Between Minimum Force and Maximum Violence: Combating Political Violence Movements with Third-Force Options

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Introduction: Balancing the Tools of Counter-Terrorism

In most liberal democratic states it is the responsibility of the police forces to cope with "internal" threats, including terrorism, since in such states terrorism is invariably defined as a criminal act rather than a manifestation of insurgent political violence. In many such instances, the resultant quantitative and qualitative overtaxing of law enforcement capabilities to keep the peace has led to calls by sections of the public, as well as by the legislative and executive branches of government, to expand both the legal and operational means available to combat terrorism, and to boost civilian agencies' capacity to deal with terrorism in proportion to the perceived threat. The deteriorating situation in Ulster in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1972 and beyond is an illustrative case in point.[1]

Although there have been cases of successfully transmogrifying police forces into military-like formations, the best-known and arguably most frequent example of augmented state responses to the threat posed by insurgent political violence movements is the use of the military in the fight against terrorism and in the maintenance of internal security. While it is imperative that the threat of a collapse of national cohesion due to the overextension of internal civil security forces be averted, the deployment of all branches of the armed forces against a terrorist threat is not without its own pitfalls. Paul Wilkinson has enunciated some of the problems posed by the use of counter-terrorism military task forces, not the least of which is that

> [a] fully militarized response implies the complete suspension of the civilian legal system and its replacement by martial law, summary punishments, the imposition of curfews, military censorship and extensive infringements of normal civil liberties in the name of the exigencies of war. … the government finds it has removed all the constraints of legal accountability and minimum force, enabling the military commanders to deploy massively lethal and destructive firepower in the name of suppressing terrorism.[2]

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1 A good review of events from the perspective of the Irish Nationalist/Republican movement's perspective can be found in J. Bowyer Bell, *The Secret Army: The IRA* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications, 1997).

2 Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy. The Liberal State Response* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 103.

Probably the most illustrative contemporary rendition of a situation that spirals out of control because the military has been called in to tackle the terrorist problem is Edward Zwick's 1998 motion picture *The Siege*.[3] Provided one allows for artistic license, *The Siege* offers great insight into the nature of the subject: the point somewhat allegorically made in the film is that, when surgery is required, a sword is not the right instrument with which to perform the operation. At the end of the day, the question remains of what is to be done. If the first, democratically sound option (e.g., the police) is for a variety of reasons not equipped to deal with the problem, and the second, *ultima ratio* option (the military) may well defeat the purpose of the exercise due to its very nature—at the heart of which lies the use of maximum force—then maybe we need to seek a third option. A third option also implies a third force.

Paramilitary Formations in Historical Context

The debate concerning what a third-force capability should be is ongoing, but it has received added urgency due to recent events in international relations. Over the years, suggestions have ranged from militarizing the police to constabularizing the armed forces. More important, and as an extension to the logic of this debate, which may be summarized as a desire for the best of both worlds, the idea of *paramilitaries*—groups with some characteristics of both the police and the military—has at some stage also entered the discussion as a viable solution.[4] To cut a long etymological (if not definitional) debate short, the term *paramilitary* came into use some six decades ago when British journalists used it to "describe Nazi-sponsored groups of enforcers that policed movement rallies and disrupted those of their opponents."[5] Admittedly, paramilitaries combine both the inherent weaknesses and strengths of police and military forces. But it is precisely for this reason that paramilitaries not only pose a risk in the context of a proportional response to terrorism; they also offer the greatest potential for shaping up to be the long sought after, well-calibrated countermeasure to terrorism, in that they can best fulfill the requirements of the liberal democratic state. They arguably remain the best option to effectively combat terrorism that we have at present.

The critical issue beyond the immediate choice of means, however, is not exclusively one of finding an appropriate and balanced solution in the context of highly politicized civil-military relations alone, but one of guaranteeing proportionality to the threat. Even more to the point, it is a question of how to make the response capability *both* adequate and democratically controllable (and hence politically viable). In order to better discuss the subject of how best to respond to political violence and terrorism

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[3] Edward Zwick, dir., *The Siege* (Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, 1998). For more information on *The Siege*, visit the relevant entry in the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) at http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0133952/, accessed on 26 May 2004.

[4] For a brief discussion on the nature of paramilitaries, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramilitary, accessed on 5 May 2004.

[5] Andrew Scobell and Brad Hammitt, "Goons, Gunmen, and Gendarmerie: Toward A Reconceptualization of Paramilitary Formations," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 26:2 (Winter 1998): 213–27; at 219.

on the ground, we need to selectively investigate the historical background of third-force paramilitaries in order to achieve an organic understanding of the subject. This should be done with a view to assessing the utility of paramilitary units in the role of third-force counter-terrorist options.

Antecedents in Antiquity and Early Modern History

That the past has a way of shaping the present is a truism that applies to the combating of political violence. In search of a tool to effectively fight political violence and terrorism that would prove both operationally effective and, to a lesser extent, politically viable, a variety of approaches have been attempted through the centuries. Significantly, the antecedents of today's governmental paramilitary units must be sought in the age of antiquity rather than in the period after 1945, when such formations became better known. Then as now, insurgency and subversion were usually directed at either unpopular indigenous governments or against occupying powers in the wake of conquest. In the event that incumbent powers in the past were not willing to sacrifice the civilian population alongside the insurgents, means other than wholesale eradication or forced migration had to be found. One way of achieving a level of precision in rooting out political violence movements was the employment of allied local forces; they were usually given a supporting, auxiliary role in conventional war, as well as in counter-insurgency operations, in the pursuit of which they featured even more prominently.

Starting in the Roman Republic, the *auxiliarii*, who were tasked with border defense and whose principal role during and following campaigns was to assist the "regular" Roman military, were recruited from among subject peoples within Rome's power orbit.[6] The employment of irregular troops in the role of supporting or specialized forces and their integration into regular army establishments created a precedent followed by another empire centuries later. In the course of suppressing the Jacobite rebellion of 1745–46 in Scotland, Lord Loudon's irregular Highland companies were formed and deployed with the express purpose of mopping up Jacobite pockets of resistance after the Battle of Culloden (16 April 1746), as well as with countering Jacobite clan guerilla attacks subsequent to the end of conventional military operations in the autumn of 1746.[7] The British Empire used the lessons learned in the course of eventually suppressing the intrepid Jacobite clans in the Scottish Highlands with devastating effect during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), in the course of which irregulars fought on both sides of the conflict.[8] Despite running the risk of committing a gross anachronism, it can be contended that the eighteenth century saw widespread

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[6] For further reference on the *auxiliarii*, see http://library.thinkquest.org/22866/English/Leger.html?tqskip1=1, accessed on 26 May 2004.

[7] Doron Zimmermann, *The Jacobite Movement in Scotland and in Exile, 1746–1759* (Basingstoke: Macmillan/Palgrave, 2003); see especially the chapter entitled "Suppression and Resistance: Hanoverians and Jacobites in 1746–1747," 21–47.

[8] For more on the uses of irregulars by the British army at home and abroad, see Peter E. Russell, "Redcoats in the Wilderness: British Officers and Irregular Warfare in Europe and America, 1740 to 1760," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 35:4 (1978): 629–52.

use—even the institutionalization—of irregular units with distinct paramilitary characteristics in regular armies, at least in the manner that we would understand the term today.[9]

Paramilitaries in the Second World War and Cold War Periods

The use of such irregular paramilitaries flowed and ebbed after the French Revolution, but the need for irregular, and increasingly specialized, groups did not disappear. As a matter of fact, quite the contrary is true. In the course of the Second World War, the so-called commandos of the British army—usually regular soldiers seconded to special units deployed far behind enemy lines—had an impact on the Allied war effort. As early as November 1941, an American officer visited Britain in order to evaluate the British commandos. In due course, the precursor to the CIA, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), used similar units with great success in France, where they helped prop up the *Maquis* against the Nazi occupation, and in Norway, where small Allied paramilitary units wreaked havoc with German rail supply lines. Significantly, when the idea of using specialized troops struck home in the U.S. during the war, it was cast not in terms of regular military personnel being used in unorthodox ways, but rather in terms of drawing highly skilled human resources from regular military units for the purpose of redeploying them as combatants who were *not* members of the armed forces. Operatives in such paramilitary units were taught a variety of skills critical to classical independent, long-range reconnaissance missions, such as aerial and maritime insertion, demolitions, unarmed combat, sabotage, and managing the logistics of local resistance movements.[10]

In the context of the Second World War, however, paramilitaries also featured in one of this conflict's darkest chapters. Axis powers, especially the Nazi regime, adhered to the ideology of "blood and soil," and reveled in a cult of racialist purity and fascist-influenced, contrived virility. Inarguably most sinister incarnation of this mentality was a paramilitary unit known as the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), run by Heinrich Himmler, which acted as a separate, quasi-sovereign entity and operated according to its own rules within the Nazi state. The original purpose of the SS was to control all other Nazi governmental structures, including other paramilitaries (e.g., the *Sturm Abteilung*, or SA) and the regular military (the *Wehrmacht*). "Being a kind of party police both by precept and function, the *raison d'etre* of the SS was loyalty to the Führer."[11]

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[9] Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies. Guerrillas and their Opponents since 1750* (London: Routledge, 2001), 2–5.

[10] Major D.H. Berger, "The Use of Covert Paramilitary Activity as a Policy Tool: An Analysis of Operations Conducted by the United States Central Intelligence Agency, 1949–1951," (n.p.: 1995), 7–8; available at www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/1995/BDH.htm, accessed on 1 April 2004.

[11] Gerhard Rempel, "Nazi Paramilitary Groups: SA and SS," 3; available at http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempel/courses/germany/lectures/26paramilitary.html, accessed on 19 May 2004.

