Aspects of Recruitment by Terrorist Organizations in Europe's Muslim Communities

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The main principles and methods for recruiting by Islamist terrorist organizations in European countries are essentially no different from those used by national security services, by religions, mystical and totalitarian cults, and even certain businesses.

The differences are a matter of nuance, emphasis, and the success rate of recruitment by certain patterns and schemes. However, it is specifically the study of these nuances that can help establish why the phenomenon of Islamist terrorism has become quasi-ubiquitous, as well as identifying means and methods for narrowing and reducing the base that advocates and nourishes terrorism, whilst furnishing it with ever more fresh recruits.

In order to better understand the powerful dynamics behind the spread of Islamism—the politicized component of Islam—through the Muslim communities of Europe, it is necessary to briefly dwell on the general characteristics of modern Islamic society, as well as the causes and the current degree of radicalization.

The ideological content of Islamism is Islamic fundamentalism, which, on the one hand, is a theological teaching and a movement to restore certain primary values, norms and relations that were canonized in history (these can be religious, ethical, family, domestic, etc.) and on the other hand, as a political teaching and the practice of struggling for power in Muslim states.

The political form of Islamic fundamentalism, despite its great diversity, can fairly cleanly be divided into two branches:

- Moderate;
- Radical & extremist.

The quest, within Islam, for simple responses to all questions, including contemporary political, economic and cultural challenges, first generated isolated hotbeds of extremism, and then led to the spread of extremism, transforming it

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into a broad Islamist movement. The main hotbeds and factors behind the genesis of Islamist extremism include:

1. Egypt: the distribution of the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood as a response to the pan-Arabism of Gamal Abdel Nasser;
2. The Arab-Israeli conflict;
3. Afghanistan: from the political instability of the mid-1970's and the war of 1979-1989 to the Taliban movement coming to power;
4. Iran: the Islamic Revolution of 1979;
5. The Islamic renaissance in countries of the former USSR, starting in the mid-1980's;
6. Iraq: the 2003 war.

The most radical branch of Islamic fundamentalism is Salafism (Wahhabism): a teaching by the followers of Mohammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who preached a return to the "pure" Islam of the Prophet and his followers.

However, the Salafists themselves violated two fundamental stipulations of the Quran:

- an interdiction on declaring jihad against Muslims;
- the sincerity of a Muslim's faith can only be judged by the Supreme Being, on the day of judgment.

One of the key criteria for classifying an extremist movement in Islamist fundamentalism could be the acceptability in that movement of the principle of *takfir*. That is, the possibility of accusing a faithful Muslim of impiety – an act which enlarges the field of battle with infidels, to include Islamic countries with relatively secular, moderate or insufficiently radical regimes.

The spread of Salafism was facilitated by a number of factors:

- a crisis of secular ideologies (socialism, pan-Arabism and nationalism);
- a crisis of legitimacy in the Islamic world;
- the renaissance of Islam;
- the appearance of disposable income from the sale of oil by certain Muslim states, primarily Saudi Arabia.

The widespread propagation of the ideas of political Islam led followers to nurture hopes of achieving three objectives:

- establishing the norms of true Islam, which would require overthrowing illegitimate governments;
- the establishment of Sharia law in society, by "awakening" true believers;
- the restoration of the Khalifat, including North Africa, the Arabian peninsula, the countries of the Near and Middle East, Transcaucasia, the North Caucasus, Central Asia and part of India – objectives which prompted active recruitment of followers and agents in the 1980's and 1990's.

However, in order to achieve these objectives, Islamists had to stand up against those forces who were actively hindering them or who could stand in the way of success: first among these were the USA, Russia and India. Islamists were particularly irritated by the presence of American military bases on holy land – Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Wahhabism.

After suffering significant losses during the global war on terrorism that began after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Islamists were forced to modify their tactics, restructure their networks and overhaul systems for the recruitment and training of followers.

According to the Congressional Research Service' report "Trends in the Development of Terrorism: 2006," a review of data on the changing development of terrorist groups and organizations across the world, the following trends can be observed in modern international terrorism:

1. Decentralization of the management of components of international terrorism networks. At the same time the lethality of terrorist acts is reduced, but the possibility of terrorist cell detection is reduced;

2. Growing professionalism:
   - in information and propaganda,
   - finances, and
   - organization;

3. Coalescence of terrorist organizations and international crime groups;

4. Growth of suicide terrorism, with a relatively high concentration in Iraq (approximately 30 % of such terrorist acts in the world and 50 % of the victims).

Decentralization has led to:

- an increased importance of remote control of terrorist subnets and cells via printed matter, the Internet and CDs containing the messages of international terrorist leaders, offering general position statements and proposing areas of terrorist activity;

- evolution of the tactics used by terrorist groups in the field, and greater independence for these groups in selecting targets for attack.

In parallel with these processes, an evolution has been seen in the methods used by Islamist terrorist groups to recruit new followers in Europe.

