

DHP P244: MODERN TERRORISM & COUNTERTERRORISM

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Political Violence & Religion

Political Violence & Religion

Current “wave” of terrorism: Unprecedented growth in number of religious terrorist groups since 1979

- Religious Cults (e.g., Aum Shinrikyo)
- Christian, Jewish and Islamist extremists

Religious extremists are threatened by:

- Modernity, “progress” vs. traditional values
- Scientific discovery vs. revealed truth
- Perceived decline of religion vs. secular forces in society, political power

Core Characteristics

- Belief that divine authority trumps man's laws
- Sense of sacred intoxication; true believer can do no wrong
- Rewards or punishments in the afterlife are more important than worldly rewards or punishments
- Personal socioeconomic and political contexts may have little or no relationship to religious justification for violence
- Violence as divine duty, blessed/sanctioned by clerical authority
- Superiority of God's rules (as interpreted from sacred texts)
- In-group/out-group "othering"; Oust "them" from holy lands;
- Dehumanization, elimination of God's enemies

COMMON THEMES

- Supremacist
 - Revealed truth from interpreted texts
- Absolutist
 - God above all else, no compromise possible
- Redemption
 - Self sacrifice
 - Sacred glory, rewards
- Sanctioned violence
 - Defending the faithful
 - Legitimacy by God
- Anti-government
- Political change
- Extreme dissatisfaction with status quo
- Transnational dimensions
- “Chosen” Vanguard
- Charismatic leader
- Seekers



Commonalities with Left Wave?

Political Violence & Religion

	Christian Extremism	Jewish Extremism	Islamist Extremism
Ideological narratives and objectives			
Identity of the “others”			
Sources of sacred legitimacy			
Examples of groups or individuals			
Typical targets & victims of attacks			

WIDE VARIETY OF ATTACKS

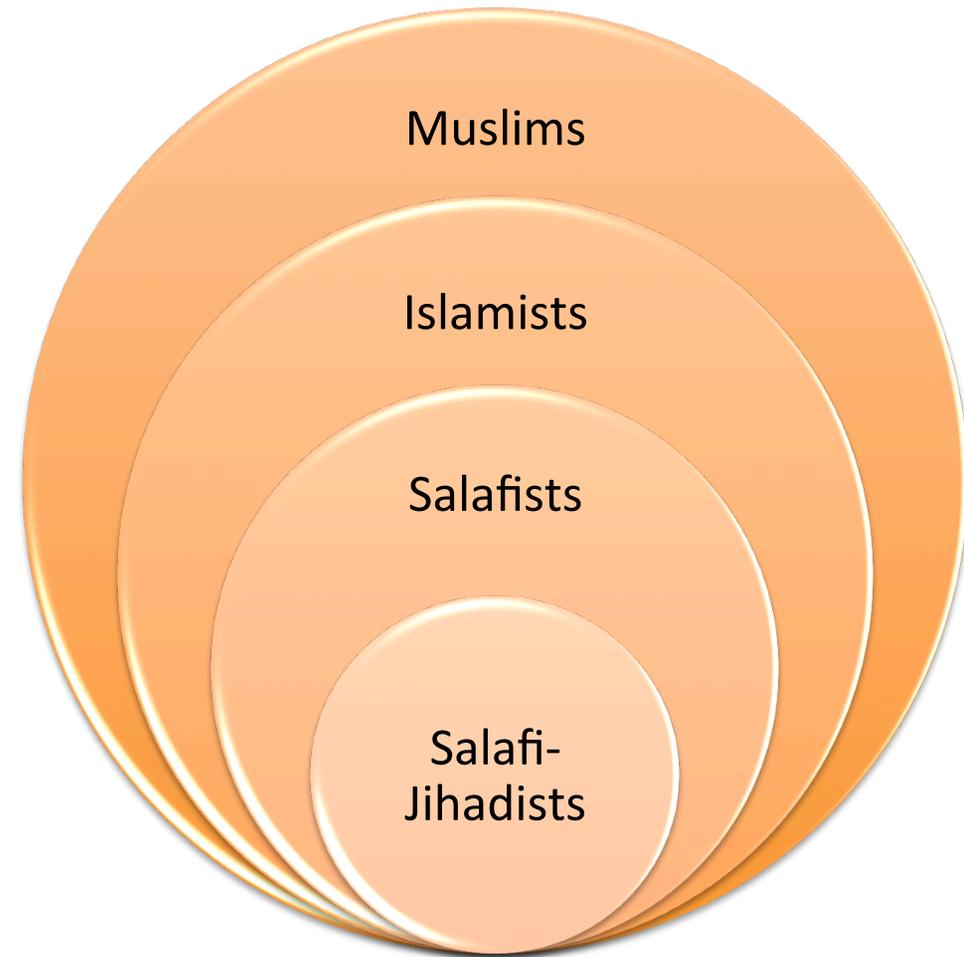
- 1983 U.S. Embassy bombing; Beirut, Lebanon; 63 dead.
- 1983 U.S. Marine Barracks bombing; Beirut, Lebanon; 241 dead.
- 1993 World Trade Center bombing; New York City; 6 dead, over 1,000 injured.
- 1995 Oklahoma City bombing; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; 168 dead, 642 injured.
- 1995 Tokyo subway, Sarin nerve agent attack; 12 dead, 5,000 injured
- 1995 Assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (by Yigal Amir)
- 1996 Khobar Towers bombing; Dahrhan, Saudi Arabia; 19 dead, 515 injured.
- 1996 Centennial Olympic Park bombing; Atlanta, Georgia; 2 dead, 112 injured.
- 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings; Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; 301 dead, more than 5,000 injured.
- 2000 The U.S.S. Cole bombing; Port of Aden, Yemen; 17 dead, 40 injured.
- 2001 September 11 attacks; 2,972 dead, an estimated 12,000 injured.
- 2002 Bombing of Kuta Beach nightclub area in Bali, Indonesia; 202 dead including 7 Americans, 350 injured.
- 2003 Simultaneous bombings of 3 residential compounds in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; 35 dead including 9 Americans; nearly 200 injured.