In contrast to the Allied paramilitaries and commandos, the SS, especially the *Waffen-SS*, had more in common with the original concept of the *auxiliarii*, in that they were frequently integrated into regular army corps and served as security assistance forces in combat operations in the front line of battle rather than behind enemy lines. Moreover, the praetorian function of acting "as a bulwark against overthrow by the … Army" or any other competing government organization is one that has been replicated many times since, with paramilitary organizations frequently singled out to play a key role to this end.[12] A more recent but no less notorious example of this type of praetorian paramilitary formation employed to control and intimidate rival government organizations and civil society alike is that of the notorious Haitian Tontons Macoutes.

After the erstwhile Allies of the Second World War became estranged from each other along an East–West divide in 1947, the U.S. and British governments were quick to realize the potential of paramilitary formations in both the maintenance of internal security—up to and including counterinsurgency assignments—in the face of Communist subversion and in special operations behind the descending Iron Curtain. The widespread endorsement of paramilitaries in the service of foreign policy during the Cold War helps explain the later proliferation of paramilitaries into other, derivative spheres of statecraft and policy, such as counter-terrorism.

The Truman Doctrine, which President Truman promulgated before the U.S. Congress in March 1947, promised beleaguered states assistance against Communist incursion. Coupled with the increasing need to avoid direct confrontation between the emerging superpowers, this doctrine also rapidly and emphatically introduced paramilitaries to the variegated battlefields of the Cold War.[13] The immediate necessity for internal security assistance, as enunciated by Truman, was carried over into the next phase of the Cold War when, on 21 December 1954, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered a landmark undertaking known as NSC 1290-d. The express purpose of NSC 1290-d was to systematically "organize, train and equip local police and other internal security forces to combat Communist subversion in the underdeveloped countries."[14] Confronted with comparable challenges, France and Britain also bent their efforts to the interdiction of subversive forces in Third World states whose regimes were on friendly terms with the West, especially in Southeast Asia.[15] The use of paramilitary forces in a crucial role in internal security assistance was yet again endorsed in NSC Action Memorandum No. 162, which dealt with the "development of U.S. and Indigenous Police, Paramilitary and Military Resources."[16]

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[12] Scobell and Hammitt, "Goons, Gunmen, and Gendarmerie," 214.

[13] Andreas Wenger and Doron Zimmermann, *International Relations. From the Cold War to the Globalized World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 19.

[14] William Rosenau, "The Eisenhower Administration, U.S. Foreign Internal Security Assistance, and the Struggle for the Developing World, 1954–1961," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement* 10:3 (Autumn 2001):1–32; cited passage at 12.

[15] Ibid., 15.

[16] NSC Action Memorandum No. 162 is available at www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon2/doc116.htm, accessed on 17 May 2004.

The CIA paramilitary program was enacted even before the U.S. government's internal security assistance program came to prominence in the 1950s. Throughout the Cold War and beyond, the CIA's investment in the use of paramilitaries in behind-the-lines operations was considerable, reaching from Albania to Poland to Guatemala. Plans in the U.S government to use special operations paramilitaries came to fruition in 1948. Against the backdrop of the Soviet war scare, the CIA received a mandate from the U.S. National Security Council "broadening the scope of covert activity to include political, economic, and paramilitary operations," which also enshrined the key advantage of using paramilitaries for behind-the-lines operations: the concept of plausible deniability.[17] This last point should also be borne in mind when considering counter-terrorism operations under adverse conditions, or in hostile territory. Be that as it may, the list of countries that have seen CIA paramilitaries in action is long and continues to grow, with the most recent example being Afghanistan.

Paralleling the course of the U.S. paramilitary effort, the British army also developed a similar non-military capability. In contrast to the CIA program, however, the British experience with paramilitaries was short-lived. One reason for cutting short a promising British paramilitary experiment was that the

> informal or independent initiatives [e.g. in Palestine and in Malaya] raised the issue of control, unwittingly reinforcing wartime criticisms. This may have contributed, at least in part, to the decision to concentrate special operations within a formally-constituted regular regiment of the Army.[18]

Yet another significant difference between the U.S. and British paramilitary programs was that, while the former was constituted with an eye to countering external support for subversive activities in the context of an internal security assistance program—and by implication to hit the enemy on his own turf without having to assume responsibility for what could be construed by the other side as an act of war—the British program built on a long-standing military tradition of dealing with local rebellions in the British Empire, and hence was highly specialized. Consequently, the British Special Air Service (SAS), founded in 1950, left its mark on the age of decolonization as a highly effective counter-insurgency tool. As a result of this development, British counter-terrorism operations to this day are assigned to the Counter-Revolutionary Wing of the SAS regiment, and thus are handled by the military, not the police. The British choice of a military response to terrorism is therefore just as much a product of historical development (including relatively harmonious civil-military relations after

[17] Berger, "Use of Covert Paramilitary Activity," 23–24.

[18] David A. Charters, "From Palestine to Northern Ireland: British Adaptation to Low-Intensity Operations," in Armies in Low-Intensity Conflict. A Comparative Analysis, ed. David Charters and Maurice Tugwell (London: Brassey's Defence Publishers Ltd., 1989), 209. For an excellent account of the SAS in Malaya, see Peter Dickens, *SAS. Secret War in South-East Asia. 22 Special Air Service Regiment in the Borneo Campaign, 1963–1966* (London: Greenhill Books, 2003; first pub. 1983).

1689) as the refusal of a majority of European states to contemplate military options is the result of their own respective past experiences.

Third-Force Paramilitary Options Against Terrorism: Four European Examples

France, Italy, Spain and, later, Germany have all adopted paramilitary counter-terrorism solutions because of their respective historical experiences, which at one time or another brought their professional armies face to face with policing duties, exposed their inherent weaknesses in dealing with this task, and—from the eighteenth century onwards—highlighted the need for a military-strength or equivalent constabulary force to combat banditry and nip rebellion in the bud.

The Italian Case: The Carabinieri

Probably the best-known example of a paramilitary formation in the service of an early modern European state is the Italian corps of the Carabinieri. Also known as *La Benemerita* (the well-deserving), the Carabinieri can look back upon an exemplary service record and a rich history, tracing their origins to the volunteer *Dragoni di Sardegna*, first embodied in 1726.[19] Functionally, the Carabinieri are part and parcel of the Italian Department of Defense; administratively, the corps is subordinated to the Italian Ministry of Internal Affairs.[20] As we will see, this bipartite membership of the Italian paramilitary force in both civil and military government organizations is a pattern replicated in the French and Spanish cases (but not in the German).

The Carabinieri are an organization with policing duties distinct from the regular police (*Polizia di Prevenzione*), and were only recently formally absorbed into the Italian armed forces, not unlike the army, air force, and navy. Counter-terrorism falls into the bailiwick of both the regular police and the Carabinieri, but it is the Carabinieri who (until 1998) had the lead in counter-terrorism investigations: they currently exercise more of a coordinating role in the course of investigations, although they do retain a critically important role in live operations. On the operational level, the Carabinieri established a special force for deployment in counter-terrorism operations in December 1990, the *Raggruppamento Operativo Speciale* (ROS).[21] The ROS is recognized as a highly competent special operations paramilitary. Notably, the advantage that the ROS holds over its equivalent in the regular police, the *Nucleo Operativo Centrale di Sicurezza*, is that the ROS is reasonably interoperable with units in the armed forces, an ability that arguably provides it with potential access to assistance services otherwise only available through the branches of the armed service, such as strategic air support for operations in dynamic environments.

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[19] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carabinieri, accessed on 1 April 2004.

[20] See www.carabinieri.it/Multilingua/ENG_P24-24_Governing_Bodies.htm, accessed on 13 May 2004.

[21] Giuseppe de Lutiis, "Terrorism in Italy: Receding and Emerging Issues," in *Confronting Terrorism. European Experiences, Threat Perceptions and Policies*, ed. Marianne van Leeuwen (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2003), 102–103.

The Spanish Case: The Guardia Civil

Following the death of General Francisco Franco in late 1975, the fledgling Spanish democracy was beset by a number of grave problems left over from the era of the Fascist state, not the least of which was separatist and ideologically motivated political violence. Another legacy of the Franco era was the existence of two militarized internal security organizations: the Policia Nacional and the Guardia Civil. In fact, regular army units patrolled the proverbial Spanish hotbed of separatist violence, the Basque Provinces, until 1981, when they were replaced by units of the Guardia Civil.[22] Established in 1844, the Guardia Civil was originally modeled on the French Gendarmerie, which at least in part explains its paramilitary nature. It was reconstituted in 1940, whence it derives its current profile.[23] For all intents and purposes, the Guardia Civil has retained its military character through the democratization process that has been underway in Spain since 1982. As a Gendarmerie-like paramilitary force, the Guardia Civil's duties are the policing of rural areas and the maintenance of the peace in urban communities of less than 20,000 inhabitants; they are also responsible for patrolling highways and for protection of critical government premises in the capital.[24]

With the sea change in Spanish politics following the general elections of 1982, when the Socialists came to power in a climate of political restiveness, the role of the army in the maintenance of internal security was further circumscribed. The new Spanish Ministry of the Interior elected to formally demilitarize the state response to political violence movements, and hence to employ the Guardia Civil as its principal tool in the protracted fight against a resilient, even burgeoning, movement of internal terrorism.[25] The main reasons for this shift favoring the Guardia Civil were, on the one hand, that they "are administratively part of the army, but are placed in the Ministry of the Interior chain of command for operational purposes" and, on the other, that there was "remarkable discipline already existing within that agency."[26] Like other European paramilitary corps, the Guardia Civil had to develop a special branch in order to adequately address the challenge of terrorism; the distillation of the Guardia Civil's operational counter-terrorism competence is vested in its special-forces wing, the *Grupos Antiterroristas Rural* (GAR). Thus, not unlike the Italians, the Spanish have chosen a solution that is formally civilian and effectively military in terms of its training, organization, equipment, and outlook.