Currently in Europe, according to various data, there are between 18 and 26 million Muslims (some estimates range from 35 to 50 million), the majority of who moved to Europe during one of three waves of immigration:

- between the end of WWII and the early 1970's. The main reason was the lack of manpower in post-war Europe;

- between 1970 and the start of the 1980's. This wave was mainly the result of family reunification following the first wave;

- from the 1980's, immigration was a quest for economic and political shelter from repression at home; in other words, a significant portion of immigrants were already politicized.

The majority of immigrants in the countries of Europe are from:

- Turkey
- Morocco
- Algeria
- Pakistan
- Tunisia.

In the opinion of a number of experts, including analysts of the security services of France and Germany, almost all Islamic communities in Europe contain a certain percentage of radicals. This begs the simple conclusion that the degree of radicalization and the level of dissemination of the ideas of Islamic terrorism are in direct proportion to the size of the Muslim diaspora.

However, this connection was not confirmed by a study by the Nixon Center (Robert Leiken and Steven Brooke) of the biographies of 373 members of transnational Sunni terrorist groups, who were indicted, convicted or perished in North America and Western Europe between 1993 and 2004. Moreover, it turned out that only in 4 of 6 European countries covered by the study were the majority of terrorists representative of the main immigrant communities in the given country.[2]

An exception from the rule is Italy, where 65 % of the terrorists were from Tunisia, while the largest immigrant community was Moroccan. In Germany, meanwhile, despite a predominance of Turkish[3] immigrants in the Muslim population, the majority of terrorists were immigrants from Algeria and Syria.

The absence of a direct link between the size of the Muslim diaspora, its ethnical composition and the level of terrorist activity indicate that the radicalization of Islamic communities is influenced less by objective factors, and more by subjective ones: primarily the influence of international Islamist terrorism using information and propaganda.

Indeed, some of the immigrants who took up the Islamist ideology before leaving their homeland brought the battle for establishing the rule of Sharia and the unity of the Islam *umma* (the global Islamic community) to Europe. However, data from a number of social science studies, including that of Mark

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[2] Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, "The Quantitative Analysis of Terrorism and Immigration: An Initial Exploration," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18:4 (December 2006): 503–21.

[3] Moreover, in the Netherlands, according to official data the number of residents of Turkish descent amongst those involved in terrorist activity is increasing. This is the result of the deliberate expansion of propaganda work by islamist extremist and terrorist organizations to include the Turkish diaspora of Europe. *The Washington Post*, 11 March 2007.

Sageman,[4] indicate that 84 % of terrorists became radical Islamists once already in the West. Another 8 % are Christians who converted to Islam.[5] After studying the biographies of 400 terrorists connected to Al-Qaeda, the author concludes that the overwhelming majority of them came from families with very moderate religious views, or which maintained a secular world-view.

The common denominator for all Muslim diaspora in Europe was the broader dissemination of the ideas of Islamism, extremism and terrorism amongst members of a second and third generation of immigrants, who were born and grew up in Europe.

This situation can be explained in objective terms: in the opinion of many experts, these people encounter greater problems when integrating into European society. If their parents, or even grandparents, had difficulties integrating, for reasons of education or language (as a result of which there was a solid, ideological basis for a rational, pragmatic explanation of their low socio-economic status), then the next generation typically encounters psychological or political obstacles, and are reluctant to accept their status of second-rate citizens.

In addition, the gradual spread of islamophobia amongst the local population was to have an increasing, negative impact on the prospects for full integration into European society by both this new wave of immigrants, and the second and third generations of previous waves.

Terrorist ideologues became aware of this colossal potential in the Islamic diaspora in Europe and with each passing year went further in recruiting its members for terrorist activities. For example, the radical Saudi theologian Abd al-Mun'im Mustafa Halima (Abu Basir) calls directly for immigrants to be used to "strengthen Muslims and weaken the unbelievers" via "restoring the duties of jihad."[6] "Immigration and jihad are indivisible. They complement one another."[7]

Who is Recruited

In order to fight Islamist terrorism more effectively, work has been done in the USA, Germany and Great Britain to produce ethnic and religious profiles of immigrants who are more predisposed than others to perform terrorist acts.

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[4] Marc Sageman, senior researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington.

[5] "Одержать победу в войне с терроризмом невозможно" ("To win in the war on terrorism is not possible"), *Information Agency* "*Moscow IT-Kernel,*" 24 August 2006, http://www.iamik.ru/?op=full&what=content& ident=29773.

[6] Here and subsequently in the text, the concept of *jihad* is used in the primitive, but more widespread, extremist sense – as war against the "godless," outside the context of a "greater jihad," "lesser jihad," etc.

[7] Abd al-Mun'im Mustafa Hlimah Abu Basir, Al-Hijrah, Masa'il wa-ahkam (Immigration: questions and rulings), 2001.

However, this experiment has not produced any tangible results, either in preventing terrorism or denying entry to these countries for active extremists.

