and that “the decision-making role of the preeminent leader is of central importance” for religious fundamentalist extremist groups and is seen as God’s interpreter (Post 2005, 616, 620); as such, so studying leaders’ messages and beliefs is important for understanding the motivations of the group as a whole. Similarly, as Konrad Kellen wrote, “Anyone who wants to gain some understanding of these terrorists should listen carefully to what the terrorists themselves say about their actions and motivations, no matter how criminal or absurd these seem” (Kellen 1998, 47). Although he was discussing West German terror, his argument still applies to terrorism today – while we study terrorists’ financial support, affiliations, weapons, travels, and actions in significant detail, we do not pay as much attention to what they are thinking or saying. While ignoring these aspects of terrorism may have its reasons – such as we do not listen because we cannot apply psychotherapy to terrorists, there is a moral need to condemn anything terrorists say or do as unacceptable and not appear too objective, or that we are too shocked to react with curiosity instead of intense anger – in order to best understand terrorists and, in understanding, better fight back, a careful analysis of their arguments must be undertaken (Kellen 1998, 47-8).

## **Al Qaeda**

### ***Introduction***

Al Qaeda, though much less organizationally centralized than before 9/11, has also become more vibrant in that there is a much larger variety of groups following and operating under its umbrella. While the affiliated groups do not receive funding or instructions in most cases, they share the same jihadist objectives against the West. The group’s leadership has diversified at multiple levels and across many countries, along with its organizational capabilities and decision-making processes. As one recent newspaper article noted, US Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper noted in March

2013, “Terrorist threats are in a transition period as the global jihadist movement becomes increasingly decentralized... the dispersed and decentralized nature of the terrorist networks active in the [Middle Eastern] region highlights that the threat to US and western interests overseas is more likely to be unpredictable” (Ahmad 2013).

Many scholars and commentators emphasize that the number of Muslims who interpret their religion in such a fundamentalist way as al Qaeda is very small. Sutton and Vertigans points out that the majority of peaceful Muslims’ beliefs and behavior are generally ignored in the media and academic analyses. The extremist fundamentalists, like al Qaeda, who interpret the religion in a way that allows or even commands terrorism and violence, are a very small minority and are not representative of the majority of the Muslim community. Furthermore, Wintrobe notes that “Islam as used by Al Qaeda is not a purely religious doctrine but one that has been intensely distorted to serve the ends of the group” (Wintrobe 2006, 178). Islam, as has been mentioned several times, and like all other major world religions, is a complex set of beliefs and practices can be interpreted in a large variety of ways depending on individual differences, social contexts, and temporal epochs (Sutton and Vertigans 2005, 7-20).

At the same time, other scholars claim that the idea of *jihad* in Islam is actually much stronger and more integral than many Western academics realize. McCarthy argues that many Western scholars “look askance at religion and are insensitive to a believer’s faith in what he takes to be transcendent, non-evolving values” (McCarthy 2010, 109). He points out that military conquest has been a significant aspect of *jihad* throughout Islamic history and scripture, with the Koran and the *hadith* repeatedly commanding Muslims to fight and kill non-Muslims, providing legality and legitimacy to such actions. McCarthy writes that this interpretation of Islam has been part of the religion’s history since Muhammad, is based on the literal commands of holy texts and many famous scholars, is backed by significant private funding, and thus there is, at least passively support for bin Laden’s activities. Brown also notes that, while

al Qaeda's theology is definitely a minority position, condemned by many, it still has "quite substantial appeal to ordinary Muslims" (Brown 2002, 294). McCarthy continues, nothing that even if only a significant minority of the Muslim world, such as 20%, interpreted their faith in this way, this would still calculate to over 250 million people – not 250 million terrorists, but this segment could provide potential passive support of and to terrorists and terrorism (McCarthy 2010).

Alternatively, Gunuratna cites the CIA as asserting that al Qaeda "can draw on the support of some 6-7 million radical Muslims worldwide, of which 120,000 are willing to take up arms" (Gunuratna 2003, 127). These two authors assert that, while al Qaeda's interpretation of Islam represents a radical fringe, this fringe might be larger than has often been assumed in the West, and also have significant passive support. At the same time, it should be stressed that while there is some sympathy for bin Laden's objectives, most Muslims living in the West do not support terrorism or any form of political violence, instead protesting against the tactics used to achieve al Qaeda's aims (Gunuratna 2003, 127, 149).

### ***Al Qaeda's History and Primary Ideologies***

The so-called "blind sheik," Omar Abdel Rahman, on trial for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center bombings, announced, "I am a Muslim who lives only for his religion and his prepared to die for it. I can never remain silent while Islam is being fought on all fronts.... My religion and conscience prompt me to fight injustice and tyranny, refute misconceptions and doubts, and expose the tyrants, even if it costs me my life and possessions" (quoted in al Zawahiri 2008 [2001], 146, 173). In court, he argued for the establishment of *shariah* and in support of *jihad* as a holy war (al Zawahiri 2008 [2001], 170). Islam is the primary motivation of al Qaeda as an organization, as well as many of its individuals. Organizationally, the group promotes certain actions based on a set of values – specifically, those values found in fundamentalist strains of Islam,

based on certain interpretations of the Islamic literature. By acting based on these values, the organization is evincing substantive rationality. These values can be seen at both the ideological level, influencing the group's basic purposes, and also translate into the group's actual actions at a tactical level, as well. Therefore, the following investigation looks at both the higher-level ideology, motivations, and strategy as well as the actualization of these beliefs at a tactical level – in the types of attacks carried out and their lethality.

Al Qaeda grew out of the fight against the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. A young Osama bin Laden and his mentor, Abdallah Azzam, created first the Afghan Service Bureau in 1984, and then Al Qaeda al-Sulban (The Solid Base) in 1988 to lead the fight for the creation of societies in the Middle East founded on strict Islamist principles. In the early 1990s, bin Laden created a worldwide strategic framework of Islamic political and military groups, inviting the leaders of other groups to al Qaeda's consultive council meetings and establishing inspirational and assistance relationships with 30 other Islamist terrorist groups. Western sources estimate that between 10,000 and 110,000 students graduated from Afghan al Qaeda training camps from 1981-2001, though al Qaeda only recruited 3,000 of the best students. Other groups besides al Qaeda were running similar training camps as well, meaning that the real number of graduates is likely higher than the base 10,000-110,000 assessment. Since the 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan, al Qaeda has evolved as a terrorist group in terms of the organization format, adapting from a hierarchical organization to a much less structured horizontal network that does not need a central command to operate, regionally and functionally compartmentalized and able to regenerate new cells in at least 80 countries. In pursuit of its goals, the group has de-emphasized the Sunni-Shi'a division (discussed shortly), forged tactical relationships with Shi'a terrorist groups like Hezbollah, and, despite the fact that al Qaeda remains primarily a Sunni organization, "Its broad-based ideology, integrated horizontally and vertically, appeals to, and resonates among, the affluent and the less affluent, the educated

and the less educated. Al Qaeda cuts across historical and sectarian barriers, drawing its membership from all strata of society” (Gunuratna 2003, 6-16).

The fundamentalist Islam that al Qaeda embraces is not a minor or entirely twisted interpretation of the religion. The interpretation has been part of Islam since the beginning of the religion, is part of the scriptures, and has been promoted by many high-level, respected intellectuals. As one scholar remarks,

It is not simply the case that a mere nineteen terrorists hijacked a peaceful religion... It is not the case... that a rag-tag handful of miscreants had “perverted” the “true Islam.” The species of Islam that has spurred these and other attacks has a long and distinguished pedigree. It is fourteen centuries old. It is rooted in the literal commands of the scriptures. It is a project that has engaged high intellects. And it is a belief system that continues to win the allegiance of the educated and illiterate, rich and poor, young and old... (McCarthy 2010, 115).

As has been previously argued, it must be understood that there is a strong base for this interpretation in the Muslim world, and that as such al Qaeda’s ideas will at least resonate with many. The majority of Muslims are not radicals that follow al Qaeda or its related groups. Yet, while 9/11 resulted in many well-publicized Muslim leaders decrying the attacks, former al Qaeda members publically denouncing the attacks with remarks such as “Al Qaeda committed suicide on September 11,” and other *jihad* groups condemning al Qaeda’s internationalization of the fight (Gerges 2010, 119-120), these groups and individuals are often criticizing al Qaeda’s timing or attack location, not the basic religious justifications.

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, there are many reasons proffered from many different sectors – academics, politicians, religious leaders, doctors – as to why people become terrorists and why al Qaeda is attacking the West. These reasons include US policies perceived as unfair, envy, material want, Islam itself, and sexual frustration. However, the literature provided by al Qaeda’s own key figures – ideologues and theorists – has often been ignored. By studying these speeches and writings, it becomes possible to understand what their motivations, grievances, and goals are in their fight against the West (Ibrahim 2007, 1).

There are two main categories of al Qaeda literature; the first is propagandist materials directed towards the West or general Muslim audiences in order to demoralize the enemy and elicit support and volunteers from the Muslim community. The second is more scholarly and theoretical, directed towards potential sympathizers and militants, and arguing for the rationale behind *jihadist* action. This type of literature uses nationalist, religious, and historical arguments to persuade the reader that violence can be legitimately used to achieve certain political ends. This literature explains a certain worldview that makes up the essence of al Qaeda; by reading this literature, we can understand this worldview and essence (Kepel 2008, 3-4).

As one of the foremost terrorism experts notes, al Qaeda is a group with political goals that is driven by a specific religious interpretation. Religious indoctrination is a key part of the curriculum in al Qaeda training camps (Gunuratna 2003, 76, 98-9, 116, 313). And of course, it is not just al Qaeda that is motivated by a religious-based rationality – there is a larger religiously-inspired Islamist insurgency against the West, waged by al Qaeda-related groups worldwide. Al Qaeda is “waging war on America in God’s name” with a strategic goal of defeating the US (Scheuer 2007, xxiii-xxiv). Dekmejian lists al Qaeda’s ideological tenets (2007, 188-9):

1. True Islam is composed of confrontation, struggle, and forced conversion to Islam.
2. Peace, dialogue, and coexistence between Islam and non-Muslim peoples is impossible; instead, the relationship is one of eternal conflict.
3. True Muslims should be detached and separate from non-Muslims, and enact total fellowship and brotherhood to other Muslims.
4. *Jihad* is actually an act of mercy by Allah that all people should undertake; fighting non-Muslims actually helps them, because they are forcibly converted to Islam, eternally saving their souls.
5. *Jihad*, both offensive and defensive, entails a constant process of war; defensive *jihad* does not require the permission of any authority or leader.
6. Anyone who helps non-Muslims or apostate regimes are legitimate targets; instead Muslims need to show total hatred towards the West, which is enacting both civilizational and ideational threats.

Overall, al Qaeda hates America and the West because of “lost honor, humiliation, attendant envy, and the ensuing fear that the Islamists’ ‘authority will pass away.’ Al-Qaeda is fueled by such existential fury, it appears, because the purer and more devout Muslim world is now seen as weak and impotent” – which is the fault of the Arab leaders that have let the West steal Muslim wealth, water down Islam into a meaningless moderate approximation, and maintain better weapons (Hanson 2007, xxviii). Al Qaeda tells the humiliated Muslim world that it offers both a practical way to fix the situation and psychological assurance that the West will fall soon. And in pursuit of this goal, all methods are allowed by God – murdering civilians, collateral damage of Muslim casualties, and uninhibited killing of Americans and seizing of their money (Hanson 2007, xxvix).

Before 9/11, al Qaeda’s short-term goals were the withdrawal of US troops from Saudi Arabia, deterring the US from supporting military interventions that lead to Muslim deaths, breaking US relationships with pro-Western Muslim rulers, and destroying US-Israeli relations (Abrahms 2010, 150). These actions were to be followed by the subsequent establishment of a Caliphate, while al Qaeda’s medium-term strategy was to rid the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East of apostate secular rules and expand the Caliphate, creating true Islamic states ruled by *shariah* law. Furthermore, according to Gunuratna, al Qaeda’s long-term goal “was to build a formidable array of Islamic states –including ones with nuclear capability – to wage war on the US (the ‘Great Satan’) and its allies” (Gunuratna 2003, 119). Much of al Qaeda’s critique of the West comes from actual Western thought and political platforms, as will be seen later in the section (Hanson 2007, xxvix).

The following sections will look briefly at some of the seminal thinkers in this strand of Islam. First is a list of several of the main quotations from the Koran, *hadith* (sayings of Mohammad), and *sunna* (stories of Mohammad’s life) – all together these three sources are called the *shariah* – that are used by the theorists in this section to support their arguments regarding *jihad* and martyrdom. More are provided in the Appendix. The section continues with an

explanation of the ideas of key historical and contemporary ideologues. All of these ideologues and theologians present al Qaeda's goals and value system, delineating what aspects of Islam are motivating their choice of actions – or, more specifically, what the values are that provide the substance of the group's substantive rationality.

First, some definitions and basic issues: *jihad*, according to Azzam, “mean[s] to give all one's energy to obtain something that is appreciated or to repel something that is detested” (Azzam 2008, 127). In defining *jihad*, mujahid, and mujahideen, Al Suri writes,

... [A] jihadi is one who exerts efforts to make Allah's word higher than anything else. This implies fighting for Allah's sake and sacrificing oneself and property for the victory of Allah's religion and the defense of Muslims (their religion, blood, honor, properties, and their land). Whoever does this job, to see Allah's face and to keep Allah's word higher than anything else, is a mujahid. And if a team or group agreed and gathered for this job, then they are mujahideen (al Suri 2008 [2005], 66).

One terrorism expert writes, “the principal aims of *jihad* are to remove oppression and injustice; to establish justice, well-being and prosperity; and to eliminate barriers to the spread of truth” (Gunuratna 2003, 112). In the Koran, *jihad* is used in several different contexts, including defending Islam and the community, removing treacherous rulers from power, preemptive strikes, and freeing people from tyranny. Defensive *jihad* was first used in the medieval Crusades against the invading Christian West and was first conceptualized in a political context in the early- and mid-1900s. Yet, it should be noted that *jihad* is technically only able to be formally and legally declared by religious authorities, and has been done so only in a few cases – it is not an automatic option that can be claimed whenever Islamic resources or lands are threatened. Those declaring *jihad* can only do so after the situation has been entirely assessed – looking at the potential risks to both the well-being and the integrity of the general Muslim community as well as the chances of victory. However, many Muslims are not aware of the strict qualifications that apply to the

announcement of *jihad*, and so it can often be invoked relatively easily in the public sphere (Ben-Dor and Pedahzhur 2003, 74).

The Koran forbids terrorism – deliberately killing non-combatants – unless they are part of the conspirator category, those who are fighting against Muslims with either actions or words (Gunuratna 2003, 113-4). Yet, as Moghadam notes, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, has stated, “Admittedly, the killing of a number of Muslims whom it is forbidden to kill is undoubtedly a grave evil; however, it is permissible to commit this evil – indeed, it is even required – in order to ward off a greater evil, namely, the evil of suspending *jihad*” (Moghadam 2008, 78). The Koran also forbids suicide but promotes martyrdom; according to the 9/11 attackers’ spiritual manual, martyrs must make sure that “the action is for the sake of God alone,” not due to a desire for personal vengeance or depression; the manual prescribes 15 exercises for purification to transform the attackers into martyrs and warriors of an ideal past and emphasizes the attacks were to be perceived as both *jihad* and as a raid (*ghazwa*) (Kippenberg 2005, 38-42).

In Islam, every ideology, law, and practice must be traced back to a certain corpus of jurisprudence – hierarchically, the Koran, the *sunna* (example of the Prophet), the *hadith* (analogic sayings of the Prophet passed down in verified chains), and consensus of Islamic scholars (the *ulema*). Based on all these sources, Islamic law – *shariah* – is established. All of these sources can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Also, it should be noted that there is a large split in the Islamic world between Shi’a and Sunni Islam. Shi’a Islam is a minority – approximately 20% – and the two sides differ over who they believe should lead the Muslim community. Political, social, ethnic, and historical differences have developed over centuries. In general, the two groups do not get along, with each believing that the other has perverted the true Islam. Thus, there is a significant amount of tension and violence between the two sides throughout the Muslim world (Juergensmeyer 2008, 47-8).

As this paper discusses the rationality of organizations, it is appropriate to quickly note the organizational structure of al Qaeda: bin Laden was – and

now al Zawahiri is – the leader, and directly under him was the Shura Council of approximately 12 members. This council oversees the various committees: military, Islamic study, media, travel, finance, etc. There is a clear hierarchy to the organization, with cadres in the bottom, managers above, and commanders nearer to the top of each committee (Stern 2003, 250).

### ***Primary Support in the Islamic Literature – the Shariah***

The *shariah* are defined by Qutb as “everything legislated by God for ordering man’s life; it includes the principles of belief, principles of administration and justice, principles of morality and human relationships, and principles of knowledge” (Qutb 2005, 73). Through the Koran, the life of Mohammad, and his sayings, Muslims find precedents for every conceivable situation, and pattern their lives on these precedents. A few select examples of Koranic quotes, *sunna*, and *hadith* are presented here to display the type of textual support that al Qaeda uses consistently in speeches, treatises, and other writings. Al Qaeda bases their values based on this body of religious texts – values which, as is argued in this paper, directly influence the actions that the group undertakes. A longer list of supporting *shariah* can be found in the Appendix.

#### *Koran*

- “Fight against them [infidels] until idolatry is no more and Allah’s religion reigns supreme” [2:191] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “You are obligated to fight, though you may hate it. For it may well be that you hate that which is good for you and love that which is evil for you. Allah knows [best]; you do not know” [2:216] – quoted by bin Laden, al Zawahiri
- “Permission to fight (against disbelievers) is given to these (believers) who are fought against, because they have been wronged and surely, Allah is able to give them (believers) victory.” [22:39] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “O you who have believed! Shall I point out to you a profitable course that will save you from a woeful scourge? Have faith in Allah and His Messenger, and fight in the path of Allah with your resources and lives. That would be best for you – if you but only knew it! He will forgive you your sins and usher you into gardens watered by running streams.

He will lodge you in pleasant mansions in the gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph! And He will bestow other blessings that you desire: help from Allah and a speedy victory. Proclaim the good tidings to the faithful!” [61:10-13] – quoted by al Zawahiri

### *Sunna and Hadith*

- According to Mohammed, “Whosoever dies without having fought (in a jihad), or having prepared his soul for this battle, dies on a branch of hypocrisy” (Azzam 2008, 116).
- “Attack in the name of Allah and in the path of Allah do battle with whoever rejects Allah. Attack!” (bin Laden 2002, 41-42)
- “The martyr is special to Allah. He is forgiven from the first drop of blood [that he sheds]. He sees his throne in Paradise, where he will be adorned in ornaments of faith. He will wed the Aynhour [wide-eyed virgins] and will not know the torments of the grave and safeguards against the greater terror [hell]. Fixed atop his head will be a crown of honor, a ruby that is greater than the world and all it contains and he will couple with seventy-two Aynhour and be able to offer intercessions for seventy of his relatives” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 143-4).
- “He who is killed for [defending] his possessions is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his blood is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his religion is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his households is a martyr” (bin Laden 2007 [post-2002], 251)

### *The Arguments of Key Theologians and Ideologues*

This section looks at several important ideologues and theologians that have influenced Al Qaeda’s rationality, which has in turn affected both the group’s purpose and its tactical choices. Short biographies will first be introduced, followed by key topical arguments and the reasoning given by these scholars for why certain beliefs are held and actions are acceptable – in particular, those beliefs that are related to the question of lethality of attacks.

#### *Backgrounds and Introductions*

In terms of key historical figures, Ibn Taymiyya was a fourteenth-century Sunni theologian who has had a particularly strong influence on radical Islam today. Sayyid Qutb was a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood who was executed under accusation of treason in 1966. One of his most famous

books was titled *Signposts* or *Milestones*; Abu Musab al Suri – another ideologue – writes that the book “contains the summary of the jihad ideology and his [Qutb’s] revolutionary ideas regarding jihad theories and overthrowing governments” (al Suri 2008 [2005], 69). The arguments put forth by both men provide some of the key justifications for *jihad* that would later be used by al Qaeda. The values and beliefs of Islam emphasized by these two scholars promote a more violent interpretation of Islam that inform al Qaeda’s worldview and the values upon which the group bases its actions.

The Palestinian religious scholar Abdullah Azzam (1941-1989) has played a key role in radical Islamic scholarship. During the 1980s war against the USSR in Afghanistan, Azzam served as an inspirational figure, the principal theoretician for and organizer of Arab participation. He was the primary individual involved in persuading the *jihad* fighters in Afghanistan that they would be rewarded in paradise. After his death, his role as the leader of the international *jihad* was filled by Omar Abdel Rahman, the ‘Blind Sheikh,’ who was to further radicalize bin Laden. Radical Islamists call Azzam ‘the imam of jihad,’ while Western analysts have preferred to him as ‘the godfather of jihad’ due to his important role in the development of the idea of global *jihad*. His two most well-known books are classics in the field of jihadist literature, *The Defense of Muslim Territories* and *Join the Caravan*, though his body of work includes over 100 books, articles, and recorded conferences (Hegghammer 2008, 81, 98; Moghadam 2008, 59). Azzam contributed both to the physical foundation of al Qaeda and was also a key ideologue in formulating the group’s initial policies. He redirected the *jihad* movement from internal to the Muslim world to externally, to the West and supporters of apostate Muslim rulers. He provided a solid foundation for the use of martyrdom acts and promoted the idea of *jihad* for a pan-Arabic political idea instead of a nationally-based conception. And, he based these policies and concepts in Islamic theology and religious tradition that emphasized which values would provide the foundation of al Qaeda’s substantive rationality.

Often called al Qaeda's mastermind, Abu Musab al Suri (born Mustafa Setmariam Nasar) has been indicted for his part in the 2003 Madrid bombings and was a prime suspect in the 2005 London bombings. He also created several sleeper cells in Europe, one of which played a key role in logistical support of the 9/11 attacks. He served as a top aid to bin Laden and had a \$5 million reward on his head by the time of his late-2005 capture in Pakistan – the second most wanted man on international terrorism lists. Born in Syria, he joined the Afghan *jihād* against the Soviet occupation and likely met Osama bin Laden there. He gradually became the primary strategist and a key theorist of the *jihād* movement and was dedicated to violence as the only way to achieve Islamic goals. He established his own training camp in Afghanistan and assisted in chemical weapons experimentation; his best student was Abu Musab al Zarqawi, the leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, for which al Suri spent time planning attacks and as an ideological guide (Lacey 2008, vii-xi).

Al Suri was a prolific writer, and his greatest work was a 1600-page book published in 2005 entitled *The Call to Global Islamic Resistance*. He wrote the book to give new *mujahideen* a thorough, clear history of the jihadist movement and its ideology – thus, the book provides us with a window into present-day jihadist thought and a historical evolution of its movements. The *Washington Post* called him “the most dangerous terrorist you never heard of” (Lacey 2008, vii-xi). Al Suri's key contributions to al Qaeda's religiously-based value set have been in his legitimation of suicide operations as well as the justification of killing civilians. These explanations are very important for al Qaeda organizationally, as it allows the group to legitimately kill civilians in its attacks instead of being worried about collateral damage.

In 1966, at age 15, Ayman al Zawahiri joined the Egyptian jihadist movement and for the next 30 years worked to overthrow the Egyptian regime. Al Zawahiri had initially joined the Muslim Brotherhood, but later came to believe that the organization had lost its way by deciding to participate in democracy instead of waging *jihād* against the apostate Egyptian government. In the late 1990s, al Zawahiri shifted strategically and joined with bin Laden in

prioritizing the defensive *jihad* against the West. A pediatrician, al Zawahiri became the chief ideologue of al Qaeda and is considered by some to be the real theorist behind 9/11 (Lacroix 2008, 147). After those attacks, al Zawahiri became the primary communication agent with the Islamic community, critical to the daily function of al Qaeda and key in radicalizing bin Laden (Mansfield 2006, 13; Bergen 2002, 206). He was al Qaeda's most important ideologue following the death of Azzam, especially after Rahman was jailed in the US. His advocacy of suicide bombing was key in influencing bin Laden to adopt the tactic. Some say he turned bin Laden from a guerilla into a terrorist, though he for certain provided practical, crucial knowledge to bin Laden and assisted in developing al Qaeda and realizing his plans. Both bin Laden and al Zawahiri follow Salafi Islam, a sect acknowledged as the pious pioneers of Islam – Islam in its totality, not strictly defined between Sunni and Shia – and which wants to take the Muslim world back to the time of the Prophet and the Koran, establishing an Islamic society governed by *shariah* (Gunuratna 2002, 34-6; Moghadam 2008, 60). Overall, al Zawahiri provides an important discussion of al Qaeda's goals and a roadmap for how al Qaeda hopes to achieve them. He also promotes and provides support for several Islamic doctrines that are key for al Qaeda attacking Muslim and American civilians, such as *jihad* and martyrdom operations. Al Zawahiri also conducts an extensive analysis of the importance of popular support for al Qaeda and the group's actions, an idea that will be analyzed more fully in the qualitative analysis that follows this chapter.

Osama bin Laden was born in Saudi Arabia, the 17<sup>th</sup> of 52 children. At university in Jeddah, he learned Islamic studies from Sayyid Qutb's brother, Muhammad – the Muslim Brotherhood's ideologue – as well as Abdullah Azzam. He moved to Pakistan within one month of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, where he and Azzam set up the Afghan Service Bureau; he spent the majority of his time supporting the Afghan campaign through recruitment and raising funds. He became very popular among the *mujahideen* because, despite his privileged background, he evinced simplicity, humility, charisma, fearlessness, and strong commitment to *jihad*. He followed the tenants of Islam

exactly, in both the things he said and his prayers (Gunuratna 2002, 21-55). As one analyst wrote, bin Laden appeared to genuinely be a pious Muslim as well as an eloquent and frank speaker; a devoted family man; a patient, focused, and talented commander of the Islamist insurgency; a successful businessman; and “an individual of conviction, intellectual honesty, compassion, humility, and physical bravery” (Scheuer 2007, 3).

Although Azzam and bin Laden conceived of al Qaeda together as a way to support Muslims persecuted for their political and religious beliefs, they differed on the tactics to be utilized – specifically, over whether or not to move the *jihad* outside of Afghanistan (Gunuratna 2002, 21-55). Stern reports that, between 1989 and 2001, the training camps established by bin Laden in Afghanistan – estimated to number between 12 and over 50 – graduated approximately 70,000-110,000 radical Muslims, though only several thousand of the top students were invited to join al Qaeda. Other training camps have also been established in Sudan, Somalia, Indonesia, Chechnya, and Yemen, among other countries (Stern 2003, 260).

Bin Laden often speaks – and writes – regarding al Qaeda’s motivations and the rationale behind the group’s attacks. Even Abrahms acknowledges that bin Laden’s policy demands have been “notably consistent” (2006, 66). His speeches and essays are “thoughtful, aware, and brutally direct” (Scheuer 2007, x). As Scheuer, a CIA veteran al Qaeda analyst, wrote,

Bin Laden’s words are... the indispensable key to understanding the religious motivation driving him and his allies. Most important, his words leave no room to doubt that Americans are being attacked for what they do in the Islamic world, not for how they think, live, or govern themselves (Scheuer 2007, x).

Bin Laden was so “successful” as a terrorist organization leader because he was able to fuse Muslim piety, religious fervor, and “a profound sense of grievance into a powerful ideological force” (Hoffman 2006, 93). As the co-founder and former head of al Qaeda, bin Laden is especially important as a mouthpiece of the organization’s goals and reasoning patterns. He provides a clear and consistent set of goals and grievances that al Qaeda has against the West. Bin

Laden has also utilized the work of the other ideologues in his justifications of both martyrdom operations and the killing of noncombatants – even Muslims. An analysis of his work should give us further insight into his motivations and the key part that religion plays in motivating and directing al Qaeda’s activities.