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[22] Fernando Reinares, "Democratization and State Responses to Protracted Terrorism in Spain," in *Confronting Terrorism*, ed. van Leeuwen, 66.

[23] Thorsten Stodiek, *Internationale Polizei. Ein empirisch fundiertes Konzept der zivilen Konfliktbearbeitung* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2004), 69.

[24] Fernando Jimenez, "Spain: The Terrorist Challenge and the Government's Response," in *Western Responses to Terrorism*, ed. Alex P. Schmid and Ronald D. Crelinsten (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 126.

[25] Ibid., p. 126.

[26] Ibid., p. 125; Reinares, "Democratization and State Responses," 66.

The French Case: The Gendarmes

Historically, the French can be said to take pride of place among Europe's paramilitaries: the Gendarmes, literally "men-at-arms"—or, in their proper appellation, the "sergeants-at-arms"—served as the executive branch of the French medieval justice system under the grand seneschal of the realm.[27] They were organized into brigades—that is, properly embodied as a formal military unit—as early as 1720. Like the Italian and Spanish paramilitaries, the Gendarmerie's various roles, such as the policing of the countryside and small urban areas, derived from historical mandates, for example that of keeping the king's peace on French highways through the centuries. Following the Revolution, Napoleon Bonaparte wrote of the Gendarmerie: "*C'est la manière la plus efficace de maintenir la tranquillité ... une surveillance moitié civile, moitié militaire, répandue sur toute la surface du pays qui donne les rapports les plus précis*…."[28]

More recently, the French paramilitary also played a critical role in the gradual retreat of empire before and during the era of decolonization, with its members serving in Indochina and Algeria. Similar to its fellow European paramilitary organizations, the Gendarmerie—with its strong *esprit de corps*, military culture, and institutional experience in fighting threats to internal security (i.e., including Indochinese and Algerian)—was a natural choice to take the front line in the fight against terrorism. The task of the French paramilitary is also impressive in terms of its breadth: criminal investigations, crowd control, the protection of critical infrastructures, and investigations concerning the military both inside and outside of France, and especially those relating to foreign interventions. Like the Italian Carabinieri and the Spanish Guardia Civil, the Gendarmerie is administratively a part of the armed forces but is effectively directed by the Ministry of the Interior.

Unlike the other two corps, however, the Gendarmerie is structurally congruent with the armed services branches in that it maintains its own aerial and maritime and other specialist branches. Furthermore, the contemporary Gendarmerie's nation-spanning network and specialist personnel enable it to procure vital logistical support, provide intelligence and operational security, and to field trained operational interdiction capabilities.[29] As early as 1974, the Gendarmerie created its own special operations group, the *Groupe de sécurité et d'intervention de la gendarmerie nationale*, in response to the terrorist attacks on the 1972 Olympics in Munich. Within this group, the *Groupe d'intervention de la gendarmerie nationale* (GIGN) was given the special task of disrupting terrorist attacks and resolving hijacking situations. The GIGN proved their mettle in the Djibouti bus affair (February 1976), drugging the hostages to clear a low-risk line of fire for their special weapons systems operators.[30] Since then, events in

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[27] See http://www.defense.gouv.fr/Gendarmerie/index.html, accessed on 1 June 2004.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Nathalie Cettina, "The French Approach: Vigour and Vigilance," in *Confronting Terrorism*, ed. van Leeuwen, 81.

[30] See http://www.specwarnet.com/europe/gign.htm, accessed on 1 June 2004.

France and attacks on French interests abroad have irrefutably proven the necessity for a well trained and adequately armed specialized counter-terrorism branch.[31]

The German Case: The Bundesgrenzschutz

The final of the four examples reviewed here is arguably the most instructive in relation to the development of third-force paramilitaries in the combating of terrorism. Against the backdrop of the murder of eleven Israeli athletes during the Olympic Games held in Munich in 1972, and the clear failure of the ordinary police in the face of aggressive terrorist action, the Federal Republic of Germany was faced with the problem of creating the capability to tackle similar problems in the future. Ironically, the greatest impediment to a more forceful operational counter-terrorism solution at the time was the constitutionally ensconced, rigid division between the German military and the police, known as the *Trennungsgebot*. In the case of Germany, the *Trennungsgebot* was the direct result of the widespread conflation of the police and the military in the Third Reich, a practice that was fostered by the Nazi regime.[32]

The dramatic events that took place in the Olympic village in front of running cameras, and subsequently at the Fürstenfeldbrück airport near Munich, created tremendous pressure to act proactively to halt future terrorist attacks. Circumstances also helped weaken the historical German post-war reticence regarding firm policies and government actions that might be interpreted as being militaristic. Caught between a disastrous police failure and the impossible prospect of a politically unfeasible military deployment, the then-minister of the interior, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, instructed the liaison officer of the Federal Border Protection Agency (Bundesgrenzschutz) in his ministry, Colonel Ulrich Wegener, to create a counter-terrorism force – but one that would be neither part of the police nor part of the military.[33]

Wegener was quick to realize the opportunity offered by the combination of civilian institutional and paramilitary advantages in the Bundesgrenzschutz. Founded in 1951, the Bundesgrenzschutz is essentially the Federal German police force. Originally, its principal task was to guard the 1300-km border it shared with Soviet-occupied territory during the Cold War. After 1972, the mandate of the Bundesgrenzschutz was expanded to include that of supplying the security and intervention reserves for the police forces of the West German *Bundesländer*, or provinces. It was out of this mandate that the Bundesgrenzschutz derived its special operations function.[34]

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[31] Jeremy Shapiro and Bénédicte Suzan, "The French Experience of Counter-terrorism," *Survival* 45:1 (Spring 2003): 67–98.

[32] For reference on the troubled relationship between the "Trennungsgebot" and current counter-terrorism efforts, see Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, "Ein Orwellscher Ueberwachungsstaat darf in Europa nicht entstehen," PDS press release of 18 March 2004, available at http://www.linxxnet.de/aktuell/19-03-04_sicherheit-eu.htm, accessed on 3 June 2004.

[33] Cf. http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Ulrich%20K%20Wegener, accessed on 1 June 2004.

[34] Stodiek, *Internationale Polizei*, 64–65.

What makes the example of the Bundesgrenzschutz so interesting with respect to the discussion about third-force options is its development and nature: in the early days of the Federal Republic of Germany, this unit, which predated the establishment of the regular Bundeswehr, was conceived of as the first step in the rearmament of the post-war West German state. From the inception of the Bundesgrenzschutz, its character and equipment (as opposed to its legal role and formal constitution) were that of a paramilitary.[35] In particular, the Bundesgrenzschutz was originally far more heavily armed than the police, being able to field armored vehicles, while also permitted to deploy light ordnance, bear heavy small arms, as well as use hand grenades. Until 1994, members of the Bundesgrenzschutz were even accorded the legal status of a combatant. Being neither a constabulary police force in the traditional sense nor formally a military unit, the Bundesgrenzschutz—because it was *by definition* a civilian unit—provided Wegener with a politically acceptable tool to fight terrorism both on German soil and abroad that could also satisfy most contemporary force saturation requirements beneath the threshold of war.

At the time, Wegener went to great lengths in order to study with the two best military special operations forces—the British Special Air Service and the Israeli Sayeret Matkal—and to incorporate the lessons learned in the formation of a homegrown counter-terrorism unit fully embedded in the Bundesgrenzschutz. The Grenzschutzgruppe 9 (GSG-9) was founded on 17 April 1973, and ever since it has acquitted itself well with respect to operational efficiency and in satisfying political concerns relating to its paramilitary character.[36] With GSG-9, the quandary of the *Trennungsgebot*, as well as the credibility problems that plagued the first option while rendering the second unacceptable in the context of a counter-terrorism mandate, was overcome by creating a third, civilian option imbued with many unique strengths that were otherwise the exclusive preserve of military organizations. The singular value of GSG-9's story, however, is that a precedent for a democratically acceptable (that is, non-military) and accountable domestic and external intervention force was set that has since served as a model for other states, and may yet convince many more countries of its applicability.

Military, Police, and the Paramilitary – Third-Force Option Reviewed

The history of paramilitary formations reviewed earlier and the four examples scrutinized above suggest that paramilitaries, because of their nature rather than in spite of it, offer great benefits as counter-terrorism intervention tools. This section will focus on some of the typical problems experienced by the police and the military in the line of duty, specifically those pertaining to counter-terrorism tasks, and will attempt to demonstrate how paramilitary third-force options can help overcome some of these difficulties by offering the best characteristics from both worlds.

[35] Ibid., 66.

[36] See http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/GSG-9, accessed on 1 June 2004.

The Constabularization of the Military vs. the Militarization of the Police

Since the end of the Cold War, military organizations in the West and elsewhere have been on the lookout for new horizons and responsibilities. Initially, the sudden vacuum left by the absence of the bipolar global conflict led to questions about the purpose of maintaining armed forces establishments at Cold War levels in terms of manpower and armament. Since that time, several responses have emerged in the ongoing debate surrounding the appropriate uses of the armed forces, ranging from robust peace support operations (PSO), to stabilizing forces, to humanitarian intervention. Whatever tasks these labels seek to designate, the fact remains that military organizations in both the East and West since 1990 have had to face a host of new challenges, some of which have pushed them to their limits (and beyond). Among these newly encountered complex situations are those that require regular troops to assume policing duties, often in challenging and difficult circumstances. This constabularization of the military has forced significant changes on an organization geared toward the waging of war: the ability to win a war in the Clausewitzian sense is predicated upon an army's ability to unleash maximum violence – a concept that is diametrically opposed to the constabulary requirement of the use of minimum force.[37]

Essentially, as Karl Haltiner has so cogently argued, the argument put forth by Morris Janowitz in his seminal work *The Professional Soldier* for a military force "committed to the minimum use of force, and … viable international relations, rather than victory," has been grossly misunderstood.[38] For, as Haltiner is quick to point out, Janowitz' observation was not directed at a new kind of military organization, but instead described a novel applied ethics of soldiering.[39] Considering the history, constitution, and organizational makeup of contemporary military organizations, and against the backdrop of their traditional propensity to use overwhelming force in the fulfillment of their duty, reeducating members of the armed forces to comply with such an ethic is a gargantuan task that, by way of comparison, would make the implementation of the Geneva Conventions pale into insignificance. Such a fundamental change will neither happen overnight nor succeed through anything less than deep-seated reforms aimed at the transformation of armies into something completely new, which may as a consequence also causally impact the military's structure and organization.