Neither is there any clear and unambiguous result from attempts to profile terrorists by social and economic traits. This was the conclusion, for example, of Edwin Bakker, of the Hague's Clingendael Institute, who in one study compared approximately 20,000 factors in the suspects' backgrounds. In his words, greater concentration on suspicious activities is required, and more attention should be paid to analyzing the personal experience and motivations of the people who are radicalized, rather than spending time on profiling.[8]

The accumulation of material to study the biographies of Islamist terrorists made it possible to identify one common factor: stages of recruitment.

- alienation and marginalization
- spiritual quests
- the radicalization process
- meetings and communicating with like-minded figures
- a gradual withdrawal from the previous circle of acquaintances and the formation of a group
- acceptance of violence as a just political tool
- making contact with an extremist group
- training and execution of a terrorist act.[9]

Psychologists studying the phenomenon of terrorism identify a number of risk factors that could spark the formation of a terrorist's world-view:

1. early socialization
2. narcissistic tendencies
3. conflict situations, especially confrontations with the police
4. personal connections with members of terrorist organizations[10]
5. personal experience of persecution – genuine or imagined.[11]

Many experts indicate the presence of a causal link between regular mosque visits, reading the Quran and radicalization – even as far as preparing a terrorist act.

On the other hand, the same Mark Sageman, based on his own research, comes to the conclusion that the overwhelming majority of students at *madrassas* (religious schools) do not subscribe to extremist ideologies.

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8 *The Washington Post*, 11 March 2007.

9 Michael Taarnby, *Recruitment of Islamist Terrorists in Europe. Trends and Perspectives*, Research Report funded by the Danish Ministry of Justice, 14 January 2005.

10 P.A. Olson, "The Terrorist and the Terrorized: Some Psychoanalytic Considerations," *The Journal of Psychohistory* 76:1 (Summer 1988): 47-60.

11 John Horgan*, The Psychology of Terrorism* (London: Taylor&Francis, 2002).

Until now, there has been no clear explanation of the selective influence of reading the Quran in conditions which appear, prima facie, to be near-identical. However, in July of 2007 a series of experiments was performed at Michigan University, which identified a general rule: the level of cruelty and aggression of students identified during the experiment was in direct relationship to the frequency with which they were read violent scenes from sacred religious texts.[12] The more religious the students were, the more cruel and aggressive they became. This effect was even stronger when students were read quotations in which God sanctioned violence. The level of aggression in atheist students also grew, but to a lesser degree.

The authors of the study consider that the constant, selective reading of holy texts that describe violence, sanctioned by God, makes sincerely faithful people more inclined to violence, on a subconscious level.

It is imagined that the thorough and comprehensive study of texts that are holy for Muslims will offer a sufficient level of knowledge to be able to understand and explore issues of faith, such that recruiters from Islamism terrorist organizations will be unable to "brainwash" them and push them to perform terrorist activities on the basis of a distorted understanding of the Quran.

Thus, mosques are a habitual, emotional environment for marginalized individuals. For the majority, such an environment is necessary, but far from sufficient, to create Islamist terrorists. A potential terrorism candidate does not necessarily have to fall under the influence of Islamism recruiters, but merely occupy a passive or active (but legal) position in the Muslim community, which depends on both objective and subjective factors.

Gilles Kepel considers that the turning point in the initiation into terrorist activity is the so-called "*tumble*" of the recruit himself, as "you cannot brainwash someone who is not susceptible."[13]

The need to change the circle of acquaintances is linked by Randy Borum with the terrorist's inherent "narcissism trauma" – extreme dissatisfaction with their own self-image. This prompts them to search for a new, "positive" identity, and adherence to a terrorist group allows them to acquire self-respect and a sense of importance.[14]

New members of terrorist groups can demonstrate a high level of dedication to the group's goals and objectives, which is a rational explanation and demonstrates a strong, even painful psychological need for inclusion in a social group, experienced during the stage of alienation and marginalization.[15] Therefore, it is virtually impossible for a terrorist to sever ties with that group – this would be the equivalent of emotional suicide.

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[12] Washington ProFile, 21 July 2007.

[13] Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[14] Randy Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism* (Tampa, FL.: University of South Florida, 2004).

[15] Reuben Miller, "The Literature of Terrorism," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 11:1 (1988): 63-87.

If E. Show links belonging to a group with protection from the fear of authoritarianism,[16] then in the case of Islamism groups in Europe one can speak of a form of protection from the dictates of the European and, more broadly, Western socio-cultural environment – an environment that appears alien and aggressive to a patriarchal, Islamic world-view. This also holds true for the mechanisms of personal empowerment and freedoms.

Initiation into a group is followed by gradual assimilation of absolutist rhetoric, and the subject adopts a simplistic, black-and-white understanding of his environment. The terrorist world-view continues to form through the following stages:

- constant, gradual adaptation of a new member in the terrorist environment;
- the terrorist chooses, in line with the peculiarities of his individual character, one role or other (for example, a professional fighter is unlikely to perform an act of suicide terrorism).[17]

Who Does the Recruiting

Initially, from the end of the 1970's and particularly after Bin Laden founded the "World Islamic Front for the Fight Against Jews and Crusaders"[18] in February of 1998, propaganda and recruiting were performed in Europe by emissaries of radical Islamist groups who arrived from abroad. However, after achieving a certain critical mass of Islamist opinion in Muslim communities in Europe, these functions migrated to local preachers and recruiters. Subsequently, growing Internet access led to the appearance of a remote form of propaganda and recruiting activity. Currently all of these forms are represented in Europe, to one degree or another.

