The double-edged sword: Globalization and international Islamic terrorism

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The American University in Cairo
The School of Humanities and Social Sciences

_The Double-Edged Sword: Globalization and International Islamic Terrorism_

A Thesis Submitted to
The Political Science Department

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Masters of Arts

By Yara Toutounji

Under the supervision of Dr. Marco Pinfari
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The current work is a product of a long research process that shifted from questions on the human need for order to a study of the violence and disorder shaping the international realm as follows from globalization and international Islamic terrorism in the twenty-first century. Along this process, I was being challenged by several aspects in my life whether personally, physically, academically or professionally. They were days I was not able to write more than one word in this document. Still, I thought every word would count as progress and I am very pleased to have finally effected a complete research work with an argument I am proud to present. First and foremost, I would like to thank my creator who has blessed me with the needed perseverance, patience and vision to complete this work. I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Marco Pinfari, for his exceptional guidance, insight and patience, and also, for reminding me to always be mindful of the bigger picture of a phenomenon rather than becoming too immersed in your own understanding. I have learned so much from you throughout this process then possibly during my entire degree. I would like to thank my readers, Dr. Waleed Kazziha and Dr. Thomas Diez, for undertaking the assessment of my work under a short time interval and for providing me with feedback that allowed for an improved research work. I am humbled to have three scholars I look up too sign on my work. I would like to thank Nada Sharkawy for her unending support that has inspired the completion of this document. I will always be grateful. Finally, I would like to thank my family for giving me more faith in myself everyday. You made me believe I can achieve this until I did.
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Chapter I: The Double-Edged Sword

Introduction

In considering the current international character of the world stage, it becomes incredibly curious why in the modern age of the twenty-first century, at a height of secularism, one of the international scene’s greatest challenges is religious terrorism. This paradox becomes ever more threatening as globalization rapidly expands in the twenty-first century causing advanced technological, communication and transportation links to bring about unprecedented terror and destruction at any point of collision between international religious terrorists- most particularly Islamic terrorist groups- and concerned nation-states. As Alexander, Browne and Nanes together maintain, “The brutality and globalization of modern violence make it amply clear that we have entered a unique ‘Age of Terrorism’ with all its formidable problems and frightening ramifications”¹.

In retaliation, most nation-states, as has been seen in the response to 9/11 and ongoing ISIS attacks, directly address terrorist attacks through military prowess as demonstrated by the American led UN invasion of Afghanistan against Al-Qaeda and the French air strikes in Syria following ISIS’ Paris attacks. In this way, most international efforts have been focused on combatting international Islamic terrorism rather than understanding it. In fact, L. Ali Khan critically advances that a generation of terrorism scholars in the non-Muslim world has attempted even before 9/11 to raise Islam in the global consciousness as a religion of violence and accordingly, has explained Islamic

terrorism as a unique phenomenon that is caused by the faith itself. Khan then asserts that this language gained more momentum in the literature with the advent of the 9/11 attacks as many experts on terrorism, many of who were involved in the US National Security establishment, were “… determined to persuade the world that Islamic terrorism is mystical violence that has little to do with concrete grievances”. To this effect, they explained the 9/11 attacks as caused by Al-Qaeda’s foremost motive to spread the Islamic faith through terrorism as expressed in the doctrine of jihad. As such, they equated the notion of jihad with terrorism and Islamic imperialism.

Along these lines, Khan describes the events of 9/11 to have transformed the ontology of Islamic terrorism as an essentialist mystical violence with an imperial purpose. Consequently, as endorsed by key social actors, some scholars and many officials, this conception of international Islamic terrorism has become a dominant political narrative in the U.S. and the West in general. Differently, a closer examination of international Islamic terrorist groups reveals that jihad is outlined by these current non-state actors as a defensive reaction against the oppression of the Muslim community, yet, as Khan maintains, “Terrorism experts distort this fact to argue that Muslims are addicted to violence because jihad is the mystical prompting for killing”. In fact, this prevailing narrative is replete with distorted understandings of Islamic terrorism and, hence, a reductionist understanding of the concept of international terrorism itself. Consequently,

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3 Ibid. p.g 5-6
4 Ibid. p.g 5-6
this serves to deviate focus from existing grievances in the Muslim world and rather treats international Islamic terrorism as caused by imperial, essentialist and relentless urges inherent in the religion of Islam.

In response to this, this research work will therefore attempt to provide a clearer understanding of international Islamic terrorism by not restrictively approaching it as a security issue as has been widely practiced but, rather, by unearthing and understanding the underlying grievances and wider dynamics that have been overlooked by many scholars. Significantly, this comes at a time of unraveling “systemic chaos” at the international level, in which the forces of globalization in the twenty-first century have been increasingly disrupting the institutions of the nation-state and resultantly, bringing about a new international order that is yet to be determined. Particularly at this time of transformation, international Islamic terrorist groups are disparagingly seeking to override the Westphalian state-centric order so as to impose their own alternative worldview that transcends national borders. Against this backdrop, understanding international Islamic terrorism becomes more relevant than ever.

**Research Question**

Hence, as a starting point, this research work questions, *what is the relationship between international grievances spurred by globalization and international Islamic terrorism in the twenty-first century?*

**Hypothesis**

To answer to this, the hypothesis presented by this work suggests-

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Three main underlying sets of popularly held international grievances involving the cultural, economic and political realms, which all feature a common concern with Western hegemony in a new globalized era, are mediated through contemporary religious interpretations of the faith, which work to inspire mobilization and polarization, by Al-Qaeda and ISIS to affect indiscriminate and acute terrorist violence in the international realm.

**Literature Review**

At first impression, it is hard not to imagine terrorists killing innocent civilians through violent and bloodthirsty methods as crazed fanatics suffering from psychological clinical conditions. However, there now exists a vast consensus between terrorism scholars that terrorists are psychologically “normal” and thereby do not meet the criteria for *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Axis I* disorders. Accordingly, the 2005 International Summit on Terrorism, Security and Democracy concluded that “the outstanding characteristic of terrorists is their normality” and that, as such, there are no defining psychological features or psychopathy that differentiated terrorists from the general population.

Many terrorism scholars have therefore shifted their attention more toward the group dynamics of terrorist organizations. On the group level, Albert J. Bergesen and Omar Lizardo begin by reprimanding some of the current literature on terrorism for treating the phenomenon as a more general form of collective violence such as race riots.

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9 Ibid. p.g. 306-307
and protest events\textsuperscript{10}. In this way, both authors criticize that the literature does not properly distinguish terrorist acts for their underlying logics and linkages to the wider environment\textsuperscript{11}. Similarly, Martha Crenshaw argues that much of the literature on terrorism fails to provide a concrete analysis on the affects of terrorism especially in contexts of political or social change\textsuperscript{12}.

Moreover, Richard Jackson, through an investigation of the political language of the war on terrorism, particularly in America, accentuates that this language is dominated by a single political narrative that is generated and endorsed by key social actors and officials in order to achieve public consent for a global counter-terrorism campaign\textsuperscript{13}. Along these lines, Jackson maintains that officials have deliberately constructed a public discourse that shapes a new reality in which terrorism is seen to be a threat to all ordinary citizens in terms of their lives, democracy, freedom, way of life and civilization and, in response, noble warriors from the West are described to risk their lives in foreign land to deliver freedom in a fight of “good” versus “evil”\textsuperscript{14}. In turn, Jackson argues that this serves to normalize and justify the act of “war on terror”, strengthen officials and contain the public by sidelining protest or dissent, and to reinforce national unity by providing a narrow definition of national identity\textsuperscript{15}. In response, Jackson holds that this dominant public narrative serves a political purpose- that counter-intuitively actually inspires cycles

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Ibid} Ibid.
\bibitem{Jackson} Jackson, Richard. \textit{Writing the War on Terrorism Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism}. Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2012. p.g 2
\bibitem{Ibid} Ibid. p.g 1-2
\bibitem{Ibid} Ibid. p.g 2
\end{thebibliography}
of international violence- rather than offers a genuine solution for eradicating terrorism through a proper understanding of the nature of terrorism \(^{16}\).

Another scholar, Robert A. Pape, comes closer to this understanding after amassing a database containing the first complete survey of suicide terrorist attacks around the world, 315 attacks in all, from 1980 to 2003. The data collected demonstrated that there is little connection between suicide terrorism and Islam \(^{17}\). Instead, he argues that what underlies almost all suicide terrorist attacks is the strategic goal of compelling modern democracies to remove their troops from land that terrorists believe to encompass their territory \(^{18}\). Also, he argues that religion, and more specifically Islam, is seldom a cause but rather a means used by terrorists to recruit potential members and to further their overall strategic objective- that is the political objective of expelling foreign occupation \(^{19}\). Pape then maintains that the United States has answered to the threat posed by suicide terrorism by transforming entire Muslim countries in the Persian Gulf through heavy military force \(^{20}\). Yet, he believes this is not sustainable and what should instead be pursued to defeat terrorism are efforts towards a basic understanding of the strategic, social and individual logic of terrorism \(^{21}\).

As the gap in the literature has been identified, it becomes appropriate to revisit what has been mostly discussed among scholars concerning the topic of terrorism and more specifically, modern terrorism that first appeared roughly 135 years ago. Terrorism

\(^{16}\) Ibid. p.g 4  
\(^{17}\) Pape, Robert Anthony. *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*. London: Gibson Square, 2006. p.g 4  
\(^{18}\) Ibid.  
\(^{19}\) Ibid.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid. p.g 6  
\(^{21}\) Ibid. p.g 7
scholars divide modern terrorism into four successive and overlapping waves. David C. Rapoport was the first to devise the concept of the wave, which he explains as a cycle of activity in a certain period of time that is essentially identified by its international character. Concerning its international character, Rapoport describes it as, “similar activities occur in several countries, driven by a common predominant energy that shapes the participating groups’ characteristics and mutual relationships.” Respectively, he delineates the four waves of modern terrorism as the “Anarchist wave” of the 1880s, the “anti colonial wave” of the 1920s, the “New Left wave” of the 1970s and finally, the current “religious wave”. It must be noted that, as Rapoport describes these waves as overlapping, the manifestation of one wave does not mean the termination of the other but rather, one wave becomes more prominent on the world stage at a certain point of concern.

Rapoport argues that the first wave, the “Anarchist wave”, was the first experience of international terrorism in human history. Thus, whereas its initial perpetrators were Russian in origin, Russian rebels went on to encourage and train groups from different countries. The climax of the first wave occurred from 1881 to 1913, frequently termed the “Golden Age of Assassination”, as anarchists carried out about a dozen assassinations on key politicians and statesmen including the French President, the Spanish Prime Minister, the Austrian Empress and the King of Italy. Correspondingly, as seen from their employment of dramatic action, first wave anarchists had developed a new form of communication coined by Peter Kropotkin as the “Propaganda of the Deed”,

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23 Ibid.
which was seen as a powerful means to capture and influence onlookers rather than the conventional use of pamphlets and leaflets. Markedly, Ayse Zarakol highlights that the “Anarchist wave” holds an important characteristic with the fourth wave, the “religious wave”, as he identifies both waves as “system-threatening” types of terrorism owing to the claims they hold against the Westphalian system at the international level with their endorsement of personal authority and religious authority, respectively, which transcend national borders.\(^{24}\)

While the first wave ended and was largely assumed to have triggered the First World War with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the second “anti-colonial wave” is considered to have been triggered by the Versailles Peace Treaty that settled the First World War as it brought to the fore the principle of national self-determination.\(^{25}\) Nevertheless, terrorists of the second wave became more successful with the conclusion of the Second World War as it served to buttress and further expand the notion of self-determination to colonial territories.\(^{26}\) This was largely manifested in Ireland with the Irish Republican Army (IRA), in Cyprus with Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston (EOKA), in Algeria with the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) and in Palestine with the Zionist Lehi group. These nationalist-secessionist terrorist groups rather saw themselves as “freedom fighters” as they fought to free their land from imperial control, which they undertook by adopting the new strategy of guerrilla warfare


\(^{26}\) Ibid. p.g 53.
against the colonial police. This period also notably saw the rise of the U.S. as a major Western power as leading European states fell to the destruction brought about by the war and the rise of supranational organization specifically the League of Nations and subsequently the United Nations (UN).

The second wave came to an end with decolonization. The third wave then came into play in the 1970s and was not about national self-determination but rather “leftist anti-Westernism”. Particularly, the “New Left wave” gained its biggest support base in Latin America and Eastern Mediterranean as demonstrated by groups such as the Colombian M-19 and FARC, the Peruvian Shining Path and other groups in Turkey and Greece. Zarakol insightfully maintains that the coincidence of this geography is telling of the anti-Western ethos of the third wave as it unraveled in semi-periphery countries that came to question the Westphalian state and the international system in which formal sovereignty and self-determination did not give way to actual autonomy and equality at the international level but rather was restricted by relations of exploitation. Overall, Zarakol well resolves that, “third wave anti-Westernism was an interesting amalgamation: the dominant norms of the international system were partially rejected, but its core organising principle, nation-state sovereignty, was tolerated (if not embraced)”.

In contrast, the fourth “religious wave” manifests to present no such toleration.

29 Ibid. p.g 2333
In fact, as it stands, many scholars increasingly pronounce what they think to be the coming of the end of the Westphalian system of nation-states. Historically, the Westphalian System arose from the Treaty of Westphalia enacted in 1648. The Treaty of Westphalia came as the culmination of the Thirty Years War in the Holy Roman Empire, which was essentially a conflict between Catholic and Protestant states. The Westphalian peace process then ushered in the termination of the Catholic Church’s authority over Western Europe and, the institution of independent, secular, sovereign nation-states no longer subject to the Pope or Emperor. The European model of the nation-state was then exported to the rest of the world following colonization.

Barak Mendelsohn presents the principle of sovereignty as established with the Treaty of Westphalia as a two-layered concept. At the first level, Mendelsohn describes sovereignty as a feature of the state and as such, the sovereign state holds exclusive authority and control over its territory and is free from outside intervention by other states. At the second level, Mendelsohn describes sovereignty as an organizing principle of the international system as it divides the world stage into autonomous entities without a central authority and issues normative rules that encourage peaceful coexistence between states. Altogether, Richard Falk appropriately maintains that, “…the logic of Westphalia established the state system as the basis of world order. Enjoying

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid. p. g 48.
exclusive control over their internal affairs, national governments also were the exclusive formal actors at the international level”\(^{33}\).

Nevertheless, as Prem Shankar Jha notes, by the twenty-first century, scholars began to grow weary of the mid- and late 1990s intellectual debate on the future of the Westphalian world order by arguing that the world is increasingly heading towards disorder and violence\(^{34}\). Keith Suter explains that this disorder owes to the expanding process of globalization as it has brought to the fore non-state actors thereby decreasing the implication of national borders and power of national governments\(^{35}\). In this way, Suter argues that this is initiating the withering away of the current world order based on nation-states\(^{36}\). Accordingly, Suter maintains that globalization is effecting the gradual erosion of the Westphalian order through the growing impact of three main groups of non-state actors. These include transnational corporations (TNCs)– companies involved in foreign direct investment and thus curtail national governments control on their economies by facilitating the interweaving of domestic economies – intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)- organizations that enable cooperation beyond national borders, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – organizations involved in functions outside


\(^{36}\) Ibid. p.g 1
the government and that have been increasingly surpassing national sovereignty by providing alternative channels for activism, information and loyalty.\(^{37}\)

It is against this background that the fourth wave, the “religious wave”, is currently unfolding. Audrey Kurth Cronin explains that the “religious wave” largely manifested itself with the unraveling of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 but achieved maturation with the 9/11 attacks by Al-Qaeda and as such, its religious dimension superseded the nationalist and revolutionary ethos of past terrorist phases thereby becoming the focal ideology of the expanding international trend.\(^{38}\) In implication, the fourth wave, as paralleled with the initial “Anarchist wave”, lends itself to what Mendelsohn explains as a “system-challenging group” as it defies the Westphalian state-centric order at the international level and rather seeks to transform it with an alternative organizing principle.\(^{39}\)

Respectively, Islamic fundamentalism, as represented by terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS, is the front-runner of the present religious wave. As Mendelsohn accentuates, for Islamic fundamentalists the Westphalian nation-state system is perceived as a Western construct imposed on the Muslim world by Western states and thus, is believed to be unsuited for the region.\(^{40}\) Alternatively, Islamic fundamentalists, advance a vision of an international order set around a single Islamic state under the Sharia, which

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\(^{40}\) Ibid. p.g 57.
hence, transcends Westphalian nation-state borders\textsuperscript{41}. This becomes more alarming at a
time when the process of globalization is, as mentioned above, gradually eradicating the
Westphalian system of nation-states and thereby, opening the space for a new
international order to take root.

Moreover, many scholars have come to characterize the “religious wave” to
consist of a “new terrorism” and this particularly owes to the expanding process of
globalization in the twenty-first century\textsuperscript{42}. Appropriately, Bergesen, Lizardo and Cronin
highlight fundamental characteristics of this new terrorism. First, the improved
technologies, which are tools of the global information age, such as the internet, mobile
phones and instant messaging have improved the ability of terrorist groups to carry out
administrative tasks, the coordination of operations, the recruitment of potential
members, communication among members and the attraction of sympathizers\textsuperscript{43}. Second,
globalization has rendered terrorist groups to be able to reach across international borders
and thus the enlarged permeability of the international system has enabled terrorist
groups to gather and disseminate information and to derive more sources to fund their
operations\textsuperscript{44}. Third, terrorist groups of the fourth wave have rather acquired a more
network form that is more loosely structured and composed of members of different
nationalities and organization locales outside the leadership’s native country\textsuperscript{45}. Lastly,
terrorists of the “religious wave” are practicing more indiscriminate violence, as they

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid. p.g 48-49.
shift from directly attacking political targets to also targeting everyday citizens, and, more globally dispersed violence that involves different geographical locations\textsuperscript{46}. In retrospect, Bergesen and Lizardo share a widely shared comment in the literature that resolves how the phenomenon of modern terrorism, particularly in its fourth religious wave, is itself becoming “globalized” and this is seen in its international character and transnational practices that overlook national boundaries\textsuperscript{47}.

\textit{Conceptual Framework}

In examining the four waves of modern terrorism, the successive anarchist, nationalist, leftist and religious waves, it becomes apparent that all four waves are underpinned by ideology. Relatedly, Cronin maintains that, “A distinguishing feature of modern terrorism has been the connection between sweeping political or ideological concepts and increasing levels of terrorist activity internationally”\textsuperscript{48}. Nevertheless, it becomes critical to distinguish between the influences and the instruments of a phenomenon like international terrorism. As mentioned above, some terrorism scholars, experts and many social actors and policy-makers in Western circles have credited the Islamic faith as the cause of contemporary international terrorism. In this way, they use Islam, as a religious ideology, to explain the occurrences of terrorist violence currently playing out on the world stage. This however is a reductionist understanding of international Islamic terrorism as it obscures underlying grievances propelled by

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. p.g 43.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
international dynamics that more closely help to explain an initial lure of international Islamic terrorism.

Thomas J. Badey properly maintains that religion is not the cause of the current international terrorism but “Instead, it is an ideology, which like communism and nationalism, is used to mobilize populations towards political violence”\(^49\). As such, Badey underlines how ideologies are belief-systems that serve to validate behavior and thereby perform operative functions involving the polarization and mobilization of populations towards particular objectives and the provision of a justification and rationalization for human action\(^50\). Along these lines, religion can be more accurately identified as an instrument used by terrorist groups to polarize and mobilize a population around common objectives through reference to a common belief-system rather than the cause of international terrorism itself.

More suitably, Asaf Jalata underlines that the common denominator of modern terrorism is that is essentially affected by grievances of some kind\(^51\). In elaboration, Cronin argues that the fourth wave of modern terrorism has been sparked by widely held grievances against empires, colonialism, capitalism and finally, the US-led international system marked by globalization\(^52\). Therefore, Cronin continues by highlighting that “…even though the newest international terrorist threat, emanating largely from Muslim countries, has more than a modicum of religious inspiration, it is more accurate to see it

\(^{49}\) Badey, Thomas J. "The Role of Religion in International Terrorism." *Sociological Focus* 35, no. 1 (February 2002). p.g 81.

\(^{50}\) Ibid. p.g 83.


as part of a larger phenomenon of anti-globalization and tension between the have and have-not nations, as well as between the elite and underprivileged within those nations.”

