Toward a Contemporary Definition of Terrorism

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> Before the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001,
> the subject of terrorism did not loom large in philosophical discussion.…
> The attacks of September 11 and their aftermath put terrorism on the
> philosophical agenda: it is now the topic of numerous books, journal
> articles, special journal issues, and conferences.[1]

Abstract

Terrorism studies point to the need for a standardized definition. This paper will suggest a "working definition" by focusing on semantics rather than an all-inclusive political statement. Its goal of isolating core concepts will be pursued with a view to historical precedents and academic research. A number of definitions begin the paper to indicate a field of meaning with introductory issues. An historical survey leads to 9/11 and its pivotal influence on our thinking about contemporary terrorism. A brief discussion of academia underscores the need for interdisciplinary collaboration for a shared understanding of the dangers that we face. Finally, a core definition will be suggested for further consideration.

Introduction

Our subject is "the clear and present danger" of terrorism. By common consent we have no standardized definition, which is a severe problem in view of the proliferation of attacks and the growing complexity of the subject. Scholarly texts highlight the need with an obligatory, introductory chapter on the meaning of terrorism. **The *Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*** defined terrorism as "government by intimidation" based on *terrorisme*, which is etymologically traced to the Jacobins in 1795, with nuances that include notions of system and policy.[2] A "terrorist," according to the dictionary, is "anyone who attempts to further his views by a system of coercive intimidation." The concept, accordingly, has a long history and now attracts international and interdisciplinary attention. Social sciences study its causes, varieties, and consequences; history traces its distinctive events and evolution over time; psychiatry and psychology explore its mental roots and ways to alleviate its consequences; philosophy analyzes its moral justification; and intelligence agencies with law enforcement pursue its prevention.

We are concerned with the issue of definition that underlies research and informs public policy. The subject, though foundationally important, is elusive and problematic. In a report to the United Nations Crime Branch in 1992, Alex Schmidt noted, "The question of a definition of terrorism has haunted the debate among states for decades…The UN Member States still have no

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[1] *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Terrorism" (http://plato.stanford.edu/ entries/terrorism/, accessed 4/2/2010).
[2] Third edition with addenda. 1955.

agreed-upon definition."[3] Walter Laqueur correctly observed about the absence of a comprehensive definition, "A working definition is certainly not beyond our reach; in any case, political decision makers will not wait for a consensus to emerge among political scientists before they pass the measures they deem necessary to combat terrorism."[4]

We will attempt to provide a "working definition." To do this we will derive the core components of "terrorism" as informed by historical awareness and academic research. We will attempt to answer two crucial questions; which words distinguish terrorism today from similar phenomena, and which terms are "definitional" as distinguished from related laws, policies, procedures, and debatable points in academic discussion. The study will proceed in four stages: First, we will survey a number of dictionaries and institutional definitions. They will serve as a semantical prelude to the contemporary field of meaning. Second, we will briefly summarize the historical evolution of the concept. This will convey a sense of depth and breadth of the subject and inform our definition of age-old phenomena. Third, we will survey academic research to identify some important scholars and writings, which mandate an interdisciplinary approach to discussions about definition. The first three stages are perhaps the most insightful ways to gain an overview of terrorism as a prelude to an adequate definition. Fourth, we will propose a refined definition with explanation for further consideration. The problem of definition is an elusive grail of terrorism studies, and we must approach the study with some awareness of its pitfalls and complexities.

A Survey of Contemporary Definitions

Dictionaries suggest a variety of definitions. For example:

American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed., 2009: "The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence by a person or an organized group against people or property with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments, often for ideological or political reasons";

Encarta World English Dictionary [North American Edition], 2009: "Political violence: violence or the threat of violence, especially bombing, kidnapping, and assassination, carried out for political purposes";

Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Law, 1996: "1. the unlawful use or threat of violence esp. against the state or the public as a politically motivated means of attack or coercion. 2, violent and intimidating gang activity";

Word/Net (Princeton.edu, 2010): "the calculated use of violence (or the threat of violence) against civilians in order to attain goals that are political or religious or ideological in nature; this is done through intimidation or coercion or instilling fear"; and

Random House Dictionary, 2010: "The use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, esp. for political purposes. 2. the state of fear and submission produced by terrorism or terrorization."

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[3] www.tamilnation.org/terrorism/index.htm (accessed 10/30/09).
[4] Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (Boston, London: Little Brown, 1987), 149.

Various international organizations and nations have sought to define terrorism with a degree of urgency, because it has proliferated in the last quarter century. International organizations and nations have attempted to define terrorism on the basis of generally accepted guidelines of international law with a bias against the notion of "state terrorism," an issue that reflects division on whether agents should be identified as "terrorists" or "freedom fighters." Generally, they have attempted to create a consensus about terrorism to create the means to prosecute in signatory countries. **"The International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings" [1997]** provides for "universal jurisdiction" over "the unlawful and intentional use of explosives and other lethal devices in, into, or against various public places with intent to kill or cause serious bodily injury, or with intent to cause extensive destruction of the public place." In 1987 Iran's delegation at an international Islamic conference stated: "Terrorism is an act carried out to achieve an inhuman and corrupt (*mufsid*) objective, and involving [a] threat to security of any kind, and violation of rights acknowledged by religion and mankind." **"The Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism" [1998]** was formulated by the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior and the Council of Arab Ministers of Justice in Cairo, Egypt: "Any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty, and security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize a national resources."[5] **"The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism" [1999]** defined terrorism in terms of twelve international agreements since 1963 as "any act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act." **"The European Union Council Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism" [2002]** concentrates on seriously violent acts with the intent "of altering or destroying the political, economic, or social structures of a country," **"The United Nations Resolution 1566" [2004]** defines terrorist acts as

> criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offenses within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political,

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[5] Earlier, in June 1987, *al-Tawhid* published "Towards a Definition of Terrorism," reflecting the conclusions of the International Conference on Terrorism that was convened by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Geneva (Resolution 20/5-P [1.5]): Based on Islamic and human principles, "Terrorism is an act carried out to achieve an inhuman and corrupt (*mufsid*) objective, and involving threat to security of any kind, and violation of rights acknowledged by religion and mankind" (http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/definition-terrorism.htm, p. 7, accessed 4/27/10).

philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or others similar nature, and calls upon all States to prevent such acts and, if not prevented, to ensure that such acts are punished by penalties consistent with their grave nature[6]

Finally, "The **Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism"** [2005] aligned itself with the United Nation's zero-tolerance approach:

Terrorist offenses and the offenses set forth in this Convention by whomever perpetuated, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature, and recalling the obligation of all Parties to such offenses and, if not prevented, to prosecute and ensure that they are punishable by penalties which take into account their grave nature. . . . Recalling that acts of terrorism have the purpose by their nature or context to seriously intimidate a population or unduly compel a government or an international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act or seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization; For the purposes of this Convention, "public provocation to commit a terrorist offense" means the distribution, or otherwise making available, of a message to the public, with the intent to incite the commission of a terrorist offense, where such conduct, whether or not directly advocating terrorist offenses, causes a danger that one or more offenses may be committed. Each party shall adopt such measures as may be necessary to establish public provocation to commit a terrorist offense, as defined in paragraph I, when committed unlawfully and intentionally, as a criminal offense under its domestic law.[7]

The preferred definition in the United States has been the **State Department's** "premeditated, politically motivated, violence perpetuated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."[8] "The **Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Terms"** differs only in nuance from the above, "The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence

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[6] UN Resolution 1566 [2004].

[7] The Convention represents the consensus of signatories to the "Europoean Convention on Human Rights," a group of nations with similar interests.

[8] *Patterns of Global Terrorism*. Washington: Department of State, 2001, vi (U. S. Code Title 22, section 2656f(d). The definition was presented in conjunction with the "Patriot Act of 2001." The government has used this definition for statistical and analytical purposes since 1983. The term "non-combatant" is defined in the code as civilians and military people, who at the time of the event are unarmed or not on duty. The **Federal Bureau of Investigation** has defined terrorism as "The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a Government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives." An earlier definition than the State Department was presented in the 1999 governmental report on profiling terrorists: "The calculated use of unexpected, shocking, and unlawful violence against noncombatants (including, in addition to civilians, off-duty military and security personnel in peaceful situations) and other symbolic targets perpetuated by a clandestine member(s) of a subnational group or a clandestine agent for the psychological purpose of publicizing a political or religious cause and/or intimidating or coercing a governmental or civilian population into accepting demands on behalf of the cause." Rex Hudson et al., *Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why: The 1999 Government Report on Profiling Terrorists* Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 1999.

to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological."

