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**A Critical Analysis of the Religious Causes of the 9/11 Suicide Terrorist
Attacks**

by

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award
of the

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Department of Political Studies
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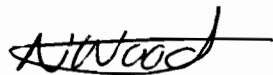
University of Cape Town

2004

Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature



Date

06/09/04

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my late grandfather, Thomas Wood.

Thank you for being my inspiration.

University of Cape Town

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I offer my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Professor Annette Seegers, whose scholarly advice encouraged me to realise my full potential.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation critically analyses the scholarly literature concerned with the causes, and more specifically the religious causes, of the events that occurred in the United States on September 11th 2001. After 19 members of Osama bin Laden's global multinational terrorist network, Al Qaeda, were held responsible for committing acts of mass suicide terrorism by hijacking 4 planes and crashing 3 of them into the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the world questioned whether these 19 men of Middle Eastern origin were representative of all Muslims.

By analysing the strengths and weaknesses of Samuel P. Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' theory, this dissertation seeks to debunk the myth that there is a clash between Islamic and Western civilisations, and that 9/11 was a consequence of this 'clash' – a 'clash' that is, according to Huntington, a direct result of Islam's anti-democratic and inherently violent nature.

The aim of this dissertation is to show that the best probable explanation of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks was the presence of radical Islamic fundamentalism in general and Al Qaeda's radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology in particular. Thus, the most probable cause of the September 11th attacks was the fact that the 9/11 hijackers adhered to radical religious values – values that are not representative of the beliefs held by the majority of Muslims.

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GLOSSARY

<i>al shaheed al hay</i>	the living martyr
caliphate	derivative of caliph or <i>khalifa</i> , which means the head of the Muslim community, who was regarded as the successor of the Prophet Muhammad.
<i>fatwa</i>	an Islamic decree
<i>hakimiyya</i>	God's sovereignty
<i>hijra</i>	migration
houries	maidens (of paradise)
<i>jahiliyya</i> (also <i>jahiliyyah</i>)	a condition of ignorance, unbelief and barbarism. A term originally meant to describe the historical period before Muhammad preached in Arabia, i.e., pre-Islamic Arabia.
<i>jihad</i>	to exert or to struggle. However, there is a distinction between the spiritual and physical forms of <i>jihad</i> .
Koran (also Qur'an)	the Islamic sacred book, the word of God as revealed to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel.
Ramadan	the ninth month of the Muslim year, during which strict fasting is observed from sunrise to sunset.
Sunni	1 of the 2 main branches of Islam adhered to by the majority of Muslims, and differing from Shi'a Islam in its acceptance of the first 3 caliphs.
<i>shahid</i>	martyr
<i>Shari'a</i>	Islamic law
sultanate	derivative of sultan, which means a Muslim sovereign.
<i>umma</i> (also <i>ummah</i>)	the Muslim community

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABC	American Broadcasting Company
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNN	Central News Network
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
Mak	Makhtab al Khidmat
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MEMRI	The Middle East Media and Research Institute
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N.	United Nations
U.S.	United States
U.S.A.	United States of America

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Research Design

a) Defining the Research Problem

Soon after receiving the news that a second plane had crashed into the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11th 2001, U.S. President George W. Bush addressed the American nation and told the American people “terrorism will not stand.”¹ Since that tragic and shocking day, President Bush and most Western politicians have taken great pains to make it clear that this is “a war against terrorism - not a war against Arabs, nor more generally, against Muslims.”² However, Osama bin Laden and those that share his beliefs claim that this is “a religious war” – “a war for Islam against the infidels, and therefore, inevitably, against the United States, the greatest power in the world of the infidels.”³

The problem this dissertation confronts is one the world was confronted with in deciding who and what caused the September 11th suicide terrorist attacks. First and foremost, although Osama bin Laden and his global multinational terrorist network, Al Qaeda, were blamed for the attacks, were they really responsible for 9/11? If so, what motivated bin Laden and the 19 hijackers to commit the most devastating suicide terrorist attacks the world has ever seen? Who should the world believe – bin Laden or Bush? If we believe bin Laden then we are agreeing with scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington, who explain the September 11th attacks as a consequence of long-standing cultural, and more specifically religious, differences between the West and Islam. However, if we consider the argument Bush purports, as this dissertation does, then we

¹. Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books. 2003). 108.

². Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2003). xv.

³. Lewis. xv.

are supportive of those authors who dismiss Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' theory as being completely flawed, mainly due to the fact that it views Islam as an anti-democratic and inherently violent monolithic entity – one that is incompatible with, and intolerant of, Western cultural and religious values. Unlike the argument put forward in this dissertation, Huntington's 'clash' thesis does not differentiate between the actions perpetrated by the 9/11 hijackers, who interpret Islam in a radically militant manner, and the rest of the Muslim population, who, regardless of their opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, do not commit acts of terrorism in the name of their religion.

b) Research Question

This dissertation addresses an explanatory question – one that seeks to critically analyse the religious causes of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks.

c) The Aim of the Study

The aim of this dissertation is to show that radical Islamic fundamentalism was the most probable cause of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks; debunking the myth that 9/11 was caused by a 'clash' between Islamic and Western civilisations.

d) Research Methodology

In order to achieve the above-specified aim, it is essential that a critical and in-depth analysis of reliable scholarly literature concerned with the causes of 9/11 in general, and the religious causes of 9/11 in particular, is conducted. The type of research carried out during the production of this dissertation will thus be based on a critical analysis of the intense scholarly debate that has emerged about religious causality, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the 2 major arguments that have been put forward to explain September 11th. The first argument is rooted in Huntington's 'clash of civilisations theory,' and argues that Islam as a civilisation, and more specifically as a religion, is an anti-democratic and inherently violent monolithic entity – one that presents a direct threat to the West. The second explanation argues that Islam is not a single monolithic entity, that there is marked difference between mainstream traditional Islamic values and those held by a small minority of radical Muslims. This dissertation

will demonstrate that Huntington's 'clash' thesis is culturally deterministic and exclusive, and that the evidence best supports the second explanation. It is thus, not Islam, but radical Islamic fundamentalist values that are a threat to the West and all those who are willing to compromise with the values of Western modernity and secularism.

This dissertation therefore aims to further investigate and develop the cause-effect relationship that exists between two variables, radical Islamic fundamentalism, which is the independent variable (cause), and the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks, which is the dependent variable (effect). Although the research of this dissertation is limited, mainly due to the fact that new evidence of the religious causes of 9/11 continues to emerge on a daily basis, by critically analysing secondary sources of literature that focus specifically on radical Islamic fundamentalism, this dissertation will reveal that the independent variable positively correlates with the dependent variable. In other words, the more radical an Islamic fundamentalist organisation is, the more likely it is that the organisation, e.g., Al Qaeda, as well as its members, will be willing to use terror. In order to falsify the hypothesis that radical Islamic fundamentalism was the most probable cause of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks, thus providing the best probable explanation of why the events occurred, the research must show that without the presence of radical Islamic fundamentalist values, the events of 9/11 would not have occurred. In other words, if the 9/11 hijackers adhered to traditional Islamic values, like the majority of Muslims, they would not have committed acts of suicide terrorism, which are strictly forbidden in the Koran.

e) Chapter Outline

This dissertation will begin, in chapter two, by addressing those questions the whole world was asking on September 11th 2001. Firstly, what exactly happened on that Tuesday morning and how can the events be defined? Secondly, who was really responsible for what has colloquially become known as 9/11, and is there any solid evidence to support these claims? Finally, if Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist organisation was responsible for the September 11th attacks, what motivated the 19

hijackers to commit acts of mass suicide terrorism – were they, as bin Laden declares, motivated by U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East? Chapter two will demonstrate that bin Laden exploits the fact that the majority of Muslim people in the Middle East are united in their hostility towards U.S. foreign policy. Bin Laden uses this manipulative strategy in an attempt to justify his organisation's terrorist activities, which are clearly prohibited in the Koran.

Chapter three of this dissertation will critically analyse Samuel P. Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' theory, which is responsible for perpetuating the Western stereotype that views Islam as an anti-democratic and inherently violent monolithic entity – one that represents a civilisational threat to Western culture. Although Huntington's 'clash' thesis is significant in terms of the impact it had on theories of International Relations, chapter three will explain why Huntington's thesis does not, contrary to the assumptions made by many others soon after the events occurred, apply to 9/11.

Chapter four will illustrate how radical Islamic fundamentalism, the origins of which lie in the Islamic decline, differentiates itself from modernist/moderate Islam. As did the 19 hijackers, radical Islamic fundamentalists, unlike their modernist/moderate counterparts, misinterpret the Koran in a radically militant manner in order to justify their terrorist activities. Thus, the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks were not caused by a 'clash' between Islamic and Western civilisations. Rather, they would not have occurred if the 9/11 hijackers were not indoctrinated with Al Qaeda's radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology.

This dissertation therefore concludes, in chapter five, with the concluding findings, which are followed by a section that is dedicated to the importance of governments knowing exactly where the roots of terror lie – knowledge that will enable governments to prevent and combat terrorism more effectively.

CHAPTER TWO

The 9/11 Suicide Terrorist Attacks: Victims, Perpetrators and Political Grievances

2.1 Introduction

Besides for the fact that America was attacked on its own soil, with the majority of victims being American, many scholars and laypersons believe that the world is not witnessing anything new – that the U.S. has perpetrated worse acts against the peoples of the developing world. Although there is some truth to this statement, in an attempt to mobilise support for his cause, Osama bin Laden exploits the fact that U.S. foreign policy is perilously unpopular in the Middle East. However, the fact that many Muslims are anti-American is the result of genuine political grievances, many of which will be analysed in this chapter, and not the consequence of believing in a religion that has been stereotyped, by Samuel P. Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' theory in particular, as being anti-democratic and inherently violent – a stereotype that bin Laden and the 9/11 hijackers seem to accentuate.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide reliable scholarly evidence that 19 men of Middle Eastern origin carried out bin Laden's orders by committing acts of mass suicide terrorism that resulted in the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. This task is fundamental in showing that the presence of Al Qaeda's radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology, and not Islam as a religion, provides the best probable explanation of the events that occurred on September 11th 2001. However, before one can ascertain what caused 9/11, it is essential that one know exactly what the perpetrators were responsible for causing.

2.2 September 11th

On Tuesday the 11th of September 2001, people around the world were gripped to the shocking images on their television screens - the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre,

“preeminent symbols of the United States’ military and economic might,” had been attacked.⁴ Out of the 4 planes that were hijacked, 2 fully fuelled Boeing 767s collided into the North and South Towers of the World Trade Centre, causing explosions that heated the Towers’ steel structure to 1 500 degrees Celsius – “the temperature at which steel melts.”⁵ Many among the more than 3 000 confirmed dead became known as “jumpers.” These people made the intelligent ‘choice’ of instant suicide as opposed to “death by burning and suffocation.”⁶ There were 115 nationalities among the rest of those who perished under “the accumulat(ed) weight of 110 collapsing floors accelerat(ing) to a speed of 250 miles per hour, causing each tower to collapse in about 15 seconds.”⁷

2.3 9/11: An Act of Suicide Terrorism

The attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre had an enormous impact on International Relations, with “only few analysts in the developed world” declaring what happened unsurprising.⁸ Noam Chomsky, a fierce critic of U.S. foreign policy, states that 9/11 was only shocking due to “the choice of innocent victims.”⁹ If the same atrocities had occurred in a ‘third world’ country no one in the West would have batted an eye-lid. Chomsky points out that “worse disasters” occurred in Central America when “forces armed and trained by the U.S. ... conducted (themselves) with unspeakable barbarism and brutality,” killing some 200 000 people and abandoning over a million people to a life without family, food or shelter.¹⁰ Thus, according to Chomsky, whose opinions are widely reiterated by many in the developing world, 9/11 was “nothing new.”¹¹

⁴. Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 227.

⁵. Malise Ruthven, *A Fury for God: The Islamist Attack on America* (London: Granta Books, 2002), 5 & 6.

⁶. Ruthven, 3 & 5.

⁷. Ruthven, 3 & 6.

⁸. William T. Tow, “Apocalypse Forever? International Relations Implications of 11 September,” in *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 49 (2003): 314.

⁹. Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 1.

¹⁰. Chomsky, 3.

Chomsky is correct in stating that terrorism is not new. Terrorism in general, and suicide terrorism in particular, “are in actuality very old *modus operandi*.”¹² Throughout the ages, people claiming to be “serving a goal or a cause” have used terrorism as a specific type or method of warfare.¹³ However, although the definition of terrorism is contested, most experts agree that terrorist acts should not be defined by the identity of the perpetrators or by the nature of their cause. Instead, an act of terrorism should be defined solely by the nature of the act.¹⁴ In other words, the focus of any definition of terrorism should be the particular method of violence the perpetrators choose in order for them to obtain the leverage, influence and power they otherwise lack to effect political change on either a local or international scale.¹⁵

Terrorists use violence in a shocking way in order to generate publicity for their cause. Acts of terrorism are thus “purposefully directed against civilians,” with the knowledge that unrestrained violence of this nature will provoke an intense media reaction.¹⁶ The attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were designed, as all modern acts of terrorism are, to generate intense media publicity, the purpose of which is to “instill fear within, and thereby intimidate, a wider target audience.”¹⁷ Terrorism is thus “a demonstrative act by definition.”¹⁸

¹¹. Noam Chomsky. “Who are the Global Terrorists?” ch.11 in *Worlds In Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 133.

¹². Yoram Schweitzer. “Suicide Terrorism: Development and Characteristics” (21 April 2000). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=112> accessed on 14/08/03.

¹³. John Gearson. “The Nature of Modern Terrorism.” ch.1 in *The Terrorism Reader*, ed. David J. Wittaker (London: Routledge, 2001), 11.

¹⁴. Gearson, 13.

¹⁵. David J. Wittaker. “Definition of Terrorism.” ch.1 in *The Terrorism Reader*, ed. David J. Wittaker (London: Routledge, 2001), 10.

¹⁶. Boaz Ganor. “Defining Terrorism: Is One Man’s Terrorist Another Man’s Freedom Fighter?” (25 June 2001), 7. Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/define.htm> accessed on 15/09/03.

¹⁷. David J. Wittaker. “Definition of Terrorism.” ch.1 in *The Terrorism Reader*, ed. David J. Wittaker (London: Routledge, 2001), 9.

¹⁸. Ariel Merari. “The Readiness to Kill and Die: Suicidal Terrorism in the Middle East.” ch.10 in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 202.

In other words, the threat or use of shocking and extreme violence is “primarily symbolic” in the sense that it is “designed to have psychological repercussions beyond the immediate target or victim.”¹⁹ The September 11th attacks can be seen in this light, due to the fact that they were deliberately designed to create a profound sense of fear and anxiety within American society in particular, and Western society in general. Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind 9/11, revealed in the negative psychological effects the attacks had created: “There is America, full of fear from north to south, from west to east. Thank God for that.”²⁰

Suicide terrorist attacks, of which the 9/11 attacks constituted a precedent in terms of the “scale of effect,”²¹ “the scope of participants and the method of operation,”²² reflect “the phenomenon of terrorism in its most extreme form.”²³ The fact that the suicide terrorist, “who actively and purposely causes his own death through blowing himself up along with his chosen target,” is an anonymous, as well as an unidentifiable threat, makes people paranoid and “fearful of venturing beyond their homes even to a convenience store.”²⁴ A disguised suicide terrorist has “the ability to execute accurate, large-scale attacks,”²⁵ which due to “the relatively high number of casualties guaranteed in such attacks, ... ensures full media

¹⁹. John Gearson. “The Nature of Modern Terrorism.” in *Superterrorism: Policy Responses*. ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002). 11 & 12.

²⁰. Brigitte L. Nacos. “The Terrorist Calculus behind 9-11: A Model for Future Terrorism?” in *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (Jan/Feb 2003): 5.

²¹. John Gearson. “The Nature of Modern Terrorism.” in *Superterrorism: Policy Responses*. ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002). 12.

²². Yoram Schweitzer. “Suicide Terrorism and the September 11 Attacks” (20 October 2002). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=452> accessed on 14/08/03.

²³. Yoram Schweitzer. “Suicide Terrorism: Development and Characteristics” (21 April 2000). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=112> accessed on 14/08/03.

²⁴. Bruce Hoffman. “The Logic of Suicide Terrorism.” in *The Atlantic Monthly* (June 2003). Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/cgi-bin/send.cgi?page=http%3A//www.theatlantic.com/issues...> accessed on 11/08/03.

²⁵. Council on Foreign Relations. “Suicide Terror: Was 9/11 Something New?” Available: http://www.terrorismanswers.org/terrorism/suicide_print.html accessed on 22/08/03.

coverage.”²⁶ As a result, many experts believe that as in the case of 9/11, the need to claim credit for such an attack is not a priority. This is due to the fact that “in the minds of the terrorists, the act speaks for itself.”²⁷

2.4 Who Perpetrated the 9/11 Suicide Terrorist Attacks?

a) Conspiracy Theories

The fact that no group or person has officially claimed responsibility for the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks, thus refusing to explain the motivations for their actions, has given many critics of the U.S. the opportunity to conjure up conspiracy theories which enable them to project their own agenda onto the situation.²⁸

One of the most popular conspiracy theories accuses the United States of attacking its own citizens in order to generate some sort of provocation or pretext. “The fact that US intelligence services had been alerted – by the French, by the Israelis, by the Philipinos - that an attack was planned, but nonetheless did nothing to prevent it is treated as proof that the U.S. intelligence services, and by extension, the U.S. leadership in general, were somehow complicit, banking on the political benefits that would accrue.”²⁹ By placing the blame on Osama bin Laden and 19 men of Middle Eastern origin, 15 of whom came from Saudi Arabia, many in the Muslim world believe that 9/11 was an American/Jewish conspiracy – a conspiracy designed by the Judeo-Christian alliance to destroy the lands of Islam. In many Middle Eastern countries Osama bin Laden is celebrated as a defiant hero – a devout Muslim who remains defiant in the face of false accusations.³⁰

²⁶. Yoram Schweitzer. “Suicide Terrorism: Development and Characteristics” (21 April 2000). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=112> accessed on 14/08/03.