A number of experts in the field of counterterrorism (including M. Sageman) consider that at the current time Al Qaeda is no longer involved in recruiting activity – at least, not directly. However, several nuances are worthy of attention here.

Indubitably, the core of Al Qaeda, once it became the ideological center, delegated its authority to recruit new members of the tactical, and even operational cells of the network. At the same time targeted recruitment—the search, study and selection of candidates needed for complex, tactically new, high-tech terrorist acts, as well as the performance of recruitment for the future (re-

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[16] Olson, "The Terrorist and the Terrorized: Some Psychoanalytic Considerations."

[17] Horgan*, The Psychology of Terrorism*.

[18] It brings together a number of islamist terrorist organizations, including: Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Egyptian Jamaa Islamiya, the Libyan Islamic Battle Group, Yemen's Islamic Army of Aden, Kashmir's Lashkar-i-Taiba and Jaish-i-Muhhamed, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Algiers' Salafist Group of Preaching and Jihad and the Armed Islamic Group, the Malaysian-Filipino Abu Sayaf, and others.

cruitment of persons with the necessary, specific abilities and capabilities)—remains centralized.

The simultaneous presence of different recruiting systems in Islamist terrorist organizations—vertical (top-down and bottom-up) and horizontal—was observed starting from the end of the 1990's, for example, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.[19]

Vertical Recruitment Systems

The task of searching for candidates was simplified at the time by the existence of legal associations of Afghan war veterans in the country.

Most frequently, contact was made with recruitment candidates during general, informal meetings of war veterans, usually held in private homes. Then the candidate was invited to a more exclusive meeting, perhaps even tête-à-tête, where he was offered membership in an Islamist terrorist organization. If the candidate agreed, then he was either presented to recruiters of a higher rank, or his case was considered remotely by the same. At this stage, his role and place in the structure of the terrorist organization were determined and he was given general instructions.

The second—"bottom-up"—recruitment system makes use of preachers and theologians. Most notorious is the activity of Nasir al-Fahd and Ali al-Khudayr, who played a somewhat indirect role in recruitment (general propaganda activity) and Sulayman al-Ulwan, who directly participated in filling the ranks of Al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia.

Horizontal Recruitment Patterns

Several patterns of recruitment of new members for terrorist networks can be called "horizontal":

1. autonomous formation of a protoorganisation – a group with the target of executing a terrorist attack, influenced by Islamist ideology, and which somehow comes into contact with an active Al-Qaeda network, during preparation of the attack.

2. initiation into the Al-Qaeda network takes place after the execution of a terrorist act, by an individual or a small group.

3. provision of financial, material or technical assistance, or shelter for friends or relatives participating in terrorist activity. This assistance can be seen as the first stage of initiation into the activities of a terrorist organization.

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[19] Thomas Hegghammer, "Militant Islamism in SA: Patterns of Recruitment to Al-Qaida (QAP)" (paper presented at the FFI Seminar, Oslo, 15 March 2006).

The Vertical ("Top-down") Recruitment Pattern

According to the security services of a number of European states, despite the arrests of Al Qaeda operational agents and recruiters in Europe, there is continuing growth in the number of people wishing to swell the ranks of Islamism terrorist organizations.

Given the sufficient numbers of self-initiating recruits, recruitment activity has changed, with the emphasis moving from the search for recruitment subjects to the selection of the best-trained and most appropriate candidates.

In a situation where legal operations are impossible in Europe, due to the heightened attention on the part of counterterrorism structures towards public associations of Afghanistan and Iraq war veterans, as was the case in Saudi Arabia, the freedom of action to recruit "bottom-up" is reduced, while horizontal and "top-down" vertical recruiting patterns take priority.

Moreover, a new phenomenon was identified in 2006: the creation of a terrorist cell and training for the execution of a terrorist act under the influence of Islamism ideology, in the absence of any links whatsoever to a terrorist network, even via the Internet.

On June 22, 2006, the USA security services arrested five citizens of that country and two nationals of Muslim countries in Miami; these were activists from the radical Islamism group "Black Muslims," suspected of preparing a series of terrorist acts: bombs in several skyscrapers and FBI offices in various cities in the country, including Chicago's 110-storey Sears Tower.[20]

At almost the same time in Timisoara (Romania) a young Romanian convert to Islam independently took the decision to perform a terrorist act in protest against the participation of the Romanian contingent in the Iraq War – he filled his car with gas canisters and tried to blow it up near the city airport.[21]

Examples of such *indoctrinated* [22] terrorism indicate that in some sense the historical, evolutionary cycle of the organized development of terrorism has run full course:

$$\textit{terrorism by lone wolves} \rightarrow \textit{by groups} \rightarrow \textit{by networks} \rightarrow$$
$$\textit{by networks of networks} \rightarrow \textit{by lone wolves}$$

In order to stimulate the appearance of such indoctrinated, self-generating lone wolf terrorists and terrorist cells, Islamism terrorism organizations:

- widely disseminate information about such acts of terrorism;
- ensure that successful terrorists are idolized;
- maintain constant ideological support, including by means of performing high-visibility, well-prepared, spectacular acts of terror that are fully covered by the mass media;

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[20] Rosbalt information agency, 6 July 2006.