As a hierarchical, top-down organization, the army would have to espouse principles that are anathema to itself in order to empower regular combatants to individually act in accordance with a constabulary/stringent peace-keeping ethic, such as flat hierarchies and the devolution of decision-making responsibilities to subalterns and non-commissioned ranks, if not to ratings and privates.[40] The short-term constabularization

[37] Grant Wardlaw, *Political Terrorism. Theory, Tactics, and Counter-Measures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 90.

[38] Quoted in Karl W. Haltiner, "Polizisten oder Soldaten? Organisatorische Dilemmata bei der Konstabularisierung des Militärs," *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift* 3 (2001): 291–98; at 292.

[39] Ibid., 292.

[40] Ibid., 292–93.

of the military, especially if viewed in the light of the challenges that have arisen in the context of the recent deployment in Bosnia and Kosovo, would therefore appear impractical.[41] For reasons of constitutional propriety, and because of concerns relating to the preservation of civil liberties, this observation applies even more pertinently to internal policing duties by the military in liberal democracies – especially if the military in question is one's own.

Reinforcing the impracticability of Janowitz's model, Wardlaw maintains that "the police and the army have significantly different roles, functions, and philosophies, which enable them to perform in quite different spheres. It is argued that this division is functional and that dysfunction would arise if *uncontrolled* overlap developed between the two organizations."[42] This potential for dysfunction, however, also applies to the police, and thus the obverse side of the problem discussed above is the militarization of the police. Historically, militarized police forces have been put to dubious uses by still more questionable autocrats, for example, in the case of the Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) that was responsible for crushing the pro-democracy movement in Tiananmen Square (4 June 1989).[43] Arguments militating against the deployment of an overly powerful and heavily armed police for internal security duties abound, not least because they recall and appear to substantiate the prospect of the police state. In that sense, from the point of view of civil liberties, the militarization of the police is at least as problematic as the deployment of the military for internal security duties is controversial. But, to use Wilkinson's nomenclature, would the same be true of a *carefully* calibrated, implemented, and politically reviewed overlap of the police and the military for the express purpose of proactively fighting terrorism? (We may recall that the establishment of GSG-9 would meet these parameters.)

In between the typical problems encountered by the military and the police in the course of having to take on tasks for which they are organizationally unsuited, there is another insidious problem: both organizations (but predominantly the military) are prone to take recourse to contracted security assistance forces.[44] The recent scandal in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison, where civilian contractors with a paramilitary character abused prisoners alongside ordinary troops, bears out this point. For this reason, and for our purposes, it is unacceptable that a counter-terrorism paramilitary unit be established, maintained, and directed by any body other than a sovereign government.

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[41] The half-way constabularization of the military in Kosovo was not least the result of a lack of trained police in the province. Arguably, constabularizing a military force under situational pressures created by an absence of professional police is a recipe for disaster. See Linda D. Kozaryn, "NATO Chief Says More Police Vital in Kosovo," *American Forces Information Service*, 8 February 2000, available at http://www.dod.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.dod.mil/news/Feb2000/n02082000_20002083.html, accessed on 8 June 2004.

[42] Wardlaw, *Political Terrorism,* 90; italics added.

[43] Scobell and Hammitt, "Goons, Gunmen, and Gendarmerie," 218.

[44] Ariana Eunjung Cha and Renae Merle, "Line Increasingly Blurred Between Soldiers and Civilian Contractors," *Washington Post*, 13 May 2004; available at www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A22547-2004May12?language=printer, accessed on 13 May 2003.

The primary argument advanced on behalf of the police is that, while the armed forces are an inappropriate tool for internal security missions, the police force is ideally equipped to discharge domestic security duties. It has been suggested that police forces, as opposed to their military cousins, are also better suited to keeping the peace and maintaining internal security because they are essentially a bottom-up organization.[45] The police offers unique assets, such as legitimacy, community proximity due to organizational decentralization and the traditional respect accorded to its constabulary powers (not least those regarding investigation and arrest), and considerable institutional memory, which also brings the experience so vital in the context of an internal security portfolio, which is traditionally its preserve.

Under normal conditions—that is, where the police discharge duties that do not bring its members face to face with situations akin to warfare—this has become a proven truism. At the same time, the very strengths extolled above are at the core of police forces' inherent weakness when confronted with large-scale counter-terrorism operations. Tore Nyhamar has described a select number of dilemmas arising from the nature of police organizations involved in confronting serious terrorist challenges in the Norwegian context:

> The Chief of Police on the nearest district on land has no qualifications to lead what will be a military operation… The military might be asked to carry out a highly dangerous and difficult operation under the leadership of someone who is not qualified… The Chief of Police will be the one responsible for the outcome of the situation, even though the leadership will inevitably drift back to the military, creating a fault line between authority and responsibility.[46]

Nyhamar's point can also be applied to many liberal democratic states besides Norway that share similar civil-military structures and relations. Moreover, according to Nyhamar, "inertia reigns because the police do not want to cede authority to the military, and the military does not want to discuss situations in which it might have to play a subordinate role to the police."[47] At the end of the day, the intractable question of which organization is to take the operational (not to mention the overall) lead in the fight against terrorism is intricately linked to the pros and cons of police and military organizations with respect to their suitability to carry out counter-terrorism activity. The question is also played out against the backdrop of concerns within the liberal democratic state pertaining to civil liberties and political acceptability, and of concerns about the defense of the state relative to adequacy, doctrine/operational principles, and ethics or outlook. Neither option satisfies all requirements; both are possessed of unacceptable or problematic characteristics, while both also possess indispensable assets. In

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[45] Haltiner, "Polizisten oder Soldaten?" 292– 93.

[46] Tore Nyhamar, "Norwegian Counter-Terrorism Policy in a Changing International Security Environment," unpublished draft paper presented on the occasion of the *First International Expert Conference on National Counter-Terrorism Policy*, 24-26 March 2004, Center for Security Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, 18. Quotation by kind permission of the author.

[47] Ibid., 20.

a comparable dead-end, one commentator noted that "[t]he suggestion is also being voiced that we should consider the establishment of a so-called 'third force' – a para-military organization which occupies the middle ground between police and army."[48]

The Third-Force Option As a Viable Alternative to Police and Military Inadequacies in the Combating of Serious Terrorist Violence

Not surprisingly, the pragmatism inherent in the suggestion for a third-force option came to fruition in a country where push quite literally has come to shove. The five-decades-long experience with low intensity conflict, protracted terrorist attacks by political violence movements, and—in the absence of a viable political solution in the foreseeable future—the ongoing process in verifying the best means to meet security challenges has compelled the state of Israel to innovate. Apart from the well-known British example of the SAS, the Israeli Sayeret Matkal units have become legendary for their secrecy and prowess, and for simply doing the impossible. The best-known example of an Israeli counter-terrorism operation is one that too many writers have spilled too much ink over: the raid on Entebbe on 27 June 1976.

Conversely, what has—and understandably so—not been broadly advertised are the failures of the Israeli counter-terrorism effort. For our present purpose, one in particular stands out: the Mahalot Massacre. On 15 May 1974, three heavily-armed men seized a school in northern Israel, trapping a few dozen teachers and pupils on the premises. Sayeret Matkal and Sayeret Golani, two Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) infantry special operations units specializing in long-range reconnaissance missions, were given the task of ending the hostage situation. The reason for the use of the two Sayerets at that time was simply that they represented Israel's highest standard of operational counter-terrorism expertise. In the course of events, a series of mistakes occurred that can arguably be attributed to the essentials of military training and its inappropriate application in a hostage crisis. The death toll was high: twenty-one children and four adults, at least two of whom were killed by friendly fire.[49] This is not to say that military training cannot be put to good and proper use in a hostage situation or other civilian-type scenario, but rather that any counter-terrorism capability in such a context must of necessity meet the requirements of the situation. In this case, the capabilities required would have been the surgical-tactical set of skills germane to a "pure" counter-terrorism outfit, such as GSG-9 or SAS-CRW.

Between Maximum Violence and Minimum Force: The Birth of Unit YAMAM

Following the Mahalot debacle, the government formed the Horev Commission (named after General Amos Horev) to investigate the special forces' failure. The commission's report states that they discovered a number of serious deficiencies, starting with inadequate training and, worse, insufficient inter-unit coordination due to the clannish *esprit de corps* of the units involved that percolated down through the ranks. It

[48] Wardlaw, *Political Terrorism*, 91.