²⁷. John Gearson. “The Nature of Modern Terrorism.” in *Superterrorism: Policy Responses*. ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002). 11.

²⁸. Russell A. Berman. “September 11.” in *Telos* 120 (Summer 2001): 163 & 164.

²⁹. Berman. 164.

³⁰. Joseph Lelyveld. “All Suicide Bombers Are Not Alike” (28 October 2001). Available: <http://www.hyrum.org/Articles/SuicideBombers> accessed on 26/08/2003.

b) Osama bin Laden and the 9/11 Hijackers

i) The 9/11 Hijackers and their Readiness to Kill and Die

Although “nine months after 9/11 ... the FBI reported that it still had only suspicions about the origins and planning of the 9/11 attacks,” most of the reliable evidence collected during “what must be the most extraordinary international investigations in history,”³¹ reveals that FBI suspicions were correct: 19 men, “15 of (whom) came from Saudi Arabia, 2 from the United Arab Emirates, 1 from Syria/Lebanon and 1 from Egypt,” all of whom have been directly linked to Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda terrorist organization, committed an act of suicide terrorism which resulted in their own deaths, as well as the murder of over three thousand people.³²

On September 11th 2001, Mohamed Atta (pilot), Abdulaziz al-Omari, Satam al-Suqami, Wail al-Shehri and Waleed al-Shehri hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 and flew it into the North Tower of New York’s World Trade Centre at 8:45 a.m., purposely killing themselves and everyone on board the plane. On that same morning, at 9:03 a.m., Marwan al-Shehhi (pilot), Ahmed al-Ghamdi, Fayez Benihamed, Hamza al-Ghamdi and Mohand al-Shehri crashed United Airlines Flight 175 into the South Tower of the World Trade Centre intentionally killing themselves and everyone on board. American Airlines Flight 77 smashed into the South-West face of the Pentagon in Washington D.C. at 9:43 a.m. Hani Hanjour (pilot), Khalid al-Midhar, Majed Moqed, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Salem al-Hazmi are the suspected hijackers of Flight 77. Ziad Jarrah (pilot), Ahmed al-Haznawi, Ahmed al-Haznawi and Said al-Ghamdi hijacked United Airlines Flight 93³³ - their intended target was suspected of being the White House.³⁴ However, during flight some of the “passengers began receiving

³¹. Noam Chomsky. *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World* (London: Pluto Press. 2002). 1.

³². Steve Smith. “Unanswered Questions.” ch.4 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2002). 49 & 51.

³³. Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books. 2003). xiv, xv & 243.

³⁴. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 67.

mobile-phone calls from their relatives and friends alerting them to the seizure and crashing of the earlier flights.”³⁵ Jeremy Glick, a passenger on board Flight 93, called his wife and told her that “Middle Eastern-looking men wearing red bandannas round their heads” had hijacked the plane he was on. Glick, “a former judo champion,” as well as fellow passenger Tom Burnett, informed their wives that the passengers were thinking of “rushing the hijackers.”³⁶ At 10:03 a.m. Flight 93 crashed in a field South-East of Pittsburgh – there were no survivors.³⁷

In the wreckage of Flight 93, a 5 page handwritten document was discovered. Other copies, also written in Arabic, were found in a car belonging to the hijackers at Dulles airport, as well as in a bag owned by Mohamed Atta.³⁸ An analysis of the document, which is believed to have been written by Atta, the 33 year old Egyptian leader of the group, reveals that it was written specifically for the 9/11 hijackers, with the particular intention of guiding them through their suicide mission.³⁹ The “Doomsday Document,” which will be discussed further in chapter four, has been analysed in depth by Juan Cole, a scholar of Middle Eastern history who is fluent in Urdu, Farsi and Arabic. Cole’s conclusion was that the document was a sophisticated method of indoctrination.⁴⁰ The first part of the document, entitled “The Last Night,” “contains 15 instructions aimed at preparing the hijackers psychologically for their action on the night before they were to carry it out.”⁴¹ The first instruction directs the soon to be hijackers to “vow to accept death,” urging them to prepare for their “rendezvous with Eternal Truth” by performing endless hours of ritualistic acts. Instruction 7 emphasises the

³⁵. Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books. 2003). 111.

³⁶. Corbin. 111.

³⁷. Corbin. 112.

³⁸. Xavier Raufer. “Al Qaeda: A Different Diagnosis.” in *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (2003): 397.

³⁹. Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books. 2003). 237.

⁴⁰. The Christian Science Monitor. “Reading into the Mind of a Terrorist” (30 October 2003). Available: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/1030/p11s01-legn.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁴¹. Juan Cole. “Al-Qaeda’s Doomsday Document and Psychological Manipulation.” presented at *Genocide and Terrorism: Probing the Mind of the Perpetrator* (New Haven: Yale Centre for Genocide Studies. 9 April 2003). 1 & 2. Available: <http://www.juancole.com/essays/qaeda.htm> accessed on 21/01/04.

importance of forgetting and being completely “oblivious to that thing called the world,” encouraging a state of “liminal consciousness” necessary for committing mass suicide and murder.⁴²

Also found in Mohamed Atta’s luggage was a copy of his will, which was written on the 11th of April 1996. Atta’s will is comprised of “strict instructions” indicating the way in which his body should be handled after his death.⁴³ Atta repeatedly insists that he “died as a Muslim which is God’s religion.” All 18 instructions emphasise Atta’s religious devotion and demand that everyone who attends his funeral must be “good Muslims,” warning “people will be held responsible for not following the Muslim religion.”⁴⁴ Instruction 14 states, “Everyone who attends my funeral should ask that I will be forgiven for what I have done in the past (not this action).” The words, “not this action,” indicate that Atta was planning to die a martyr (*shahid*) defending Islam against nonbelievers – an action deserving only of praise.⁴⁵ According to the Koran, “to die for one’s faith is the highest form of witness to God: “If you are killed in the cause of God or you die, the forgiveness and mercy of God are better than all that you amass. And if you die or are killed, even so it is to God that you will return (3:157-158).”⁴⁶

However, although “being killed by the enemy in *jihad* guarantees paradise, suicide is strictly forbidden. *Shahid* is the warrior who was killed by the enemy in battle, not the one who killed himself.”⁴⁷ Bernard Lewis, a seminal author on Islamic history and culture, states that the

⁴². Cole. 11-13.

⁴³. ABCNEWS.com. “Suspected Hijacker Left Strict Instructions.” Available: http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/DailyNews/WTC_atta_will.html accessed on 27/03/2002.

⁴⁴. ABCNEWS.com.

⁴⁵. ABCNEWS.com.

⁴⁶. John L. Esposito. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name Of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 69.

⁴⁷. Ariel Merari. “The Readiness to Kill and Die: Suicide Terrorism in the Middle East.” ch.10 in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 197.

early Islamic authorities “make a clear distinction between facing certain death at the hands of the enemy and dying by one’s own hand.”⁴⁸ Islamic law conforms with Christianity and Judaism by condemning all those who commit suicide to eternal hell.⁴⁹ Islam is particularly strict with regards to the punishment suicides will suffer. The following passage from the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad is testament to this fact: “Whoever kills himself in any way will be tormented in that way in Hell ... Whoever kills himself in any way in this world will be tormented with it on the day of resurrection.”⁵⁰

Although there is much dispute as to whether all of the 19 hijackers knew they were going to die on the morning of September 11th, Osama bin Laden himself is quoted in *The Washington Post* as saying that although the details of the hijackings were not known until just before the men boarded the planes, they all knew in advance that it was a “martyrdom operation.”⁵¹ There is still much confusion, however, about how much time the hijackers were given to comprehend their impending deaths, many believe that the “Doomsday Document” was tantamount in stiffening the hijackers’ resolve.⁵² It is known for sure, however, that at least 6 of the men had received flying lessons up to two years prior to September 11th. These men, Mohamad Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, Ziad Jarrah, Khalid al-Midhar, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Hani Hanjour had been preparing for their martyrdom mission for at least two years in advance and knew that it would involve a suicide flight mission.⁵³ Ziad Jarrah, who often stayed at

⁴⁸. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2003). 119.

⁴⁹. Ariel Merari. “The Readiness to Kill and Die: Suicide Terrorism in the Middle East.” ch.10 in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*. ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge. U.K.: Cambridge University Press. 1990). 197.

⁵⁰. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2003). 118 & 119.

⁵¹. Steve Smith. “Unanswered Questions.” ch.4 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Plgrave Macmillan. 2002). 51.

⁵². Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books. 2003). 238.

⁵³. Gerald Posner. *Why America Slept: The Failure to Prevent 9 11* (New York: Random House. 2003). 147-149.

Mohamed Atta's rented apartment in Hamburg with Marwan al-Shehhi, wrote a farewell note to his girlfriend telling her that she will "have to wait a bit longer until (they) can be together again." In the letter he says that he "did not escape," but has done what he had to do. He tells her that she should be proud of him, "for this is an honour."⁵⁴ One can deduce from the wording of his farewell letter that Jarrah had planned in advance to commit suicide. More importantly, however, he did not believe that this action would lead to severe punishment in the afterlife. Contrary to Islamic tradition, he believed that his suicide would be a honourable death in defense of Islam, one that according to the 'Doomsday Document' would be rewarded with the sexual pleasures of heavenly "houris or maidens."⁵⁵

ii) Osama Bin Laden: The Mastermind behind September 11th

On the 16th of April 2002, the Arabic television network, Al Jazeera, aired a videotape of Ahmed al-Haznawi (one of the Saudi hijackers aboard Flight 93) pledging his life to "martyrdom" and declaring that he would "send a 'bloodied message' to the Americans by attacking them in their 'heartland.'"⁵⁶ Al-Haznawi's message, which was recorded 6 months before 9/11, contradicts the evidence that only the 6 men who had received flying lessons were aware that September 11th was a suicide mission. Al-Haznawi's message is, however, the first evidence "not produced by the U.S. government to tie the accused terror mastermind (Osama bin Laden) to the Sept. 11 attacks."⁵⁷ Hafez El-Mirazi, Al Jazeera's Washington bureau chief, stated that the videotape, which "features bin Laden, top Al Qaeda deputy Ayman Al-Zawahiri and a man identified as one of the Sept. 11 hijackers (al-Haznawi)," "is the first clear

⁵⁴. Jane Corbin, *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books, 2003), 149 & 240.

⁵⁵. Juan Cole, "Al-Qaeda's Doomsday Document and Psychological Manipulation," presented at *Genocide and Terrorism: Probing the Mind of the Perpetrator* (New Haven: Yale Centre for Genocide Studies, 9 April 2003), 9. Available: <http://www.juancole.com/essays/qaeda.htm> accessed on 21/01/04.

⁵⁶. Julian Borger, "Chilling, Defiant: The Video Suicide Message of a September 11 Killer" (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4394844,00.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁵⁷. ABCNEWS.com, "New Bin Laden Tape: A Smoking Gun?" (18 April 2002). Available: abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNEWS/aljazeera020416.html-46k accessed on 1/12/03.

evidence” from a non-U.S. source “that bin Laden and Al Qaeda are responsible for Sept. 11.”⁵⁸

The videotape, which is entitled “The Wills of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs,” shows “pictures of all 19 hijackers.”⁵⁹ Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who is pictured sitting next to Osama bin Laden, says “those brothers who went out and gave their souls to Allah almighty, God almighty has granted them this victory we are enjoying now.”⁶⁰ Although “bin Laden does not speak” on the tape, Ayman Al-Zawahiri assumedly speaks on his behalf when he says “we thank God for the victory we have achieved. This victory can only be attributed to the goodness of God.”⁶¹ According to Al Jazeera network officials, the segments featuring bin Laden and his deputy were made after September, whilst those of al-Haznawi were made “in the Afghan city of Kandahar about six months before September 11.” Al-Haznawi’s final will and testament is screened against a background “picture of the World Trade Centre twin towers exploding.”⁶² The “image of the World Trade Centre in flames was apparently electronically inserted into the tape of Ahmed al-Haznawi.”⁶³

Al-Haznawi begins his “prepared statement” by saying that he was going to “help send a ‘bloodied message’ to the world.”⁶⁴ The hijacker “provides no details of the plot” (probably because – as has been mentioned above - he was not informed of the details until just before the 19 accused men boarded the planes). He does, however, implicate himself in the 9/11

⁵⁸. ABCNEWS.com.

⁵⁹. Julian Borger. “Chilling, Defiant: The Video Suicide Message of a September 11 Killer” (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4394844,00.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶⁰. CNN.com. “New Bin Laden Tape Surfaces” (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/meast/04/15/terror.tape/index.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶¹. ABCNEWS.com. “New Bin Laden Tape: A Smoking Gun?” (18 April 2002). Available: abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNEWS/aljazeera020416.html-46k accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶². Julian Borger. “Chilling, Defiant: The Video Suicide Message of a September 11 Killer” (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4394844,00.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶³. CNN.com. “New Bin Laden Tape Surfaces” (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/meast/04/15/terror.tape/index.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶⁴. CNN.com.

attacks by angrily declaring, “it is time to kill the Americans on their own ground among their families and soldiers... The truth is that we will fight them on their own ground.” Al-Haznawi “boasts of having killed Americans outside their homeland, an apparent reference to Al Qaeda attacks on U.S. targets overseas.”⁶⁵ He then vows to take revenge for “the time of bondage and humiliation” that Muslims have suffered,⁶⁶ and warns all Americans to “start digging their own graves because a thousand bin Ladens are preparing to kill them.”⁶⁷ Al-Haznawi thus directly implicates bin Laden in the 9/11 attacks by implying that bin Laden has been the inspiration for any future attacks on American soil. *The Muslim News* reported that the videotape “erases any doubt that Osama bin Laden was behind the atrocities.”⁶⁸

‘The Wills of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs’ is not, however, the first time that Osama bin Laden lauded the 9/11 plot. In mid-November 2001, videotape was recovered from Afghanistan in which bin Laden is seen sharing his delight with a visiting Saudi Arabian Sheikh. Some analysts are of the opinion that this videotape is merely indicative of bin Laden’s reaction to the September 11th attacks. However, many more believe that this videotape is hard evidence that Osama bin Laden was a key figure, if not, the key figure, in the planning of the 9/11 attacks.⁶⁹ The following excerpts clearly indicate that the attacks did far more damage than bin Laden had personally anticipated.⁷⁰ Bin Laden states that he had “calculated in advance” the damage the exploding planes would cause to the World Trade

⁶⁵. Julian Borger. “Chilling, Defiant: The Video Suicide Message of a September 11 Killer” (16 April 2002). Available: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4394844,00.html> accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶⁶. ABCNEWS.com. “New Bin Laden Tape: A Smoking Gun?” (18 April 2002). Available: abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNEWS/aljazeera020416.html-46k accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶⁷. Amardeep Bassey. “Terror Video for Sale at Mosque.” in *Birmingham Sunday Mercury* (4 August 2002). Available: http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/news/print_version.php?article=3140 accessed on 1/12/03.

⁶⁸. Bassey.

⁶⁹. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 139.

⁷⁰. Steve Smith. “Unanswered Questions,” ch.4 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 53.

Centre. Furthermore, the subsequent quotations reveal that bin Laden had prior notification of the specific date “the event would take place.”⁷¹

Osama bin Laden: “We calculated in advance the number of casualties from the enemy who would be killed, based on the position of the tower. We calculated that the floors that would be hit would be three or four floors. I was the most optimistic of them all ... due to my experience in this field, I was thinking that the fire from the gas in the plane would melt the iron structure of the building and collapse the area where the plane hit and all the floors above it only. This is all that we had hoped for.”

Sheikh: “Allah be praised.”

Osama Bin Laden: “We were at [inaudible] when the event took place. We had notification since the previous Thursday that the event would take place that day. We had finished our work that day and had the radio on. It was 5:30 P.M. our time. I was sitting with Dr. Ahmad Abu-al-Khair. Immediately we heard the news that a plane had hit the World Trade Centre. We turned the radio station to the news from Washington. The news continued and no mention of the attack until the end. At the end of the newscast, they reported that a plane just hit the World Trade Centre.”

Sheikh: “Allah be praised”⁷²

2.5 U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East: A Cause of 9/11?

a) A Declaration of War by Osama bin Laden: The 1998 *Fatwa*

On February 23, 1998, Osama bin Laden declared a ‘holy war’ on the United States of America. Bin Laden, together with the leaders of the ‘World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders,’ called on “every Muslim who believes in God and wishes to be rewarded to comply with God’s order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever

⁷¹. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 139.

⁷². Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 139.

and whenever they find it.”⁷³ Most specialists on 9/11 believe that the September 11th suicide terrorist attacks were “a strike delivered in accord”⁷⁴ with this 1998 *fatwa*.⁷⁵ Thus, in order to attempt an answer to the question of why bin Laden masterminded the 9/11 attacks, it is necessary that one refrain “from caricature and instead attend to bin Laden’s own statements about why he is at war with the United States.”⁷⁶ “Osama’s *fatwa* gave three main reasons why (Muslims) should target the United States:”⁷⁷

“First, for seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbours, and turning its bases in the peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighbouring Muslim peoples. If some people in the past have argued about the fact that the occupation, all the people of the peninsula have now acknowledged it. The best proof of this is America’s continuing aggression against Iraqi people using the peninsula as a staging post, even though all its rulers are against their territories being used to that end, but they are helpless.”

“Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded one million ... despite all this, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the

⁷³ Gunaratna, 1.

⁷⁴ Tim Luke, “On 9.11.01,” in *Telos* 120 (Summer 2001): 131.

⁷⁵ A *fatwa* is an Islamic decree based on “formal legal opinions that decide matters not mentioned in the text.” See Oliver Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999), 10. However, “it should be borne in mind ... that the force of a *fatwa* depends entirely upon who pronounces it, and none of the recognized Islamic authorities (Sunni or Shia) regards Osama bin Laden as a person capable legitimately of issuing one.” See Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 9.

⁷⁶ Peter L. Bergen, *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 226.

⁷⁷ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 58.

ferocious war or the fragmentation or devastation. So here they come to annihilate what is left of this people and to humiliate their Muslim neighbours.”