The **working definition in the United Kingdom** reflects an evolving semantical process that was based on the **"Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Acts of 1989"**: It was defined as "the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear." The definition was criticized because it omitted the issue of threats, the seriousness of casualties or social [e.g., property or electronic sabotage] disruption, and religious goals. **Lord Lloyd of Berwick reviewed it in 1996** and recommended that a new definition in accord with the operational definition of the **Federal Bureau of Investigation** (USA, fn. 7): "The use of serious violence against persons or property, or threat to use such violence, to intimidate or coerce a government, the public or any section of the public, in order to promote political, social, or ideological objectives."[9] Lord Lloyd himself noted that the definition did not cover events like the disruption of air traffic or electronic systems. This process culminated in the lengthy UK legal definition in the "Terrorism Act of 2000" (section I):

Section 1. –

    (1) In this Act "terrorism" means the use or threat of action where --

        (a) the action falls within subsection (2),

        (b) the use or threat is designed to influence the government
           [or an international organization] or to intimidate the public or a
           section of the public, and

        (b) the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political,
           religious, racial or ideological cause.

    (2) Action falls within this subsection if it --

        (a) involves serious violence against a person,

        (b) involves serious damage to property,

        (c) endangers a person's life, other than that of the person
           committing the action,

        (d) creates a serious risk to the health and safety of the public
           or a section of the public,

        (e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an
           electronic system.

    (2) The use or threat of action falling within subsection (2) which involves
        the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not subsection (1)(b)
        is satisfied.[10]

In November 2005 Home Secretary, Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke M. P., acting affirmatively on a request from the Chairman of the Select Committee on Home Affairs, Rt. Hon. John Denham

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[9] "Inquiry into Legislation against Terrorism" [1996], Cm 3420: para 5:22.
[10] The definition was taken from the UK Statute Law Database (accessed 11/12/09).

M.P., appointed **Lord Carlile of Berriew** to review terrorism legislation, including the above definition.

Lord Carlile noted favorably that the "Terrorism Act of 2006" extended the range of terrorism offenses to include publicly perceived "direct or indirect encouragement or other inducement to them to the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism or convention offences," whether in content or circumstances. This verbal or written "encouragement' is elsewhere equated with "glorifies the commission or preparation (whether in the past, in the future or generally) of such acts or offenses."[11] He acknowledged the ambiguity of "preaching and glorification": "However, amendments made to the 2006 Act during its passage through Parliament need to be read carefully; they do not criminalize mere preaching and glorification, as subsections 2 and 3 illustrate."[12] Actually, subsections 2 and 3 do not specify precisely the difference between "mere" and "criminal" statements. And one wonders if matters of definition and policy are not confused in discussions of various means like biological, radiological, and electronic attacks. All of these statutes and procedures are crucial for governmental policy, but they assume a commonly understood definition of terrorism, which Lord Carlile elsewhere disclaims.

We must emphasize, in spite of the plethora of suggestions, that a definitional consensus has been elusive. Lord Carlile quoted Lord Lloyd's conclusion: "We must obviously do our best with the definition. However, having spent many hours looking at many different definitions, I can only agree with what was said by both the noble Lord, Lord Goodhart, and the noble Lord, Lord Cope; namely, that there are great difficulties in finding a satisfactory definition. Indeed, I was unable to do so and I suspect that none of us will succeed." He then emphatically supported Lord Lloyd: "I am entirely in agreement with that comment [cited above]. Hard as I have striven, and as many definitions as I have read, I have failed to conclude that there is one that I could regard as the paradigm."[13] Almost all experts of this oft-considered subject acknowledge that there is no standardized definition for the 21st-century world, even though attacks have proliferated in the first decade. Terrorism is an international threat in an interconnected world. How can we control the multiplication of terrorist acts, if we do not know more precisely our "clear and present danger" in this perplexing and seemingly impenetrable dilemma?

Lord Carlile also included a useful synthesis of responses to his research, which was expressed as four propositions.[14] First, no definition or special procedures for apprehending terrorists are needed. The position argues that terrorism is covered by existing criminal laws, and that definition and procedures would violate freedoms and lead to unconstitutional actions by the state. Second, a definition is needed without special procedures. The view holds that all terrorist actions are covered by criminal laws, but the sentencing judge should be empowered to

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[11] Lord Carlile of Berriew Q.C., *The Definition of Terrorism: A Report by Lord Carlile, Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation* (London: Crown Copyright, 2007), 39.

[12] Ibid., p. 41.

[13] Ibid., p. 4. Amy Zalman, "The Many Definitions of Terrorism," concluded: "There is no definition of terrorism agreed on throughout the world, and definitions tend to rely heavily on who is doing the defining and for what purpose" (http://terrorism.about.com/od/what is terroris1/ss/DefineTerrorism.htm, accessed 4/5/2010).

[14] Lord Carlile, *Definition*, p. 19.

proportionately increase punishments according to the severity of the offense. Third, a tighter-than-present definition is needed, including special procedures for serious offenses. Though similar to the current UK position, criminal legislation needs to address the special categories of terrorism. Fourth, a definition is needed with broader procedures to anticipate future terrorist activity.

A conflict has arisen between security issues and the protection of rights and freedoms. The UK and the US have prioritized security over civil liberties in their legislation and law-enforcement procedures. Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 allows police to arrest and detain a suspect without charge for 48 hours with extension to seven days if necessary. The latter provision was extended in 2003 to 14 days and then 28 days by the Terrorism Act of 2006. Section 44, the most controversial, allows for "stop-and-search" procedures of any suspect without reasonable suspicion that an offense has been committed. Between July and December 2007, the BBC reported that 14,000 people had been searched by British Transport Police in Scotland. In 2008 the Metropolitan Police conducted 175.000 searches, including 2,313 children under age 15. In response, protesters demonstrated in Trafalgar Square against harassment of photographers on 23 January 2010. Section 44 was ruled illegal by the European Court of Human Rights based on a search of two people in 2003 at the ExCel Centre, which was a military equipment exhibition.[15] The Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex issued a report "The Rules of the Game," which criticized the Terrorist Act of 2000 as too unclear for criminal law. According to the report, "it leaves room for political bias and could be used to persecute people active in legitimate social and political movements who are exercising their rights."[16] Lord Carlile acknowledged that the weight of British legislation was vested in security but that the "discretion" of authorities is necessary for the protection of the public.[17]

The United States responded to 9/11 with the Patriot Act of 2001 and the Intelligence Act of 2004. *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project* pitted free speech against national security. At issue was "material support" for terrorist groups on the State Department's list. The law prohibited not only tangible but also intangible "advice, training, service, and personnel." The dissent cited training on human rights and peacemaking for the Kurdistan Workers' Party, a designated terrorist organization. The law has been important for prosecutors; since 2001 the government had used it to charge 150 defendants that resulted in 75 convictions. On 22 June 2010, Chief Justice Roberts, writing for the 6-3 majority, reversed the Court of Appeals and upheld the law by deferring to the executive and legislative branches because of the extraordinary threat of terrorism: "The government, when seeking to prevent imminent harm in the context of international affairs and national security, is not required to conclusively link all the pieces in the puzzle before we grant weight to its empirical conclusions."[18] Of course, advocates of civil liberties and apparent humanitarian aid have disagreed with the ruling.

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[15] Specific incidents are listed in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism_Act_2000, accessed 5/19/10.
[16] The quote can be found in Lord Carlile, *Definition*, p. 21.
[17] Ibid., pp. 35-37.
[18] http://ccrjustice.org/holder-v-humanitarian-law-project, accessed 6/25/2010.

In summary, the dictionaries raise a number of definitional issues. Generally, they define terrorism as an unlawful, violent act (or threat) against people (or property) to intimidate (or coerce) an enemy for political (or ideological) reasons. Is terrorism synonymous with (political) violence? Should it be defined as an act or event, or should it include the threat of violence? Is it always done with intent (or calculation), and is the intent always political? Should means (or weapons) be included in a definition? Should causes be included? Should terrorists' intent to "coerce change" be included in its core meaning? Is it not tautological to define terrorism as "systematic terror" as some dictionaries do?

The organizational (or institutional) definitions are more concerned with legal norms and the proper balance between security measures and civil liberties. Generally, they focus on gravely unlawful (or criminal, violent) acts (or threats) that intend to kill (or kidnap, injure, destroy) non-combatants (or property to include economic structures) and to intimidate (or compel, coerce) a government to effect political change. The United Nations' resolution emphasizes the severity of the terrorists' deeds and defines these with international conventions and protocols. It also advocates counterterrorism against political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, and religious enemies as the lengthiest declaration against terrorism. The Council of European Convention follows the UK and adds "the intent to incite the commission of a terrorist offense," which draws inflammatory speaking into violent behavior. The Terrorist Act of 2000 added a qualification of "risk to the public" and "interference with an electronic system," which in 2006 included "publicly perceived direct or indirect encouragement of terrorism." All of this points to an emphasis on security in the UK and US.