53. Along these lines, international Islamic terrorism is to be understood more clearly in the context of the age in which it is practiced and that is- the age of globalization- as manifested in the novel international attributes of modern terrorism and in the international grievances held by both terrorist groups and their aggrieved sympathizers.

Observably then, globalization can be characterized as a “double-edged sword” as it both rendering international Islamic terrorism to be globalized and yet, globalization is sparking a terrorist reaction against the very process in the twenty-first century. This reaction is articulated in the tradition of World System Theory as proponents of the tradition such as Chase-Dunn and Boswell discuss the “reactionary force” of international terrorism as a system-challenging “globalization backlash” and others such as Jurgensmeyer speak of the interconnectedness between the disorder caused by globalization with defensive reactions of Arab-Islamic terrorist organizations54.

The general backlash against globalization is identified in the literature as “localization” and this involves, as historian Paul Kennedy describes, the shift of authority from the nation-state to smaller units due to economic and technological advancements55. In fact, Martin Khor states that, “Globalization is what we in the Third World have for several centuries called colonization” 56. First, globalization is not a new

53 Ibid. p.g 35.
phenomenon but rather what distinguishes it in the twenty-first century is the pace at which it is taking place. As such, the new sophisticated networks of communication and transportation have amplified global interdependence to the point that as Jamal R. Nassar highlights “Consequently, today we find ourselves inhabiting a world that has become a seamless and indivisible web of interconnected parts despite all the borders that divide its many states”\(^{57}\). In the process, Nassar underlines that this interconnectedness has produced homogenizing forces that are predominantly Western as attested to by the spread of Western culture and practices globally\(^{58}\).

This is particularly manifested with the ‘Americanization’ of the globe as Benjamin Barber maintains that globalization is leading to a homogenized ‘McWorld’ with the diffusion of American popular culture and consumerism that is dominating the globe\(^{59}\). Resultantly, many advocates in Third World countries critically perceive homogenization as the advancing of a new Western hegemonization under the guise of globalization\(^{60}\). To this effect, Cronin asserts that “The new international terrorism is increasingly engendered by a need to assert identity or meaning against forces of homogeneity, especially on the part of cultures that are threatened by, or left behind by, the secular future that Western-led globalization brings”\(^{61}\).

Furthermore, this is not solely manifested in the cultural realm but also, in the economic and political realms. In the economic realm, the activities of both transnational corporations and intergovernmental organizations have demonstrably increased the gap in

\(^{57}\) Ibid. p.g 2.  
\(^{58}\) Ibid. p.g 3-6.  
\(^{59}\) Ibid. p.g 7.  
\(^{60}\) Ibid. p.g 3.  
wealth between the global North and the global South. In terms of transnational corporations, foreign investment has not been equally distributed among nations leading to the marginalization of specific societies from the global market. Consequently, developing countries excluded from the global market are unable to reap benefits from free trade leading to stunted economic growth and increasing poverty\textsuperscript{62}. In terms of intergovernmental organizations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have required Third World countries to adopt structural adjustment programs, which are loan packages accompanied by stipulations for reform such as privatization, lowering of trade barriers and dismantling of public welfare programs. In this way, Nassar attests that, the IMF and World Bank serve as institutions of “neo-colonialism” as “… they serve primarily as a control mechanism for First World elites to shape economic policy in Third World countries in such a way as to further the interests of transnational corporations and banks”\textsuperscript{63}.

Altogether, the practices of transnational corporations and intergovernmental organizations have led to a growing wealth gap globally as the one billion people living in the West and the elite of the Third World countries reap benefits from globalization and thereby have come to own up to 80 percent of the world’s wealth. In the process, they have increasingly isolated and rendered the majority of the world’s population into lives of poverty and desperation. Therefore, as Murphy resolves, “In short, globalization is not, and never was, global. Much of the world home to one-third of its people and including large tracks of Africa and many Muslim countries, has simply failed to

\textsuperscript{62} Murphy, John F. "The Impact of Terrorism on Globalization and Vice-Versa." \textit{The International Lawyer} 36, no. 1 (Spring 2002). JSTOR. p.g 82.

participate” ⁶⁴. Manifestly, this is particularly felt in the Arab World and many Muslim countries as economic discontent has arisen in these disenfranchised areas and consequently as Suter asserts, Islamic fundamentalist groups practicing terrorism capitalize on recruiting “… young, unemployed, alienated men, who fear they have lost out in the race for wealth” ⁶⁵.

Lastly, in the political realm, Strobe highlights how intergovernmental organizations, and most particularly the UN and its Security Council, have been ineffective in reinforcing the principle of sovereignty and as a result, powerful nation-states, particularly from the West, have practiced intrusion into the sovereign land of other nations, whether under their own initiative or under UN auspices ⁶⁶. Relatedly, Neumayer and Plumper explain that this is mostly reflected in the Arab region and wider Muslim world as Western interference, particularly from the U.S. in terms of military presence and the provision of aid and arms, plays a critical role in bolstering unpopular regimes in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and Iraq ⁶⁷. Moreover, this is intensified with Western military presence and interference in the Muslim World such as the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, US drone strikes in Pakistan, the presence of Russian forces in Chechnya, the US and Britain’s invasion of Iraq, UN backed military interventions in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo under the pretext of

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⁶⁴ Murphy, John F. "The Impact of Terrorism on Globalization and Vice-Versa." The International Lawyer 36, no. 1 (Spring 2002). JSTOR. p.g 83.
humanitarian concerns and the Jewish occupation and settlement in Palestine.

To this effect, Strobe explains that locals undertake a violent reaction, which in specific cases takes the form of terrorism, as they feel ignored, brutalized, disenfranchised and suppressed by foreign intervention\textsuperscript{68}. Along these lines, Islamic terrorist groups describe intergovernmental organizations as political tools in the hands of powerful countries to maintain the dependency of the Muslim World and to implement their own political agendas. Resultantly, this allows them to exploit popular frustrations by attacking Western targets in a bid to overturn the prevailing international order\textsuperscript{69}. Overall, Strobe highlights that, “…powerful nation-states have effectively caused their own domino-principle: the rise of non-State actors pushing for their ‘rights’ outside the remit of the Westphalian system”\textsuperscript{70}.

Along these lines, this paper seeks to demonstrate that international Islamic terrorism is not directly caused by Islamic faith as an effort to spread the religion but rather, it can be more accurately understood in the context of the age of globalization whose transformative power has both bestowed it with global concerns and global capacities that are unique to the twenty-first century. These global concerns are best demonstrated by the international grievances it spurs that belong to the cultural, economic and political realms and which predominately involve a concern with Western hegemony in new a globalized era. Altogether, this becomes even more looming with the

\textsuperscript{68} Driver, Strobe. "The Sovereign Nation-State as a Contributor to Terrorism." E-International Relations Publishing. October 25, 2014. p.g 5.


\textsuperscript{70} Driver, Strobe. "The Sovereign Nation-State as a Contributor to Terrorism." E-International Relations Publishing. October 25, 2014. p.g 5.
religious dimension of contemporary international terrorism because, as Mendelsohn advances, religion serves as an “organizing principle” that overrides nation-state borders and as such, inspires a system-threatening challenge to international order. In this case, this challenge comes in the form of international Islamic terrorism. Along these lines, the relationship reasoned in this research work therefore depicts,

International Grievances → Islamic Religion (as interpreted by fourth wave terrorists) →

International Islamic Terrorism

In this way, this study is an effort to depart from the positivist assumptions of the dominant political narrative in the U.S. and the West that reasons that Islam and its propagation is the main cause of international Islamic terrorism. In recognition of the limits of exclusivity, this work offers a more historical, discursive and interpretive account of the fourth wave by highlighting that there is a mutual constitution between the agent- international Islamic terrorists and the broader environment- Western-led globalization in the twenty-first century, which should be uncovered in order to more accurately recognize the phenomenon of international terrorism. Thus, the Islam propagated by organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS is not explained as an independent variable. Rather, it is posited as an intermediate variable standing between underlying international grievances spurred by the context of the globalized age, and, indiscriminate and acute terrorist violence in the international realm. It must also be clarified that this research work does not demarcate these international grievances as the single independent variables at the root of international Islamic terrorism but instead, as overlooked basal variables, among possible others, that are then mediated by modern religious interpretations of the faith to inspire mobilization and polarization towards terrorist violence on the world stage.
In terms of defining the terms under investigation, it must be noted that there exists no consensually accepted definition of terrorism in the literature, which well explains how the concept can be liable to different understandings. Moreover, the terming of the fourth wave as the “religious wave” and its proponent, international Islamic terrorism, is in itself misleading as it accentuates the religious character of contemporary terrorism whereby leaving behind some of its underlying influences. In this way, the term religious terrorism is thus used as a euphemism in many Western circles for violence committed by Islamic groups and as Badey claims, this obscures from correctly understanding international terrorism as a modern phenomenon. Therefore, to properly set the parameters of the forthcoming research work, definitions of the following terms are provided:

- Modern Terrorism: “Modern terrorism refers to a type of violent interaction initiated by a non-state actor, which is not formally recognized as a legitimate wielder of the means of violence or a valid initiator of violent interactions, directed against the representatives (human, material or symbolic) of a formally recognized state actor in the international system, which does not follow the institutionalized rules and conventions of military engagement.”

- International Terrorism: “where the perpetrator, target group, or national locale of the incident involves at least two different countries.”

Similar to terrorism, there exists no basic definition for globalization as it lends itself to different understandings. Therefore, this paper offers the definition provided by Malcolm Walters as it fits the topic of the research at hand, and then this is accompanied by an important point of clarification made by Ulrich Beck.

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• Globalization: “Globalization is the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the planet via settlement, colonization and cultural replication. It is also bound up intrinsically with the pattern of capitalist development as it has ramified through political and cultural arenas. However, it does not imply that every corner of the planet must become Westernized and capitalist but rather that every set of social arrangements must establish its position in relation to the capitalist West - to use Robertson’s term, it must relativize itself” 74.

• “Globalization - however the word is understood - implies the weakening of state sovereignty and state structures” 75.

Finally, in considering the relationship laid out in this study, it must be emphasized, as this paper will seek to provide through the analysis of primary sources, that the mostly unobserved international grievances belonging to the cultural, economic and political realms are in fact articulated and discussed by terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Together, as a common divisor, they denounce Western hegemony in the twenty-first century as led by the US, European countries such as Britain and France, and their immediate allies. Along these lines, it becomes essentially significant to investigate them especially under the context of the increasingly interconnected era.

Methodology

To this point, the literature has described that the attainment of a hegemonic position by the West by cultural, economic and political globalization has effected a violent reaction by third world countries and most particularly, the Muslim World in the twenty-first century. Yet, as there exists some recognition in the literature on the effects of international grievances on international Islamic terrorism, little has been done to illustrate this but rather much focus has been on the religious aspect of the fourth wave of

modern terrorism. To answer to this, this research work is an effort to unearth the underlying links articulated between international grievances and international Islamic terrorism by undertaking a postcolonial perspective in a contemporary time of globalization.

Along these lines, this paper adopts the Post-Colonial Theory that, as explained by Sankaran Krishna, “…post-colonialism articulates a politics of resistance to the inequalities, exploitation of humans and the environment, and the diminution of political and ethical choices that come in the wake of globalization” 76. In short, Krishna explains globalization as the reigning or hegemonic ideology in the world today and postcolonialism as one of its main adversaries or forms of resistance77. Appropriately, Krishna explains Islamic terrorism a form of indigenous politics in recent decades, that is, “…the resistance of various first peoples in different parts of the world to their colonization and dispossession” 78.

To demonstrate this, this work ventures to reveal and explain the discursive links between international Islamic terrorism and the idea of postcoloniality as resistance to Western dominance in the age of globalization. To this effect, the methodology employed follows a qualitative approach in the post-structuralist tradition as it undertakes a critical discourse analysis (CDA)- a social analysis of spoken and written language- that seeks to identify the existence of international grievances in the accounts of Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups including Al-Qaeda and ISIS. In turn, this is done to show that international Islamic terrorism does not independently stem from Islamic faith, which

77 Ibid.
78 Ibid. p.g 121.
is- typical to the four waves of modern terrorism- used as political tool for polarization and mobilization, but rather is influenced at base, among other potential explanations, by an understanding of the rise of American/Western hegemony over the Muslim World in the twenty-first century. As such, this work is an effort to challenge and possibly re-construct the current political narrative prevalent in Western circles, particularly among policy makers and key social actors in the U.S., in order to allow for a more effective and sustainable response to the fourth wave of modern terror by treating it with closer understanding rather than by force.

A critical discourse analysis is best suited for this research effort as it conveys much more insight and unaltered understandings of international Islamist terrorist groups. Fortunately for this study, adherents of international Islamic terrorism have gone to great measure to articulate and disseminate what they stand for and what propels their activities and this especially increased with the advent of 9/11. As David Aaron reveals, “Since the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., jihadis have redoubled their outreach efforts, increasingly exploiting the Internet to propagate their vision of the world, their interpretation of Islam, their version of the history of the Middle East, their grievances, their rationale for terror, their strategy, and even their tactics” 79. Respectively, this paper draws on primary material from texts, including books, magazines, interviews, web postings, and articles, as well as excerpts from the Qur’an and Hadith, pronounced by the leaders and members of Islamic terrorist groups.

As Norman Fairclough explains, the term ‘text’ can be applied in a very broad sense to include both written and printed texts as well as transcripts of spoken

conversation, interviews, television programs and webpages. In this way, text is understood as any actual instance of language in use\textsuperscript{80}. Moreover, this paper examines texts that have appeared starting the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, as this is when the process of globalization vastly expanded, until 2016 when the fourth was greatly active. For the most part, the authors of the texts examined are leading and influential members of Al-Qaeda and ISIS and so, their texts are favorably disseminated with little effort of masking the identity of the author through pseudonyms as is largely practiced by many members of these organizations.

\textit{Remarks}

It is critical to point out that a main limitation to this study is the existence of local and not only international grievances that do influence international Islamic terrorism. Such local grievances include both ideological and development failures on the part of Arab regimes as shown in the collapse of Arab nationalism that led to a crisis identity to which Islamism sought to resolve and the political repression, narrow political participation, mismanagement of public assets and failed political reform practiced by Arab leaders. Nevertheless, the international grievances investigated in this paper are more an attribute to this unique global age, because as has been identified, they act as a reactionary backlash to the process of globalization and resultantly, they bestow international terrorism with a more international cause. In this sense, they allow us to investigate international Islamic terrorism through an international lens and this falls more inline with the international character of modern terrorism as practiced throughout its four successive waves.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{80} Fairclough, Norman. \textit{Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research}. London: Routledge, 2003. p.g 3.}
Finally, the world welcomed the twenty-first century under the banner of violence specifically with the bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by Al-Qaeda, a non-state terrorist organization operating through an international network. Yet, while many onlookers in the West hurried to place blame and highlighted the Islamic character of Al-Qaeda that they argued was seeking to spread the faith, they missed to consider the symbolism both U.S. landmarks evoked. The World Trade Center symbolized global capitalism under American leadership while the Pentagon symbolized American dominance in a globalized era. As such, this demonstrates that a closer look at international Islamic terrorism, which we are still experiencing to this day with the deadly activities of ISIS, reveals that it is a symptom of globalization’s double-edged sword.

Chapter II: Understanding Global Jihad as Interpreted by the Fourth Wave

The Rise and Fall of the Early Caliphate

The fourth wave of international Islamic terrorism as a modern phenomenon interestingly draws on the early history of Islamic civilization and its decline over the past 400 years. At the time of prophet Muhammed’s death in 632 CE, after dominating and converting the largely pagan tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, Muslims appeared on the world stage that was at the time superseded by the Persian and Byzantium empires. In a little over a century, the Muslims had then defeated the Persians and an Islamic empire came into place spanning from the Pyrenees Mountains in Spain to the foothills of the Himalayas. A splendid civilization flourished as medicine, science and mathematics thrived in the Muslim lands at a time when Europe was stuck in the Dark Middle Ages.

In the 12th century, the Muslims thwarted the attack of the Crusaders, armies of Christians from Western Europe that acted in response to Pope Urban II’s call to go to war against the Muslim people in the Holy Land. This coupled with the immersion of Turkish and Mongol invaders into Islam in the 10th and 13th centuries demonstrated the religion’s power and appeal. By 1453, the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople and brought an end to the Roman Empire. They then surged into southeastern Europe and occupied what is now Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Serbia, Macedonia and parts of Ukraine. By the 19th century, The Ottoman Empire now referred to as “the sick man of Europe” was gradually fragmenting as industrializing Europe encroached onto its territories. The onslaught of World War I then brought about the complete dissolution of the Ottoman Empire as the Versailles Peace Conference, specifically

through the Sykes-Picot agreement, partitioned the Ottoman caliphate into mandates under Western powers, “… which became colonialists in all but name”\textsuperscript{83}.

The combined sense of loss and humiliation instigated by the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire along with the colonialist period that led to the creation of the modern Middle East, however, under Western political, economic and cultural asymmetrical control, sparked a reform movement in the Arab World that began at the helm of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century\textsuperscript{84}. This movement sought to reverse Western supremacy of Muslims particularly in the Arab World and was divided into three divergent streams. It included the modernizers that believed that Islam needed to be altered and shaped according to the modern world by adopting Western elements, the secularists that espoused the ideologies of Arab socialism, Arab nationalism and Pan-Arabism and, the Salafis- a term presently employed to refer to Islamic fundamentalists who want to return to the pure Islam of the Prophet and the first four caliphs. As such, Salafis seek to substitute the civil institutions that were imported from or imposed by the West with Islamic law in an effort to restore the caliphate. Appropriately, international Islamic terrorists have roots in this movement\textsuperscript{85}.

As the end of World War I marked the end of the Ottoman Empire and the unfolding of the colonial period, the end of World War II was met with decolonization-related conflicts, including those in the Muslim region. At this time, it is Arab nationalists that took center stage as they espoused notions of Arab solidarity to make up for the confusion left by the newly created modern state system in the Middle East. The leading

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. p.g 3.
example of this movement was Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser, particularly with the union he established with Syria in 1958 to create the United Arab Republic. However, the failure of this project, which was also met with several political and ideological failures from the part of Arab nationalist elites, created an opening for the reemergence of pan-Islam as an alternative organizing principle. This culminated with the 1967 defeat of the Arab nationalist elite in the Six-Day War against Israel during which the large territorial loss combined with the major humiliation Arab states suffered largely weakened the appeal of Arab nationalism and consequently, laid the groundwork for Islamic fundamentalism, as inspired by the Salafi movement, to garner pace.

The Fourth Religious Wave

This largely manifested itself with fourth “religious wave” and its intersection with globalization in the modern era, which can best be traced to the Cold War Era and most specifically with the Soviet army’s invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. This served to considerably upset the detente between the Soviet government and the US. Consequently, the US’s Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) then followed a policy referred to as “containment”, which involved supporting the Islamic insurgent groups—“the Mujahideen”—against the Soviet occupation. The Soviet invasion occasioned in the Soviet-Afghan War that lasted from December 1979 to February 1989. Throughout, US support was particularly manifested in Operation Cyclone, which was from the longest and most expensive CIA operations undertaken and which involved the arming and

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financing of Arab mujahideen to defeat the Soviet invasion. In this way, Afghanistan came to be perceived as “the melting pot” as it generated, under CIA guidance, a number of Islamic terror groups from different Arab countries. This largely came into play with the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan under Gorbachev as many Arab mujahideen went back to their countries of origin and gave force to Islamic militancy there.

In effect, as noted, the fourth “religious wave”, as an international phenomenon, became more visible on the world stage with the success of Iran’s Islamic Revolution in 1979. Accordingly, shortly after the revolution, members of the Revolutionary Guards invaded the US embassy in Tehran and detained 49 American citizens as captives for over a year. Afterwards in 1983, Iran’s Islamic fundamentalist proxies in Lebanon initiated two concurrent attacks on US Marines and French troops in Beirut resulting in over 300 casualties. These two attacks then propelled a wave of attacks against Western targets and it is under such an atmosphere that the first modern writings of international Islamic terrorist groups began to appear in print. To this effect, a declaration by the leader of the Jama'a Islamiyya in Lebanon held that, “… The Iranian revolution demolished the division of the Islamic world into Soviet and American spheres of influence and proved that Islam can stand on its own between the two superpowers without committing itself to either of them.” Hence, this largely reinforced and propelled the global jihad movement.