[49] See http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/special.html, accessed on 8 June 2004.

was especially this last item that was responsible for considerable rivalry between the two units.[50] Among the structural recommendations made by the Horev Commission was that the responsibility for domestic counter-terrorism be taken out of the hands of the IDF; it was to be passed on to the police and the frontier guards (MAGAV).[51] On 26 January 1975, the government passed its Resolution 411, which removed the responsibility for domestic counter-terrorism from the military to the civilian branch. According to one commentator, the rationale for the governmental decision to give MAGAV the lead role in domestic counter-terrorism efforts was that "it's a paramilitary, half-breed organization."[52] Furthermore, the "personnel are selected and delivered by the IDF, but its orders and chain of command are via the police. Since the future unit was to be [a] domestic civilian unit but with a strong military focus …, it was placed under MAGAV."[53]

The high standards to which Unit YAMAM, MAGAV's special counter-terrorism force, was trained did not prevent it from becoming involved, albeit only passively, in Israel's greatest hostage rescue failure ever, the so-called "Beach Road" incident, in the course of which thirty-five civilians were killed in action and two hijackers were apprehended alive. In this instance, as in later incidents, the circumstances surrounding the IDF's Sayeret forces' intervention in a domestic terrorist hostage situation after the Mahalot Massacre was highly controversial, and were again tied to pronounced inter-service rivalries that permeate the Israeli security establishment. Unit YAMAM, however, did fully justify the faith placed in it by the advocates of a third-force option. In March 1988, armed men hijacked a bus near Dimona, the site of Israel's principal nuclear research facility; the commuter bus carried mostly married women and children. The "Mother Bus" incident, as it became known, has since become a benchmark for counter-terrorism hostage rescue missions. The balance sheet of the operation was three hijackers killed against three hostage fatalities as a result of *hostile* fire.

Conclusion: The Shaping of a Counter-Terrorism Instrument

How was such a dramatic improvement in performance possible? The explanation is quite simple. The YAMAM cadre was recruited straight from elite military and civilian organizations, such as Sayeret Golani (elite infantry special forces), Sayeret Duvdevan (IDF counter-terrorism specialist unit) and, rarely, from the "blue" police. As mentioned previously, and as was realized in the course of the Second World War, the politically advantageous distinctiveness of third-force options was vested in such units' recruiting of specialists across the board of extant security organizations and the recruits' *civilian* redeployment.[54] Although it still does not appear to attract the cream of

[50] The Israeli Special Forces Home Page, "Unit YAMAM," 4; available at www.isayeret.com/units/civi/yamam/article.htm, accessed on 6 May 2004.

[51] For the MAGAV, see http://www.fact-index.com/m/ma/magav.html, accessed on 8 June 2004.

[52] "Unit YAMAM," 5.

[53] Ibid., 5.

[54] See Scobell and Hammitt, "Goons, Gunmen, and Gendarmerie."

the IDF's crop, YAMAM's admissions policy was and remains based on individual merit and training; its commanders' challenge really is to render military and civilian counter-terrorism operators philosophically compatible and operationally and technically interoperable in order to harness the full spectrum of their respective assets. Moreover, the YAMAM operational profile is geared towards surgical operations in a predominantly static environment (e.g., bus takeover, house entry and seizure), which can be likened to classical police operations, and contrasted with complex, dynamic special operations deep behind enemy lines (e.g., independent counter-insurgency missions with limited or no resupply).[55]

This mandated profile has permitted YAMAM from the outset to hone its skills to perfection for use in the domestic counter-terrorism context; arguably, within the confines of their purview they are almost without peer. At the same time, Unit YAMAM is no glorified police special weapons and tactics (SWAT) formation, as its members are much more likely to be experienced military special forces operators, and their equipment, not unlike that of the GSG-9, is frequently military-grade and thus considerably heavier than that used by the police. Nevertheless, its personnel base and high concentration of know-how has also given Unit YAMAM the ability to operate in more dynamic, war-like situations, such as in border security counter-terrorism missions, for example against infiltrators.

The bottom line is that, given the opportunity, the Israeli government realized the insufficiency of a purely military solution for combating incidents requiring a high degree of precision and extra circumspection due to the frequently acute potential for collateral damage. From the very beginning, Unit YAMAM was an experiment, wedding together disparate forces, commanded in the field by military ranks but fully under a civilian chain of command. Achieving the full integration of military and civilian combat capabilities and the optimal fusion of military and police special operations command structures was never without its problems, but it was certainly worth it. Despite the deeply entrenched tradition of the IDF as the principal force provider in cases of serious terrorist violence, the Israeli authorities grasped that something else—something new—was needed to meet the challenge of terrorist attacks inside the country's borders. Even beyond the national borders, the finely honed skills and pinpoint accuracy of a civilian paramilitary third-force option was, whenever required by the reality on the ground, to be preferred over the harder punch and superior pull of a classical military special forces capability.

All of these critical services could be provided by an optimum combination of civilian and military special operations cultures, bringing together a diverse knowledge base and, not least, instilling the necessity of using an adequate—even a minimum—amount of force, but always with the *ultima ratio* option of massive force escalation. The probability that future terrorist violence will remain in the median range (e.g., heavy small arms and explosives)—which frequently falls between the force saturation levels of the military and the police—renders the consideration of a third-force option,

[55] "Unit YAMAM," 11.

with its civilian mandate and specialist knowledge, the best operational (and most politically viable) model for a democratically controllable, accountable, and acceptable counter-terrorism tool.

Terrorism—A Cultural Phenomenon?

Ana Serafim *

Introduction

This article is aimed at providing a cultural perspective on contemporary terrorism. I will examine not domestic terrorism, but rather the form of terrorism we are confronted with today: terrorism with global reach, terrorism without borders and any conceptual limitations, terrorism that defines death and destruction as achievements in themselves.

In my view, the ideological terrorism (such as the Red Brigade and the Baader-Meinhof Gang) that plagued many Western societies in the 1970s and 1980s, the nationalist and ethnic discontent that has been and continues to be the greatest inspiration for terrorists, and the religiously motivated forms of terrorism all have a cultural aspect. Still, I will not focus particularly on any of these types of terrorism, but I will rather try to find out what is culturally distinct about today's brand of global terrorism and which solutions, if any, can we find in the realm of culture that will help us in the struggle against terrorism. This is not because I underestimate the many and various manifestations of terrorism, but because I am interested in today and tomorrow more than in yesterday. I am also particularly interested in this new type of terrorism because I think that contemporary forms of terrorism are more cultural in origin and nature than ever.

Analyzing culture as a category is not an easy task, and it is not a purely scientific enterprise. What people think, how they think, and the way they react to events are all influenced by culture. Even terrorists are products of culture. Thus, regarding a definition of culture, most readers will probably be able to agree with me only on the fact that there is much disagreement about the meaning of *culture*, both as a word and a concept. I interpret culture in the usual social-scientific sense of beliefs, values, and lifestyles on the world scene, with special attention to religion as a central component. Obviously, culture is not only about religion, but it is also true that the most prominent cultural dimension of twenty-first-century terrorism can be found in religion. In particular, the events of September 11 are deeply rooted in religious and cultural tensions sharpened by the end of Cold War. So the focus of this article will be particularly on religion, because I think that changes taking place in the area of religion throughout much of the world are also working to reinforce the cultural differences between societies, and differences between cultures are helping to facilitate (in my view) the rise and development of terrorism.

It is a tendency in Western society, which is politically oriented, to assume that there is a rational pragmatic cause for acts of terrorism, and a corresponding belief that, if the particular political grievance is addressed properly, the phenomenon will fade. However, when the roots of a terrorist movement are not political (or economic),

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it is naïve to expect political gestures to change the hearts of radicals. Attempts to deal with the terrorist threat as though it were divorced from its intellectual, cultural, and religious wellsprings are doomed to failure.[1] In short, I would not argue that terrorism is purely a cultural phenomenon, but I take as a theorem that modern terrorism has significant cultural aspects in its objectives, causes, methods, and consequences.

All readers will agree with Martha Crenshaw's observation that terrorism is not justified by any group identification or affiliation: moral, cultural, religious, or ethnic.[2] Still, it is obvious that culture underpins and influences terrorists' thoughts and actions, so it seems logical that terrorism is *perceived* differently and is *used* differently by different cultures.

I will focus in particular on two main cultures, Islamic and Western Judeo-Christian, because I think it is in the interface between these two that the so-called "new terrorism" is flourishing. I will not argue here in favor of or against Islam or Christianity as competing cultures and sets of values in relation to terrorism, but I will try to offer an objective approach in order to better understand and eventually bridge the gap between the two cultures, a gap that, in my view, could possibly be widened by the phenomenon of modern terrorism.

Perceptions of Terrorism in Different Cultures

After September 11, the historic cultural difference between the West and the Muslim world re-emerged as one of the principal frontiers of cultural suspicion. While terrorism—even in the form of suicide attacks—is not by definition an Islamic phenomenon, it cannot be ignored that the lion's share of terrorist acts, particularly the most devastating, in recent years have been perpetrated in the name of Islam. This fact has sparked a fundamental debate both in the West and within the Muslim world regarding the link between these acts and the teachings of Islam.

Perceptions of Terrorism within Islamic Culture

Most Western analysts are hesitant to identify terrorist acts with the central teachings of one of the world's great religions, preferring to view them instead as a perversion of a religion that is essentially peace-loving and tolerant. Moreover, an interpretation that places the blame for terrorism on religious and cultural traits runs the risk of being branded as bigoted and Islamo-phobic.[3]

Muslims often accuse Western analysts of misinterpreting Islam and ignorance about its real essence. *But if these critics do not wish to see their religion associated with contemporary terrorism, then they need to be reminded that it is not "the others" who initially misunderstood and misjudged Islam, but rather the terrorists themselves.* They have sent scholars all over the world looking everywhere—including in their re-

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1 Shmuel Bar, "The Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism," *Policy Review* 125 (June & July 2004), available at: http://www.policyreview.org/jun04/bar.html.

2 Martha Crenshaw, "The Psychology of Terrorism: An Agenda for the 21st Century," *Political Psychology* 21:2 (June 2000).

3 Bar, "Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism."

ligion—for explanations of their actions. It is not the case that Islam itself is a danger, but we have the duty to investigate any possible source of inspiration and motivation for terrorists, in order to try to defeat the threats we currently face. Thus, I will investigate what Daniel Pipes calls the "terroristic version of Islam."

