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## **Global Salafi Jihad & Global Islam**

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# Global Salafi Jihad & Global Islam

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# Global Salafi Jihad

- Violent Islamist Revivalist Social Movement
- Modeled on the community of the Prophet & his companions (*Salaf*)
- Injustice due to **crisis of values** (*Jahiliya*) requires overthrow of apostate 'Muslim' ruler to establish Salafi state (Qutb)
- Three phases:
  - Against the **near enemy** (Faraj – “the forgotten duty”)
  - Global expansion of defensive jihad (Azzam)
  - Global offense against the **far enemy** (Zawahiri & bin Laden)
    - Expel the West from the Middle East

# Evidence Based Terrorism Research

- The use of violence against non-Muslim governments or population to establish an Islamist state
- 400 biographies of terrorists
  - Trial transcripts
    - US, France, Germany, Egypt, Indonesia, Morocco, Canada
  - Press accounts
    - English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish (FBIS)
  - Academic publications
  - Internet (corroborated)

# Diaspora & Terrorism

- Diasporas are important to terrorism in general:
  - Anarchists, IRA, LTTE, ETA
- Link predated “globalization”
- Link not specific to religion or Islam
- 84% of Global Salafi Mujahedin have joined the jihad, while in a diaspora (87% in Western Europe)

## Terrorist “Profile”

- 2/3 from Upper or Middle Class
- Mildly devoted to Islam as youth, but 10% are Christian converts
- Average age at joining the jihad: 26 years
- 87% secular education
- 62% with college education (technical fields)
  - Although well educated, relatively ignorant of traditional Islam
- 2/3 are professional or semi-professional
- 3/4 married & majority with children
- Vast majority have no criminal background
- No apparent mental problem or personality pathology

## Joining the Jihad

- Friendship (pre-existing): 68%
  - “Bunch of guys” collectively deciding to join
  - Joining childhood friends
- Kinship: 20%
  - Fathers, brothers, first cousins
  - Importance of in-laws & marriage to cement friendship bonds
- Discipleship: 10%
  - Southeast Asia: *Jamaah Islamiyah*
    - *Pondok Ngruki & Pesantren Luqmanul Hakiem*



## Trajectory of Core Arabs

- Upwardly & geographically mobile (“best & brightest”)
- Mostly from religious, caring & middle class families
- Global citizens, conversant in 3 or 4 languages, skilled in computer technology
- Separated from traditional bonds & culture
- Homesick, lonely, marginalized & excluded from society
- Seek friends
- Drifted to mosques for companionship, not religion
- Moved in together (halal food), formed cliques

# Trajectory of Maghreb Arabs

- Two main paths
  - Second generation in the West
  - Young economic immigrants to the West
- Upwardly mobile, & completely secular background
- Excluded from society
- Dropped out of school
  - Petty crime (false documents & drug dealing)
  - Drug addiction
- Groups of friends, who grew up together & collectively drifted to religion to escape their situation
- Radicalized collectively

## Joining the Jihad

- Bottom up, self-organizing activity
- No top down recruitment program
  - No campaign, shura or budget dedicated to recruitment
  - Selection: 15-25% of volunteers accepted
- Social bonds came before ideological commitment
- No evidence of “brainwashing”: they simply acquired the beliefs of their friends
- Group processes: no Robinson Crusoe narrative

# Motivating Terrorist Operations

- Insidious process
- Low risk participation with increasingly closer set of friends
- Medium risk proselytism for ideal way of life
- Importance of specific script for the global Salafi jihad: 12 Islamist institutions generated 50% of sample
- Salafi ideology: new values (Islam & *ummah*)
  - Greater jihad: “born again”, imitation of Salaf
  - Faith & commitment grounded in intense small group dynamics
  - Gradual development of collective identity
- Complete transformation of values

## In-group love

- Dynamics of dense social networks promotes in-group love
- Self-sacrifice for comrade and the cause
  - Secular → religious
  - Material → spiritual
  - Short-term opportunity → long-term vision
  - Individual concern → communitarian sacrifice
  - Apathy → active engagement
  - Traditional morality → *takfir* group morality
  - Worldly gains → otherworldly rewards

## Out-group hate

- Grounded in everyday experience of exclusion from highest levels of society
  - Endemic in Middle East: fight for Justice
  - Western Europe: failure of integration policy
  - Not in U.S., Canada & Australia: American Dream
- Grounded in group dynamics:
  - “Bunch of guys” escalation of mutual complaints about the unfairness & injustice of society
  - Endorse conspiracy theories
- Endorse takfir doctrine → sanctions commission of crime against society

# Group Dynamics

- Global Salafi jihad is grounded in group dynamics
  - Once in the movement, difficult to abandon it without betraying close friends & family
  - This natural & intense loyalty to the group, inspired by a violent Salafi script, transforms alienated young Muslims into fanatic terrorists
- High risk terrorist operations
  - In-group love + out-group hate (under specific violent script, often religious) → mass murder + suicide

## “Culture shock”

- Global Salafi jihad might be a manifestation of “culture shock”
  - Lack of anchor of traditional social world creates vulnerability to new ideology, especially when shared in groups
  - Not specific to Islam
  - Internet is now creating these opportunities to all “alienated” young men, who no longer need to be geographically dislocated to be attracted to radical ideologies (Jihadi, Neo-Nazi, Cults...)