Understanding Global Jihad

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88 Ibid.
89 Ibid. p.g 7.
90 Ibid. p.g 7-8.
Al-Qaeda has been described as the vanguard of the “the global Salafi jihad, a worldwide religious revivalist movement with the goal of re-establishing past Muslim glory in a great Islamist state”\(^91\). Nevertheless, it becomes crucial to realize that jihad is a very complex tradition that has been interpreted in different eras to signify different things. In fact, a sharp distinction must be noted between offensive and defensive jihad. As Aaron explains, offensive jihad is a collective obligation of the Muslim community, however not everyone is expected to take part in it and it must be proclaimed by the appropriate authority i.e. the Caliph\(^92\). Also, offensive jihad is waged against infidels in the *Dar al-Harb* (Abode of War) as distinguished from *Dar al-Islam* (House of Islam) with the objective of propagating the religion. Differently, defensive jihad is undertaken when Muslim territory is persecuted or subjugated and thereby, becomes an individual obligation that befalls on all Muslims\(^93\). In this way, its objective comes in the form of the defense of the Muslim community and Islam itself from outside interference.

International Islamic terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda and ISIS, lay claim that their interpretation of jihad is rooted in classical sources and in doing so lend their cause with an appeal of authenticity. Yet, with closer examination, it becomes evident that the way in which these groups interpret jihad is much more in line with modern interpretations on defensive warfare. In fact, what they actually borrow from classical sources is instead the mode of conduct during armed conflict whereby their objectives are more connected to contemporary readings.

\(^{93}\) Ibid.
**Classical Sources**

The classical sources were written at the time of the peak of the Muslim empire as it stretched from Europe, Africa and Asia. Accordingly, they were concerned with validating and reinforcing Muslim domination and therefore afforded liberty to the rules directing the resort to armed conflict\(^9^4\). The classical jurisprudence that discusses armed conflict under Islamic law mainly involves five different jurists. These include Malik the founder of the Maliki school, al-Shaybani the representative of the Hanafi school, al-Shafi’i the founder of the Shafi’i school, Ibn Qudama a Hanbali jurist and Ibn Hazm a representative of the Zahiri school.

In effect, the term jihad was predominately used in the writings of classical jurists to explain the use of armed force against non-Muslims. Whereby, the term may hold a purely spiritual connotation known as greater jihad that refers to a struggle against inner desires, jihad held a different meaning when applied to armed conflict. Markedly, Nesrine Badawi carefully illuminates that classical jurists generally understood jihad as offensive and thus, its purpose was seen to ensure the promulgation of the religion\(^9^5\). This is most substantially discussed by al-Shafi’i who refers to the initiation of jihad for the promotion of the message of Islam when commenting on the conduction of armed conflict against non-Muslims. An example of this can be found in *al-Umm*, Vol. IV in which Al-Shafi’i maintains,

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\(^9^5\) Ibid. p.g 305.
Exalted and Glorified God, rendered His religion, with which he sent his Apostle, God’s blessings peace be upon him, triumphant over all other religions, in that he made apparent to all who heard it that it is the Truth, and that all other religions are false.
And he made it triumphant in that the totality of disbelief is two religions; the religion of the People of the Book, and the religion of the unscriptured. And God’s Apostle, God’s blessings and peace be upon him, vanquished the unscriptured until they adopted Islam, voluntarily and coerced, and he slew and enslaved the People of the Book until some of them adopted Islam, and some paid the jizya, humbled and his command, God’s blessings and peace be upon him, ruled them 96.

Moreover, Badawi explains that the jurist’s position on offensive jihad is significantly manifested in the classical jurists’ stipulation on the need to invite non-Muslims to Islam before fighting 97. In this way, Badawi reveals that, “The fact that many jurists spent effort on detailing how and when infidels were to be invited to join Islam before fighting is, to some extent, an indication that they were willing to engage in an offensive war with the objective of propagation of the message of Islam” 98. An example of this can be found in al-Umm, Vol. IV in which Al-Shafi’i upholds,

It is obligatory to bid the infidels whom [we are obliged] to invite to Islam [either] convert to Islam or to [pay] the jizya. As for who has [already] received the invitation, Muslims have the right to slay him before he is invited [again] to Islam. And if they invite him to Islam, then that is their right, on the basis that if they have the right to leave off fighting him for an extended span of time, then postponing fighting him until he is invited is a [shorter span of time].
As for those who have not received the invitation of Muslims, it is not permissible to fight them until they are invited to [the] faith, if they are other than the People of the Book, or to [accepting] the faith or giving the jizya if they are of the People of the Book 99.

Similarly, Badawi elucidates on another point that demonstrates classical jurisprudence’s regard for offensive jihad and that is how jurists such as al Shafi‘i and Ibn Qudama were reluctant to establish an open-ended truce with non-Muslims, which therefore reveals a

96 Ibid. p.g 315.
97 Ibid. p.g 316.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid. p.g 317.
predisposition for a perpetual war with the enemy until they have converted to Islam or have paid the *jizya* \(^{100}\). An example of this inclination can be found in *al-Mughni*, Vol. XIII in which Ibn Qudama asserts,

> It is not permissible to conclude a truce except for a reckoned and known span of time, based on what we have cited. Al-Qadi said: “What is apparent of Ahmed’s words is that it is impermissible [to conclude a truce that extends] more than ten years,” and that is the opinion chosen by Abu Bakr and al-Shafi’i’s *madhab*, because God’s declaration to “slay idolaters wherever you find them” is general, and then the ten-year period was specified because the truce that the Prophet, God’s blessing and peace be upon him, concluded with Quraysh on the day of al-Hudaybiya was of ten [years’ duration]\(^{101}\).

As such, an examination of classical sources has disclosed that jurists largely understood jihad as offensive. This stands in stark contrast to the defensive jihad articulated by international Islamic terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Yet, what modern Islamic terrorists do actually borrow from classical jurisprudence has more to do with their line of conduct as demonstrated through their practice of indiscriminate violence and destruction of the enemy’s property.

As explained, classical jurists’ sought to loosen the rules governing the mode of conduct in armed conflict against non-Muslims. This most relevantly led them to advocate indiscriminate violence through indiscriminate targeting and the use of indiscriminate weaponry. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that some classical jurists such as Malik, al-Shaybani and Ibn Qudama forbid the killing of persons who are not able to fight such as women, children and the elderly and also of those with no interest in fighting such as hired laborers, peasants and monks\(^{102}\). Differently however, al-Shafi’i and Ibn Hazm dismissed the stipulation regarding not targeting older men, peasants and

\(^{100}\) Ibid. p.g 318.
\(^{101}\) Ibid. p.g 318-319.
\(^{102}\) Ibid. p.g 327.
monks by sustaining that all adult men were legitimate targets of attack. Furthermore, classical jurists converged on allowing the accidental killing of women and children as a consequence of the use of indiscriminate weapons. In fact, all classical jurists endorsed the resort to indiscriminate weapons. An example of this can be found in Siyar in which al-Shaybani affirms,

The army may launch the attack [on the enemy] by night or by day and it is permissible to burn [the enemy] fortifications with fire or to inundate them with water.
I asked: Would it be permissible to inundate a city in the territory of war with water, to burn it with fire or to attack [its people] with mangonels even though there may be slaves, women, old men, and children in it?
He [replied]: Yes I would approve of doing all of that to them.

Lastly, classical jurists gave legitimacy to the destruction of the enemy’s property during warfare. Malik provides an example of this in al-Mudawanna, Vol I,

“Was Malik of the opinion that is reprehensible to burn their villages and fortresses with fire or drown them with water?”
He said: “Malik said there is nothing wrong with burning their villages and fortresses with fire and drowning them with water and ruining them.”

This goes to illustrate that international Islamic terrorists organizations have roots in classical Islam only in terms of the methods of violence they practice, which involves indiscriminate attacks, indiscriminate targets and the destruction of the enemy’s property rather than the nature of warfare itself.

The Starting Point

Up to here, a reading of classical doctrine has illustrated how jurists understood jihad as offensive warfare that is undertaken by the Muslim community to spread the

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103 Ibid. p.g 329.
104 Ibid. p.g 333.
105 Ibid. p.g 334.
106 Ibid. p.g 347.
107 Ibid. p.g 348.
Islamic faith yet, not everyone is required to participate. This deviates from the jihad proclaimed by international Islamic terrorist organizations that rather falls into line with contemporary accounts that typify jihad as defensive warfare of an individual obligation against Western hegemony. Along these lines, Christina Hellmich insightfully maintains that the ideology advocated by Al-Qaeda and subsequent groups needs to be “problematized” as it involves the articulations of ideas and practices stemming from the Islamic belief of a contemporary community of Muslims rather than from a traditional set of beliefs clearly identifiable in classical doctrine as such groups lay claim\textsuperscript{108}. Consequently, this tension demonstrates that global jihad is a not reintroduction of classical doctrine but instead is influenced by other factors, particularly the socio-political context of the time, which as discussed is largely characterized by Western-led globalization.

Along these lines, Hellmich also maintains that the inner logic of international Islamic terrorist groups is not grounded on the main schools of Islamic faith but on a “new ideological starting point” that owes to the translation of Islamic principles into the current socio-political situation and, correspondingly, their interpretation in context of the modern age of globalization\textsuperscript{109}. This is mainly demonstrated by the articulated goal of global jihad that, as will be illustrated, involves terminating Western political, cultural and economic hegemony by advocating a jihad of defensive rather than offensive nature, and establishing a transnational Islamic State, reminiscent of the golden age tradition of the Caliphate, which transcends the Westphalian state-centric order.


To corroborate Hellmich’s argument on the new ideological starting point of international Islamic terrorism, it is necessary to trace it to the modern sources that, as argued, have influenced the conceptualization of a defensive jihad in reaction to Western hegemony in the globalized era. As noted, classical jurisprudence on jihad developed in the context of Empire. In stark contrast, modern sources discussed jihad at a time marked by a loss of power\textsuperscript{110}, which began with the British domination of India to the increasing encroachment on the land of the Ottoman empire by European powers to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire following World War I to the proliferation of Western colonialism, and this finally resulted in the establishment of modern nationhood in the Middle East that was however still stuck in an asymmetrical relationship with the West. As John Kelsay notes, “Even, or perhaps one should say particularly, in the post-colonial order of states established following World War II, [modern sources] focused on these matters, as groups of Muslims struggled for liberation against Western influence, and then to establish new, Islamically legitimate patterns of order”\textsuperscript{111}. To illustrate the influence of modern sources, I will draw upon three contemporary Islamist writers that have had a huge impact on radical Islamist thinking as these have most particularly influenced the avocation of an individual, defensive jihad in response to the socio-political context of the time. These three modern authors include Mawlana Mawdudi (1903-1979), Sayid Qutb (1906-1966) and Muhammad al-Farag (1952-1982).


\textsuperscript{111} Ibid. p.g 371.
Mawdudi was the initial modern writer to methodically study jihad and accordingly, often endeavored to apply Islamic law to modern problems involving politics, economics and culture. Essentially, Mawdudi reprimanded British and French colonialism for the decay of Muslim rule in the Middle East and South Asia. In 1940, he founded the political party *Jamaat-i-Islami* in Pakistan and was in opposition to nationalism, especially Hindu secular nationalism, which he believed endangered Islamic identity and solidarity by substituting it with one based on language or ethnicity\(^\text{112}\). To this effect, Mawdudi understood jihad as a war of liberation to bring about the establishment of a just Islamic state of a transnational character\(^\text{113}\).

A summary address titled “War in the cause of Allah” (*Jihad fi Sabil Allah*) articulated by Mawdudi on 13 April 1939 well captures how he perceived jihad as a world revolution against the Western-imposed state-centric order as he states,

> …the objective of the Islamic *Jihad* is to eliminate the rule of an un-Islamic system, and establish in its place an Islamic system of state rule. Islam does not intend to confine this rule to a single state or to a handful of countries. The aim of Islam is to bring about a universal revolution. Although in the initial stages, it is incumbent upon members of the Party of Islam to carry out a revolution in the state system of the countries to which they belong, their ultimate objective is none other than a world revolution\(^\text{114}\).

Moreover, as Richard Bonney discloses, in Mawdudi’s first major work titled *Jihad in Islam (al-Jihad fi al-Islam)*, *on the Islamic law of war and peace*, Mawdudi is seen to challenge Islamic orthodoxy based on the classical sources by maintaining that the goal

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\(^\text{113}\) Ibid.

of jihad was not invite people to Islam\textsuperscript{115}. In fact, Bonney highlights that Mawdudi explained that, “God used \textit{jihad} to protect people from each other in an Islamic version of Hobbes’ ‘dissolute condition of masterless man’; freedom of religion was also protected by \textit{jihad}... ‘There is no place for compulsion in religion’... and thus unbelievers (\textit{kuffar}) may not be forced to change their faith”\textsuperscript{116}. Instead, Mawdudi withholds that the purpose of jihad was to free people from injustice (\textit{fasad}) and violence (\textit{fitnah}) as it would bring about, through war and bloodshed, the establishment of a universal and just Islamic state\textsuperscript{117}.

Qutb then built upon Mawdudi’s work by administering it with a call for action and as such as came to be known as the “father” of jihadism in the modern age\textsuperscript{118}. In fact, one of his most important works titled \textit{Milestones} is often referred to as the jihadi ‘bible’, second only to the Qur’an and Sunnah. Qutb went to study modern educational techniques in the U.S. from 1948 to 1950, which proved to be a formative period in his thinking. Respectively, Qutb was appalled by the materialism, sexual permissiveness and racism that he witnessed in America and so upon his return to Egypt, Qutb resigned from the Ministry of Education and joined the Muslim Brotherhood. Also, Qutb grew up in Egypt at the time when it was a British protectorate and in summation came to the understanding that the decline of Muslim civilization and prevailing social inequalities

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid. p.g 202-203.  
owed to the growing spread of Westernization and materialism\textsuperscript{119}. Respectively, Qutb expanded the concept of \textit{Jiahiliyyah} to mark not only the pagan period of ignorance before Prophet Mohammed but to entail all modern society and specifically, non-Islamic governments\textsuperscript{120}. Along these lines Qutb asserted that,

If we look at the sources and foundations of modern ways of living, it becomes clear that the whole world is steeped in Jahiliyyah [ignorance of the Divine guidance], and all the marvelous material comforts and high-level inventions do not diminish this ignorance. . . . It is now not in that simple and primitive form of the ancient Jahiliyyah, but takes the form of claiming that the right to create values, to legislate rules of collective behavior, and to choose any way of life rests with men, without regard to what God has prescribed\textsuperscript{121}.

As such, Qutb regarded that the creation of an Islamic government was decreed by God and therefore, saw no middle ground between the Dar al-Islam and the Dar al-Harb.

In this sense, Qutb upheld that “...a Muslim must either reject ignorance and embrace jihad or be counted among the enemies of God” \textsuperscript{122}. He then proclaimed for genuine Muslims to wage jihad against non-Muslim authorities that he considered \textit{kuffar} (non-believers), which he ordained to the entire Muslim ummah as he rejected the idea of national borders and nationalism\textsuperscript{123}. This line of action is illustrated as Qutb maintains,

“Of course, in that case the defense of the ‘homeland of Islam’ is the defense of the Islamic beliefs, the Islamic way of life, and the Islamic community. However, its defense is not the ultimate objective of the Islamic movement of Jihad but is a means of establishing the Divine authority within it so that it becomes the headquarters for the movement of Islam, which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind, as the object of this religion is all humanity

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\textsuperscript{119} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008. p.g 59.
\textsuperscript{121} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008.
\textsuperscript{123} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008. p.g 59.
\end{flushright}
and its sphere of action is the whole earth\textsuperscript{124}.

Overall, as Porter expounds, “Qutb saw jihad as the armed struggle defending Islam: the true enemy of Islam was the West, as illustrated by the Crusades, European colonialism, and the neo-colonialism of the Cold War era” \textsuperscript{125}.

Finally, Al-Farag, founder of the group Jama’at al-Jihad, was heavily influenced by Qutb’s call for action and more acutely, identified jihad as a “Sixth Pillar of Islam” and as such as an obligatory individual duty\textsuperscript{126}. In his chief work titled \textit{The Neglected Duty} Al-Farag argues how the fall of the Muslim Empire owed to a negligence of jihad as a fundamental element of Islam\textsuperscript{127}. Therefore, Al-Farag dismissed all peaceful ways to establish an Islamic state and maintained that it could only be done through jihad in order to purify the Muslim World from Western corruption\textsuperscript{128}. Respectively, in his own words, Al-Farag advocates that,

\ldots The establishment of an Islamic State is an obligation for the Muslims. \ldots If, moreover, (such a) state cannot be established without war, then this war is an obligation as well. “Muslims are agreed on the obligatory character of the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate. To announce a Caliphate must be based on the existence of a (territorial) nucleus (from which it can grow). This (nucleus) is the Islamic State” \textsuperscript{129}.

\textsuperscript{124} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008.
\textsuperscript{126} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008. p.g 63.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{129} Aaron, David. \textit{In Their Own Words: Voices of Jihad: Compilation and Commentary}. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008. p.g 64.
The ‘Near Enemy’

It is important to note that at the outset, Islamic terror groups, jihadis, committed themselves to a defensive jihad that involved fighting Western forces at home. Accordingly, Fawaz A. Gerges explains that throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, jihadis, dedicated themselves to attacking local rulers, referred to as the “near enemy”\textsuperscript{130}. Jihadis thus committed themselves to a domestic agenda that sought the total mobilization and confrontation against secular local leaders, which were mainly blamed for allowing expansion of Western colonization and exploitation of Muslim lands and for their moral corruption that served to eliminate Islamic principles from public life and replace them with Western principles\textsuperscript{131}. In this way, jihadis sought to primarily topple domestic leaders with the overriding goal of reinstating the caliphate that would render the Islamic Sharia the law of Muslim lands\textsuperscript{132}.

Gerges maintains that jihadi’s local concerns were widely manifested in their written documents and manifestos. An example of this is well established in a pamphlet titled, “The Inevitability of Confrontation”, distributed by the Jihad Group of Upper Egypt as it reveals jihadis foremost focus on domestic grievances, which it ranked in terms of importance as such,

(1) toppling the impious ruler who has abandoned religion; (2) fighting any Muslim community that deserts Islam; (3) reestablishing the caliphate and installing a caliph (pan-Islamic ruler); and (4) liberating the homeland, freeing the captives (prisoners), and spreading religion\textsuperscript{133}…

Along these lines, Gerges maintains that, “In the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, jihadis

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid. p.g 44.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. p.g 45.
did not articulate, let alone entertain, a paradigm of taking jihad global. Their politics were decidedly domestic”\textsuperscript{134}. To this effect, Gerges continues to explain that jihadis considered local rulers’ subservience to the West as the cause of Western hegemony over Muslim lands and thereby sought to terminate Western hegemony by supplanting the secular local order with an Islamic one\textsuperscript{135}. At this point, Gerges specifically reserves that jihadis internal targeting of the near enemy rather than the outside targeting of the West was less an ideological or religious matter but instead a matter of material capability and resources as it was deemed much more suitable to attack local infidels rather than to confront Western superpowers\textsuperscript{136}.

\textbf{The Shift}

The shift to global jihad that is of both a defensive and international nature is attributed to the period starting the mid-1990s. Accordingly, Gerges delineates several factors to have contributed to this dramatic shift. The first is the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet invasion as it ended with the humiliating retreat of Russian troops and thereby demonstrated to jihadis that it was possible to defeat a superpower. Moreover, this contributed to the second factor as following the Afghan war in 1989, thousands of Afghan veterans and other experienced jihadis, as well as young Muslims from several countries, went on to pursue external military exploits against Soviet dominance in countries such as Chechnya, Indonesia, Somalia, Kashmir, the Philippines, Eritrea, Burma, Tajikistan leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union. To this effect, Gerges emphasizes that the success of the Afghan war generated the rise of a new generation of

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid. p.g 47.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid. p.g 50.
jihadis, Mujahideen, “… who traveled from one front to another in support of their persecuted and oppressed Muslim brethren worldwide.”