### *Jihad*

Ibn Taymiyya argued for a literal interpretation of the *shariah*, contending that the Islamic communities built during the time of Mohammed in Medina were ideal communities, and all Muslims – as well as all humans – should aspire to live similarly. At that time, Muhammad fought for the hegemony of Islam, not the coexistence he had promoted while living in Mecca (McCarthy 2010, 105-11). During this period Islam became significantly more in favor of fighting and war on unbelievers and enemy tribes were brutally conquered (McCarthy 2010, 105-11). Ibn Taymiyya promoted this version of Islam, which commanded believers to work – *jihad* – to bring about universal submission to Allah. One of the intellectual schools today that is a descendent of this thought is Wahhabism, the official religious creed of the Saudi Arabian royal family and the country in general; Iranian religious leaders promote similar interpretations of Islam based on Ibn Taymiyya (McCarthy 2010, 105-11).

As explained by Wiktorowicz, Ibn Taymiyya contributed to *jihad* as an ideology primarily in terms of moral and religious reasoning. Ibn Taymiyya argued, “The command to participate in jihad and the mention of its merits occur innumerable times in the Koran and the Sunna. Therefore it is the best voluntary [religious] act that man can perform” (Wiktorowicz 2005, 83). Bin Laden quotes Ibn Taymiyya in his 1998 declaration of war against the Americans: “As for defensive warfare, this is the greatest way to defend sanctity and religion. This is an obligation consensually agreed to [by the *ulema*]. After faith, there is nothing more sacred than repulsing the enemy who attacks religion and life” (bin Laden 1998, 12-13). Al Zawahiri also quotes Ibn Taymiyya in several essays – for example, “If the enemy enters the lands of

Islam, he must surely be repelled as soon as possible for all Islamic lands are one *umma*. There must be a general call to arms, without requiring permission from the father nor [any other] opposition” (al Zawahiri 2007 [2002], 93).

Qutb argues that Islam involves the freedom to submit oneself to God, so *jihad* was necessary to establish the context – with leadership expelled – in which conquered peoples could convert. Like Ibn Taymiyya, Qutb believed that *jihad* should target both nonbelievers and the apostate rulers of Muslim territories who were not following the *sharia* well (McCarthy 2010, 112-3). Al Zawahiri describes Qutb as the most influential contemporary martyr in Islam and “the most prominent theoretician of the fundamentalist movements” (in Stern 2003, 264). Qutb also argues against a strict definition of nationality or territory. All Muslims belong to one pan-Islamic country and provide a family for each other. National boundaries, flags, and other such divisions are minor when compared to the overarching shared religion and community of all Muslims. Therefore, *jihad* is not undertaken for any specific country or family, but instead for the success of Islam and for the sake of God and the Muslim community or *umma* (Qutb 2005, 85-86). Qutb argues that *jihad* is a fundamental aspect of Islam, because, as Azzam quotes, “If jihad were a transient phenomenon in the life of Muslims, all these sections of the Quranic text would not be flooded with this type of verse! Likewise, it would not have taken up so many chapters in God’s book – and in such a manner! Nor would it have occupied so much of the *sunna* of the Prophet” (Azzam 2008, 115).

Azzam was also key in arguing that *jihad* was an obligation for all Muslims, who are required to participate both morally and financially; not participating was a capital sin. Afghanistan was held up as a case in point – reconquest of the country from the USSR via *jihad* was a religious requirement and in individual obligation. After Afghanistan was reconquered, all other formerly-Muslim lands must be brought back to Islamic rule via *jihad* (Kepel 2006, 146-7). His legacy is comprised of three parts: political, organizational, and ideological. Politically, he was able to transform the Afghan war from a regional issue to a global fight, contingent upon all Muslims to join. He did this

through fundraising, network creation, and systematic propaganda. Organizationally, he was the ‘father of the Afghan Arabs:’ he created the Afghan Service bureau, which recruited and trained thousands, or even tens of thousands, of foreign Muslims to support the Afghan resistance against the Soviet invasion. In turn,

The result was the creation of an Islamism International made up of men whose strong feelings of brotherhood transcended national and cultural differences as well as ideological perspectives – those of the nation-state and the struggle against specific Arab governments. Perhaps more important still is the way the Service Bureau and its branches created a cadre of extremely motivated, experienced, and hardened activists, whose paramilitary prowess was superior to that of any previous Islamist group (Hegghammer 2008, 97-8).

However, his most important contribution was ideologically, as one of the primary theoreticians of global *jihad*. Azzam’s primary achievement in this regard was moving the target of *jihad* from the enemy within to the external enemy – foreign aggressors occupying Muslim territories. General self-defense was more important than getting rid of bad domestic governments (Hegghammer 2008, 98-9). Fighting was legitimate as long as “its aim is to spread God’s word, save humanity from unbelief, and lead humanity from the darkness of this world to its light and the light of the next life” (Azzam 2008, 127). Because proselytizing the Muslim faith often hit economic, social, and/or political obstacles, combat was created as a legitimate means of spreading Islam (Azzam 2008, 127).

For the first generations of Muslims, *jihad* was a way of life; Muhammad led many *jihad* battles, participating in 27 expeditions and fighting in nine of these. He was commanded by God to fight against those who fought him and fight the polytheists until they had converted to Islam (Azzam 2008, 117; Qutb 2005, 33). According to Azzam, there are two types of *jihad*, offensive and defensive. Offensive *jihad* [*jihad al-talab*] means going abroad and attacking unbelievers. This is a collective duty; at the very least, the borders of the Muslim world should be guarded defensively to intimidate the enemies of God. Alternatively, defensive *jihad* [*jihad al-daf*] is expelling unbelievers from

Muslim land. This is an individual duty, and in certain cases – such as the imprisonment of Muslims by unbelievers, or unbelievers entering Muslim land – it is the most important individual duty. It cannot be ignored or abandoned, as it is one of the fundamental obligations of every Muslim; in fact, “*jihad* is a collective act of worship” (in Gunuratna 2003, 117; Azzam 2008, 106, 117).

Azzam created a different territorial discourse, moving the object of *jihad* from the political system of a Muslim state to the territory itself, arguing that if even “a portion of Muslim territory is invaded, jihad becomes an individual duty for all Muslim men and women” (Azzam 2008, 103). For instance, the struggle for Palestine – “the sacred cause of Islam, the heart of the Muslim world, and a blessed land” – was not about creating a state, but instead about reclaiming Muslim land; according to Hegghammer, Azzam wrote, “the Palestinian problem will be solved only through jihad... jihad, a rifle, and that is all. No negotiations, no conferences, no dialogue” (Hegghammer 2008, 98-9, 107). Azzam argued that places like Afghanistan, Palestine, Kashmir, Lebanon, the Philippines, Chad, and Eritrea were all territories that had been entered by unbelievers. As such, it was compulsory for all Muslims to fight until the unbelievers had left. He asserted that “as long as any country that was once Muslim is still in non-Muslim hands... all Muslims are sinners”; furthermore, the more powerful a Muslim is, the sin increases – meaning that leaders, preachers, scholars, and other high-ranking individuals who do not go to *jihad* are sinning more egregiously than more common people (Azzam 2008, 106-7). Donating money does not grant anyone an exemption, and *jihad* is a continuous lifelong duty (Azzam 2008, 121). Azzam also rejected the idea of a revolutionary front carrying out a coup d’état in favor of a military approach, proposing a territorial “solid base” in which Muslims could be educated in *jihad* and learn how to reconquer Muslim territory. In addition, Azzam promoted the idea of pan-Arabism as a political platform, correspondingly reducing the importance of nation-states.

Al Suri also believes *jihad* to be a duty for all Muslims. Until the colonizers leave Muslim territory, “the entire *ummah* will remain guilty and

responsible before God for not sufficiently repelling the enemy. Violent jihad is an individual duty obligatory on every Muslim” (al Suri 2008 [2005], 6). Also like other theorists, al Suri declares the current battle to be one of defensive *jihad* – a duty for all Muslims. He writes, “there is a war established and imposed on us by our enemy that, in accordance with the requirements of our religion, we are obliged to fight” (al Suri 2008 [2005], 25). Therefore, he sees the current attack on Muslim and Arab lands by the US and other Western powers as a war being fought against Islam – and as such, the tenants of Islam call him to fight back. It follows “that armed jihad is the solution for putting an end to the crises of the current situation. The sharia evidence for this is clearer than the eye of the sun,” while the minimal form of resistance is verbally and sentimentally (al Suri 2008 [2005], 48, 64). The work a mujahideen group does is to “expel evil” and the acts are “based on concepts and religious convictions meant to eliminate infidels and their leaders or to destroy establishments that serve alcohol or purvey prostitution or any other corrupt practice that is contrary to Islamic laws” (al Suri 2008 [2005], 67).

For al Zawahiri, Islam is extremely involved with Muslim life and provides a multitude of rules and laws that govern every aspect of Muslims’ lives. One of those regulations is about fighting against invasions in Muslim countries: “resistance is a duty imposed by shari’ah,” a compulsory obligation for every single Muslim to support *jihad*, especially in Palestine, as it is infidel-occupied Islamic land – and it is also compulsory to continue to strive for its liberation until the day the land is won back. *Jihad* is a battle being waged to defend Islam, the Muslim nation, Palestine, values, honor, wealth, power, sanctities, and is a battle in which every Muslim is obligated to partake (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 129; al Zawahiri 2006c [2006], 340). Furthermore, “*jihad* is the most excellent work a servant [Muslim] can render. *Jihad* is proof of absolute love;” love of Allah is a prerequisite of *jihad*, because if you love Allah, then you love what he loves and hate what he hates (al Zawahiri 2007 [2002], 81-2).

*Jihad* requires religious motivations and thinking; for example, on Palestine he says, “It is impossible to do *jihad* [struggle] there with a narrow and secular nationalistic way of thinking, which pushes aside Sharia and respects the seculars’ influence in Palestine” (al Zawahiri 2006b [2006], 318-9). He has a very negative view of the secular movements in Palestine, writing that they are going against the way of Islam – in fact, they are criminals in Islamic eyes. Al Zawahiri argues that there are many benefits that result from *jihad* – such as inspiring hope in other Muslims, a weapon of resistance directed against the regime’s supporters who become demoralized, and actions against US and Western interests, which create a sense of solidarity in resistance among the Muslim world (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 109). In fact, because all other methods of resistance have failed, “there is no solution without jihad” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 205). He further sees a wide array of countries undertaking a new Crusade against Islamic lands, using many tools to fight Islam, such as Muslim rulers, the UN, multinational corporations, international news agencies, international communications and data systems, and international relief agencies (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 203-4). He maintains that the Islamic world has been occupied for the past two centuries. In response to Western aggression and invasion, “this age is witnessing a new phenomenon that continues to gain ground. It is the phenomenon of the mujahid youths who have abandoned their families, country, wealth, studies, and jobs in search of jihad arenas for the sake of God” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 204-5). However, *jihad* takes a long time and requires much sacrifice. For al Zawahiri, the goal is “comprehensive change,” which takes time; as such, the *jihad* movement “must not despair of repeated strikes and recurring calamities. We must never lay down our arms, regardless of the casualties or sacrifices” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 219).

Al Zawahiri argues that the ultimate goal for Muslims is to establish a caliphate like that of the Prophet in the heart of the Islamic world; as such, *jihad* is a way of sacrifice and a type of action that is “a large step directly towards that goal” (Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 255). In terms of freedom, he writes,

Our freedom is the freedom of unity and manners and chastity and fairness and justice. And therefore, any reform that seeks that freedom depends on three things:

- Rule of the Qu'ran
- Liberation of the homelands
- Liberation of the people

They will not come about except through jihad, and struggle, and more struggle, and martyrdom. They will not come about unless we eject the enemies from our homes, and seize our rights with the power of jihad. The enemies will not leave our homes if we show kindness or ask them (al Zawahiri 2006b [2004], 242).

*Jihad* can be used to attain these goals in three stages. The first is to expel the Americans from Iraq, and the second is to establish, develop, and support an Islamic authority to become a Caliphate, over as much territory as is possible, centered on Iraq. The third stage is to extend the wave of *jihad* to encompass the secular countries around Iraq, while the fourth is to fight with Israel and take back the Palestinian territory (Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 255-6). The *jihad* “to defend and fight against this crusader campaign that is targeting our religion and sacred beliefs, our lands and wealth, we need to carry on the fight on four related fronts” (al Zawahiri 2006b [2006], 313). The first front is to inflict losses on the West that would result in long-term damage, especially with regard to Western infrastructure – such as 9/11 and the Madrid and London bombings. The second front is to force the Western countries to leave Muslim territory, concentrating on Iraq, Palestine, and Afghanistan. The occupying forces must be made to pay a heavy price for their presence. The third front is to work towards changing the apostate Middle Eastern regimes, while the fourth front is proselytizing – spreading the Islamic religion – as well as promoting the idea of *jihad* among the Muslim population to increase support psychologically and financially (al Zawahiri 2006b [2006], 313-5).

Al Zawahiri also discusses the little-known doctrine of *taqiyya* – literally, self preservation through dissembling – which means that Muslims are permitted to openly deceive infidels by pretending goodwill or friendship, in certain extreme circumstances, as long as they remain loyal to Islam in their hearts. Outwardly, they can smile and pretend to blend into the culture – even

drinking beer and behaving in immoral ways, as did the 9/11 hijackers. However, the Muslim must not do anything to support the infidels in harming other Muslims, even if not supporting should result in his death (al Zawahiri 2007 [2002], 72-5).

For bin Laden, *jihad* must be undertaken by all whenever the enemy invades Muslim territory (bin Laden 2007 [1998], 12-13). *Jihad* is carried out by Muslims who are defending their faith and responding to the orders of Allah and Muhammad (bin Laden 2007a [2002], 231). As such, al Qaeda issued a decree to all Muslims that it was an individual duty for every Muslim able, in any country, to kill Americans and their allies, military and civilians. This decree would be in effect until Mecca and Jerusalem were liberated from the invaders and all enemy armies were withdrawn from Muslim territory (bin Laden 2007 [1998], 12-13). In response to the on-going attack, 9/11 was both a legitimate act of self-defense and a way to punish the wicked. Bin Laden had for many years previous been trying to communicate this message (bin Laden 2007 [2004], 216). And, he offered a truce if the US simply withdrew from the Middle East, in which case the US would save billions of dollars and Muslims could start to rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan (bin Laden 2007 [2006], 224).

Bin Laden further saw the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan as an official declaration of war on Islam by the West (bin Laden 2007 [2001], 194). In this fight, all Muslims should undertake *jihad* to defend their religion – and al Qaeda has declared its continued dedication to Allah by refusing to abandon Islam and by fighting against the invaders. He swears “that neither America, nor anyone living there, will ever enjoy safety until we can first see it as a reality in Palestine and before all the infidel armies quit the land of Muhammad” (bin Laden 2007 [2001], 195). Al Qaeda has been able to survive the invasions of the Middle East due to Allah’s will – “by holding fast to principles, faith overcame all the materialist forces of the people of evil, by Allah Exalted’s grace” (bin Laden 2007b [2002], 2440-5). In this war, it is easy for the *jihadists* to hurt America – for example, all bin Laden had to do to provoke and lure the US government “was send two *mujahidin* to the farthest

east to raise aloft a piece of rag with the words “al-Qaeda” written on it, and the [U.S.] generals came a-scurrying,” which damages America economically, politically, and in terms of human life (bin Laden 2007 [2004], 217).

In addition, bin Laden argued that, while “battle, animosity and hatred – directed from the Muslim to the infidel – is the foundation of our religion,” this is a kindness and a type of justice (bin Laden 2007 [2005], 43-4). This is because the result of this battle is that the infidel would convert to Islam – and thus have the chance to join Allah in paradise after death. In fact, bin Laden points out, it is part of Islam to impose religious beliefs on other peoples; he writes, “we *are* to force people by the power of the sword to [our] particular understandings, customs, and conditions, in order to induce debasement and humility...” (bin Laden 2007 [2005], 51). Muhammad himself, three months after first moving to Medina, sent out a raiding party of Muslims to foreign lands to destroy infidel strongholds and take their possessions, women, and lives (bin Laden 2007 [2005], 56). On many occasions, Muhammad went with them – as bin Laden says, “thus our Prophet and his Companions and the righteous forefathers have all now become ‘terrorists,’” clearly implying that this was not a negative thing in the Islamic history (bin Laden 2007 [2005], 58).

### ***Islam as a System of Belief***

Having spent several years in the West, Qutb had come to believe that the Western period of rule was ending because “it is deprived of those life-giving values which enabled it to be the leader of mankind” (Qutb 2005, 3). Therefore, in order to preserve the legacy of Europe, new leadership was needed – and, “Islam is the only System which possesses these values and this way of life” (Qutb 2005, 3). In Islam, “religion” means a way of life, and the *shariah* deal with “the morals, manners, values and standards of the society, according to which persons, actions and events are measured. It also deals with all aspects of knowledge and principles of art and science” (Qutb 2005, 38, 73). Only God can provide guidance for Muslims “in matters of faith, in the concept of life, acts of worship, morals and human affairs, values and standards,

principles of economics and political affairs and interpretation of historical processes” (Qutb 2005, 74). Qutb argues the Koran teaches Muslims a different reality, a different scale by which to weigh all matters, and a different conception of struggle. Pain and pleasure in life do not have much weight in this scale, while faith is the true weight. For Muslims, the Koran becomes “a part of their personalities, mingling with their lives and characters so that they became living examples of faith – a faith not hidden in intellects or books, but expressing itself in a dynamic movement which changed conditions and events and the course of life” (Qutb 2005, 8). In fact, “the word ‘religion’ includes more than belief; ‘religion’ actually means a way of life” and the words Islam [submission] and Muslim [one who has submitted] prove that upholding religious law, *shariah*, is central to Islam (Ibrahim 2007, 118).

Everything in Islam is derived from the Oneness of God – including Islam’s laws and institutions. Islam “extends into all aspects of life; it discusses all minor or major affairs of mankind; it orders man’s life – not only in this world but also in the world to come; it gives information about the Unseen as well as the visible world; it not only deals with material things but also purifies intentions and ideas” (Qutb 2005, 18-19). Islam is, further, “a practical religion; it has come to order the practical affairs of life” (Qutb 2005, 19). For Qutb, Islam is a community, a movement, and a belief, all at the same time. The community and movement would both be founded on belief, and practical life would mirror belief. The community would represent and practically interpret the religious faith. Muslims should always struggle against ignorance of their faith, and Islamic belief “not only addresses itself to hearts and minds but also includes practices and morals” (Qutb 2005, 23-24).

The earthly scale is limited, while the Hereafter is the sphere that is important. Realizing this, a Muslim’s horizons are enlarged, so that he or she sets his or her eyes on the Hereafter (Qutb 2005, 105-7). Muslims are workers for God, and do whatever, however, and whenever God wants. It is not the responsibility of Muslims to decide what the end result of their actions will be; instead, they should simply do what God decrees (Qutb 2005, 108). Overall,

God's wisdom underlies every decision and every condition. He administers the entire universe, and, He is informed of its beginning and its end, controlling its events and its interrelationships. He knows the wisdom, hidden from us behind the curtains of the Unseen – the wisdom which, in conjunction with his will, unfolds the long process of history (Qutb 2005, 109).

Again, he argues, "Islam is a comprehensive concept of life and the universe with its own unique characteristics" (Qutb 2005, 88). It is an "eternal state of mind... to inspire the Believer's consciousness, his thoughts, his estimates of things, events, values, and persons" (Qutb 2005, 97). And, argues Qutb, a Muslim's standards, conscience, values, morals, and understanding are superior to man-made standards and values. This superiority gives a Muslim

a sense of dignity, purity and cleanliness, modesty and piety, and a desire for good deeds, and of being a rightly-guided representative of God on earth. Furthermore, this belief gives him the assurance that the reward is in the Hereafter, the reward before which the troubles of the world and all its sorrows become insignificant (Qutb 2005, 99).

### *Apostate Muslim Governments*

Ibn Taymiyya argued that it was the duty of Muslims to also overthrow leaders in the Muslim world who were not ruling according to a fundamentalist interpretation of the *shariah* (McCarthy 2010, 105-11). As Doran notes, Qutb was particularly important for translating "the logic of Ibn Taymiyya's rulings on apostasy into a comprehensive perspective on the problems of Islam in the modern world" (2002, 180). Qutb also promoted the concept of *takfir*, which meant that true Muslims could identify imposter Muslims who had departed from the true path of Islam; these imposters could be proclaimed *kaffir*, meaning that they were no longer part of the Islamic community. Through this doctrine, he argued that apostate Muslim rulers could be overthrown – without this doctrine, no matter how poorly they rule, Muslim rulers may not be challenged. Therefore, attacks against apostate Muslim governments could be considered legitimate as long as 'true believers' had declared a ruler to be *kaffir* (Coll 2004, 203).

Like other theorists, al Zawahiri berates secular rulers of Muslim lands because they have not implemented *sharia* law, have diverted the *umma* from true Islam and themselves deviated entirely from the true religious path. Even worse, these evil, corrupt rulers have befriended the invaders and assisted them in their attempted take-over of Muslim territory – and have even signed peace agreements with or given implicit acceptance to Israel. This act, as well as many others, shows that these rulers are rejecting *jihad* in that their duty should be to drive out the invaders from Muslim lands and help Palestinians. Based on the *shariah*, al Zawahiri argues that while it is forbidden to overthrow a tyrannical Muslim, it is a duty to overthrow an infidel ruler. Because the current rulers of Muslim countries are not ruling according to the *shariah*, they are therefore apostate infidels – thus, “it is obligatory to overthrow them, to wage *jihad* against them, and to deposit them, installing a Muslim ruler in their stead” (al Zawahiri 2007 [1991], 122). In such a situation, all Muslims must revolt against the ruler; if someone physically is unable to fight, then they are obligated to emigrate (al Zawahiri 2007 [1991], 129). It is interesting to note that al Zawahiri held democracy to be contrary to Islam and therefore entirely illegitimate as a form of government over Muslims (al Zawahiri 2007 [1991], 130-6).

### ***The West as an Enemy at the Gates***

In al Suri’s perception of the West, the Bush administration, as leader of the “modern Crusader-Jewish” campaign against the Islamic and Arab world, had announced the goal of entirely eliminating the social, economic, religious, cultural, political, and civilizational existence of the Muslim people, through the following plans:

Transforming the political map of the Middle East and the Arab-Islamic world; that is, transforming the ruling systems and reconstructing, replacing, or forming them anew.

Redrawing the map of certain countries, encouraging fractiousness as well as localized, religious, ethnic, and political strife.

Destroying cultural- and identity-based resistance movements and reconstituting the social fabric by removing the religious, intellectual,

and moral foundation of the region and reshaping this foundation on the basis of western thought, specifically American-Zionist thought.

Hegemony over the sources of wealth in the region, particularly oil and gas, mineral resources, and other agricultural and livestock resources, so as to pump them through the arteries of the invaders and the Zionist entity implanted in the heart of the region.

Transforming the region into a market for liquidating imperialist products via so-called partnership and free trade agreements in the Middle East (al Suri 2008 [2005], 3).

Al Suri sees the West as barbarically, insolently, and malevolently attacking the Muslim world, with America in the lead of this “Third Crusader Campaign” – following the first and second campaigns in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries (al Suri 2008 [2005], 3).

In short, al Suri believes the Muslim community is currently facing an overwhelming disaster due to the American-led attack; worse, many rulers of the Muslim world are cooperating with the Americans, undertaking war against their own religion and the *jihadists*. Significant portions of the Arab world have also been willing to give help to the American occupiers, abandoning the commands and tenants of Islam. The Muslim community, or *umma*, is being threatened – with hardship, pain, and conquest – and faced with fear, humiliation, killing, hunger, and destitution. He argues that the majority of Muslims today have lost their religion, worldly power, and all aspects of their lives have been put under enemy control and tyranny. Thus, it is necessary for *jihadists* to come forward and fight back against God’s enemies (al Suri 2008 [2005], 5, 30-34, 175).

Al Zawahiri asserts that the Muslim world has been insulted and humiliated by the West, with the US specifically targeting Afghanistan through the UN with sanctions – which he perceives as an attack (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 128-9). He argues that the US and other Western countries, strongly influenced by Jews, have committed many crimes against the Muslim people, such as the establishment of Israel. In order to fight back, Muslims must use the same tactics the West uses – military force and violence; the West “does not know the language of ethics, morality and legitimate rights. They only know the

language of interests backed by brute military force. Therefore, if we wish to have a dialogue with them and make them aware of our rights, we must talk to them in the language that they understand” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 198-9).

Al Zawahiri has often discussed what al Qaeda wants the West to do – and not do – in order to make ‘peace’ with al Qaeda. In a 2005 message to the British, he gives a brief summary of al Qaeda’s demands:

Our message to you is clear, nonnegotiable, and you must do it immediately: There will be no saving you except if you meet these three conditions: You must withdraw from all our lands. You must stop stealing ou[r] petroleum and our other riches. And you must immediately stop supporting the corrupt leaders (Zawahiri 2006c [2005], 258-60).

In a similar letter to the Americans, al Zawahiri lists the reasons that Al Qaeda is fighting against America. First, because the West attacked “us” in Palestine; the British gave Palestine to the Jews, who have engaged in oppression, killing, destruction, tyranny, crimes, expulsion, and devastation. America continues to support Israel in its domination of Palestine, attacked Muslims in Somalia, and supported Russia in Chechnya, India in Kashmir, and Jewish aggression in Lebanon. Apostate Middle Eastern governments act as agents of the West, attacking “us” daily and preventing Muslims from establishing an Islamic state based on *shariah*. These governments humiliate Muslims, have given up on Palestine, and steal the community’s wealth – oil – and sell it cheaply to the West. Removing these governments is an obligation for al Qaeda in order to free the Muslim community, regain Palestine, and create a state under *shariah* law. American troops occupy Muslim countries, spreading bases and corruption, protect Israel, pillage oil, and besiege Muslim sanctuaries. Due to the US (and UN) sanctions towards Iraq after the Gulf War, over 1.5 million Iraqi children died, while tens of thousands of Afghan and Iraqi children died from bombings in US invasions. These exmaples contradict US claims to promote human rights and freedom; as such, al Zawahiri sees the only possible explanation to be that the West is hostile to Islam. America has attacked Islam for over 50 years through aggression and oppression, and as such will receive

*jihad*, revenge, and resistance in return; “If the only way to repel these thieves is by killing them, then let them be killed – without dignity (al Zawahiri 2007 [2005], 182-4; al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 287-93).

Al Zawahiri also calls on the US to end American society’s lying, immorality, oppression, and debauchery; he calls the US “the worst civilization witnessed by the history of mankind” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 296). The US does not rule according to *shariah* law, religion is separated from politics, usury is permitted and underpins a significant amount of investments and the economy – also meaning that Jews have taken control of the economy, media, and all aspects of American life. The US allows drugs and other intoxicants, acts of immorality are accepted and are part of the American definition of freedom, gambling is allowed, and women are exploited as advertising tools. The sex trade is strongly rooted in American society, and the US has brought to humankind AIDS, “a Satanic American Invention” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 296-9). Industrial waste and gases have destroyed nature, but the US refuses to sign the Kyoto protocol due to corporate greed. Rich people hold all the political power – and therefore, the Jews are in power. American military power has been used more than any other nation’s armed forces to destroy mankind, such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki; instead of defending values and principles, the military works to secure profits and interests. The US is hypocritical in manners and principles, judging itself and others differently (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 299).

Furthermore, al Zawahiri claims that American freedoms and values are only for Caucasians; the rest of the world receives imposed destructive and monstrous policies and political regimes. Prohibiting weapons of mass destruction – at least, in those countries that are not American friends – further maintains American hegemony. The US is one of the worst countries in respecting international law, but selectively punishes other countries acting similarly. Americans are war criminals who are granted immunity through agreements with domestic governments, despite the many crimes committed against Muslims and other peoples of the world, like the destruction of civilian

villages, bombs dropped on mosques with praying Muslims inside, and torturing and killing of prisoners. While the US claims to be a vanguard of human rights, it has not acted in such a way both in other countries and in America – such as in capturing suspicious people of Middle Eastern descent and holding them in custody through the Patriot Act (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 299-302).