[21] Ibid.

[22] From the Latin *inductio* – directing, guiding.

- provide the bare minimum of organizational and technical knowledge to perform the terrorist act.

Why are such apparently "low-yield" acts of terror needed?

First, they contribute to some degree to maintaining constant terrorist activity and, as a result, maintain an atmosphere of fear.

Second, indoctrinated terrorists, by means of constant technical and tactical self-improvement, will gradually increase their level of professionalism, and by doing so will increase the amount of damage caused.

Third, the most successful of the lone-wolf terrorists (in terms of the results of the act of terrorism, and in terms of evading arrest and retribution) will sooner or later create terrorist cells or begin to transfer their experience to relatives, friends, etc. (for example, as in the case of the Washington sniper).

Fourth, such acts of terrorism, being disconnected from international terrorism, distract the attention of the structures established to combat extremism and terrorism, forcing them to spread more thinly their manpower and resources.

How Are Terrorists Recruited

As a rule, general propaganda is distributed through specially-created organizations,[23] newspapers and internet sites, by islamists and Islamism terrorist organizations, to achieve the following:

- formation of support groups amongst the general population. These play an auxiliary role, such as financial support. In part, these groups are used to propagate the heroic portrayal of *shakhid* [24] suicide bombers and the shakhid tradition in Europe's Islamic communities;

- the ideological and psychological formation of Islamism lone-wolf terrorists;

- the unstructured growth of the network, via self-organization of small terrorist groups;

- the formation of psychological readiness for "front line" missions—in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kashmir (India), etc.

In the latter two cases, as a rule,[25] contact is made with representatives of an Islamism terrorist network.

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[23] For example, the company As-Sahab, created upon the initiative of bin Laden, and which was involved in the production of videos praising the ideas of a jihad against the unbelievers. Ahmed Zeidan, *Bin Laden Unmasked: Meetings whose Publication were Prohibited by the Taliban* (Beirut: The World Book Company, 2003), p. 15.

[24] A shakhid is a warrior who has fallen in a fight for his faith.

[25] For example, two young Moroccans from the town of Eindhoven (Netherlands): Ahmed al-Bakiuli and Halil al-Hassnaui went to Kashmir independently and on their own initiative; they were killed by Indian border guards. Emerson Vermaat, *Bin*

Direct recruitment for deployment in "hotspots," training of professional terrorist fighters, as well as psychological and practical training for Islamism suicide terrorists, takes the form of targeted recruitment of candidates.

Specific recruitment approaches and methods depend, in part, on such factors as:

- intramural or remote contact between the recruiter and the recruit;
- the length and total time of contact;
- the frequency;
- the regularity;
- the goal of recruitment (general, specific, long-term, etc.);
- the degree of deconditioning and desocialization of the recruit;
- the level of his education and intellect;
- his current emotional state;
- his professionalism and the personal qualities of the recruiter.

The majority of these factors, just like the psychological characteristics of the candidate, are taken into consideration and used by the recruiter intuitively, as similar skills are developed over a period of many years, in part during the study of Islamic theology and law, participation in numerous theological and secular discussions, etc.

If a recruit has a developed ability for independent, critical interpretation of religious teachings and discussion, then it is considered efficient to hold such classes in small, homogeneous groups (up to 6-8 people of similar age, background, education and social status[26]), using group psychotraining methods and where a "follower" is brought into contact with a sincerely and deeply faithful, but highly radical "leader."

The foundations for recruitment can be summarized with the acronym "MICE": Money, Ideology, Compromise and Ego (personal motives).

Recruitment for Terrorist Activity using Financial Incentives

The money factor plays an insignificant role in the recruitment of naturalized or long-established immigrants to Europe, but plays a relatively larger role in finding potential terrorists in the latest wave of immigration, especially those arriving from African countries.

A good example is the arrest in Spain, in May of 2007, of 14 Moroccan citizens and two Algerians, who recruited penniless immigrants from the Maghreb to go to terrorist training camps, or even straight to Iraq and Afghanistan.[27]

Laden's Terror Networks in Europe (The Mackenzie Institute for the Study of Terrorism, 2002).

[26] Luis Miguel Ariza, "Virtual Jihad: The Internet as the Ideal Terrorism Recruiting Tool," *Scientific American* (January 2006).

[27] *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, 30 May 2007.

According to US military analyst John Robb,[28] the fee for participation in a terrorist act in Iraq in 2004 was between 100 and 300 USD, depending on the qualifications of the fighter.