The third factor manifested itself with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 for two particular reasons. One, it led to the 1991 Gulf War that served to spark animosity against the West as jihadis rallied against the military coalition and UN economic sanctions directed by the US in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait. Two, after the liberation of Kuwait, the US decided to station its troops in Saudi Arabia which infuriated many jihadis and reaffirmed their persuasions that the West and particularly, the US, held hegemonic designs on Muslim lands. Along these lines, Gerges upholds that, “Suffice it to say that the Gulf war in 1991 and the permanent stationing of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia played a decisive role in the globalization of jihad, particularly in the ideological incitement and mobilization of anti-Americanism” 137.

The fourth factor involves the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict that started in the mid-twentieth century with the Western-endorsed Jewish occupation of Palestinian land and the resulting creation of the state of Israel. This was further buttressed with Western military presence and intervention in Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Kosovo leading to the growing impression that “…the West is irreconcilably hostile towards the Muslim world” 138. Altogether, this demonstrates that the new generation of transnational jihadis disregarded the asymmetry of power between

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137 Ibid. p.g 57.
them and the West and, as Gerges maintains, believed they could confront and prevail over the powerful foreign nations\textsuperscript{139}.

This newfound confidence was reinforced by the development of a transnational network among jihadis that started in Afghanistan and spread elsewhere and maintained by private donations through sympathetic jihadi charitable foundations\textsuperscript{140}. Moreover, this fifth factor also involved the significant role played by religious sheikhs, specifically in Saudi Arabia, that both materially and morally supported transnationalist jihadis efforts in countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Somalia and elsewhere. Lastly, the sixth factor owed to a major schism within the jihadi movement itself as some jihadis felt defeated at the hands of the security forces of the pro-Western local rulers while a growing minority of transnational jihadis residing overseas, mostly in Afghanistan or Europe, dissented, went its separate way and took jihad global. Along these lines, Gerges explains, “Thus in the late 1990s, as jihadis’ conflict with the near enemy was winding down, it was replaced by a deadlier one against the far enemy, the United States. Bin Laden’s Al Qaeda, along with other fringe”\textsuperscript{141}.

\textit{Global Jihad}

To be exact, there is no clear cut development of the process that paved the way for the grievances first held by Islamic terrorist groups to attain a more international character. As mentioned, initially, Islamic forces were concerned in fending off the “near enemy” involving Western sympathetic local leaders. Nevertheless, the most elaborate pronunciation of the shift that led the initial political grievances to be perceived through a

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid. p.g 58-62.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid. p.g 66.
more international lens in addition to an initial articulation of the more recent grievances brought by Western-led globalization in both the cultural and economic realms first came with the publication of the document titled, “The Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Christians” by Al-Qaeda.

The Declaration of the World Islamic Front document was published on 23 February 1998 in a London-based Arabic newspaper named _Al-Quds Al-Arabi_ in an edict signed by Osama bin Laden. As J. M. B. Porter maintains this document serves as a key to understanding bin Laden’s vision of modern Islamic terrorism as it explicitly articulates the outside targeting of the “far enemy”, the West and most particularly the US, which it describes as a modern-day Crusader, in efforts for a defensive jihad. In this way, Porter explains that this document contains the philosophical and theological framework of jihad as pronounced by bin Laden to justify international Islamic terrorism.

Indeed, the document closes with a fatwa against the US and the West in general by proclaiming,

The Arabian Peninsula has never -- since Allah made it flat, created its desert, and encircled it with seas -- been stormed by any forces like the crusader armies spreading in it like locusts, eating its riches and wiping out its plantations. All this is happening at a time in which nations are attacking Muslims like people fighting over a plate of food. In the light of the grave situation and the lack of support, we and you are obliged to discuss current events, and we should all agree on how to settle the matter.

No one argues today about three facts that are known to everyone; we will list them, in order to remind everyone:

First, for over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning

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143 Ibid.
its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples.
If some people have in the past argued about the fact of the occupation, all the people of the Peninsula have now acknowledged it. The best proof of this is the Americans' continuing aggression against the Iraqi people using the Peninsula as a staging post, even though all its rulers are against their territories being used to that end, but they are helpless.
Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the crusader-Zionist alliance, and despite the huge number of those killed, which has exceeded 1 million... despite all this, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres, as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation. So here they come to annihilate what is left of this people and to humiliate their Muslim neighbors.
Third, if the Americans' aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews' petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there. The best proof of this is their eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighboring Arab state, and their endeavor to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper statelets and through their disunion and weakness to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the Peninsula.
All these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on Allah, his messenger, and Muslims. Ans ‘ulama have throughout history unanimously agreed that the jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries. This was revealed by... the Shaykh of al-Islam in his books, where he said: “As for fighting to repulse [an enemy], it is aimed at defending sanctity and religion, and it is a duty as agreed. Nothing is more sacred than belief except repulsing an enemy who is attacking religion and life.”
On that basis, and in compliance with Allah’s order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims:
The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies-civilians and military-is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque [in Jerusalem] and the holy mosque [the Haram Mosque in Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim.

In review, as Isaac Kfir discusses, the Declaration initially highlights three sets of interconnected grievances that are aimed at mobilizing a response against Western forces

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that seek to hurt or weaken the Muslim nation (ummah)\textsuperscript{145}. The first grievance is mostly political as it centers on America’s occupation of Muslim lands and establishes a polarization between Muslims and non-Muslims, whom are described to be corrupting and exploiting the Arabian Peninsula. The second grievance is economic as it centers on the sanctions, termed as “protracted blockade”, and thereby the consequential devastation inflicted upon Iraq and its Muslim neighbors\textsuperscript{146}.

The third grievance connects the first two by blaming the West for the horrors Muslims endure whether through the occupation and fragmentation of their lands or through the enforced blockade. As such, Kfir maintains that in the third grievance, “The sinister force is the West, seen mainly as the United States (the far enemy) and materialism, which draws Muslims from their obligation. In other words, if seen as an eschatological movement, Al Qaeda promotes a view where fixation with materialism by a contemporary society undermines the ummah, leading it to abandon true Islam”\textsuperscript{147}. Altogether, the Declaration reinforces that at base Al-Qaeda’s viewpoint is concerned with international grievances whereby religion is used as a mobilizing and polarizing tool to validate and rationalize a reactive action.

The Declaration identifies this reactive action in terms of a jihad articulated as a defensive war against Western ‘Crusaders’ and thereby, upheld as an individual obligation of every Muslim\textsuperscript{148}. Ultimately, the international shift is then explicitly

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid. p.g 237  
maintained in the claim to strike against the West in any country possible whereas the
call to target both combatants and non-combatants directly speaks to indiscriminate
terrorist violence. Altogether, this shows that the move towards a more international lens
was first introduced with the Declaration of the World Islamic Front document by Al-
Qaeda, which gives ideological support to a defensive jihad aimed at the outside targeting
of Western apostates that have infected Muslim land whether through their military
presence, economic materialism and cultural secularism. This is in line with the
ideological starting point discussed by Hellmich and therefore reinforces the description
of the Declaration of the World Islamic Front document as the “foundation” of
international terrorism in the modern century 149.

**The View from Within**

Kfir describes that global jihad, as practiced by international Islamic terrorist
groups, is a violent and indiscriminate enterprise as it makes little distinction between
combatants and non-combatants and, moreover, it perceives the entire world as a
battlefield thereby denouncing national borders and performing operations across the
globe150. Therefore, as Khashan continues, the ultimate goal of global jihad, which is
prescribed as an individual duty, is to bring an end to Western hegemony and, eventually,
to establish an Islamic State that is reminiscent of the Caliphate at the time of the
Ottoman Empire and that defies the Western-imposed Westphalian nation-state order151.
The ultimate goal of Al-Qaeda resonates to this day with the spread of ISIS onto the

149 Ibid.
150 Kfir, Isaac. "Social Identity Group and Human (In)Security - The Case of Islamic
p.g 233.
world stage; however, as will be demonstrated, ISIS takes this more into materialized practice with its early establishment of the Islamic State.

Yet, as Hellmich criticizes, there is an absence of sufficient examination into the logic that underlines international Islamic terrorist groups in both academic and policy circles as this is largely confined to an “outside-in” perspective without a necessary assessment of primary sources. In light of this, the following chapters of this research work will closely analyze selected primary sources by Al-Qaeda and ISIS in order to provide a more direct understanding of the discourses communicated by these groups and therefore reveal how global jihad is not a re-introduction of classical doctrine but rather an ideological starting point influenced by a contemporary community of Muslims concerned with the socio-political context of the time, which is marked by Western political, economic and cultural hegemony in the age of globalization. Hence, by examining the inner logic of how these international grievances are articulated in the discourses by Al-Qaeda and ISIS and then mediated by contemporary religious interpretations to endorse defensive and indiscriminate terrorist violence, this research work will thereby endeavor to challenge the dominant political discourse in the West set around fourth wave by coming closer to fulfilling the missing “view from within”.

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Chapter III: Background on Al-Qaeda

The Origins of Al-Qaeda

The key founder of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, once listed as FBI’s most wanted man, was born into one of the world’s wealthiest families. He was the son of Mohammed bin Awad bin Laden, a man of Yemeni origin who made a fortune out of his construction business in Saudi Arabia. During Osama bin Laden’s formative years, he attended the business management school at King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah where two teachers influenced him, Muhammed Qutb, the brother of Sayyid Qutb, and Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian member of the Muslim Brotherhood, to adopt militant Islamic views. Bin Laden however did not complete his studies but rather joined his father’s company through which he learned the art of construction. His first attested involvement in Islamist activity happened with the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

In fact, bin Laden became a major funder of the mujahideen by giving cash to the families of wounded or martyred fighters, constructing hospitals, and facilitating the escape of millions of Afghan refugees to the Pakistani border. By 1984, bin Laden together with Azzam established a network of recruitment and fund-raising named, Maktab al Khidamat (Services Office), in the Middle East, Europe and America. Moreover, bin Laden then also involved himself with the actually fighting by participating in the 1986 battle in Jalalabad and an April 1987 frontal assault against the Soviet invaders. Ayman al-Zawahiri, the operational leader of Al Jihad in Egypt, arrived

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in Afghanistan in 1986 and joined with bin Laden’s Arab brigade thereby serving as its military mastermind\textsuperscript{154}. During this time, the U.S. was perceived as a positive contributor to the mujahideen effort as the CIA secretly armed and funded the mujahideen fighters with around $3 billion from 1981-1991 to expel the Soviet forces as it followed its policy of ‘containment’ \textsuperscript{155}.

By 1988, towards the final withdrawal of the Soviet occupation, bin Laden and Azzam decided not to disband the network of Arab recruits they had garnered during the war effort but instead bestowed it with a more concrete structure. Azzam coined its name as Al-Qaeda meaning “the base” or “foundation” and in effect, he intended for this network to act as a vanguard of fighters in the re-conquest of the Muslim world\textsuperscript{156}. He explained this in a written editorial published on April 1988 in issue number 41 of al-Jihad in which he states that, “Every principle needs a vanguard to carry it forward. . . . [T]here is no ideology that does not require a vanguard to achieve victory. This vanguard constitutes the strong foundation (al Qaeda al-sulbah) for the expected society” \textsuperscript{157}. Nevertheless, shortly after, in 1989, Azzam was killed in a car bomb and speculations on his murder ranged from Arab intelligence services to bin Laden or Zawahiri in a bid for power. With Azzam’s death, bin Laden took charge of Al-Qaeda by assuming control

over the *Maktab*’s funds and organizational structure and hereafter, Zawahiri remained with him and became Al-Qaeda’s chief strategist.

**Turning Point**

The final Soviet force, The Soviet Fortieth Army, withdrew in 1989 from Afghanistan. Bin Laden and Zawahiri remained in order to fight off the communist lackey regime established by Moscow and directed by Mohammed Najibullah. When this failed, bin Laden returned to Jeddah and resumed work in his family’s construction business empire. Bruce Riedel maintains that up to 1990, Al-Qaeda’s activities were mainly directed at fighting off communism specifically in Southern Asia. However, this then came to an end with the dissolution of Soviet Union and its withdrawal from its patron states. Riedel then critically emphasizes a turning point in Al-Qaeda’s focus starting 2 August 1990 with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait\(^\text{158}\). In Saudi Arabia, bin Laden lobbied Saudi authorities to raise an army of Arab mujahideen to expel the Iraqi invaders from Kuwait and to protect Saudi Arabia from a potential Iraqi invasion. His proposal was declined by the Saudi government on the grounds of being impractical and was rather replaced with “Operation Desert Storm” that involved the deployment of an international coalition of 500,000 troops, mostly Americans, in Saudi Arabia to oust Iraq from Kuwait. Then on, from 1991-2003, around 6,000 U.S. troops remained in Saudi Arabia under the pretext of containing Iraq.

This decision by the Saudi government was heavily opposed by bin Laden who was greatly disdained by the presence of foreign troops on Saudi soil specifically in two of Islam’s holiest cities, Mecca and Medina, whereas Jerusalem had been occupied by

\(^{158}\) Ibid. p.g 48.
Israel since 1967\textsuperscript{159}. As Phillipe Migaux describes, “Bin Laden viewed this development as an unbearable humiliation for all Muslims—the land of the Prophet defiled by infidels. To him, the American presence represented a twofold act of aggression: the occupation of Saudi Arabia by infidel soldiers was also evidence of America’s desire to plunder the country’s wealth under the pretext of protecting it”\textsuperscript{160}. Along these lines, this served to transform bin Laden from a de facto U.S. ally against the Soviet Union into one of America’s principal adversaries.

At the turn of 1991, with the liberation of Kuwait by the multinational coalition led by the U.S., bin Laden relocated in Sudan. He had a large fortune at his hand and used it to construct modern roads and housing and, as a trade-off, the Sudanese government ignored his clandestine activities. Moreover, bin Laden started purchasing property in Sudan in order to host and train Al-Qaeda forces for use this time against America as well as in operations in the Balkans, Chechnya, Kashmir and the Philippines. In fact, Riedel maintains that it is during his time in Sudan, and specifically in late 1994, that bin Laden transformed into a fully-fledged terrorist\textsuperscript{161}. Riedel demonstrates this with an open letter written by bin Laden to the chief mufti of Saudi Arabia bin Baz that included a series of complaints against the ruling Saudi family and its clerical supporters.

In his letter, bin Laden criticizes the Saudi royal family for its alleged corruption, for allowing U.S. troops on Saudi soil in defense from Iraq in 1990, for not properly fighting off the Soviet Union in South Asia and for their support of the Oslo peace

\textsuperscript{160} Ibid. p.g 318.
process between Israel and Palestine. Correspondingly, bin Laden therefore advises bin
Baz to make clear “from these tyrants and oppressors who have declared war on God”162
in an effort to save himself. And more critically, bin Laden then continues to advocate for
a jihad against the Crusaders, Jews, and tyrants so as to retrieve “every stolen Islamic
land from Palestine to al-Andalus and other Islamic lands that were lost because of the
betrayals of rulers and the feebleness of Muslims” 163. In his own words, Riedel thus
asserts that, “This letter marked bin Laden’s transition from critic to avowed jihadist” 164.

Also in Sudan, bin Laden resumed his alliance with Zawahiri who fled to
Khartoum on the run from the Egyptian intelligence and had intended to operate from
there against Egypt. During their contact in Sudan, Zawahiri proved to pose a huge
influence on bin Laden inspiring him to break completely from the Saudi royal
government and turn more acutely towards jihad. During this time, bin Laden and
Zawahiri transformed Al Qaeda into a global threat with cells and associates in over 70
countries that involved groups of radical Islamist forces operating throughout the Muslim
world but as yet in opposition to their governments, the “near enemy”. In 1996, as Al-
Qaeda was becoming a greater menace, the Sudanese government, under both U.S. and
Egyptian pressure, ousted bin Laden from Khartoum and thereafter he returned to
Afghanistan.

Only months upon his arrival to Afghanistan, bin Laden issued his first fatwa on
August 1996 that was addressed to the entire Muslim community. Migaux argues that it
is starting this initial fatwa that bin Laden underpins the principle of legitimate self-

162 Ibid. p.g 52-53.
164 Ibid. p.g 53.
defense to underline his line of action\(^{165}\). In his fatwa bin Laden asserts,

the people of Islam had suffered from aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-Crusaders alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslims’ blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of the enemies. Their blood was spilled in Palestine and Iraq. The horrifying pictures of the massacre of Qana, in Lebanon are still fresh in our memory. Massacres in Tajakestan, Burma, Cashmere, Assam, Philippine, Fatani, Ogadin, Somalia, Erithria, Chechnia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina took place, massacres that send shivers in the body and shake the conscience. All of this and the world watched and heard, and not only didn’t respond to these atrocities, but also with a clear conspiracy between the USA and its allies and under the cover of the iniquitous United Nations, the dispossessed people were even prevented from obtaining arms to defend themselves\(^{166}\).

To address this, bin Laden ascribes jihad as the solution against the Judeo-American alliance that has infiltrated Jerusalem and Mecca. Then, bin Laden concludes by invoking various sayings from the Prophet on the necessity of jihad therefore asserting, “Your enemies are the Israelis and Americans. Cavalry of Islam, be mounted!”\(^{167}\).

Afghanistan remained Al-Qaeda’s main base of operation from 1996-2001, throughout which bin Laden assisted the Taliban to secure and maintain control over the country. In fact, the Taliban’s new leader, Mullah Omar, was involved in a symbiotic relationship with bin Laden by benefiting from bin Laden’s funds and technical and administrative expertise that helped him gain control over 80% of the country while bin Laden benefited from the reopening of training camps for the mujahideen now based in Afghanistan. Altogether, an intricate network of alliance was established between Al-Qaeda and the Taliban through honorary positions, marriage ties, administrative functions and financial support. In 1997, Zawahiri arrived in Afghanistan and took under his


\(^{166}\) Ibid.

leadership the group of mujahideen training there whereby also becoming Al-Qaeda’s chief ideologue whereas bin Laden remained the organization’s main chieftain.

In the winter of 1997-1998, with Al-Qaeda’s established base in Afghanistan and its well-consolidated network spawning various countries, bin Laden and Zawahiri finally felt confident enough to declare their long cautioned war on America and the West in general both unambiguously and publicly. This came in the form of the aforementioned document, The World Islamic Front against Jews and Crusaders, that united various Islamist groups, such as al-Jihad and the Egyptian GI, the Followers of the Prophet Movement (Harakat al-Ansar) and the Bangladeshi Jihad Movement (Harakt al-Jihad) under one umbrella, the global jihadi movement belonging to the fourth religious wave of modern terror. As discussed, the document reprimanded against earlier grievances such as Western occupation and interference in the Arab World as well as more immediate international grievances involving Western imposed economic sanctions and cultural materialism. Yet, its most critical contribution to the phenomenon of modern terror came as Riedel well describes, “the new modus operandi of the organization designed to create maximum terror: multiple operations in different locales carried out at the same time” 168. This announcement of outside targeting finally established the shift of the jihadi movement towards an international lens and its manifestation came with the events of September 11.

**September 11, 2001 (9/11)**

On the 11th of September 2001, at 8:45 am, American Airlines flight II, headed from Boston to Los Angeles, collided into the northern tower of the World Trade Center

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168 Ibid. p.g 60.
in New York. Immediately after, at 9:05 am, United Airlines flight 175, also flying from Boston to Los Angeles, crashed into the southern tower of the World Trade Center. Then at 9:39 am, American Airlines flight 77, headed from Washington to Los Angeles flew into the Pentagon. Altogether, these attacks stole the lives of 3,000 people that were not only American but included nationals from seventy-nine different countries. The material damage amounted to about $7 billion. Evidence revealed that each flight had been hijacked by a group of at least four terrorists belonging to a well-organized network, Al-Qaeda.

Al-Qaeda’s use of airplanes as a weapon of mass destruction indiscriminately against ordinary citizens in the United States constituted at that time as the most lethal terrorist attack in modern history. Yet, what is often missed, as concern is mostly focused on the devastation caused by the event, is the symbolic message embedded in the September 11 attacks. As Migaux explains, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were selected as the target of attacks owing to their symbolism as icons of America’s economic, material and political power. Also, Migaux highlights that the September 11 attacks signaled the initialization of a global war against the international community, especially the West. Appropriately, this aligns itself with the document of the World Islamic Front, as the September 11 attacks illustrated the shift from local to global jihad with its concern with international grievances owing to the targets’ symbolic value and its outside targeting of American territory. Lastly, as Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the September 11 attacks in a videotape message that it broadcasted openly, and this was the

170 Ibid.
first time for bin Laden to do so, it gave way to numerous other testimonials, statements
and declarations by bin Laden and other members of Al-Qaeda therefore inviting us to
the “view from within” the organization and its later successors.