Al Zawahiri demands that the US look deeply and honestly at itself and realize that it lacks any manners or principles. The US demands that others adhere to a certain set of American values and principles, but does not itself adhere to these standards. The US should stop supporting the Indians, Russians, Israeli, and Filipino governments in their oppression of Muslims, and it should leave Muslims lands. America should end its support of the apostate rulers in the Middle East and stop interfering in domestic issues. Finally, al Zawahiri asks that the US deal with “us” on a basis of mutual interests and benefits as opposed to theft and occupation. If the US does not respond to these conditions, then it should be prepared to fight with the Islamic community (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 302-3). Overall, al Zawahiri argues that the culture, values, and civilization of the West are not desirable for Muslims, nor is the West’s conception of “freedom” one that is shared in the Muslim world:

The freedom that we want is not the freedom of lowly rascal America. It is not the freedom of the usurious banks and the giant companies and the misleading Mass Media Organizations. It is not the freedom to ruin others for the sake of one’s own material interests. It is not the freedom of AIDS and the industry of atrocities and same-sex marriage. It is not the freedom of gambling and wine and the breakdown of the family, and the freedom for women to be used as a commodity for bringing in customers and signing deals, and attacking passengers, and selling goods. It is not the freedom of two-faced principles and the division of the people into looters and looted. It is not the freedom of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is not the freedom of trading torture systems, and of supporting the systems used to defeat and suppress others at the hands of America’s friends. It is not the freedom of Israel in the extermination of the Muslims and the destruction of the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Judaization of Palestine.

It is not the freedom of Guantanamo and Abu Ghareb. It is not the freedom of the bombing of Al Sagaadi, with seven ton bombs and cluster bombs, and dropping leaflets and depleted uranium, and destroying the villages of Afghanistan and Iraq. It is not the blood suckers or the freedom that comes from the monopoly of weapons of mass destruction, and prohibiting others from developing them. It is not the freedom of decision of those in the monopoly of the International Community, where four of the five senior members are Crusaders (al Zawahiri 2006a [2004], 235, 240-2).

Bin Laden believed that the *mujahideen* and Muslim world's decisive actions had directly led to the USSR withdrawing from Afghanistan, collapsing, and subsequently the Cold War ending. The US had become the world's only superpower thanks to the Muslims' hard work in expelling the Soviet Union – and the US was not grateful, in bin Laden's eyes. Bin Laden publically declared war on America on September 2, 1996 and again on February 23, 1998. He sees the world as one in which the US is intent on destroying Muslims, Islam, and the independence of the Middle East, and has been trying to annihilate Muslims and their culture since 1945 – especially as American troops entered Saudi Arabia prior to the First Gulf War and never left. He has repeatedly publically warned the US that al Qaeda would increase the lethality of their attacks until the US withdrew its troops from Saudi Arabia, ceased support of Israel, and ended the embargo on Iraq. Scheuer quoted bin Laden as having announced, “I am fighting so I can die a martyr and go to heaven and meet God. Our fight is now against the Americans. I regret having lived this long. I have nothing to lose” (in Scheuer 2007, xvii, 3-4, 33).

In al Qaeda's 1998 “The World Islamic Front's Declaration to Wage *Jihad* Against the Jews and Crusaders,” bin Laden discussed a number of reasons as to why al Qaeda – along with other terrorist groups – had decided to fight against the West. The document describes the current situation in the Middle East as the worst in history in that it had been stormed by “the Crusader hordes that have spread in it like locusts, consuming its wealth and polluting its fertility” (bin Laden 2007 [1998], 11). The battle with the West was a battle over values of justice and freedom. The document goes on to describe “three

well-established facts” to remind readers what, exactly, the West has done to the Muslim world; these crimes are, to bin Laden, clearly a declaration of war on God, Muhammad, and the Muslim community:

For over seven years America has been occupying the lands of Islam in its holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula – plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead with which it fights the neighboring Muslim peoples....

Despite the awful devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people at the hands of the Crusader-Jewish alliance, and despite the astronomical number of deaths – which has exceeded 1 million – despite all this, the Americans attempt once again to repeat the horrific massacres, as if the protracted sanctions imposed after the brutal war, or the fragmentation and devastation, was not enough for them....

Now if the Americans’ purposes behind these wars are religious and economic, so too are they also to serve the Jews’ petty state [Israel], diverting attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and the murder of Muslims there. There is no better evidence of this than their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighboring Arab state, and their endeavor to fragment all the states of the region – such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan – into mini-paper states, whose disunion and weakness will guarantee Israel’s survival and the continuation of the brutal Crusader occupation of the Peninsula (bin Laden 2007 [1998], 11-12, 50).

### ***The Issue of Suicide and Justification of Martyrdom Operations***

In arguments that could be construed to support suicide, or martyrdom, operations, Qutb notes,

The highest form of triumph is the victory of soul over matter, the victory of belief over pain, and the victory of faith over prosecution. In the [stories of Islam] described above, the souls of the Believers were victorious over fear and pain, over the allurements of the earth and of life, and they gained such victory over torture which is an honor for all mankind and for all times – and this is the true victory” (Qutb 2005, 105).

Azzam also gave theoretical justification to this act, arguing that it was the ultimate form of devotion to God. Due to Azzam’s work, martyrdom became a key concept in radical Islamism, and martyrdom operations have become one of

the primary techniques in Islamic terrorism (Hegghammer 2008, 99-101.) Azzam argued that four conditions were necessary for an act to be classified as martyrdom:

1. That combat took place along God's path ("He who fights for God's word to prevail is on the path of God": this is an accepted hadith). This text has the force of law: Whoever was killed while he had the intention of supporting Islam is a martyr; otherwise, he is not.
2. Having shown endurance and courage.
3. Attacking and not fleeing.
4. Not having stolen spoils of war before they were distributed... (Azzam 2008, 133).

Al Suri also offers an important explanation of suicide and martyrdom operations. Because the soul belongs to Allah, not the person in whose body it resides, suicide is forbidden under Islam (the Korean says, "Do not destroy yourselves" [4:26]). On the contrary, martyrdom is not forbidden: "a human sacrificing himself to serve Islam, raise Muslim morale, or hating the enemy for the sake of almighty Allah is not considered suicide" (al Suri 2008 [2005], 179). Other reasons for martyrdom that are acceptable are to entice other Muslims into copying, imitating others who have done the same thing, or terrorizing the enemy. Muslim scholars, too, have ruled that sacrificing oneself for the sake of Islam's victory is not suicide, as there is a difference of intention. Suicide is killing yourself (and your soul) in order to escape from life, while "self-sacrificing is exerting the soul for the sake of protecting Allah's religion and the triumph of the religious laws without pain or grief" (al Suri 2008 [2005], 179). Furthermore, in a situation in which an occupier uses Muslims as human shields – so that *jihadists* will not shoot at the occupier for fear of hitting the Muslim – "the mujahideen should not refrain from attacking them, because the Muslims may be defeated if they do so or if the harm resulting from refraining to shoot at them is greater than if they were to shoot at Muslim prisoners and detainees" (al Suri 2008 [2005], 180). In the present occupation, Western forces are of many types – security, military, civilian – and they mix with Muslim populations, making it difficult to attack them. For this

reason, martyrdom operations and explosives have been increasingly used (al Suri 2008 [2005], 180-1).

So, says al Suri, what about apostates – Muslims who are aiding the invaders or working for them, when these groups are mixed with Muslims in the street or marketplace? An attack in would result in innocent Muslims losing their lives. Al Suri says that each situation must be judged separately, according to the *sharia* – in particular,

The key factor... is who among Muslims is going to be killed with the explosive operations of the mujahideen. They (Muslims) should be avoided by any means possible. The mujahideen should weigh the benefit and importance of the operation, the relative unintentional harm inflicted on Muslims, and the damage that the operation will inflict on the infidels, and how the damage will affect them (the infidels) (al Suri 2008 [2005], 180).

For example, if only a few enemy military patrol troops will be killed by a bomb in a crowded marketplace, then the attack should not be undertaken. However, if in a certain operation the jihadist thought that the attack would result in significant damage to the enemy, perhaps even defeating the infidel, and if the *mujahideen* tried to keep Muslims away from the attack site and picked a certain time that the fewest Muslims would be present, then if the attack is undertaken and some Muslims are injured, God should forgive the jihadists (al Suri 2008 [2005], 180-2). Of course, those who have chosen to live abroad in the West are generally considered traitors – unless they are there under an emergency or other extreme situation – and as such, it is less of an issue if they are killed in an attack because they chose to live in the West (al Suri 2008 [2005], 180-2).

Al Zawahiri sees martyrdom operations as “the most successful in inflicting damage on the opponent and the least costly in terms of casualties among the fundamentalists.... Cause the greatest damage and inflict the maximum casualties on the opponent, no matter how much time and effort these operations take, because this is the language understood by the west;” martyrs are the greatest of the *mujahideen* (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 200-201). Because martyrdom has been, in the *hadiths* at least, revealed as such a glorious

calling, it is legitimate to want to do this for Allah and to pursue the path of martyrdom. Furthermore, in Islamic history, when Muslims pursued *jihad* they were a strong and powerful people. But when they abandoned this calling, God humiliated them by allowing them to be divided and conquered. Muhammad remarked that abandoning *jihad* was disgraceful, while returning to *jihad* was glorious (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 144). Those that are physically unable should still undertake *jihad* with their tongues and hearts (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 144-5, 150).

However, as martyrdom operations are not part of the Koran or Islamic history they need to be rationalized and analogized more than the arguments in favor of *jihad*. Al Zawahiri's starting point is the Prophet's statement, "War is deceit"; therefore, the surreptitious nature of martyrdom makes these fighters deceitful, and therefore legitimate in a war context. However, this is a weak argument, based on the *hadith* and not on a Koranic command. Al Zawahiri argues that the difference between forbidden suicide and allowed martyrdom intention – *why* the person is killing himself. It is forbidden if due to depression; it is glorified if based on service to Islam. Many historical Islamic scholars have argued similarly (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 154-61). And, as pointed out by Ibrahim, there is an anachronistic element to this line of argument – the technology at the time of the Prophet and the Koran did not allow for suicide bombings as a way for *mujahideen* to inflict large casualties on the enemy. Therefore, it is basically impossible to find a precedent in the *shariah* because the tactic did not exist until recently. And in this regard, there are a multitude of *hadiths* that show it is legitimate to fight to certain death, especially if it assists Islam (Ibrahim 2007, 137-40).

### ***The Importance of Community Support and the Media***

Al Suri also includes a chapter on the media and how to project the correct message to any audience. In particular, the audience is important because the Muslim community should be supporting jihadist organizations and perhaps even be motivated to join the *jihad*. Messages should include

information about the beneficence of Allah and his desire for Muslims to live a better life, while also discussing the potential victory that could come through *jihad* and the subsequent expansion of Muslim territory and rule. Messages should include patriotic fervor and remind Muslims of the negative consequences of neglecting their *jihad* obligations – such as enemy hegemony, casualties, destruction, and humiliation. The message style is also important, in that it should attempt to promote Islam, increase general support for Islam and for the jihadist movement, and inspire others to join the movement (al Suri 2008 [2005], 189-90).

The strongest weapon that *jihad* fighters have is popular support from the Muslim masses in Iraq and the surrounding countries. Therefore, al Zawahiri writes that it is imperative that the *mujahideen* movement not only maintain this support as much as it is able, but also work to increase it (Zawahiri 2008b [2005], 257). Without such support, al Qaeda will be unable to achieve its goals of overthrowing the apostate local governments and establishing a Caliphate; “this goal will not be accomplished by the mujahed movement while it is cut off from public support, even if the Jihadist movement pursues the method of sudden overthrow” (al Zawahiri 2006 b [2005], 257-8). If the movement undertakes a popular war of *jihad* – which it is trying to do – or an *intifadah*, which happens on occasion in Palestine, “then popular support would be a decisive factor between victory and defeat” (Zawahiri 2006 b [2005], 258). Conversely, without such support,

This is precisely what the secular, apostate forces that are controlling our countries are striving for. These forces don’t desire to wipe out the mujahed Islamic movement, rather they are stealthily striving to separate it from the misguided or frightened Muslim masses.

Therefore, our planning must strive to involve the Muslim masses in the battle, and to bring the mujahed movement to the masses and not conduct the struggle far from them...

Therefore, the mujahed movement must avoid any action that the masses do not understand or approve, if there is no contravention of Sharia in such avoidance, and as long as there are other options to resort to, meaning we must not throw the masses – scant in knowledge – into the sea before we teach them to swim... (al Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 258-60).

In a letter to al Zarqawi, al Zawahiri cautions against undertaking too many attacks against the Shi'a, as most Muslims do not understand why these attacks are happening – especially when the attacks are taking place in a Shi'a mosque or mausoleum. Al Zawahiri believed that no matter how much the reasoning as explained,<sup>8</sup> the attacks would not be acceptable to the majority of Muslims. Even the mujahideen might question the correctness of fighting with the Shi'a in the midst of a much larger battle against Western occupation and apostate Middle Eastern government. Only if the operations are necessary for self-defense should they be undertaken, so the fight against the Shi'a should be delayed until after the West has been expelled and the apostate governments overthrown. Attacks against the Shi'a could actually assist the Americans. Furthermore, the Iranians hold many *mujahideen* prisoners, so attacks against the Shi'a could result in the Iranians taking revenge on these fighters, harming the *jihad* movement overall (al Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 268-71). Another issue is the scenes of slaughter, especially of hostages – another matter that the majority of Muslims will not find palatable. Instead, general Muslims do not understand how this could be a valid response to the Western occupation; while al Zawahiri acknowledges that this view is partially due to “the malicious, perfidious, and fallacious campaign by the deceptive and fabricated media” (al Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 272), Muslims – a sympathetic audience – should be spared questions about the usefulness of *mujahideen* actions in the effort to win their hearts and minds. Al Zawahiri argues “that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma” (al Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 272-3).

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<sup>8</sup> Al Zawahiri says the valid reasoning behind al Zarqawi's moves was that the Shi'a cooperated with the US in the invasions of both Afghanistan and Iraq in exchange for power and that strains of Shi'a Islam – such as the Twelver school – are based on falsehood and excess and are dangerous. The group also claims al Zawahiri, has a “history [of] cooperating with the enemies of Islam, [which is] consistent with their current reality of connivance with the Crusaders” (al Zawahiri 2006b [2005], 266-8).

Thus, on behalf of al Qaeda, Al Zawahiri argued that the *jihād* movement must come closer to the general Muslim population, making its message more accessible and clear for all to understand why exactly *jihādists* are acting in certain ways. A separate wing of the movement should be established for this work – to preach, provide services, work, and share the concerns of the Muslim people in order to win their respect, affection, and confidence. If Muslims do not feel like the *jihād* movement cares about them, is trying to defend them, and loves them, then Muslims will not support the movement; “it must be extremely careful not to get isolated from its nation or engage the government in the battle of the elite against the authority” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2001], 208-9). It appears clear that this al Qaeda leader believes that minimal casualties is important for public opinion purposes. Yet, despite this his arguments, especially in that he acknowledges the importance of garnering and maintaining Muslim hearts and minds, al Qaeda still maintains many justifications for killing civilians – Muslim and Western – which decreases al Qaeda’s support in the Muslim world, as further analysis in Chapters IV and V will show.

### ***Killing Civilians***

According to al Zawahiri, it is also legitimate to attack American civilians – as opposed to only the leaders – because America is a democracy, so “the American people have chosen, consented to, and affirmed their support for the Israeli oppression of the Palestinians, the occupation and usurpation of their land, and its continuous killing, torture, punishment and expulsion of the Palestinians” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 293). Americans pay taxes that fund bombs dropped on Afghanistan, tanks in Palestine, armies occupying the Middle East, ships that blockade Iraq, and Israel’s attacks and penetration of Muslim territory. Elected politicians oversee these expenditures, and Americans as a community have personally chosen these leaders. The American army is a volunteer army – “part of the American people” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 293). The Koran says that if attacked, Muslims can attack in return: “Whoever has

destroyed our villages and towns, then we have the right to destroy their villages and towns. Whoever has stolen our wealth, then we have the right to destroy their economy. And whoever has killed our civilians, then we have the right to kill theirs” (al Zawahiri 2006 [2006], 294).

Al Zawahiri also discusses the killing of others whom it is forbidden to kill during *jihad* – such as Muslims, children, women, and Christians and Jews who have submitted to the rule of Islam. In order to fully legitimate this, al Zawahiri for a legal view that allows bombarding infidels even if someone among them is of one of the groups that it is forbidden to kill, as long as there is an obligation or need for Muslims to undertake this action or if not taking the action will delay *jihad*. The Prophet himself besieged the inhabitants of one town and fired catapults, knowing that women and children could be injured (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 162-71). He further points out that all the *hadithic* literature that deals with this concept is in the context of offensive *jihad*; therefore ultimately, whether or not it is legitimate or illegitimate to kill these groups in offensive *jihad* is relatively immaterial, as the Muslim world is currently in a defensive *jihad* situation. When Islam is under attack, any stipulations on not killing Muslims, women, children, or tax-paying Jews and Christians disappear, as Muslims are fighting for their very existence and the perpetuation of their religion:

But when Muslims are defending their religion and their sanctities, and the infidels are surrounding them from every corner, and instead they are the ones who are seeking them out and pursuing them, and whenever they overcome, they torture and murder the Muslims; or when the infidels settle in the lands of Islam trying to impose infidelity by the power of the sword [i.e., by force of arms], making Muslims embrace their laws after first forfeiting the *sharia* of Allah – in these situations it becomes a binding obligation on every Muslim to fight them any way he can. He should never abandon this obligatory duty because some Muslims might be killed mistakenly, not intentionally. Whoever does die is in the hands of Allah, and we trust that he is a martyr (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 167-8).

Further, he quotes Ibn Taymiyaa on this matter as well: “Based on the consensus of the *ulema*, those Muslims who are accidentally killed are martyrs;

and the obligatory *jihad* should never be abandoned because it creates martyrs” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 168).

Al Zawahiri sees further implied conclusions that apply to the present-day *jihad*. First, because the enemy vastly outnumbered the *mujahideen* in both troop numbers and armaments, it is basically impossible for jihadists to confront the enemy in open battle. Therefore, “bombarding the organizations of the infidels and apostates in this day and age has become an imperative of *jihad* in our war with the idolatrous tyrants” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 169). Secondly, because the invaders are able to hide themselves in armored vehicles and have many intricate security measures, it is very difficult to attack them other than through rockets and explosives – and thus, the use of these weapons is permissible. Thirdly, while the infidels deliberately spread out amongst Muslims in order to make it very difficult for jihadists to hunt them down and find them alone, it is still permissible to attack them in places where other Muslims may be injured because otherwise the *jihad* will be delayed. Fourthly, attacking via missiles and explosives has been very effective on other fronts, such as in Palestine, Lebanon, Algeria, and Egypt, making it a legitimate means (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 169). Fifthly, as long as the *mujahideen* attempt to repeatedly warn – in a general way – Muslims to stay away from the infidels’ primary areas, then it is allowable that they be killed in an attack, as the effort was made to warn them away. Sixthly, those Muslims who are mixed in with the infidels of their own free will, such as by working for them, are less sacred than if they were Muslims forced to be used as human shields. And since the *hadith* allow for human-shield Muslims to be sacrificed for the good of Islam, those who have chosen to be among the invaders are even less deserving of attempts to not attack in a way that might injure them. Finally, it would be good to pay blood money in the cases in which Muslims die in such attacks, but only if there is extra money that is not needed to further the *jihad*, and only if those who died had a legitimate reason to be caught amongst the infidels. Further, those who are killed in attacks against the infidels are considered to be martyrs, and therefore they also go to Heaven and receive the benefits and glory of that

position, with the implication that this is a form of spiritual assistance (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 169-70).

Bin Laden assessed killing innocents through terrorism as permissible both legally and intellectually, because the West has and continues to kill Muslims – such as the Iraqi and Afghani children cited above by al Zawahiri. Therefore, killing of innocent Western civilians was, for bin Laden, acceptable reciprocal treatment: as Bergen quoted bin Laden, “We will do as they do. If they kill our women and our innocent people, we will kill their women and innocent people....” (Bergen 2002, 233).

### ***Conclusion: The Religious Rationality of al Qaeda***

Al Qaeda’s problems with the West and America are not primarily cultural; bin Laden’s statements do not focus on American movies or music. Instead, he rails against the US for its policies in the Middle East – support for Israel, physical presence in Saudi Arabia, the campaign against Iraq, and support for apostate regimes such as those in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. These are political grievances, not cultural, and they are “justified by his own understanding of American power” (Bergen 2002, 227). As Bergen points out, the 9/11 hijackers did not crash planes into a Coca-Cola factory or Las Vegas – instead, they attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, key symbols of America’s economic and military strength. And the people that died in those attacks were supporting America’s economy and military, and thus were perceived by al Qaeda as semi-combatants. As bin Laden once said in an interview, “Not all terrorism is cursed; some terrorism is blessed.... America and Israel exercise the condemned terrorism. We practice the good terrorism, which stops them from killing our children in Palestine and elsewhere” (Bergen 2002, 233-6).

Taking all of these pronouncements together, al Qaeda has a set of distinct goals that the group has consistently supported, goals that have been rationalized and legitimated based on religious reasoning – reasoning that also

figures prominently in al Qaeda's assessment of how these goals should be reached. First, the organization wants US troops to leave Saudi Arabia. Al Qaeda also wants the US to stop supporting armed interventions around the world that kill Muslims – such as in Chechnya, Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Moreover, the group desires the US to end its support of the Middle Eastern rulers who suppress their people and do not rule according to Islam, as in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. A further al Qaeda objective is for the US to end its support of Israel, and in particular, its support of Israel's occupation of Palestinian Muslim land and the subsequent poor treatment and murder of Muslims. Al Qaeda perceives the Muslim world to be under attack and finds this situation to be intolerable. The organization believes that the West must stop attacking the Middle East and Islam, and that drastic measures are needed – such as allowing high levels of collateral damage in attacks – to achieve these objectives.

It should be noted that the US government does not acknowledge these objectives as the reasons why 9/11 occurred. As Abrahms chronicles, after 9/11 President George W Bush publically stated that al Qaeda and terrorists in general “hat[e] not our policies, but our existence;” “these acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos,” “they want us to stop flying,” and terrorists want to disrupt and reduce “our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other” – overall, “Americans’ way of life” (2006, 69). Bin Laden and other al Qaeda representatives often complain that the US has misunderstood the real reasons for 9/11 – in particular, that the US “spoil[s] our security” and “attack[s] us” (Abrahms 2006, 70). Furthermore, in response to 9/11, the US undertook many actions that were contrary to al Qaeda's goals – in fact, often making the perceived Western infractions worse. The US increased Persian Gulf troop levels fifteen-fold, indirectly or directly supported counterterrorism actions that killed many thousands of Muslims globally, increased its support of Israel vis-à-vis the Palestinians, and built up military relations with pro-US Middle Eastern rulers, especially in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (Abrahms 2006, 71).

It should also be highlighted that al Qaeda ideologues have worked hard to justify their most contentious activity – the killing of civilians. While killing apostate rulers or government officials has some support in the *shariah*, attacking Muslim civilians is different. The massacres have “also threatened Al Qaeda’s strategy to win the hearts and minds of Muslims in its battle against the United States and its ‘puppets’” (Wiktorowicz 2005, 89). Al Qaeda uses two primary arguments to justify killing non-Muslims: the first is the idea of proportional response, in that the enemy has attacked Muslim civilians first and therefore these tactics can legitimately be used in response. Al Qaeda often cites the conflicts in which the US has targeted Muslims, such as Palestine and Bosnia. One al Qaeda ideologue argued that, proportionally, the US has killed so many Muslims that Muslims can rightfully kill 4 million Americans to achieve parity. Secondly, al Qaeda follows Ibn Taymiyya’s argument that, as *jihad* is fighting for Allah, all those Muslims who stand in the way of this can legitimately be targeted. This includes those who fight with words and actions, which results in al Qaeda being able to subjectively define ‘civilian,’ ultimately arguing that anyone who assists an enemy in any fashion – in deed, word, or mind – is no longer a non-combatant; the democratic nature of American government is emphasized in this regard. Al Qaeda further uses the subjective aspect of “capacity to fight” to broaden the potential pool of legitimate targets to include anyone deemed to be supporting the perceived war against Islam, such as businesses, journalists, NGOs, and academics. Al Qaeda argues that the enemy’s civilians are not actually noncombatants because they support the enemy in word, thought, and deed. And, especially in a context of a defensive struggle, ultimately *jihad* is more important than individual Muslim lives, so that the killing of civilians, unintentional or not, is justified (Wiktorowicz 2005, 89-94). These key religiously-based values are what inform the group’s substantive rationality – and as such, result in the terrorist actions that the group characterizes with extensive violence and many casualties, issues that will be discussed further below.

## **The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine**

In contrast to the ideological and political work of al Qaeda explicated above, the following group analyzed is thoroughly secular. While many goals of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and al Qaeda are similar – a Palestinian state, an end to the corrupt Middle Eastern governments, an end to Israel as a state, the US leaving the Middle East – the types of terrorism they use are different. While al Qaeda undertakes attacks with bombs, IEDs, and martyrs, the PFLP concentrated mostly on plane hijackings – in which no passengers were intended to be harmed or killed – or in targeted assassinations. While al Qaeda argued that killing Muslims was helping them to reach martyrdom, the PFLP rarely killed anyone who was not a key enemy. Instead of choosing actions based on religious values, the PFLP leadership planned actions based on a cost-benefit analysis – how to gain the biggest concessions, such as the release of jailed compatriots, how to gain the most publicity for the Palestinian cause and for the PFLP, and how to bring Palestinian independence closer. While al Qaeda demonstrates Weber’s substantive rationality, the following case study of the PFLP shows a group fighting for similar goals but in a different way – an instrumental, rational-choice way. Again, both the PFLP’s ideology and its actual tactics will be investigated, as both levels would be affected by the group’s rationality.

As a short background note, Palestinians have felt humiliated by Israeli policies and Jewish actions for the past century, resulting in rage, desperation, and despair. Terrorist leaders harness these feelings in their recruits and often target Israeli civilians and leaders in their attacks. As Stern notes, Palestinians and Israelis have, on a per-capita basis, suffered many 9/11-scale attacks, resulting in trauma in the civilian populations of both groups. Religious groups further argue that, because every Israeli is required to do military service, there are no civilians in Israel – and thus, all Israelis are legitimate targets of *jihad* (Stern 2003, 32-40).

In comparison to al Qaeda, there is unfortunately much less primary source information available on the PFLP. It is a secular Palestinian terrorist

group that was founded by pediatrician George Habash on December 11, 1967, directly after the Six Day War. The guerilla organization actually splintered from a previous group that Habash and Wali Haddad founded in the 1950s, a political party named the Arab Nationalist Movement that had the motto of “Unity, Liberation, Revenge.” The PFLP is ideologically Marxist-Leninist and has fought strongly against Israel. While Habash was a Christian from Palestine, he wanted the PFLP to be entirely secular, based on socialism and Marxism. The group was supported by the Soviet Union, Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon, and spread to other countries in the Middle East, joining the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1968; the organization’s membership reached about 3,500 active members in the late 1960s. The PFLP’s leadership was educated in the Levant in a cosmopolitan atmosphere, and they recruited from urban centers, appealing mostly to professionals – such as teachers, doctors, engineers, and lawyers; many of their operatives were actually educated in the West. The PFLP has worked to attract quality members, highly trained and fanatically dedicated, over quantity, and engaged in carefully-planned small-scale operations. The group has been credited with initiating the trend of international terrorism (Blackwell 2013, 590-2; Laqueur 2002,199; Davies 2003, 18; Amos 1980, 71-8).

The PFLP was most active in the 1970s and 1980s, decreasingly active in the 1990s, and its presence again following the second *intifada*. The group has relatively limited popular appeal because of its strong Marxist-Leninist orientation, as opposed to the more appealing Islamist groups, and so has remained on the margins of the Palestinian struggle since its relative heyday when it maintained cells throughout the Middle East and Europe. The PFLP became most known for its airplane hijackings, and most operations were led by Habash’s co-conspirator Haddad; Carlos the Jackal (Ilich Ramirez Sanchez) was one of the most famous PFLP recruits, training in a PFLP camp in Jordan and joining in operations. Hijackings were appealing because they required only a few operatives with a few weapons who could hold hundreds of people for ransom – often the release of fellow jailed fighters. Using the plane, the

hijackers could fly almost anywhere in the world, so they could pick countries friendly to their causes. Also, regardless of the actual success of the mission, plane hijackings garnered significant world media attention (Combs and Slann 2007, 257-8; Blackwell 2013, 590-2, Davies 2003, 19, 103-6).

