

Security, Terrorism and Islam

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Islamic Theology of Counter Terrorism

اسلام کے تھیولوجی آف کاؤنٹر ٹیرورازم

Introduction

One of the significant changes in the field of terrorism over the past 20 years has been the increase in the number of groups claiming religious beliefs as a source of legitimacy for the action (Source: The Role of Religion and Belief in The Fight Against Terrorism, p. 25). It is undeniable that sovereignty free actors pretend to act in the name of Islam. Europe has registered, profiled attacks, particularly the United Kingdom. From cyber terrorism to railway attacks (the 2017 London attack at the Parsons Green Underground Station), followed by London bridge attack and 2019 London bridge stabbing demonstrate how globalized the world is. All events claimed by jihadist's crusaders, who perceive the 'West' as the number one enemy of their ideology of a self-proclaimed Islamic caliphate where **Shariah** should be respected. Islamic State (ISIS), Al Qaeda and Boko-Haram activities are restricted by the Holy Quran, which advocates for **Peace, Solidarity and Unity**.

Critically enough to say; intelligence led security have been challenged by extremists and radical religious fundamentalists. In the 1960s, airports and airlines have been already potential targets for terrorists. Terrorists hijack commercial airliners in pursuit of sociopolitical objectives. The **Palestinian terror groups** including the **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)** and the **Abu Nidal Organization** used this trend in order to expose their grievances and gain worldwide coverage. This approach was equally used to request for the release of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel and Western governments. (Sources: Haaretz, The Palestine Liberation Organization, p. 137, Britannica, RAND, BBC News)

The first ever terrorist hijacking occurred in 1968; when the **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)** targeted an Israeli El Al airliner route from Rome to Tel Aviv and diverted it to Algeria. PFLP abducted 12 persons, and were released after 40 days in exchange for 16 Arab prisoners (Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, BBC News, New York Times, International Encyclopedia of Terrorism, p. 233, RAND). Shaykh Abdul Aziz al-Al-Shaikh, Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia in 2001 said "Hijacking planes, terrorizing innocent people and shedding blood constitute a form of injustice that cannot be tolerated by Islam, which views them as gross crimes and sinful acts"

Nonetheless, old trends are increasing endorsed by new wave of terror. The 1985, **Hezbollah** hijacking of a flight from Cairo to San Diego, in order to secure the release of hundreds of Shiite prisoners from Israeli custody, is an example necessary to redefine counter terrorism strategy in Europe. France intelligence and counter terrorism unit were challenged by the **Armed Islamic Group (GIA)** an Islamist insurgent group from Algeria, seized an airplane from Algiers and flew it to Marseille, demanding 27 tons of fuel before continuing on to Paris in 1994(Sources: TIME, Haaretz, Council on Foreign Relations,

New York Times, APH, Time). The 2015 Charlie Hebdo attack and the Stade de Paris are strategic incidents to redefine France Counter terrorism strategy and intelligence program.

According to Diego Gambetta, Professor of Sociology at the University of Oxford, Terrorists choose to attack airports and airlines because they seek to “cause as much havoc as possible to as many people [as possible] by the cheapest of means,”. Security analyst Brian Michael Jenkins said; attacks on airliners give terrorists “the symbolic value they seek” by creating local alarm, and “guarantee [ing] the attention of the international news media.” (Sources: Guardian, CNN). The 2019 attack on a Cameroonian airplane (Camair-Co) in the North West Region is appealing to the international community about the sociopolitical contention famously known as ‘Anglophone Crisis’. analysing these attacks and threats pose by jihadists; this paper cautions the international security community about attacks from ‘**flying birds**’ drones.

Islam is a religion of peace and moderation. The Holy Quran condemns extremism and suicide (4:17), (5:77, 22:78). “The passengers were all killed, thanks be to God,” a statement used by ISIS to claim responsibility of the 2015 attack on Russian passenger aircraft over the Sinai Peninsula. Three ISIS suicide bomber perpetrated attacks on Brussels’ Zaventem airport as well as the city’s metro killing 32 people and 270 were injured in 2016. It should be noted that the Quran prohibits suicide killings (4:29) and is considered as an abuse of the divine gift of life.

The ISIS’s Amaq news agency wrote that its so-called “**soldiers**” had targeted “specially selected locations” in “**crusader Belgium,**” but gave no further clues as to the justification of the target types. The group also perpetrated an attack in the capital city of Turkey, Istanbul’s Ataturk Airport, 45 were murdered and more than 230 injured (Sources: Reuters, Heavy, Agence France-Presse, Telegraph, New York Times, Heavy, NBC, CNN).