*Post- 9/11*

After the September 11 attacks, Al-Qaeda’s base in Afghanistan crumbled during
military operations that were fighting off the American reprisal. In a year’s time, the
organization silently relocated itself as key leaders fled to Pakistan and Iran where
established and influential networks already existed. Moreover, Al-Qaeda’s operational
leaders and their officers reorganized themselves along a second geographical covering
Georgia, Turkey, Syria, the Gulf States, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The third axis involved
mujahideen cells that repositioned themselves throughout Europe, Asia and the United
States.

As the September 11 attacks cemented Al-Qaeda’s position as a global jihad
movement, Al Qaeda ventured to pursue its agenda for the 21st century. Its ultimate
objective, as declared, was to establish or restore an Islamic caliphate spanning from
Spain to Indonesia along the rules of the Sharia. Nevertheless, Al-Qaeda failed to adopt a
blue print of action and this ultimate objective was more pronounced than actually
performed. To this end, Al-Qaeda continued to wage jihad in traditional jihad regions
such as Chechneya, Somalia and Kashmir however, these were largely unsuccessful.
More critically, as Mark Sedgwick asserts, “Unlike the Assassins and other premorden
instances of religious terror, al-Qaeda is not a product of the premorden world but of

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171 Ibid. p.g 335.
today’s interconnected world” \textsuperscript{172}. This was mostly demonstrated in its operations that now sought after the far enemy, the Western world, and its economic, cultural and political hegemony of the Muslim world, in terms of a defensive jihad believed to be of an individual duty.

Thus starting the 2000s, Europe, similar to the United States, also became the target of Al-Qaeda’s operations. Following the line of conduct endorsed in the classical sources, Zawahiri set three goals for future operations following September 11, which involved that operations achieved maximum casualties through indiscriminate attacks that involved indiscriminate weapons. Nevertheless, along the lines of defensive jihad advocated in the modern sources, Al-Qaeda attacked the “material” West. These attacks included repeated attempts of attacks on Britain- notables ones being a successful attack on London’s public transport system in 2005 and a failed attack planned for 2006 that intended to hijack ten jumbo jetliners headed from Britain to Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Montreal, and Toronto and their demolition midflight over the North Atlantic. As for France, it was able to thwart all Al-Qaeda’s plots on its own ground however Al-Qaeda struck it repeatedly beyond its own borders. This included the killing of two residents and a tourist in Jerba on 11 April 2001, a sailor in Yemen on 6 October 2002, four tourists in Bali on 12 October, eleven technical experts in Karachi on 5 May 2002 and three expatriates in Casablanca on 9 June 2003. Moreover, Al Qaeda was believed to be involved in the assault against Madrid’s metro system on March 2004, which is characterized as Europe’s most horrific terror attack to date. Other plans for the West include a foiled plan by Danish authorities that targeted the Danish elections and a foiled

plan by German authorities regarding the attack of a U.S. air base in Ramstein.

In examining both failed and successful operations by Al-Qaeda following September 11, it becomes clear that such operations do not measure near the destructive scope of 9/11. Rollins attributes this instead to the actions of the U.S. officials whose coalition forces’ military and intelligence measures have curbed Al-Qaeda’s destructive ability. Yet, in the 2010 Annual Threat Assessment hearing held for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Dennis C. Blair, Director of National Intelligence (DNI), resolved that whereas “important progress has been made against the threat to the U.S. homeland over the past few years, I cannot reassure you that the danger is gone. We face a persistent terrorist threat from Al Qaeda and potentially others who share its anti-Western ideology.” This anti-Western stance has been circulated through videos, audiotapes, statements and interviews by Al-Qaeda. However, as noted, little has been done to discern in Al-Qaeda’s discourses how the three main sets of international grievances involving the cultural, economic and political realms that feature a common concern with Western hegemony in the age of globalization- and this is seen here in al-Qaeda’s anti-Western attacks and stance- are present and mediated by contemporary religious interpretations of Islam by Al-Qaeda to affect acute and indiscriminate terrorist violence in the international realm.

174 Ibid.
Chapter IV: Critical Discourses Analysis and Al-Qaeda

This chapter propels the investigation of the discourses pronounced by international Islamic terrorist groups to decipher the role of international grievances and Islamic belief within their rhetoric. It will explore specifically the discourses of Al-Qaeda and chapters concerning ISIS will then follow this. It is important to note that the statements, interviews and broadcasts by Islamic terrorist organizations can largely be found at piecemeal in different sources. Respectively, this speaks not only of the need to translate the mostly Arabic texts into foreign languages- owing to the international significance of the fourth wave- but also, to the means of communication used by the terrorist groups themselves.

As such, Islamic terrorist groups, in the context of the modern age of globalization, widely propagate their statements, declarations, and interviews on the Internet as websites are created then taken down to avoid attention by the authorities. Pamphlets and TV broadcasts are also used but the Internet remains the most significant medium for extensive distribution. Overall, this renders original excerpts to be difficult if not impossible to locate. However, widespread distribution on the Internet also means that these texts are never really gone and can be found in bits and pieces or at full length in a variety of online and printed sources. Ultimately, this allows us more insight into the terrorist’s own voice and, therefore, a “view from within”.


critical discourse analysis and the post-colonial theory

The methodology used in this paper attempts to combine the approach of a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) along with the Post-Colonial theory. This combination complements the current aim of the paper, which seeks to demonstrate how
international grievances act as a preliminary affect of the fourth wave of modern terror and Islamic belief is mostly used as a political tool or an “organizing principle” to mobilize and polarize potential supporters around the rhetoric. As noted, this represents a two-step chain of influence where international grievances lend themselves to Islamic religion as interpreted by the modern terrorists and which in turn lends itself of the phenomenon of international Islamic terrorism in the twenty-first century.

It is important to note that critical discourse analysis does not involve a unitary research framework but rather, CDA is theoretically and analytically varied. As such, this means there are no clear-cut guidelines to follow a critical discourse analysis. Yet, CDA does embrace a common perspective, which allows it to have an identifiable conceptual framework. This common perspective primarily looks at the way in which “…social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose and, ultimately resist social inequality”.

This focus on resistance falls in well with the Post-Colonial theory, which contains a fundamental aspect involving social inequality and struggle for social justice. This specifically owes to the Post-Colonial theory’s focus on the historic issue of the unequal encounter between the West and non-West in terms of colonial

176 Ibid. p.g 352.
relations. In this way, the term “Post-colonial” concerns itself with the cultural, political and economic circumstances occupying a formerly occupied colonized space and thereby, examines the history of Empire- before, during, and after- from the viewpoint of the assumed “victims” - in this case, international Islamic terrorists. Whereas this may seem as a vast time-span, a concern of this paper includes to trace how this history resonates to this day in the modern discourses of Islamic terrorist groups and how it persists under the vestiges of a newer form, that is “neo-colonialism”, which is systematically challenged by fourth wave terrorists. Along these lines, when asked: Why is this useful? Norman Fairclough insightfully answers, “Because, studying discourse practice ensures attention to the historicity of discursive events by showing both their continuity with the past (their dependence upon given orders of discourse) and their involvement in making history (their remaking of orders of discourse).”

Moreover, Fairclough identifies CDA as an interpretative and explicative study of discourse texts, which he identifies as forms of social action and interaction. As noted, Fairclough identifies the term “text” to involve both instances of written and spoken language discourses. CDA is therefore explained to bridge the gap between text and society- by mediating between the micro-level of language use, discourse and verbal interaction, and the macro-level of analysis involving dominance and inequality between social groups- to form “one unified whole.”

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178 Ibid.
179 Ibid.
182 Ibid. p.g 354.
In its turn, context is then related to this unified whole as it is defined “… as the mentally represented structure of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production or comprehension of discourse”\(^\text{183}\). Correspondingly, context includes the time, place, ongoing actions and participants of a specific “communicative” situation. As made evident, the context relative to this paper involves the modern age of globalization in the twenty-first century and how this affects the communication of participants such as international Islamic terrorists vis-a-vis the West. Along these lines, this chapter will attempt to investigate the discourses of Al-Qaeda by looking at three texts by three different members of the organization and circulated in three different mediums, however, within a quite close time span. Chapter VI follows this in similar fashion but by investigating the discourses of ISIS.

This will all be done along the lines of the Post-Colonial theory that will serve to highlight the presence of international grievances in the discourses of international Islamic terrorists speaking against Western hegemony in the twenty-first century. Also, this investigation will challenge the political narrative in the West by accentuating how these underlying international grievances are then mediated by modern Islamic interpretations to propel international Islamic terrorism, as has been the instrumental practice of ideology during the four waves of modern terror. Lastly, before opening this investigation, it must be stated that critical discourse analysis essentially takes texts at their face value without really probing into the question whether the authors of these texts in fact believe in what they are disseminating. Along these lines, this research work is an effort to illustrate the considerable presence and thus, significance, of international

\(^{183}\) Ibid. p.g 356.
grievances, which the literature has for the most part understudied or rather overlooked. Moreover, as noted, the employment of the Post-colonial theory concerns itself with the viewpoint of the assumed “victims”, therefore, the articulated grievances, although present in the discourses, involve both- mostly actual or reasonable grievances as well as some articulated grievances that could be seen to fall more inline with hyperbolic allegations from the part of the “victims” against the West. Yet, whether real or exaggerated, they still hold resonance with the audience they are trying to affect as they serve to reinforce the call against Western hegemony in the age of globalization.

**Bin Laden, “Letter to the American People”, shortly after 9/11.**

Shortly after 9/11, Osama bin Laden circulated a letter online titled, “letter to the American people”. The letter claims to hold the truth regarding why Al-Qaeda is fighting the West and most specifically, America. Notably, for the most part, the letter addresses all the international political, economic and cultural themes highlighted in this paper as influences of international Islamic terrorism and then, at the very end, it supports these with passages from the Quran to reinforce polarization and mobilization.

The letter can be separated into three parts. In the first part, bin Laden addresses a first question that he poses to the American people that is: *Why are we fighting and opposing you?* He answers that the fight against America is a response to the attack and occupation of Palestine followed by the creation of the State of Israel endorsed by the British as well as the attack on Somalia, Chechnya, Kashmir and Lebanon. Then, bin Laden condemns America for stealing the ummah’s wealth and oil under the vestiges of its international influences, for its military bases occupying the region that he argues act to reinforce the Jewish occupation and the theft of the region’s wealth, and for the
economic sanctions imposed against the Iraqi people. This is all seen when he delineates,

(a) You attacked us in Palestine:
(i) Palestine, which has sunk under military occupation for more than 80 years. The British handed over Palestine, with your help and your support, to the Jews, who have occupied it for more than 50 years; years overflowing with oppression, tyranny, crimes, killing, expulsion, destruction and devastation. The creation and continuation of Israel is one of the greatest crimes, and you are the leaders of its criminals. And of course there is no need to explain and prove the degree of American support for Israel. The creation of Israel is a crime which must be erased. Each and every person whose hands have become polluted in the contribution towards this crime must pay its price, and pay for it heavily.
(b) You attacked us in Somalia; you supported the Russian atrocities against us in Chechnya, the Indian oppression against us in Kashmir, and the Jewish aggression against us in Lebanon.
(d) You steal our wealth and oil at paltry prices because of your international influence and military threats. This theft is indeed the biggest theft ever witnessed by mankind in the history of the world.
(e) Your forces occupy our countries; you spread your military bases throughout them; you corrupt our lands, and you besiege our sanctities, to protect the security of the Jews and to ensure the continuity of your pillage of our treasures.
(f) You have starved the Muslims of Iraq, where children die every day. It is a wonder that more than 1.5 million Iraqi children have died as a result of your sanctions, and you did not show concern.

In these passages, bin Laden is therefore seen to mostly highlight political and economic international grievances brought about the region by the West and especially, the U.S. As an answer to this, bin Laden proceeds to promote jihad as resistance against America’s aggression and oppression by maintaining that,

These tragedies and calamities are only a few examples of your oppression and aggression against us. It is commanded by our religion and intellect that the oppressed have a right to return the aggression. Do not await anything from us but Jihad, resistance and revenge. Is it in any way rational to expect that after America has attacked us for more than half a century, that we will then leave her to live in security and peace?!!

Bin laden proceeds to emphasize that the blame falls not only on the American

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185 Ibid. p.g 3.
government but, rather, on all Americans as it is the American citizens who vote for their governments, pay taxes and make up the American armed forces. In this sense, bin Laden justifies the use of indiscriminate violence and outside targeting against the American nation, both politically and materially, in the form of a response to American aggression. This is seen when he asserts that,

Allah, the Almighty, legislated the permission and the option to take revenge. Thus, if we are attacked, then we have the right to attack back. Whoever has destroyed our villages and towns, then we have the right to destroy their villages and towns. Whoever has stolen our wealth, then we have the right to destroy their economy. And whoever has killed our civilians, then we have the right to kill theirs.\(^\text{186}\)

Along these lines, bin Laden is seen to highlight global jihad as a matter of resistance and thus, self-defense, against outside hostility, intrusion and theft of the Muslim world. The second part of the letter addresses a second question that bin Laden raises to the American people and that is: *What are we calling you to, and what do we want from you?* He first answers this by arguing for the recognition of Islam as a religion of self-defense. This is indicated when he describes that,

It is the religion of showing kindness to others, establishing justice between them, granting them their rights, and defending the oppressed and the persecuted. It is the religion of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil with the hand, tongue and heart. It is the religion of Jihad in the way of Allah so that Allah's Word and religion reign Supreme. And it is the religion of unity and agreement on the obedience to Allah, and total equality between all people, without regarding their colour, sex, or language.\(^\text{187}\)

This passage reveals an interpretation of jihad along contemporary lines as a form resistance and self-defense from the side of the seemingly oppressed. Respectively, this reference to global jihad has been demonstrated to belong to the modern sources of the faith, which have been influenced by the context of the Western-led globalized era rather

\(^{186}\) Ibid. p.g 4. \\
\(^{187}\) Ibid.
than classical doctrine. In effect, bin Laden continues to answer the second question by enumerating several points of oppression and exploitation that all fall within the political, economic and cultural realms of international grievances held against American and Western-led globalization. This involves the following,

(2) The second thing we call you to, is to stop your oppression, lies, immorality and debauchery that has spread among you.
(a) We call you to be a people of manners, principles, honour, and purity; to reject the immoral acts of fornication, homosexuality, intoxicants, gambling's, and trading with interest.

(b) It is saddening to tell you that you are the worst civilization witnessed by the history of mankind:
(i) You are the nation who, rather than ruling by the Shariah of Allah in its Constitution and Laws, choose to invent your own laws as you will and desire. You separate religion from your policies, contradicting the pure nature which affirms Absolute Authority to the Lord and your Creator. You flee from the embarrassing question posed to you: How is it possible for Allah the Almighty to create His creation, grant them power over all the creatures and land, grant them all the amenities of life, and then deny them that which they are most in need of: knowledge of the laws which govern their lives?

(ii) You are the nation that permits Usury, which has been forbidden by all the religions. Yet you build your economy and investments on Usury. As a result of this, in all its different forms and guises, the Jews have taken control of your economy, through which they have then taken control of your media, and now control all aspects of your life making you their servants and achieving their aims at your expense; precisely what Benjamin Franklin warned you against.

(iii) You are a nation that permits the production, trading and usage of intoxicants. You also permit drugs, and only forbid the trade of them, even though your nation is the largest consumer of them.

(iv) You are a nation that permits acts of immorality, and you consider them to be pillars of personal freedom. You have continued to sink down this abyss from level to level until incest has spread amongst you, in the face of which neither your sense of honour nor your laws object.

(v) You are a nation that permits gambling in its all forms. The companies practice this as well, resulting in the investments becoming active and the criminals becoming rich.

(vi) You are a nation that exploits women like consumer products or advertising tools calling upon customers to purchase them. You use women to serve passengers, visitors, and strangers to increase your profit margins. You then
rant that you support the liberation of women.

(vii) You are a nation that practices the trade of sex in all its forms, directly and indirectly. Giant corporations and establishments are established on this, under the name of art, entertainment, tourism and freedom, and other deceptive names you attribute to it.

(viii) And because of all this, you have been described in history as a nation that spreads diseases that were unknown to man in the past. Go ahead and boast to the nations of man, that you brought them AIDS as a Satanic American Invention.

(xi) You have destroyed nature with your industrial waste and gases more than any other nation in history. Despite this, you refuse to sign the Kyoto agreement so that you can secure the profit of your greedy companies and industries.

(x) Your law is the law of the rich and wealthy people, who hold sway in their political parties, and fund their election campaigns with their gifts. Behind them stand the Jews, who control your policies, media and economy. As illustrated, the list of grievances include bin Laden reprimanding America for the institution of secularism by separating religion from politics and law, the usury in its economic practices, the production, trade and usage of intoxicants harmful to the environment, its allowance of incest and acts of immortality along the lines of personal freedom, the gambling among its transnational companies, its exploitation of women and the trade of sex by its large corporations under the umbrella of entertainment, tourism or freedom, the spread of global disease, the destruction of the environment through industrial waste and gases by its giant industries, and its material law influenced by the wealthy. As evidenced, this long list involves international grievances along all three-political, economic and cultural-realms that bin Laden argues should be put at rest.

Bin Laden then continues to emphasize America’s double standard by spelling out a dichotomy between the US and the rest of the world. To this effect, he says,

188 Ibid. p.g 5-6.
Let us not forget one of your major characteristics: your duality in both manners and values; your hypocrisy in manners and principles. All manners, principles and values have two scales: one for you and one for the others. The freedom and democracy that you call to is for yourselves and for white race only; as for the rest of the world, you impose upon them your monstrous, destructive policies and Governments, which you call the 'American friends'.

Along these lines, bin Laden goes on with the rest of his letter to highlight examples showcasing this alleged double standard in America’s international practices. These include,

(a) The freedom and democracy that you call to is for yourselves and for white race only; as for the rest of the world, you impose upon them your monstrous, destructive policies and Governments, which you call the 'American friends'.

(b) Your policy on prohibiting and forcibly removing weapons of mass destruction to ensure world peace: it only applies to those countries which you do not permit to possess such weapons. As for the countries you consent to, such as Israel, then they are allowed to keep and use such weapons to defend their security. Anyone else who you suspect might be manufacturing or keeping these kinds of weapons, you call them criminals and you take military action against them.

(c) You are the last ones to respect the resolutions and policies of International Law, yet you claim to want to selectively punish anyone else who does the same. Israel has for more than 50 years been pushing UN resolutions and rules against the wall with the full support of America.

(d) As for the war criminals which you censure and form criminal courts for - you shamelessly ask that your own are granted immunity!! However, history will not forget the war crimes that you committed against the Muslims and the rest of the world; those you have killed in Japan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Lebanon and Iraq will remain a shame that you will never be able to escape.

(e) You have claimed to be the vanguards of Human Rights, and your Ministry of Foreign affairs issues annual reports containing statistics of those countries that violate any Human Rights. However, all these things vanished when the Mujahideen hit you, and you then implemented the methods of the same documented governments that you used to curse. In America, you captured thousands the Muslims and Arabs, took them into custody with neither reason, court trial, nor even disclosing their names. You issued newer, harsher laws.

(5) We also advise you to pack your luggage and get out of our lands. We desire for your goodness, guidance, and righteousness, so do not force us to

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189 Ibid. p.g 6.
send you back as cargo in coffins.

(6) …Do not interfere in our politics and method of education. Leave us alone, or else expect us in New York and Washington.

(7) We also call you to deal with us and interact with us on the basis of mutual interests and benefits, rather than the policies of sub dual, theft and occupation, and not to continue your policy of supporting the Jews because this will result in more disasters for you.\(^{190}\)

As spelled out by bin Laden, he reprimands America’s double standard when it comes to which countries it allows to possess weapons of mass destruction, its involvement with International law such as the UN’s selective resolutions that cater to the US and its allies, the international war tribunals that bestow the US with immunity, America’s violation of international Human Rights and its unjust support of Israel in Palestine, Indians in Kashmir, Russians in Chechnya and the Manila government in Southern Philippines. Lastly, bin Laden draws attention to American involvement in the Arab region by reprimanding Western interference in Arab land and affairs. As such, the second part of the letter is seen to also involve concern with international grievances against Western hegemonic practices. In response to this, bin Laden call upon the U.S. to overturn its policies of dual nature, theft and occupation, and to interact with the Muslim world on the premise of mutual benefits.