Arguably the most famous PFLP skyjacking was the September 1970 (Black September/Skyjack Sunday) simultaneous hijacking of three US-bound passenger jets, though they had planned to hijack four. The group hijacked a fourth several days later and flew all the planes to Jordan, where the passengers were held hostage. After several weeks, the PFLP blew up the empty jets – on September 11. Another famous attack was undertaken with the Japanese Red Army, the 1972 massacre at an airport in Tel Aviv that killed 26 and injured over 80. In 1973, Habash agreed with the PLO to restrict terrorist activities to Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan, but he withdrew the PFLP from the PLO in 1974 due to political differences. The PFLP became the leader of the Rejection Front, a loose coalition of Palestinian organizations that were opposed to the PLO/Fatah strategy that was seen as too compromising towards Israel. Over the next 15 years, the PFLP was a key player in Palestinian anti-Israeli violence and extremism in the region – another famous skyjacking was of an Air France flight in 1976 that was landed in Uganda (Entebbe); Israeli Defense Forces mounted a successful hostage rescue mission. In 1977 the group, in relation with the West German Red Army Faction, skyjacked a Lufthansa flight and landed it in Mogadishu, where West German counter-terrorism unit GSG-9 undertook hostage rescue. Another famous operation by the PFLP and West Germans, under Libyan auspices, was kidnapping OPEC oil ministers in 1975 (Combs and Slann 2007, 257-8; Blackwell 2013, 590-2; Ensalaco 2008, 1, 14-27, 79, 96-102, 109-117; Amos 1980, 71, 242; Sharif 2009, 25-30).

The group has remained opposed to negotiations or any relations with Israel, even when the Palestinian Authority concluded the Declaration of Principles with Israel in 1993, and suspended its relationship with the PLO at the same time. It cooperates with Fatah to promote national Palestinian unity. Aside from attacks against Israeli targets, the PFLP has also attacked Arab

targets that were deemed too moderate to or promoting compromise with Israel. Habash stepped down as leader in April 2000, though his successor (Abu Ali Mustafa) was killed in 2001 by Israeli commandos. In response to this incident, the group has engaged in several suicide bombings since the early 2000s, assassinated an Israeli minister, and participated in joint operations with other Palestinian groups – especially random shootings and small-scale car bombings. As of the mid-2000s, the group’s estimated strength was under 1000 (Combs and Slann 2007, 257-8; Blackwell 2013, 590-2).

The following section looks at some of the group’s pronouncements and speeches. Although there are few primary sources that can be found in English, there are several quotes that explain why Habash founded the PFLP and was fighting against Israel.

### ***George Habash and PFLP Platforms***

Given that the PFLP is ideologically based in Marxist-Leninism, many of the group’s pronouncements discussed general socialist goals. According to their manifesto, the PFLP announced that it fought for a “popular war of liberation by arming and mobilizing the people in popular militias so that the war can be fought on the widest possible front... protracted war waged by a mobilized, self-reliant people, armed with proletarian ideology is the sole road for national socialism....” (in Laqueur 2002, 193). Furthermore, Habash himself noted, “In today’s world, no one is innocent, no one is neutral. A man is either with the oppressed or he is with the oppressor. He who takes no interest in politics gives his blessing to the prevailing order, that of the ruling classes and exploiting forces” (in Davies 2003, 1). Habash desired a total Maoist cultural revolution:

A proletariat cultural revolution that would embrace all the cadres of the movement is a basic task for acquiring the Marxist-Leninist ideology.... The only security to prevent the cultural revolution from becoming an intellectual luxury... is to carry the revolution out by political practice against everything that exists in the society (in Amos 1980, 139).

In advocating for a complete transformation of Palestinian and Arab society, Habash foresaw a future socialist state in which the PFLP had pride of place in the government, though the actual revolution for which he was fighting would likely take several decades:

... a future state in Palestine... run after liberation on Marxist-Leninist principles. There will be a Marxist-Leninist party and the PFLP will be the leader of the revolution. The fight for the liberation of Palestine will take another 20 or 30 years, and after victory everything will be different. Not only will Palestine be free of Zionism, but Lebanon and Jordan will be free of reaction and Syria and Iraq of the petty bourgeoisie. They will have become truly Socialist and united; Palestine will be part of a Marxist-Leninist Arabia (in Amos 1980, 74-5).

In direct opposition to al Qaeda and other Islamist groups, the PFLP was founded in opposition to the role of religion in Arab society and promoted a theory of revolutionary change in traditional social customs (Amos 1980, 71).

In this regard, Habash also believed that the Arab regimes should be removed from power and replaced by socialist governments, as the Arab governments were not doing particularly well in governing. The PFLP's leadership believed that the 1967 Israeli victory was not simply a military disaster for Muslims, but even worse, was a defeat of the Arab regimes themselves. Habash was quoted as saying, "It reveals the incapacity of these regimes to effect any political, military, economic or ideological mobilization that could ensure steadfastness and victory over neo-imperialism, its alliances and plans in our homeland" (Amos 1980, 130). A longer-term PFLP goal was the elimination of Western capitalist influences from the Middle East, especially support of Israel: "Our enemy is not Israel, full stop... Israel is backed by imperialist forces" (in Davies 2003, 18). Moreover, one PFLP comment indicated that,

Arab capitalism and feudalism are still the ruling force in some Arab countries whose interests are linked to those of international imperialism led by the United States. Despite the partial and superficial contradictions which appear to exist between these [Arab] regimes and Israel, this contradiction is overshadowed by an objective agreement between these regimes and international imperialism. Therefore, the present Palestinian armed struggle, and the future of Arab armed

struggle, have a relationship of confrontation with these regimes despite the tactical positions which are imposed on either of the two sides by temporary considerations (Amos 1980, 137-8).

Furthermore, similar to al Qaeda several decades later, the PFLP wanted to engage in a more broadly-based revolution, arguing that Palestinians alone were unable to defeat all the forces arrayed against them – the state of Israel, world Zionism, and imperialism – and as such, the Arab world should mobilize all revolutionary forces:

It is only through this kind of mobilization [of revolutionary forces on the Arab and international level] that we would be able to ensure the force which could confront Israel, Zionism, international imperialism, and Arab reaction. The Palestinian revolution, merged with the Arab revolution, can alone achieve victory. Confining the Palestinian revolution within the limits of the Palestinian people means failure, especially when we remember the nature of the alliance which we are confronting (in Amos 1980, 137).

One important goal of the PFLP was the creation of a democratic socialist Palestinian state – meaning that the Israeli state and its existence in Palestine were unacceptable. This viewpoint was based on Habash's personal experiences. He was born and grew up in Palestine, his father a Greek Orthodox Christian. During college he worked on a medical team for Palestinian refugees evicted from Israel during the 1948 war; his experiences during this time shaped to his later political beliefs in that he devoted his life to working to return Palestinians to Palestine. Of his experience in the war, he once said, "... we suffered a profound shock, seeing people driven out by force. The scenes at the time were indescribable... people were shot in the streets" (in Amos 1980, 73). After the 1948 war he gravitated towards the right, but after the 1967 War and Arab defeat, he moved left. While he had co-founded an Arab political party in the 1950s – as mentioned above – he came to believe that a military group would be more effective in achieving his nationalist aspirations. The group's first communiqué, in December 1967, stated,

The only language which the enemy understands is the language of revolutionary violence. Armed struggle is the basic course which can turn our land into an arena for struggle against occupation and against

efforts to liquidate our question... Fighting against the enemy is the historical course which we must follow in order to reach the stage when we can open the west front against the enemy, so Palestinian land may be turned into an inferno where invaders will burn. Armed struggle has no limits (in Amos 1980, 77-8).

In terms of the group's actions – terrorism that was specifically manifested primarily in high-profile plane hijackings – Habash justified these moves by arguing that the PFLP tried as hard as it could to make sure no one was injured in the course of the attacks:

As regards the hijackings, we have always done everything to ensure the safety of the passengers. No Westerner has been harmed in any way. In other words our operations have been carried out flawlessly, and as a whole they provide evidence that our organisation is honourable. Of course, we have violated international law – but what of international law in 1949, when Israel absolutely refused to return the Palestinian refugees to their homes? Though the West may have been shocked by it, the hijacking of planes was popular among Palestinians and the Arab masses in general – and to us that matters a lot. The struggle is far from being a purely military one; it is psychological too, and we have to raise the morale of the masses while at the same time harass the Israelis (in Davies 2003, 17).

Along the same lines, the PFLP used terrorism as a form of communication, because it had high psychological and political shock effect:

We believe that to kill a Jew far from the battleground has more of an effect than killing 100 of them in battle; it attracts more attention. And when we set fire to a store in London, those few flames are worth the burning down of two kibbutzim, because we force people to ask what is going on, and so they get to know our tragic situation (in Amos 1980, 193).

The PFLP did not distinguish between military and civilian targets; anything to do with Israel represented a legitimate target for their attacks – including anything in Israel itself, any Israeli operation or installation in another country, any foreign business that was working with Israel, US installations in Arab lands, and all Arab regimes that were seen as agents of the US. The PFLP worked to cut Israel off from its friends, and as such tried especially hard to disrupt sea and air communications between Israel and the West. As Habash

reasoned, Israel is “an island isolated from its friends and surrounded by enemy lands” (Amos 1980, 193).

Strategically, the group focused on small-scale, very organized raids into the Palestinian territories and Israel, working towards quality of operations instead of quantity. Habash argued,

The main point is to select targets where success is 100% assured. To harass, to upset, to work on the nerves through unexpected small damages. Brute force is out: this is a thinking man’s game, especially when one is as poor as the Popular Front is. It would be silly for us to even think of waging a regular war; imperialism is too powerful and Israel too strong. The only way to destroy them is to give a little blow here, a little blow there; to advance step by step, inch by inch, for years, for decades, with determination, doggedness, patience. And we will discuss our present strategy. It’s a smart one, you see; would you really want to fly El Al? I wouldn’t (in Amos 1980, 192-3).

As a point of interest that also provides more information about the PFLP, one scholar chronicles the training schedule of a typical PFLP camp, in which a large amount of political indoctrination was varied with physical and military training. Political teachings take place in the morning and discussions continue throughout lunch. Before dinner, the group undertakes self-criticism. After dinner, the recruits learn geography and Hebrew, followed by time spent reading revolutionary literature – such as Mao, Lenin, and Marx. The school’s curriculum lasted almost five months (Amos 1980, 170). In 1970, the political education program was:

- Marxist-Leninist theory
- The kind of age we are living in: Imperialism, Revolution and counter-revolution
- Political problems: The Zionist movement, Israel and what it is like, The Palestinian problem and the Arab world
- PFLP: The birth and death of the movement, The first split and its causes (PFLP-High Command), The second split and its causes (PDFLP), The PFLP and the Arab Nationalist Movement (Amos 1980, 171).

The PFLP is also very unusual among Palestinian groups – and terrorist groups in general – in that it allows women to join. The PFLP provided training camps for women and girls in Lebanon, and pictures show the girls practicing hand-to-

hand combat and judo. While other organizations that involve women operationally tend to use them on special missions, the PFLP in particular stresses using women in combat. PFLP female operatives planted bombs in Israeli locales and were part of aircraft hijacking teams – such as Layla Khalid. Less-involved roles include distributing printed material and demonstrating against Israeli occupation in Palestine (Amos 1980, 173).

This section has briefly addressed the PFLP's goals and the actions they took to reach those goals – meaning, the types of attacks carried out. Many of the group's goals are similar to those of al Qaeda, but the types of terrorism chosen were often very different. In particular, the PFLP targeted individual leaders for assassinations and carried out plane hijackings; in both types of attacks, the group worked hard to not harm any civilians or non-combatants.

## **Comparisons**

The differing rationalities of these groups – one religious, one secular – can be seen to be part of their overall strategy, as well as at a more tactical level, in their attacks. There are clearly several key goals the two groups have in common: ending Israel as a political entity and returning the land to the Palestinians, breaking the bond between the US and Israel, disposing of the other Middle Eastern governments that are not effectively ruling, and trying to force the US to leave the Middle East. Both groups also envisioned changing the overall ruling structure of the Middle East – with al Qaeda wanting a religious government (Caliphate) for the region, while the PFLP wanted a socialist government in place. Given that the two groups have many goals in common, which can be seen as the independent variable, their ideologies that resulted in the formation of these goals as well as their tactics must be assessed. If both groups operated according to the same type of rationality, with similar goals, then the attacks carried out should be similar in both type and in execution. In particular, this paper focuses on the issue of casualties in attacks – how many 'innocent bystanders' were killed in an operation. Therefore, if both

groups have the same rationality – based on underlying values – then both should kill approximately equal numbers of civilians in their attacks. In this case, the values are the intervening variable, with the independent variable being the goals of the groups and the dependent variable being the groups' attitude towards the value of life and the associated behaviors derived from these attitudes.

Al Qaeda's writings support both suicide terrorism, which has been shown by scholars to be particularly lethal, and the killing of civilians, both Muslim and non-Muslim. The most famous al Qaeda attack was 9/11, when almost 3,000 people were killed, including citizens of 80 countries. Many other attacks perpetrated by al Qaeda also had high death tolls. The 1998 African embassy bombings killed 213 in Nairobi (including 12 Americans) and 11 in Dar es Salaam). The 2000 USS Cole attack killed 17, and the 2003 Baghdad UN headquarters bombing killed 22 dead. The 2004 Madrid bombing killed 191 dead, while the 2005 London bombings killed 52 dead also had large casualty counts. Thus, it is clear that al Qaeda has perpetrated a large number of attacks with a many casualties.

While the PFLP is also very famous for its plane hijackings, these were not used in martyrdom operations but were instead used to gain hostages that could be traded for PFLP members in jail and bring media attention to the Palestinian struggle and the PFLP as a group. Habash specifically says that passenger safety is very important to him and his group when undertaking attacks. The most famous PFLP plane hijacking was its first: the September 6, 1970 simultaneous hijacking of three US-bound passenger jets, with a fourth several days later. All the planes were flown to Jordan and the 310 passengers held hostage, though the non-Jewish and non-flight crew hostages were quickly released. By the end of the month, the rest of the hostages were released in exchange for four PFLP members; overall, one terrorist was killed by a sky marshal and one hostage was reported wounded, while the empty planes were blown up to increase media attention to the incident. Other PFLP hijackings of planes resulted in few casualties as well – and these usually were due to the

hostage rescue attempts mounted by governments, as opposed to the terrorists injuring or killing their hostages. The PFLP was actively against injuring or killing any civilians in their attacks, working hard to make sure that all stayed alive and well.

This paper argues that al Qaeda is a religiously-motivated group that evinces a substantive rationality in choosing means based on the values held by the group – religious values – which are not the same as instrumentally rational means to reach their objectives. Furthermore, the paper holds that the PFLP is an example of a secular group that primarily demonstrates instrumental rationality, choosing the means to best reach their objectives. While their goals are the same, their ideologies and their actual attacks are quite different in both type and lethality. A quick comparison of the two groups’ most famous attacks – the attacks being the tactical means employed by both groups to reach their objectives – makes it clear that al Qaeda kills many people, whereas the PFLP killed few. The PFLP sees its attacks as the most expedient means to certain ends, while al Qaeda carries out its attacks in ways that are not the most expedient or efficient for reaching their goals – but are based on religious values promoted by the group’s ideologues. Al Qaeda emphasizes particular religious values, in particular values that show little regard for the value of life – like *jihad*, martyrdom, the killing of civilians as legitimate – in the undertaking of their attacks. The PFLP does not see any of these values as legitimate, regarding the value of life as much higher than al Qaeda, and thus does not engage in attacks that include these aspects. The differences between the two group’s rationalities, given similar short- and medium-term goals, show that the two groups employ different types of rationalities in choosing the means to reach similar ends.

It should further be noted that it is not simply that groups evincing a religious rationality have a larger capacity to commit lethal attacks than secular groups. The PFLP had the ability to undertake a multitude of plane hijackings; they could have easily exploded those planes in mid-flight or directed them into large buildings instead of re-directing them to an airfield of their choosing and

holding the passengers and crew hostage. But, because the PFLP does not have the same ideological motivations and rationality as religious terrorist groups, they have chosen not to engage in attacks with many casualties, despite their ability to do so. Therefore, the issue under consideration is the values and rationalities behind each group, not in their physical ability to undertake certain types of attacks or be particularly lethal.

The next chapter will provide a statistical analysis of this issue – the lethality of religiously-motivated groups’ attacks compared with the lethality of secular groups’ attacks – to see if what has been seen in these two case studies is statistically significant in a larger sample.

## **IV. Quantitative Analysis**

### **Hypotheses, Variables, and Methodology**

#### *Basic Hypotheses*

To support the idea of differing rationalities, and in particular a substantive rationality that esteems the values behind an action instead of the most expedient means to reach an end, the research program studies the propensity of religiously-motivated terrorist organizations to kill more or fewer people than secular terrorist organizations. Furthermore, this question would best be assessed in a geographically and temporally large statistical analysis in order to provide the most support for the idea of a substantive rationality employed by religious terrorist groups. The basic hypothesis assessed in this section is that religious terrorist organizations undertake attacks with less regard for the casualties caused by the attack than do secular groups. Religious groups are carrying out an attack based on the previously-discussed religious motivations and values, which have been shown in the last chapter to place little value on human life in the greater context of a religious war in which the ‘soldier’ has a higher calling. Religious terrorist groups have been acknowledged as more violent than secular groups and likely to “attack randomly, targeting people whose only crime is to be in the wrong place at the wrong time” (Stern 2003, xxii). And as Hoffman notes, “terrorism motivated in whole or in part by religious imperatives has often led to more intense acts of violence that have produced considerably higher levels of fatalities than the relatively more discriminating and less lethal incidents of violence perpetrated by secular terrorist organizations”: over 1998-2004, religious terrorist groups perpetrated 6% of recorded incidents but were responsible for 30% of the fatalities (Hoffman 2006, 88).

Conversely, secular groups, cognizant of public opinion and without certain violent religious interpretations driving their actions, would be more

circumspect in their attacks, resulting in fewer collateral-damage casualties. In this assessment, the independent variable is the attack type and general undertaking, while the dependent variable is the different values held by different groups – in particular, for this quantitative analysis, the attitude towards the value of life. Both types of terrorist organizations are attempting to achieve similar goals, as described in the previous section – such as support from a local population or reaction from the government to support a cause and become a more important political player. As both group types have the same end goals, if both types were instrumentally rational, then both would engage in the roughly the same terrorism tactics – including the similar numbers of casualties. If there is indeed a difference in the casualty numbers and demographics between secular and religious groups, this difference can be interpreted as support for the concept of differing rationalities – what seems irrational from an instrumental point of view can be rational from a value-based point of view.

*H4.0: Religiously-motivated terrorist groups engage in terrorist attacks that result in the same number of or fewer casualties than secular groups do in their terrorist attacks.*

*H4.1: Religiously-motivated terrorist groups engage in terrorist attacks that result in higher casualties than secular groups do in their terrorist attacks.*

Of course, in order for this argument – that religious terrorist groups engage in attacks that kill more civilians, and that this is a substantively rational choice, not an instrumentally rational decision – to make sense, it also must be shown that religious terrorist groups loose support in a given country after terrorist attacks have occurred in that country. As the spiritual leader of Hezbollah has noted, “We don’t see resisting the occupier as a terrorist action. We see ourselves as *mujahideen* who fight a Holy War for the people” (in Hoffman 2006, 23). If these groups are indeed fighting for the people, then the people would show support for the group and its actions. In particular, if support for terrorist groups increases after terrorist attacks – even if these

terrorist attacks are killing many civilians – than these attacks are an instrumentally rational decision. If support decreases after the attacks, they were not an instrumentally rational choice for the terrorist organization to have made. Despite the fact that the 1998 al Qaeda East Africa bombings killed more Africans than Americans, there was no backlash against al Qaeda in the Muslim world and 40 religious leaders supported bin Laden’s call for a *jihād* against America in March 1998. While most terrorists groups before the 1990s tried to avoid high-casualty attacks due to the subsequent negative publicity, al Qaeda “is not in the least concerned by such matters” (Gunuratna 2003, 62, 122). In 2005, al Zawahiri wrote,

...[A]nd I proclaim to all Muslims and the *mujahidin* that, by the grace of Allah, al-Qaeda is spreading, growing, and becoming stronger. By the grace of Allah, it has become a popular and trailblazing organization, confronting the new Zionist-Crusader campaign, in defense of all the plundered Muslim lands, and fighting all the apostate and collaborating regimes that rule our Muslim *umma*. And people from every region of Islam rally around it [al Qaeda], as they confront the infidels, apostates, traitors, and collaborators, wherever they may be, with weapons, with fighting, with calls [to Islam], and with argumentation. All praise be to Allah (al Zawahiri 2007 [2005], 179-80).

If al Qaeda were indeed “a popular... organization,” then it would be supported by public opinion in the Muslim world. Clearly, if people support religious terrorist groups despite these groups undertaking more lethal attacks, then the argument that religious terrorists are not making an instrumentally rational choice is not supported. Conversely, if people in the countries under study do *not* support religious terrorist groups after attacks have taken place, and the groups continue their attacks, then it would appear that they are not acting in an instrumentally rational way.

Again, the lack of data regarding public opinion on specific terrorist groups makes assessing this issue difficult. The best information comes from the Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, which has surveyed almost 300,000 people in 59 countries since the project started in 2002 (Pew 2012). The most

recent data available is from 2012, so there is potentially a 10-year time period that can be assessed in terms of people’s support for terrorist groups. There are several questions related to this research project, including peoples’ attitudes regarding their support for Osama bin Laden and the favorability of al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah – all religiously-motivated terrorist groups – as well as support for suicide attacks.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, not all the questions were asked every year nor were they asked in many of the countries that are part of this analysis – but the data trends do show that support for religious terrorist groups declined over time.

**Table 1: Confidence in Osama bin Laden<sup>10</sup>**

Country/ Year	2003		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	C	NC	C	N C	C	NC										
Egypt	-	-	-	-	27	70	18	69	19	68	23	67	18	73	22	68
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	68	-	-	20	70
Jordan	56	44	61	36	24	75	20	69	19	73	28	60	14	83	13	82
Kuwait	20	61	-	-	-	-	13	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	20	75	5	77	-	-	1	95	2	96	4	96	0	98	1	98
Pakistan <sup>11</sup>	46	26	52	22	38	31	38	31	34	27	18	47	18	45	21	42
Palestinian Territories	72	22	-	-	-	-	57	35	-	-	52	46	-	-	34	65

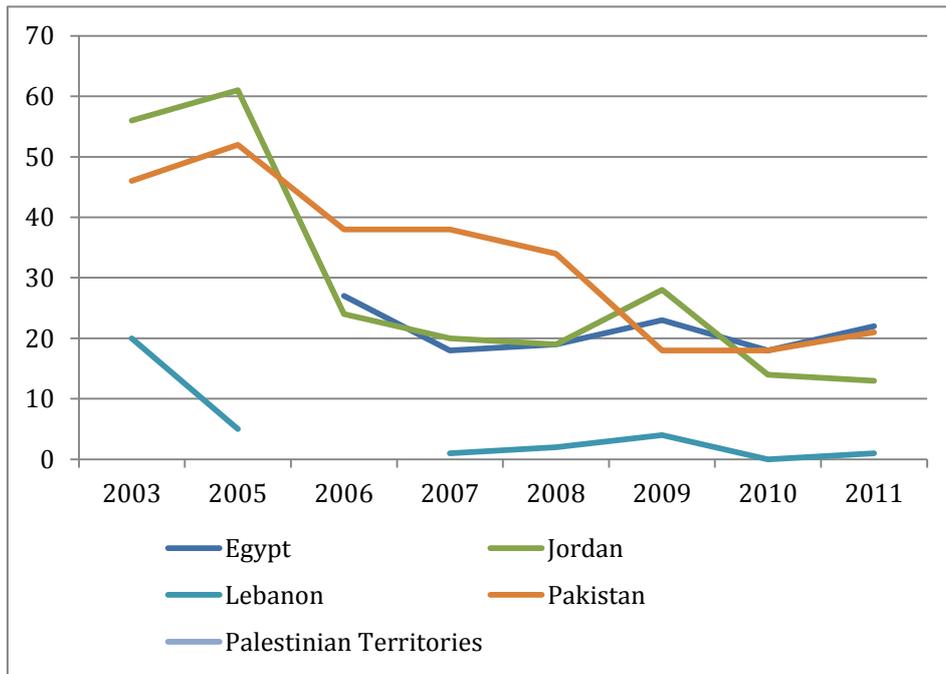
C = Confidence | NC = No confidence  
 Note: Based on Muslim responses only

<sup>9</sup> The actual wording of the questions used in the surveys is included in the Appendix.

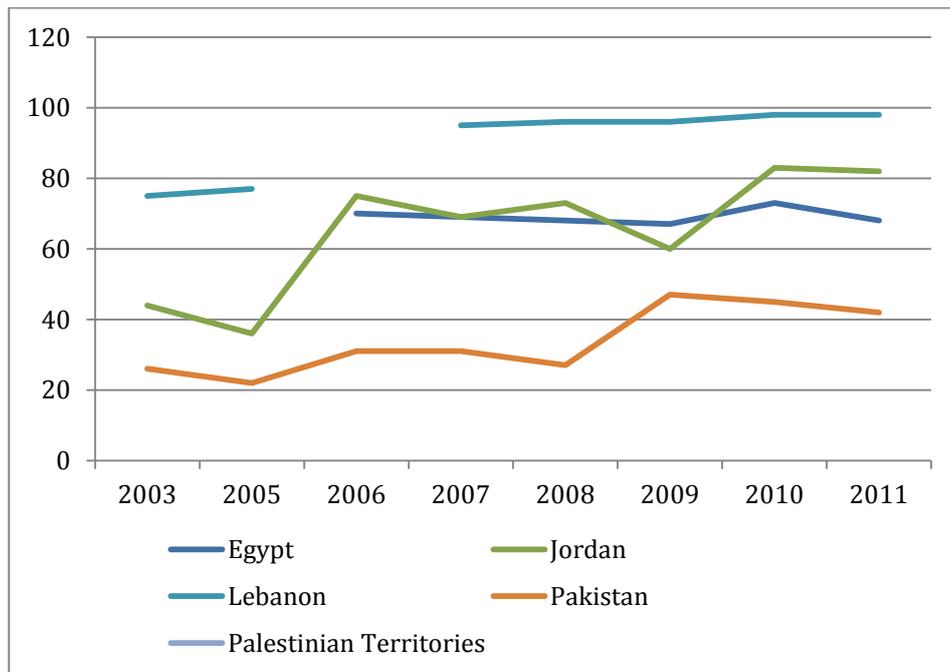
<sup>10</sup> The statistics are based on Muslim responses only; ‘Confidence’ combines responses of "a lot of confidence" and "some confidence," while ‘No Confidence’ combines responses of "not too much confidence" and "no confidence at all."

<sup>11</sup> Although not included in the statistical analysis in this paper, Pakistan has been included in some of these Tables due to the lack of data regarding other key countries (such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, etc.). The viewpoints of those in Pakistan could be assumed to at least be somewhat similar to those in Afghanistan, as the countries have a very long shared border and also, recently, a period of closeness in relationship, at least on the civilian level. Again, these statistics are given merely to attempt to distill some trends in Middle Eastern public opinion, so any information that could help in that assessment is utilized, though with a grain of salt, as Pakistan is not part of the region analyzed later in this chapter.