“Third, if the Americans’ aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews’ petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. The best proof of this is their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighbouring Arab state, and their endeavor to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel’s survival and the continuation of the brutal Crusade occupation of the peninsula.”⁷⁸

According to Osama bin Laden, “these crimes ... amount to ‘a clear declaration of war by the Americans against God, his Prophet, and the Muslims.’” In such a situation it is incumbent on every individual Muslim to defend the lands of Islam by killing “Americans and their allies, both civil and military ... in any country where this is possible.”⁷⁹

i) U.S. Troops in Saudi Arabia

Five and a half months after bin Laden issued this declaration, the Saudi born multimillionaire was “held responsible for ... the bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.” Shortly after the simultaneous bombings, Osama bin Laden was declared “Washington’s most wanted fugitive” and was charged with conspiring to kill Americans.⁸⁰ The fact that the date of the two U.S. bombings in East Africa coincided with “the eight anniversary of the arrival of American troops in Saudi Arabia in 1990” is evidence that the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia was, and remains, bin Laden’s “primary concern.”⁸¹

⁷⁸ Gunaratna, 58 & 59.

⁷⁹ Bernard Lewis, “License to Kill,” in *Foreign Affairs* 77 (Nov/Dec 98). Available: http://web22.epnet.com/delivery.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+1n+en-us+sid+8122EE61-4C6C-4... accessed on 08/08/03.

⁸⁰ Mary Anne Weaver, “The Real bin Laden,” in *The New Yorker* (13 September 2001), 1. Available: http://www.newyorker.com/archive/content/?010924fa_03 accessed on 01/12/03.

⁸¹ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002), 62.

Osama bin Laden's dissent of the Saudi regime began in June 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. King Fahad, the Custodian of the Two Holy Places, rejected bin Laden's offer to provide the services of his Arab-Afghan veterans, all of whom had at some stage been resident at one of Osama's militant training camps in Afghanistan.⁸² Instead of accepting bin Laden's offer to organise a defense of the Saudi Kingdom, King Fahad invited 540 000 American U.S. troops to protect the Holy Land. The fact that "20 000 U.S. troops continued to be based in Saudi Arabia after Kuwait's liberation,"⁸³ infuriated bin Laden to such an extent that the Saudi regime felt it necessary to strip him of his citizenship in April 1994.⁸⁴

In August 1996, Osama bin Laden issued "A Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places: A Message from Osama bin Muhammed bin Laden unto his Muslim Brethren All over the World Generally, and Toward the Muslims of the Arabian Peninsula in Particular."⁸⁵ Bin Laden's 1996 *fatwa*, which was not formally sanctioned by a legitimate religious authority,⁸⁶ describes the occupation of the Land of the Two Holy Places as the greatest suffering ever inflicted upon the world's Muslims by the infidel enemy.⁸⁷

The fact that the Saudi regime allowed the Americans to occupy the holiest land in all of Islam is unforgivable when one considers the Prophet Muhammad's final utterance: "Let there be no

⁸². Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (U.S.A: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2002). 315 & 316.

⁸³. Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books. 2001). 133.

⁸⁴. Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (U.S.A: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2002). 317.

⁸⁵. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2002). 331.

⁸⁶. Gunaratna. 37

⁸⁷. Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (U.S.A: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2002). 317.

two religions in Arabia.”⁸⁸ This much-misused quote is used to uphold the perspective that “the U.S., and more generally Western presence in Saudi Arabia ... desecrate the sanctity of the sacred land.”⁸⁹ Many scholars of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies have, however, pointed out that although “Caliph Umar decreed that Jews and Christians should be removed from Arabia ... his decree was both limited and compassionate.”⁹⁰ In contrast to moderate Islam, which is tolerant and believes in the “restoration of equality among the People of the Book,” Osama bin Laden threatens and uses indiscriminate violence against non-believers, whom he judges according to an exclusivist ideology. The Prophet Muhammad himself, warned “against innovation in religion,” as well as “all damaging political innovations” which sought to “(capture) power over Muslims” by claiming the right to label “their opponents as non-believers.”⁹¹

Contrary to Islamic tradition, Osama bin Laden uses his 1996 *fatwa* to condemn the Saudi regime as un-Islamic. According to bin Laden, in addition to the regime’s inability to protect the country from the American crusader forces, the Saudi Kingdom “has torn off its legitimacy” by “ignoring the divine *Shariah* law.”⁹² Bin Laden repeatedly states that the regime’s implementation of man-made civil law has stripped the Kingdom of its Islamic status, thus giving the Muslims of the Arabian Peninsula no choice but to overthrow the Saudi regime and replace it with “a true Islamic state.”⁹³

⁸⁸. Bernard Lewis. “License to Kill.” in *Foreign Affairs* 77 (Nov/Dec 98). Available: http://web22.epnet.com/delivery.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+1n+en-us+sid+8122EE61-4C6C-4... accessed on 08/08/03.

⁸⁹. Russell A. Berman. “September 11.” in *Telos* 120 (Summer 2001): 165.

⁹⁰. Bernard Lewis. “License to Kill.” in *Foreign Affairs* 77 (Nov/Dec 98). Available: http://web22.epnet.com/delivery.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+1n+en-us+sid+8122EE61-4C6C-4... accessed on 08/08/03.

⁹¹. Seif I. Tag El-Din. “Islamic Ethics of Religious Pluralism.” in *The Islamic Quarterly* 47 (2003): 147-152.

⁹². Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2002). 37.

⁹³. Gunaratna, 38 & 39

ii) U.S. Support for Repressive Regimes

In April 1982, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated. The men charged with plotting and instigating the assassination explained that it was their duty to exterminate leaders who had abandoned God's faith and replace them with the "perfect Islamic order."⁹⁴ Egypt's current President, Hosni Mubarak, has also been condemned by senior Al Qaeda leaders as "godless" and anti-Islamic."⁹⁵ In recent years, however, moderate Islamic Egyptians have rocked the streets of Cairo with calls for Mubarak's resignation – a demand that was brutally suppressed. Much like Sadat's regime, Mubarak's government is characterised by its authoritarianism and corruption. Many Muslims living in Egypt are infuriated by the fact that the United States - a country that stands for freedom and democracy - is "content to let Mubarak reign supreme and indefinitely."⁹⁶

In exchange for U.S. support, Egypt was transformed into one of Washington's most important strategic partners in the Middle East. For example, Mubarak, "more than anyone else, gave legitimacy to the U.S.-led coalition in the Gulf War. He not only moved quickly to persuade several Arab states to join the coalition following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, but also dispatched 36 000 soldiers to the battlefield and provided the United States with over flight and basing rights."⁹⁷ In return for his efforts, Mubarak's regime was rewarded with more foreign aid "than any other country in the world except Israel." Most Egyptians, however, have not benefited from "the billions of dollars in aid the country receives each year."⁹⁸ As a result, Egypt's people are growing increasingly resentful and disillusioned towards their tyrannical President and the Superpower that supports him.⁹⁹

⁹⁴. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), 104 & 105.

⁹⁵. Council on Foreign Relations. "Causes of 9/11: U.S. Support for Repressive Regimes." Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/regimes.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

⁹⁶. Mary Anne Weaver. "Pharaohs-in-Waiting," in *The Atlantic Monthly* (October 2003). Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2003/10/weaver.htm> accessed on 21/01/04.

⁹⁷. Weaver.

⁹⁸. Weaver.

⁹⁹. Weaver.

Dictatorships such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia allow “individuals no room for legitimate political activity.”¹⁰⁰ “Lacking any other outlet, new and growing discontents...find expression in religious extremist movements.”¹⁰¹ Radical Islamic organisations, such as Ayman Al-Zawahiri’s Egyptian Islamic Jihad and Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda, offer an “attractive alternative” to many of those who feel that “there has to be something better, truer, and more hopeful than the inept tyrannies of their rulers.”¹⁰² In order to mobilise support, radical Islamic groups provide discontented Muslims with “a critique of what is wrong and a program for putting it right.”¹⁰³ The critique of what went wrong in the Muslim world “is not entirely wrong” in blaming the West for present-day conflicts in the Middle East.¹⁰⁴ However, feelings of humiliation and despair, anger and frustration, are effectively exploited by Islamic extremist groups that justify their hatred of the United States by enforcing their “own understanding of Islam.”¹⁰⁵

iii) Iraq and Palestine

In order to garner aggressive Muslim support, Osama bin Laden cunningly exploits politically contested issues such as the United Nations’ economic sanctions against Iraq and the United States’ support for Israel with regards to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The U.N. sanctions against Iraq are one of the grievances mentioned most frequently by the leader of Al Qaeda.¹⁰⁶ Bin Laden’s 1998 declaration of war lists 3 main grievances bin Laden has against the United

¹⁰⁰. Jack Beatty. “The Real Roots of Terror,” in *Atlantic Unbound* (5 December 2001). Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/polipro/pp2001-12-05.htm> accessed on 23/10/2002.

¹⁰¹. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), 101.

¹⁰². Lewis, 101.

¹⁰³. Lewis, 101.

¹⁰⁴. Lewis, 102.

¹⁰⁵. Peter L. Bergen. *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 227.

¹⁰⁶. Council on Foreign Relations. “Causes of 9/11: U.N. Sanctions On Iraq.” Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/iraq.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

States and all its citizens.¹⁰⁷ It is surprising that a man who was once willing to defend Saudi Arabia against Saddam Hussein's apostate regime,¹⁰⁸ is now deeply concerned about the effects of "the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war" – a war he was eager to fight.¹⁰⁹ According to bin Laden, "the Americans' continuing aggression against Iraqi people" has resulted in the deaths of over "one million" children.¹¹⁰ Although few deny the destruction the U.N. sanctions have caused, the perception that the United States – "the leading advocate of maintaining the U.N. sanctions" – is entirely responsible for the suffering of the Iraqi people is "a wellspring of anti-Americanism in the Middle East."¹¹¹

Similarly, the issue of Palestine, or rather America's support for Israel with regards to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, is a grievance Osama bin Laden has exploited as "the perfect vehicle for his propaganda."¹¹² The fact that "bin Laden's statements before September 11 placed anti-Israel themes relatively low on his litany of grievances," indicates that "U.S. support for Israel" was "probably not" a cause of 9/11.¹¹³ Bin Laden, did, however, start "invoking the Palestinian cause more frequently after September 11 to rally Arab support." For example, in videotape found after 9/11, bin Laden specifically refers to the innocent Palestinian children being killed as a result of America's apathy.¹¹⁴ The fact that "many – if not most – Arabs cite American backing for the Jewish state as one of their main complaints

¹⁰⁷. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2002). 58 & 59.

¹⁰⁸. Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (U.S.A: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2002). 316.

¹⁰⁹. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2002). 59.

¹¹⁰. Gunaratna. 59.

¹¹¹. Council on Foreign Relations. "Causes of 9/11: U.N. Sanctions On Iraq." Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/iraq.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

¹¹². Michael Scott Doran. "Palestine, Iraq, and American Strategy," in *Foreign Affairs* 82 (Jan/Feb 2003): 25.

¹¹³. Council on Foreign Relations. "Causes of 9/11: U.S. Support for Israel." Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/israel-support.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

¹¹⁴. Council on Foreign Relations.

against the United States,”¹¹⁵ enabled bin Laden to spin the 9/11 attacks “as retribution for crimes committed against Palestine.”¹¹⁶ However, many scholars have pointed out that “Palestine-as-symbol works best when Palestine-as-place is burning.”¹¹⁷ In other words, Osama bin Laden relies on the escalation of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in order to rally support against the United States. The universal symbolism of Palestine, i.e., “the fact that (Palestine) represents all grievances in the Middle East against the West,” thus only serves to benefit bin Laden and his campaign of terror.¹¹⁸

2.6 Conclusion

Although Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network have been held responsible for causing the most shocking and extreme act of suicide terrorism the world has ever seen, no one, including bin Laden, has officially claimed responsibility. This, among other things, has led to competing and contradictory interpretations of whom and what caused 9/11. Recent videotaped evidence does, however, come close to a full admission by senior Al Qaeda leaders that the 19 men suspected by the FBI, were in fact guilty of perpetrating the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks. Whether all 19 men knew they were going to die is a matter that has been hotly contested. It is widely agreed, however, that at least 6 of the men knew they were going to die that Tuesday morning. Although suicide is strongly condemned in Islamic tradition, leaders of radical Islamic organisations indoctrinate their recruits to believe that there is no greater honour than becoming a martyr and defending Islam against infidels and apostates.

On September 11th 2001, Osama bin Laden hoped to rally support against the West and its Middle Eastern allies by showing Muslims that America is not invincible and that its citizens are not exempt from terror and fear. In his 1998 *fatwa*, bin Laden exploits popular political grievances in the Middle East, such as U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, U.S. support for repressive regimes, the United Nation’s economic sanctions on Iraq and U.S. support for Israel with

¹¹⁵. Council on Foreign Relations.

¹¹⁶. Michael Scott Doran. “Palestine, Iraq, and American Strategy.” in *Foreign Affairs* 82 (Jan/Feb 2003): 25.

¹¹⁷. Doran, 25.

¹¹⁸. Doran, 25.

regards to the Israeli Palestinian conflict, in order to create a mood of hatred and revenge. However, mobilisation of aggressive Muslim support requires leaders of radical Islamic groups to use religious and ideological rhetoric as justification for their acts of terror. In other words, in order to legitimate using acts of terror, radical Muslims such as bin Laden and the 9/11 hijackers justify terrorism in general, and suicide terrorism in particular, with their own militant interpretation of the Koran. Radical Islam is thus based on a misinterpretation of the Koran, which contrary to Islamic ethics of religious pluralism, advocates and seeks to provoke a clash of civilisations between Islam and the West.

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CHAPTER THREE

9/11: A ‘Clash of Civilisations’/Islam versus the West?

3.1 Introduction

Since the events of 9/11 Samuel P. Huntington’s ideas have received renewed emphasis, with scholars and laypersons alike questioning whether civilisations, and more specifically Islam and the West, are at war. The aim of this chapter is to show that the ‘clash of civilisations’ theory proposed by Huntington in 1993 and elaborated upon in his 1996 book, is not, as he and many others believe, the most “meaningful and useful lens” through which to view International Relations in the post-Cold War world.¹¹⁹ Despite the fact that Huntington’s ideas are superficially alluring, a critical analysis of his central claims regarding the differences between Islamic and Western cultural values reveals additional weaknesses in his theory, which when applied to 9/11 debunk the myth that there is a clash between Western and Islamic civilisations.

3.2 Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilisations’ Theory

a) “The Remaking of World Order”: Inter-Civilisational Conflict

Several months after Al Qaeda first attempted to blow up the World Trade Centre, the journal *Foreign Affairs* published Samuel P. Huntington’s article, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Huntington’s now-famous article was written to oppose Francis Fukuyama’s ‘one world’ theory of post-Cold War world politics.

Unlike Fukuyama, who in his 1989 article “argued that we had reached ‘the end of history’; not that historical events would stop, but that History, understood as the evolution of human societies through different forms of government, had culminated in modern liberal democracy

¹¹⁹. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1996). 14.

and market orientated capitalism,”¹²⁰ Huntington argues that “the disintegration of the cold war system,” i.e., “a stable bipolar (two superpowers) system,” allowed for “a new balance of power”¹²¹ – one that is, “for the first time in history, ... multipolar and multicivilizational.”¹²² According to Huntington, “the remaking of world order” resulted in a change of nation-state behaviour. The behaviour of nation states, which “remain the principal actors in world affairs,” is greatly influenced by the “cultural preferences, commonalities, and differences” of the world’s civilisations.¹²³ In other words, “culture is ... meaningful in the international system to the extent that it has an impact on behaviour, and in particular in the way that it embodies and defines difference.”¹²⁴

According to Huntington, world politics has entered a new phase, one in which “the next pattern of conflict ... will not primarily be ideological or primarily economic (as it was during the Cold War):”¹²⁵

“The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principle conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”¹²⁶

¹²⁰. Francis Fukuyama. “History and September 11.” ch.2 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2002). 27 & 28.

¹²¹. Timothy Dunne. “Realism.” ch.6 in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (New York: Oxford University Press. 1997). 119.

¹²². Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 21.

¹²³. Huntington. 21.

¹²⁴. Simon Murden. “Cultural Conflict In International Relations: The West and Islam.” ch.19 in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (New York: Oxford University Press. 1997). 376.

¹²⁵. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 22.

¹²⁶. Huntington. 22.

Thus, according to Huntington, “conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world.”¹²⁷ Huntington defines a civilisation as “the highest cultural grouping and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes them from other species.”¹²⁸ The post-Cold War world order will be dominated by the interactions among 7 or 8 major civilisations, which according to Huntington are as follows: “Western, Confusion, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African.”¹²⁹ The identity of different civilisations is determined by key cultural elements such as language, history, customs, traditions, institutions and, most importantly, religion. These cultural differences are basic to our civilisation identity. In other words, they are the elements that define a civilisation’s values and norms.¹³⁰ For example, “people of different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy.”¹³¹ Huntington, like many distinguished historians, holds the opinion that “these differences are the product of centuries” and thus “will not soon disappear.”¹³² Huntington’s theory predicts that conflicts in the new world order will occur as a result of these long-standing historical “differences among civilizations.”¹³³

Huntington’s civilisational paradigm assumes that one of the effects of globalisation is that the interactions between peoples belonging to different cultural entities are increasing. Consequentially, Huntington believes that “differences and animosities stretching back deep

¹²⁷. Huntington. 22.

¹²⁸. Huntington. 24.

¹²⁹. Huntington. 25.

¹³⁰. Huntington. 21 & 43.

¹³¹. Samuel P. Huntington. “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 25.

¹³². Huntington. 25.