Terroristic Version of Islam

Martin Kramer, a research professor in Middle East affairs at Tel Aviv University, has written that "Islamism" is Islam reformulated as a modern ideology. Whereas Islam is traditionally viewed as being comparable to Judaism and Christianity, Islamism is a response to ideologies that emerged in the modern West, such as communism, socialism, or capitalism. It has a political agenda; it is an effort to draw meaning out of Islam that can be applied to problems of contemporary governance, society, and politics. We therefore may ask if there are any historic similarities between Bin Laden, et al., and Martin Luther and the Reformation. In his own eyes, Bin Laden may see himself as a profound reformer of Islam, just as Luther was in the history of Christianity, but most scholars of Islam describe Bin Laden's vision as a highly distorted and retrograde version of the faith.

According to Daniel Pipes, militant Islamism derives from Islam but is a misanthropic, misogynist, triumphalist, millenarian, anti-modern, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, terrorist, jihadist, and suicidal version of it.[4] Still, what I hope to examine is not the political dimension of Islamism, but its cultural elements. To Islamists, living by the *sharia* (religious law) is the key both to the moral life and to the regeneration of the Muslim faith. The ideology of Islamism is given coherence by its focus on this one element.[5]

The basic sentiment expressed by contemporary Islamist terrorists was also present in the Muslim Brotherhood, a political movement that started in Egypt in 1928 with the goal of restoring Islamic laws and values in the face of growing Western influence. At about the same time, another group of radical brethren was taking shape in Saudi Arabia, advocating the puritanical interpretation of Islam known as *Wahhabism*. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Wahhabi radicals in Saudi Arabia both rose out of an Islamic religious movement called the *Salafiyya*, which held that the practice of Islam had become corrupted and needed to be reformed to reflect the original seventh-century form of Islam practiced at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. This extreme interpretation of Islam would eventually influence a new generation of violent radical Muslim groups, including the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Egyptian Islamic Jihad. Although all these trends and religious movements have been present for almost a century, they never seemed to achieve the level of extremism and the global reach that can be found in the language of today's terrorists. This new quality is due to the fact that terrorist discourse has evolved and exploited religious concepts in order to advance their political and cultural agenda.

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[4] Daniel Pipes, "Aim the War on Terror at Militant Islam," *Los Angeles Times* (6 January 2002).

[5] Martin Kramer, "Is Islamism a Threat? A Debate," *Middle East Quarterly* (September 1999).

The message of terrorist organizations is not Koranic, but heretical. Four main concepts are of interest for my approach.

- *Dar al Islam/Dar al Harb*. The underlying element in the radical Islamist worldview is a-historic and dichotomist: perfection lies in the ways of the Prophet and the events of his time; therefore, religious innovations, philosophical relativism, and intellectual or political pluralism are anathema. In such a worldview, there can exist only two camps—Dar al-Islam ("The House of Islam," i.e., the Muslim countries) and Dar al-Harb ("The House of War," i.e., countries ruled by any regime but Islam)—which are pitted against each other until the final victory of Islam. The radical Muslims carry these concepts to their extreme conclusion.[6]
- *Ummah*. This is an ancient Arabic term that denotes the totality of Muslims in the world at any given time; in this sense, it refers to much more than our word religion usually comprehends.[7] In Islamic terms, *ummah* means what secular diplomats call the international community. The two terms correspond in internal variety, geographical dispersion, and potentially global ambition.
- *The Great Caliphate* calls for the replacement of all secular leadership with religious leaders in any country having Muslim majorities. This would include Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia, all the Emirates, Sudan, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, and finally what Muslims call the "occupied territory" of Israel.
- *Jihad* is such an important concept to Islam that it is almost regarded as a sixth pillar. It is also the most misunderstood of all aspects of Islam. Most Islamic scholars interpret *jihad* as a nonviolent quest for justice: a holy struggle rather than a holy war. The word *jihad*, they argue, actually means "striving" in the spiritual sense. It means that a Muslim's real daily striving is to become pure in spirit and to resist sin and evil. All of the Koran's chapters except one begin with the phrase "Allah is merciful and compassionate." So if Islam is such a compassionate and tolerant religion, why then do the militant/extremist Islamists continue to resort to the use of violence?[8] Compassion and tolerance, after all, are not part of the common Western perception of *jihad*, at least as it is used by terrorists. They are interpreting *jihad* to mean a holy war, departing from the notion that a Muslim's duty is to keep up the struggle against the spiritual enemies of Islam.

Today's *jihadis* are calling their war the "Third Great Jihad," and are doing so within the framework of a time line that reaches back to the very creation of Islam in the seventh century. This constitutes part of their attempts to recreate the dynamics that gave rise to the religion in the first two hundred years of its existence. *Jihad* represents

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6 Bar, "Religious Sources of Islamic Terrorism."

7 Jack Miles, "Theology and the Clash of Civilizations," *Cross Currents* 51:4 (Winter 2002).

8 Ivar Hellberg, "Notes on Islam," Course presentation, MDD-12 Defense Diplomacy Course - July 2004, Cranfield University, United Kingdom.

the chance to overcome the shame of Islam's long decline from glory and superiority over the West into the decay and decadence represented by current Arab governments.

All these concepts are illustrative for my discussion, simply to show how things have changed. If, at the beginning, *jihad* was considered just a holy war in the House of Islam, it then became a mobilizing concept justifying political activities, and finally emerged as an efficient terrorist activity in its own right. Due to these new interpretations of the teachings of Islam, we today have arrived at a completely erroneous (in the Muslim view) perception of Islamic culture. Many Muslim scholars say that Osama Bin Laden and other Islamic fundamentalists do not represent the real Islam. If that is the case, then how can one distinguish between the real Islam and the distortion of it?

Who does represent true Islam: "Will the real Islam please stand up?"[9]

Islam represents an ethical, ideological, ideational, and cultural phenomenon. It is both a belief system and a code of conduct based on a hierarchy of values, norms, standards, laws, and institutions; it represents a way of life, a world system, and a social movement for historical change.[10] *Still, there is a tendency to not judge Islam by its books, but by what is done in its name*. The problem is that Islamism has, in some respects, become more visible than the real Islam.

Why is it that the Islamist message seems unitary, while the perception of Islam is so diverse, even among Muslims themselves? Within Islam, the unifying influence of faith (insofar as Sunni and Shia can be said to be united) is outweighed by other societal differences. Even within the Arab world, where a more or less common language (to a significant extent), common culture and historical experience are added to shared religion, there is no immediate likelihood of unity. In addition, most Muslim violence is directed against co-religionists. So Muslims are not united, a fact that some observers attribute to the teachings of Islam itself, arguing that they make Muslims confrontational. How does the Muslim world perceive terrorism? Does the Muslim community see it and feel it the way we do? Saddam Hussein was the only state leader to praise the attacks of September 11. Many Muslim-majority countries are members of the U.S.-led coalition fighting terrorism. Moreover, Al Qaeda also targets Muslim governments, such as those in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, that it sees as godless. Still, do the populations of those nations really support the coalition against Bin Laden and its member states? Talking with people from Muslim communities, they shared with me their view on that specific issue: maybe the political leaders are in favor of supporting the Americans in the war against terrorism, for political and strategic reasons, but the ordinary people are not. What is more, there are Muslims who morally support the terrorists, and think their war is right. One confusing problem is that one may find this trend even among Europe's fifteen million Muslims. To take but one example, in the UK, a recent poll has shown that 13 percent of British Muslims surveyed would "regard further attacks by Al Qaeda or similar organizations on the U.S. as justified." We may also re-

[9] Miles, "Theology and the Clash of Civilizations."

[10] See "Islam and Terrorism: What Does Humanity Need; Confrontation or Cooperation?", available at: http://www.jamaat.org/iat/humanity1101.html.

member that the attacks of September 11 were popular on Arab streets, where they were met with spontaneous celebrations and reportedly made Osama a popular name for newborn boys.

To what extent is the Islamic world the target of terrorism? Some authors say that the war being waged by Bin Laden and his followers is as much against Islam as it is against the West. Al Qaeda and its allies represent a perversion of Islam, and are engaged in a campaign to change Islam itself.[11] This analysis is borne out by terrorist attacks in Central Asia and Morocco, in Saudi Arabia, Algeria—and some in Iraq—that have been directed against fellow Muslims, who have abandoned what the extremists view as "true Islam." Still, the primary targets of today's terrorists remain modernity, Christianity, America, and the West, which in the Islamist perspective make up a single unholy stew.

Now we will shift to the other side of the equation. Why is Western culture perceived in this way by the Muslim world? How "alien" is Western culture from Islamic culture?

Perceptions of Terrorism in Western Judeo-Christian Culture

The West is no longer a mere geographic proposition; it has also taken on cultural and civilizational dimensions. It obviously differs from all other civilizations in that it has had an overwhelming impact on all other civilizations in the world that have existed since 1500.[12] The West's popular culture is global in its reach, but in many parts of the world it is widely regarded with suspicion, and met with varying degrees of resistance. Within the Islamic world, the West has been stereotyped as the embodiment of arrogance, exploitation and irresponsible individualism.[13]

A first distinction between Islam and Christianity occurs with regard to the place and role of religion within society. Many of the cultural features of Western societies are the result of the "privatization of religion" in the Christian world. The modern form of governance, democracy, is about privatization, and thus everything in Western societies—including religion—became a private issue. Indeed, religion in Western societies is largely restricted to the private sphere. It is substantially independent from government, and its role is reduced to the private life of each individual.

Islam, on the other hand, is a pervasive religion. It regulates every aspect of human life. Western culture is completely different. It gives first priority to the human individual. Societies that are structured around the pursuit of religious objectives can appear illogical to societies like ours, based as they are on individual rights and freedom.

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[11] David F. Forte, "Religion is Not the Enemy," *National Review Online* (19 October 2001), available at: http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-forte101901.shtml

[12] Josh Burek, "The Clash of Civilizations: a reading guide," on-line resources and expert commentary on Samuel P. Huntington's essay (quoting Vincent Ferraro); available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/specials/sept11/flash_civClash.html.