**Figure 1: Confidence in Osama bin Laden**



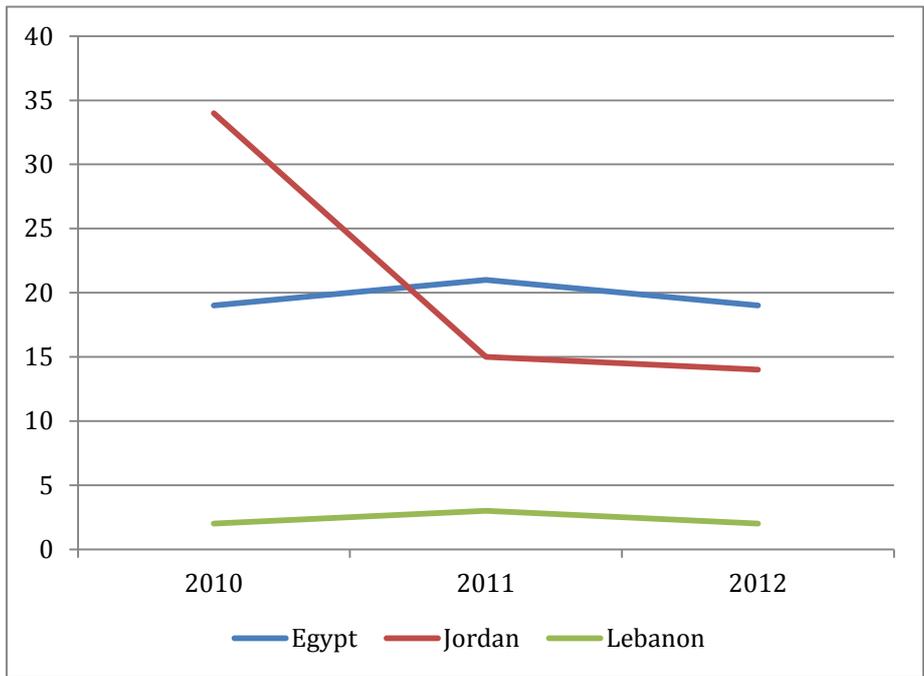
**Figure 2: No Confidence in Osama bin Laden**



**Table 2: Al Qaeda Favorability<sup>12</sup>**

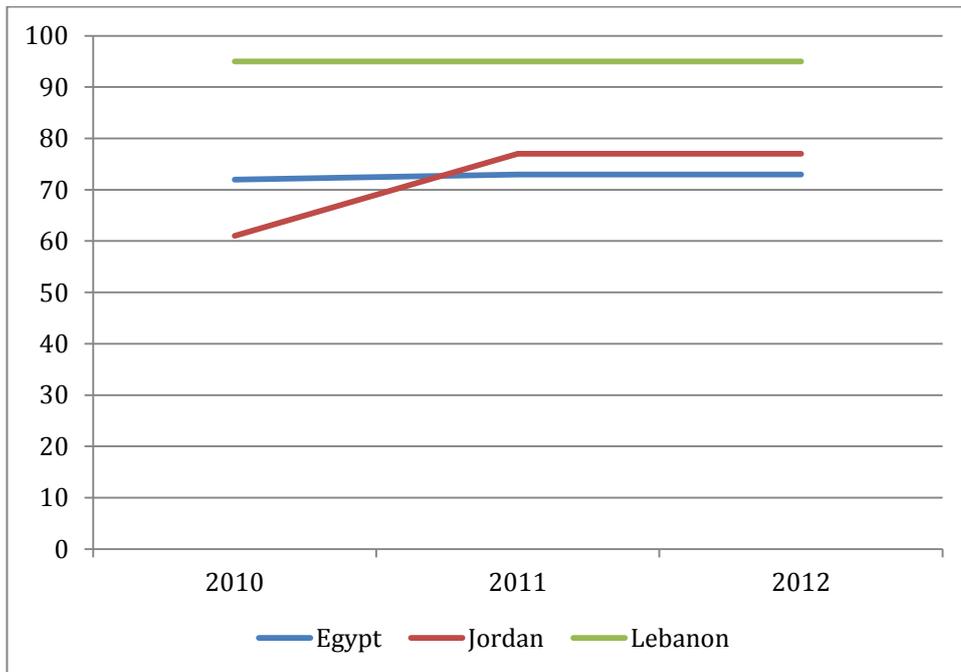
Country/Year	2010		2011		2012	
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Favorable	Unfavorable
Egypt	19	72	21	73	19	73
Jordan	34	61	15	77	14	77
Lebanon	2	95	3	95	2	95
Palestinian Territories			28	68		

**Figure 3: Favorable Views of al Qaeda**



<sup>12</sup> 'Favorable' combines responses of "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable," while 'Unfavorable' combines responses of "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable."

**Figure 4: Unfavorable Views of al Qaeda**



These tables and graphs indicate that popular opinion in the Middle East was increasingly not in support of bin Laden and al Qaeda over time. Other tables and graphs indicating the polled responses regarding support of Hezbollah, Hamas, and suicide bombing are included in the Appendix; the general trend lines are similar to those that have been shown above for bin Laden and al Qaeda.

### ***Data***

All datasets on terrorism inherently have and face a variety of problems. Most datasets originated in the private or government sectors, not as academic efforts. As such, the data has often not been collected or coded according to rigorous academic norms. In addition, whether a given attack is perpetrated by terrorists or not (i.e., a criminal assassination and a terrorist assassination can look similar) is often difficult to ascertain. Furthermore, terrorism data is

generally derived from open sources (mostly news reports), which means that unless an attack was “newsworthy” – in both scope and location – it may not have been in the news and thus not included in a dataset. Similarly, datasets have had differing access to government terrorist reporting, which would result in improved incident inclusion (ie, ITERATE before 1996 could access the FBI’s *Daily Reports* resulting in a more inclusive database). Moreover, different datasets use different definitions of terrorism and have different coding rules. Even within datasets the coding is often highly varied. One large issue for international/transnational terrorism datasets is what constitutes a country – the coding of disputed territory, such as whether to treat Palestine as a separate entity (or entities) or part of Israel, can make a huge difference in statistical analyses. Thus, because terrorism “databases have selection biases in terms of sources, because they use different operational definitions of terrorism, because they have different inclusion or exclusion rules, or simply because the enormity of capturing so much data in real time is so great,” each database covers only a portion of terrorism events and using them in conjunction would be ideal (Sheehan 2012, 18; Sandler and Enders 2002, 5).

Unfortunately, the data set that seems to have been used by several scholars to analyze religiously-motivated terrorism, the RAND Terrorism Knowledge Database (TKB), is no longer available. This database has been updated and expanded into the RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents (RDWTI) that includes the TKB and a former RAND database (Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, MIPT); however, this database no longer seems to include many variables of interest to this research project. Of the remaining datasets (International Terrorism: Attributes of Events (ITERATE), the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), World Incident Tracking System (WITS), Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data (TWEED)), the GTD was initially selected as the best option for this research. Sheehan (2012) argues that a ‘critical framework’ for terrorism databases can be used to compare and evaluate the relative validity of these datasets. He includes six criteria: conceptual clarity, context and immediacy of observation, citation

transparency, coding consistency, certainty of record, conflict of interest issues, and convenience, accessibility, and functionality. It appears that the GTD fits these criteria best and is also the best for this empirical study as it contains both domestic and international terrorism, making the data more inclusive and providing a more holistic picture of terrorism, as was noted by Capell and Sahliyeh (2007) in their use of the ICT: “the increasing decentralization of terrorist groups and the fact that such groups are some of the most lethal terrorist organizations today makes it mandatory to thoroughly investigate... [both] domestic and transnational groups...” (Capell and Sahliyeh 2007, 277). Also, the GTD offers a useful, though limited, collection of terrorist group profiles that describe whether certain groups are religious or secular. In addition, because most of the literature on terrorism analyzes ITERATE, this paper includes complementary tests of the regression on this database to ascertain the convergence between the two datasets. While the two differ in many respects, any trends that are significant in both would provide more support for the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis.

The GTD began in 2001 when the University of Maryland acquired a dataset that had originally been collected by Pinkerton Global Intelligence Services. There are, however, several major problems with the GTD. The first is that the variable coding conventions for 1970-1997 and those after 1998 are different. In fact, the coding conventions, broader definition of terrorism, and notes on sources from the Pinkerton-coded data are often unavailable. Also, the number of events is significantly larger from the late 1970s through the early 1980s, which may be due to Pinkerton recruiting a larger coding staff instead of an actual increase in terrorism. Furthermore, the data for 1993 was entirely lost. While attempts were made to recollect the data from original news sources, this was very difficult 15-20 years after the attacks. As such, approximately 15% of the data has been recovered; there were no other notes or records available to re-code the 1993 data (Enders et al 2011; START 2012). While this data is excluded from the master dataset, it has been appended to the dataset used in this paper under the assumption that secular and religious attacks alike were

excluded/included in roughly proportional numbers, and that there would thus be no bias in including the insufficient data for 1993. I judged it better to include the available data rather than exclude it, as the goal is to use the most inclusive data set possible.

The GTD- and ITERATE-derived datasets used in this paper cover the countries of the Middle East (Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, South Yemen, Yemen, North Yemen, Syria, United Arab Emirates [Bahrain, Dubai], Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, and the West Bank/Gaza), along with Afghanistan, looking at all terrorist attacks from 1970-2011. While ITERATE covers only transnational/international attacks, the GTD dataset does not distinguish between domestic and transnational attacks. Many articles in the terrorism literature focus solely on transnational attacks, which is in part due to the fact that until recently, the primary database that was available and utilized (ITERATE) only included transnational attack data. However, with the relatively recent release of the GTD, it is now possible to analyze domestic incidents as well. Especially in regions in which terrorist groups do not have a specific home country and the membership is often multi-national, or at least regional, the strict demarcation between domestic and transnational incidents seems over-specified. Thus, a dataset that includes both types of attack would seem to provide a more inclusive, fuller picture of terrorism.

Furthermore, much of the terrorism literature looks only at suicide attacks (i.e. Pape 2003; 2005), apparently under the assumption that the rationale for the organization sending out a suicide attacker is different than for an organization planting a bomb or undertaking an assassination. However, statistically analyzing all types of terrorist attacks – suicide and non-suicide – also would seem to provide a fuller picture of terrorism and the lethality of attacks. While suicide bombings may result in higher casualty rates, bombs and other types of non-suicide attacks can also create many casualties. Assessing the relative lethality of all types of terrorism first and then running the model looking only at suicide terrorism could result in a more complete analysis of

terrorist attack lethality, allowing us to see if the forecast relationship is present in both iterations.

The GTD defines terrorism in two different ways. For 1970-1997, the definition was: “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation” (Sheehan 2012, 37). However, the definition was updated for the 1998-2011 portion of the database. While each event must still be intentional, involve at least some level of violence or threat of violence, and the perpetrators must be sub-national actors, two of the following three criteria must also be met:

1. The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal;
2. There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims;
3. The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities (START 2012)

START provides variables for these three criteria so users can choose events data based on their own definitions.

ITERATE has used generally the same definition of terrorism since the database was launched in the early 1970s. Transnational/international terrorism is defined as:

[T]he use, or threat of use, of anxiety-inducing, extra-normal violence for political purposes by any individual or group, whether acting for or in opposition to established governmental authority, when such action is intended to influence the attitudes and behavior of a target group wider than the immediate victims and when, through the nationality or foreign ties of its perpetrators, its location, the nature of its institutional or human victims, or the mechanics of its resolution, its ramifications transcend national boundaries. International terrorism is such action when carried out by individuals or groups controlled by a sovereign state, whereas transnational terrorism is carried out by basically autonomous non-state actors, whether or not they enjoy some degree of support from sympathetic states (Mickolus et al 2011).

While it has been reported that ITERATE has worked hard to maintain continuity among coders and apply identical criteria for coding consistency, it has also been argued that some of the cases included do not quite fit the given definition of terrorism (Sheehan 2012).

### ***Variables and Further Hypotheses***

This paper uses event data representing a single terrorist attack. The dependent variable is the number of casualties in an attack ((total deaths – terrorist deaths) + (total wounded – terrorist wounded)), while the independent variable is whether an organization is religious or secular, the categorization of which will be explained in more detail later in this chapter, as well as in the Appendix.

The disadvantage of using a highly inclusive data set in terms of attacks is that a significant amount of information is lost regarding the identities of the attackers. Many articles use smaller databases in which they can find substantial material on many of the groups, especially as related to control variables such as group age, state sponsorship, size, locality, and territorial holdings. It seems to me that this is a form of bias – only including the groups about which the most information is known results in selecting the most successful and famous groups, which can often be the most lethal. By using a much more inclusive data set, this paper has attempted to correct for this bias; however, this also means that few control variables can be added to the model, as the information to do so simply does not exist.

One useful control variable is state sponsorship. It can be argued that state sponsorship would be a negative predictor of attack lethality, as states would have a dampening effect on the group's actions due to the state's concerns regarding the opinions of its constituency and its international image. However, given the relative lack of information on the majority of the groups involved in this database, the control variable would not be very meaningful even if it was available. Unfortunately, this variable is not a part of the GTD

dataset, and reconstructing it based on open-source information when it is very difficult to even find if a terrorist group is religious or secular is a task that is unlikely to be particularly successful. Furthermore, it would seem likely that states sponsoring terrorism would wish their sponsorship to remain relatively secret, as common knowledge of such sponsorship would have large repercussions in the international community (i.e., like it has in Syria, Iran, and Afghanistan). Thus, it was determined that the information available via open sources was too scanty to attempt to create this type of control variable for the GTD dataset. In addition, other studies have looked at this variable and determined it to be a weak predictor of lethality (i.e. Asal and Rethemeyer 2008; Piazza 2008). At the same time, ITERATE does include a state sponsorship variable; this variable was included as a control in the ITERATE iterations of the statistical analyses, with the expectation that a state-sponsored group will have reduced lethality.

This paper has also included a control variable representing the number of competing groups in both the GTD and ITERATE analyses, as it has been argued that the more groups share the same constituent population, the more lethal their attacks will be in order to gain attention and distinguish themselves from their competitors. One example, discussed by Bloom, is that the PFLP started to use suicide attacks only after Hamas used them first and subsequently gained in popularity. A similar situation was seen in Lebanon in the 1980s with Hezbollah and Amal (Bloom 2004). Conversely, Piazza (2008) found that, controlling for Iraq, the number of competing groups was not a significant predictor in suicide terrorism. It is expected that this variable will be a weak but positive predictor of casualties.

There have been many arguments regarding the connection between democracy and terrorism. One group of scholars believes that a democracy is more likely to be attacked due to the open nature of the system, resulting in less security, as well as the relative freedom of the press, which would lead to more media coverage – which terrorists want in order to advertise their grievances

and their cause. In particular, the press freedom aspect would be relevant for terrorist groups' strategic choices because they could increase their media coverage if they attack a target in a democratic state with a relatively free press, whereas if they attacked a target in an authoritarian state, the government could institute a media blackout. Because one terrorist organization goal is to attract followers, media coverage is important. Pape, in particular in relation to suicide terrorism, argues that democracies are attacked primarily due to nationalist – not religious – motivations and that democracies are particularly sensitive to casualties. He performed statistical tests looking at suicide terrorism over 1980-2003, finding that suicide terrorists almost always attack democracies that are seen as occupiers of a territory (i.e., Pape 2003, 2005). Others argue that democracies are less likely to be attacked because those who live in a democratic system can adequately address their grievances through the political process and justice systems (i.e. Wade and Reiter 2007; Piazza 2008). Li (2005) finds that democratic participation reduces transnational attacks in a country, while at the same time institutional political constraints increase the number of incidents; thus, these trends subsume the effects of press freedom. Similarly, Wade and Reiter (2007) find that regime type is uncorrelated with suicide terrorism, looking at both Freedom House and Polity data.

To assess the effects of democracy and press freedom, a second control variable included in this analysis is the democratic score of the country in which a terrorist event is taking place, which can also act as a semi-proxy for press censorship. Polity IV democracy and autocracy data that is available up through the year 2011 measures this on a scale from -10 to 10 (Marshall et al 2010). Higher scores indicate higher levels of democracy. The score is based on three subcomponents: the competitiveness of participation, executive recruitment, and constraints on the executive (Marshall et al 2010; Wade and Reiter 2007, 337). It is expected that the democratic nature of a country – especially as it relates to press censorship – will not have a significant effect on the casualties resulting from terrorist attacks in both the GTD and ITERATE databases. Press censorship will be further discussed later in this section.

There are other control variables that were unable to be included in this analysis. For example, following Asal and Rethemeyer (2008), it would be useful to control for groups with larger memberships, older group age, and groups with direct territorial control. These variables could account for the lethality of attack, as more established, larger groups with more resources could likely carry out more deadly attacks. However, again, due to the loss of specific details about each group that comes with the increased inclusivity of the data, it is impossible to gather this type of information for the large variety of groups included in both the GTD and ITERATE datasets. While it could be possible to create a control variable to describe linkages to other terrorist organizations, the variable would be almost meaningless. We are missing information on the primary group that perpetrated an attack in so many instances that knowing if a second, allied group was also involved borders on impossible in most cases. The attacks that do include a second group in the databases tend to be those groups which are already famous, large, or attack places that have heavy press coverage – introducing selection bias into this potential control variable, along with a significant lack of necessary information for the analysis to be at all meaningful. Thus, it was decided to not attempt to include this as a control variable.

In the following regression, the unit of analysis is a terrorist attack. The variables were analyzed via a series of negative binomial regression models. This was chosen because the dependent variable, the number of casualties in an attack, is never negative but is often zero – and thus unevenly distributed in a nonrandom way. Therefore, an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis would not be the best way to analyze this data (Piazza 2009; Wade and Reiter 2007). It has been proposed that a zero-inflated negative binomial model (ZINB) would be superior, but it has been shown that the results are almost indistinguishable (Asal and Rethemeyer 2008). In all iterations of the model, secular and religious lethality probabilities are measured against the comparison variable, “Unknown” groups.

After narrowing both the GTD and ITERATE datasets to the countries under investigation (Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, South Yemen, Yemen, North Yemen, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Afghanistan, and the West Bank/Gaza/Palestine), the terrorist organizations that perpetrated any attacks over the 1970-2011 time period were coded based on their secular or religious nature. ‘Secular’ includes all organizations that are not delineated as religious: thus, communist, socialist, ethno-nationalist, nihilist, etc. While the GTD includes information on up to three groups and ITERATE on up to two, the primary group’s ideology only was coded, as it was assumed that this was the most relevant for the planning and motivation of the attack. It was often difficult to find if a group was secular or religious, as many of the groups only engaged in one or two attacks, often 20-30 years ago. An extensive open source search on the Internet was undertaken.<sup>13</sup> Despite best efforts, it remained impossible to find this information for many of the groups in the dataset, especially the GTD, which includes many more, and smaller, groups than ITERATE. It should also be noted that the datasets utilized in this paper also include several Christian and Jewish terror groups. Again, ultimately, this research program is not intended to apply only to Islam, but to all religions that have followers who commit violent crimes motivated by their religious beliefs and values.

Furthermore, it should be noted that of the GTD’s 21,112 attacks between 1970 and 2011 in these countries, approximately two-thirds (14,164) of these were coded in the dataset as “Unknown” or with a generic title such as “insurgent.” Of the remaining groups, 2,676 attacks were coded as perpetrated by secular groups, 4,006 attacks as perpetrated by religious groups, and the group ideologies of a further 222 attacks could not be ascertained (thus, the total “Unknown” is 14,386). For ITERATE, of the total 2,859 attacks, 1,544 were coded in the dataset as “Unknown” or with another generic title. Of those

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<sup>13</sup> See the Appendix for a list of sources utilized to determine if a group was religious or secular, a full list of the groups according to their coding categorizations (for both datasets), and further information on coding procedures.

coded with specific group names, secular groups committed 624 attacks, religious groups 644 attacks, and the ideologies of the organizations executing the remaining 47 attacks could not be found (thus, the total “Unknown” is 1,591).

It should also be noted that, following Capell and Sahliyah (2007), not all the terrorist groups classified as religious in a database – or in newspapers and other open sources – are engaged in a cosmic, transcendental war between good and evil or are divinely inspired. Some of these groups are religious, but also engage in terrorism in the pursuit of nationalist goals. Yet, these groups remain different from secular groups. Capell and Sahliyah give an example: though Hamas and Hezbollah do not share a transcendental view of the world with al Qaeda, instead concentrating on nationalist goals, “both would like to apply Islamic precepts in the conduct of daily life of the citizens” (2007, 273), and thus have a significant religious motivation in addition to their nationalist goals – which are, themselves, often colored or even based on religious ideas.

Finally, a casualties variable was produced which added up the number of wounded and killed (excluding terrorists wounded or killed in the attack). In cases which a source stated that there were “many” or “some” (GTD) or “Unknown, but individuals were injured” (ITERATE), the values of this variable were changed to ‘2.’ As such, the overall lethality shown in this analysis is probably lower than reality, though this should have no effect on the hypothesis testing in terms of biasing one group type over the other.

In lieu of being able to include many control variables in the regression model, several iterations of the model using variations on the dataset were undertaken instead. The first variation attempts to assess only ‘transnational’ terrorism incidents. While the GTD does not include a separate international/domestic terrorism incident variable, in part following Enders et al (2011), it was still possible to distill a proxy variable using differences between the country and nationality of those attacked, if there were a variety of nationalities attacked (the data codes up to 3 nationalities), if any Americans

were involved, and if the target type was an NGO or governmental facility, among other factors. By definition, ITERATE includes only international attacks, so this iteration was only performed with the GTD data, which could then be better compared with the ITERATE results.

*H4.2: International terrorist attacks undertaken by religiously-motivated terrorist organizations result in a higher number of casualties than international terrorist attacks undertaken by secular groups. [GTD]*

A second iteration dropped a particular variable included in the GTD that catalogues whether or not the coders doubted whether a certain attack was “terrorism proper” – as opposed to a drug-related event, political attack,<sup>14</sup> guerilla strike, or other types of violence. With these doubtful cases dropped, the regression was run again on what is presumably ‘purer’ terrorist attack data, though this regression iteration only assesses data after the introduction of this variable in 1997.

*H4.3: Assessing only attacks that are relatively certain to be terrorism and not other forms of violence (drug-related, gang-related, politically-motivated, etc.), religiously-motivated terrorist groups engage in attacks that result in a larger number of casualties than secular groups do in their terrorist attacks. [GTD, 1997-2011]*

The next iteration assesses press freedom, which is already somewhat included in the model as a control variable with the democracy/autocracy measurement – as such, the correlation between the two variables is likely to be high. It has been argued above that press freedom could lead to an increase in lethal terrorist attacks because this would provide more extensive coverage to the group’s goals and causes. Yet, similar to the type of political system, following Li (2005), it is expected that press censorship will not affect the lethality of terrorism in any significant way. Data that specifically measures with press freedom is only available from 1979 onwards (Karlekar and Dunham

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<sup>14</sup> Such as one political group attacking the group’s opposing candidate in order to win an election.

2012), so this iteration drops all data before that year.<sup>15</sup> Also, this variable includes many missing values, especially in the earlier years, meaning that the results of this iteration should be carefully interpreted in that context.

*H4.4: A country's level of press censorship does not have a significant effect on the lethality of terrorist attacks carried out on the country's territory, for either religious or secular groups. [GTD and ITERATE, 1979-2011]*

The fourth iteration involves narrowing the dataset to only evaluate attacks that resulted in casualties; thus, all attacks that did not result in at least one casualty (not including terrorist casualties) were dropped from the dataset and the regression was run again with both ITERATE and the GTD. It is expected that the theory developed in this paper and the differences in lethality between religious and secular terrorism will be maintained in this narrowed dataset.

*H4.5: When considering only attacks that resulted in casualties, religiously-motivated terrorist organizations undertake attacks that kill more people than do the attacks of secular groups. [GTD and ITERATE]*

A fifth iteration further focuses the data set, analyzing suicide attacks only. As much of the literature assesses suicide attacks alone, the model was run again using data that just included attacks in which the terrorist him/herself died in the attack. A variable for suicide is included in the GTD data, which was coded 1 for cases in which there was evidence that the perpetrator did not intend to escape alive – whether or not the perpetrator actually died. ITERATE reports a variety of incident types; those that did not involve suicide were dropped for this iteration. Again, the relationships are expected to hold in this rarified dataset.

*H4.6: Considering only suicide attacks, religiously-motivated terrorist organizations' attacks result in more casualties than do the attacks of secular groups. [GTD and ITERATE]*

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<sup>15</sup> This is why it could not be included as a control variable.

Last, the basic model is run again without the inclusion of terrorist strikes in Iraq in the datasets. Some scholars use Iraq as a control variable or drop the country from their datasets entirely because any country-specific trend, given the high incidence of attacks, could skew the results of the hypotheses being tested. Indeed, out of the 21,112 events in the GTD dataset, 7,810 (37%) occurred in Iraq; the country with the second most events was Afghanistan, with 3,042 (14.4%). The ITERATE dataset is much more evenly distributed, with 11.8% of events taking place in Iraq (338 out of 2865). As such, the final iteration included in this paper does not include attacks in Iraq; it is expected that religious terrorism will remain statistically significant in terms of lethality vis-à-vis secular terrorism.

*H4.7: When Iraq is not included in the data assessment, religiously-motivated terrorist organizations engage in attacks that result in more casualties than do secular groups. [GTD and ITERATE]*

## **Analysis and Results**

The results of the basic model can be seen in Table 3. Both religious and secular groups have statistically significant coefficients, showing that the lethality of their attacks is higher than that of the “Unknown” group, explained above. Furthermore, the coefficient for religious groups is almost twice that of secular groups, showing that religious groups are almost twice as lethal as secular groups, based on the GTD data (1970-2011, domestic and international terrorist events). Democracy also appears to be slightly negatively correlated with lethality; although the correlation is small, it is strong. This shows that democracies are slightly less likely to have lethal terrorist attacks. The variable representing the number of competing groups is also very slightly negative, yet still strongly significant. This means that an increase in the number of competing groups actually very slightly reduces the lethality of attacks. This is in opposition to the literature on competing groups, which argues that as groups increase in a certain geographical area, they increase the lethality of their

attacks because they are competing for attention in the media and followers among the populace.

**Table 3: Basic Model (GTD)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.02139***	.0587552	17.38	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.5697627***	.0501022	11.37	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0794809***	.005911	-13.45	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.0160932***	.0018654	-8.63	0.000
<i>Number of observations</i>	8816			
<i>LR <math>\chi^2(4)</math></i>			613.5	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0143
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	1.082928	.0173052		
<i>Alpha</i>	2.953314	.0511076		

Table 4 shows the second iteration in which the GTD data was refined to approximate transnational terrorist attacks only. The results are consistent with those in Table 3; the relation of religion to lethality of attack remains almost exactly the same in terms of coefficient and equally statistically significant ( $P < .005$ ). Furthermore, the lethality of secular attacks decreases slightly vis-à-vis the “Unknown” group against which these coefficients are being measured. Democracy very slightly increases in the value of the coefficient, meaning that democracies are slightly less likely to be the site of transnational terrorism attacks, compared to the initial iteration of domestic and international attacks combined. Furthermore, the competition coefficient value is also slightly higher, with the result that an increase in the number of competing groups is slightly less likely to result in increased international terrorism than an increase in the number of competing groups in the first test.

**Table 4: Approximating International/Transnational Terrorism (GTD)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.018293***	.0755637	13.48	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.4248916***	.0661162	6.43	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0860622***	.0075813	-11.35	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.0224456***	.0023536	-9.54	0.000
<i>Number of observations</i>	5709			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			441.54	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0166
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	1.34245	.0222375		
<i>Alpha</i>	3.828411	.0851343		

The results in Table 5 provide the results of the basic regression model using ITERATE data. Religion, as compared with the “Unknown” group, is more lethal, with high statistical significance. In addition, secular groups are also statistically significantly more lethal than the “Unknown” group; however, a comparison of the coefficients shows that religious groups are significantly more lethal than their secular counterparts. When compared to the GTD results, the ITERATE data does not illustrate that democracy or state sponsorship are significant variables when measuring lethality. Conversely, the group competition control variable displays some significance in reducing the incidence of terrorism ( $P < .05$ ), though the coefficient is very small.

Furthermore, the results in Table 5 can be compared with the GTD results shown in Table 4 above, as both datasets have been constructed (roughly, in the case of the GTD) to include only international terrorism events. The variables of interest to this paper, whether a group is religious or secular, are both statistically significant in the two datasets assessing only international terrorism, and the coefficients of the religion variable are both higher than the

secular variable. While democracy is statistically significant in the GTD dataset, albeit with a small coefficient, it lacks significance in the ITERATE dataset. Also, the amount of group competition is significant in both datasets, with almost the same coefficient; in both, an increased number of groups in the region leads to a slight decrease in attack lethality.