¹³³. Huntington. 25.

into history” will be invigorated, the result of which will be prolonged and violent conflicts.¹³⁴ In sum, Huntington’s theory is based on the assumption that as a result of their differing cultural heritages, people, or groups of people from different civilisations, are much more likely to conflict with each other, than people, or groups of people, from the same civilisation. Thus, according to Huntington, the divisive and unifying force of culture shapes and defines the nature of conflict in the post-Cold War world.¹³⁵ For example, during situations of war, “groups and states belonging to one civilization (will) naturally try to rally support from other members of their own civilization.”¹³⁶ Huntington uses the cases of the Gulf War, the former Yugoslavia and Bosnia as evidence of civilisational rallying or “‘kin-country’ syndrome.”¹³⁷

Despite the fact that the Gulf War saw one Arab state invading another, with “only a few Muslim governments overtly support(ing) Saddam Hussein,” Huntington believes that civilisational rallying was evident because “many Arab elites privately cheered (Hussein) on.”¹³⁸ Additionally, Huntington is of the opinion that most of the general Arab population, together with the entire Islamic resurgence movement, rallied against the Western coalition and supported Saddam Hussein.¹³⁹ The fact that radical Islamic groups branded Hussein a secular apostate is completely overlooked by Huntington, who also seems unaware that Osama bin Laden initially offered his own services in the defense of Saudi Arabia against Iraq.¹⁴⁰

Huntington’s most often referred to example of civilisational rallying, the Bosnian conflict, also does not support his thesis of a clash of civilisations. Although “the breakup of the

¹³⁴. Huntington. 25 & 26.

¹³⁵. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 28.

¹³⁶. Samuel P. Huntington. “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 35.

¹³⁷. Huntington. 35.

¹³⁸. Huntington. 35.

¹³⁹. Huntington. 35.

¹⁴⁰. Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (U.S.A.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University. 2002). 316.

former Yugoslavia pitted Muslim Turks, Slavic Serbian Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholic Croats against one another, ... little else about this tragic conflict conforms to Huntington's expectations."¹⁴¹ Huntington explains "the continuation and intensification of the fighting among Croats, Muslims and Serbs in the former Yugoslavia," entirely in terms of inter-civilisational, or more specifically, inter-religious, conflict.¹⁴² Besides there being three different civilisations, or more specifically, three different religions, involved in the Bosnian conflict, Huntington fails to acknowledge any other factors that could have explained the vicious eruption of violence in the Balkans.¹⁴³ Although religion played a vital role in the conflict, it was the way in which religious sensibilities were exploited and manipulated for political gain that defined the true nature of any civilisational rallying. The genocidal campaign against the Bosnian Muslims was not, as Huntington argues, the inevitable product of "ancient hatreds," which were released with the end of the Cold War. "To the contrary, history shows that patterns of religious interaction in the region were often humane and benevolent to all kinds."¹⁴⁴

(b) Islam versus the West: Ancient Civilisations at War

Contrary to Huntington's repeated assertions that "for the first time in history, global politics has become multipolar and multicivilizational,"¹⁴⁵ his theory is rigidly focused on "the West and the rest" map of the world,¹⁴⁶ but more particularly on a world that is supposed to be

¹⁴¹. David Skidmore. "Huntington's Clash Revisited." in *Journal of World-Systems Research* 4 (Fall 1998): 185.

¹⁴². Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 38 & 127.

¹⁴³. Huntington. 126 & 127.

¹⁴⁴. R. Scott Appleby. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (U.S.A.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Inc., 2000). 64-71.

¹⁴⁵. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 21.

¹⁴⁶. Huntington. 33.

historically divided “between Western Christianity, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam, on the other.”¹⁴⁷

Huntington’s theory of post-Cold War world politics is based on the assumption that “the fault lines between civilizations are ... the flash points for crisis and bloodshed.”¹⁴⁸ Huntington believes that the most significant cultural fault line is the one that runs through the Balkans - this line historically coincided with the boundary between the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires. According to Huntington’s approximations:¹⁴⁹

“The peoples to the north and west of this line are Protestant or Catholic; they shared the common experience of European history – feudalism, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution; they are generally economically better off than the people to the east; and they may look forward to increasing involvement in a common European economy and to the consolidation of democratic political systems.”

“The peoples to the east and south of this line are Orthodox or Muslim; they historically belonged to the Ottoman or Tsarist empires and were only lightly touched by the shaping events in the rest of Europe; they are less advanced economically; they seem much less likely to develop stable democratic political systems.”¹⁵⁰

Like many other scholars, Huntington assumes that “the most dangerous cultural conflicts” are the ones that occur along “the line separating Western Christianity, on the one hand, from Muslim and Orthodox peoples on the other.”¹⁵¹ Besides for the events that took place in the

¹⁴⁷. Samuel P. Huntington. “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 29 & 30.

¹⁴⁸. Huntington, 29.

¹⁴⁹. Huntington, 30.

¹⁵⁰. Huntington, 30 & 31.

¹⁵¹. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. “Islam & the West: Testing the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis” (5 June 2002). 2. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksq/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

former Yugoslavia, Huntington claims that centuries of “conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations” are proof that there is a clash between Islam and the West.¹⁵² Huntington ‘borrowed’ much of his ‘clash’ thesis from one of the West’s foremost historians of Islam, Bernard Lewis. Lewis first coined the notion of “a clash of civilizations” in his controversial article “The Roots of Muslim Rage.”¹⁵³ Much like his other writings on Western-Islamic relations, this article - published in *The Atlantic Monthly* three years before Huntington made his biggest debut – claims that the current struggle between Western and Islamic civilisations can be traced back to the advent of Islam in the seventh century.¹⁵⁴ Huntington believes that “this centuries-old military interaction between the West and Islam is unlikely to decline.”¹⁵⁵ In fact, at the time his *Foreign Affairs* article was published, Huntington predicted that the ‘clash’ would violently accelerate into the future.¹⁵⁶

3.3 The Causes of the ‘Clash’ between Islam and the West: A Critical Analysis

a) The Similarities between Islam and Western Christianity

According to Huntington, the causes of the ongoing pattern of conflict between the West and Islam flow from the nature of the Christian and Islamic religions and the civilizations based on them. Huntington acknowledges that centuries of conflict can be partly attributed to the similarities between Christianity and Islam.¹⁵⁷ As Bernard Lewis points out, both religions are monotheistic, i.e., they both adhere to the doctrine or belief that there is only one God and that they are the sole possessors of the true interpretation of God’s word.¹⁵⁸ Unlike polytheistic

¹⁵². Samuel P. Huntington. “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 31 & 32.

¹⁵³. Bernard Lewis. “The Roots of Muslim Rage. in *The Atlantic Monthly* 266 (September 1990): 60.

¹⁵⁴. Bernard Lewis. “The Revolt of Islam.” in *The New Yorker* (19 November 2001). Available: http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/?011119fa_FACT2 accessed on 23/10/03.

¹⁵⁵. Samuel P. Huntington. “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 31 & 32.

¹⁵⁶. Huntington. 32.

¹⁵⁷. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996), 210.

¹⁵⁸. Bernard Lewis. *Islam and the West* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1993), 5.

religions, monotheistic religions are inherently inclined to “see the world in dualistic, us-and-them terms.”¹⁵⁹ In addition, their universalistic nature requires their adherents to proselytise God’s message through the creation of world religions.¹⁶⁰ Thus, from their inception, both Christianity and Islam often “expanded by conquest,”¹⁶¹ describing each other as infidels that “had to be resisted and overcome.”¹⁶² Throughout the centuries Christians and Muslims have, at one time or another, perceived each other as a threat to the existence and proliferation of their religions. This perception, as well as a number of other factors, determined the nature of centuries of conflict between Western and Islamic civilisations.¹⁶³ Huntington thus rejects the idea that Christians and Muslims could form a multicultural society based on peace and respect.¹⁶⁴ Instead, he focuses entirely on those factors that can be viewed as a source of divergence between Western and Islamic civilisations.¹⁶⁵

b) Differences between the West and Islam

i) Democracy and Secularism versus Anti-Democracy and the Non-Separation of Religion and Politics

According to Huntington, there are 2 key differences between Islamic and Western cultures. The first, which will be discussed in this section, is that the West is characterised by representative democracies and the Middle East is not. According to Huntington, as well as the other scholars who share his views, this difference is directly linked to the West’s

¹⁵⁹. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996), 210 & 211.

¹⁶⁰. Bernard Lewis. *Islam and the West* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1993), 5.

¹⁶¹. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996), 211.

¹⁶². Bernard Lewis. *Islam and the West* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1993), 7.

¹⁶³. Lewis, 8.

¹⁶⁴. Benjamin R. Barber. “Fantasy of Fear: Huntington and the West versus the Rest.” in *Harvard International Review* 20 (Winter 97). Available: <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=26193&db=aph> accessed on 15/10/03.

¹⁶⁵. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996), 210 & 211.

separation of church and state (secularism) and the Muslim world's non-separation of religion and politics.

Huntington's 'clash' thesis argues that "there are sharp cultural differences between the core political values common in societies sharing a Western Christian heritage ... and the beliefs common in the rest of the world, especially Islamic societies."¹⁶⁶ Although Huntington is correct in assuming that "contemporary values in different societies are path-dependent, reflecting long-standing legacies associated with core civilizations" is correct,¹⁶⁷ his argument is biased towards the Euro-centric claim that "the strongest distinguishing characteristic of Western culture, the aspect which demarcates Western Christianity most clearly from the Muslim and Orthodox worlds, concerns the values associated with representative democracy."¹⁶⁸ According to Huntington:

"The Muslim world lacks the core political values that gave birth to representative democracy in Western civilization: separation of religious and secular authority, rule of law and social pluralism, parliamentary institutions of representative government, and protection of individual rights and civil liberties as the buffer between citizens and the power of the state."¹⁶⁹

Huntington's attack on the Islamic world "seems all too plausible given the failure of electoral democracy to take root throughout the Middle East and North Africa."¹⁷⁰ However, the fact that Freedom House categorises "none of the core Arabic-speaking societies" as electoral democracies, with "only one fourth ... among the 47 countries with a Muslim majority"

¹⁶⁶. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 3. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁶⁷. Norris and Inglehart. 3.

¹⁶⁸. Norris and Inglehart. 3 & 4.

¹⁶⁹. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. "The True Clash of Civilizations." in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2003): 63.

¹⁷⁰. Inglehart and Norris. 63 & 64.

falling into this category, does not prove Huntington's pessimism about the Muslim world correct. The fact that most Muslim majority countries can not be classified as electoral democracies does not mean that Muslim people or the Islamic religion are unsupportive of democratic values and ideals.¹⁷¹ In fact, when Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart tested Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis against empirical evidence from the 1995-2001 waves of the World Values Survey, they discovered that there are "striking similarities in the political values" held in the West and Islamic worlds.¹⁷²

The World Values Survey reveals that, "at this point in history, societies throughout the world (Muslim and Judeo-Christian alike) see democracy as the best form of government."¹⁷³ However, the fact that "the people of the Muslim world overwhelmingly want democracy," does not mean democracy is sustainable in their societies.¹⁷⁴ Unlike Huntington, who believes that there is something about the religious culture of Islam and Islamic people that prevents democratic political models succeeding in the Muslim world,¹⁷⁵ Norris and Inglehart consider the influence of factors such as levels of per capita income and education on the sustainability of democracy in Middle Eastern societies.¹⁷⁶ Thus, to avoid being drawn into an argument about Islam's necessary incompatibility with democracy, one must first consider that most Muslim majority states face a wide range of social and political barriers to democracy.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹. Inglehart and Norris. 64.

¹⁷². Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 1. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁷³. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. "The True Clash of Civilizations." in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2003): 64.

¹⁷⁴. Inglehart and Norris. 65.

¹⁷⁵. Inglehart and Norris. 63.

¹⁷⁶. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 8 & 9. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁷⁷. Fred Halliday. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (London: I. B. Tauris. 1995). 116.

Critics such as John Esposito condemn the view that “Islam is inherently antidemocratic and intolerant or that at best, it is ‘not hospitable to democracy.’”¹⁷⁸ Esposito states that this assumption is an “easy excuse” for the West to keep looking the other way and continue supporting autocratic Middle Eastern regimes.¹⁷⁹ According to Esposito, Huntington fails to acknowledge the role authoritarian leaders play in preventing democratic reforms in the Middle East. In addition, Huntington does not recognise the ways in which the West has blocked democratisation and development in order to further its own strategic interests in the oil rich region.¹⁸⁰

Instead, Huntington chooses to believe that “the failure of electoral democracy to take root in most states in the Middle East and North Africa” is a result of a Muslim preference for “strong leadership and rule by traditional religious authorities.”¹⁸¹ Although evidence from the World Values Survey revealed that “many more Muslims than Westerners supported the idea of religious authorities, there was widespread agreement with this idea in many other parts of the world including Sub-Saharan Africa and Catholic Latin America.”¹⁸² Thus, the non-separation of religious and political authority is “by no means specific to Islam.”¹⁸³ In fact, despite the West’s stance that public institutions should be secular, the World Values Survey reported that two fifths of the Americans surveyed believe that “politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office.”¹⁸⁴ According to Norris and Inglehart, findings from the World Values Survey reveal that despite “a strong societal role by religious authorities”

¹⁷⁸. John L. Esposito. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1992). 214.

¹⁷⁹. Esposito. 191.

¹⁸⁰. Esposito. 215.

¹⁸¹. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. “Islam & the West: Testing the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis” (5 June 2002). 4. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁸². Norris and Inglehart. 11.

¹⁸³. Fred Halliday. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (London: I. B. Tauris. 1995). 117.

¹⁸⁴. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. “The True Clash of Civilizations.” in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2003): 66 & 67.

proving far more favourable in Islamic societies than in the West,¹⁸⁵ “most of the Muslim countries surveyed (with the exception of Pakistan) think highly of democracy.”¹⁸⁶ In fact, “contrary to Huntington’s thesis, compared with Western societies, support for democracy was marginally *slightly stronger* (not weaker) among those living in Islamic societies.”¹⁸⁷ This information effectively challenges the commonly held assumption that a non-separation of religion and politics is incompatible with the values and principles of democracy.

However, in spite of this evidence, many scholars continue to advance the view that support for democratic ideals is unique to the West. Huntington’s prediction that “democratic values will be most deeply and widely entrenched in Western societies” is based on the belief that “the political values of democracy originated in the West with the separation of church and state.”¹⁸⁸ According to Lewis, it is widely acknowledged that the origins of secularism, i.e., “the idea that religion and political authority, church and state are different, and can or should be separated,” are Christian.¹⁸⁹ Although there is a general consensus that the idea of secularism dates back to the New Testament, “in which Christ is quoted as saying, ‘render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s,’”¹⁹⁰ scholars, particularly non-Western ones, are quick to point out that the “legal

¹⁸⁵. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. “Islam & the West: Testing the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis” (5 June 2002). 15. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁸⁶. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. “The True Clash of Civilizations.” in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2003): 66. The 1995-2001 waves of the World Values Survey “includes nine societies with a Muslim majority (ranging from 71 to 96 percent), including Jordan, Pakistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh and Albania, Morocco, Iran and Egypt.” See Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. “Islam & the West: Testing the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis” (5 June 2002). 8. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

¹⁸⁷. Norris and Inglehart. 11.

¹⁸⁸. Norris and Inglehart. 6.

¹⁸⁹. Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam And Modernity In The Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002). 96.

¹⁹⁰. Lewis. 97.

separation of church and state”¹⁹¹ is a “modern Western, post-Enlightenment” construct.”¹⁹² In other words, “the modern notions of religion as a system of belief for personal life” ... “is relatively new.”¹⁹³ Historically, “all the world’s religions ... were fairly comprehensive ways of living.”¹⁹⁴ Mohammed Arkoun agrees that “any effort to contrast from their moments of origin a Christianity that distinguishes between” the realms of “political power” and “spiritual authority,” and “an Islam that mixes them would be hasty, superficial, and unacceptable because it would not take account of ... historical conditions.”¹⁹⁵

Thus, in order to understand the current differences between Islam and Christianity with regards to the separation of church and state, one must be aware of the historical context in which that religion emerged. The famous dictum, i.e., “render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s,”¹⁹⁶ can only be understood “if we recall that Palestine in the time of Christ was under Roman authority.”¹⁹⁷ Due to the fact that “the political order was linked to the Roman Empire, ... the religious establishment could take no political initiative without referring to Rome. In this context, the only means for a man of religion to affirm any authority whatsoever was to remain entirely within spiritual and religious planes.”¹⁹⁸ Thus, the words of Jesus laid claim to a distinctive Christian

¹⁹¹. Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press. 1994). 18.

¹⁹². John L. Esposito. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1992). 231.

¹⁹³. Esposito. 231.

¹⁹⁴. Esposito. 230.

¹⁹⁵. Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press. 1994). 18 & 19.

¹⁹⁶. Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam And Modernity In The Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2002). 97.

¹⁹⁷. Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press. 1994). 18.

¹⁹⁸. Arkoun. 18.

institution – the church. Like the state, the church had, and continues to have, “its own laws and jurisdictions, its own hierarchy and chain of authority.”¹⁹⁹

It is well documented that “the political and religious situation of Arabia at the beginning of the seventh century differed in essential ways from that of Palestine in the time of Jesus.”²⁰⁰ The world into which the Prophet Muhammad was born was characterised as being a chaotic desert wasteland,²⁰¹ in which competing tribal loyalties divided and weakened the pre-Islamic Arabia.²⁰² On the night of the 17 Ramadan in 610 CE, Muhammad received his first revelation from God. However, “it was only in 612 that Muhammad felt empowered to preach and gradually gained converts,” many of whom came from the poorer clans in Mecca.²⁰³ According to Karen Armstrong, one of the world’s leading authorities on Islam, Muhammad, similarly to Jesus, “insisted it was wrong “to build a private fortune, but good to share wealth and create a society where the weak and vulnerable were treated with respect.”²⁰⁴ Muhammad warned his tribe, the Quraysh, which was also the leading tribe of Mecca, that if they “did not mend their ways, their society would collapse ... because they were violating the fundamental laws of existence.”²⁰⁵ As such, the core teaching of the new scripture, the Koran, was “the demand that human beings behave to one another with justice, equity and compassion.”²⁰⁶

This teaching of social justice, which insisted upon the implementation of democratic rights, was confronted with “open persecution.” The reigning Meccan leaders vowed to exterminate

¹⁹⁹. Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam And Modernity In The Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2002). 98.

²⁰⁰. Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press, 1994). 20.

²⁰¹. Huston Smith. *The World's Religions* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991). 223.

²⁰². Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press, 1994). 20.

²⁰³. Karen Armstrong. *Islam: A Short History* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001). 3 & 4.

²⁰⁴. Armstrong. 4.