A Summary of "Terrorism's" History

Various forms of terrorism have been a constant presence in world history.[19] Meanings have shifted with different eras and circumstances. As noted in the *Oxford Dictionary*, terrorism entered public discourse with reference to the Jacobin "reign of terror" in 1793-94. Its goal was to reshape French society in the image of civic virtue as perceived by its proponents. Tribunals enforced revolutionary policy with mass executions of the "enemies of the people," actual or potential, as an expeditious means of consolidating the "virtuous" regime. Estimates are that approximately 40,000 people were killed. Enemies were identified so ambiguously that no one was excluded in principle. In this context terrorism was a means of virtue for the Jacobins. Critics of the purge, on the other hand, invested the notion of terrorism with negative connotations, associating it with tyranny based on fear.

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[19] The roots of political violence are ancient. In the 1st Century C.E., Jewish Zealots attacked Roman authorities and their collaborators in Judea. Their *Sicarii* hid daggers under their cloaks, mingled with crowds at festivals, murdered their victims, and then disappeared into the panicked gathering. In the 11th Century C.E., the *Hashshashin* ("assassins"), a relatively small group of Shia Muslims attacked Fatimid rule with assassinations and alliances with powerful enemies. Cf. Gerard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, eds., *The History of Terrorism: From Antiquity to al Qaeda*, trans. by Edward Schneider, Kathryn Pulver, and Jesse Browner (Berkeley: University of California, 2007), chap. 3.

The descriptive and evaluative use of the term shifted in the 19th Century.[20] Groups of anarchists, revolutionaries, and militant nationalists concluded that political negotiations were ineffective, so they turned to "propaganda by the deed," a longstanding equivalent of terrorism that promoted violence against political enemies to catalyze political change. Targeted leaders would be assassinated, hopefully to destabilize an oppressive regime, generate fear among its constituency, and effect change.[21] Carlo Pisacane wrote in his *Political Testament* (1857) that "ideas spring from deeds and not the other way around." Mikhail Bakunin in his "Letters to a Frenchman on the Present Crisis" (1870) emphasized, "We must spread our principles, not with words but with deeds, for this is the most popular, the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda." The phrase "*propagande par le fait*" was popularized by Paul Brousse in an article by that name in the *Bulletin of the Jura Federation* (1877). Inspired by Pisacane, Bakunin, and Sergei Nechayev, the *Narodnaya Volya* ("People's Will Movement") targeted "leaders of oppression" with guns and bombs, assassinating Tsar Alexander II in 1881. In another noteworthy incident, August Vaillant, a French anarchist, bombed the French Chamber of Deputies in 1893.

The early years of the 20th Century were characterized by state terrorism as in the Jacobin revolution. The Bolsheviks, Maoists, and Nazi regimes were totalitarian and achieved control by ruthlessly suppressing all opposition and then persecuting potential opponents. Totalitarian terrorists defended their tactics, whether by execution or starvation, as a defense of the state against internal enemies. Totalitarianism has been associated with state terrorism, including military dictatorships that have continued its strategies into the 20th Century.

World War II introduced the definitional issue of the relation of war and terrorism. Certainly the terrors of war, just or otherwise, were evident in the Resistance, incendiary bombings in Asia (such as Japanese bombing of cities like Shanghai) and Europe (such as the bombings of London and Dresden), and supremely the atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, definitional boundaries can become so clouded that war and terrorism become synonymous, and "terrorism" becomes redundant. Perhaps we should recognize that causes of mass casualties can co-exist and that terrorism can be seen as a part of war if applicable. An apt analogy would be a violent storm system that spawns other storms on its periphery or in its wake. Chaliand and Blin present a customary distinction between the types of conflict, "While warfare is based on physical coercion, terrorism seeks to have a psychological impact. In contrast to guerilla warfare, terrorism is the negation of combat. It is about attacking an unarmed adversary, not about surprise attacks on elements of a regular army."[22] When terrorism is a part of war such as World War II and Vietnam, then it should not to be equated with the war.

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[20] The same period witnessed the invention of dynamite as an affordable explosive and the rotary press for mass-produced pamphlets, both of which became instruments in terrorist activity.

[21] Generally, their form of terrorism avoided non-influential people, though the French and Spanish anarchists in the 1880s and 1890s engaged in indiscriminate killings. The legacy of "the deed" continued through the urban guerilla movements in the 1970s and 1980s.

[22] Chaliand and Blin, *History of Terrorism*, p. 227.

From the middle of the 20th Century, insurgent organizations and religious extremists have occupied the stage. Terrorist campaigns were abetted by the Cold War, anti-colonialism, and the growth of international media. The threat of nuclear holocaust between the competing superpowers sheltered attacks around the world that were fed by massive underground flows of monies and weapons. These guerilla movements were a way to promote client states without a nightmarish apocalypse. Besides equipping despotic "allies" for state terror, the flow of arms also promoted armed insurgents such as the red brigades, paramilitary factions, and movements like *Partido Comunista del Perú*, commonly known as "Shining Path." The insurgency movements sought to undermine existing governments while building their power base, often as proxies for larger powers like the Soviet Union, China, or the United States.

Linked to Cold-War insurgency in the instability of the times were the post-war dissolutions of colonial empires and the rise of nationalist movements to fill the void. The Germans and Japanese had to deal with the dispersal of their dismembered dominions. For anti-colonial nationalists, the issue was the seizure of power in their countries with limited resources. Thus, terrorism was used to loosen colonial controls and to encourage national independence.

Examples are numerous, so we will limit ourselves to campaigns against the British by the Irish, the Zionists, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.[23] The *Irish Republican Army* was born during World War I with the merger of several nationalist groups, who were united on the issue of independence. A hard-fought struggle led by Michael Collins, a master strategist, resulted in the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922. In the temper of the times, a military victory did not amount to political victory, which prolonged the hostilities. Noteworthy events included the Easter Rising of 1916, which had 194 casualties. The execution of IRA's leaders in the aftermath gave the movement martyrs and motivation. Around Easter 1920 the IRA attacked 300 police stations and later carried the conflict to Liverpool on British soil. This gave the IRA international attention and the measure of freedom in 1922.

The IRA itself gravitated away from terrorism as a tactic and has represented itself through *Sinn Féin*, its political wing. However, the *Provisional IRA* broke away in 1969 and initiated armed confrontations such as Bloody Sunday in January 1972 in Londonberry and bomb attacks later in July. Its military actions until 1997 characterized a period known as "the Troubles."

The strength of the Irish resolve endured for over thirty years and demonstrated that international support, strategic leadership, and a war-weary public could effect political change. This made the IRA a blueprint for nationalist movements that would echo in anticolonial conflicts to come.

The Irish-inspired Zionist groups like *Hagannah*, *Irgun*, and *Lehi* ("Freedom Fighters for Israel") as well as the Muslim Brotherhood, which used terror tactics to free Egypt from British

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[23] Worthy of mention are the Chechnyan separatists led by Shamil Basayev, who have attacked Russian targets since 1994. The *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam* were founded by Velupillar Prabhakaran in 1976. Seeking to create an independent Tamilese state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, it carried out numerous bombings, including a 1987 car bombing at a Columbo bus terminal that killed 110 people. In 2009 a Sri Lankan military offensive claimed that it had effectively destroyed the LTTE.

control. [24]Perhaps Irgun's most notable attack was the 1946 bombing of the King David Hotel, British military headquarters in Jerusalem, killing 91 soldiers and civilians. When their goal was reached as in the creation of Israel in 1948, the groups often integrated into the new political process; Irgun was transformed into a part of Likud, and Lehi was blended into Israel's Defense Forces. Scholars have noted that the rare cases where terrorists achieved their goals are usually in the national liberation struggles, while guerilla movements have generally failed.

Nationalistic campaigns, separatist movements, and organizations driven by extreme ideologies have resorted to terrorism as their tactic of choice. They have viewed it as their only way of changing a dominant, oppressive system. By and large, insurgent terrorism has been clandestine in operation and indiscriminate in killing. By the aftermath of the world wars, terrorism had acquired a globally repugnant reputation, and no one wished to apply the term to their agenda. Thus, insurgents portray their campaigns as struggles for liberation by military means rather than criminal activities. They depicted the governments or agencies of the oppressive system as the "true terrorists," as guardians of structural violence and injustices that caused sub-state movements to rally around the motto "peace without justice is not peace." Terrorism on these terms becomes the aim of the violence rather than the attacks per se. Governments, in turn, labeled all non-state violence as terrorism. Hence, because non-state agents carried it out, the state responded forcefully for the security of its citizens. As a result, one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter, and public discourse on the issue becomes a definitional logjam. This is the reason for the United Nations' inability to formulate a definition that could be embedded in international law. Islamic countries have rejected all definitions that label liberation movements as terrorist, while Western countries have not accepted any definition that allows for states and their agencies to be terrorists.