The financial stimulus for engagement in organized terrorist activity, performing secondary, auxiliary functions, more commonly takes the form of economic and propaganda/awareness-raising activities in a pre-existing terrorism environment (an existing social foundation for terrorism), in medical, social and educational structures that exist in parallel to similar state infrastructure – for example, such has been created in Libya, Syria, Egypt and a number of other mid-Eastern countries by the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah and Hamas.

If such a self-supporting socio-economic foundation for nourishing Islamism terrorism were to be created in European countries, this factor would play a far greater role in recruitment.

Recruitment for Terrorist Activity using Compromise

Terrorists have most commonly been recruited using the leverage of compromise in the middle East and South Asia, usually in one of the two following scenarios: a subject is revealed to have cooperated with the law enforcement or security services of the state or, in a patriarchal Islamic environment, a woman is accused of marital infidelity or improper pre-marital relations. As a rule, the recruitment subject is offered the opportunity to engage in suicide terrorism to preserve their family honor.

The increasing number of Muslim communities in Europe and the tendency within such communities to densely populate small areas leads, inter alia, to their voluntary self-exclusion from the life of society, choosing to become self-sufficient and isolated. Within such communities, standards for public morals and rules for behavior are imported from the common homeland. Deviance from these rules, excessive europeanization (this is particularly relevant for women) increases their psychological vulnerability, which can easily become a ground for ideological and psychological manipulation by Islamic terrorist organizations, and their involvement in acts of terrorism.

Thus, recruitment into Islamism terrorist organizations by means of compromise is also a growing problem, however modestly.

Recruitment for Terrorist Activity using Ideology

For a number of decades, the main goals of the radical, politicized wing of Islamic fundamentalism has been the struggle for power in Islamic states and the establishment in such states of unfailing observation of Sharia law in all areas of life. In order to achieve these goals, a strategy was developed: all states that "sold out" themselves to the godless (the West) were declared illegitimate, "barbarous societies" ("jahiliyyah"), became the so-called "near enemy" of extremists.

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[28] Washington ProFile, 26 October 2004.

However, ostensibly to achieve these same goals, bin Laden justified the need to engage in a global jihad in his 1996 fatwa, calling for a confrontation with the "distant enemy," the Christian and Jewish West, only after victory over which could all "corrupt" Islamic regimes be easily overpowered.

It is necessary to note here that even within the Al Qaeda network itself, there is no agreement over the scale and geographical distribution of this jihad. For example, if bin Laden and al Zawahiri are supporters of a global jihad, then the leaders of Al Gamaa al Islamiya and Harakat-ul-Mujahedin—Rifai Ahmed Taha and Fazul Rahman Halil—remain supporters of the struggle with the "jahiliyyah" – the near enemy.

Contradictions between supporters and opponents of exporting jihad to beyond the limits of Muslim countries played a certain role in the fragmentation and decentralization of the Al Qaeda network. Nevertheless, these were resolved to some degree by the beginning of the Iraq War, but remain a constant factor with a clear trend for growth. However, the main reason for this is most likely not ideological, but in the struggle for control over the entire Islamism movement.

Another important element in bin Laden's fatwa was the declaration of participation in jihad as the second most important duty of Muslims, after unshakeable faith. This transformed the question of whether or not to participate in the global jihad into a personal decision to be made by each individual Muslim.

Bin Laden explained the necessity of participating in jihad by reference to a direct occupation, as well as the subjugation of Muslim lands to the West. The question of occupation is perhaps open to debate for a relatively large number of regions in the world, while the question of subjugation is rhetorical and timeless. Therefore, the main reason for jihad is simple, clear and eternal.

In order for the ideology of Islamism terrorism to be a global, renewable resource, it is necessary to generate international ideas that are not restricted by borders. It is specifically the reinforcement of such trends that is currently taking place, as the ideological principles of the global jihad are being adjusted and refined.

For example, in January of 2007 one of the famous ideologues in modern Islamism, Sheikh Hamed bin Abdalla al-Ali, in his statement entitled "Agreement on a Supreme Council of Jihad Groups," called for the consolidation of activities by all Islamism groups. Such calls for terrorists to coordinate their actions are not new: as early as 2004, Ayman al-Zawahiri offered to establish, as part of the general ideological activities, a so-called Council for the Development of Decisions.

However, the "Agreement" does not call for tightening the main ideological line of the global jihad – in fact, calls for tolerance with respect to other Islamism groups and salafist movements contained within it have the goal of actually expanding the common ideological basis and the boundaries of acceptability of

various possible interpretations of jihad. This includes expanding jihad to include a common enemy – the Shiite branch of Islam.[29]

Such a flexible approach would allow Al-Qaeda, based on dedication to general goals, to engage in tighter cooperation with a number of terrorist groups that do not share the ideology of a global jihad – with the subsequent, gradual correction of those ideological positions.

A clear example of such ideological "regeneration" is the Algerian radical Islamism group Al Jamaa as-Salafiya li-d-Daava va-l-Kital (SPJH, the Salafist Preaching and Jihad Group).