In the third part of the letter, bin Laden reaffirms Arab and Muslim resistance by consecutively denoting several Quranic verses. This notably includes him asserting,

If you fail to respond to all these conditions, then prepare for fight with the Islamic Nation. The Nation of Monotheism, that puts complete trust on Allah and fears none other than Him. The Nation which is addressed by its Quran with the words: "Do you fear them? Allah has more right that you should fear Him if you are believers. Fight against them so that Allah will punish them by your hands and disgrace them and give you victory over them and heal the breasts of believing people. And remove the anger of their (believers’) hearts.\(^{190}\)

\(^{190}\) Ibid. p.g 6-8.
Allah accepts the repentance of whom He wills. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise" [Quran9:13-1].

"So do not become weak (against your enemy), nor be sad, and you will be*superior ( in victory) if you are indeed (true) believers" [Quran 3:139]

"Think not of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive with their Lord, and they are being provided for. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them from His bounty and rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers." [Quran 3:169-171]

"Allah has decreed that 'Verily it is I and My Messengers who shall be victorious.' Verily Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty" [Quran 58:21]

These selected Quranic verses exemplify how Islam is articulated in a way to inspire mobilization and polarization in response to the international grievances spelled out by Al-Qaeda that belong to the age of globalization. In revision, this is seen in bin Laden’s discussion of transnational companies, multinational corporations, intergovernmental organizations and global material and secular practices.

Overall, as demonstrated in examining this letter, foremost concern is not articulated in terms of propagating the Islamic faith as some Western scholars and many policy-makers seem to argue. Differently, this letter seems to be mostly concerned with espousing global grievances belonging to the political, economic, and cultural realms, and this is later mediated with religious endorsements that speak to reinforcing resistance and self-defense of the assumed oppressed Muslim people against the US and the West. To this effect, bin Laden closes his letter by affirming the victory of the Muslim people in their fight against Western interference taking us back to the history of Empire. Along these lines, bin Laden ultimately states,

191 Ibid. p.g 8.
The Islamic Nation that was able to dismiss and destroy the previous evil Empires like yourself; the Nation that rejects your attacks, wishes to remove your evils, and is prepared to fight you. You are well aware that the Islamic Nation, from the very core of its soul, despises your haughtiness and arrogance.

This is our message to the Americans, as an answer to theirs. Do they now know why we fight them and over which form of ignorance, by the permission of Allah, we shall be victorious?192


Abu Ayman Al-Hilali provides a rich text that discusses the significance of Al-Qaeda’s 9/11 attacks by placing them under an international lens thereby accentuating all the international grievances spurred by Western hegemony in the age of globalization. Appropriately, Al-Hilali’s opening statement identifies the symbolism behind the 9/11 attacks in a manner far removed from a religious cause but, as this paper has attempted to argue, is more related to concerns with Western hegemony by maintaining that,

The martyrdom attack/raid on New York and Washington that al-Qa'ida mujahidin carried out under the leadership of Usama Bin Ladin--God preserve him and grant him victory--on 11 September 2001 targeted symbols of the United States’ hegemony and economic, political, and military might: the Defense Department and the World Trade Center193.

In a similar manner, Al-Hilali warns against the continuation of violent attacks unless the U.S. ends its tyranny and suppression of the “exploited peoples” of the Muslim world.

They have become easy prey for the mujahidin and they will be a target for similar attacks unless the United States renounces its tyranny, arrogance, oppression of the exploited peoples, and complicity in Zionist terror against our Palestinian brothers194.

Al-Hilali proceeds by remarking that the events of 9/11 have acted to announce

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193 Ibid.
194 Ibid.
the arrival of a new challenger in the international stage that is seeking to override the current world order, which he maintains serves to oppress and exploit people under the Western system of globalization. As such, he declares,

It sensed that another challenger had appeared--after the fall of the Soviet Union--on the international arena. Someone was vying with it for political and global influence to redraw the political and international map\textsuperscript{195}.

To compliment this, Al-Hilali enumerates the several realms of this oppression that fittingly fall within the political, economic and cultural international grievances that this paper has been highlighting. These include,

- Economic globalization links the global economy to the United States for ultimate control over capital through the World Trade Organization, transnational corporations, the IMF, and the World Bank.
- Political globalization entails direct political interference in various countries, the division of the world into geopolitical regions, the creation of a strategic framework based on vital interests, the imposition of economic sanctions on those who resist (under the pretext that they practice terror, human rights violations, and political despotism), and protection for the children of Zion and all of their allies through the veto weapon...[ellipses as published]
- Cultural globalization imposes the United States' culture and way of life through US schools and restaurants...[ellipses as published]\textsuperscript{196}.

Therefore, Al-Hilali goes on to describe 9/11 as a historic turning point in the international realm as he maintains it has challenged and transformed the world’s political future concerning issues such as, freedom, natural resources, independence and resistance to superpowers and their international agencies. This is denoted when Al-Hilali remarks,

Analysts agree that the raids marked a historic turning point in international relations and the global political arena. They sparked a sea change in the policy of the United States, the global leader, as well as fundamental change in the geopolitics of Central Asia, the Arab world, and Islamic countries. They ignited a far-ranging intellectual and political debate that continues to this day over sensitive issues in the world's political future--Palestine, the freedom of oppressed peoples, justice, natural resources such as oil, independence, Islamic

\textsuperscript{195} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid.
law, the refusal to submit to US tyranny and its tools like the Security Council and the United Nations...\textsuperscript{197}.

As demonstrated, these passages largely discusses the influences of attacks such as 9/11 to be more linked to underlying political, economic and cultural grievances belonging to the Western-led globalized era and therefore, the ultimate concern is placed with challenging and overturning the current world order. Al-Hilali thus reveals Al-Qaeda and other jihad movements in general as the main challengers acting on this. Respectively, he asserts, “As everyone knows, the actor was al-Qa'ida, the Taliban movement, and jihad movements in general”\textsuperscript{198}.

Under this background, Al-Hilali continues to elucidate on the raids of 9/11 by providing what he believes is the real clarification behind the matters surrounding them\textsuperscript{199}. Al-Hilali begins by outlining a scheme of dichotomization between the U.S. and the Muslim world. Along these lines, Al-Hilali asserts that, “The United States is the enemy of God's faith and Muslims. It is fighting against them”\textsuperscript{200}. Al-Hilali then distinguishes Afghanistan and Palestine as “the crux of struggle” between the Islamic community and the West and therefore, as the “dividing line” between both camps\textsuperscript{201}. Nevertheless, he goes on to enumerate other Islamic nations such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan that are also fighting Western hegemony as embraced by the U.S., the European Union, Israel, the United Nations and “secularists in general”\textsuperscript{202}. Al-Hilali thus marks the events of 9/11 as a marking point in the fight against

\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{200} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{201} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.
the West as it attacked the U.S., a modern superpower, at its heart by targeting the country in its own grounds and in visible light, and by targeting institutions of political, economic and cultural significance.

1 The country targeted was the United States, the superpower that no one dares to oppose or fight because it has the most modern aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines at sea, Stealth bombers in the air, and a missile shield in space...[ellipses as published]

2 It was targeted at home and in broad daylight. This is a powerful challenge.

3 The raid was both symbolic and political. It struck vital institutions that represent the United States politically and militarily (the Pentagon) and economically (the World Trade Center). They are also part of the US people's memory and emotions.203

As such, this passage falls in line with the discussion of the shift in the fourth wave of modern terrorism as it took on an international dimension with the outside targeting of its enemy, which was spurred by the events of 9/11, as well as the underlying influence of international Islamic terrorist violence that has more closely to do with international grievances as seen in the symbolism behind the attacks.

Moreover, the effects of 9/11, as al-Hilali remarks, have demonstrated how a small group of 19 martyrdoms can strike against a global superpower at its core and instigate huge material and political losses. Along these lines, Al-Hilali offers an oxymoron by maintaining that the raids of 9/11 have demonstrated that, “Power has limits and weakness has power.”204 This power, Al-Hilali embodies in the form of jihad operations, as he maintains, “Jihad and martyrdom operations are our strategic weapon against the enemy.”205 This characterization is particularly noteworthy as it describes the Islamic concept of jihad as a political tool of resistance against the “octopus of U.S.

203 Ibid.
204 Ibid.
205 Ibid.
hegemony" rather than the cause of terrorism itself as recounted by the Western political narrative. Al-Hilali then proceeds to discuss the defensive nature of jihad, which falls under interpretations provided by modern sources as he upholds that,

In light of globalization/Americanization, everyone agrees that the Arab and Islamic countries have submitted to US-Zionist hegemony. They remain colonies.

This statement stands as a reference to the colonialism of the Muslim World through Western hegemony in the age of globalization. Al-Qaeda is then typified as the vanguard of likewise movements, specifically through its execution of the events of 9/11, which primarily aim to challenge the globalization-fueled Western hegemony that dictates the current world order through advancing the strategy of jihad. Along these lines, when discussing this concept of vanguard, Al-Hilali maintains,

This applies to al-Qa'ida's blessed raid, as well as to Imam Bin Ladin's appeal to the community asking for its participation. Like all jihad movements, al-Qa'ida is based on doctrine, ideas, education, politics, and military action. Its project is a civilization. It aims to liberate global political thought and the current political reality from the fetters of globalization-fueled US hegemony. Al-Qa'ida intends to implement its political program through a strategy of jihad.

In comparison, reference to Islamic faith is found at the end of Al-Hilali’s text and rather mainly accompanies Al-Hilali’s efforts at polarization and mobilization rather the propagation of the faith. For polarization, this is seen where he asserts,

The raids on New York and Washington and the clearly delineated struggle they produced between two poles on the political and international arena--the Islamic pole, led by Imam Bin Ladin and commander of the faithful Mullah

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206 Ibid.
207 Ibid.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid.
Omar, and the Zionist-crusader pole, led by the United States\textsuperscript{210}.

As for mobilization, this makes up the closing of his text, which Al-Hilali uses to inspire further mobilization by demarcating that the raids of 9/11 stand as a turning point in modern history as the “downtrodden”- the oppressed Muslims- began to rise up\textsuperscript{211}. He reinforces this with a verse from a Quran that states, “And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed on the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs” [28:5]\textsuperscript{212}. With this, Al-Hilali calls upon “mujahid brothers” in Palestine, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Philippines to fight against Western hegemony\textsuperscript{213}. He sustains this with another text from the Quran by maintaining, “Our Lord was correct when He said, “Fighting is prescribed upon you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth, and ye know not” [2:216]\textsuperscript{214}.

Altogether, Al-Hilali’s text particularly touches upon most if not all themes discussed in this paper. His text reinforces the argument that international grievances in the cultural, economic and political realms concerning Western hegemony in the age of globalization act as an underlying influence of international Islamic terrorism. Also, as seen at the very end of Al-Hilali’s text, these grievances are mediated with modern religious interpretations of Islam, which act more as a means of polarization and mobilization, in order to inspire indiscriminate terrorist violence internationally.

\textsuperscript{210} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{212} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{214} Ibid.
Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Knights Under The Prophet’s Banner, 2001

Ayman Al-Zawahiri provides an insightful book that heavily accentuates on the importance of jihad for confrontation against the West. Here, excerpts of this large work will be examined. As follows, under the heading, The Universality of Our Battle, Al-Zawahiri markedly maintains,

The Western forces that are hostile to Islam have clearly identified their enemy. They refer to it as Islamic fundamentalism. They are joined in this by their old enemy, Russia. They have adopted a number of tools to fight Islam, including the United Nations; the servile rulers of the Muslim peoples; multinational corporations; international corporations; international communications and data exchange systems; international relief agencies and nongovernmental organizations, which are used as a cover for espionage, conspiracies, proselytizing, and arms struggling.215

As such, Al-Zawahiri has identified the two poles of the West versus Islamic fundamentalism and accordingly, he has outlined international agencies such as transnational corporations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations belonging to the political, economic and cultural realms that he depicts as hostile to the faith.

In response, Al-Zawahiri recounts of an international coalition of jihad movements taking place by describing,

It is a growing force that is rallying under the banner of jihad, against the scope of the new world order. This force is free of servitude to the dominant Western imperialism and promises destruction and ruin to the new crusades against the lands of Islam. This force thirsts for revenge against the heads of the global gang of infidels, the United States, Russia and Israel. This force is anxious to seek retribution for the blood of martyrs, the grief of mothers, the deprivation of orphans, the suffering of detainees, and the wounds of tortured people throughout the lands of Islam, from Eastern Turkistan to Andalusia.216

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216 Ibid. p.g 194.
Along these lines, jihad is thus distinguished as a tool used in the fight against the West and more specifically, Western colonization. In this sense, it is described as a means to fight against the underlying grievances held across the Muslim world and imposed through Western-led globalization, and this includes the enumerated hegemonic agencies mentioned above by Al-Zawahiri such as IGOs namely the UN, TNCs, NGOs and international communication and information systems. Moreover, here again, jihad and the ultimate goal of establishing a new world order is not described as a means of propagating the religion of Islam but rather, as a means to defend, liberate and alleviate the aggrieved Muslim people from Western subjugation. Al-Zawahiri proceeds to expound on urgency of the cause by maintaining that, “no solution is possible without jihad” 217. Accordingly, Al-Zawahiri maintains that this understanding was reached in self-defense against the Western ‘crusade’ over Muslim land that left Muslims with nothing- to which he uses the simile, “We have become like orphans at a banquet for the villians” 218.

Under the heading, *Mobilizing the Fundamentalist Movement*, Al-Zawahiri markedly maintains,

...the jihad movement must come closer to the masses, defend their honor, fend off injustice, guide them and lead them to victory. It must simplify access to the origin and facts of religion and free them of complex terminology and intricate expression219.

Although indirectly, this passage demonstrates that movements such as Al-Qaeda do tamper with religious texts in the way they see fit in order to deliver their call for action for mobilizing Islamic communities around jihad. Correspondingly, Al-Zawahiri outlines

\[\text{Ibid. p.g 195.}\]

\[\text{Ibid. p.g 196.}\]
this call for action around grievances far removed from a religious cause but rather more associated with efforts of resistance and liberation against the West and, specifically the U.S. This is seen when Al-Zawahiri asserts,

The jihad movement must enable the Muslim community to participate with it in the jihad, and believers will participate only if the mujahedeen’s slogans are comprehensible. The one slogan that the community has understood well, and to which it has responded for the past fifty years, is the call to jihad against Israel. In addition, for a decade the community has been galvanized against U.S. presence and has responded favorably to calls to jihad against the Americans. A single look at the history of the mujahideen in Afghanistan, Palestine, and Chechnya will show that the jihad movement took a central leadership position in the community when it adopted the slogan of liberating the nation from its external enemies and when it portrayed national liberation as a battle of Islam against unbelief and unbelievers.

Also, as illustrated in this passage, the initial grievances accentuated by international Islamic terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda have much more to do with liberating the Muslim World from Western hegemony to which Islam, under modern interpretations of jihad, plays a secondary role of attempting to mobilize and polarize the community around the rallying point of believers against unbelievers.

Moreover, Al-Zawahiri advances Al-Qaeda as the vanguard organization with the ultimate end of establishing the Islamic State reminiscent of the age-old caliphate. This is stated as Al-Zawahiri accentuates,

finally, by pursuing the goal of establishing an Islamic state in the heart of the Muslim world: the jihad movement must follow a plan aimed at establishing an Islamic state it can defend on a territory in the Muslim world; from there, it will lead to the struggle to restore the rightly guided caliphate after the Prophet’s model.

Al-Zawahiri then advances the goal of establishing the Islamic State as a struggle against the Westphalian state-centric order, which he markedly characterizes as the “anti-Muslim

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220 Ibid. p.g 196-197.
221 Ibid. p.g 198.
world order”. Thereby, Al-Zawahiri advocates for the mobilization of Muslims in order to override the current world system and here again, religion is mostly used in the context of mobilization and polarization. This is established as he maintains,

Here, we must repeat what we have already explained about the composition of the new anti-Muslim world order and its relationship with regimes in our countries. As we have emphasized earlier, we must mobilize the community for the battle of Islam against unbelief.

The struggle is therefore described as held against the West and in the tradition of international Islamic terrorism, it is set to indiscriminately target outside by attacking the Western enemy’s land. This is highlighted as Al-Zawahiri maintains,

Our Islamic movement and its Jihadi vanguard, as well as the entire community, must bring the major criminals- the United States, Russia and Israel-into the battle. This is why we must move the battle of the enemy’s territory, to burn the hands of those who have set fire to our countries... Therefore, given this new reality, we must prepare ourselves for a battle that is not confined to a single region but that extends to apostates at home and the Judeo-crusaders abroad.

Also, in accordance with modern interpretations embraced by international Islamic terrorism, Al-Zawahiri delineates that the battle is to be fought as an individual obligation of every Muslim. Accordingly he maintains,

Our battle is that of every Muslim: we must reiterate that this battle, which we must wage to defend our faith, community, sanctuaries, honor, values, wealth and resources, is that of every Muslim, young or old. It is a battle that touches every one of us in our work, our families, our children, and our dignity.

Finally, this serves to illustrate how the global jihad advocated by Al-Qaeda is more related to the modern interpretations of Islam, which cater to the context of the globalized age, rather than the classical doctrinal sources of the faith that speak of spreading the religion as is generally repeated in the dominant Western political narrative.

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222 Ibid. p.g 200-201.
223 Ibid. p.g 201-201.
224 Ibid. p.g 204.
Chapter V: Background on ISIS

The Origins of ISIS

Ever since the events of September 11, Al-Qaeda has been regarded as the face of international Islamist terrorism. However, with the unfolding of the twenty-first century, another Islamic terrorist group, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), came to supersede Al-Qaeda’s global influence and brutality. The origins of ISIS can traced to the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003, as ISIS is the successor to Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). AQI was formed in October 2004 and played a major role in the Iraqi insurgency that arose in opposition to the US occupation that had removed the Sunni minority from power with the fall of Sadam Hussein. AQI was under the direction of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and was in association with Al-Qaeda Central (AQC), which was the offshoot of the original Al-Qaeda after the US’s reprisal in Afghanistan.

As Ahmed S. Hashim explains, the AQC and AQI converged in terms of ideology and goals and in this sense, both organizations promoted tawhid (monotheism), accentuated on the belief that the Prophet Mohammed is God’s messenger for all of mankind and thereby repudiated secularism (ilmaniyah) and all other ‘isms’ such as nationalism, tribalism, communism and Baathism. Moreover, they viewed jihad as the individual duty of all Muslims to liberate Muslim territories from Western control such as the American occupation of Iraq and ultimately, wanted to establish an Islamic State that transcended national borders. Nevertheless, the AQC and AQI diverged when it came to line of conduct. In fact, ever since its effort in Afghanistan as it fought the American

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226 Ibid.
reprisal, the AQC became weary of miscalculations it had committed there. These included the killing of other Muslims through the indiscriminate attack of public places and the targeting of ‘infidel’ high-profile political or religious leaders in an effort to curtail violence and maintain social capital. Along these lines, bin Laden noted that, “We are now in a new phase of assessing jihad activities and developing them beyond what they were in the past.” Nevertheless, the AQI conducted itself in Iraq with close to no constraint by causing mass civilian casualties to the point that Zarqawi came to be referred to as the “sheikh of slaughterers” and by targeting the Shiite population as well as other political and religious officials. Yet, the AQC tolerated AQI’s conduct by streamlining that the country was occupied by the US.

On 7 June 2006, the US military executed Zarqawi and the AQI revamped itself as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and thereafter described itself as “… the first cornerstone of the Islamic Caliphate project…” Nevertheless, by 2007, the ISI’s influence began to wane. In 2010, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took control of the organization and reinvigorated its capacities by establishing a hierarchical and centralized structure that however allowed attendants considerable freedom of action in the field. The year 2011 was marked by several events starting with the execution of bin Laden on 2 May 2011 in Pakistan by the Navy SEALs of the US Naval Special Warfare Development Group.