**Table 5: International/Transnational Terrorism (ITERATE)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.780089***	.1957354	9.09	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.8770669***	.178148	4.92	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	.0257959	.0191603	1.35	0.178
<b>Competition</b>	-.0227135**	.0086039	-2.64	0.008
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	-.3505545	.5095071	-0.69	0.491
<i>Number of observations</i>	1619			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			105.33	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0178
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	2.119291	.0496508		
<i>Alpha</i>	8.335137	.4138038		

Table 6 shows the third iteration, which leaves out the attacks about which the GTD coders had doubts as to the event actually being an act of terrorism. After dropping these likely non-terrorism attacks from the database, along with all attacks before 1997, the basic model was re-run with similar results. The lethality coefficient of religion remains statistically significant and is still much higher than that of the secular variable. The other variables' coefficients continue to be significant as well, and that of democracy is slightly higher than in the original test (Table 3). Thus, in the attacks that are most likely to be true terrorist strikes, the relationship between the variables still holds – religious terrorism is more lethal than secular terrorism, an increase in

the democracy score results in a slightly less lethality, and an increase in the number of competing groups results in a slightly reduced total attack lethality.

**Table 6: Reducing Doubts About Terrorism (GTD, 1997-2011)**

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Z-Score	Probability > z
<b>Religious</b>	1.385916***	.0778289	17.81	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.6438404***	.0955863	6.74	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0829289***	.0106824	-7.76	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.0129347*	.0062258	-2.08	0.038
<i>Number of observations</i>	3770			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			412.63	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0197
<i>/Lalpha</i>	.81214	.024815		
<i>Alpha</i>	2.252724	.0559013		

Next, press freedom is assessed from 1979-2011. In Table 7, the GTD data shows that the religious or secular nature of terrorist organizations retains high statistical significance ( $P < .005$ ), with the coefficient of the religion variable still higher than that of the secular variable, though lower than in other iterations. The democratic nature of a country also remains significant and slightly negative, as does the variable representing the amount of group competition. The freedom of press in a country is also statistically significant ( $P < .05$ ) in that it is correlated with a slight reduction in the lethality of terrorist attacks, more so than regime type.

**Table 7: Press Freedom (GTD, 1979-2011)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	.9892523***	.0587249	16.85	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.6071887***	.0516763	11.75	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0582951***	.0086491	-6.74	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.0258799***	.0020529	-12.61	0.000
<b>Press Freedom</b>	-.1110225**	.0381384	-2.91	0.004
<i>Number of observations</i>	8250			
<i>LR <math>\chi^2(4)</math></i>			708.96	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0172
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	.992062	.0177319		
<i>Alpha</i>	2.696789	.0478192		

Table 8 shows the results of adding freedom of the press to the regression for ITERATE; they are initially similar to those in the GTD iteration. Religion remains statistically significant and with a larger coefficient than the secular variable. Democracy and state sponsorship remain not statistically significant, while the competing groups variable increases in both significance and slightly in coefficient. Conversely, the variable measuring press freedom is not statistically significant in the ITERATE data. Thus, freedom of the press does not have any significant relation to attack lethality in this dataset. However, it should be remembered in both datasets' analyses of press freedom that there were many missing scores for press freedom in many of the countries over the period analyzed – as such, only weak conclusions that can be drawn from these tests.

**Table 8: Press Freedom (ITERATE, 1979-2011)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.739922***	.2131005	8.16	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.812225***	.2308157	3.52	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	.0469189	.0432575	1.08	0.278
<b>Competition</b>	-.0371087***	.0101666	-3.65	0.000
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	-.3460514	.4915735	-0.70	0.481
<b>Press Freedom</b>	-.2572644	.2119436	-1.21	0.225
<i>Number of observations</i>	1109			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			92.79	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0217
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	2.012829	.0580749		
<i>Alpha</i>	7.484465	.4346593		

The fifth iteration looked at the lethality of religious and secular terrorist organizations' attacks, but only those in which someone (other than a terrorist) was injured. In the GTD analysis, as seen in Table 9, all the variables remain statistically significant, though reduced in their coefficient values, as compared to the "Unknown" comparison variable. Religion's coefficient is reduced, though remains higher than the coefficient for secular groups. Thus, while both organizations commit attacks that result in casualties, the lethality of the attacks perpetrated by religious groups is still statistically significantly higher than the lethality of secular groups' attacks. Democracy remains slightly negative, along with the competition control variable – thus, in attacks with casualties, a democracy has a slightly lower chance of being attacked. Similarly, an increase in competing groups has a slight lowering effect on attack lethality.

**Table 9: Casualty-Only Attacks (GTD)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	.9082119***	.0485858	18.69	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.5473655***	.0441863	12.39	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0411284***	.0050074	-8.21	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.020415***	.0016432	-12.42	0.000
<i>Number of observations</i>	5741			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			639.60	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0180
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	.336906	.0179516		
<i>Alpha</i>	1.400607	.0251432		

When analyzing only those attacks in which there was at least one casualty, Table 10 displays the ITERATE data results that demonstrate the same general relationship between the variables as has been evident throughout the first several tests. Religion remains highly significant, with a larger coefficient than the secular variable. Democracy and state sponsorship stay statistically not significant, while the incidence of competing groups is still negative and significant at the  $P < .05$  level, though the coefficient remains very small.

**Table 10: Casualty-Only Attacks (ITERATE)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.112039****	.1788637	6.22	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.70266895***	.1910681	3.80	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0036092	.0192961	-0.19	0.852
<b>Competition</b>	-.0263286**	.0088543	-2.97	0.003
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	-.4635974	.4727769	-0.98	0.327
<i>Number of observations</i>	367			
<i>LR <math>\chi^2(4)</math></i>			46.96	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0162
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	.6502869	.0649496		
<i>Alpha</i>	1.91609,	.1244494		

The next iteration focuses specifically on suicide terrorism, which results in a dataset of many fewer cases; according to one article, suicide attacks accounted for only 2.16% of international terrorist events, and only 3.36% of domestic attacks over 1968-2005. Of the 851 active terrorist groups documented, only 58, or 6.82%, undertook at least one suicide attack (Piazza 2008, 23). As Table 11 shows, while the casualty coefficient for religious terror organizations remains significant and at roughly the same value in the GTD dataset, the coefficient for secular groups, as compared to “Unknown” groups, drops substantially and is now no longer statistically significant. The coefficient for group competition is also no longer statistically significant, while the coefficient for democracy becomes less significant, though remaining small and negative.

**Table 11: Suicide Attacks (GTD)<sup>16</sup>**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	.9076789***	.185605	4.89	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.1132872	.26431198	0.43	0.667
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0636577*	.0291597	-2.18	0.029
<b>Competition</b>	.0059959	.018949	0.32	0.752
<i>Number of observations</i>	283			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			33.08	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0133
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	.6209472	.0824768		
<i>Alpha</i>	1.86069	.1534637		

The ITERATE dataset presents problems in this iteration. As Table 12 shows, there are only 48 cases, and all the variables tested in the regression loose statistical significance if just suicide attacks are looked at. However, after closer investigation it seems that the small number of cases is due to the many missing values in the dataset for number of casualties in suicide attacks. After these missing values were changed to zero,<sup>17</sup> another regression was run (the results are reported in table format in the Appendix), with many more cases; both the religious and secular organization variables remain very statistically significant with religion in particular maintaining a higher coefficient. In that

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<sup>16</sup> Because a large amount of democracy score values are missing in the GTD-derived database, many events initially coded as suicide (over 1400) were not included in the regression. A regression was done that did not include democracy as a variable, and the results were consistent with those in the rest of the analysis – the “religious” variable was still statistically significant with a positive coefficient. This shows that the findings in this paper do not depend on democracy as a control variable.

<sup>17</sup> This same test was done with all the other iterations, and the suicide attack iteration was the only one with significantly different regression results. All other iterations in this paper – for ITERATE – remained almost exactly the same in terms of coefficients, standard errors, z-scores, and significances.

iteration, democracy and state sponsorship are not significant, while the number of competing groups is significant with a slightly negative effect.

**Table 12: Suicide Attacks (ITERATE)**

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Z-Score	Probability > z
<b>Religious</b>	.08275776	.5623652	1.47	0.141
<b>Secular</b>	.4181184	.8313359	0.50	0.615
<b>Democracy</b>	.0273682	.0810067	0.34	0.735
<b>Competition</b>	-.0273682	.0810067	-.015	0.879
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	0 (omitted)			
<i>Number of observations</i>	48			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			2.56	0.6337
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0061
<i>/lnalpha</i>	.9431568	.1934769		
<i>Alpha</i>	2.56805	.4968582		

Finally, the last iteration looks at the GTD and ITERATE datasets without the inclusion of any events in Iraq. It should be remembered that while Iraq represents 37% of the events in the GTD dataset, and thus could theoretically skew the results if there was a specific Iraq-only pattern taking place, Iraqi events represent only 11.8% of the ITERATE database, so dropping them should have little effect. In the GTD dataset, the casualty coefficient for religious groups remains significant and is approximately the same as in the other tests. The variable representing secular groups is also significant, with a similar coefficient. Also, both the level of democracy and the number of competing groups become very significant. Thus, when looking at a dataset of the Middle Eastern minus Iraq, religious terror organizations remain more lethal than secular and “Unknown” groups, while both democracy and increased group competition have a slightly negative effect on lethality.

**Table 13: Basic Model, without Iraq (GTD)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.047866***	.0750005	13.97	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.6612803***	.0595579	11.10	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	-.0604736***	.0067235	-8.99	0.000
<b>Competition</b>	-.0118507***	.0963693	-5.46	0.000
<i>Number of observations</i>	6149			
<i>LR chi<sup>2</sup>(4)</i>			360.72	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				0.0132
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	1.340731	.022055		
<i>Alpha</i>	3.821836	.0842907		

Looking at the ITERATE dataset without Iraq, Table 14 shows that both the religious and secular variables remain statistically highly significant and the religious variable maintains its higher coefficient. State sponsorship continues to lack significance, and for the first time, the number of competing groups has lost statistical significance. Also for the first time in the ITERATE analyses, the variable representing democratization becomes slightly statistically significant ( $P < .5$ ). Moreover, the coefficient is positive, presenting results that are different from the GTD analyses – the ITERATE dataset shows that, outside of Iraq, an increase in democracy will slightly increase the lethality of terrorist strikes, whereas the GTD data shows that an increase in democracy will slightly reduce the lethality of attacks.

**Table 14: Basic Model, without Iraq (ITERATE)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.836567***	.2007623	9.15	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.8475154***	.1910951	4.44	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	.04551*	.0202672	2.25	0.025
<b>Competition</b>	-.0050153	.0093372	-0.54	0.591
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	-.3290732	.5397775	-0.61	0.542
<i>Number of observations</i>	1512			
<i>LR <math>\chi^2(4)</math></i>			104.01	0.0000
<i>Pseudo R<sup>2</sup></i>				.0193
<i>/Lnalpha</i>	2.126966	.0522653		
<i>Alpha</i>	8.389373	.438473		

## **V. Discussion and Conclusion**

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Analyses**

This paper has investigated the question of whether or not terrorist organizations can be considered rational, contributing to the overall scholarly understanding of terrorism. By proposing the idea of a value-based rationality, the actions of religious groups can perhaps be better explained – and perhaps even predicted and countered – than through rational choice theory. The case studies presented here, of al Qaeda and the PFLP, show the different motivations and strategic calculi of the two organizations. While they have similar goals, the two groups' actions towards reaching those goals were very different. The PFLP made decisions on a cost-benefit, instrumental, means-ends basis, while al Qaeda chose actions based on the value system provided by its particular fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. These case studies support the paper's hypotheses: secular and religious terrorist organizations have similar goals but use different types of terrorism to attempt to reach these goals; secular groups employ instrumental rationality; and, religious groups employ substantive rationality.

The quantitative section of this paper has argued that religiously-motivated terrorism is correlated with more casualties than non-religiously-motivated terrorism, that religiously-motivated terrorist groups engage in attacks that result in higher casualties than do secular groups. This has been investigated using both a well-established database, ITERATE, and a relatively new database, the GTD – and in doing so has attempted to promote the further use of this database. Through the GTD, both domestic and international terrorism have been analyzed in one event database; it would perhaps be beneficial to not always hold to such a large demarcation between the two as there has been in past research, given that it is often difficult to know whether a certain event is an incidence of domestic or transnational terrorism. The GTD

results have been compared with those from ITERATE, in order to provide further verification of the broad trend lines evident in both.

Overall, the analysis supports the assertion that religious terrorism statically significantly produces more casualties than does secular terrorism. In every virtually every model, both these variables were statistically significant, often at the  $P < .005$  level, and the variable that corresponded to the religiously-motivated groups consistently had a higher coefficient than the secular variable. This is an important finding because the two variables were being measured against the “Unknown” group, which is likely to include both secular and religious groups. And, as the GTD and ITERATE datasets demonstrated generally the same trends, the correlations investigated in this paper are provided with more statistical support. Also, it seems likely that the similar results in the two datasets also mean that perhaps maintaining a sharp distinction between international and domestic terrorism is not necessary or even helpful in every case.

In the iterations of the model that narrowed the dataset to provide a tougher test of the model by narrowing the dataset tested to look only at attacks in which there were casualties, suicide attacks, and international/transnational terrorism, the relationship between secular and religious terrorism generally held. The relationship also held in the GTD results when Iraq was excluded from the dataset due to its potential to skew the results, given that attacks in Iraq represent a significant portion of the dataset. The small number of events included in the GTD test of suicide terrorism could be one explanation for why the secular variable lost statistical significance, as it retained full significance in the adjusted ITERATE test of this narrowed dataset. While the religion coefficient was higher in this iteration, it was still similar to the other iterations, meaning that perhaps suicide terrorism is not necessarily qualitatively different from other forms. It would be beneficial to find a better way to investigate this iteration with the GTD, in particular through increasing the number of events in the dataset to make a larger subset for testing; for instance, this could be done

by working to replace the missing values in the control variables like democracy.

Another important and unexpected finding of this analysis is that the variable representing the number of competing groups maintained statistical significance throughout the regressions, and this effect was generally negative. This relationship was visible in both the ITERATE and GTD datasets. Thus, an increase in the number of competing groups appears to have slightly reduced the lethality of terrorist attacks. This result contradicts the argument (ie Bloom 2004) that an increase in groups competing in the region would lead to an increase in attack lethality – as the number of groups in a region increased, the argument is that the groups would attempt more ‘spectacular’ and casualty-inducing attacks in order to gain attention and followers, as there was more competition for attention. Instead, the analysis shows that an enlargement in the amount of terrorist organizations in the Middle East over 1970-2011 resulted in fewer casualties per attack.

Also contrary to expectations and hypotheses, based on the GTD data, a country’s increase in democracy (which can also provide a rough measure of press freedom) generally results in a slight decrease in the lethality of terrorism. Yet, this variable is rarely statistically significant in the ITERATE database; when it is, the effect has also been slight and has been both negative and positive in these models depending on the iteration. In both data sets, the coefficient of the democracy variable is very small; thus, while there seems to be a minor relationship between lethality of attack and democracy, it is not a large effect. The iteration that included an actual measure of press freedom was significant, relatively small, and negative in the GTD data. This variable lacked significance in the ITERATE database. These results are interesting, as a significant portion of the literature argues that democracies are more likely to be attacked due to the increased press coverage an attack receives and the open nature of the democratic system, making such a political system more vulnerable. At the same time, as investigated earlier in this chapter, there have more recently been some scholars who have argued that an increase in

democracy would lead to both an increase in attacks due to increased press freedom providing more of a platform for a group to get their message to a wider audience and at the same time a decrease in attacks due to increased freedom of expression and other legitimate means of resolving grievances; as such, scholars such as Li (2005) maintained that these two effects would cancel each other out – meaning that an increase or decrease in a country’s democracy score would have very little effect on the lethality of terrorist attacks.

Finally, throughout the ITERATE analyses, state sponsorship consistently lacked statistical significance. Again, this test could not be done with the GTD data because this variable is not included in the dataset and researching it independently would require extensive time and resources – neither of which were available during the writing of this paper. While the academic literature holds that state sponsorship should lead to reduced lethality, there is one likely key reason as to why this variable lacked significance in this analysis – there is a lot of missing information on this variable because states would likely not wish to advertise their support of terrorism. Given how hard it is to find out even basic information about a group, such as its religious or secular nature, it is much more difficult to find out something that is likely so secret and that the state often does not want others to know, given the potential likely recrimination from the international community. Thus, it is probable that the lack of data on this variable does not allow a particularly thorough testing of the hypothesis.

There are many avenues for further research in the area of terrorism and rationality, especially in looking at how different value-sets held by certain groups on certain issues result in differences in terrorist actions undertaken. While I am also interested in assessing whether religious groups also kill more people who share their religion or ethnicity – not those whom have been defined as the enemy – than secular groups, using available data it is essentially impossible to do in a study such as this, which includes are large region and a long time period. A more targeted study, looking at one area (such as Israel/Palestine) over a much shorter period could perhaps amass enough

information on the perpetrators and targets to investigate this potential aspect of religiously-motivated terrorism. Unfortunately, such an effort is beyond the scope of this paper. Any attempt to create a database that also includes information on religious differences between the attacker(s) and the victims(s) would also be very useful in testing the basic research program described in this paper. More religions could be included in the study and case studies could be undertaken on terrorist groups and religiously-motivated violence in general in other religions. More control variables could fruitfully be developed, such as those suggested above – state sponsorship, groups with larger membership, older groups, linkages to other terrorist organizations, and groups with direct territorial control, among a long list of possibilities. Generating these variables would often be predicated on in-depth research into the groups that are involved in these attacks, which likely would prove to be exceedingly difficult. The same statistical analysis could be run using data from other databases or with subsets of data involving groups or periods about which we have more data describing the organizations involved, though the potential for selection bias would be large.

The results, supporting the assertion that religious terrorist attacks are consistently significantly more lethal than secular attacks, can also provide backing for the theory of substantive rationality that was developed earlier in this paper. The theory argued that terrorists are rational in a value-based way, and thus they would attempt to achieve a certain end based on values, not based on the most efficient means. Devotion to a religion such that it colors a person's every decision and view of the world could result in a religious terrorist organization making decisions based on values, not instrumental rationality. As such, killing many people in a terrorist attack could, while not practically or instrumentally rational, be value rational in that it would achieve the goal in a way that conforms to the values of the terrorist group. Islam, which includes some very violent values, can be argued to have this type of effect. Moreover, it should again be noted that the datasets utilized in this paper also include several Christian and Jewish terror groups; this research is not intended to apply only to

Islam, but to all religions that have followers who commit violent crimes motivated by their religious beliefs and values.

## **Implications**

In order to understand the motivation of religious terrorist groups, we need to listen – and understand – to what these groups and their leaders are saying. As one prominent al Qaeda and bin Laden CIA analyst has argued,

Without bin Laden's words, Americans are left with their leaders lies, the media's superficiality, and little chance of preventing their country's ultimate defeat. That the safety and survival of Americans lies in understanding their enemies' words, and disbelieving their leaders', speaks directly to the... state of America's political culture (Scheuer 2007, xiii).

If we pay attention to what terrorist groups are saying, we can understand what is driving them – and prepare a strategy to defeat that threat (Scheuer 2007, xiii).

The US and Western response to terrorism has primarily been military, in trying to erase terrorist groups wherever they can be found by killing leaders and operatives, destroying training camps and headquarters, and attacking states that implicitly or explicitly support terrorism. However, this approach has several problematic aspects. One is that military action against specific terrorist sanctuaries and training camps has limited effectiveness against the cells and franchises that are already in many other countries. Also, responding to terrorism with violence ultimately recruits more terrorists, clearly the opposite of intentions. There are also long-term side effects of military actions – such as refugees, criminal undertakings, and *mujahideen* searching for a new home and a new group (Stern 2003, 289-90). A second counterterrorism strategy, though not often used, is political accommodation, while a third strategy is democracy promotion. All three strategies have not produced effective results in terms of reducing terrorism or the number of terrorists (Abrahms 2008, 103).

As Gunuratna has noted, if religious terrorism is to be defeated, the counterterrorism tactics – certainly those of the US – will need to change. Despite the so-called ‘Global War on Terror,’ al Qaeda has not only continued as an organization, but it has spawned a multitude of loosely-linked allies and copycats, all working to carry out similar terrorist actions with similar goals. Although the organizational structure of al Qaeda and its affiliates has changed, the organizations have continued to operate. The number of new recruits exceeds the number of terrorists killed or captured by the US-led ‘war.’ As this paper has proposed, value-based rationality entails that certain groups with a certain system of values can undertake actions based on those values and not on what is instrumentally logical. As has been investigated, the values promoted by al Qaeda ideologues such as al Zawahiri and bin Laden have argued that it is permissible to kill innocent Muslims, martyrdom is the highest form of glorifying Allah, the West is on a crusade to take over all Muslim lands, and that it is perfectly legitimate and is indeed mandatory that Muslims fight a defensive *jihad* against the Western invaders. Ignoring the appeal, pervasiveness, and historico-scriptural basis of fundamentalist Islam – the type espoused by al Qaeda – is not an effective way to deal with the terrorist problem (Gunuratna 2003, 68).

The key to countering religious value-based terrorism is to fight against the pull of the ideology and the values it espouses. In particular, the message that al Qaeda is not following the Koran but is instead heretical – misinterpreting, misrepresenting, and corrupting religious texts – has not been disseminated adequately. Without any attempt to dilute or counter the extremist ideology that al Qaeda embraces, the organization will remain a model of Islam among extremist Muslims. Therefore, even if the military campaign against terrorism is pursued to full capacity – and had full economic, political, and military support in both the West and the Middle Eastern allies – it could last for decades, as the ideology of al Qaeda remains legitimate to a large enough group of recruits that the organization can replenish its depleted ranks quickly. A plan needs to be developed by the US and its allies that goes beyond basic

military strategy and funding of counterterrorism operations, instead working to promote alternative versions of Islam that command more legitimacy – and increase the message that al Qaeda represents a perverted form of the religion that is not a valid interpretation. A critical counterterrorist strategy must be to reduce the future supply of terrorists by “discrediting... Al Qaeda’s leadership, ideology, strategies and tactics in the very countries where Muslims live and work (Gunuratna 2003, xlii, 19, 317).

For counterterrorism purposes, many in high-level decision-making positions in the US government view these religious groups as irrational or crazy; this is an understandable reaction, as discussed by Kellen (1998) in the literature review. Hermann and Hermann also note that “people experiencing stress tend to dehumanize the enemy, enabling them to deal with the enemy without any sense of remorse. The enemy is irrational – he deserves what he gets” (1998, 224). While understandable, this mentality does not assist in developing effective counterterror policies. It is difficult for governments to deal with adversaries that they do not see as rational, as they simultaneously deal with terrorist groups as calculating actors who will be deterred by a threat of punishment while also believing that terrorists are unpredictable, irrational fanatics. The inconsistencies between these two perspectives “may make the response to terrorism susceptible to emotional judgments, misperceptions, and oversimplification” (Crenshaw 1998b, 258) – all of which are not conducive to developing effective counterterror policies (Taylor and Horgan 2006, 585). Misguided policies, based on misconceptions and prejudices, “can needlessly prolong campaigns of violence and exacerbate the search for acceptable solutions” (Silke 1998, 52). And as Crenshaw added, “terrorism is often presented as an undifferentiated phenomenon, yet its conduct takes a variety of complex forms” (Crenshaw 1998b, 248), in terms of both the motivations of groups that undertake terrorist acts as well as the details of the acts themselves. Reich notes that terrorism has “been carried out by an enormously varied range of persons with an enormously varied range of beliefs in order to achieve an enormously varied range of ends” (Reich 1998b, 262); as such, the assumption

that there is one terrorism could be pernicious in its effects on counterterrorism policy development. Overgeneralization and reductionism are not helpful in this policy sphere.

Hoffman concluded that “countering terrorism is akin to taking a series of time-lapse photographs. The image captured on film today is not the same as the image yesterday, nor will it be the same tomorrow”; terrorism and terrorist organizations are continually evolving and changing – and, counterterrorism tactics need to change accordingly (Hoffman 2006, 295). Therefore, this paper has argued that all terrorism is not the same and does not have the same motivations. In particular, religiously-motivated groups are not the same as secular groups, yet should still be perceived as rational – simply a different type of rationality than that which with the West is familiar. If viewed in such a way, government officials and others may be more inclined to take the groups’ speeches, pronouncements, and writings more seriously and develop counterterrorism policies that better address the situation.

First of all, to damage the organizations’ long-term strategy, the specific rhetorical points promoted by terrorist groups – that it is allowed to kill innocent Muslims and non-Muslims, that terrorist acts are martyrdom acts and this is a way to honor Allah, that the West is crusading against Islam, that Islam is in the midst of a defensive *jihad* – must be countered, and done so by voices that are outside *and* inside the Muslim community, from outside of *and* inside the Middle East. If the ideology remains unbroken, it will continue to attract supporters. Al Qaeda’s interpretations of Islam must be shown to be against the Koran, and this must be portrayed in a very basic explanation so that it can reach as many potential and current recruits as possible. As has been noted (ie, Capell and Sahliyeh 2007, 278), military force cannot be the primary means of combating terrorism, a much wider strategy that addresses multiple levels needs to be implemented.

Islamic groups also display intense ideological commitment and selfless actions, both of which appeal to potential recruits. In addition, the groups provide welfare, and related NGOs also provide jobs and (Islamic) education.

Not only do these groups radicalize those they help, this again attracts potential recruits due to the good social work of these organizations. The West should work to replace these assistance networks by working with Muslim NGOs and governments at both the national and local levels to help build policies and infrastructure for education, employment, and justice systems that promote nonsectarian, humane values.

Similarly, reducing popular support through political processes to ameliorate economic and social conditions and resolve conflicts would reduce the support for terrorist groups' extreme solutions. In particular, resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict would have a moderating effect on Muslim public opinion worldwide, as this is a key grievance noted by many religious and secular leaders, as seen in the case studies on al Qaeda and the PFLP. The US needs stay out of any cultural debates between the two sides and allow the international community to referee and promote solutions to resolve the many outstanding issues between the two sides. Similarly, other conditions that strengthen Islamists – such as Palestine, Kashmir, and corrupt, autocratic Middle Eastern governments – must be addressed for a strategic victory against terrorism to even be possible. The US and its allies should further work to reduce the corruption of Middle Eastern governments. Al Qaeda wants to establish a Muslim country based on *shariah* and the rule of Islamic law – this has appeal to many, especially when their current secular governments are so corrupt and ineffective as well as often disregarding of Islamic injunctions.

Furthermore, the West needs to work on better spreading information. Many Muslims do not know about the times that America has assisted Muslims or fought on their behalf. Al Qaeda and other groups present a twisted version of events, selectively choosing 'facts' to support their claims. A broader educational program, perhaps via radio, could present a more balanced view of the historical facts. At the same time, Western troops need to be pulled out of the Middle East quickly. The longer foreign troops remain in the Middle East, the greater the likelihood that significant parts of these societies will support al

Qaeda and similar militant groups fighting back against the perceived invading aggressor.