The statehood of Israel was a first catalytic event that has led through a series of movements and trends to global Islamic strategies and the pivotal event of September 11, 2001. Others were the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and "Desert Storm," the United States' initial invasion of Iraq. However, the roots of contemporary terrorism must be traced to the beginnings of Islam in the 7th Century, which bequeathed authoritative texts and traditions (chiefly the *Qur'an* and its *sharia* ["law"] and Mohammed's sayings [the *hadith*]). Rapid conquests gave Islam a sacred core (Medina and Mecca) with vast territories and populations from Africa to southern Asia. Its empire, considered sacredly, is a geopolitical space without national boundaries, which has been populated by the *umma* ("community of Muslim believers") living in *sunna*, tradition centered in five practices. From its beginnings religion and politics were intertwined with honors being dispensed for *jihad*, from its general sense of devoutness to its

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[24] Interestingly, Lehi was the last group to identify itself as "terrorist" until recent Islamic radicalism because of the politically negative connotation of the term. John Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism* (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), 86, interviewed a number of terrorists from the Provisional IRA, one of whom stated, "To me, terrorist is a dirty word, and I certainly don't . . . nor have I ever considered myself to be one, but, ah, I remain an activist to this day." Also, Christopher Harmon, *Terrorism Today*, 2nd ed. (London, New York: Routledge, 2008), 1-3.

particular meaning of defending Islam by any means.[25] Mohammed's death in 632 C.E. stunned Muslim leadership, which was unprepared for succession. The battle of Karbala in 680 between warring caliphates signaled the fissiparous tendency of the religion throughout its history.[26] The war against the Crusaders was the next conflict with symbolic significance for the present, reappearing frequently in jihadist mythology.

A resurgence of a fundamentalistic Islam arose in the 9th Century with Ibn Hanbal of Syria, whose Sunni jurisprudence insisted on strict conformity to *salaf* ("ancient ones"), as Mohammed's first followers were known. The issue was unity in the face of threats from the Crusades and Mongols. His disciple Ibn Tamiya (1263-1328) extended Hanbalism by making jihad equal to prayer as an Islamic practice. His call to violence was successful among the marginalized classes.[27]

Similarly, Ibn Wahab (1703-1792) advanced Ibn Tamiya's *salafism* into a "purified" strictness in his alliance with the Saud tribe to dominate Arabia. His Wahabis with the Sauda ended Hashemite claims, and together they founded Saudi Arabia in 1932. Tremendous wealth from oil production and its holy cities of Medina and Mecca enabled the country to become the dominant model of Sunni Islam. At the end of the 19th Century in a setting of European colonialism, Muslim clerics again blamed the weakness of the culture on the abandonment of religion and the decadence of the elite classes. Rashid Rida (1865-1935) endorsed *wahabism* and advocated Ibn Taliya's salafism. To this point, Islamic history evidenced a recurring pattern of fragmentation, corruption, and a call for reform.

Hassan al-Banna's founding of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928 initiated another important anticolonial phase It has been a religious organization that was dedicated to the "elimination of evil." It sought to rectify the injustices of economic disparity through governmental redistribution of wealth, a reminder of the fact that Islamic religion and politics are indivisible.[28] The Brotherhood contained an armed branch that challenged Farouk and fought with Arab forces during the 1948 war in Palestine.

Palestinian resistance was initiated by Haj Amin al-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, in the wake of the Sykes-Pinot Agreement (1916), which opened the way for a Jewish homeland. Palestinian militants, inspired in part by Marxism, were galvanized by their imams' calls to jihad. Al-Husseini's sermons were laced with exhortations to resist modern Crusaders with numerous references to Ibn Taimiya and Ibn Wahab.

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[25] One of the distinctions of Shiism is the role of the *imam*. They believe that 'Ali was an *imam* first and only then a *caliph*. The caliph's role was more political and worldly, while the imam's was primarily religious.

[26] Karbala later became the nostalgic model for jihad's honors for warriors and martyrs (*shahid*).

[27] He reminds today's students of Anwar al-Awaki, the fiery preacher who fled to Yemen and was implicated as an influence on Nidal Malik Hasan, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, among others. Formerly, he outwardly opposed 9/11 but may have been promoting radicalism at the same time.

[28] In 1941 Abu l'Ala Maududi (1906-1980) started *Jamaat-I-Islami* ("Islamic group") with a similar purpose to the Muslim Brotherhood. A blend of Maududi's religious nationalism with wahabi proselytizing resulted in Pakistani's Deodandi *madrassas* and, in the late 1980s, the Taliban generation. Deobandis were founded in 1866 in Deoband, India, by Sunnis who aligned themselves with salafism. According to the *London Times*, about 600 of Britain's approximately 1400 mosques were led by Deobandi scholars (www.timesonline.co.uk, September 7, 2007, accessed 5/15/10).

From its inception the Palestinian cause has been a rallying point for fractured Islamic interests, including opposition from the Hashemite dynasty in Transjordan. Military asymmetry was repeatedly underscored by military maneuvers such as the Israelite advance to the Suez Canal (1956). In the same year *al-Fatah* was formed as a Palestinian political force. The *Palestinian Liberation Organization* began in 1964 in Egypt under Ahmed Shukairy, and in 1967 al-Fatah joined the PLO's umbrella movement. Abu Iyad organized al-Fatah's splinter group *Black September* in 1970 and led the "Munich massacre" of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Summer Olympics, a notorious terrorist event in the 20th Century. Abu Nidal led another splinter from al-Fatah in 1974, which was called *Fatah—The Revolutionary Council* or ANO (Abu Nidal Organization). This group's most notorious attacks were against El Al Airlines in Rome and Vienna in 1985.[29] *Hezbollah* ("Party of God") is a Lebanese political party that started after the country's civil war in 1982. It has sponsored missile attacks and suicide bombings against Israel from 1992.[30] And *Hamas* ("Islamic Resistance Movement") is another Palestinian initiative that was founded in 1987 by its wing of the Muslim Brotherhood.

After the Six-Day War, a second catalytic event was the Soviet invasion of Afganistan in 1979. Islamic resistance turned the country into a training center with assistance from Cold-War adversaries and Islamic sympathizers.[31] The foundation of the *mujahideen* movement was the resurgence of a broad-based, jihadist fundamentalism, a distinctive phase of "religious terrorism" toward the end of the century.[32] An army of volunteers flooded the besieged country. They were united by a radical faith and mobilized by networks of militants. They sloughed their African, Middle Eastern, and Asian loyalties to form a community of holy warriors in the tradition of the Prophet's alliances. With God as the motivator, the relativity of political boundaries yielded to sacred absolutism with apocalyptic scenarios of an uncompromising, all-or-nothing outcome. After the Soviet withdrawal, they dispersed to the world with their vision of Islamic imperialism. The road to contemporary terrorism, as before, wound through pivotal leaders and movements: Qutb, Shakri, 'Azzam, Rahman, and bin Laden among many others.

Sayyin Qutb (1906-1966) developed Ibn Taimiya and Maududis' principle of punishing the corrupt prince. He labeled corrupt authorities as apostates, so that jihad was no longer merely a defensive obligation to protect the umma from infidels, but also an offensive imperative

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[29] In the 1970s and 1980s, at the height of his power, Abu Nidal was widely regarded as the most ruthless of Palestinian leaders. He was implicated in attacks in about 20 countries, killing or injuring over 900 people.

[30] 'Ali Shari'ati (1933-1977), who facilitated theocracy in Shiism, also introduced a second concept into jihad. One nuance was like Hanza, the Prophet's uncle, who received honor for the loss of his life during war. The other meaning was like Imam Hussein, son of 'Ali, who sought death in suicidal conditions for the honor of Islam. In cases of hopeless asymmetry, like the Palestinian cause and al-Qaeda, suicide bombings became a tactic of choice.

[31] Remarkably, the United Sates backed Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the most radical Islamist, who led MUKUB after 'Azzam's death.