THE NEW CYBERTERRORISM THEORY

The validation of a theory is based on its grand strategy in relation to the field of study and issues to address (which are usually military, sociopolitical, and economic) (Kennedy, 1991). Each nation has an explicit or an implicit strategy on how to respond to global trends, and most nations usually have a forum where experts get together (for example is the National Security Council of the United States). **Grand strategy** is usually the domain of scholars (e.g., Waltz 1979; Gaddis 1982; Heymann 2003; Ikenberry 2002; Mead 2004; Nye 2002) as well as anyone else, who writes on related subjects like International relation and diplomacy, global terrorism, jihadist tendencies and cyber security (Clark 2003; Frum & Perle 2003; Kagan 2003; Brzezinski 2004; Cronin & Ludes 2004; Etzioni 2004; Ferguson 2004; Hart 2004; Stevenson 2004; Barnett 2005).

Before September 11, 2001, George W. Bush, then a presidential candidate, warned that “American forces are overused and underfunded precisely when they are confronted by a host of new threats and challenges the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the rise of cyberterrorism and the proliferation of missile technology.” His accession to power led to the first campaign of the ‘**War Against Terrorism**’ and the creation of the **Office of Cyberspace Security** in the White House in order to respond to jihadist tendencies perpetrated on the World Trade Center and Pentagon (American Military Machine) the symbol of the United States challenged.

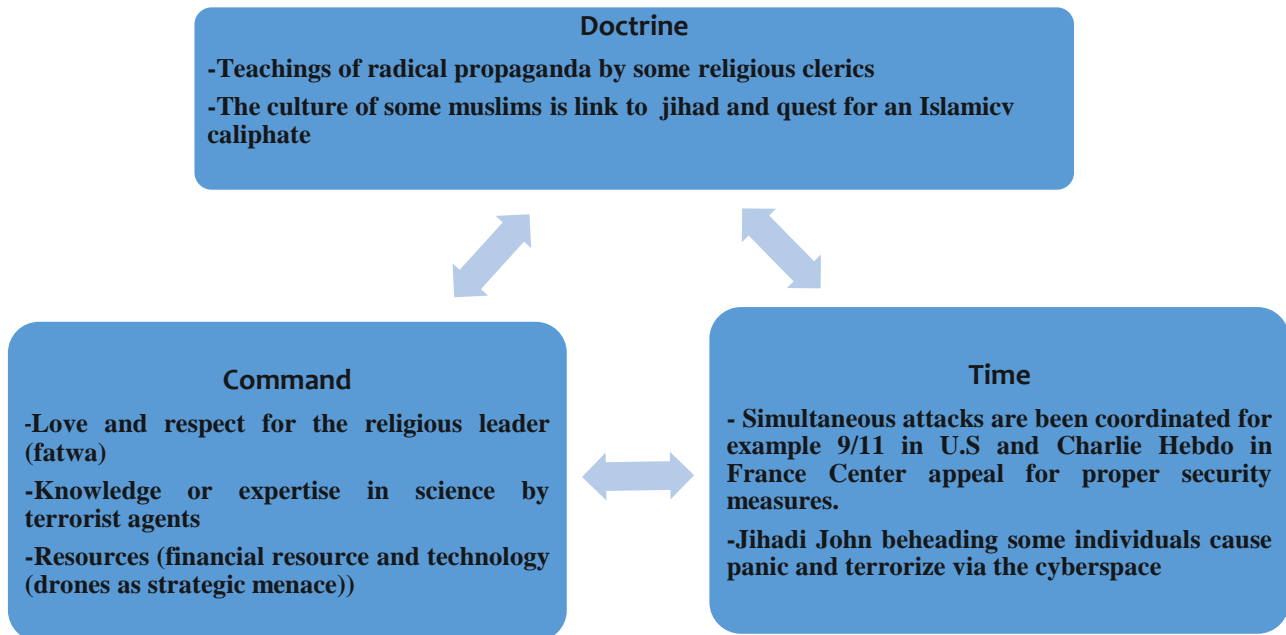
In 2003, Tom Ridge (director of the Department of Homeland Security) reintegrated that “Terrorists can sit at one computer connected to one network and can create worldwide havoc”. “[They] don’t necessarily need a bomb or explosives to cripple a sector of the economy or shut down a power grid.” warnings which correlate with a survey of 725 cities conducted in 2003 by the National League of Cities which ranked cyber terrorism alongside biological and chemical weapons at the top of a list of city officials’ fears.