²⁰⁵. Armstrong. 4.

²⁰⁶. Armstrong. 4 & 5.

the man who threatened their position of power and privilege.²⁰⁷ So in the year 622 C E, the Prophet Muhammad and his followers made their migration (*hijra*) to Yathrib, “later renamed al Madina, the City of the Prophet.”²⁰⁸ “From the moment of his arrival at Medina, Muhammad assumed a different role. From prophecy he was pressed into administration. ... The prophet was (thus) transformed into a statesman,”²⁰⁹ and at the same time “Islam became institutionalized as a state.”²¹⁰ Hence, the city of Medina came to represent the ideal Islamic state,²¹¹ in which “all aspects of human life,” public and private, were regulated according to *Shari‘a* law. Unlike Western civilisation, which draws a distinction “between canon law and civil law, between the law of the church and the law of the state,” i.e., the separation of religion and politics, Muslims are governed by “a single law” that is accepted as being of divine origin.²¹²

ii) Islam: An Inherently Violent Religion

In his article, “The Roots of Muslim Rage,” Bernard Lewis implies that the non-separation of religion and politics is much to blame for the current “mood of hatred and violence” directed against the West.²¹³ The rise of Islamic fundamentalist movements in the late 1970s was in large part a defensive reaction against the process and consequences of secularisation.²¹⁴ Fundamentalist movements of all faiths express an innate fear that secular establishments are

²⁰⁷. Huston Smith. *The World's Religions* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco. 1991). 227 & 228.

²⁰⁸. Malise Ruthven. *Islam: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1997). 37.

²⁰⁹. Huston Smith. *The World's Religions* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco. 1991). 229.

²¹⁰. Mohammed Arkoun. *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (U.S.A.: Westview Press. 1994). 20.

²¹¹. Karen Armstrong. *Islam: A Short History* (London: Phoenix Press. 2001). 12.

²¹². Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam And Modernity In The Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 2002). 100.

²¹³. Bernard Lewis. “The Roots of Muslim Rage, in *The Atlantic Monthly* 266 (September 1990): 48.

²¹⁴. Gabriel A. Almond. Emmanuel Sivan. R. Scott Appleby. “Fundamentalism: Genus and Species.” ch.16 in *Fundamentalism Comprehended*, eds. M. E. Marty and R.S. Appleby (U.S.A.: University of Chicago Press. 1995). 405.

“determined to wipe religion out.”²¹⁵ In order “to wrest religion out of its marginal position and back to center stage a “small minority of fundamentalists” commit acts of shocking and extreme violence.²¹⁶ Fundamentalists who use terror in their struggle to halt the modern trend towards secularism are generally referred to as radical fundamentalists.²¹⁷ Radical Islamic fundamentalists such as Osama bin Laden and the 9/11 hijackers espouse a militant “ideology that provides ‘the faithful’ with a plan of action” designed to undermine the values and principles of democracy.²¹⁸

Thus, it is the argument of this thesis that unlike the majority of Muslims who support democracy,²¹⁹ radical Islamic fundamentalists are determined to provoke a clash between Western and Islamic civilisations by claiming to represent the religious and political grievances of all Muslims.²²⁰ Huntington, however, disagrees with this line of reasoning and states that “the underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism,” or in this case radical Islamic fundamentalism, but Islam – “a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power.”²²¹

According to Huntington, the entire Islamic civilisation is a threat to the West. Contrary to evidence provided by the World Values Survey, Huntington claims that “it is hard to find any Muslims ... praising Western values and institutions” – this being just one example of how he

²¹⁵. Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 141.

²¹⁶. Armstrong, see first page of introduction & x.

²¹⁷. Emmanuel Sivan, “The Clash within Islam,” in *Survival* 45 (Spring 2003): 25.

²¹⁸. Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), see first page of introduction & xi.

²¹⁹. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “The True Clash of Civilizations,” in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2003): 66.

²²⁰. Refer to chapter two for more information on political grievances in the Middle East region.

²²¹. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 217.

continuously lumps all Muslims together as being instinctively anti-Western.²²² Huntington links any Islamic criticism of the West, regardless of whether it may be constructive, to intolerant behaviour that will naturally lead to violence, although his own criticism of the West's arrogance with regards to uniting the world through 'universal' values, will of course not.²²³ In addition, Huntington goes to great lengths to explain that unlike Western people, whose violence is at least restrained in times of war, Muslims have a much higher propensity toward violent conflict. For example, between 1928 and 1979, the United Kingdom and the United States resolved more than 80 percent of their international crises using rational and non-violent means. Muslim states, on the other hand, resorted to "high-intensity violence" in over half of the crises in which they were involved.²²⁴ Huntington states that although his evidence is based on the results of "a casual survey of inter-civilizational conflicts," he feels confident to make profound judgments such as "Muslim bellicosity and violence are late-twentieth-century facts which neither Muslims nor non-Muslims can deny."²²⁵

According to Huntington, the 'fact' that "Muslims are involved in far more inter-group violence than people of other civilizations," is particularly disturbing if one considers the Christian trend away from violent conflict.²²⁶ In order to understand why "Islam's borders *are* bloody,"²²⁷ Huntington provides a list of causes, which he believes explain the historical and the contemporary Muslim propensity toward group violence.²²⁸ Like many Western scholars, Huntington relies on stereotypical arguments that portray Islam as a religion that encourages

²²². Huntington. 213.

²²³. Robert Kaplan. "Looking the World in the Eye." in *The Atlantic Online* (December 2001). 19 & 20. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2001/12/kaplan.htm> accessed on 23/10/2003.

²²⁴. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 258.

²²⁵. Huntington. 258.

²²⁶. Huntington's statement that "in the past Christians killed fellow Christians and other people in massive numbers" is laughable when one considers the fatalities engendered in America's 'war on terrorism.' See Huntington. 262.

²²⁷. Huntington seems genuinely shocked that this statement attracted such "critical comment." See Huntington. 258.

²²⁸. Huntington. 262 & 263.

violence. The fact that the Prophet Muhammad was “a hard fighter and a skilful military commander” is, more often than not, associated with Islam being a religion that “glorifies military virtues.”²²⁹

However, as previously discussed, an understanding of the historical conditions in which Islam emerged, reveals that Muhammad had no other option but to defend the Islamic community against “the threat of total extinction.”²³⁰ Disregarding countless passages in the Koran that advocate peace and compassion,²³¹ Huntington joins the bandwagon that maintains the belief that “the doctrines of Islam ... dictate war against unbelievers.”²³² This commonly held assumption leads Huntington to the conclusion that Muslims suffer from a unique disposition – ‘indigestibility.’ According to Huntington, “the ‘indigestibility’ of Muslims” explains their inability to tolerate “living in close physical proximity” to non-Muslim groups.²³³ Huntington states that this characteristic, as well as the other ‘cultural differences’ mentioned above, provides sufficient cause for conflict between Islamic and Western civilisations.²³⁴

²²⁹. Huntington. 263.

²³⁰. Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001), 17.

²³¹. For example, Surahs 30 and 49 state that “God made people into different tribes and nations speaking different languages and living in different cultures: All these are signs of God’s universal compassion and we must learn to appreciate each other.” See Akbar S. Ahmed, *Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World* (United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003), 4. Another famous example is the revelation God made when he declared: “There is no compulsion in religion (Surah 2: Verse 256).” See Ahmed, 4.

²³². Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 263.

²³³. Huntington, 263 & 264.

²³⁴. A sufficient cause is defined as a cause “that can produce an effect unaided.” See “The Cause-Effect Essay.” Available: http://www.howard.k12.md.us.mth/english_dept/adv-comp/eng_effect.html accessed on 01/12/03.

3.4 September 11th and the Applicability of the ‘Clash’ Thesis

a) The Significance of Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilisations’ Theory and How it Applies to 9/11

Contrary to the Realist assumption that “all ... non-state actors in world politics are of lesser significance” than the state,²³⁵ the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks were acts of war perpetrated by 19 “poorly armed” men.²³⁶ These men were not acting on behalf of their countries of origin. Instead, they claimed that they were representatives of Islam. In his speeches, bin Laden claims to speak on behalf of all Muslims and openly seeks to provoke a clash of civilisations between Islam and the West. For example, in October 2001, Bin Laden stated, “this battle is not between Al Qaeda and the U.S. ... This is a battle of Muslims against the global crusaders.”²³⁷

The September 11th attacks, as well as statements made by Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda members, “prompted a blizzard of speculation in the media on the nature and scale of the ‘Islamic threat.’”²³⁸ Despite President George W. Bush’s repeated declarations that praised Islam as “a religion of peace,”²³⁹ the rhetoric associated with Huntington’s ‘clash’ thesis remained “thick in the air.”²⁴⁰ For example, politicians such as Silvio Berlusconi, who “reasserted the view that the underlying problem for the West is not terrorism or even Islamic fundamentalism but Islam, i.e., a rival and inferior civilization,” mimicked the broad generalisations for which Huntington is famous.²⁴¹ Huntington is responsible for perpetuating

²³⁵. Timothy Dunne. “Realism.” ch.6 in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (New York: Oxford University Press. 1997). 118.

²³⁶. Stanley Hoffman. “Clash of Globalizations.” in *Foreign Affairs* 81 (July/August): 104.

²³⁷. Council on Foreign Relations. “Causes of 9/11: A Clash of Civilizations?” Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/clash.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

²³⁸. Robert W. Hefner. “September 11 and the Struggle for Islam.” Available: <http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/hefner.htm> accessed on 23/10/03.

²³⁹. Russell A. Berman. “September 11.” in *Telos* 120 (Summer 2001): 169.

²⁴⁰. Tariq Modood. “Muslims in the West: A Positive Asset.” Available: <http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/modood.htm> accessed on 23/10/03.

²⁴¹. Madood.

an Orientalist discourse that has, since “the late eighteenth century,” constructed an Islam that “has always signified danger and threat” to the West.²⁴²

The fact that many Muslims strongly oppose U.S foreign policy in the Middle East does not mean, as Huntington suggests, that “the great majority of Muslims” support the use of violence against the West.²⁴³ As noted in chapter two, bin Laden exploits politically contentious issues such as Palestine in order to rally support for his acts of terror - all of which are justified in accordance with his own radical interpretation of Islam. It is bin Laden’s interpretation of Islam, and not the Islamic civilisation, which is a threat to the West, as well as all those who support the values and principles of democracy, which according to evidence from the 1995-2001 waves of the World Values Survey is the majority of Muslims.

Similarly, “Western leaders seeking to build a coalition against the followers of Osama bin Laden, took pains to distance themselves from the clash of civilizations thesis, stressing deep divisions within the Islamic world between the extreme fundamentalists and moderate Muslims.”²⁴⁴ Most importantly, leaders across the world emphasised that “the events of September 11 arose from the extreme ideological beliefs held by ... Al Qaeda and Taliban fundamentalists, not mainstream Muslim public opinion.”²⁴⁵ The fact that radical Islamic fundamentalists are “fighting their own governments,”²⁴⁶ particularly those allied with the

²⁴². Edward W. Said. *Orientalism* (London: the Penguin Group. 1978). 3 & 26.

²⁴³. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 217.

²⁴⁴. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. “Islam & the West: Testing the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Thesis” (5 June 2002). 5. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

²⁴⁵. Norris and Inglehart. 5.

²⁴⁶. Amitav Acharya. “State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11.” ch.17 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2002). 196.

U.S., e.g., Saudi Arabia and Egypt, shows that 9/11 cannot be defined as a clash of civilisations.²⁴⁷

b) The Reactions to September 11th were Not Reflective of the ‘Kin-Country’ Syndrome

It is thus the argument of this thesis that the suicide terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11th 2001, as well as the reactions to them, disprove ‘the clash of civilisations’ theory, which is to a large extent based on the notion of ‘kin-country’ syndrome. According to Huntington, in post-Cold War world, “the principal basis for cooperation and coalitions” is “civilizational rallying.”²⁴⁸ For example, earlier in the chapter, Huntington is quoted as saying that “groups or states belonging to one civilization that become involved in war with people from a different civilization naturally try to rally support from members of their own civilization.”²⁴⁹

In an interview with Ben Wattenberg, Huntington states that the reactions to 9/11 were “very much along civilizational lines.”²⁵⁰ Huntington believes that the evidence to support this claim is that “following September eleventh, ... the countries that are closest to us culturally – Britain, Canada, Australia – immediately came forward, sent military forces to work with ours. The reaction in Europe ... was again enthusiastic sympathy and expressions of support.”²⁵¹ Huntington states that unlike the Western civilisation’s reaction, the response from the Muslim world was “very ambivalent.”²⁵²

²⁴⁷. It is not a coincidence that the 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia and Egypt. See Peter L. Berger, *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 203 & 228.

²⁴⁸. Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 35.

²⁴⁹. Huntington, 35.

²⁵⁰. Ben Wattenberg, “When Cultures Collide” (24 January 2002), 2. Available: <http://www.pbs.org/thinktank/transcript984.html> accessed on 23/10/03.

²⁵¹. Wattenberg, 2.

²⁵². Wattenberg, 2.

Contrary to Huntington's analysis of the reactions to 9/11, evidence "from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, from Iran to Indonesia," showed that "Islamic nations distanced themselves from the theology of Osama bin Laden."²⁵³ Muslim religious leaders "roundly condemned the acts of 9.11.01,"²⁵⁴ denouncing bin Laden and his politics as un-Islamic.²⁵⁵ In addition, most Muslim-majority states, including the devout Muslim nation of Pakistan, which was "among the first to offer military facilities to the U.S.," responded to 9/11 by "offering the U.S. "material and logistical assistance."²⁵⁶ So, in responding to September 11th, governments in the Middle East and Asia had the same reactions as those in the Western world – "they overwhelmingly sided with Washington."²⁵⁷ One can therefore conclude that contrary to Huntington's culturally deterministic theory, "states acted more as states than as civilizations."²⁵⁸

3.5 A Final Critique

a) Islam is Not an Anti-Democratic and Violent Monolithic Entity

Most of the criticisms levelled against Huntington after the September 11th suicide attacks were the same weaknesses that have plagued his theory since its inception in 1993. While the events of 9/11 – all committed 'in the name of Islam' – seem to accentuate and reinforce cultural stereotypes that present Islam as anti-democratic and inherently violent, it has been shown throughout this chapter that Islam is not incompatible with the values of peace and democracy. In addition, the fact that authoritarian governments dominate the Middle East is

²⁵³. Amitav Acharya. "State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11." ch.17 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). 194 & 195.

²⁵⁴. Tim Luke. "On 9.11.01." in *Telos* 120 (Summer 2001): 131.

²⁵⁵. Akbar S. Ahmed. *Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World* (United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003). 29.

²⁵⁶. Amitav Acharya. "State-Society Relations: Asian and World Order after September 11." ch.17 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). 195.

²⁵⁷. Acharya, 195.

²⁵⁸. Acharya, 195.

not, according to Norris and Inglehart, as well as others such as Kabuli, Esposito, Voll, Shadid and Said, a reflection of Islam's core values and teachings.²⁵⁹ However, Huntington, as well as anyone who promotes the 'clash' thesis, obscures a complex reality by portraying the idea that all Muslim people belong to a threatening and unified bloc.

Thus, the criticism most often attributed to Huntington is the way in which he lumps all Muslims together, overstating the coherence of the 'Islamic civilisation'²⁶⁰ – a concept that has been widely criticised for failing to consider the various aspects of a Muslim person's identity.²⁶¹ Huntington's critics challenge "the notion of a single Islamic culture, pointing to substantial contrasts found among one billion people living in diverse Islamic nations."²⁶² Robert Kaplan states, "because Huntington's brush is broad, his specifics are vulnerable to attack."²⁶³ Jonathan Fox concurs by noting that for the most part, "Huntington's list and description of civilization is ... not nearly specific enough for use in categorizing groups."²⁶⁴ For example, one of Huntington's fiercest critics, Fouad Ajami, explains that "the Islamic world is not even remotely monolithic: that in Iran the birthplace of Islamic revolution, many young people are in earnest rebellion against fundamentalist critics; that Saddam Hussein came to dictatorial power as an avowed secularist and waged war for a decade against Iran;

²⁵⁹. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 4. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04. Also see John L. Esposito. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press. 1992). 214-221.

²⁶⁰. Benjamin R. Barber. "Fantasy of Fear: Huntington and the West versus the Rest." in *Harvard International Review* 20 (Winter 97). Available: <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=26193&db=aph> accessed on 15/10/03.

²⁶¹. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 4. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

²⁶². Norris and Inglehart. 4.

²⁶³. Robert D. Kaplan. "The Coming Anarchy." in *The Atlantic Online* (February 1994). 15. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/foreign/anarchy.htm> accessed on 23/10/02.

²⁶⁴. Jonathan Fox. "Ethnic Minorities and the Clash of Civilizations: A Quantitative Analysis of Huntington's Thesis." in *British Journal of Political Science* 32 (July 2002): 422.

that leaders in Egypt and Jordan found a way to sign a peace treaty with Israel; that in places as various as Egypt and Turkey modernity and secularism ... have proved resilient against profound challenge - in short, that 'the world of Islam divides and sub-divides.'²⁶⁵ Huntington denies portraying all Muslim people as a single monolithic entity.²⁶⁶ However, his denial is made redundant by his assumption that the great majority of Muslims are not moderate; instead they are violent people, especially in comparison to the people of other civilisations.²⁶⁷ Thus, Huntington makes no distinction between "Muslims who are radical or moderate, traditional or modern, conservative or liberal, hard-line or revisionist."²⁶⁸

3.6 Conclusion

The conclusion of this chapter is that the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks cannot be defined as being part of some sort of general 'clash of civilisations.' More specifically, the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were not caused by long-standing cultural differences between the West and Islam. In fact, many scholars have challenged the assumption that Western and Islamic values are, as Huntington suggests, diametrically opposed to one another. Evidence from the 1995-2001 waves of the World Values Survey shows that although the West is characterised by secular democratic institutions and Islamic countries advocate a non-separation of religion and politics, the majority of Muslim people strongly support the values and principles of democracy. Huntington's 'clash' thesis is completely flawed because it does not differentiate between the actions perpetrated by the 9/11 hijackers, who interpret Islam in a radically militant manner, and the rest of the Muslim population, who, regardless of their

²⁶⁵. Hendrik Hertberg and David Remnick. "The Trap." in *The New Yorker* (24 September 2001). Available: http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/?011001ta_talk_comment accessed on 23/10/03.