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228 Ibid.
230 Ibid. p.g 72.
which left Zawahiri in charge of the AQF and also the US withdrawal from Iraq. Then in late 2011, Baghdadi began to send funds and operatives to reinforce Jabhat al Nusra (JN) in Syria, which was the leading rebel group fighting against President Bashar al-Assad during an episode of the Arab Spring. JN was led by Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani and had done well in its fight against the Syrian regime as it had popularly established an efficient network of food and medicine distribution that contrasted with the brute and unruly conduct of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) opponents of the Syrian regime.

ISI fighters sent to Syria practiced the same unrestrained violence and indiscriminate attacks, even when it came to Muslims, that Zarqawi had pursued in Iraq to the AQF’s disdain. Furthermore, ISI fighters capitalized from the unraveling civil war in Syria, following the partial breakdown of governmental authority, as this opened up opportunities to gain battlefield experience, new recruits, and to operate within sanctuaries. A particularly noteworthy episode was the jihadists’ seizure of the city of Raqqa in Syria as this allowed ISI to capture oil wells that rendered it able to independently finance its operations without reliance on outside sources, such as Al-Qaeda’s reliance on charities for funding that leaves it dependable on shifting social opinions and economic downturns. Also, ISI’s attempt at self-sufficiency involved its looting of regime depots, trafficking, extortion, the taxing of religious minorities, and the capturing of basic resources. Overall, Phillips resolves that, “This access to independent resources has made [ISI] richer, bolder and more dangerous than any of its jihadist rivals,

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233 Ibid. p.g 77.
paving the way for its most recent assault on the Iraqi state” 235.

**The Rise of ISIS**

By April 2013, Baghdadi issued a startling announcement by declaring a merger between JN and ISI and thus asserted, “the cancellation of the name Islamic State of Iraq and the cancellation of the name Jabhat al-Nusra, and the joining of the two under one name: the “Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham” 236. Jawlani issued a statement rejecting the merger by maintaining that none of the JN leadership had conceded to it. Nonetheless, many JN fighters defected to join ISIS and the nascent organization quickly gained ground and influence. In June 2013, Zawahiri published a letter that stood against the merger and implied that JN would fight in Syria and ISI in Iraq. Baghdadi defied Zawahiri’s verdict and insisted on the merger. In response, Zawahiri ordered the disbanding of ISIS and for JN to lead jihadists in Syria. However, ISIS’ members repudiated Zawahiri’s decree on the basis of Islamic jurisprudence that endorsed the union of the Muslim ummah and therefore, ISIS leadership asserted that jihadists should remain undivided 237.

In January 2014, Zawahiri made a final appeal to the ISIS leadership that insisted that it concludes its efforts in Syria, especially as this had led it to engage in conflict with other jihadi groups. Nevertheless, ISIS yet again ignored Zawahiri’s appeal as it continued to expand in the country. On February 2014, AQC severed its ties with ISIS in a statement that made known that, “Al-Qaeda announces it is not linked to the Islamic

235 Ibid.
236 Al-Tamimi, Aymenn Jawad, "The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham." *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2013). p.g 20.
State of Iraq and al-Sham, as it was not informed of its creation and did not accept it” … “ISIS ‘is not a branch of al-Qaeda, has no links to it, and the al-Qaeda group is not responsible for its acts’ 238.

In June 2014, ISIS made a return to Iraq and also continued to attain large tracts of territory and to capture cities there. As soon as they captured a city, ISIS members quickly took over the police, municipal buildings and primary infrastructure such as water and electricity thereby gaining complete access to basic resources. Moreover, ISIS, exploited the failure of sectarian government in Iraq by effecting operational ties with many previous Sunni and Baathist insurgents whereas many remaining military units and civilian leaders were exterminated to send a message to the Shia-dominated Maliki regime. Through ISIS’ advances, the Iraqi security forces came to a collapse as it four army divisions crumbled and thereafter will not be easily reestablished239. The First Division lost two brigades in Anbar and later in June 2014 two other of its brigades were defeated. The Second Division lost four of its brigades in Mosul while the same holds for the Third Division. Lastly, the Fourth Division was also routed by ISIS and then completely devastated. In the meantime, ISIS took hold of a vast amount of equipment involving 1,500 armored Humvees, many mortars and heavy artillery pieces. In addition, ISIS was able to seize major amounts of cash and other resources that altogether rendered it to become, as Musa al-Gharbi maintains, “… one of the richest illicit organizations on

the planet, valued at more than $2B and growing" 240.

**The Islamic State**

As Hashim underlines, the success of ISIS operations on the grounds of Syria and Iraq demonstrated that the time was ripe for the institution of an Islamic State241. Thus, on 29 June 2014, ISIS proclaimed its occupied territory as a new caliphate, identified itself as the Islamic State and introduced Baghdadi as its ruler (caliph). The spokesman for ISIS, Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Adnani al-Shami, referred to the caliphate as “the neglected obligation of the era” and asserted that the organization’s Shura Council had officially instituted the caliphate and that Muslims throughout the globe should now show solidarity to the new caliph242.

In the wake of ISIS’ advances, many local and tribal leaders in Syria and Iraq fearfully transferred their militias, towns and villages under ISIS’ control. Resultantly, Hashim highlights that both these surrenders and the organization’s appropriation of more territory afforded ISIS with territorial continuity between the lands it had occupied in Syria and Iraq243. Altogether, ISIS came to the control of 33% of Iraq and 35% of Syria and this meant that about four million Iraqis and Syrians resided in cities governed by ISIS. Furthermore, without an effective border between both countries, ISIS was able to operate loosely between Syria and Iraq. To reinforce its role as a state, ISIS instituted courts and the religious police, al-Hisba, that were responsible for the enforcement of a

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242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
strict adherence to the sharia, established its own state-like institutions and assumed control over state infrastructure. Meanwhile, in order to uphold all this, ISIS greatly suppressed the local population under its controlled areas and showed little concern with civilian misery but rather destroyed anyone it regarded as a dissenter.\textsuperscript{244}

In effect, ISIS’ declaration of the Islamic State divided jihadist thinkers and movements along two fringes. Most notably, the AQC, which tended to embrace an older generation of jihadis, contended that Baghdadi was a newcomer who held no legitimacy in his declaration of the caliphate, deemed the time as unripe for such a declaration and the manner in which the Islamic State was established and upheld as inappropriate.\textsuperscript{245} As for ISIS, Baghdadi and his supporters argued that in contrast with the AQC’s lack of potency and success in the current years, ISIS’ military success and growing influence provided it with both the legitimacy and opportunity to proclaim the Islamic State.\textsuperscript{246}

In comparison, Naureen Chowdhury Fink and Benjamin Sugg explain that both the Al-Qaeda and ISIS initiatives involve the need to carry out jihad as a duty of all Muslims and similarly, both organizations perceive the West, especially the US, as hostile towards Muslims and Islam.\textsuperscript{247} Along these lines, Fink and Sugg delineate that both organizations draw a line between Dar al-Harb (Abode of War) and Dar al-Islam (Abode of Islam) that essentially denotes the “incompatibility” of Islam with secular law.


\textsuperscript{245} Hashim, Ahmed S. "The Islamic State: From Al-Qaeda Affiliate to Caliphate." \textit{Middle East Policy} 21, no. 4 (Winter 2014). p.g 79.

\textsuperscript{246} Ibid.

and secular authority. Yet, as Kfir explains, ISIS has embraced the general ethos of Al-Qaeda by accentuating Western presence and influence yet it has responded to this by attempting to establish an Islamic State, reminiscent of the early Islamic Caliphate, a goal that Al-Qaeda has never materialized.

In practice, ISIS has achieved this by taking advantage of the civil war in Syria and the sectarian tension in Iraq, and in the process of instituting its Islamic State; it has excluded the territorial division between Syria and Iraq. Accordingly, ISIS has argued that the border between both countries is a Western construct that has been established as a result of the Sykes-Picot treaty following World War I. In this way, ISIS asserts that such borders are a Western-imposed creation that aimed at weakening the Islamic community and especially the Sunni minority in Iraq and the Sunni majority in Syria.

As Kfir highlights, these claims by ISIS expound upon key Al-Qaeda arguments that hold that the modern world was fashioned by European colonialism, which sought to exploit the wealth of Muslims and to dominate them by keeping them divided and under Western hegemonic control.

Moreover, ISIS’ creation of the Islamic State in terms of a revived caliphate demonstrates an example of localization that responds to the humiliation caused by the Sykes-Picot treaty by attempting to revitalize pan-Islamic sentiments. As such, the Islamic State, as it transcends national borders, represents ISIS’ concrete challenge to the international system as it defies the Westphalian world order by disregarding the

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248 Ibid.
250 Ibid. p.g 241.
251 Ibid.
universal system of sovereign nation-states and attempting to replace it with a shared system of religious authority. Along these lines, ISIS tries to capitalize on the economic, cultural and political grievances caused by Western secular and hegemonic practices by introducing the Islamic state as a tangible challenge to the world order, which is seen as a product of Western imperialism in the globalized era that has kept Muslims divided and the Islamic ummah weak. In this sense, the Islamic State is described by ISIS as an effort to unite and reinforce the Muslim world by overriding national identities and thereby, as Kfir accentuates, “ISIS is appealing to tribal and religious identities so as to create a new form of citizenship in which individuals can have security—physical, economic, social, and religious—as long as they accept ISIS’ message.”

**Challenges from Within**

The Islamic State issued by Baghdadi was consolidated differently in both Syria and Iraq. In Syria, this was achieved through violence and abrupt control over territory and the local population. In Iraq, ISIS’ approach was more piecemeal as an effort was done to form and maintain local alliances and to gradually include itself within the local population. This was especially sensitive when it came to ISIS’ relations with the well-armed and established former Sunni insurgents. To ISIS’ advantage, these Sunni

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fighters have been alienated by the Iraqi government that had denied them greater political participation or access to resources, which ISIS capitalizes on.

As Hashim delineates, ISIS’ repressive line of conduct and unrestrained violence with the local populations of Iraq and Syria, as well as its delicate relationship with local partners, may lead to its collapse if the local population manages to successfully engage it into conflict or if strife over resources and power positions emerge with its allies. In Syria, resistance to ISIS has already begun as groups associated with the FSA have already issued declarations stating their rejection of the Islamic State and their persistence in their fight against it. As for Iraq, ISIS has already experienced tension with Baathist and nationalist groups that regard ISIS as a useful force to topple the Shia-dominated government but however subsequently want power in their own hands. On top of all this, ISIS has to concern itself with the challenges of day-to-day governance and territorial supervision and this will only intensify as it attempts to further expand its Islamic State.

**Challenges from the Outside**

The challenges facing ISIS are both internal and also, external. As Hashim puts into words, “The key question is whether the group can reinforce its hold on the area it controls, or whether it will face factional challenges or effective international pushback.” This international pushback is becoming more pronounced as ISIS, in the tradition of international Islamic terrorism, has been persistently targeting the West. These attacks notably include the Jewish Museum of Belgium shooting on May 2014, the Copenhagen

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255 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
257 Ibid. p. 79.
shootings aimed at a free speech event by Lars Vilks and the Great Synagogue of Copenhagen on February 2015 and, the Paris attacks that involved suicide bombings outside the Stade de France, several mass shooting at cafés and restaurants and a mass shooting and hostage taking of attendants at a concert in the Bataclan theatre on November 2015. These were followed by the Brussels bombings in which suicide bombers attacked a metro station and an airport on March 2016, the Orlando nightclub shooting on a gay night on June 2016, the Nice attack where a truck toppled a crowd watching the fireworks at the Promenade des Anglais on July 2016, the Wurzburg train attack in which an Afghan refugee attacked people on a train near Wurzburg in Germany with an axe on July 2016 and, the Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray church attack where the priest, Jacques Hamel was killed during mass on July 2016.

Overall, it is estimated that ISIS has been, up to the year 2016, involved in over 70 terrorist attacks in 20 countries, which have resulted in about 1,200 dead and 1,700 injured. In retaliation, the international community has mostly referred to the US in an effort to push back ISIS. Accordingly, former President Obama devised a six-point plan to bring about ISIS’ defeat, which however, as Hashim asserts, “promises more than it can likely deliver” 258. The first initiative took place on 10 September 2014 and involved an extension of the aerial bombing campaign in Iraq. To a degree, airpower has managed to curb ISIS’ rapid advance and has reinforced the fallen Iraqi army and the Kurdish forces to recapture back from ISIS some of the territories it had taken. However, airpower is limited in its effectiveness because as Hashim argues, it is not able to completely

258 Ibid. p.g 80.
displace a whole system of control over people, infrastructure and territory\textsuperscript{259}. The second initiative considered the training and equipping of the Iraqi army and the Kurdish forces, the peshmerga. To this effect, the US is seeking to further finance the Iraqi army that, as aforementioned, had collapsed in the summer of 2014. Yet, Hashim makes clear that the Iraqi army’s failures owe to sectarian tensions, kinship prioritization rather than professionalism, huge corruption and weak command, control and communication methods that need to be all addressed before any better training and equipment can make a difference\textsuperscript{260}.

The third initiative appealed to the aerial bombing of Syria, which is therefore liable to the same shortcomings of airpower in Iraq if not more as ISIS has deeply rooted itself in eastern Syria. Also, the fourth initiative similarly requires the training and arming of Syrian rebels to fight ISIS yet Syrian rebels are made up of diverse groups that are hard to moderate or discipline. The fifth initiative notably included the development of a coalition of European and regional partners to physically thwart back ISIS and thus this constituted as the international pushback. Lastly, the sixth initiative involved the reliance on weak local ground forces in Iraq and Syria to deter ISIS however, this is to be done without a political or diplomatic interaction with the Iraqi and Syrian regimes and thus, as Hashim upholds, will not achieve a thorough degradation of ISIS control\textsuperscript{261}.

In assessment of the international response to ISIS, it is evident that the international community has yet again treated the challenge of international Islamic terrorism as a security issue to be answered to through military force. As this is effective

\textsuperscript{259} Ibid. p.g 80-81.
\textsuperscript{260} Ibid. p.g 81.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid.
in a short-term effect to push back ISIS from occupied territories, it however does not answer to underlying affects of international Islamic terrorism that gave leverage to Al-Qaeda and continue to do so with ISIS in the twenty-first century. As John Esposito asserts, the US and the international community, need to address the grievances that underlie international Islamic terrorist groups such as ISIS, involving Western political, economic and cultural hegemony in the Middle East, if they are serious about defeating terrorism\textsuperscript{262}. ISIS’ discourses themselves capitalize on these international grievances as they are then mediated through a religious rhetoric to give impetus to the organization as it attempts to validate and expand its Islamic State. The following chapter, through a discourse analysis, will attempt to illustrate just that and therefore, will seek to offer a way to respond to ISIS that goes beyond security measures by identifying and interpreting a set of underlying influences present in the rhetoric of fourth wave international Islamic terrorists.

Chapter VI: Critical Discourse Analysis and ISIS

Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, A Message to the Mujahdeen and Muslim Ummah in the month of Ramadan, July 2014.

In Al-Baghdadi’s statement to the Muslim ummah circulated online, one can discern considerable continuity with Al-Qaeda’s rhetoric almost a decade earlier. As such, within the rhetoric of ISIS’ chief leader, there is still emphasis on international grievances allegedly held by the Muslim world against international powers. Also, the discourse of colonialism is still heavily present as well as the call for polarization and mobilization behind the banner of jihad. This is initially met at the beginning of the text, in which Al-Baghdadi maintains,

Indeed, the ummah of Islam is watching your jihad with eyes of hope, and indeed you have brothers in many parts of the world being inflicted with the worst kinds of torture. Their honor is being violated. Their blood is being spilled. Prisoners are moaning and crying for help. Orphans and widows are complaining of their plight. Women who have lost their children are weeping. Masājid (plural of masjid) are desecrated and sanctities are violated. Muslims’ rights are forcibly seized in China, India, Palestine, Somalia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Caucasus, Shām (the Levant), Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Ahvaz, Iran [by the rāfidah(shia)], Pakistan, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria and Morocco, in the East and in the West.

The focus here is evidently placed on grievances suffered by the entire ummah, which is described through an international lens as the list encompasses countries and Muslims in the East and the West. Respectively, jihad in terms of self-defense is offered as the solution and is described as a form of “revenge” and “rescue” of the ummah against tyranny. This is seen when Al-Baghdadi urges,

So raise your ambitions, O soldiers of the Islamic State! For your brothers all over the world are waiting for your rescue, and are anticipating your

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brigades\textsuperscript{264}.

So by Allah, we will take revenge! By Allah, we will take revenge! Even if it
takes a while, we will take revenge, and every amount of harm against the
ummah will be responded to with multitudes more against the perpetrator.
{And those who, when tyranny strikes them, they defend themselves} [Ash-
Shūrā: 39]\textsuperscript{265}.

Al-Baghdadi continues with the following statements,

So let the world know that we are living today in a new era. Whoever was
heedless must now be alert.
Whoever was sleeping must now awaken. Whoever was shocked and amazed
must comprehend. The Muslims today have a loud, thundering statement, and
possess heavy boots. They have a statement that will cause the world to hear
and understand the meaning of terrorism, and boots that will trample the idol of
nationalism, destroy the idol of democracy and uncover its deviant nature\textsuperscript{266}.

So listen, O ummah of Islam. Listen and comprehend. Stand up and rise. For
the time has come for you to free yourself from the shackles of weakness, and
stand in the face of tyranny, against the treacherous rulers – the agents of the
crusaders and the atheists, and the guards of the jews\textsuperscript{267}.

This illustratively denounces Western political and cultural hegemony as Muslims are
asked to mobilize against nationalism, secularism and democracy belonging to the West.
Moreover, this also reinforces how the rhetoric of international Islamic terrorist
organizations such as ISIS is greatly influenced by resistance against international
grievances rather than with spreading the religion of Islam as recounted in the Western
political narrative.

Also similar to Al-Qaeda’s rhetoric, the assertion of international grievances is
followed by a call for mobilization and polarization. Along these lines, Al-Baghdadi
dichotomizes between the Muslim World and the West by delineating,

\textsuperscript{264} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{265} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{266} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.
O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith, and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy – the camp of the Muslims and the mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the jews, the crusaders, their allies, and with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by America and Russia, and being mobilized by the jews.

As demonstrated, this is recounted with an emphasis on Islamic faith as the dichotomy is set between the community of belief and disbelief or in other words, between Islam as preached by ISIS and Western secularism. Al-Baghdadi continues by asserting,

Indeed the Muslims were defeated after the fall of their khilāfah (caliphate). Then their state ceased to exist, so the disbelievers were able to weaken and humiliate the Muslims, dominate them in every region, plunder their wealth and resources, and rob them of their rights. They accomplished this by attacking and occupying their lands, placing their treacherous agents in power to rule the Muslims with an iron fist, and spreading dazzling and deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom, democracy, secularism, baathism, nationalism, and patriotism, among other false slogans.

As such, Al-Baghdadi then characterizes this dichotomy by the weakening of the Muslim world first by the fall of the early caliphate that then allowed the West to oppress and shame Muslims through the occupation, the plundering of wealth and resources and the spread of Western notions such as secularism and nationalism in Muslim regions. Along these lines, this passage thus serves to illustrate the influence of international grievances belonging to the political, economic and cultural realms and that are spurred by Western hegemony on international Islamic terrorist organizations as highlighted here by ISIS’ rhetoric.

Al-Baghdadi answers to this state of oppression and humiliation of the Muslim world with jihad by notably articulating the very term of “Terrorism” itself. Al-Baghdadi maintains,

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268 Ibid.
269 Ibid.
Because terrorism is to disbelieve in those slogans and to believe in Allah. Terrorism is to refer to Allah’s law for judgment. Terrorism is to worship Allah as He ordered you. Terrorism is to refuse humiliation, subjugation, and subordination [to the kuffār – infidels]. Terrorism is for the Muslim to live as a Muslim, honorably with might and freedom. Terrorism is to insist upon your rights and not give them up.270

As such, ISIS equates its advocated jihad as a means of self-defense against the oppression of the Muslim World and in this way translates accusations of terrorism as a means of resistance and liberation, and here a confirmation rather than the spread of the faith. Finally, this explicit use of the term “terrorism” by Al-Baghdadi is then aligned with the fourth wave of modern terror as it is described to transcend national-borders and take up an international character, specifically with the establishment of the Islamic State.