The new cyberterrorism theory examines security challenges of the globalization era within three narratives; **doctrine, command** and **time**. The rule of the ‘game’ has changed, with computers jihadist easily share their doctrine and over time, issue the religious command (fatwa) for followers to perpetrate attacks on states and networks in order to cause harm, like Imam Samdura’s book “**Aku Melawan Teroris**” which mean I fight terrorist, is critical at to international security. He considered Americans as terrorists). The question which has always been; can Shariah and Islamic Caliphate end terrorism? Why is fatwa only issued by religious clerics? Radical religious clerics like Imam Abubakar Shekau of Boko-Haram, American-born radical imam Anwar al-Awlaki and Imam Samudra (death) go beyond the Muslim culture (Source: Continuity, Innovation and Change by Prince Hassan El Talal, La Moderation et le juste-milieu).

Command and time are two strategic factors of cyberterrorism. Jihadists tendencies mutate according to technological evolution (globalization era). Dorothy E. Denning’s in ‘**The Jihadi Cyber terror Threat**’ argues that most individuals engage in cyber terrorism have gone through formal education in Information communication Technology (computer science, computer engineering, and information science). Their knowledge and expertise pose a global menace, particularly those engaged in computer programming, hacking and coding which is a strategic force for the terrorist organization.

As alliances keep emerging, the patterns of attacks equally change. The proliferation of drones is a major threat in contemporary times. Though used by some states to minimize military casualties in terrorist terrain, flying birds (drones) became a source of concern when the Islamic State issued cyber threats to the ‘Great Russia’ during the host of the FIFA World Cup 2018. The recent attacks in Europe appeals

for a review on the concept of ‘**Just War**’ and the geopolitical system of the ‘West’ which is continually challenged by sovereignty free actors (radical religious crusaders or extremists).



The New Cyber Terrorism Theory

The new cyberterrorism theory, analysis security issues of the globalization era, which are but not limited to terrorism and jihad tendencies. Doctrine is another aspect of the theory, which pins radicalization and global terrorism to misinterpretation of verses of the Holy Quran and hate speeches. The word ‘**jihad**’ is used by some radical religious clerics to incite followers to perpetrate violence on states and communities.

According to Asma Barlas, jihad is mentioned 36 times in the Holy Quran, referring to a moral duty, such as jihad of the soul (life), the tongue (propaganda), or the pen (article, presentations and strategies). One of the fundamental principles of Islam is: “Good and bad are not equal. Replace evil by good” (**Holy Quran 41:34**), but extremists exploit these flaws to instigate sympathizers to perpetrate suicidal attacks. Jihadist’s tendencies are often perpetrated following religious commands issued by spiritual leaders, who are usually radical crusading for an Islamic Caliphate. A **fatwa** is a command issued by religious cleric in the Islamic world. The new dawn of terrorist attacks or jihadist tendencies is due to fatwas issues by radical religious leaders. In some cases, a fatwa is issued to restrain persons from propagating radical doctrines or instigating violence for example;

- In 1979 fatwa by Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini relating to the death sentence of Salman Rushdie for his book 'Satanic Verses'.

- On the negative stance, Saudi Wahabi cleric Sheikh Mohamad al-Arefe, was the first to issue a fatwa appealing to Sunni women to present themselves for sexual Jihad in Syria. He posed that, Islam is like Christianity, a missionary religion in which God's message is primordial, anything forbidden becomes '**halal**' in times of Jihad according to the extremists.

Timing is a strategic factor in analysing crimes and attacks. Terrorism and violent extremism have broadened the field of security with new courses such as; Strategic Response to Terrorism, Terrorism Spots, Counter Terrorism of Stadia and even Jihadist tendencies and Global Terrorism. The attack on the Stade **de Paris in 2015**, and the media threat of ISIS to Russia on future attacks during the **FIFA World Cup in 2018**, was a signal for Europe to not only step up her security, but reconstitute a new counter terrorism strategy. Drones pose a strategic threat to the international community and to the 'West' in particular, considered a major enemy of terrorist organizations.

The relevance of this theory as concerns terrorism is to caution intelligence agencies about threats posed by flying birds (drones) and migration. The theory provides an image of international security threats, and future patterns of organizations within Europe and in other continents. It also advocates for proper surveillance and vetting method in order to restraint criminals from perpetrating attacks in the nearby future. For example, the case of Sami Omar Al-Hussayen Saudi, dynamic Computer Science graduate student at the University of Idaho, studying Computer Security, charged for operating websites used to recruit terrorists, raise funds, and disseminate inflammatory rhetoric (Dorothy E. Denning, The Jihadi Cyber Terror Threat). "If network channels of airports are being hacked, then eventually military drones can be hacked and used against another state" **Let stand for security and peace.**

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