[13] Simon Murden, "Cultural Conflict in International Relations: The West and Islam," in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, edited by John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 377.

But the values that are prized by these societies are completely different. One observant Muslim told me once, "My country is above myself and above my family. My country is my religion." Individual freedom is not their main concern – they care most about their fellow Muslims and their countries. Westerners cannot comprehend how "rational" people can "joyously" destroy their lives and the lives of innocent civilians in America and Israel and elsewhere in the world. They do not understand the psychology that drives suicide bombers to their deaths in order to bring honor and paradise to them, their families, and Muslims everywhere. We cannot conceive of a culture that encourages young people to slaughter themselves for the perceived benefits of the afterlife. These concepts are totally alien to Western thinking.

On the other hand, Western values such as individualism, liberalism, human rights, equality, liberty, democracy, free markets, and separation of church and state often have little or no resonance in Islamic culture. Western efforts to propagate these values produce instead a reaction against "human rights imperialism" and a reaffirmation of indigenous values.

Is Christianity as such a target of terrorism? Modern terrorism is religious only in means, not in its targets. What we see is that terrorists are targeting values, rather than religion.

Terrorists are not fighting against the Christianity as a religion, but rather against the products of Christian culture, which are Western values.

If this is the case, then it might be asked exactly in what way Western culture challenges Islamist terrorists. This question bring me to the next point of my analysis, where I hope to shed light on what is cultural about contemporary terrorism, and from what perspective can we define terrorism as a cultural phenomenon. As I said in the introduction, I consider twenty-first-century terrorism to have cultural objectives, causes, means, and consequences.

What Are the Cultural Aspects of Contemporary Terrorism?

First of all, I consider the terrorist agenda to be at times primarily social and cultural, not political. Among the cultural objectives terrorists have on their agenda, I would include:

1. *Reject and destroy Western culture*. Today's terrorists are seeking the elimination of Western secularism and values, and of those who support them.[14] In the eyes of Islamic fundamentalists, the openness of Western culture and its values are repulsive. There are numerous books and articles that point to this antipathy toward the Western world, either because of a broad cultural incompatibility or a specific conflict between Western consumerism and religious fundamentalism.[15] Western values are seen as contaminating Islam, and therefore there is a perceived cultural

[14] Stephane Lefebvre, "Perspectives on Ethno-nationalist/separatist Terrorism," *Conflict Studies Research Centre Monthly*, Issue M29 (May 2003).

[15] Well known examples of such articles are Samuel Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 (Summer 1993); and Benjamin R. Barber's "Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy," *Atlantic Monthly* (March 1992).

duty to fight against this influence. Terrorists want to insulate their societies from penetration or "corruption" by the West.

2. *Defeat globalization*. Associated with Western values is the process of globalization. Globalization is what terrorists dislike most, and this is because globalization is not only about exporting and importing prosperity, but also values. Pope John Paul II suggested what these values might be in an address earlier this year in which he spoke of globalization as not just an economic fact, but a "cultural phenomenon" as well: "Those who are subjected to it often see globalization as a destructive flood threatening the social norms which had protected them and the cultural points of reference which had given them direction in life. Globalization is moving too quickly for cultures to respond."[16] Fear and rage in the face of threats to established beliefs and ways of life—threats seen as originating above all in America's liberal, consumerist culture—are a large part of the dynamic driving Islamist fury today.
3. *Fighting the infidels, unifying the ummah*. This new form of terrorism is more intent on punishment for perceived wrongs, destruction of the existing order, the quest to create Islamic states by the imposition of the *sharia* law. Today's militant form of Islam seeks to rid the Middle East of all Western influence and establish an Islamic state. Fundamentalists believe that violence, including killing civilians, is justified as a means to restore *sharia* and maintain Islamic cultural identity. And Islamists not only want to preserve their identity, but also to either convert or punish nonbelievers.
4. *Targeting societies becomes a terrorist objective.* What appears to be emerging today is a desired goal to devastate an entire society, not simply to politically influence an audience. If traditionally the objective of terrorists' political violence was to influence government structures or states, the new form of terrorism is oriented toward the society that they want to change: the society itself has become the main target.

There is also a cultural motivation behind contemporary terrorism. Terrorists are fighting their war because of a religious commandment. September 11 occurred because of a religious commandment to wage *jihad* and work toward the establishment of *sharia*. Terrorism therefore became a culture that gave the poor and the hopeless a basis for self-worth: to fight for their faith.

Islamist terrorists are also fighting out of a sense of cultural frustration. The cultural anger against the West is quite explicit, and is clearly invoked as a motivation for terrorist acts. Their hate is not limited in time and space. Once asked what the *jihadis* will do if U.S. forces finally pull out of Iraq, one terrorist said: "We will follow them to the U.S."[17] Their level of frustration is high because they are looking at the past. As

[16] Russel Shaw, *The Catholic Response to Terrorism* (30 September 2001), available at: http://www.osv.com/whatthechurchteaches/whenevilstrikes/shaw.asp.

[17] Michael Ware, "Meeting the Jihad," *Time*, 5 July 2004.

Francis Fukuyama wrote, the days of Islam's cultural conquests are over, and fundamentalists cannot accept it.[18]

Terrorists also exploit globalization in order to justify their activities. Kashima reverses the role of globalization in modern terrorism, from a violent intrusion that provokes terroristic opposition, to a neutral medium that terrorists use to advance their violent agendas. He claims that globalization offers an opportunity for terrorists to gain publicity for their political agenda, to place it on the "communal common ground of the people who engage in public discourse" about it. As Carl Ratner has written, "Globalization makes terrorism an 'attractive' political strategy for some."[19]

Terrorism is also cultural in its approaches and means; the first such instrument that comes to mind is the religion of Islam itself. One question therefore arises: Is religion a weapon of terrorists? Some analysts agree that, although some terrorist organizations may have a religious and political face, they have built their strength on terrorist tactics, which have nothing in common with religion.

I disagree with this perspective. I think that the believers—the human capital of terrorist organizations—are the main weapons of terrorism, and therefore I would argue that religion becomes an organizing principle, a mobilizing factor, and therefore can be seen as a weapon of terrorists. By appealing to deeply ingrained religious beliefs, radical leaders succeed in motivating the Islamist terrorist, creating for him a social environment that provides approbation and a religious environment that provides moral and legal support for his actions.

Terrorists are also using religious ideological centers to teach extremism, which raises the question of whether these *madrasas* are centers of education or nurseries of terrorism. It is well known that religious indoctrination is a pre-condition for creating good militants. It can be safely assumed that the great majority of Muslims in the world have no desire to join a *jihad* or to politicize their religion. However, it is also true that, insofar as religious establishments in most of the Arabian Peninsula, in Iran, and in much of Egypt and North Africa are concerned, radical Islamist ideology does not represent a marginal and extremist perversion of Islam but rather a genuine and increasingly mainstream interpretation. Many religious schools in these countries impart only religious education (along with a minimal level of general education, which tends to produce semiliterate religious scholars). They promote negative thinking and propagate hatred and violence in society.

We may also see today the global means of the new forms of terrorism. Because of globalization, terrorists have access to more powerful technologies, more targets, more territory, more means of recruitment, more financial resources, and more easily exploited sources of rage than ever before. This new terrorism is using global and modern means to achieve its ends. Extremist ideologies are spread through websites and videotapes, and the use of information technologies such as the Internet, mobile

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[18] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 45–46.

[19] Carl Ratner, "A Cultural Critique of Psychological Explanations of Terrorism," *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin* 38:1-2 (2004), 18–24.

phones, and instant messaging has extended the global reach of many terrorist groups.[20]

Along with the material results of terrorist attacks, we are at present also confronting the cultural consequences of terrorism, such as:

1. *Negative impact on Western societies.* Although terrorism is generally unsuccessful in reaching its political objectives, it often does succeed at the tactical and strategic levels, instilling fear and confusion and impacting societies by causing tremendous physical destruction and grave bodily harm. It is an interesting situation: contemporary terrorists have society as a whole as a target, because in democracies the individual and society both play a very important role within the state, as well as on the international scene. It is no longer effective to simply kidnap people or kill political representatives. When the society as a whole is the target, the efficacy of terrorist activity is by far enhanced. The impact of terrorism on Western societies becomes therefore very important. A terrorist attack such as the one of September 11 may have profound political, social, and economic consequences for the targeted society. It can inspire widespread anxiety, anger at the government for failing in its primary mission of providing security, and popular demand for draconian measures that could shake a political system and fundamentally alter the society's lifestyle.[21]
2. *Terrorism as an "intellectual fashion."* What we also see today is that subcultural elements crop up in contemporary intellectual fashion, along with extremist policies. Terrorists are becoming popular, and this is not only among the illiterate. We witness today an "intellectual attraction" to terrorism, to the use of intellectual means of propaganda, and therefore to a certain level of attention being paid to the "intellectual nature" of the new terrorists. This is a dangerous trend as, over the long term, the popularization of extremist views cannot augur well for the security of any state or society. This kind of "intellectual terrorism" can be worse than physical terrorism.
3. *Copy-cat influence on other types of terrorism*. All types of terrorism are profoundly influenced by the form of terrorism we currently face. For instance, the influence of Al Qaeda on Muslim separatist groups active in their home countries is growing. It is a worrying trend, as each Al Qaeda attack becomes a recruiting poster for terrorism in general, no matter the specific type.
4. *Clash of ideologies/cultures/civilizations.* One of the main consequences of modern terrorism is the controversial "clash of civilizations" that Samuel Huntington suggested in 1993. The essence of this thesis is that the great divisions among humankind and the dominant source of conflict in the future will be cultural. Re-

[20] Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism," in *Defeating Terrorism–Shaping the New Security Environment,* ed. Russell D. Howard and Reid L. Sawyer (New York: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2004), 39.