Along these lines, Al-Baghdadi adheres that,

O Muslims everywhere, glad tidings to you and expect good. Raise your head high, for today – by Allah’s grace – you have a state and khilāfah, which will return your dignity, might, rights, and leadership. It is a state where the Arab and non-Arab, the white man and black man, the easterner and westerner are all brothers. It is a khilāfah that gathered the Caucasian, Indian, Chinese, Shāmī, Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian, Maghribī (North African), American, French, German, and Australian. Allah brought their hearts together, and thus, they became brothers by His grace, loving each other for the sake of Allah, standing in a single trench, defending and guarding each other, and sacrificing themselves for one another…

Therefore, rush O Muslims to your state. Yes, it is your state. Rush, because Syria is not for the Syrians, and Iraq is not for the Iraqis. The earth is Allah’s. {Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous} [Al-A’rāf: 128].

The State is a state for all Muslims. The land is for the Muslims, all the Muslims.271

Altogether, as Al-Baghdadi identifies jihad as a form of self-defense or resistance against international grievances as well as reinforces the establishment of the Islamic State, this demonstrates how ISIS’ discourses are more closely linked to modern sources as was

270 Ibid.
271 Ibid.
Similarly demonstrated with Al-Qaeda’s selected discourses. Also, as highlighted in this last passage, the ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic state is described as an end for the defense, security and liberation of Muslims rather than for spreading the religion. In effect, ISIS has more closely attained this ultimate end of establishing the Islamic State than by Al Qaeda with the initial establishment of an Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, which thus has rendered ISIS’ terrorism to pose a more systematic threat to the current nation-state world order.

*Abu Mohammed al-Adnani, This Is The Promise of Allah, June 2014.*

In another online message, ISIS’ main spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani notably circulates a message regarding the awakening of the Muslim ummah around the Islamic caliphate. He begins by decrying any domination of the ummah by emphasizing that,

Allah... also gave honor to the ummah... [which] does not accept submission to anyone or anything other than Allah. It does not accept transgression nor oppression... This is the ummah of Muhammad...which, whenever it is truthful with Allah, He brings about His promise for them...272.

This is followed by al-Adnani’s call for the awakening of the Muslim ummah by jihad from its long slumber against oppression. This is seen when he maintains,

The time has come for those generations that were drowning in oceans of disgrace, being nursed on the milk of humiliation, and being ruled by the vilest of all people, after their long slumber in the darkness of neglect – the time has come for them to rise. The time has come for the ummah of Muhammad...to wake up from its sleep, remove the garments of dishonor, and shake off the dust of humiliation and disgrace, for the era of lamenting and moaning has gone, and the dawn of honor has emerged anew. The sun of jihad has risen. The glad

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tidings of good are shining. Triumph looms on the horizon. The signs of victory have appeared.\textsuperscript{273}

As illustrated, Al-Adnani makes vast use of words such as “humiliation”, “neglect”, “dishonor” and “disgrace” to describe the state of the ummah under oppression. His use of imagery when remarking that “the sun of jihad has risen” well typifies his resolve that time of jihad has arrived. This is reinforced by his reference to the Islamic State, which at that time had been initiated in both Iraq and Syria by ISIS. Accordingly, al-Adnani states,

Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhid... rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the tawaghit [tyrants] have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed. Their soldiers are either killed, imprisoned, or defeated. The Muslims are honored. The kuffar [unbelievers]... are disgraced. Ahl Al-Sunna [Sunnis] are masters and are esteemed. The people of bid’ah[forbidden religious innovation]... are humiliated. The hudud [Koranic punishment] are implemented...The frontlines are defended. Crosses and graves[1] are demolished. Prisoners are released by the edge of the sword.\textsuperscript{274}

In this instance, al-Adnani’s characterization of the flag of the Islamic State as the flag of unity well demonstrates ISIS’ disregard for the Westphalian nation-state system and its systemic challenge to the current world order that it had began to materialize. Also, Al-Adnani describes the Islamic State to have brought liberation, defense and esteem to Muslims through the edge of the sword, and this reinforces the argument that international Islamic terrorist organizations are more influenced by modern notions of resistance rather than the classical urge to propagate the Islamic state.

Al-Adnani completes his statement on the Islamic state with calls for mobilization and polarization, and as has been shown to be the practice in both Al-Qaeda’s and ISIS’ discourses, this is complemented with religious support. As such, he asserts,

\footnote{273}{Ibid.}
\footnote{274}{Ibid.}
Fear Allah with regards to yourselves. Fear Allah with regards to your jihad. Fear Allah with regards to your ummah... We – by Allah – do not find any shari'a [-based] excuse for you justifying your holding back from supporting this state... It is time for you to end this abhorrent partisanship, dispersion, and division, for this condition is not from the religion of Allah at all. And if you forsake the State or wage war against it, you will not harm it. You will only harm yourselves...²⁷⁵

Finally, Al-Adnani maintains,

So rush O Muslims and gather around your caliph, so that you may return as you once were for ages, kings of the earth and knights of war. Come so that you may be honored and esteemed, living as masters with dignity... By Allah, if you disbelieve in democracy, secularism, nationalism, as well as all the other garbage and ideas from the west, and rush to your religion and creed, then by Allah, you will own the earth, and the east and west will submit to you. This is the promise of Allah to you...²⁷⁶

Along these lines, al-Adnani decries Western notions such as secularism, nationalism and all other western-inspired notions, and he asserts that Allah will grant the Muslim ummah supremacy if it is to give up these ideas. Overall, Al-Adnani’s text demonstrates ISIS’ foremost concerns with international grievances such as the subjugation of Muslims by Western inspired notions and practiced oppression, he then mediates this with Islamic inferences in his text along modern interpretations in a way to inspire mobilization for liberation and victory, which he describes is being achieved through the institution of the Islamic State.


To well cement on ISIS’ reference to Western cultural hegemony as an international grievance, Abu Thabit Al-Hijazi text in ISIS’ main magazine Dabiq has been selected. As made evident, ISIS is mostly preoccupied with international political

²⁷⁶ Ibid.
grievances against Western oppression, and this can be explained through its efforts to establish its Islamic State on the ground. Yet, as also demonstrated, ISIS texts do hold references to international economic and cultural grievances, however, substantially more so on cultural international grievances and Al-Hijazi’s text is another example of that. Al-Hijazi’s discussion on cultural grievances is mostly provided in the context of Western schools that have been set up not only in Western land but also in the Muslim world as a good testament of globalization.

To begin, Al-Hijazi asserts that,

Children attending the schools of the kuffār are first introduced to the kufrī concept of nationalism, whereby they are required to stand for the national anthem, and in places such as America, pledge allegiance to some national symbol such as the flag, or recite nationalistic slogans, or pledge allegiance to a tāghūt king or president, as is the case with the lands ruled by murtadd nationalist tawāghīt. The point is to indoctrinate them into the system as early as possible by beating into their heads that their loyalty, first and foremost, is to the nation or to their race, not to the people of Islam, not to their religion, not even to Allah!277.

As such, this is how Al-Hijazi claims Muslims are first embedded in Western culture and their allegiance is misdirected to the Western notion of nationalism and its rulers. To counter this, Al-Hijazi asserts that,

This runs contrary to walā’ and barā’, a fundamental cornerstone of Islam. {Your ally is none but Allah and His Messenger and those who have believed – those who establish prayer and give zakāh, and they bow [in worship]. And whoever is an ally of Allah and His Messenger and those who have believed – indeed, the party of Allah – they will be the predominant} [Al-Mā’idah: 55-56]278.

In this way, Al-Hijazi upholds that Muslims will only achieve ascendancy in loyalty to their religion and not Western notions.

Furthermore, Al-Hijazi dives more into grievances against Western cultural
hegemony by denoting that,  

Apart from teaching them to accept all manner of religious deviance and social perversion, the schools of the kuffār encourage children to take part in the various festivals of kufr and shirk, including Christmas, Halloween, and Easter, amongst others. They have them dress up, paint their faces, sing songs, attend parties, exchange gifts, and take part in school plays held for these various occasions.  

This explicit delineation of Western culture hegemony is concluded with a discussion on secularism as Al-Hijazi explains that Western methods such as “certain scientific principles” serve to encourage Muslims to turn to atheism. Respectively, Al-Hijazi asserts,  

In addition to integrating the students into a culture replete with kufr and shirk and overtly teaching them numerous concepts that nullify one’s Islam, the kuffār seek to further corrupt them by incorporating anti-fitrah concepts into the curriculum that may lead them to question or even abandon their religion. This is the case with those who use certain “scientific principles” such as the so-called “scientific method” as a backdoor for questioning the existence of Allah, even though Allah granted mankind the faculties of perception to observe and reflect on the creation as a means of increasing their awe and reverence of Him, not for the purpose of leading them to kufr and atheism.  

Overall, Al-Hijazi’s text well illustrates cultural grievances articulated against Western hegemony in the age of globalization. Al-Hijazi can be seen to articulate these grievances along religious inferences in such a way as to inspire polarization between Muslims and the West along the lines of Islamic faith and, to mobilize Muslims around the idea that their faith is being infringed through Western cultural hegemony. In this way, Al-Hijazi’s articulation of religion does not inspire the propagation of the faith but rather its defense and confirmation against secular and Western-inspired notions. Also, Al-Hijazi’s use of Western schools to describe his argument is well placed as it demonstrates that Muslims enrolled in these schools are influenced from an early age. To this effect, this illustrates  

279 Ibid.  

280 Ibid.
that ISIS discourses do substantially concern themselves with matters of resistance against Western hegemony beyond the establishment of the Islamic State and the plundering of wealth and resources.
Chapter VII: Concluding Remarks

At the outset, this research work has sought to highlight the paradox that exists in the age of the twenty-first century during which, at a height of secularism, the international realm is being directly challenged by an incompatible phenomenon—religious terrorism and more particularly, international Islamic terrorism. This becomes ever more impressive as the forces of globalization have reached unmatched proportions in the current age bringing about increased communication, transportation and information links that extend beyond nation-state borders. This has served to empower international terrorist organizations in the fourth wave of modern terrorism, as these non-state actors have acquired a loose network form, larger border permeability and a more effective means of practicing indiscriminate violence. Overall, this has influenced commentators to remark that we have entered an unprecedented “Age of Terrorism”.

Yet, globalization has remarkably not only bestowed international Islamic terrorism with global capacities but also with global concerns. This serves to act as a “double-edged sword” as international Islamic terrorists accentuate international grievances such as Western political, economic and cultural intervention in Muslim land, which includes the actions of non-state actors specifically, transnational corporations, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations. In turn, these are described to endorse forces of Western cultural homogeneity in terms of a secular “Mc World” with the diffusion of American popular culture and consumerism, the marginalization of the developing Muslim region from the world market leading to curbed economic growth and increasing poverty which also owes to the structural adjustment programs stipulated by the World Bank and the IMF, and Western intrusion.
and/or occupation of Muslim land whether under the auspices of the UN or independent initiative. Altogether, these are perceived to reinforce Western hegemony, or neo-colonialism, in the globalized age of the twenty-first century.

Along these lines, international Islamic terrorist groups have adopted a reactionary force termed under the lens of the World System Theory as a “globalization backlash”, which seeks to bring an end to Western hegemony and to ultimately transcend what they perceive as a Western-imposed Westphalian state-centric order that was enacted by the West to keep the Muslim world weak and divided. This is expressed with the ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic State reminiscent of the age-old caliphate and thus, which can be described as an attempt of “localization” to revitalize pan-Islamic sentiments in reaction to the alleged humiliation caused by the Sykes-Picot treaty. This was highlighted to be ever more significant as it is accompanied by “systemic chaos” on the international stage that is propelled by globalization. In effect, the process of globalization was shown to be bringing about this “systemic chaos” by disrupting the nation-state through advancing the before mentioned non-state actors (TNCs, IGOs and NGOs) which challenge the implication of national borders and power of national governments. This is gradually leading to the erosion of the nation-state and the coming about of a new international order that is still to be determined and that which international Islamic terrorists consequently seek to exploit by imposing their own worldview.

In response to the threat posed by international Islamic terrorism, some Western scholars, experts and many social actors and policy-makers frequently portray the fourth wave as a result of the faith of Islam itself as disseminated by the dominant political
narrative in the US and the West. In this way, they highlight Islam as a religion of violence that seeks to spread the faith through the doctrine of jihad therefore, leading to international Islamic terrorism on the world stage. This has allowed policy-makers to treat the fourth wave as a security issue and thereby, the response has repeatedly been to answer to organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS through force and military prowess. However, a closer examination of both classical jurisprudence and the modern sources of Islam has demonstrated that the rhetoric of international Islamic terrorism falls more into line with the defensive jihad of an individual obligation that is articulated in the modern sources against Western hegemony in the age of globalization and the institution of a caliphate beyond nation-state borders. This stands in contrast to the offensive jihad found in the classical sources that has to do with the promulgation of the faith through a collective obligation that is first appealed by the Caliph and in which not everyone is required to participate. To this effect, this has demonstrated how the Western political narrative lends itself to a distorted understanding of international Islamic terrorism and therefore, a reductionist understanding of the fourth wave of modern terrorism itself.

To correct this, this research work has attempted to avoid the positivist language of those in Western circles that seek to explain international Islamic terrorism as an almost exclusive product of Islamic faith and rather offer a more “historical, discursive and interpretive” understanding of the fourth wave of modern terrorism. In this way, a connection to the history of the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the colonialist period was highlighted in which the Muslim world was seen to be stuck in an asymmetrical relationship with the West leading to the Cold War Era in which global jihad organizations, inspired by the Salafi reform movement, started to speak of consolidating
the stance of the Muslim world independent from Western superpowers. Hence, the research parameters were then set by capitalizing on Hellmich’s argument concerning “a new ideological starting-point” to demonstrate how the global jihad practiced by organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS is not a reintroduction of classical doctrine but rather an ideological starting point influenced by a contemporary community of Muslims concerned with the socio-political context of the time. Respectively, this context is largely manifested in both the novel international character and transnational attributes of modern terrorism that transcend national borders and the international political, economic and cultural grievances held against Western hegemony in the globalized age of the twenty-first century.

Moreover, this research work argued that these international grievances are then accompanied by contemporary religious interpretations of Islam by organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS to inspire mobilization and polarization towards acute and indiscriminate violence in the international stage. In this regard, this work proceeded to accentuate Thomas J. Badey’s explanation of ideologies as belief-systems that serve to validate behavior and therefore perform operative functions concerning the polarization and mobilization of populations towards specific objectives and the provision of a justification and rationalization for human action. Along these lines, religion has been identified as an instrument used by terrorist groups to polarize and mobilize a population around common objectives through reference to a common belief-system rather than being the direct cause of international terrorism itself. This was then linked to Cronin’s characterization of the four waves of modern terrorism to have been similarly sparked by

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largely held grievances against empires, colonialism, capitalism and finally, the US-led international system marked by globalization\textsuperscript{282}. Moreover, this reinforces Cronin’s resolve that whereby the fourth wave of modern terrorism involves a measure of religious inspiration, it is more appropriate to understand it through the context of anti-globalization and tension between the have and have-not nations and/or colonizers and former colonies\textsuperscript{283}. In fact, this falls more inline with the characterization of the four waves of modern terrorism that are essentially identified owing to their international character by terrorism scholars.

Altogether, this research work was thus set to demonstrate that international Islamic terrorism is not directly caused by the faith itself, which is rather used as a political tool for polarization and mobilization, but differently, the fourth wave of modern terrorism, as articulated by international Islamic terrorist organizations, involves international grievances spawned by globalization in the twenty-first century as underlying influences, among possible others. In practice, this was shown by departing from the outside-in perspective enunciated by the dominant Western political narrative, which fails to observe the preliminary influences and linkages to the wider environment of international Islamic terrorism, and rather embarking on an examination of primary sources involving a set of selected discourses belonging to Al-Qaeda and ISIS. These selected discourses were held in different mediums including online statements, books and magazines spanning from years 2001 to 2015 when both organizations were most active and vocal.

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid. p.g 35.
The methodology followed included a critical analysis discourse, which is explained to not follow a specific research framework but rather engages a common perspective that seeks to understand and expose how social inequality, power abuse and dominance are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the socio-political context. This was combined with the Post-colonial theory, which compliments CDA’s focus on resistance as it contains a fundamental aspect involving social inequality and the struggle for social justice as well as a concern with the unequal encounter between the West and non-West in terms of colonial relations. In all, this was attempted in order to provide a more authentic understanding of international Islamic terrorism with greater insight achieved from analyzing primary sources involving key selected discourses from Al-Qaeda and ISIS therefore challenging the current Western narrative and fulfilling the missing “view from within”.

Whereas Al-Qaeda encompasses more sizeable discourse texts than ISIS, as it is a more mature organization thus has more elaborated on its subject, the research analysis demonstrated that there is great continuity between the discourses of Al-Qaeda and ISIS. This is particularly demonstrated as both accounts articulated global jihad as a form of self-defense of an individual obligation set to bring to an end Western oppression, interference and overall, hegemony over Muslim land. In both accounts, there was also much reference to the system-challenging Islamic State set as a memory of the age-old Caliphate and in defiance to the Western-imposed state-centric order. In fact, the institution of the Islamic State was articulated by both terrorist organizations as a confirmation of the faith in order to defend the existing Muslim community from Western secularism, outside interference and exploitation rather than as a means to
spread the faith. However, this is more relevant to ISIS than to Al-Qaeda as the Islamic State was never materialized by Al-Qaeda but was differently initiated by ISIS in both Syria and Iraq. Overall, the articulation of global jihad as a matter of self-defense of an individual obligation as well as of a pan-Islamic and transnational Islamic State serves to greatly support the argument that members of organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS follow a modern interpretation of international Islamic terrorism that stands as a reaction to context of the age in which it is practiced and that is- Western-led globalization.

Furthermore, the research analysis demonstrated that whereas both organizations involve rhetoric primarily concerned with the international grievances spawned by globalization in the political, economic and cultural realms, there is variance with how these are mentioned. On the one hand, Al-Qaeda makes substantial references to all three international grievances with vivid references to Western powers and international organizations such as TNCs, IGOs and NGOs responsible for them. On the other hand, ISIS accounts illustrate leading concern with political grievances followed by cultural grievances and then economic grievances against the international realm. This may largely be due to the fact that ISIS is in a constant effort to consolidate its Islamic State on the ground against the effort of Western forces. Moreover, as noted, it is important to be mindful that, in both accounts, these articulated grievances, along the tradition of the Post-colonial theory, are expressed from the side of the “victims” and therefore, whereas some may be seen as actual or reasonable grievances others are more exaggerated, however, all resonate with the audience they are trying to influence as they equally involve a concern with Western hegemony in the age of globalization. Lastly, in both accounts, mentions of international grievances are then mediated by, usually at the end of
the discourse text, religious inferences aimed at polarizing and mobilizing the Islamic ummah around international Islamic terrorism.

This serves to support the hypothesis that has argued that, *Three main underlying sets of popularly held international grievances involving the cultural, economic and political realms, which all feature a common concern with Western hegemony in a new globalized era, are mediated through contemporary religious interpretations of the faith, which work to inspire mobilization and polarization, by Al-Qaeda and ISIS to affect indiscriminate and acute terrorist violence in the international realm*. Along these lines, the logic underscoring this paper has interpreted the Islamic faith, as articulated by fourth wave terrorists, to stand as an intermediate variable between underlying international grievances spurred by the context of the globalized age, and, indiscriminate and acute terrorist violence in the international realm, which it inspires through mobilization and polarization. In this way, this research work offers a closer and original understanding of the fourth wave of modern terror that is missing in the literature by providing a more appropriate investigation of international Islamic terrorism in accordance to its international setting.

In conclusion, both accounts of Al Qaeda and ISIS feature nostalgia with the past, specifically with the memory of the glorious Ottoman Caliphate, contrastingly interwoven with mentions to the new globalized era and its looming international grievances. ISIS attaches itself more to the past with its attempt of establishing the Islamic caliphate whereas Al-Qaeda is more globalized with its language with explicit references made to globalization and the international organizations that propel it. In reinforcement, this is not only demonstrated in the discourse analysis chapters but in
most, if not all, chapters of this research work that also include insights into the discourses of international Islamic terrorist organizations starting with the World Islamic Front document cementing the shift to the fourth wave of modern terror. Ultimately, the results of this research work have all gone to illustrate that the nature of international Islamic terrorism, as practiced in the present age twenty-first century, is characteristically a double-edged sword, with both global concerns and global capacities. Today, we are combatting its capacities without addressing its concerns.
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