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## VII. Appendix

### A Selection of Quotes from the Islamic *Shariah* Highlighted by Al Qaeda

#### *Koran*

- The Most High said: “fight in the path of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah loves not the transgressors” [2:190] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “Fight against them [infidels] until idolatry is no more and Allah’s religion reigns supreme” [2:191] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “You are obligated to fight, though you may hate it. For it may well be that you hate that which is good for you and love that which is evil for you. Allah knows [best]; you do not know” [2:216] – quoted by bin Laden, al Zawahiri
- “Do not consider those as dead who were killed in the way of God; they are living and find sustenance from their Sustainer. They enjoy what God has given them from His bounty, and are glad for those who are left behind (on earth) and have not reached there yet, that they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. They are jubilant at the favor from God and His bounty; indeed, God does not destroy the reward of the Believers” [3:169-71] – quoted by Qutb, al Zawahiri
- “Let believers not take for friends and allies infidels rather than believers: whoever does this shall have no relationship left with Allah – unless you but guard yourselves against them, taking precautions” [3:28] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “... Whoever fights in the way of God and is killed or becomes victorious, to him shall We give a great reward” [3:74] – quoted by Qutb
- “Those who believe fight in the cause of God, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of rebellion. Then fight the allies of Satan; indeed, Satan’s strategy is weak” [3.78] – quoted by Qutb
- “O you who have believed! Do not take infidels as allies and friends instead of believers. What! Do you desire to offer Allah a clear proof against yourselves?” [4:144] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- Why would you not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated? – men, women, and children whose cry is: Our lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; raise for us from Your [presence] one who will protect! Raise for us from Your [presence] one who will help!” [4:75] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “Those who believe, fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of Taghut [anything worshipped other than Allah e.g. Satan]. So fight you against the friends of Satan; ever feeble is indeed the plot of Satan.” [4:76] – quoted by al Zawahiri

- “This day I have perfected your religion [i.e., way of life] for you” [5:3] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “O you who have believed! Do not take the Jews and Christians for friends; they are but friends of each other; and whoever among you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them.... And whoever takes Allah and His Messenger and those who believe as a guardian, then surely the party of Allah are they that shall be triumphant. O you who have believed! Do not take for friends and allies those who take your religion for a mockery and a joke, from among those who were given scriptures [Jews and Christians] before you, and the infidels; and be careful of [your duty to] Allah, if you are believers.” [5:51-8] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “You will see many of them befriending those who disbelieve. Evil is that to which their souls prompt them: in torment shall they abide. And had they believed in Allah and the Prophet and what was revealed to him, they would not have taken them for friends. Yet most of them are evil doers” [5:80-1] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “If you were to obey the greater part of those on earth, they would lead you astray from the path of Allah. They follow nothing but idle fancies and [utter] nothing but lies” [6:116] – quoted by bin Laden
- “Fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and [all] religion belongs to Allah” [8:39] – quoted by bin Laden, al Zawahiri
- “Muster against them what fighting men and steeds of war you can, in order to strike terror in the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides them whom you do not know, but Allah knows well” [8:60] – quoted by bin Laden
- “[T]hen fight the leaders of infidelity – surely their oaths are nothing – so that they may desist.” [9:12] - quoted by al Zawahiri
- “Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive with might [i.e., wage *jihad*] in Allah’s way, with their goods and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of Allah: they are the people who will achieve [salvation]” [9:19] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- And the Most High said: “[A]nd fight the Pagans all together as they fight you all together” [9:36] – quoted by al Zawahiri, bin Laden
- And the Most High said: “Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever you find them – seize them, besiege them, and make ready to ambush them!” [9:5] – quoted by al Zawahiri, bin Laden
- God says, “March forth, whether light or heavy, and fight with your wealth and your lives on the Path of God; this is better for you, if only you knew” [9:41] – quoted by Azzam
- “Oh Prophet! Wage war against the infidels and hypocrites and be ruthless. Their abode is hell – an evil fate!” [9:73] – quoted by bin Laden

- “Oh you who believe! Fight the infidels who dwell around you, and let them see how ruthless you can be. Know that Allah is with the righteous” [9:123] – quoted by bin Laden
- “Permission to fight (against disbelievers) is given to these (believers) who are fought against, because they have been wronged and surely, Allah is able to give them (believers) victory.” [22:39] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “We disown you and the idols which you worship besides Allah. We renounce you: enmity and hate shall reign between us until you believe in Allah alone.” [60:4] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “Allah does not forbid you from being kind and equitable to those who have not fought you. But Allah forbids from befriending those who fought you because of your religion, and driven you out from your homes or abetted others to drive you out. They who befriend them are indeed the evildoers” [60:9] – quoted by bin Laden, al Zawahiri
- “O you who have believed! Shall I point out to you a profitable course that will save you from a woeful scourge? Have faith in Allah and His Messenger, and fight in the path of Allah with your resources and lives. That would be best for you – if you but only knew it! He will forgive you your sins and usher you into gardens watered by running streams. He will lodge you in pleasant mansions in the gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph! And He will bestow other blessings that you desire: help from Allah and a speedy victory. Proclaim the good tidings to the faithful!” [61:10-13] – quoted by al Zawahiri
- “O Prophet! Wage war against the infidels and the hypocrites, and be ruthless against them. Their abode is Hell – an evil fate!” [66:9] – quoted by al Zawahiri

### ***Sunna and Hadith***

- According to Mohammed, “Whosoever dies without having fought (in a jihad), or having prepared his soul for this battle, dies on a branch of hypocrisy” (Azzam 2008, 116).
- According to Mohammed, “In paradise God has prepared one hundred levels for the mujahedeen; the difference between every pair of these is like the difference between heaven and earth, so if you ask God, as for Paradise” (Azzam 2008, 119).
- “I have been sent with the sword between my hands to ensure that no one but Allah is worshipped – Allah who put my livelihood under the shadow of my spear and who inflicts humiliation and scorn on those who disobey my commandments” (bin Laden 1998, 11)
- “Attack in the name of Allah and in the path of Allah do battle with whoever rejects Allah. Attack!” (bin Laden 2002, 41-42)

- “No nation ever forsook *jihad* without becoming degraded” – (bin Laden 2007 [2002], 59).
- “The martyr is special to Allah. He is forgiven from the first drop of blood [that he sheds]. He sees his throne in Paradise, where he will be adorned in ornaments of faith. He will wed the Aynhour [wide-eyed virgins] and will not know the torments of the grave and safeguards against the greater terror [hell]. Fixed atop his head will be a crown of honor, a ruby that is greater than the world and all it contains and he will couple with seventy-two Aynhour and be able to offer intercessions for seventy of his relatives” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 143-4).
- “He who is killed for [defending] his possessions is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his blood is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his religion is a martyr; he who is killed for [defending] his households is a martyr” (bin Laden 2007 [post-2002], 251)
- “If you take up a domestic life, hold on to the tails of cattle, are content with farming, and thus abandon *jihad*, Allah will let humiliation lord over you until you return to your religion” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 144-5).
- “A man said: Where [do I stand], O Messenger of Allah, if I am killed? He said: In Paradise. So he hurled the dates that were in his hand and fought till he was killed” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 153).
- “A man said: O Messenger of Allah, if I plunge myself into the ranks of the idolaters and fight till I am killed – what the, to heaven? He said: Yes. So the man plunged himself into the ranks of the idolaters, fighting till he was slain” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 153).
- “When the men rejoined on the day of Badr, Awaf bin al-Harith said: O Messenger of Allah, what about His slave does the Lord laugh? He replied: To see him plunge his hand in battle and fight to fatigue. So he threw his shield and advanced, fighting until he died a martyr” (al Zawahiri 2007 [pre-9/11], 153).

## Pew Research Global Attitudes Project – Questions

1. Confidence in Osama bin Laden: Now I'm going to read a list of political leaders. For each, tell me how much confidence you have in each leader to do the right thing regarding world affairs - a lot of confidence, some confidence, not too much confidence, or no confidence at all. Osama bin Laden
2. Al Qaeda Favorability: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of al Qaeda?
3. Hezbollah Favorability: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of Hezbollah?
4. Hamas Favorability: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of Hamas?
5. Support for Suicide Bombing: Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?

## Pew Research Global Attitudes Project – Further Results

**Table 15: Hezbollah Favorability<sup>18</sup>**

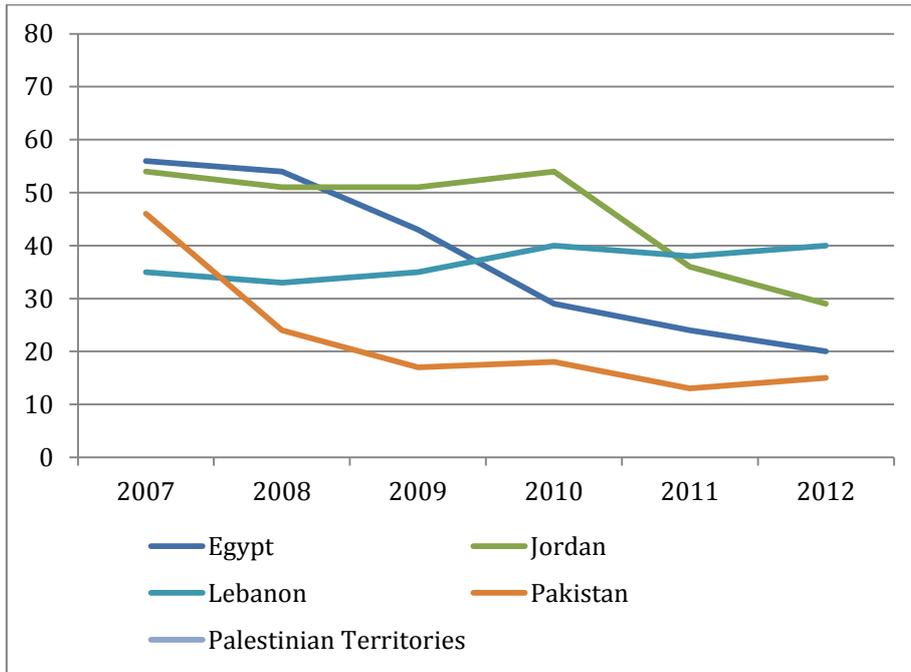
Country/ Year	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U
Egypt	56	41	54	40	43	57	29	66	24	74	20	75
Israel	-	-	-	-	4	92	-	-	5	91	-	-
Jordan	54	44	51	45	51	45	54	45	36	63	29	70
Kuwait	49	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	35	64	33	65	35	64	40	58	38	60	40	60
Pakistan	46	13	24	16	17	23	18	12	13	14	15	11
Palestina n Territories	76	20	-	-	61	36	-	-	61	37	-	-

F = Favorable

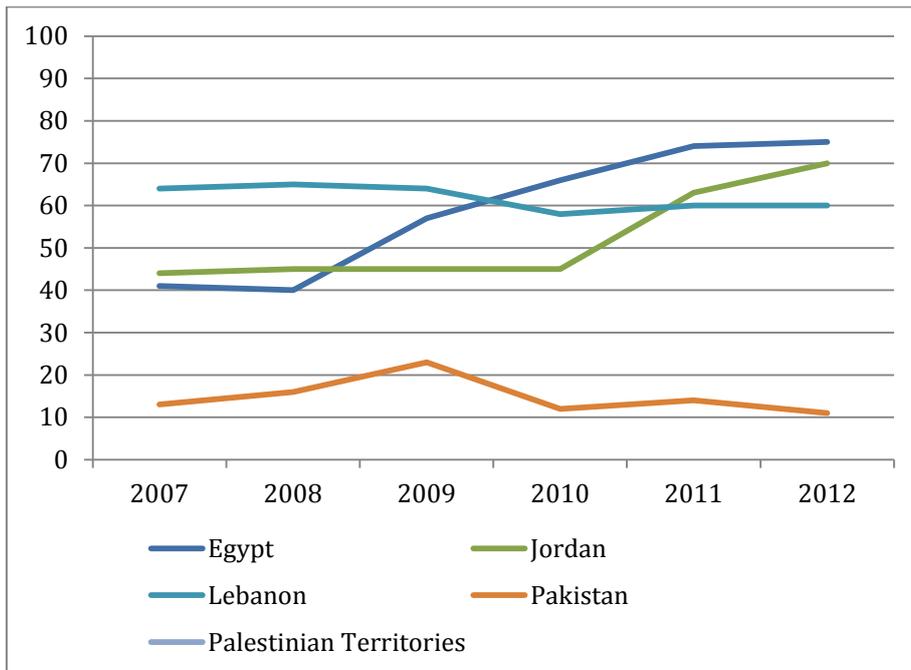
U = Unfavorable

<sup>18</sup> 'Favorable' combines responses of "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable," while 'Unfavorable' combines responses of "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable."

**Figure 5: Favorable Views of Hezbollah**



**Figure 6: Unfavorable Views of Hezbollah**

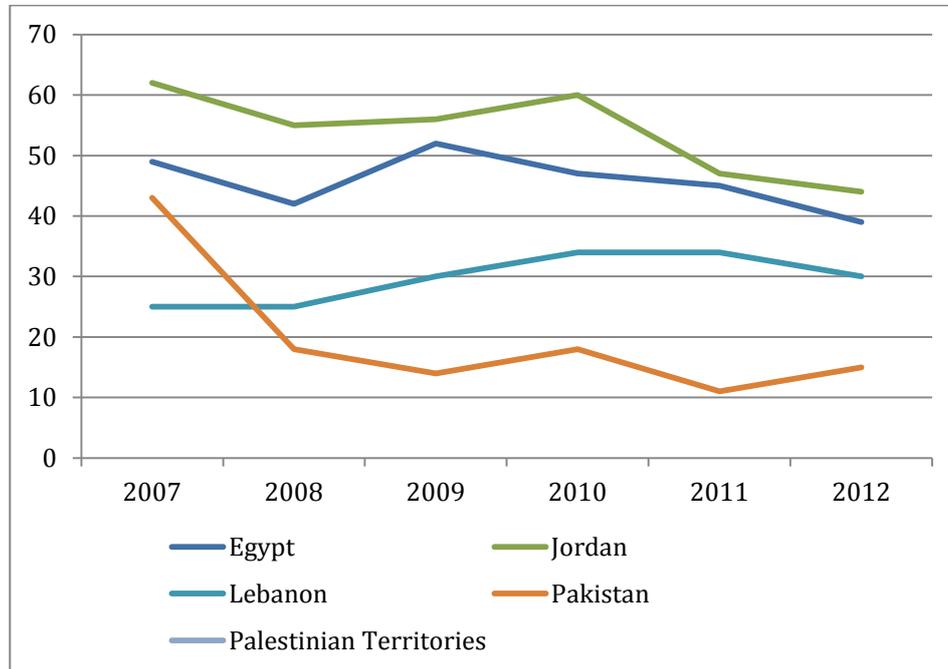


**Table 16: Hamas Favorability<sup>19</sup>**

Country/Year	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U	F	U
Egypt	49	49	42	50	52	44	47	50	45	51	39	56
Israel	-	-	-	-	4	94	-	-	5	94	-	-
Jordan	62	36	55	37	56	36	60	35	47	50	44	53
Kuwait	39	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	25	67	25	72	30	68	34	63	34	64	30	67
Pakistan	43	14	18	16	14	24	18	13	11	14	15	12
Palestinian Territories	62	33	-	-	44	52	-	-	42	56	-	-

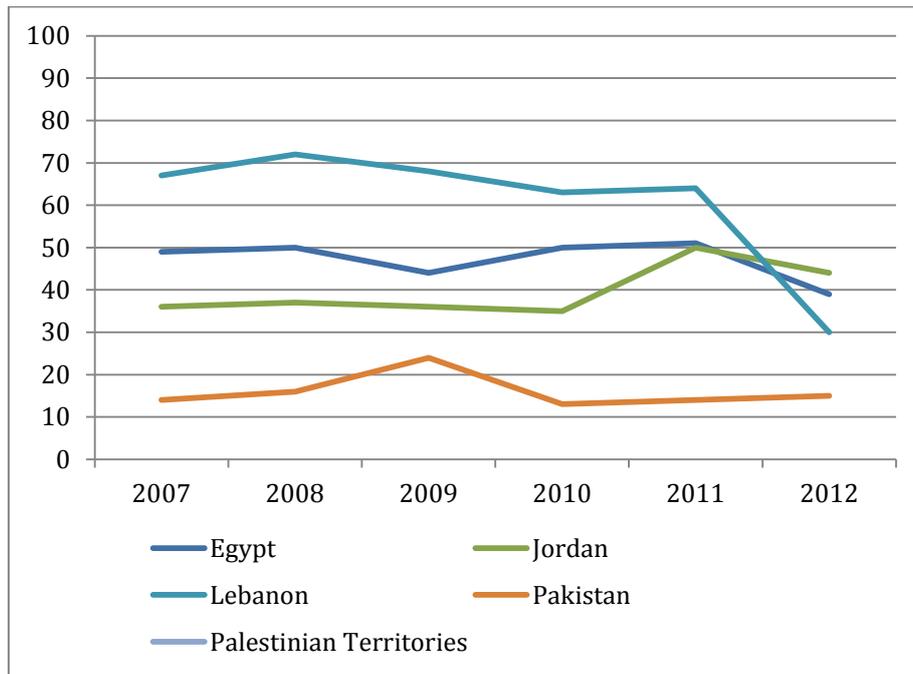
F = Favorable  
U = Unfavorable

**Figure 7: Favorable Views of Hamas**



<sup>19</sup> 'Favorable' combines responses of "very favorable" and "somewhat favorable," while 'Unfavorable' combines responses of "very unfavorable" and "somewhat unfavorable."

**Figure 8: Unfavorable Views of Hamas**



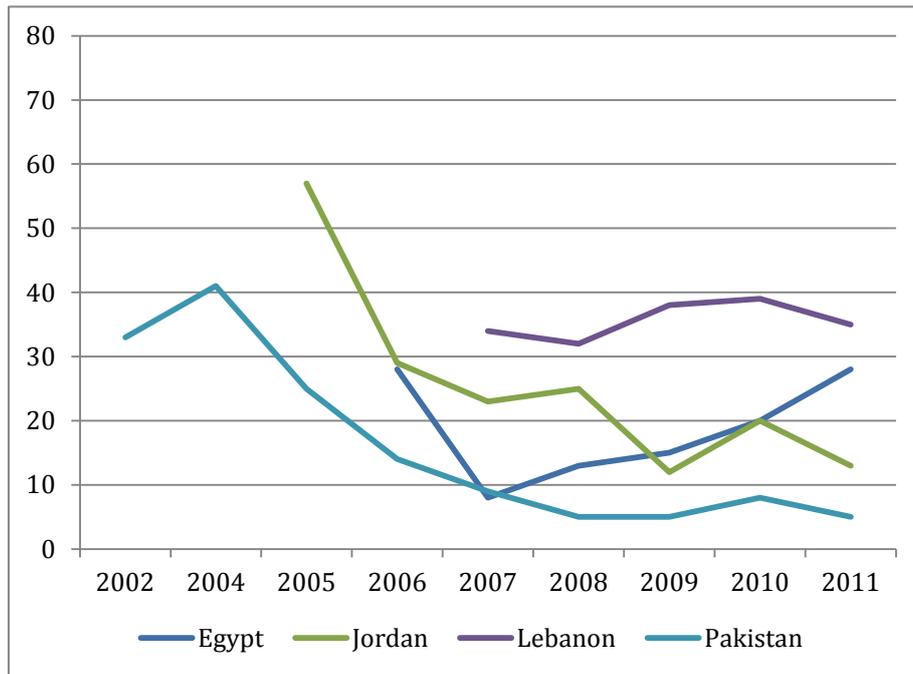
**Table 17: Support for Suicide Bombing**

Country/ Year	2002		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	O	R	O	R	O	R	O	R	O	R	O	R
Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	70	8	83	13	80
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jordan	43	48	-	-	57	42	29	71	23	69	25	70
Lebanon	74	21	-	-	39	52	-	-	34	66	32	67
Pakistan	33	43	41	43	25	64	14	77	9	81	5	91
Palestinian Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	17	-	-

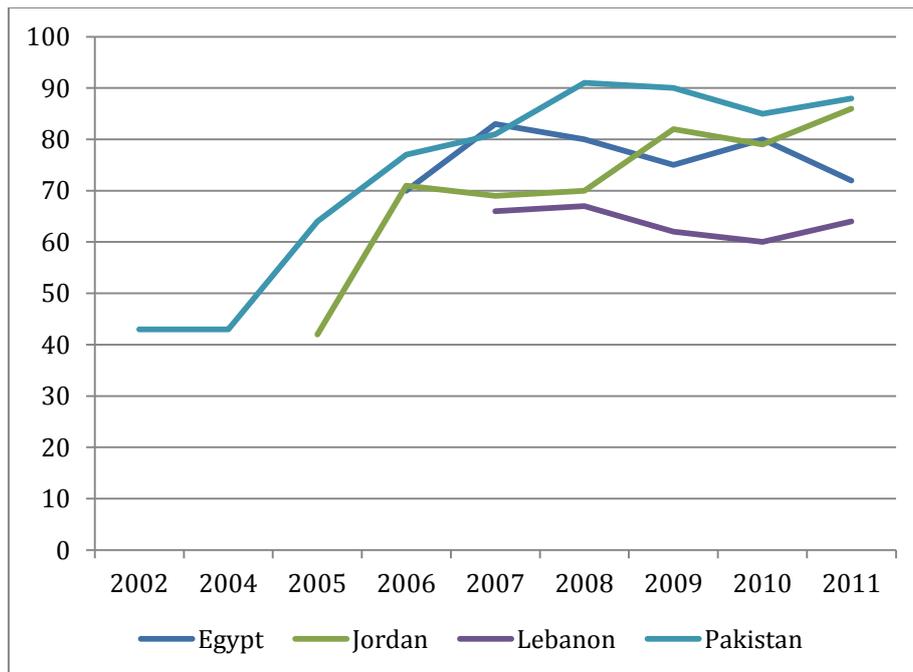
Country/Year	2009		2010		2011	
	O	R	O	R	O	R
Egypt	15	75	20	80	28	72
Israel	7	80	-	-	20	68
Jordan	12	82	20	79	13	86
Lebanon	38	62	39	60	35	64
Pakistan	5	90	8	85	5	88
Palestinian Territories	68	31	-	-	68	29

\* O = often/sometimes justified | R = rarely/never justified  
 Note: This question was asked only of Muslims

**Figure 9: Suicide Bombing is Often/Sometimes Justified**



**Figure 10: Suicide Bombing is Rarely/Never Justified**



## Coding Assumptions and Efforts

The GTD dataset itself contained many errors in spelling and translation, which is not unexpected for a dataset that has been in existence for over 40 years and has seen a multitude of coders with different coding rules. In fact, sometimes the group responsible was coded simply as “individual” or “terrorists,” which was relatively unhelpful. I attempted to correct for these errors when I was able to see them. For example, sometimes group names were translated, such as the “Grey Wolves,” or a different name was used that actually referred to the same organization – the Grey Wolves are also known as the “Idealist Association,” thus both would be coded ‘nationalist’ even though I could only find the ideological affiliation for one.

The ITERATE database, though privately maintained, also has errors and inconsistencies in spelling. However, as the database is significantly smaller than the GTD, there were fewer issues. One problem encountered with ITERATE was in coding groups as religious or secular. The database codes groups based on a 1-4 digit number, with the codebook providing corresponding group names. However, there are approximately 20 group numbers that were involved in this analysis that were not included in the codebook; an email to the maintainers of the database did not yield any response.

The ideology of the terrorist groups in the GTD was coded with significant difficulty. For some, START provided group profiles; however, ideology was not always known even if a group did have a profile, and many groups did not. In these cases, a Google search was done; if any information could be found regarding the ideology of the group, the group was coded as such. ITERATE provides a document that has categorized many of the groups’ ideologies; however, many were not included in this document and an internet search had to be undertaken, often unsuccessfully. Via Google searches, I generally utilized sites such as:

- [TrackingTerrorism.org](http://TrackingTerrorism.org)
- [TerrorismFiles.org](http://TerrorismFiles.org)
- [ISVG.org](http://ISVG.org)
- Jane’s Defense Magazine
- Wikipedia
- Newspaper articles, such as from the NY Times, LA Times, Chicago Tribune-Times, and Times of India

When data was still not available on many groups, I made several basic coding assumptions based on group name in an attempt to reduce the number of “unknowns” in the dataset. As such, groups that were affiliated with the Taliban (such as Jaysh al-Muslimin/Army of the Muslims), al Qaeda (such as Jund al-Sahabah Group), and Hezbollah (such as the Lebanese Resistance Group) were all coded as religious. All groups associated with the Palestinian al Fatah organization (nationalist-separatist; for example Force 17) were coded as secular. All groups that had “Islamic,” “Allah,” “Monotheism,” or “Jihad” in the organization’s name were coded as religious, along with any groups that had “Jewish” or “Christian” in the name (but I did not automatically code “Muslim” or “Israeli” as religious, as these are not necessarily religion-related); examples include Islamic Holy War Group or Khorasan Jihadi Group. Furthermore, any group that had “Shiite,” “Sunni,” or

“Salafist” as part of its name was coded as religious (i.e., Jihadi Movement of the Sunna People). Finally, all groups that had “nationalist,” “socialist,” “communist,” “right wing,” “left-wing,” “agents” of a state, or “separatists” in the name were coded as secular (such as Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit or Lebanese Socialist Revolutionary Organization).

Also, many groups are identified in various sources as having multiple motivations, such as religious and ethno-nationalist. In these cases, any group that had ‘religious’ among its classifications was coded as religious in this papers’ datasets. Overall, the coding of the group type categorizations should be taken with a grain of salt, as the ideology of many groups is not 100% certain.