If in September of 2001 the group officially expressed its doubts that the terrorist acts of 11 September 2001 were organized and executed by Al Qaeda, not least because of the illegitimacy of such attacks under Islam, in 2003 it declared its support for the activities of Al-Qaeda and its readiness to spread jihad beyond Algeria. In 2005 the group's leader, Ibrahim Mustafa, declared jihad on the territory of Algeria and against all foreign citizens.

The gradual adjustment of ideological positions transformed SPJH from an Islamic terrorist group acting in Algeria, into a regional sub-network of Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (North Africa), just like Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia.

SPJH has a broad recruitment, finance and technical support network in Europe, which is the most active in communities of North African immigrants in Spain, Italy, Britain, France and the Netherlands. According to a number of European security services, at least 200 people trained in SPJH camps in Iraq now live in Europe.

Another worrying aspect of SPJH is the presence within this group of aquatic units—fighters—who could offer Al Qaeda a significant advantage: water-based terrorist acts in European ports.

Thus, by gradual correction (and, sometimes, fundamental change) of the ideological positions of local terrorist groups, an international Islamism terrorist movement recruits into its ranks, to serve its own goals and objectives, numerous new members, who are moreover already organized, structured and trained.

Recruitment for Terrorist Activity using Personal, Psychological Motives

The study of specific examples of the recruitment of new members into Islamism terrorist activities, over many years and from many angles, has failed to identify the universal relevance of any personal motives or reasons.[30]

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[29] This can also be seen as an attempt to reinforce the ideological foundation for fighting the growing influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in certain regions of the Middle East, primarily Iraq, and especially given the prospect of the withdrawal, sooner or later, of coalition troops from that country.

[30] "For members of terrorist groups there is a multitude of personal motives. For some it is the sensation of power in the hands of the powerless, for others the main motive is vengeance, and yet others seek to acquire a sense of personal importance." Jerrold M. Post, "The Psychological Roots of Terrorism," in *Addressing the Causes of Terror-*

However, in the opinion of some psychologists, such as Robert Lukabo, "there is clearly a certain set of personal characteristics that terrorists have to have,"[31] and which are not acquired overnight. Before becoming a terrorist, a person must pass through apathy and other forms of social deconditioning.[32]

A number of psychologists identify certain types of person, whose key character traits suggest a predisposition to membership in rigidly structured organizations. Yet these traits by no means lead inevitably to membership in a terrorist organization, or even criminal activity. However, these character traits, given possible problems associated with self-realization in day-to-day life, can be successfully utilized for recruitment. In generalized form, these personality types are:

- The organizer (subtypes: the ideologue, the process manager)
- The vain (subtypes: narcissus, poser, techie specialist)
- The revengeful
- The risk-taker, or thrill-seeker
- The sadist
- The loser
- The impressionable.

The specific work undertaken by a recruiter will correspond to each of the personality types.

For example, in order to recruit a "revengeful" type—after the 2003 Iraq War this was one of the most widespread types of candidate for terrorists from Islamic communities in Europe—it is necessary to provoke a desire for vengeance towards a specific, or general target. For example, European society, the member states of the antiterrorist coalition in Iraq and Afghanistan, disloyal authorities in Islamic states, etc.

In line with the psychological traits of the candidate's character and personality, the appropriate method for working with him is chosen – in a group or individually. To a large degree, this is true for the "vain" set of types (on the one hand, self-sufficient "lone wolves" or "supermen," and on the other hand vain "actors" or "posers" who need an audience) as well as the "loser" type (working in a team can both help him overcome his complexes and reinforce them; in which case his chances of being recruited for a suicide act are increased).

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ism, *The Club de Madrid Series on Democracy and Terrorism*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Club de Madrid, 2005).

[31] R. Lukabo, "Terrorism: psychological and political aspects," http://psychology.net.ru/ptsd/ptsd_terror.shtml.

[32] Miller, "The Literature of Terrorism."

Recruitment in Iraq and Afghanistan

Apart from direct support for sabotage and terrorist activities, sending volunteers to hotspots has strategic importance for international terrorism's long-term plans: highly-trained terrorists with fighting experience will be in demand both in other "hotspots" and for organizing terrorist acts in Europe after their return.

Given an early withdrawal of coalition troops from Iraq without achieving the key military and political goals, an upsurge in activity by Islamic terrorists can be expected in Europe.

Training Professional Terrorist Fighters

The psychological and professional training of a professional fighter requires somewhat more time than training a suicide terrorist; for example, the subject needs to be taken to a training camp, most of which are outside Europe.[33]

According to Abd al-Samad Muassawi, the brother of Zakarius Mussawi (a terrorist involved in the preparation of the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001), the mujahedin psychology is altered using a method that has been developed in great detail, and which consists of several stages. First, against a background of gradually-increasing physical and mental loads, the recruit's food ration is reduced. After reaching the point of psychic exhaustion, strong psychological pressure is exerted on the subject: he is persuaded that he turned out to be far weaker, physically and morally, than expected; a sense of guilt is fostered in the subject, with respect to his "brothers in arms," instructors and mentors, but also the Islamic *umma* as a whole. In this way the recruit is gradually brought to a state of readiness to perform any act in order to remedy his guilt and justify the hopes placed in him.[34]

Training a Suicide Terrorist

Unlike regular suicides, by which the subject wishes to put an end to their own real or perceived, irresolvable problems, Islamism suicide terrorists perform acts of self-sacrifice to resolve global religious and political problems which are supposedly common to all of Islam.