[32] A notorious example of religious terrorism was Aum Shinrikyo (a.k.a. Aleph), a Japanese cult, which intended to start an apocalyptic war that would usher in its utopian alternative. Its founder and leader was Chizmo Matsumoto (a.k.a. Shoko Asahara), a self-styled guru with absolute authority. He recruited thousands of zealots, acquired finances in excess of $100 million, obtained extensive media holdings, and secured weapons like poisonous gases. The group hoped to secure nuclear arms from the former Soviet republics without success. In 1994 they carried out an attack in Matsumoto, Japan, killing eight and injuring 200. Seven months later they dispersed sarin gas on five trains in Tokyo, killing twelve and injuring 5000 people.

to remove corruption from Islamic leadership. During his imprisonment under Nasser, Qutb stressed divine sovereignty in his condemnation of Western democracies and contemporary Muslim regimes. His radical following in the Muslim Brotherhood produced 'Abdallah 'Azzam, Ayman Zawahiri, and Omar Bakri. 'Azzam united the salafist mujahideen in Pakistan during jihad against the Soviet regime. Al-Zawahiri became leader of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad group and al-Qaeda'a second in command. And Bakri became a vocal supporter of international jihad in British media.

Another Egyptian, Ad al-Salam Faraj, also developed Ibn Tainiya's view of jihad, making it a foundational practice of Islam. In his view it is the perpetuation of political violence, obliging the umma ultimately to indiscriminate killing. He founded Egypt's hard-line *al-Jihad*, which interpreted it as "holy war" in a radical sense. After Anwar Sadat's assassination, Faraj was executed in 1982. Mustafa Shukri's *Jamaat al-Muslim* ("Muslim's society") expanded Qutb's "apostasy" and Faraj's "jihad" and asserted that all Muslims who did not wage holy war were heathen. His followers migrated to Algeria and Pakistan for training and conflict before they returned to network in Europe.

The *Gama'at al-Islamiya* (GI) was the most developed movement of Egyptian jihadism. In the later 1970s under Omar Abdel Rahman (the "blind skeikh"), it evolved into a highly structured organization with dozens of "autonomous" groups. When Sadat pursued rapproachment with the West, he became the "Pharoah," whom the GI determined to kill. This internal dynamic was frequently repeated in this generation of Islam. The decline of radical organizations under Hosni Mubarak was marked by their attacks on the tourist industry, notably at Luxor in 1997. The government cracked down, and the militants were forced to take refuge among Afghanistan's mujahideens in the 1990s, which in turn joined forces with al-Qaeda.

The administration of the militant volunteers and vast financial resources was entrusted to 'Abdal-lah 'Azzam. An educational leader in the World Islamic League, he created MUKUB (*Maktab al-Khidmat ul-Mujahideen ul-Arab*, "Bureau of Services for Arab Mujahideen") in Peshawar in 1984, another clandestine umbrella movement with leadership drawn from representative constituencies. To monitor his activities, the head of Saudi intelligence services, Prince Turki al-Faisal, appointed Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden was highly trained, independently wealthy, and devoutly religious. He had studied under 'Azzam and Mohammed Qutb, Sayyid's younger brother. 'Azzam formed an international jihadist army and used Palestine as a priority to provide unity among the diverse volunteers. In 1988 he also founded *al-Qaeda* ("the base"), because he felt that every great vision needed a vanguard to advance toward its utopian society. The first *intifada* in 1987 marked the resurgence of Islamic fervor for an anti-Zionist initiative. But 'Azzam and his sons were killed by a car bomb in 1989, and bin Laden assumed control as *emir* ("commander").

If strategic networks have been the engine of modern terrorism, then the communication revolution has been its fuel. In Magnum Ranstorp's words, "The role of the media as the oxygen of terrorism would take on a new added meaning, urgency, and complexity with globalization

and the instruments of cyberspace."[33] On the heels of wireless communication came radio and television with their ability to inform masses quickly. Terrorism is sensational news and commands an expanding share of public attention, even in a world of terabytes (perhaps yottabytes) where only headlines are noticed by increasingly illiterate populations. Thus, a serious tension has persisted between the need for public awareness, the demands of free speech, and authoritative censorship. The two-edged sword of free speech feeds sensational violence in psychological warfare, but it enables security agencies to monitor exchanges between terrorists. Bin Laden, an expert in psychological warfare, could hardly have directed al-Qaeda without sophisticated technology. On the other hand, after the catastrophic attack on 9/11, the organization has had to revert to a slower, more secure means of communication such as couriers between franchised cells.[34]

Bin Laden initially began to weave an alliance between al-Qaeda's *Majlis* ("governing council") and the Taliban to complement his Saudi and African connections. In 1991 the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait. In a fateful event, the United States invaded Iraq in a third catalytic event after the Six-Day War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The presence of "Christian" troops on Saudi soil rankled bin Laden. Two of Islam's holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, were there. The third in Jerusalem was occupied by Israel with American support. In bin Laden's perception, the United States and its allies had defiled the land of the Prophet and humiliated his people. Furthermore, the Americans had plundered Islamic wealth and corrupted its leadership. So, with extraordinary animosity, he decreed that the United States would be, for the first time, the supreme target of Islamic terrorism.[35] In 1993 a car bomb with cyanide exploded underneath the World Trade Center, and a Pakistani terrorist killed CIA employees in front of their headquarters in Langley, Virginia. In 1998 bin Laden issued a *fatwa* ("manifesto") that summoned the umma to kill Americans indiscriminately and to plunder their money: "The ruling to kill Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in every country in which it is possible to do it.…We—with God's help— call 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 and whenever you can find them."[36] The decree led to a new umbrella movement called World Islamic Front against Jews

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[33] Magnus Ranstorp, "Introduction: Mapping Terrorism Research," in *Mapping Terrorism Research: State of the art, gaps, and future direction*," ed. by the author, 1-2 (London, New York: Routledge, 2007).
[34] An implied shift in the rise of Yemen and the involvements of *Lashkar-e-Taiba* and the Punjabi Taliban indicate this.
[35] Generally, Western Europe tended to be the focus of attacks before the 1990s, whereas the United States was challenged beyond its borders. Pearl Harbor was embedded in the American memory as "a day of infamy." But this isolation began to change in 1993, when the bomb exploded beneath the World Trade Center. In 1995, Timothy McVeigh, an American extremist, bombed the federal building in Oklahoma City. Another extremist attacked the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. And the "Unabomber," Ted Kacyzynski, perpetuated seventeen attacks. These attacks represent "domestic terrorism," acts that were carried out for a variety of reasons: revenge, deprivation, or insanity. In the 21st Century Western Islamic recruits compounded the problem and exposed terrorism as the contemporary "chaos monster" with no boundaries.
[36] http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html, accessed 2/15/10).

and Crusaders (FIMIJC). Numerous attacks were carried out under its auspices against American embassies (as in 1998) and targets like the *USS Cole* (2000).

For over a year bin Laden nurtured a plan to humiliate the United States on its own territory in a threefold manner. He plotted to strike at symbols of power with America's own equipment in a way that would inflict maximum casualties.[37] He personally supervised the preparations, delegating its various stages to cells in Asia, Europe, and North America on the basis of proven dedication and discretion. On the morning of September 11, 2001, nineteen terrorists hijacked four large airliners. Three of the airborne "bombs" destroyed the World Trade Center and a section of the Pentagon. The fourth aircraft targeted the White House but crashed in Pennsylvania. Nearly 3000 people were killed, and material damage was estimated at about $7 billion. The unprecedented attack unleashed a massive counterterrorist offensive against Iraq and Mullah Omar's Afghanistan.

In the wake of 9/11, al-Qaeda has clandestinely advertised three goals to rally a globalized radical movement. First, they will seek to inflict maximum casualties, because, in their view, that is the language that speaks loudest in the contemporary world. Second, they wish to work through Islamic martyrs as the most cost-effective means for mass casualties. Third, they will choose strategic targets and weapons to destroy symbolic structures of the enemy to demonstrate their resolve.

The goals raise the final issue of our survey; the dynamics of suicide bombing that amplifies the profound psychological dimension of contemporary terrorism.[38] Their primary example, of course, was the 9/11 offensive. The notion of *bombes humaines* (or *Lebenbombe*) is comparatively new in Western experience, which has led some scholars to compare it with the kamikaze pilots in World War II. In this sense, martyrdom becomes a symbol of ultimate sacrifice and a weapon of war. It also surfaces the very problematic comparison of war and terrorism. Why do some devout Muslims develop into personal weapons of mass destruction? We have noted the role of military asymmetry, which the Palestinians adopted as a strategic "necessity." Also, family-group dynamics and personal hopelessness seem affect the availability of suicide attackers. The deaths of these human weapons prevent a thorough analysis of their situations and motivations and shroud this form of contemporary terrorism in mystery.

We note in summary that an unresolved debate today is whether terrorism is a distinctively new threat or an evolution from its past through globalizing institutions. It has become a complex "network of networks" that challenges precision of vocabulary or meaningful explanations of its mutating characteristics.[39] Our survey has traced it from its lexical roots in the

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[37] A similar plan was formulated to fly a plane into the British Parliament building, but it was cancelled in favor of an attack against British interests in Turkey.