²⁶⁶. Michael Steinberger. "Interview: So, are civilisations at war?" (21 October 2001). 2. Available: <http://www.observer.guardian.co.uk/islam/story/o.1442.577982.00.html> accessed on 23/10/03.

²⁶⁷. Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1996). 217, 256 & 258. Also see Michael Steinberger. "Interview: So, are civilisations at war?" (21 October 2001). 1. Available: <http://www.observer.guardian.co.uk/islam/story/o.1442.577982.00.html> accessed on 23/10/03.

²⁶⁸. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. "Islam & the West: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis" (5 June 2002). 4. Available: <http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris.shorenstein.ksg/Acrobat/clash%20of%20Civilization.pdf> accessed on 30/03/04.

opposition to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, do not commit acts of terrorism in the name of their religion.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Most Probable Cause of the 9/11 Suicide Terrorist Attacks

4.1 Introduction

It has been established that the September 11th suicide terrorist attacks were not evidence of a ‘clash’ between the Muslim world and the West, that the 9/11 hijackers were “not representative of Islam.”²⁶⁹ Despite this fact, the 9/11 hijackers do represent a part of Islam – “a radical, fundamentalist part,”²⁷⁰ with most scholars supporting the view that the motives behind the September 11th attacks were only religious in the sense that they expressed “a radical, politicized form” of the Islamic religion.²⁷¹

The aim of this chapter is to show how radical Islamic fundamentalism arose in response to the crisis Islam is confronted with in the twenty-first century, and how this defensive reaction against Western modernity and secularism has resulted in a small minority of radically militant Muslims – it is the values these radical Muslims hold that present the most probable cause of 9/11. In addition, in an attempt to mobilise support, radical Islamic fundamentalists such as Osama bin Laden use religious and ideological rhetoric, which is based on a misinterpretation of the Koran, to justify acts of suicide terrorism.

²⁶⁹. Andrew Sullivan. “This Is a Religious War.” in *The New York Times* (7 October 2001). Available: <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/07/nyregion/07sullivan.html?searchpv=past7days&pagewanted=print> accessed on 27/03/02.

²⁷⁰. Sullivan. 1.

²⁷¹. Council on Foreign Relations. “Causes of 9/11: Muslim Militant Extremists.” Available: <http://www.terrorismanswers.com/causes/muslim.html> accessed on 01/12/03.

4.2 The Origins of Radical Islamic Fundamentalism

a) The Islamic Decline

An understanding of radical Islamic fundamentalism, particularly the role it played as the most probable cause of the September 11th suicide terrorist attacks, is possible only when one is familiar with how it “emerged from the trauma of modern Muslim history.”²⁷²

It is a well-documented fact that the Ottoman Empire was by far the most powerful the world had ever seen,²⁷³ and for many centuries Islam was “in the forefront of human civilization and achievement.”²⁷⁴ For most medieval Muslims the glory of the times was self-explanatory: “Islam represented the greatest military power on earth.”²⁷⁵ As a consequence, its armies expanded the Muslim empire across the globe, achieving unprecedented economic status and success. Thus, the superiority of Islam as the greatest civilisation on earth was well grounded at the time, and the threat that it posed to Christendom resulted in a constant fear of an Islamic attack.²⁷⁶ However, by the late seventeenth century Europe had made enormous strides in the arts and sciences, politics and economics, and most notably in the field of weaponry.²⁷⁷ According to Bernard Lewis, Islamic societies only adopted from the Europeans “what was recognisably and immediately useful – weaponry, naval construction, the practice of medicine, along with some other devices.”²⁷⁸ These, however, were “stripped of their cultural associations and thus reduced to dead artifacts without organic roots.”²⁷⁹ As a result, by the early nineteenth century Islam posed no serious threat to Christendom, and a new era of

²⁷². Daniel Pipes. “Introduction from *Militant Islam Reaches America*.” Available: <http://www.danielpipes.org/books/mirainto.php> accessed on 15/10/03.

²⁷³. Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (Great Britain: Phoenix Press, 2000), 132.

²⁷⁴. Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2002), 3.

²⁷⁵. Lewis, 6.

²⁷⁶. Lewis, 4, 6 & 7.

²⁷⁷. Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (U.S.A.: Oxford University Press, 1993), 15.

²⁷⁸. Lewis, 26.

²⁷⁹. Lewis, 26.

European discoveries and expansion would eventually lead to the total collapse of the Ottoman Empire.²⁸⁰

The balance of power had thus shifted, and “in 1918 the Ottoman sultanate ... was finally defeated – its capital, Constantinople, occupied, its sovereign held captive, and much of its territory partitioned between the victorious British and French Empires.”²⁸¹ Many scholars have dubbed the Treaty of Versailles ‘the mistake of the century,’ and although this claim has been unfairly exaggerated, many Westerners and Muslims alike believe that there is a direct link between the decisions that were made at Versailles and present day conflicts in the Middle East.²⁸² The protectorates and mandates that were set up in Iraq and Palestine for example, were “experienced as an outrage, since the European powers had promised the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire independence.”²⁸³ Furthermore, in 1948 the state of Israel was created “with the support of the United Nations and the international community.”²⁸⁴ As is shown in chapter two, “the loss of Palestine became a symbol of the humiliation of the Muslim world at the hands of the Western powers, who seemed to feel no qualms about the dispossession and permanent exile of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.”²⁸⁵

This sense of betrayal and humiliation left, and continues to leave, many in the Muslim world searching for answers as to ‘what went wrong.’ How could a people who were once at the forefront of civilisation now find themselves subject to the humiliation of the modern and all - powerful West?²⁸⁶ Scholars of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies have searched relentlessly

²⁸⁰. Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson. 2002). 7, 9, 12-17.

²⁸¹. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson. 2003), xv & xvi.

²⁸². Margaret Macmillan. *The Peacemakers* (London: JohnMurray. 2001), 499 & 500.

²⁸³. Karen Armstrong. *Islam: A Short History* (Great Britain: Phoenix Press. 2000). 148.

²⁸⁴. Armstrong. 149.

²⁸⁵. Armstrong. 149.

²⁸⁶. Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson. 2002). 3 & 152.

for an answer to this question. For scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington, the decline of Islam in the Middle Ages is a direct result of Islam's advocacy of a non-separation of religion and politics - an aspect of Islamic culture that many believe poses "an obstacle to freedom, to science," as well as "economic development."²⁸⁷ However, if this is true then "how is it that Muslim society in the past was a pioneer in all three, and this at a time when Muslims were much closer in time to the sources and inspiration of their faith than they are now?"²⁸⁸

In an attempt to understand Islam's 'fall from glory,' Muslim societies around the world began to examine their failures and weaknesses. In doing so, however, many Muslims do not perceive the problem as 'where did we go wrong?' Instead, the blame for popular political grievances is often directed solely against the West, and more specifically against U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Authors as varied as John L. Esposito and Bernard Lewis agree that although "there have been," and still are, some "good reasons for such blame," it is the way in which "specific teachers and doctrines and groups" exploit Islam's changed position in world politics that is the real problem.²⁸⁹

4.3 A Macro Analysis of Radical Islamic Fundamentalism's Key Features and How these Differ from Modernist/Moderate Islam

a) A Defensive Reaction Against Western Modernity and Secularism

Fundamentalisms of all faiths share certain traits. First and foremost, fundamentalisms are "specific religious phenomena" that have formed "in reaction to, and in defense against, the processes and consequences of secularization and modernization."²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷. Lewis. 156.

²⁸⁸. Lewis. 156.

²⁸⁹. Lewis. 153 & 156.

²⁹⁰. Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan. *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 20 & 92.

Although “the Western media often give the impression that the embattled and occasionally violent form of religiosity known as ‘fundamentalism’ is a purely Islamic phenomenon, ... this is not the case. Fundamentalism is a global fact and has surfaced in every major faith in response to the problems of our modernity.”²⁹¹ In fact, fundamentalism first surfaced in Christianity, in the United States, at the beginning of the twentieth century. According to Karen Armstrong, the reason why fundamentalism first appeared in the United States, and only became known in other parts of the world at a later date, is because “a fundamentalist movement ... only takes shape when the modernization process is quite far advanced.”²⁹² This explains why “Islam was ... the last to develop a fundamentalist strain, when modern culture began to take root in the Muslim world in the late 1960s and 1970s.”²⁹³

Unlike the Western world, whose experience of modernity became synonymous with “innovation and autonomy,” the people of the Muslim world experienced the process of modernisation as an affront on their identity.²⁹⁴ The Western impact on the Islamic world was perceived as a threat to traditional Islamic cultural values. This perception, however, was not a paranoid delusion. The destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the consequent colonisation of the Middle East subjected Muslim people to the “humiliation and disgrace” Osama bin Laden referred to in his videotape of October 7, 2001²⁹⁵ – the day U.S. and coalition forces intervened in the Taliban’s Afghanistan.²⁹⁶ Thus, essential for understanding the rise of radical Islamic fundamentalism, as well as its key features, is to see it within the context of “a

²⁹¹. Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (Great Britain: Phoenix Press, 2000), 164.

²⁹². Armstrong, 165.

²⁹³. Armstrong, 165.

²⁹⁴. Armstrong, 145.

²⁹⁵. Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2003), xv.

²⁹⁶. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003), xvii.

general feeling of decline and stagnation and a continued state of dependency,”²⁹⁷ all of which were reacted to in an attempt to reassert a position of “cultural dominance.”²⁹⁸

The experience of being displaced by secular modern thought, whether it is via colonization or a by-product of globalisation, is therefore important for understanding religious fundamentalisms. The advent of the twentieth century witnessed a rebuff of Enlightenment thought, which, since its inception in the late seventeenth century, “sought to displace religion as the source of values.”²⁹⁹ The belief that “practical reason,” i.e., science, could “fulfill the function of religion,” challenged religious authority and “spurred the modern quest for the autonomy of man.”³⁰⁰ The proliferation of Enlightenment thought into the twentieth century continued to oppose state religion and argued for the separation of church and state. Islam was thus plunged into a crisis of identity, with most Muslims questioning how it was possible that the lands of Islam could “be falling more and more under the domination of the secular godless West?”³⁰¹

Most scholars of Islam and fundamentalism agree, the Muslim world’s response to “the marginalization of religion,” which occurred as a result of “the processes and consequences of secularization and modernization,” was, and remains, twofold.³⁰² As in every religious community, there are those who “try to assimilate with the new culture,” and then there are others who “raise walls of defense and fight against the changes – especially against their

²⁹⁷. Shireen T. Hunter. “Introduction.” in *The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter (U.S.A.: Indiana University Press, 1988), xii.

²⁹⁸. George M. Marsden. “Defining American Fundamentalism.” ch.2 in *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: A View from Within: A Response from Without*, ed. Norman J. Cohen (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 28.

²⁹⁹. Bruce B. Lawrence. *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989), 11.

³⁰⁰. Lawrence, 9 & 11.

³⁰¹. Karen Armstrong. *Islam: A Short History* (Great Britain: Phoenix Press, 2000), 152 & 153.

³⁰². Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby. “Fundamentalism: Genus and Species.” ch.16 in *Fundamentalism Comprehended*, eds. M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (U.S.A.: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 405.

religion being displaced as a central culture shaping force.”³⁰³ Those who “want to generate dialogue and understanding” with secular modern powers have been appropriately described as adopting an attitude of inclusion.³⁰⁴ However, whilst fundamentalists exploit the processes of secular modernisation for their own purposes for example, most fundamentalist movements adopt and master the use of “modern means of communication and recruitment,”³⁰⁵ they are accurately labeled ‘exclusivists’ due to their rejectionist and confrontational attitude.³⁰⁶

Thus, in responding to the very real challenges posed by the infiltration of secular modern culture into Middle Eastern societies, exclusivists, in this case radical Islamic fundamentalists, unlike their inclusivist or modernist/moderate counterparts, believe that the “religious vacuum” currently being filled by Western popular culture must be counteracted – either by restructuring the present Islamic establishments entirely or by operating outside of, i.e., separating themselves from, *jahili* society.³⁰⁷ The concept of *jahiliyya*, or “the period of ‘ignorance’ or ‘barbarism’ before the Prophet Muhammad preached in Arabia,” is central to radical Islamic fundamentalist thought.³⁰⁸ According to Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), who was “the principal ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt,”³⁰⁹ and has more recently been dubbed “the father of Sunni radicalism”³¹⁰ and “the inspiration behind September

³⁰³. George M. Marsden. “Defining American Fundamentalism.” ch.2 in *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon: A View from Within: A Response from Without*, ed. Norman J. Cohen (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing Co., 1990), 28.

³⁰⁴. Akbar S. Ahmed. *Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World* (United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003), 123.

³⁰⁵. Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby. “Fundamentalism: Genus and Species.” ch.16 in *Fundamentalism Comprehended*, eds. M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (U.S.A.: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 405.

³⁰⁶. Akbar S. Ahmed. *Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World* (United Kingdom: Polity Press, 2003), 123.

³⁰⁷. Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven, U.S.A.: Yale University Press, 1985), 5 - 15 & 85 - 86.

³⁰⁸. Gilles Kepel. *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World* (Great Britain: Polity Press, 1994), 20.

³⁰⁹. Malise Ruthven. *A Fury for God: The Islamist Attack on America* (London: Granta Books, 2002), 71.

³¹⁰. Emmanuel Sivan. “Islamic Radicalism: Sunni and Shi’ite.” ch.2 in *Religious Radicalism and Politics in the Middle East*, eds. E. Sivan and M. Friedman (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 39.

11th,”³¹¹ *jahiliyya* is “not just a specific historical period,” it holds “sway in Arab societies today.”³¹² In other words, “Islam has reverted to a state of *jahiliyya*,”³¹³ in which “true Muslims” find themselves “adrift in a sea of ignorance and unbelief, akin to the un-Islamic society in which Muhammad was born.”³¹⁴

Qutb, whose teachings were greatly influenced by Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-1979), a Pakistani journalist who in 1941 founded the radical Islamic organisation Jamaat-i-Islami and was “the first Muslim thinker to arrive at a sweeping condemnation of modernity and its incompatibility with Islam,” advanced the idea that due to the infiltration of Western modernity into Middle Eastern societies “Islam in this century is in the process of losing its grip over society.”³¹⁵ The brother of Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Qutb, who taught Osama bin Laden Islamic studies at university in Jeddah,³¹⁶ published *The Jahiliyya of the Twentieth Century*, which elaborated upon Sayyid’s idea that Islam is in danger of being culturally poisoned by Western, and more specifically “man-centered,” values and social mores such as “materialism” and “hedonism.” “The core of Sayyid Qutb’s ideas thus consists in a total rejection of (Western) modernity ... since (Western) modernity represents the negation of God’s sovereignty (*hakimiyya*) in all fields of life and the relegation of religion to the dustbin of history.”³¹⁷

³¹¹. Malise Ruthven. *A Fury for God: The Islamist Attack on America* (London: Granta Books. 2002). 71.

³¹². Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven. U.S.A.: Yale University Press. 1985). 102.

³¹³. Sivan. 85.

³¹⁴. John L. Esposito. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of God* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2002). 59.

³¹⁵. Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven. U.S.A.: Yale University Press. 1985). 22 & 27.

³¹⁶. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 22.

³¹⁷. Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven. U.S.A.: Yale University Press. 1985). 24 & 27.

Thus, like fundamentalists of all faiths, Qutb and Mawdudi based their ideology, which forms the foundation of radical Islamic fundamentalist thought, on “the doctrine of God’s sovereignty.”³¹⁸ According to David Zeidan, a fundamentalist worldview “acknowledges God’s absolute sovereignty over all of his creation including man, and over all spheres of life. In this worldview the world is God’s world, and the central reference point is God, not man.”³¹⁹ Furthermore, much like other fundamentalists, who view the world from a “dualistic or Manichean” standpoint,³²⁰ Qutb and Mawdudi “recast the world into black and white polarities.”³²¹ Hence, Qutb’s belief that human beings face a “clear-cut choice: either to observe the Law of Allah in its entirety, or to apply the laws laid down by man of one sort or another.”³²² For Mawdudi, “because God alone ruled human affairs and was the supreme legislator, human beings had no right to make up their own laws or take control of their own destiny.”³²³ By “attacking the whole notion of human freedom and human sovereignty,” Mawdudi was “defying the whole secularist ethos.”³²⁴

According to Mawdudi, Islam, unlike Western-style democracy, which leads to “chaos, greed and mob rule,” is “a revolutionary ideology” that seeks to free human beings “from subjection to anything other than God.”³²⁵ Contrary to the position adopted by most Muslims, even most Islamic fundamentalists, which argues that it is against the tenants of Islam for anyone but God to judge the authenticity of a Muslim’s faith and that in accordance with the *Shari’a* a

³¹⁸. Karen Armsrtong. *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf. 2000). 237.

³¹⁹. David Zeidan. “Typical Elements of Fundamentalist Islamic and Christian Theocentric Worldviews.” in *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 13 (2002): 209.

³²⁰. Gabriel A. Almond. Emmanuel Sivan and R.Scott Appleby. “Fundamentalism: Genus and Species.” ch.16 in *Fundamentalism Comprehended*, eds. M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (U.S.A.: University of Chicago Press. 1995). 406.

³²¹. John L. Esposito. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of God* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2002). 60.

³²². Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven. U.S.A.: Yale University Press. 1985). 24.

³²³. Karen Armsrtong. *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf. 2000). 237

³²⁴. Armstrong., 237.