Despite the fact that even among Islamic theologians there is no unambiguous attitude to such a means of fighting the "godless,"[35] a certain proportion of Muslim society has initiated and actively supports the cult of such sacrifices.

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[33] However, some ideologues of islamist terrorism, such as Aby Masabom as-Suri, have developed programs for training terrorists in the states of Europe. Brynjar Lia, "Al-Suri's Doctrines for Decentralised Jihadi Training: Part I," *Terrorism Monitor* 5:1 (Jamestown Foundation, 18 January 2007).

[34] Abd Samad Moussaoui, *Zacarias Moussaoui: The Making of a Terrorist* (London: Serpent's Tail, May 2003).

[35] For example, Sheikh Muhammad Usaimin considers that when Muslims "tie explosive devices to their bodies, and then slip into a crowd of non-believers and blow them up and themselves too, this is suicide, and may Allah save us from this, because suicide is

In 2003-2006, international terrorist organizations were forced to pay greater attention to the training of suicide terrorists, for a number of reasons,[36] including:

- the elimination of smoothly-functioning camps in Afghanistan and Chechnya, and to some degree in Iraq and Libya;
- major losses amongst terrorists who received training in bomb-making;
- relatively low material and time costs.

The construction and launch of new camps in regions of Pakistan weakly-controlled by the central government cannot yet compensate for the loss of islamists, as only small groups can be trained in such camps – usually no more than 10-20 subjects.

Doctor Ahmad Hadjem Muhi ad-Din, a Palestinian psychologist, distinguishes two categories of suicide terrorist:

- those ready for death: i.e. those who openly declare their intention to execute a suicide terrorist act in order to achieve political goals, or in the name of vengeance, and
- those with a death wish – persons in a traumatic psychic state, in which they are locked in a constant search for death. The death wish turns them into a cheap weapon.[37]

In the Middle East, the idea of death is cultivated and engrained gradually, starting almost from pre-school age,[38] and is especially intensive in the kindergartens and camps of Hezbollah and HAMAS. The cult of death in the name of the Almighty, the achievement of readiness to make this self-sacrifice is achieved by means of turning the images of shakhid suicide bombers into heroes, by the repeated screenings during classes of recordings of the funerals of suicide terrorists, etc.

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a sin that earns an eternity in the flames of hell … Such suicide does not correspond to the interests of Muslims, because if a person kills himself and takes another ten, hundred or two hundred lives, this will not benefit Islam, because after that people will stop adopting this religion … Moreover, such actions can yet further aggravate enemies, who will set about annihilating Muslims in the most vicious fashion." *Islam protiv terrorizma. Sbornik fetv* [Islam against terrorism. An anthology of fatwahs] (Moscow, 2003).

[36] The execution of suicide attacks in the area of the Arab-Israeli conflict follows a different dynamic.

[37] Ash-Shark al-Ausat newspaper (London), 16 January 2003. Cited from the MEMRI website, www.memri.org.

[38] This process of psychological influence largely coincides with the experience of the Jesuit Order in Europe, in which it is said: "Give us a child to bring up until he is 7, and then you can do with him what you wish, but he will be ours."

Such psychical correction has the goal of making subjects consider self-sacrifice necessary, because "if one is to die an early death anyway, why not make it happen even earlier, but in the name of the Almighty?"[39]

In Europe, such psychological treatment cannot be widespread, which is one of the reasons why the motivation of suicide terrorists from Muslim communities in Europe has an emphasis not on ideology (fanaticism for an idea that goes as far as self-destruction), but instead on the ego – awareness of a person's own uniqueness. The terrorist is confident of his special designation, he is proud of being called by the will of Allah to awaken wayward societies.

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The reinforcement of joint, counterterrorist efforts by the law enforcement agencies and security services of all European states to prevent and interdict terrorist activities is, indubitably, vital. However a variety of notable factors—socio-economic, ideological, psychic and psychological—influence the processes of radicalization and terrorist recruitment under Islamism slogans, and also presupposes the need to deploy broad-sweeping and multi-level anti-terrorist propaganda.

Only the effective combination of these two approaches can make it possible to prevent the formation in Europe's Muslim communities, economically and in terms of the mobilization of human resources, of a self-sufficient terror environment, such as the ones which have been created in a number of countries of the Middle East by organizations such as Hezbollah, HAMAS and the Muslim Brotherhood.

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[39] That is, to the simplified understanding of the statement by Sheikh ul-islam ibn Taymiya: "Because this was a jjihad on the path of Allah, people started to believe, and he lost nothing, because he would still die sooner or later." *Islam protiv terrorizma. Sbornik fetv* [Islam against terrorism. An anthology of fatwahs].