[38] The psychological dimension points to the promise of neuroscientific discoveries. Violent behavior is related to complex environmental and social circumstances in combination with heritable and biological factors: genetic risks, environmental stresses, hormonal alternations, neuroimaging data on brain function alterations, neurobiological research from neuron to feedback loops to the limbic system, computational models on the development of hierarchical societies, among other considerations.

[39] We acknowledge that terrorist movements are not "organizations" in a traditional sense. They have become a hybrid mix of politics and crime. As examples, we may cite the Dawood Ibraham gang in Karachi with Islamic

French Revolution, through state terrorism and insurgencies, to its post-9/11 resurgence. It follows the common themes of international terrorism with an emphasis on non-state movements. There are notable omissions such as extremists attacks (e.g., Timothy McVeigh in Oklahoma City) and campus terrorism (e.g., Cho Seung-Hui at Virginia Tech University and Amy Bishop at the University of Alabama-Huntsville). The summary has hopefully demonstrated that terrorism's causation and execution reflect generations of hatred and frustration that is transformed into homicidal realities. Rigorous academicians have proposed a range of paradigms to examine the modalities of various networks. These models lie beyond the scope of this paper, but their common appeal is that advanced research must integrate perspectives from non-contemporary terrorism. The preponderance of contemporary scholarship is understandably focused on short-term, immediate assessment of current groups and threats. This survey has surfaced the notion of "propaganda by the deed" as an abiding characteristic of terrorism. "The deed" is a clear and present danger, and the world seems to recognize it as such, even if it cannot fully understand—and define—it.

A Survey of Academic Research

Research on terrorism expanded exponentially with the catastrophic events of 9/11. For thirty years studies were confined to a relatively small nucleus of pioneering scholars who recycled their work with one another in a mutually reinforcing feedback loop.[40] Andrew Silke noted that "on 9/11 bin Laden wiped the slate clean of conventional wisdom on terrorists and terrorism."[41] Since the catastrophe, the field of terrorism studies has catapulted from the periphery of academic interest into the vortex of policy concerns worldwide, an uncontrollable tidal wave of mixed information that begs for scientifically informed and analytically tested scholarship. Of course, 9/11 was a shocking wake-up call. However, Paul Wilkinson has given us a deeper reason:

> But without doubt the decisive factor causing the deliberate neglect of the subject throughout the Cold War was the preoccupation of powerful governments, think tanks and research institutes with other matters far more pressing at the time: the nuclear arms race, arms control, détente, Kreminology, containment, etc. During the Cold War all democratic governments, with the conspicuous exception of Israel, did not see terrorism as a strategic issue.[42]

The explosion of academic interest exposed past weaknesses and future needs for interdisciplinarians.

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groups close to bin Laden such as Jaish-i-Muhammed and the Haraket-ul-Mujahideen and the link between the Provisional IRA the criminal FARC guerilla movement in Columbia.

[40] Alex Schmidt and Berto Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1988), 23, identified only 32 leading researchers at the time.

[41] Andrew Silke, *Research on Terrorism: Trends, Achievements and Failures* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), xviii.

[42] Paul Wilkinson, "Research into Terrorism Studies: Achievements and Failures," in *Mapping Terrorism Research*, ed. Ranstorp, p. 318.

Silke has measured the impact of 9/11 by surveying articles in two major journals for three years after the attack, *Terrorism and Political Violence* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*.[43] He noticed that all-important collaborative research had increased from 9.4% (pre-9/11) to 20% of the articles. The use of statistics in research, both descriptive and inferential, increased slightly from 19% to 25.9%. The accumulation of inferential statistics allows for some control of the data when collection methods may be weak. Silke's work exposed some skewed emphases as well, so that resources could be shifted to more vital topics. First, articles on al-Qaeda rose from 2% to 20%. The low level of attention before 9/11 was "perhaps the most significant research failing in the field of the past twenty years,"[44] since the organization had been a growing threat from 1992, and its intense hostility to the United States was never a secret. Second, research on suicide terrorism rose from .5% to 11.5%, about one in nine articles after the attack. Third, articles on weapons of mass destruction have risen from 2.7% to 5.7%. The increase is difficult to understand, since incidents and fatalities are significantly fewer from WMD than other means like suicide terrorism.[45]

Out of the complexity of modern terrorism, several priorities have emerged. Among these is the acquisition of new data from primary research on the field. Scholars must try to expand our knowledge of causes that are context-specific and are supported by case studies. For example, David Ronfeldt has argued that al-Qaeda and related networks represent a global "tribe" that pursues segmental warfare.[46] Charles Tilly among others has examined the dynamics of networks in terrorism.[47] How do religions and their "sacred violence" (absolute beliefs, martyrology, and geographical sites) spawn terrorism?[48] The pervasive role of psychology in general (and neurobiology in particular) in individual and "cellular" behavior will endure as a vital subject.[49] Another ongoing need is additional understanding about how terrorists are recruited in different places and circumstances, and how they are trained to translate anger and hatred into sacrificial participation.[50] We need to know more about how the rapidly changing

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[43] Andrew Silke, "The Impact of 9/11 on Research on Terrorism," in *Mapping Terrorism Research*, ed. Ranstorp, chap. 4.

[44] Ibid., 84.

[45] Silke attributes this interest to the fears of policy makers who award research grants, ibid., p. 90. However, WMD may pose a future threat with the possibility of nuclear weapons spreading to potential terrorists.

[46] Donald Ronfeldt, "Al-Qaeda and its Affiliates: A Global Tribe Waging Segmental Warfare," *First Monday* 10/3 (7 March 2005).

[47] Charles Tilly, "Collective Violence in European Perspective," in *Violence in America*, vol. 2: *Protest, Rebellion, Reform* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1989); also, Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003).

[48] David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California, 2005); Austin Turk, "Sociology of Terrorism," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004): 271-86; and *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77 (2009): 823-940.

[49] Bruce Bongar, et al., eds. *Psychology of Terrorism* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University, 2007); John Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism*; Cf. Nancy Hayden, "The Complexity of Terrorism: Social and Behavioral Understanding," in *Mapping Terrorism Research*, ed. Ranstorp, chap. 13.

[50] Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995); Quintan Wiktorowitcz, ed. *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 2004); and Aldon Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven: Yale University, 1992).

means of communication can be utilized for public security. How can the social sciences blend their research with intelligence communities to accurately advise and inform policy-making agencies?

These needs and priorities point to the importance of definitional issues in terrorist studies. Walter Laqueur observed in 1987: "Ideally, all discussions of terrorism, its motives and inspiration, its specific character and mode of operation, its political orientation and long-term consequences, should start with a clear, exact, and comprehensive definition of the subject."[51] He lamented that such a definition does not exist. Later Martha Crenshaw observed that terrorism studies were still plagued by the lack of an adequate definition, an inability to build a cohesive, integrated, and cumulative theory built around larger data-sets and over longer periods of time because of "the event- driven character of much research."[52] To Laqueur's caveat about variables, we can note language changes in transitional and tempestuous times like the last century. A part of our problem is the minefield of semantical equivalences that blend terrorism with various kinds of extreme violence; war, massacres, insurgency, riots, criminal activity, assassination, genocide, and other phenomena that horrify humanity. Terms can be similar in kind but very different in degree and nuance. An equation of similar terms is not the way to gain semantical clarity.

Academicians agree that the "right" definition for the above needs and priorities must be sufficiently broad to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration. Perhaps the best way to affirm the importance of this need is to describe three collaborative approaches, all of which point to the importance of a definitional foundation. First, after World War II, Carl Hovland, Clark Hull, and their colleagues approached terrorism as a "social influence campaign" and analyzed it with the Yale model of persuasion that was based on learning and communication theories.[53] Their work, of course, corresponded to the nationalistic and anticolonial campaigns, which assumed that negotiations could alleviate destructive hostilities. Also assuming that terrorism is the unlawful use of violence to achieve political ends, the approach argued that terrorists sought to persuade a target audience to effect change. Terrorism from the perspective of "social influence" is a process that includes six steps: *exposure* to the appropriate audience (e.g., riveting news), *attention* through a shocking event (e.g., something that warns against the *status quo*), *comprehension* through culturally appropriate means (e.g., bin Laden's declaration of jihad against the US), a desired *response* to the attention-getting exposure (hopefully Islamic mobilization against the enemy), *duration* of response until the change is effected, and *translation* of the perceived threat into action (hopefully a sustained campaign of terror). The process was illustrated in the train bombings in Madrid in March 2004. The attack occurred three days before the national election as a "statement" against Spain's support of the invasion of Iraq.

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[51] Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, p. 142.
[52] Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Terrorism: An Agenda for the 21st Century," *Political Psychology* 21 (2000), 405.
[53] Carl Hovland, Andrew Lumsdaine, and F. D. Sheffield, *Experiments on Mass Communication* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1949); Hovland, Irving Janis, and Harold Kelley, *Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1982).