³²⁵. Armstrong. 238.

true Muslim need only profess the Islamic credo (“There is no other god than Allah and Muhammad is his messenger”); perform the 5 daily prayers and observe the fast of Ramadan, Mawdudi and Qutb adopted the views of Ibn Taymiyya, who stated that a professed Muslim or Muslim ruler ceases to be one when he/she fails to keep or apply the *Shari‘a*.³²⁶ Qutb, for example, believed that any ruler who chose to apply secularist policies could be excommunicated or declared an apostate of the faith. In the case of President Nasser of Egypt, who “outwardly professed Islam, (but) his words and actions proved that he had in fact apostatized,”³²⁷ Qutb assumed Mawdudi’s position that “no ruler who refused to govern according to God’s will (as revealed in the Koran and the Sunnah) could command the obedience of his subjects. In such a case, “revolution was not simply a right, but a duty.”³²⁸

b) A Radically Militant Interpretation of Islam and Islamic Sacred Texts

Fundamentalists of all faiths share a common trademark: their mark is that they “*fight back*.”³²⁹ Fundamentalists “want to reclaim a place they feel has been taken from them. They would restore what are presumed or claimed to be old and secure ways retrieved from a world they are losing. Fundamentalists will do what it takes to assure their future in a world of their own defining.”³³⁰

Fundamentalism in general is thus defined by its militancy, i.e., all fundamentalists are willing to fight - in some form or another - for their beliefs. However, unlike scholars such as Daniel Pipes, who believes that all fundamentalists “must be considered potential killers,”³³¹ this dissertation recognises a distinction between those fundamentalists who do not support the use

³²⁶. Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven, U.S.A.: Yale University Press, 1985), 97 & 109.

³²⁷. Karen Armstrong. *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 240.

³²⁸. Armstrong, 237.

³²⁹. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. *The Glory and the Power: The Fundamentalist Challenge to the Modern World* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1992), 17.

³³⁰. Marty and Appleby, 17.

³³¹. Daniel Pipes. “Bin Laden is a Fundamentalist: A Reply to David, F Forte” (22 October 2001). Available: <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-pipes102201.shtml> accessed on 15/09/03.

of terror and those that take a radically active militant stance that encourages the use of terrorism in order to achieve religious and political goals. According to Gabriel Ben-Dor, the term radicalism refers to “those who would change society by the root, or from the root.”³³²

In contrast to the opinion espoused by the majority of Muslims, which, in this case, includes the position taken up by most moderate Islamic fundamentalists, radicals such as Osama bin Laden have adopted Qutb’s attitude that there can be “no compromise” with current Muslim society, due to the fact that it has reverted to a state of *jahiliyya* in which infidel leaders rule.³³³ At the beginning of July 2003, bin Laden made a speech in which he urged young Muslims to purify Islam of “flawed modern Western values, such as ‘materialism’ and ‘secularism.’”³³⁴ Like Qutb, bin Laden condemns the rulers of the Middle East as apostates and accuses leaders such as Hussein bin Ali and his family of conspiring “against the Ottoman Caliphate with the British,” thus blaming the region’s rulers and those who support them for “the fall of the Islamic Caliphate state.”³³⁵

According to Olivier Roy, Islamic fundamentalist thought is “obsessed ... with the restoration of the caliphate,”³³⁶ which for nearly 13 centuries “remained a potent symbol of Muslim unity, even identity; its disappearance under the double assault of foreign imperialists and domestic

³³². Gabriel Ben-Dor. “The Uniqueness of Islamic Fundamentalism.” in *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8 (Summer 96): 241.

³³³. Olivier Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1999). 41 & 42.

³³⁴. Dr. Yoram Kahati and Yoni Figchel. “Osama bin Laden as the New Prophet of Islam” (15 July 2003). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articleDet.cfm?articleid=489> accessed on 01/12/03.

³³⁵. MEMRI (The Middle East Media and Research Institute). “A New Bin Laden Speech.” in *The Jihad and Terrorism Studies Project* (18 July 2003). 1 & 3. Available: <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP53903> accessed on 08/08/03.

³³⁶. Olivier Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1999). 33. Even though the Taliban no longer governs Afghanistan, the downfall of which is blamed on infidel Islamic leaders, Osama bin Laden still considers it the perfect country in which “to establish the ideal Islamic state and the Islamic Caliphate.” See MEMRI (The Middle East Media and Research Institute). “A New Bin Laden Speech.” in *The Jihad and Terrorism Studies Project* (18 July 2003). 1 & 2. Available: <http://www.memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP53903> accessed on 08/08/03.

modernists, was felt throughout the Muslim world.”³³⁷ The fact that “many Muslims are still painfully aware of this void” is exploited by Islamic fundamentalists,³³⁸ who according to Olivier Roy, are united in their acknowledgement that gaining control of political power is a necessity if the ideal of reconstituting the Muslim community (*umma*) under a single power is to be made a reality.³³⁹

Thus, in keeping with Roy’s analysis, the split within Islamic fundamentalism, i.e., the split between moderate and radical Islamic fundamentalists “lies not on the question of the necessity of an Islamic state.”³⁴⁰ The split does, however, lie “on the means by which to arrive at one and the attitude to adopt with respect to the powers in place.”³⁴¹ Moderate Islamic fundamentalists advocate “a reformist position,”³⁴² which according to Hudaybi, who was a dissident member of the MB in the 1950s, includes educational endeavours such as propagating, “preaching, admonishing and trying to bring people back to Right Path.”³⁴³ However, unlike radical Islamic fundamentalism, which “reappropriates the idea of revolution: the forceful overthrow of a political regime in order to replace it with a system founded on a different ideology,” moderate Islamic fundamentalism adheres to traditional Islamic thought in the sense that it “reject(s) the concept of excommunication, considering in the tradition of the *ulamas* (the clerical scholars), that an unjust power is preferable to division in the community (*fitna*).”³⁴⁴

³³⁷. Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson. 2003). xvii.

³³⁸. Lewis. xvii.

³³⁹. Olivier Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers. 1999). 13, 33 & 41.

³⁴⁰. Roy. 24.

³⁴¹. Roy. 24.

³⁴². Roy. 42.

³⁴³. Emmanuel Sivan. *Radical Islam* (New Haven. U.S.A.: Yale University Press. 1985). 109.

³⁴⁴. Olivier Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers. 1999). 3 & 42.

Unlike moderate Islamic fundamentalists, who seek to promote non-violent change from within the current Islamic system,³⁴⁵ radicals such as bin Laden emulate Qutb's revolutionary ideology - a blueprint for recreating the ideal Islamic state through a process of political rupture with modern *jahili* society.³⁴⁶ However, in order to recreate the ideal Islamic state, the model for which is based on "the archetypal society of Medina,"³⁴⁷ Qutb set for himself the task of legitimising revolt in terms of mainstream Sunni thought.³⁴⁸ According to Qutb, the fact that "the right to revolt ... is not readily acceptable to traditional Sunni political thought,"³⁴⁹ is irrelevant if one compares the similarity of the crisis Islam faces today with the challenges the Prophet encountered in his efforts to save Islam from being annihilated in the early years of the seventh century. Qutb believed that the only way "to turn back the tide of secularism" and force Muslim societies "to return to the values of Islam" was by creating "an ideology that would mobilize a dedicated vanguard" - "a party of committed individuals who vowed to fulfill God's command and replace the *jahiliyyah* of Mecca with a just, egalitarian society that recognized only the sovereignty of God."³⁵⁰

In his attempt to recreate "the original community," i.e., "that of the first community of believers at the time of Prophet and of the first four caliphs,"³⁵¹ Qutb inevitably simplified the life and the career of the Prophet. According to Karen Armstrong, Qutb "removed the complexities, ambiguities, and contradictions of the Prophet's personal, multi-faceted struggle, to create the kind of streamlined program that a modern ideology requires, but in the process, the ruthless selection that this involved inevitably distorted the Islamic vision."³⁵² For

³⁴⁵. Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam* (New Haven, U.S.A.: Yale University Press, 1985), 109.

³⁴⁶. Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1999), 12, 13 & 41. Also see Karen Armstrong, *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 241.

³⁴⁷. Armstrong, 241.

³⁴⁸. Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam* (New Haven, U.S.A.: Yale University Press, 1985), 92.

³⁴⁹. Sivan, 90.

³⁵⁰. Karen Armstrong, *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 240 & 242.

³⁵¹. Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1999), 12 & 13.

³⁵². Karen Armstrong, *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 242.

example, “Qutb saw the Prophet’s career proceeding in four stages; to recreate a rightly guided community in the twentieth century, Muslims must also go through this four-fold process.”³⁵³

Qutb selectively interpreted the first stage of the Prophet Muhammad’s career in such a way that Qutb would be able to legitimate his call for ‘true’ Muslims (the vanguard) to create a counter-society – “a pure Muslim enclave.”³⁵⁴ However, although Muhammad and the first community of Muslims segregated themselves from pagan Meccan society, and eventually undertook the migration (*hijra*) from Mecca to Yathrib, they did so because their lives, as well as the existence of the Islamic faith, were threatened with extinction.³⁵⁵ Thus, the third stage of the Prophet’s career - the establishment of the Islamic state of Medina – was not, as it is in the case of Qutb’s ideology, a matter of voluntary exclusion and separation from mainstream society. The fact that “the last time Muhammad preached to the community before his death, he urged Muslims to use their religion to reach out to others in understanding, since all human beings were brothers,” who were made into different nations and tribes so that they may know one another, is evidence that Qutb’s radical fundamentalist ideology is contrary to the Koran’s message of inclusion and tolerance.³⁵⁶

Much like Mawdudi, “who demanded a universal *jihad*, which he declared to be the central tenant of Islam,”³⁵⁷ Qutb insisted that the final and most important stage of the Prophet Muhammad’s career was his initiation of “a period of armed struggle against Mecca, at first in

³⁵³. Armstrong, 242.

³⁵⁴. Armstrong, 242.

³⁵⁵. Armstrong, 242. Also see chapter three for more information regarding the life and career of the Prophet Muhammad.

³⁵⁶. Armstrong, 242 & 243.

³⁵⁷. A. G. Noorani, *Islam and Jihad* (London: Zed Books, 2002), 71. “No other major Muslim thinker had ever made this claim before. It was an innovation required, in Mawdudi’s eyes, by the current emergency.” See A. G. Noorani, *Islam and Jihad* (London: Zed Books, 2002), 72. In his July 2003 speech, Osama bin Laden reiterated the militancy of Mawdudi’s vision by declaring that there are “five new pillars” of Islamic religious law – the most important of which is *jihad*, which is “mandatory for all Muslims.” See Dr. Yoram Kahati and Yoni Figchel, “Osama bin Laden as the New Prophet of Islam” (15 July 2003). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=489> accessed on 01/12/03.

small scale raids against the Meccan trading caravans, and then by sustaining the attacks of the Meccan army.”³⁵⁸ In keeping with Qutb’s thinking, Mohamed Atta, who piloted the first plane that crashed into the World Trade Centre, is believed to have authored the “Doomsday Document,” which refers to the raid at Badr and the battle of Uhud in such away that they are taken out of context and given an active contemporary application, which emphasises the need for the 9/11 hijackers to wage a jihad against the United States as it is representative of pagan Mecca. Like Mecca was in the seventh century, the United States, the leader of the Western world, is economically and militarily superior to the Muslim world in the twenty-first century. Hence, the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon by 19 members of Al Qaeda was symbolic of the way in which Mecca was eventually defeated by a small Muslim force.³⁵⁹

However, as Armstrong states, “by making *jihad* central to the Muslim vision,” radical Islamic fundamentalists distort the life and career of the Prophet Muhammad.³⁶⁰ According to traditional biographies, “even though the first *ummah* had to fight to survive, Muhammad did not achieve victory by the sword but by a creative and ingenious policy of non-violence,” which eventually resulted in Mecca voluntarily opening its gates to Muhammad and accepting “the rule of Islam and the sovereignty of God.”³⁶¹ Similarly to Armstrong, Huston Smith, one of the world’s most respected authorities on the history of religions, challenges the Western stereotype that views Islam as a religion that was “spread primarily by the sword.”³⁶² Smith states that although “the Koran does not counsel turning the other cheek,” it does teach “forgiveness and the return of good for evil when the circumstances warrant – ‘turn away evil

³⁵⁸. Karen Armstrong, *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 242.

³⁵⁹. Juan Cole, “Al-Qaeda’s Doomsday Document and Psychological Manipulation,” presented at *Genocide and Terrorism: Probing the Mind of the Perpetrator* (New Haven: Yale Centre for Genocide Studies, 9 April 2003), 4 & 5. Available: <http://www.juancole.com/essays/qaeda.htm> accessed on 21/01/04.

³⁶⁰. Karen Armsrtong, *A Battle for God* (New York: Alfred & Knopf, 2000), 243.

³⁶¹. Armstrong, 242 & 243.

³⁶². Huston Smith, *The World’s Religions* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 254.

with that which is better (42:37).”³⁶³ This is, however, different from “not resisting evil.” “Far from requiring the Muslim to turn himself into a doormat for the ruthless, the Koran allows punishment of wanton wrongdoers to the full extent of the injury they impart (22:39-49).”³⁶⁴ Social justice is thus a principle held dear to Islam, but the rules of righteous war or *jihad* do not permit the slaying of women, children or the elderly, all of who were victims of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks.³⁶⁵

Thus, although the Koran permits the use of violence in very specific circumstances, all of which, according to the majority of Muslims, involve matters of self-defense, terrorism - “the deliberate killing of noncombatants” - is strictly forbidden in Islam.³⁶⁶ In addition, Rudolph Peters observes that ““without any exception”” ““all {modernist} authors emphatically state that [jihad] may never serve the aid of compelling people to conversion.’ Moreover, most modernist scholars throughout the Islamic world emphasize that jihad does not mean only fighting. ‘There are spiritual and moral forms of jihad which are more important than fighting and that the jihad duty can also be performed by the tongue and the pen.’”³⁶⁷ In other words, there is a distinction between the spiritual and physical forms of *jihad*, which “simply means ‘to exert.’”³⁶⁸ Spiritually, the meaning of *jihad* is interpreted as “engaging in a battle against sin and Satan in one’s own life. This is called ‘the greater jihad.’ Applied to the physical realm, the exertion means righteous warfare. This is called ‘the lesser jihad.’ A well-known Hadith reports that the prophet Muhammad gave top precedence to the greater jihad, humanity’s spiritual struggle against evil.”³⁶⁹

³⁶³. Smith. 254.

³⁶⁴. Smith. 254 & 255.

³⁶⁵. Smith. 255.

³⁶⁶. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 113.

³⁶⁷. Abdul Karim Khan. “Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam (Book).” in *Journal of World History* 14 (Spring 2003): 93. Available: http://web22epnet.com/delivery.asp?tb=1&_ug=db+0+1n+en-us+sid+8122EE61-4C6C-4 accessed on 08/08/03.

³⁶⁸. A. G. Noorani. *Islam and Jihad* (London: Zed Books. 2002). 45.

³⁶⁹. Noorani. 45.

4.4 A Case Study of Al Qaeda and the Ideology that Inspired the 9/11 Suicide Terrorist Attacks

a) Al Qaeda: A Global Multinational Terrorist Network

It was established in chapter two that the 19 men who hijacked 4 planes on September 11th 2001 and then crashed 3 of them into the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, belonged to Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda organisation, the roots of which lie in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan.³⁷⁰

After Soviet troops entered Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1979, bin Laden traveled to Peshawar, Pakistan, and started raising funds for the Afghan Mujaheddin and their cause. In 1982, bin Laden decided to settle in Peshawar permanently, where he joined his mentor and the head of the MB in that province, Abdullah Azzam. Azzam had created the Makhtab al Khidmat (MaK) or Services Centre, which provided accommodation and logistical services to thousands of Arab volunteers, who had come from all over the Muslim world to fight the invading communist enemy.³⁷¹ The Arab Afghans, as they became known, shared many of bin Laden's views, which were deeply coloured by the ideas and doctrines of the MB and Saudi Arabia's Wahhabite clergy.³⁷² The influence of Wahhabism, which is a radical fundamentalist sect of Islam founded by Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the mid-1700s and has since become Saudi Arabia's state religion, was greatly underestimated before it was discovered that 15 of the 19 9/11 hijackers were citizens of Saudi Arabia. Stephen Schwartz, "a journalist who has been studying Islam and extremism for more than a decade, set out to write an expose

³⁷⁰. Ahmed Rashid and Mary Anne Weaver confirm this statement. See Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books. 2001). vii. Also see Mary Anne Weaver. "Blowback." in *The Atlantic Online* (May 1996). 1. Available; wysiwyg://11/http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/96may/blowback.htm accessed on 27/03/2002. Like Weaver, many scholars and laypersons alike believe that the U.S. government, the CIA in particular, was culpable in creating Al Qaeda. However, as Peter Bergen points out, charges that "the CIA armed and trained the Afghan Arabs and even bin Laden himself as part of its operation to support the Afghan rebels fighting the Soviets in the 1980s" are tenuous, due to a lack of corroborated evidence. See Peter L. Bergen. *Holy War, Inc. Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden* (London: Phoenix. 2002). 66 & 67.

³⁷¹. Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books. 2001). 131 & 132.

³⁷². Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2002). 314.

of Wahhabism, which he believes is at the root of ‘two and a half centuries of Islamic fundamentalism, and ultimately terrorism, in response to global change.’³⁷³ Schwartz describes how more than two centuries before Qutb denounced Egypt as a *jahili* society, al-Wahhab returned from his travels of the Ottoman Empire with “a belief that Islam had been corrupted and weakened by the Ottomans, and that it needed to be brought back to its roots.”³⁷⁴ However, as is the case with all radical Islamic fundamentalist sects, al-Wahhab’s brand of “an original, authentic Islam” misinterpreted and distorted the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.³⁷⁵ Similarly to Schwartz, Rashid warns that the spread of Wahhabism, which became “a major plank in Saudi foreign policy after the oil boom in the 1970s,” continues to present the international community with a serious crisis of security,³⁷⁶ particularly because the Wahhabi model of Islam is defined solely by its absolute intolerance of anyone - Muslim and non-Muslim - who does not adhere to the same beliefs as it espouses.³⁷⁷

Osama bin Laden, who in 1986 “set up his own training camp for Arab Afghans,” which was funded with Saudi money, became increasingly revered as the ideal Islamic leader – someone who “can emulate the personality of the Prophet Muhammad”³⁷⁸ and can rid Islam of all its impurities.³⁷⁹ After Azzam’s assassination, which many believe bin Laden was responsible

³⁷³. Katie Bacon. “Interviews: The Real Islam.” in *The Atlantic Online* (20 March 2003). 1. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/cgi-bin/send.cgi?page=http%3A/www.theatlantic.com/unboun> accessed on 09/08/03.