### ***Coding of Groups: GTD***

#### ***Religious (4,006 events):***

1920 Revolution Brigades, 1920 Revolution Brigades, Abdullah Azzam Brigades, Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, Abu Musa Group, Adan Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA), Agudat Israel Party, Al Jihad, Al Zawahiri Loyalists, Al-Faruo Battalion, Al-Fatihin Army (AFA), Al-Haramayn Brigades, Al-Mujahedin Brigades (Palestine), Al-Qa'ida in Lebanon, Al-Qa'ida in Saudi Arabia, Al-Qa'ida in Yemen, Al-Qa'ida, Al-Qa'ida in Iraq, Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQLIM), Al-Qassam Brigades, Al-Sadr Brigades, Al-Shabaab al-Mu'minin, Ansar Al Sunnah (Palestine), Ansar Sarallah, Ansar al-Din, Ansar al-Islam, Ansar al-Jihad, Ansar al-Sunna, Ansar al-Tahwid wal Sunna, Arab Steadfastness Front, Armed Struggle Cells, Armed Struggle Organization, Army of Islam, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haqq, Asbat al-Ansar, Banner of Islam, Beirut Martyrs Forces Organization, Black Brigade, Black Friday, Brigades of Iman Hassan-al-Basri, Christians, Committee of Solidarity with Arab and Middle East Political Prisoners (CSPPA), Dawn Forces, East Turkistan Liberation Organization, Egyptian Tawhid and Jihad, Faithful Resistance, Free Syrian Army, Generation of Arab Fury, Gilad Shalhevet Brigades, Great Eastern Islamic Raiders Front (IBDA-C), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar group, Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement), Haqqani Network, Harakat-i-Inqilahi-i-Islami, Hezb-e Wahdat-e Islami-yi Afghanistan, Hizb-I-Islami, Hizballah Palestine, Hizballah, Holders of the Black Banners, Huthis, Imam Hussein Brigade, Independent Nasserite Movement, Iraq's Jihadist Leagues, Iraqi Islamic Vanguard for National Salvation (IIVNS), Iraqi Mujahideen, Iraqi Strugglers' Movement, Iraqi Sunni Insurgents, Islamic Army in Iraq (al-Jaish al-Islami fi al-Iraq), Islamic Companies, Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, Islamic Holy Star, Islamic Holy War Group, Islamic Jihad Beit-al Maqdis Group, Islamic Jihad Brigades, Islamic Jihad Organization (Yemen), Islamic Liberation Organization, Islamic Movement Organization, Islamic Movement for Change, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Mujahidin, Islamic Revenge Organization, Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), Islamic Salvation Front (Palestine), Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), Islamic Struggle Front, Islamic Swords of Justice in the Land of Ribat, Islamic Unification Movement, Islamist Extremists, Ittehad-i-Islami, Jaish Al-Umma (Army of the Nation), Jaish al-Ta'ifa al-Mansura, Jaish-e-Mohammad (Iraq), Jamiat-e Islami-yi

Afghanistan, Jaysh al-Muslimin (Army of the Muslims), Jenin Martyrs Brigades, Jerusalem Groups Hebrew (Qvutzot Yerushalayim), Jewish Defense League (JDL), Jewish Extremists, Jewish Fighting Organization (Eyal), Jewish Terror, Jihadi Movement of the Sunna People of Iran, Jihadist Soldiers, Jordanian Islamic Resistance, July 14 Movement, Junaid Jihadist Battalion, Jund Al-Tawid, Jund al-Sahabah Group, Jund al-Sham for Tawhid and Jihad, Jundallah, Kach, Kahane Chai, Keshet, Khorasan jihadi group, Kurdish Islamic Unity Party, Lebanese Arab Army, Lebanese Resistance Group, Mahaz-e-Milli Islami Afghanistan, Mahdaviyat, Mahdi Army, Martyr Abu Ja'far Group, Martyrs of Saad Sayel, Militant Islamic Group, name not stated, Mujahideen Army, Mujahideen Shura Council, Muslim Brotherhood, Nahzat e Eslami, National Accord Movement, National Revolutionary Command (Umar al-Mukhtar), Organization for Purging the Majlis (Parliament), Organization for Zionist Retribution, Organization of Soldiers of the Levant, Palestinian Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Phalange, Popular Army Vanguard- Battalions of Return, Popular Resistance Committees, Rabbi Rahane Group, Protectors of Islam Brigade, Revolutionary Christians of the Cedars, Revolutionary Security Apparatus, Right Wing Christian extremists, Saif-ul-Muslimeen, Salah al-Din Squad, Saudi Hizballah, Sharp Sword Organization, Shield of Islam Brigade, Shiite Muslims, Sicarii, Sipah-e-Sahaba/Pakistan (SSP), Soldiers of Truth, Sons of the South, Sons of the South (Shiite Muslim Group), South Lebanon Army, Sunni Muslims, Sunni Supporters, Supreme Command for Jihad and Liberation, Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution, Supreme Islamic Council, Sympathizers of Al-Qa`ida Organization, Syrians, Takfir wal-Hijra (Excommunication and Exodus), Taliban, Tanyus Shanin Armed Unit, Tawhid and Jihad, Tawhid and Jihad (Palestine), Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Temple Mount Faithful Movement, Terror Against Terror, The Husayn Ubayyat Martyrs' Brigades, The Islamic Movement, The Islamic Revolution to Liberate Palestine, The Nation's Army, Tripoli Martyrs Battalion, Turkish Hizballah, Turkish Islamic Commandos, Turkish Islamic Jihad, Usbat al-Ansar (League of Partisans), Yazbik Revolutionary Organization, Youth of Islamic Awakening, al-Da'wah Party, al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya (IG), al-Shawqiyun, United Arab Revolution

Secular (2,676 events):

14 March Coalition, 28 May Armenian Organization, Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), Ahmad Jibril, Ahrar Al-Jalil (Free People of the Galilee), Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, Al-Sa'iqa , Al-Toaiman Tribesmen, Amal, Arab Communist Organization, Arab Liberation Front (ALF), Arab Revolution/Liberation Vanguard Organization, Arab Revolutionary Cells, Arab Socialist Baath Party, Arab Separatists, Arab Socialist Baath Party of Iraq, Arab Socialist Union Members, Arab Struggle, Arbav Martyrs of Khuzestan, Armed Vanguard of a Second Mohammed Army, Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, Badr Brigades, Barzani Guerrillas, Black December, Black Hand, Black Panther Group (Palestinian), Black September, Black Tigers, Chechen Rebels, Communist Party of India - Maoist (CPI-M), Communist Warrior's Union, Communists, Counter-revolutionaries, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Dev Genc, Dev Sol, Dev Yol, Devrimci Halk Kurtulus Cephesi (DHKP/C), Diyala Salvation Council,

Eagles of the Palestinian Revolution, Egypt's Revolution, Egyptian Revolutionary Organization, Fatah Hawks, Fatah Uprising, Fatah al Islam, Fedayeen Khalq (People's Commandos), Fighters of the People, Force 17, Forqan Group, Free Nasserite Revolutionaries, Front for the Liberation of Lebanon from Foreigners, Future movement (Lebanon), Grey Wolves, Hamawand Tribe, Idealist Association, International Revolutionary Action Group (GARI), Intifada Martyrs, Iranian Revolution Organization, Iraqi Communists, Iraqi Liberation Army, Iraqi National Congress (INC), Islamic Cause Organization, Islamic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (IFLP), Islamic Renewal Movement, Japanese Red Army (JRA), Joint Palestinian leftist organization, Jordanian National Liberation Movement, June 16 Organization, Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide, Kamal Udwan Unit of Palestinians, Khalid ibn Walid, Khalid ibn Walid Brigade, Kurdish Democratic Party-Iran (KDP), Kurdish Democratic Party-Iraq (KDP), Kurdish Marxist Separatists, Kurdish Peshmerga Guerrillas, Kurdish Separatists, Kurdistan Free Life Party, Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK), Kurdistan National Union, Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Faction (LARF), Lebanese Liberation Front, Lebanese National Resistance Front, Lebanese Socialist Revolutionary Organization, Left-Wing Demonstrators, Left-Wing Extremists, Left-Wing Guerrillas, Left-Wing Militants, Left-Wing Terrorists, Left-Wing Workers, Left-wing separatists, Liberation Battalion, Liberation Hawks, Likud Political Party, M-19 (Movement of April 19), Mahir Cayan Suicide Group, Martyr Sami al-Ghul Brigades, Marxist Peoples Fedayeen of Iran, Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit, May 15 Organization for the Liberation, Mesopotamian Army (MEZOR), Motherland Party, Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), National Movement of Iranian Resistance, Ninth of June Organization, Omar Bin Khattab Group, Organization for the Defense of Detainees Rights, Organization of Avenging Palestinian Youth, Organization of the Sons of Occupied Territories, Orly Organization, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Palestinian-nationalist Lebanese joint, Palestinian/Lebanese nationalists, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), People's Liberation Army, People's Liberation Force, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Gen Cmd (PFLP-GC), Prisoner Gourgen Yanikian Group, Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), Revolutionary Action Organization of the Arab Resistance Front, Revolutionary Arab Youth Organization, Revolutionary Forces for the Liberation of Iraq, Revolutionary Liberation Cells, Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Moslems, Revolutionary Outburst Movement, Right Wing Lebanese Militiamen, Right-Wing Group, Right-Wing Militants, Separatist Arab Guerrillas, Separatist Clandestine Organization, Separatists, September 17 Organization, Shahin (Falcon), Shinwari Tribe, Siah KAL, South Moluccans, Southern Mobility Movement (Yemen), Southern Yemen Separatists, Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Socialist Labor Party of Lebanon, Tanzim, The Northern Alliance (or United Islamic Front for Salvation of Afghanistan – UIFSA), The United Southern Front, The al-Aqsa-Group, Tribesmen Murad Tribe, Turkish Communist Party/Marxist (TKP-ML), Turkish Communist Toilers Party, Turkish Communist Workers Party, Turkish Leftists, Turkish People's Liberation Army, Turkish People's Liberation Front (TPLF)(THKP-C), Unified Kurdish Socialist Party, Union of Galilee Christians, Union of Revolutionary Communists in Turkey (TIKB), Union of the Peoples of the Arabian

Peninsula, al-Ahwaz Arab People's Democratic Front, al-Fatah

Remain Unknown (222 events):

16 January Organization for the Liberation of Tripoli, 9 February, Abida Tribe, Abu Hassan, Ahmad Alawi al Muqbili, Al-Bakazim, Al-Masni Tribe, Al-Yemenia al-Ulia Tribesmen, Al-Zaidi Tribe - Mareb, Anbar Salvation Council, Anti Kurdish Workers Party Iraq nationals, Aqmur, Arab Commando Cells, Arab Democratic Party, Arab Palestine Organization, Arab People's Group, Arab Revenge Organization, Arab Youth Group (Militant), Armed People's Units, Army of State Liberators, Arya, Autonomy-Seeking Arabs, Avenge the Arab Nation, Avengers of the Infants, Ba'adi (on my own behalf), Bani Hilal Tribe, Bani Jaber tribe, Bani Nawaf tribe, Begumcans Cell, Beirut Martyrs Battalion, Bin Zabyan Tribesmen, Black September II, Black Wednesday, Black Wednesday, Boz-Ok (Grey Arrow), Civilians Seeking Revenge, Conqueror Army, David's Sword, Democratic Party, Druzes, Faqra Tribal Group, Father of the Poor, Fighters for the Liberation of the Turkish People, Forbid the Evil Group (Moslem Militants), Forces of the Free Arab, Forces of the Struggling Ranks, Free Lebanon, Free Revolutionaries Movement-The Giants, GP II, Gholam Yahya Akbar, Hasmoneans (Jewish Settler Group), Hubay Qah Group, Hushaysh Tribal Members, Iranian Monarchists, Iraqi Revolutionary Forces, Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), Jordanian Revolutionary and Military Committee (MOUAB), Just Punishment Brigades, Justice Party, Kaka-Tribesmen, Khomeynites, Lebanese Free Will Movement, Lebanese Secret Army, Lebanese and Palestinian Resistance Fighters, Major Muhammad Zuhny Group, Martyr Ahmad Alishuay B Group, Martyr Ali Nasir group, Martyr Riyadh Taha Group, Martyrs Halim Group, Martyrs revenge organization, Moslem opponents of Gemayel, Muhammed Shuqayr Group, Mujahideen Brigades, Mujahideen Corps in Iraq, Mujahideen Group, Munadil al-Jumalyi Brigade, Muslim Commando (Iraqi revolutionary brothers), Najib Watan Party Faction, National Salvation Forces Organization, Nobles of Jordan, Organization for the oppressed in Egypt's Prisons, Palestinian Revolution Forces, Poverty Brigade, RYF, Ramzi Nahra Martyr Organization, Red June, Republican People's Party, Resistance Movement of the Union of Revolt Workers, Revolutionary Headquarters (Turkey), Revolutionary Labor Organization, Revolutionary Road, SYS, Salafi Abu-Bakr al-Siddiq Army, Settlers at Kfar Darom, Sham 'unite, Sharivad 17 Tal-Al-Za'atar(Sept 17 Tal-Al-Za'atar), Shaykh Hassan Khalid Forces, Shaykh Subhi Al-Salih Forces, Soskan tribe, Tela Mohammed, The Aref Boluki Dynamite group, The Eradication of Evil, The Great Serpent, The Organization for the Return of Legality, The Unit of the Chemical Weapons Martyrs, al-Itada, U/I Snipers, Ultra Conservative Clerical Group, Umar al-Mukhtar Martyr Forces, Unk Iranian Guerrillas, Vengeance Party, Village League, Youths of Ali Movement, al-Jub Tribe, al-Marabitun Revolutionary Committee, al-Nadir, UNK/protest against USSR invasion of Afghanistan

Unknown (14,164 events)

Unknown, Afghan Guerrillas, Afghan Mujahideen, Afghan Rebels, Anti-Government Group, Anti-Revolutionary Agents, Arabs, Armed People, Armenians,

Bedouin tribesmen, Concerned citizens, Extremists, Fedayeen, Guerrillas, Gunmen, Individual, Insurgents, Iranian Extremists, Iranian Militants, Iranians, Iraqis, Israel Militant, Israeli Extremists, Israeli Settler, Israeli Terrorist Group, Kurdish Militants, Kurdish Oppositionists, Kurdish Rebels, Kurdish guerrillas, Kurds, Local Residents, Lone Jew, Local Extremist, Libyan, Militants, Militia Members, Muslim Demonstrators, Muslim Extremists, Muslim Fundamentalists, Muslim Guerrillas, Muslim Militants, Muslims, Opponents of Regime, Opposition Group, Other, Palestinian Activists, Palestinian Forces, Palestinians, Pro-Iraqi Terrorists, Pro-State Militiamen, Relatives of terrorist, Resistance Movement, Syrian Terror, Terrorists, Tribal Group, Tribal guerrillas, Tribesmen, Turkish Revolutionaries, Urban Guerrillas, Villagers, Yemenis, pro-iranian terrorists, rioters,

### ***Coding of Groups: ITERATE***

#### ***Religious (644 events):***

Islamic Liberation Organization, Jewish Defense League, Committee of Solidarity with Arab and Middle Eastern Political, Organization for Solidarity with the Chechen Resistance Fighters, Islamic Jihad Cells Lebanon, IPS Peoples Strugglers Mujahiddin e Kha, Islamic Jihad Organization, Iranian Amal Movement, Revolutionary Islamic Organization, Guards of Islam Guard Corps of Islam Group, Mujahidin Peoples Fighters Organization, Fedayen-e-Islam led by Ayatollah Sadegh, Islamic Revolutionary Movement, Hezbollah, indeterminate Shiite moslems, Islamic Association of Students of the World, Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, Imamis Soldiers Iran, Great Eastern Islamic Conquering Front IBDA Turkey, Islamic Jihad Turkey, Mujahidin Iraqis Iraqi Mujahideen Movement, Al Dawa, Martyr Araef Basri Commando, Iraqi Strugglers Movement, Ansar al-Din Iraq, Ansar al-Din Iraq, Vanguard of the Conquest Egypt Talai al Fath, Sulayman Khatir Group, Abdullah Azzam Brigades al Qaeda in Syria and Egypt, The Muslim Group al-Jamaa al klamiyah Islamic League of Those, Al-Hilal Revolutionary Organization, Egypt of Arabism Misr al-Urubah, Takfir wa Hijra Repentant and Holy Flight, Egyptian Revolution, Egyptian Liberation Organization, El Aksa, Muslim Brotherhood, Peoples Mujaheddin, Islamic Army for the Liberation of Palestine, Friends of Mayumi Hachiya, Al-Husayn Brigade, Green Cells, Islamic Jihad Against the Oppressors, Partisans of God Supporters of God Alla, Chosen of God Mukhtaru Allah, Sunnite Islamic Resistance Movement, Lebanese Islamic Army, United Forces of Justice, Islamic al-Husayn Organization, Organization of Revolutionary Justice ORJ, Fighting Revolutionary Cells, Al-Mukhtar Forces, Islamic Siffin Organization, Islamic Amal Movement, Southern Lebanese Army SLA, Amal Security Bureau, Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, Khaybar Brigade, Black Brigade, Islamic Unification Movement, Sharp Sword Organization, Forces of the Islamic Dawn, Islamic Liberation Organization, indeterminate followers of Musa as-Sadr, Armed Struggle Organization, Moslem Holy Warriors, Phalange, Sons of the South, Lebanese Amal Shiite militia, Forces of Mojahedin, Martyr Abu Ja far Group, Ali Nasir Group, Imam Musa as-Sadr Brigades Imam as-Sadr, Movement of Arab Revolutionary Brigades, The Islamic Martyrs, Green Formation, Islamic Liberation Front, Partisans of Sadam, Revolutionary Justice Organization - RJO, Prophet Muhammad s Army - Jihad

Brigades, Cell of Shaykh Muhammad Ya qub of Imam M, Black August Organization Munazzamat, Shabab al-Nafir al Islami led by Shaykh Qirrish Jordan, Harkatal al Intilaqah al-Thawriyah Lebanon, Harakat al-Madd al Thawri al-Arabi Arab Revolutionary Resurgence, Kahana Hay Israel, Rebels Movement Kach Israel, Hamas Islamic Resistance Movement Palestinian, Wrath of God, TNT Terror Against Terror, Union of Galilee Christians, Islamic Vengeance Organization, Islamic Jihad Movement of Palestine, Izz-al-Din al Qassam Battalions Squads of the New Disciples of, Punishment Squad Al Icab, Battalions of Faith Kataib al-iman Saudi Arabia, Saudi Hizballah, Movement for Islamic Change - The Jihad Wing Saudi Arabia, Usama Bin Ladin al-Qaida The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders - Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Sites, al-Qaeda Iraq (Mesopotamia), Arab People Ash-Shab al- Arabi, Organization of Islamic Justice, Tigers of the Gulf Saudi Arabia, The Movement for the Struggle of the Jordanian Islamic Resistance, Ahmed al Daqamisah Group Holy Warriors of Ahmed Daqamisah, Union of Imams Jordan - al Qaeda, The Islamic Jihad Brigades for the Liberation of Palestine, Armed Struggle Cells - Lebanon, Islamic Jihad Movement - Bayt al-Maqdis - Lebanon, Islamic Jihad Yemen, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Yemen, Army of Believers - the al-Qaeda Branch in the Land of Palestine, Imad Mughniyeh - Palestine, Egyptian Jihad, Houthi Shi'ite Rebels Yemen, Group of Martyr Salah al-Bitar of the Ara, Prophet Muhammads Forces in Kuwait-Revol, Organization for the Liberation of Muslim, al-Qaeda Kuwait, Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, Shiite Muslim Activists Bahrain, Islamic Front Against Heretics, Students of Musa Abu Marzuq Palestinian, Islamic Renewal Group led by Abu Ashraf who split from, The Basics of the Islam Palestinian, Jordanian Resistance Jordan, Dotsam-Karmal-Gdboddin Militia Afghanistan, Mullah Salam belongs to Ittihad-i-Islamif of Sayyaf Afghanistan, Islamic Society of Afghanistan, Harakat-e Enqelabe Islami, Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, Taleban Militia Afghanistan, Harkat-ul-Ansar Movement of Friends - Muslim group India, Islamic Movement Iranian Sunni Muslims Pakistan, Taleban Pakistan, MNLF Moro National Liberation Front, Ansar al-Tawhid - Companions of Monotheism (Sudan), Palestinian Islamic Army (Al-Qaeda affiliate), Abu Musab - al Zaraqawi (Jordan - Al Qaeda), Arabian Peninsula's Fallujah Brigade - al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Ansar-al-Sunna Army - Islamic Retaliation Movement, Monotheism and Jihad Group (Iraq), The Islamic Army of Iraq - Khalid bin al-Waleed Brigade, The Lions of Allah Brigade (Iraq), Islamic Resistance Brigades, Salafist Brigades of Abu Bakr al Siddiq (Iraq), Ansar al-Islam (Turkey), Mujahideen Brigades Saraya al Mujaheddin (Iraq), Jamaat al-Tawhid and Jihad, Hoister of the Black Flags (Iraq)

Secular (624 events):

Organization of French Socialists, Red Brigades, Autonomous Workers Movement, Chechen Activists, KGB Russia, Chechen Rebels Chechnya, Tajik Rebels Tajikistan, al-Dali group Algeria, Iranian students, National Front Forces of Iran, Iranian National Liberation Movement-Red, Forqan, Feda iye Khalq Mujaheddin e Khalq, Iranian intelligence agents, Iranian Peoples Fedayin Guerrillas, Falcons Brigade - Iraq, Swords of Righteousness Brigade - Iraq, Marxist Leninist Communist Party MLK-P Turkey, The Resistance Movement, Revolutionary

Peoples Salvation Party Front Turkey, The Turkish Peoples Liberation Party C Peoples Liberation Forces, TPLA Turkish Peoples Liberation Army, TPLF Turkish Peoples Liberation Front, Turkish Revolutionary Youth Federation, indeterminate Armenian nationalists, Mayir Cayan Suicide Group, Marxist group, Slave Kortin Yanikiyan Group, ASALA Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia, 28 May Armenian Organization, Acilciler The Swift Ones, Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Union, THKPC Turkish Peoples Liberation Party, Revolutionary Way Dev Yol, Armenian June 9 Organization an ASALA wing, Orly Group Orly Organization, Dev Sol Revolutionary Left, Turkish Revolutionaries, Indeterminate Turkist Separatists, Hawari Group Pro Iraqi Iraq, Iraqi Agents, Iraqi Communist Party, Iraqi Baathists, Unified Kurdistan Socialist Party, Army for the Liberation of Kurdistan, KDP Kurdish Democratic Party, Kurdish rebels, Patriot Union of Kurdistan PUK, PKK Kurdish Peoples Liberation Front, National Union of Iraqi Kurdistan, National Liberation Front of Kurdistan ERNK, Halabjah Martyrs - Iraqi Kurds, Kurdistan Peoples Liberation Army ARGK - Faction of PKK, Kurdistan Workers Party KWP, Kurdish Freedom Fighters - Teshmargia, Kurdish Revolutionary Committees Movement, Islamic Pride Brigades - Egypt, Arab Revolution Vanguard Organization, Alawite intelligence service, October 17 Movement for the Liberation, Syrian agents, Revolutionary Action Organization, Lebanese National Progressive Front, Lebanese Liberation Organization, Tanyas Shahin Armed Unit, Liberation Hawks Suqur al-Tahrir, Lebanese Liberation Front, Fedayeen Arab Cells, Arab Liberation Front Lebanon, Black Palm Organization Black Hand Organ, Fedayeen Revolutionary Cells, Armed Arab Brigades, National Revolutionary Command, Black Banner Organizational, September 17 Organization, Lebanese Front for National Resistance, Progressive Socialists Druze militia, Lebanese Socialist Revolutionary Organization, Lebanese Revolutionary Guard, Lebanese Revolutionary Socialist Movement, Revolutionary Arab Youth Organization, Lebanese leftists, Front for the Liberation of Lebanon from, Arab National Organization, Eagles of the Revolution Nusur ath-Thawr, Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz, The Pan Arab Action Organization Lebanon, Lebanese Red Brigades, LARF Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Faction, Al Aqsa Group, Jordanian National Liberation Movement, Jordanian intelligence organization, Jordanian Free Officers Movement, MOUAB Military and Revolutionary Committee, Western Emancipation Group, Arab Revolutionary Communist Party, Organization for the Defense of Detainee, Arab Revolutionary Platoons - Revolu, The Arabs Eagles Nusur al-Arab Lebanon, Black September-June Black September, Israeli agents, PFLP Popular Front for the Liberation of, Al Fatah, BSO Black September, Palestine Popular Struggle Front, Nationalist Youth Group for the Liberation, PFLP-GC PFLP-General Command, Organization of the Sons of Occupied Terr, Eagles of the Palestinian Revolution, OANY ANYOLP Organization of Arab Nation, PLO Palestine Liberation Organization, Al Saiqa Thunderbolt, DFLP Democratic Front for the Liberation, PLA Palestine Liberation Army, Palestine Revolutionary Forces, Arab Communist Organization, Arab Liberation Front, Palestine Rejection Front, Abdel Nasser Movement, Fatah Force 17, 15 May Arab Organization, Fatah-Revolutionary Council Abu Nidal Gr, Black June headed by Abu Nidal, Organization of the Sons of Palestine, Organization of Avenging Palestinian Youth, Revolutionary Organization of Socialist, indeterminate Abu Nidal guerrillas, Arab Revolutionary

Cells, PLF Palestine Liberation Front, International Anti-Imperialist Front, Anti-Imperialist International Brigades, Direct Revolutionary Action for the Liberation of Palestine, Organization of Socialist Revolution - Lebanon, Palestinian Liberation Movement, Islamic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, al-Hada Yemeni Tribe, indeterminate Yemeni Tribesmen, al-Jawf Yemen Tribe, Jahm Tribe Yemen, Bakil Tribe Yemen, Khalulran Khulan Tribe Yemen, Ahnum Tribe Yemen, Aslam Tribe Yemen, Yemini Tribe, Murad Tribesmen Yemen, Wadi al Dabaat Yemeni Tribe, Bani Dabian Tribe Yemen, Al-Shaif Tribe Yemen, al-Shamian Tribe Yemen, Fehaid Tribe Yemen, Khawlan Tribe Yemen, al-Abdullah bin Dahha Tribe Yemen, Tribe Yemen, Tribe Sharda Tribe Yemen, Eagles of National Unity, Peoples Liberation Army of Oman, Afghan National Liberation Front, North Korean agents, JRA JURA Japanese Red Army Rengo Sekig, Al Zulfiqar, Libyan Agents, The Armed Forces of the Poor and the Oppressed - FESK

Remain Unknown ('known unknowns') (47 events):

Albanian Peoples Path, Tunisian Revolutionary National Organization, Aref Boluki Dynamite Group, The Brotherhood of Martyrs, Kurdish sympathizers, Revolution Group, Martyr Lula Ilyas Aboud Group - Lebanon, Organization for the Defense of Palestinian Strugglers, Independent Committee for the Liberation, Group 219FA, 3 March Organization, Organization of Frances Friends in Lebanon, Organization of the Defense of the Lebanese People, Islamic Jihad in Jhaz, Suicide Forces of Barbarossa, Muhammad Hassan Unit of the Shaykh Subhi al-Salih Forces, Afghan Revolutionary Front, The Organization of The Eagles of Asia - South Korea, Mustafa Abdel-Qader Abed Ansari (Saudi Arabia), The Arab Resistance Group - al-Rashid Brigades (Iraq), Death Squad of the Iraqi Resistance, Martyrs Brigade (Iraq)

Unknown (1,544 events)

indeterminate Libyans, criminals, no group, indeterminate Sudanese guerrillas, indeterminate Iranian guerrillas, indeterminate Turkish guerrillas, indeterminate Iraqi guerrillas, indeterminate Egyptian guerrillas, indeterminate Syrian guerrillas, indeterminate Lebanese guerrillas, indeterminate Jordanian, indeterminate Israelis, indeterminate ArabPalestinian guerrillas, indeterminate Yemeni resistance, indeterminate Kuwaitis, indeterminate Afghan mujahadeen guerrillas, indeterminate Afghanis, indeterminate Pakistani, indeterminate Bahrainis, indeterminate Islamic militants (Pakistan), UNKNOWN

**Additional ITERATE analysis of suicide attacks, with missing casualty values changed to zero:**

**Table 18: Suicide Attacks (ITERATE), adjusted**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Z-Score</b>	<b>Probability &gt; z </b>
<b>Religious</b>	1.728169***	.1989984	8.68	0.000
<b>Secular</b>	.8602924***	.1807366	4.76	0.000
<b>Democracy</b>	.0197887	.0191873	1.03	0.302
<b>Competition</b>	-.0255323**	.0085405	-2.99	0.003
<b>State Sponsorship</b>	-.357288	.5138766	-0.70	0.487
<i>Number of observations</i>	1620			
<i>LR chi2(5)</i>			97.84	0.0000
<i>pseudo R2</i>				0.0167
<i>/lnalpha</i>	2.135412	.0495163		
<i>alpha</i>	8.460528	.4189341		

## 국문초록

테러리즘의 합리성은 19세기 이래 학술적 연구의 대상이 되어왔으며, 개인 행위자와 조직(organization)이라는 양 측면에서 연구가 진행되어왔다. 한편, 지금까지의 연구들은 개인 또는 단체를 판단하는 기준으로서 합리적 선택 이론에서 이야기하는 도구적 합리성(instrumental rationality)이라는 개념을 전제해 왔다. 이러한 종류의 합리성은 서양에서는 가장 일반적이지만, 이것이 다른 문화 또는 사회 역시 같은 합리성을 따른다는 것을 의미하지는 않는다. 많은 학자들은 테러리스트 조직, 특히 종교적 동기에 따라 행동하는 테러리스트 조직을 서양 기준의 합리성 개념으로 평가함으로써 테러리스트들이 비합리적이거나, 최소한 잘못된 판단을 하고 있다고 결론지었다. 따라서 본 논문은 다른 종류의 합리성이 존재할 가능성을 살펴보고, 나아가 다른 종류의 합리성이 테러리즘을 더 잘 설명할 수 있는지에 대해 조직의 차원에서 고찰한다.

본 논문은 이론적 측면에서 막스 베버(Max Weber)가 발전시킨 합리성의 유형들 중에서 실질적 합리성(substantive rationality), 또는 가치 합리성(value-based rationality)에 초점을 둔다. 특히 실질적 합리성은 테러리즘 연구에 적용될 수 있는데, 이를 통해 종교적 동기를 가진 테러 조직이 도구적 또는 목적 합리성을 갖지 않더라도 가치 합리성을 가질 수 있다는 주장이 가능하다. 종교적 테러리스트 조직과 세속적 테러리스트 조직은 유사한 목표를 가지고 있다 하더라도 목표를 달성하기 위해 사용하는 방법은 서로 다를 수 있다. 그러나 실질적 합리성의 측면에서 볼 때 이 둘은 모두 합리적이라고 평가될 수 있으며, 이러한 결론은 외교정책 커뮤니티, 특히 서양의 커뮤니티가 가진 관점과 방식에 영향을 미칠 가능성을 가진다.

나아가, 본 논문에서는 특히 테러 공격의 동기를 종교적 동기와 세속적 동기로 나누어 테러 공격의 치사율(lethality)을 비교 분석한다. 알카에다(al Qaeda)와 팔레스타인해방인민전선(Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP)의 두 단체에 대한 심층 사례연구를 실시하였으며 각 조직을 대표하는 리더들의 이념적 발언들에 초점을 맞추어 분석했다. 다음으로 테러 단체의 종교적 또는 세속적 성향을 코딩을 통해 분류한 후, 그것을 바탕으로 그 단체의 테러 공격의 치사율을 계측하고 있는 Global Terrorism Database (GTD)와 International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE)를 활용한 통계 분석을 실시한다. 다양한 측면의 반복적인 분석을 통해 종교적 동기를 가진 테러리스트 그룹의 공격이 상대적으로 더 세속적 이념의 동기를 가진 그룹의 공격보다 더 높은 치사율을 가지고 있다는 가설의 타당성을 밝힌다. 이러한 결론을 통해 정책결정자들과 대 테러 전략에 대한 함의를 제공한다.

**키워드:** 테러리즘, 종교, 합리성, 알카에다, 막스 베버, 대테러정책,

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