The audiences of terrorism are its constituency and its enemy. The message was that the terrorists are capable of imposing their agenda.[54] We may note that "social influence" analyses have discovered that terrorism is most effective against democracies, because their leadership must be more responsive to the "general will" than authoritarian societies.

Second, violence as mimesis has been studied collaboratively in terms of its connections to sacredness and social medicine. René Gerard, a professor of social science and humanities at Stanford University, advanced his "scapegoat" theory to explain mimetic desires as the basic cause of group violence.[55] People who are threatened or excluded from their desired group identity tend to resort to violence to try to restore their sense of social order. The annual "Colloquium on Violence and Religion" and its journal *Contagion* were founded in 1990 to explore Gerard's theory and its implications for social violence. For example, at the annual meeting in 1999 in Atlanta, Georgia, scholars discussed "scapegoating" in terms of the massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, and concluded that schoolyards are sacred grounds where students engage in ritualized activities. Campus terrorism sometimes involves humiliated teens, who turn to armed gangs and violent cults to gain respect.

Felton Earls, professor of social medicine at Harvard Medical School, spent ten years in research to try to understand armed violence as a health problem. With his colleagues Earls used propensity stratification on longitudinal, adolescent data in Chicago's neighborhoods and concluded that exposure to firearm violence doubled the probability that teens will perpetrate the same crime within two years.[56] Surprisingly, they found that "community efficacy" is a more important indicator of the potential for deadly violence than status and race. If groups and neighborhoods have a sense of security and "fellow feeling" within themselves, regardless of economic status, then the probability of violent crime diminishes. Earls explained: "What we found is that as we got close to a neighborhood and understood how the residents functioned in terms of the degree to which people watched out for each other, trusted each other, and monitored each other's kids . . . if we measured those aspects of neighborhoods, we could draw much sharper correlations and maybe even causal connections with rates of violence."[57]

Third, social philosophers have debated the moral justification of terrorism in terms of broad or restricted definitions. In view of the injustices of oppressive regimes, is terrorism ever justified? The broad definition has been preferred by social scientists to define terrorism over time. The restricted position argues that terrorist violence should be defined only in terms of

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[54] Several scholars have noted that "the terrorist rate of success is pretty high when it comes to short-term goals but quite low when it comes to long-term objectives" (Brigitte Nacos, *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding Threats and Responses in the Post-9/11 World*, 3rd ed. [Boston: Longman, 2010], 131). Dipak Gupta makes the same point; 90% of all groups disappear after one year of activity. The survivors are the ones with a strong constituency like the national liberation struggles (Gupta, *Understanding Terrorist and Political Violence: The life cycle of birth, growth, transformation, and demise* [London, New York: Routledge, 2008], chap. 8).

[55] René Gerard, *The Gerard Reader*, ed. by James Williams (New York: Crossroad, 1996).

[56] Jeffrey Bingenheimer, Robert Brennen, and Felton Els, "Firearm Violence Exposure and Serious Violent Behavior," *Science* (27 May 2005), 1323-26.

[57] Felton Earls, "Is violence a medical problem?," *Harvard University Gazette* (December 1, 2005), 17.

noncombatant persons.[58] The latter view focuses on the repugnance of indiscriminate killing and just war theory.[59] The "freedom fighters," on the other hand, argue that targeted killing of oppressive leaders is "political assassination," while terrorists like bin Laden consider all participants in an unjust or corrupt population as "combatants" to be killed. Such annihilationism, of course, is preposterous.

Justifications of terrorism that concede the tragedy of noncombatant deaths are twofold, consequentialism and nonconsequentialism. Consequentialists argue that terrorism is not evil in itself and must be judged solely in terms of evil consequences. Kai Nielson, for example, assesses terrorism on a case-by-case basis with a view to its worthwhile accomplishments.[60] As an example, terrorism in guerilla warfare in behalf of liberation as in Algeria and Vietnam may be justified. Nicholas Fotion responds to "worthwhile consequences" with a point about relativity; how do we determine the higher good and justify terror against noncombatants, when it may not be the only option?[61] It seems that a residual of relativism always haunts value judgments like these.

The nonconsequentialist denies the consequentialists' claim that only consequences matter. Virginia Held advanced a view that limited terrorism is justified, if it is the only way of reforming an unjust society. That is, it is a justification of distributive justice, for groups and individuals, to rectify violations of rights.[62] However, the argument is disturbingly vague about who can practice terrorism and who will ensure equity in its outcome.

The argument of "supreme emergency" extends the point of justice to "an ultimate threat to everything decent in our lives, an ideology and a practice of domination so murderous . . . that

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[58] Some philosophers have called for a morally neutral definition of terrorism for the sake of argument. For example, Angelo Corlett, *Terrorism: A Philosophical Analysis* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2003), 114-20; and Robert Young, "Political Terrorism as a Weapon of the Politically Powerless," in Igor Primoratz, ed., *Terrorism: The Philosophical Issues*, 57 (Basingstoke, England, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Can terrorism ever be conceived in a morally untarnished way? Corlett and Young want to distinguish between intrinsic wrong and absolute wrong. Under certain circumstances they want to make room for a "selective terrorism" that may be justified. A response to this point is that exceptions by "slippery slide" can generate more abuses through expanding exceptions. C. A. J. Coady, "Terrorism, Morality, and Supreme Emergency," *Ethics* 114 (2003-4), 787-89. Carl Wellman has asserted that "violence is not essential to terrorism, and, in fact, most acts of terror are nonviolent" ("On Terrorism Itself," *Journal of Value Inquiry* 13 (1979), 250-51. He illustrates the view with professorial intimidation in the classroom. This is a departure from terrorism's semantic range. Similarly, Ted Honderich suggests that "terrorism" can be understood without a notion of terror (*Humanity, Terrorism, Terrorist War* [London, New York: Continuum, 2006], 88.) A general understanding of terrorism has been fixed etymologically and historically. A terrorist act has characteristically been the killing or injuring of a random collection of people who happen to be in a certain place in a certain time.

[59] C. A. J. Coady, "Terrorism and Innocence," *Journal of Ethics* 8 (2004), 37-58. Cf. Ian Durie, "Terrorism: What Is It and How Do We Deal with It?," in *War in the Bible and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. by Richard Haas and Elmer Martens (Winona Lake, IN: Easenbraum's, 2008), 113-25.

[60] Kai Nielson, "Violence and Terrorism: Its Uses and Abuses," in Burton Leiser, ed., *Values in Conflict*, 446 (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 446.

[61] Nicholas Fotion, "The Burdens of Terrorism," in *Values in Conflict*, ed. by Leiser, p. 464.

[62] Virginia Held, "Terrorism, Rights, and Political Goals," in *Terrorism: The Philosophical Issues*, ed. by Primoratz, pp. 65-79.

the consequences of its final victory were literally beyond calculation, immeasurably awful."[63] Faced with the Nazi threat, the RAF and USAAF devastated German cities, killing 600,000 noncombatants and injuring another million to force the enemy into unconditional surrender. For Walzer this was justifiable, because the survival of political communities amounts to self-defense. Again, the lines are blurred between a moral disaster in a fight to the death and a political disaster which may not involve an extreme outcome. In Walzer's view, we must wager the crime of terrorism against the perceived evil, because rarely are choices in true emergencies rationally testable. And, how does the open conflict of war relate to the clandestine attacks of terrorism?

We can note that the growth of terrorist studies and their expansion into disciplines that, at first glance, might seem unrelated has left the matter of definition in a state of flux. We noted that some philosophers even suggested that "terrorism" is not necessarily about terror and casualties. With the definitional quandary in mind, we conclude the section with Laqueur's definition of an academic consensus and his caveat that "indiscriminate use of the language has led to loose thought on the subject"[64]: "Most authors agree that terrorism is the use or the threat of the use of violence, a method of combat, or a strategy to achieve certain targets, and that it aims to induce a state of fear in the victim, that it is ruthless and does not conform to humanitarian rules, and that publicity is an essential factor in the terrorist strategy. Beyond this point definitions diverge, often sharply."[65] The definition may be dated, and, as time has passed since his writing, not even the "consensus" has survived.

Our discussion of academia began with the remarkable post-9/11growth of terrorist research. Scholars shifted their attention from Cold-War issues to terrorism with new emphases like the strategies of al-Qaeda and Talaban, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the dynamics of suicide terrorism. The shift in needs and priorities exposed the fact that language had not evolved at the pace of the changing world, resulting in definitional confusion about terrorism. Ranstorp underscored collaboration as essential: "In essence, interdisciplinary focus and innovation will remain absolutely vital in efforts to develop a critical knowledge base in future terrorism research."[66] We attempted to illustrate this need with three examples from communication theory, social medicine, and social philosophy. The section concluded with a "consensus definition" that introduces our proposal.