[21] Brian Michael Jenkins, "Countering Al-Qaeda," in *Defeating Terrorism*, ed. Howard and Sawyer, 134.

> ligion discriminates sharply and exclusively between people, and the main cultural fault line in the world occurs where the West meets Islam. Were the September 11 attacks, from a Huntingtonian perspective, part of a clash between Islamic and Western civilizations? Bin Laden and his terror network see it that way. Al Qaeda considers its terrorist campaign against the U.S. to be part of a war between the *ummah* and the Judeo-Christian West. For Al Qaeda, the fight is against Western civilization as a whole. Islamic scholars say that it is a fight between the vast majority of progressive Muslims and the miniscule percentage of radical Muslims. According to Rohan Gunaratna, it is not a clash of civilizations but a clash among civilizations, a fight that must essentially be fought within the Muslim world.[22]

Many experts say that the new form of terrorism cannot be reduced to a clash of civilizations. Still, we see a continuously growing gap between Islam and Western civilization. Anti-Western feelings openly manifested in the Muslim world are generating an increase in Western hostility towards Islam in general. Western societies, the main victims of contemporary terrorism, are exposed to the danger of an increasingly hateful attitude toward Muslim communities. If you go in the streets in Western countries and ask ordinary people what they feel about Muslims, they will make—even if not deliberately—an association between the current threat to their security and the Muslim world. The more terrorist attacks take place, the greater the anti-Muslim resentment on the part of the targeted populations.

Having in mind all these cultural aspects of terrorism, it is logical to consider how terrorism might be fought using cultural means. What is the role of culture in the fight against terrorism?

Cultural Approaches to Fighting Terrorism

It has been assumed that understanding terrorism crucially affects the responses to it. Therefore, in order to comprehend the motivation for these acts and to draw up an effective strategy for a war against terrorism, it is necessary to understand the religious-ideological factors that underlie it, and which are deeply embedded in Islam. Consequently, counter-terrorism begins on the religious-ideological level, and must adopt appropriate methods. The cultural and religious sources of radical Islamic ideology must be addressed in order to develop a long-range strategy for coping with the terrorist threat to which they give birth.

To this end, I suggest there is an urgent need for a more effective, meaningful, and all-embracing dialogue between the Muslim and the Western worlds in order to bring about a better understanding of each other's interests and aspirations. Therefore, the Muslim world must take the course of openly learning from the West and confining the role of religion to the private sphere. A reformist movement in Islam is required, an interpretation of Islam that combines a proper respect for Muslim traditions with a

[22] Rohan Gunaratna, "Defeating Al Qaeda—The Pioneering Vanguard of the Islamic Movements," in *Defeating Terrorism*, ed. Howard and Sawyer, 20.

willingness to embrace the opportunities and obligations for development offered by the modern world.

There is a need for an Islamic Reformation, to allow modernization to take place; as Rohan Gunaratna has pointed out, this is a battle within Islam itself, rather than between Islam and the West. I think that progress has been made already in this direction, by bringing the subject of Islam into the public debate within the Muslim world itself.

Another effective approach would be to engage Islam—and therefore theology should become a topic in international diplomacy—not as a security issue, but as tool to better understand each other. Because of the secularization of the state in the West, Western governments when dealing with one another do not expect to be required to deal with one another's religious leaders. It is different in the case of the Muslim world, where religious leaders typically have a far greater influence on the public than civilian leaders do.[23] So theology should become of interest for makers of policy and diplomacy.

Promoting moderate Islam should be another approach taken by the West. The best way of managing the fundamentalist challenge is to initiate a serious dialogue with moderate Islamic groups that may foster in the long term, if not the democratization of their regimes, at least a marginalization of their radical elements. Moderates must win in the struggle within Islam. Every precaution should be taken not to antagonize moderate elements in the Muslim community, and therefore it is important to know if it is power or weakness that moderates Muslims, and act accordingly.

Integrating Islam within the Western community is also important. Gert Weisskirchen, the foreign policy spokesman for Germany's Social Democrats, spoke about the need to Europeanize Islam.[24] But is it possible for Europe to Europeanize Islam, or for America to Americanize Islam?

Some argue that, in the years ahead, it should be the voice of Western Muslim communities that should be heard rather than that of Bin Laden. Western Muslim communities can make a difference, due to their connections to and understanding of Islamic culture. These communities can serve as a link between the Islamic and Western worlds. Still, it has been shown that many terrorists belong to these communities. Expatriate and refugee communities remain vulnerable to ideological penetration and recruitment, and they still identify themselves with the struggles in their homelands. Until and unless host governments develop a better cultural understanding of the threat and target terrorist propaganda—both its producers and their tools—the threat from within will persist.[25]

A crucial element of the cultural front in the fight against terrorism is reforming the education system in the Muslim world. Extremists primarily come from societies where there is a high level of extremist teaching. Social change must be encouraged and promoted, with an emphasis on education. There are serious problems caused by the religious schools. Terrorists make use of these schools to disseminate ideologies

[23] Miles, "Theology and the clash of civilizations."
[24] *Time*, 29 March 2004, 28.
[25] Gunaratna, "Defeating Al Qaeda," 5.

that are contrary to the teachings of Islam. It is not religion that is taught there, but politics: the politics of hatred.

When asked which is the best measure of whether you are winning or losing a war on terrorism, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, said that the best way is "to monitor whether the numbers we are killing and deterring are greater than the numbers the Madrasas are producing and Al-Qaeda is recruiting." Here stands the difference between two approaches: "hard," or military power, used by Westerners to defeat terrorism, and "soft," or cultural power, used by terrorists to win. This has to change. In the same way that terrorists are using now more and more hard power, those fighting them should focus on soft power. Joseph Nye, one of America's leading thinkers on foreign policy, has advocated for the use of soft power in order to improve America's image in the Middle East. He argues that the spread of information and American popular culture has generally increased global awareness and openness to American ideas and values.

Soft power worked with Communist Europe because of a common history, a shared religious heritage, and a similar cultural framework. But in the Middle East, there is a great disparity on all of these issues. Can efforts based in soft power really take root in Muslim societies? It is more difficult to wield soft power where there are deep cultural differences. For instance, it is almost impossible to think that Western values could be spread among the radical Islamists who abhor democracy, who believe that human rights and tolerance are imperialist inventions, and who want to have nothing to do with deeper Western values which are not those of the Koran as they interpret it. But the target of soft power should, again, be the large Muslim communities that are not yet radicalized, and the uneducated masses. In this regard, illiteracy is another important aspect to be dealt with. Destitute and illiterate young people, in my view, are the easiest target for recruitment by terrorist organizations, because they are the easiest to manipulate.

Conclusion

To conclude, a cultural approach to terrorism may not offer any concrete solution to it, but it definitely can provide us with a far more insightful and effective strategy to understand the concrete cultural issues involved in terrorism. Comprehending both the conditions that provoke terrorism as well as the ideological and cultural objectives that guide the terroristic response to these conditions will make us better prepared to understand the reasons for terrorism and to fight against it.

As it seems that there is no purely political or military solution to terrorism, it is reasonable to try to approach it differently. Nobody wants to antagonize the Muslim community. The United States has avoided portraying its campaign against Al Qaeda and the Taliban as a crusade against Islam, and it is not my intent to make Islam into a security issue either. Instead, I agree with those analysts who describe the enemy as an ideology, a set of attitudes, a belief system organized into a recruiting network that will continue to replace terrorist losses unless defeated politically, economically, and culturally. Therefore, if states do not have policies towards religions, they do respond to

ideologies, so it is important to develop hard power solutions in relation to Islamism and soft power approaches to Islam. Hard power is needed to eliminate the Islamist threat, while soft power is needed to attract the moderates, appease militant Islamists, and to promote a true alternative to Bin Laden in the world where he originated.

Islamic fundamentalism is a threat to Western culture, in the same way that Western culture is perceived as a threat to the Islamic world. It is always about misperceptions, misunderstandings, and ignorance about each other. But when people of one culture perceive those of another not just as alien but also as threatening, serious conflict is likely.[26]

I don't know if it is a clash of civilizations that we are facing today, but I do realize that there is a gap between the Muslim and the Western world, and I do think that terrorism increases that gap. This chasm needs to be narrowed, and cultural means may contribute to the effort. Without being blind to the dangers of militant fundamentalism, we must remain aware of the moral distinction between discrete religious sects like Wahhabis and terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and Islamic Jihad.

By continuing to maintain that moral bright line between terrorism and Islam, we help to legitimate all the varied and peaceful traditions of Islam, *including those that oppose fundamentalism.* This permits us to precisely isolate and destroy terrorists, while working on a multifaceted program to blunt and reduce militant fundamentalism within Islam.[27] Understanding the diversity of Islam gives those of us who are not Muslim a valuable tool to facilitate our dealings with Muslims, and is therefore a step that is much too important to ignore or deny.[28]

To conclude, viewing terrorism purely as a cultural phenomenon would be too extreme. Indeed, contemporary terrorism has cultural features, and may be taken as a cultural phenomenon, but the point is that, so far, the terrorism of the twenty-first century is the manifestation of only an isolated part of a culture, not of the whole. Just simply associating the two words seems inadequate to me. This is because I don't want to conflate a positive word with a complete negative one. Still, as we have seen, they meet somewhere. Therefore, I would argue that the form of terrorism we are facing today is rather a non-cultural, sub-cultural, or an a-cultural phenomenon. And, indeed, this sub-cultural phenomenon could well nourish "a clash of civilizations."

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[26] Murden, "Cultural conflict in international relations," 375.

[27] Forte, "Religion Is not the Enemy."

[28] Llewellyn D. Howell, "Act of war: terrorism in the Clash of Civilizations," *USA Today Magazine* (July 2002), available at: http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1272/is_2686_131/ai_90683547.