³⁷⁴. Bacon. 1.

³⁷⁵. Bacon. 1.

³⁷⁶. Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books. 2001). 85.

³⁷⁷. Katie Bacon. “Interviews: The Real Islam.” in *The Atlantic Online* (20 March 2003). 1. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/cgi-bin/send.cgi?page=http%3A/www.theatlantic.com/unboun> accessed on 09/08/03.

³⁷⁸. Osama bin Laden views himself as a kind of modern Muhammad, who has not only the authority but the duty to update dogmatic principles of Islamic religious law.” Bin Laden “bases this authority on the fact that he and his supporters, of all the Muslims, are engaged in the true Jihad.” See Dr. Yoram Kahati and Yoni Fighele. “Osama bin Laden as the New Prophet of Islam” (15 July 2003). Available: <http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=489> accessed on 01/12/03.

³⁷⁹. Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban: The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books. 2001). 86, 87 & 132.

for,³⁸⁰ bin Laden took over Azzam's organisation and "established a database of all the ... volunteers who had passed through his camps." "This gave birth to an organisational structure built around a computer file whose Arabic title Al Qaeda (The [Data] base) became famous only ten years later when it was portrayed to the American Justice Department as the key to an ultra-secret terrorist network."³⁸¹ According to Rohan Gunaratna, the world's leading expert on the terrorist network, Al Qaeda is "above all else a secret, almost virtual, organization, one that denies its own existence in order to remain in the shadows. This explains why it always uses other names and identities (such as the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and the Crusaders) when referring to its actions, beliefs or statements, thereby keeping us guessing about its true motives, its true intentions."³⁸²

Besides for its policy of absolute secrecy, Al Qaeda draws its strength from the fact that "it confronts the world with a new kind of threat" – it is "the first (global) multinational terrorist group of the twenty-first century."³⁸³ "Al Qaeda pursues its objectives through a network of cells," the membership of which varies from 2 to 15 individuals.³⁸⁴ "Cells assigned for special missions like 9/11 ... are coordinated through an agent-handling system where a cell leader reports only to his controller or agent handler. Most agent handlers live near the target location or in the 'hostile zone' – Europe or North America. Some cell leaders report to a principal agent handler who never leaves Afghanistan, Pakistan or another 'safe zone.'"³⁸⁵

³⁸⁰. Jane Corbin. *The Base: Al-Qaeda and the Changing Face of Global Terror* (London: Pocket Books, 2003), 22.

³⁸¹. Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 315.

³⁸². Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003), 4.

³⁸³. Gunaratna. 1 & 129.

³⁸⁴. Gunaratna. 127 & 130.

³⁸⁵. Gunaratna. 130 & 131.

As noted above, Al Qaeda was established and dominated by Arabs, for this reason “Arabs staff the vital positions and control all the key operations.”³⁸⁶ However, being truly global, Al Qaeda is “organized along the lines of a broad-based family clan with its constituent multinational members designated as ‘brothers,’ a term commonly used by religious Muslims when referring to each other.”³⁸⁷ Hence, Al Qaeda’s “North African ‘family’ (exclusively Algerians, Egyptians, Tunisians, Moroccans, Libyans) is responsible for activities in Europe, its Southeast Asian ‘family’ (Malaysians, Indonesians, Filipinos, Singaporeans) for operations in the Far East, and its Central Asian ‘family’ for the region from Turkey across Muslim Central Asia into Xingjiang in China.”³⁸⁸ Thus, “what gives Al Qaeda its global reach is its ability to appeal to Muslims irrespective of their nationality, giving it unprecedented resources.”³⁸⁹ Al Qaeda’s multinational terrorist organisation is therefore a global threat.

b) Al Qaeda’s Radical Islamic Fundamentalist Ideology: A Motivation for Murder

As Mustafa Alani of the Royal United Services Institute for Security and Defense Studies in London states, “Al-Qaeda as an ideology is now stronger than al-Qaeda as an organisation.”³⁹⁰

It has been shown throughout this chapter that Al Qaeda’s ideology is deeply rooted in the radical Islamic fundamentalist ideologies of its associate groups. Most notably, is the effect Mawdudi (the founder of the Jamaat-i-Islami) and Qutb (the principal ideologue of the MB in Egypt), “both of whom sanctioned the use of violence for the establishment of Islam,” have had on Al Qaeda’s leaders and members.³⁹¹

³⁸⁶. Gunaratna. 131.

³⁸⁷. Gunaratna. 129.

³⁸⁸. Gunaratna. 129.

³⁸⁹. Gunaratna. 129.

³⁹⁰. Alani made this statement bearing in mind the effect the U.S.-led ‘war on terror’ has had on Al Qaeda’s infrastructure. See Sebastian Rotella and Douglas Farah. “Al-Qaeda’s terror by franchise: Terrorist group mutating into a decentralised network spread across many countries.” in *The Sunday Independent* (23 November 2003). 1.

³⁹¹. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 134 & 135.

Although radical Islamic fundamentalists from all over the Muslim world ‘fight’ to be one of the chosen few recruited as full Al Qaeda members,³⁹² in order to attract the widest possible support for its revolutionary cause - the elimination of apostate rulers, as well as all those who support repressive regimes in the Middle East, and the establishment of an Islamic state that is governed in accordance with *Shari‘a* law³⁹³ - Al Qaeda “produces moral justifications for violent acts” that contradict mainstream traditional Islamic thought.³⁹⁴ Most experts on terror agree, “people do not ordinarily engage in reprehensible conduct until they have justified to themselves the morality of their actions.” “In this process, destructive conduct is made personally and socially acceptable by portraying it in the service of moral purposes.”³⁹⁵

It is thus essential for the leaders of Al Qaeda to raise awareness among Muslims of the grievances that gave rise to the world’s most infamous terrorist organisation. Al Qaeda therefore “attaches great importance to propaganda, in particular the need for Muslim youths to reflect on the state of their societies.”³⁹⁶ As with almost all radical Islamic fundamentalist organisations, “Al Qaeda specifically targets young men as recruits”³⁹⁷ – men who feel that they are leading a life of humiliation. Al Qaeda’s leaders deliberately intensify these feelings of humiliation and provide new recruits with “seductive solutions to grievances.”³⁹⁸ The source of Muslim youths problems is, according to Al Qaeda, which conforms to Qutb’s

³⁹². “According to Western intelligence sources, which vary quite alarmingly in their estimates, between 10,000 and 110,000 recruits graduated from Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan between 1989 and October 2001.” However, “Al Qaeda recruited only 3,000 or 3 percent, of those it trained in terrorism and guerrilla warfare, this suggests that Al Qaeda has more than enough manpower to draw on, now and in the future. Gunaratna, 11.

³⁹³. Gunaratna, 98 & 99.

³⁹⁴. Albert Bandura, “Mechanisms of moral disengagement,” ch.9 in *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, ed. Walter Reich (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 174.

³⁹⁵. Bandura, 163.

³⁹⁶. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003), 118.

³⁹⁷. Gunaratna, 99.

³⁹⁸. Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2003), 3, 262 & 264.

revolutionary ideology, apostate rulers who have been corrupted by Western values that have infiltrated into Muslim societies.³⁹⁹

“The [the apostate rulers] tried, using every means and seduction, to produce a generation of young men that did not know anything except what [the rulers] want, did not say anything except what [the rulers] want, did not say anything except what [the rulers] think about, did not live except according to the rulers’ way, and did not dress except in the rulers’ clothes ... the bitter situation the nation has reached is a result of its divergence from Allah’s course and his religious law for all places and all times.”⁴⁰⁰

Qutb emphasised “the need to cleanse Islam from impurities resulting from its exposure to Western and capitalist influence.”⁴⁰¹ Commentary from an Al Qaeda recruitment video seized in London after September 11th stated that the only way to purify Islam, i.e., bring Islam back to its roots, is through the use of violence.⁴⁰²

*“Jihad, bullets and martyrdom operations are the only way to destroy the degradation and disbelief which have spread in the Muslim lands.”*⁴⁰³

However, the fact that the Koran permits only a *jihad* of self-defense, which excludes the techniques of terror, means that the enemy must be dehumanised to such an extent that “recruits are willing to violate normal moral rules” in an effort “to restore the dignity of humiliated youth” and “to help ward off dangerous temptations.”⁴⁰⁴ “This idea is similar to

³⁹⁹. Stern, 264 & 265.

⁴⁰⁰. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003), 99.

⁴⁰¹. Jessica Stern. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2003), 265.

⁴⁰². Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003), 72.

⁴⁰³. Gunaratna, 72.

⁴⁰⁴. Jessica Stern. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2003), xxviii, 262 & 263.

Franz Fanon's notion that violence is a 'cleansing force,' which frees the oppressed youth from his 'inferiority complex,' 'despair' and 'inaction,' making him fearless and restoring his self-respect."⁴⁰⁵

As shown in chapter one, according to the Koran, to sacrifice oneself in the defense of Islam is "the highest form of witness to God."⁴⁰⁶ Acts of martyrdom are therefore given top priority by Al Qaeda recruits; all of whom have been ideologically indoctrinated to believe that "to inflict maximum damage on the enemy target by fearlessly striking it, (and) in the process also destroying (oneself)," is "the highest form of sacrifice."⁴⁰⁷ Although other terrorist organisations driven by radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology psychologically condition their recruits to be willing to die for the cause, "no other group has invested so much time and effort as Al Qaeda in programming its fighters for death."⁴⁰⁸ The fact that the Koran explicitly condemns suicide is another reason why "the enemy must be portrayed as a monstrous threat" - one that is intent on destroying Islam.⁴⁰⁹ In order to achieve his objectives Osama bin Laden indoctrinates Al Qaeda's recruits to believe that those Muslims who choose to sacrifice their lives in the defense of Islam will be greatly rewarded in the afterlife.⁴¹⁰

"A martyr's privileges are guaranteed by Allah; forgiveness with the first gush of blood, he will be shown his seat in paradise, he will be decorated with the jewels of Imaan [belief], married off to the beautiful ones, protected from the test in the grave, assured

⁴⁰⁵. Stern. 264.

⁴⁰⁶. John L. Esposito. *Unholy War: Terror in the Name Of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2002). 69.

⁴⁰⁷. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 10 & 122.

⁴⁰⁸. Gunaratna. 122.

⁴⁰⁹. Jessica Stern. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: HarperCollinsPublishers. 2003). 262.

⁴¹⁰. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 122.

security in the day of judgment, crowned with the crown of dignity, a ruby of which is better than Duniah [the whole world] and its entire content, wedded to seventy-two of the pure Houries [beautiful ones of paradise], and his intercession on behalf of seventy of his relatives will be accepted.”⁴¹¹

As is shown in chapter two, at least 6 of the 19 hijackers held responsible for the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks had been preparing for their deaths at least 2 years before the events of September 11th occurred.⁴¹² Bin Laden, however, has been quoted as saying that all 19 hijackers knew in advance that 9/11 was going to be a “martyrdom operation.”⁴¹³ The fact that not 1 of the 19 hijackers flinched or had a second thought about the act of suicide terrorism he was preparing to perform, is mainly attributable to his religious belief that he, as well as his family, would be rewarded by Allah for his supreme sacrifice.⁴¹⁴

The fact that suicide bombers do not conform to “the typical profile of the suicidal personality,”⁴¹⁵ means that the leaders of Al Qaeda know full well that if “the culture of martyrdom” were not firmly embedded in the collective psyche of the Al Qaeda organisation, its recruits would not be willing to perform a terrorist operation that would be guaranteed to kill them.⁴¹⁶ In other words, Al Qaeda recruits who have been selected for martyrdom are

⁴¹¹. Gunaratna. 9 & 10.

⁴¹². Gerald Posner. *Why America Slept: The Failure to Prevent 9 11* (New York: Random House, 2003). 147-149.

⁴¹³. Steve Smith. “Unanswered Questions.” ch.4 in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Plagrave Macmillan, 2002). 51.

⁴¹⁴. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003). 9.

⁴¹⁵. Nasra Hassan. “An Arsenal of Believers.” in *The New Yorker* (19 November 2001). 2 & 3. Available: http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?fact/011119fa_FACT1 accessed on 25/08/03. The 9/11 suicide bombers, for example, were not mentally unstable, poor or uneducated. In fact, the opposite is true: most of them came from middle-class families and had university educations. These facts also dispute the correlation often made between poverty and terrorism. See Karin von Hippel. “The Roots of Terrorism: Probing the Myths.” in *Superterrorism: Policy Responses*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002). 26.

⁴¹⁶. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2003). 10.

subject to intense indoctrination by the organisation's masterminds - the purpose of indoctrination is to accentuate the new recruit's pre-existing fundamentalist beliefs.⁴¹⁷

In addition, religious indoctrination involves using "methods of group pressure" – these include placing recruits in secret martyrdom cells and bestowing on each cell member the title 'the living martyr' (*al shaheed al hay*).⁴¹⁸ The living martyrs are 'encouraged' by the trainer to undergo countless hours of recitation, during which selected verses of the Koran are read repetitively. Thus, emphasising the need to wage a violent *jihad* against the infidel enemy.⁴¹⁹ As did 1 of the 9/11 hijackers in "The Wills of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs," soon to be suicide bombers are generally "instructed to write or videotape a final testimony."⁴²⁰ The act of repeatedly reading or watching his or her final will and testament has the effect of creating "a kind of 'social contract' that the candidate will find difficult, if not impossible to break."⁴²¹

4.5 Conclusion

Thus, the conclusion of this chapter is that radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology in general, and Al Qaeda's radical fundamentalist ideology in particular, provides the best probable explanation of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks. If the 9/11 hijackers had not been indoctrinated with radical Islamic fundamentalist beliefs, they would not have been willing to sacrifice their lives in the defense of Islam. Radical Islamic fundamentalists such as Osama bin Laden often address genuine political grievances that are of concern to all Muslims.

⁴¹⁷. David Brooks. "The Culture of Martyrdom." in *The Atlantic Monthly* (June 2002). 2. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2002/brooks.htm> accessed on 23/10/02.

⁴¹⁸. Assaf Moghadam. "Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects." in *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (2003): 85 & 86.

⁴¹⁹. Nasra Hassan. "An Arsenal of Believers." in *The New Yorker* (19 November 2001). 6. Available: http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?fact/011119fa_FACT1 accessed on 25/08/03.

⁴²⁰. David Brooks. "The Culture of Martyrdom." in *The Atlantic Monthly* (June 2002). 3. Available: <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2002/brooks.htm> accessed on 23/10/02. See chapter one for further details concerning "The Wills of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs."

⁴²¹. Assaf Moghadam. "Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects." in *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (2003): 85.

However, unlike the majority of Muslims, including moderate Islamic fundamentalists, radical Islamic fundamentalists sanction the use of terror as a means to achieve their goals. In order to justify their morally unacceptable actions, radical Islamic fundamentalists such as Qutb distort Islam as it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, offering instead their own selective interpretation of why Islam fell from glory and how the crisis that confronts Muslim societies can be solved.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.1 Concluding Findings

The concluding findings of this dissertation are that there is sufficient reliable evidence to prove that 19 members of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist organisation were responsible for committing acts of mass suicide terrorism, which resulted, on September 11th 2001, in the deaths of over 3000 people and the complete destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York. This evidence is essential to achieving the aim of the study, which is to show that radical Islamic fundamentalism, and more specifically Al Qaeda's radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology, was the most probable cause of the 9/11 suicide terrorist attacks. In addition, this evidence is vital in order to be able to debunk the myth that a whole civilisation of people, which although may be anti-American as a result of political grievances, is not an inherent threat to the West like Samuel P. Huntington believes it is.

Furthermore, this dissertation found that although Huntington is correct in assuming that conflict will be defined by cultural, and more specifically religious, values, his assumption that these values encompass those held by entire populations is, however, false. In other words, "the dominating source of conflict will be cultural,"⁴²² not in the civilisational sense, i.e., Islam versus the West, but rather in terms of the radical Islamic fundamentalist values adhered to by a very small minority of Muslims versus all those - Muslim and non-Muslim - who adopt, or even compromise with, the values of Western modernity. It is thus reasonable to conclude that radical Islamic fundamentalism, and not Islam, is a threat, not just to the West, but to all those who are at peace with the values and principles of democracy.

⁴²². Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Simon & Schuster. 1996). 22.

5.2 Significance of the Study with Regards to Future Policy Implications

According to Rohan Gunaratna, “the global fight against Al Qaeda will be the defining conflict of the twenty-first century.”⁴²³ As was shown in the previous chapter, “Osama bin Laden has built an organization that functions both operationally and ideologically at local, national and international levels. Defeating Al Qaeda and its associate groups will be the single biggest challenge confronting the international community, law enforcement authorities and national militaries in the foreseeable future.”⁴²⁴

In order for the governments of the world to be able to prevent and combat the terrorist threat that Al Qaeda poses to the safety of their citizens, it is essential that the appropriate governing authorities understand where the origins of terrorism lie. In this case, the roots of terror can be directly traced to the radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology that Al Qaeda and its associate groups espouse. Thus, the enemy is not Islam, as has already been discussed, but radical Islamic fundamentalism – the ideology.

It therefore follows that understanding the nature, i.e., the key features, of radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology is crucial in fighting and winning the war against terrorism. In other words, although “heavy bombing detected, disrupted and degraded the physical infrastructure of Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, their fighting cadres are intact,” and will continue to grow unless governments and civil society respond to “the long-term strategic threat” posed by Al Qaeda’s ideology.⁴²⁵ According to Gunaratna, “the powerful message that Al Qaeda is not Koranic but heretical has not been packed into the counterterrorism toolbox. If no effort is made to counter or dilute the ideology of extremism, then support for the Al Qaeda model of Islam will only

⁴²³. Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group. 2003). 294.

⁴²⁴. Gunaratna. 294.

⁴²⁵. Gunaratna. 123, 296 & 297.

increase,” which means that thousands of young Muslim men will continue to be recruited to sacrifice their lives in acts of suicide terrorism.⁴²⁶

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⁴²⁶. Gunaratna, xlii & 123.

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