A Proposal for a Contemporary Definition

In formulating a "contemporary definition" of terrorism, we agree with the scholarly consensus that a comprehensive and interdisciplinary definition is not possible, if only because competing interests will not agree on its variables. Debates about particulars without a consequent

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[63] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic, 2000), 253-54. His point would apply as well to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which temporarily ended war in the Pacific.
[64] Laqueur, *Age of Terrorism*, p. 299.
[65] Ibid., p. 143.
[66] Ranstorp, *Mapping Terrorism Research*, p. 12.

consensus seem to obfuscate every issue. So, with an eye on definitional precedents, historical emphases, and academic insights, we will attempt to derive a "core definition" with a semantical emphasis and as neutral a result as possible. This means that a number of important legal considerations will not be included, because they are more relevant for policy matters than definition.

When the world thinks about terrorism, peoples' first thought is that an attack with widespread social implications has taken place. They will also reflect on the fact that they could have been killed had they been at a different time and place. A definition would do well to highlight "the propaganda of the deed" rather than "political violence," because the notion of violence is too nebulous even in political contexts. Though most terrorist attacks are international in scope and political in intent, a number of serious incidents are apparently personal and unconnected to social change such as acts of revenge and sometimes insanity. We speak of violence in relation to war, crime, speech, ecology, and entertainment (including sports) among other topics. Of course, terrorism is extreme violence, which also describes genocides, assassinations, homicides, and a variety of death-dealing events. We should be careful to avoid an equation of distinguishable horrors. Terrorism may be a singular event or a part of a revolutionary campaign with multiple attacks. That is, not all of al-Qaeda or Provisional IRAs' activities have been acts of terrorism. But it always occurs in some form of attack, whether in a state or non-state, domestic, or campus setting.

The emphasis on the deed means that a threat of terrorism should not be included in a definition, though it is essential for laws and policies. Threats point to terrorism and may be subject to prosecution, depending on the circumstances. By the same token, terrorism should not be equated with a state of hostility. If every perceived threat could be prosecuted, then democratic societies would be subject to constant protests over infringements of free speech. Conventions, laws, and law enforcement procedures are necessary, but they are not lexical and require qualifications that undermine semantic clarity. The on-going discussions about British terrorism laws may be cited here.

Three important qualifiers of a terrorist attack are unlawful, strategic, and clandestine. Terrorism is unlawful, meaning that it is directed against the status quo of a society, country, or a generally accepted course of events (or policy). Law is used here both as criminal law and in a philosophical sense of social order. Regardless of the agents or means, WMD or assault weapons, it is characterized by an attack that psychologically promotes a disabling fear in its target audience.[67] So, "unlawful" in this sense is not necessarily a characteristic of state but rather an attempt to destabilize the status quo in one's favor. Like "violence," "intimidation," though suggestive, is too nebulous and weak for the intent of most terrorists. Instead of "deterrence," post-9/11 terrorist attacks seek to destroy their enemy. The unlawfulness of

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[67] On 16 June 2010, law enforcement officers in Dallas, Texas, conducted a surprise attack on an apartment complex. The apartments were well-known as a center for criminal activities. About 100 officers with assault weapons conducted the raid, which was designed to "shock and awe" the neighborhood. The report resembled a terrorist attack, so why was it not described as terrorism? The reasons are that the intent was law enforcement against crime as well as no intent to inflict mass casualties (*Dallas Morning News*, 6/17/2010, 1A).

terrorism is indicated by its "repulsive" reputation in most quarters of the world. In the words of Bruce Hoffman: "On one point, at least, everyone agrees: terrorism is a pejorative term. It is a word with intrinsically negative connotations that is generally applied to one's enemies and opponents, or to those with whom one disagrees and would otherwise prefer to ignore."[68]

Terrorism is a strategic attack, usually in an asymmetrical situation. It is intentional, often meticulously planned, and is never accidental. This means that the attacks may not succeed for a variety of reasons (as in the cases of Hosam Smadi or Faisal Shahzad), but the terrorists' intent is to inflict mass casualties on their target audience. Bruce Bonger correctly states, "The category of terrorism includes diverse practices that range from kidnappings to bombings intended to create mass casualties."[69] In support of the point, the Global Terrorism Database rates terrorist organizations by their fatality count.[70] And indiscriminate killing (or "collateral damage") was a significant part of 20th-century warfare, from nuclear bombs to guerilla conflicts. "Targeting non-combatants" remains a significant part of just-war thinking, but terrorists disregard the distinction and aim for public exposure such as means of transportation for psychological effect. Terrorism is never private in its intent or execution. We could say "usually mass casualties," because strategic and symbolic properties remain attractive targets for catastrophic damage. 9/11 famously involved power symbols in New York and Washington, and future terrorists might target utilities or cyberspace. However, even in destruction of property, mass casualties remain a primary objective.

Finally, terrorism is clandestinely conceived. In a setting of asymmetry, its strategy involves a surprise attack with psychological consequences. This can only be accomplished in secret. The trait, though obvious, has been recognized as an important difference from traditional warfare. Also, it has been consistently included in definitions

From the "List of terrorist incidents" we can make a number of observations about variable aspects of terrorism: its means, agents, and causes (or conditions).[71] Means are the most evident. The overwhelming majority of incidents were carried out with explosives and assault weapons. From 1970 through 2007, terrorists used car bombs about 1500 times, according to the Terrorist Response Center in Maryland. The center tracked 876 in the Middle East and North Africa, 212 in Western Europe and 163 in South Asia.[72] As one would expect, automatic weapons are preferred for attacks in public venues.

Agents are more problematic. Firstly, suicide terrorists leave only inferences about their identity and motive. Secondly, the accessibility of affordable weapons has undermined a stereotypical profile of terrorists, which usually resembles a down-and-out gangster. Law enforcement officials acknowledge that "the face" of worldwide terrorism resembles "ordinary suburbanites."

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[68] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University; London: Victor Gollanez, 1998), 32.
[69] Bruce Bongar, "Defining the Need and Describing the Goal," in *Psychology of Terrorism*," ed. by Bongar et al., p. 4.
[70] Gary LaFree, "The Global Terrorism Database: Accomplishments and Challenges," p. 9 (http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php?option=com_rokzine&view=article&id=105, accessed 4/1/10).
[71] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_terrorist_incidents, accessed 11/30/09).
[72] Ray Rivera, "A Dread Revived: Terror in the Trunk," *New York Times* (May 3, 2010).

Finally, causative factors are elusive and complicated, because they often defy a satisfying explanation and overlap in most incidents. We can list a few of them, which will review some points in the paper. Economic deprivation can cause people to explore any promise of relief. Less direct factors like natural catastrophes, such as the famine in Afganistan in the 1970s, can destabilize populations and make them susceptible to propaganda. Economic prosperity, on the other hand, enables terrorists to arm themselves with more sophisticated weaponry. On this point the accessibility of weapons has facilitated attacks, and we can only wonder how terrorists would use nuclear capabilities. International dishonor or humiliation can lead to widespread rage against political "satans" like the United States and Europe, who have allegedly trampled religious absolutes and sacred lands. Counterterrorism sometimes risks the backlash of a growth in terrorism. Charismatic leaders can skillfully manipulate global communication to network and channel deep-seated anger into deadly aggression. They can also use group behavior to multiply cells for networked terror.

Terrorism can acquire momentum from successful attacks. After 9/11 bombs killed 202 people in Bali in October 2002. Most of the victims were Western tourists and Balinese hospitality staff. On November 16 and 20, 2003, al-Qaeda's bombs killed 57 and wounded 700 in attacks on Jewish and British targets in Istanbul. On March 10, 2004, Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigade exploded an estimated ten bombs on behalf of al-Qaeda and killed 191 people, wounding 600 others, in an attack on Madrid's public transportation. And on July 7, 2005, suicide bombers attacked London's public transportation system, killing 56 people and wounding over 700. The attack occurred on the first day of the 31st G8 Conference. Well-publicized acts of terror also occurred in Russia, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Japan, North and Central Africa, and Columbia.

Past attempts to define terrorism are weakened when they try to be too comprehensive because of the large number of variables over time and in each attack. Furthermore, preoccupation with specific exceptions to general points of agreement will detract from a common understanding of the phenomena. Variables and exceptions are more appropriate for analytical discussions. So, an "ockhamized" definition should be proposed with a view to public policy. global comprehension, and mutual understanding. This paper will suggest that terrorism is "**a public attack, clandestinely conceived to inflict mass casualties for psychological effect**" . . .

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