Summary

- Across the world's major religions we have seen examples of political violence
- Many common themes and characteristics
- Important to keep this comparative perspective in mind when reading, discussing the threat of modern global jihadists

Salafi-Jihadist Ideology

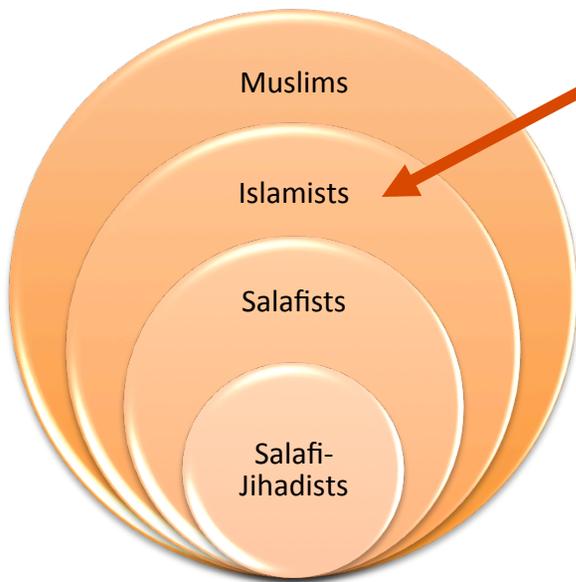
- What is it, where did it come from, what are the main elements?
- Why does it resonate among a small minority in the Muslim world?
- Why are there so many variations of this ideology?
- Who are the main ideological entrepreneurs?



Background Knowledge on Islam

- Islam (submission to the will of God)
 - Muhammad, Mecca, Medina, 5 pillars, ummah, sharia
 - Quran, Hadith, Sunnah (competing interpretations)
 - Sunni-Shia division
 - [1.8 billion worldwide](#) (2014 estimate); Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, Iran, Turkey
 - Terms like infidel, apostate, salaf, takfir, kafir, jihad
 - Caliphate: In the years after the Prophet Muhammad's death in the 7th century, the caliphate stretched from Spain to Afghanistan. It legitimized its rule in Islamic terms, and its true era lasted about 300 years
- Similarities to other global religions
 - Absolutist, superior “revealed truth”, transnational
 - Long-term view of history, sacrifice, devotion, eternal salvation

Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328)



Islamic scholar, issued fatwa against Mongol rulers: “Leader who doesn’t enforce *shari’a* completely, or wage active *jihad* against infidels is apostate and unfit to rule”

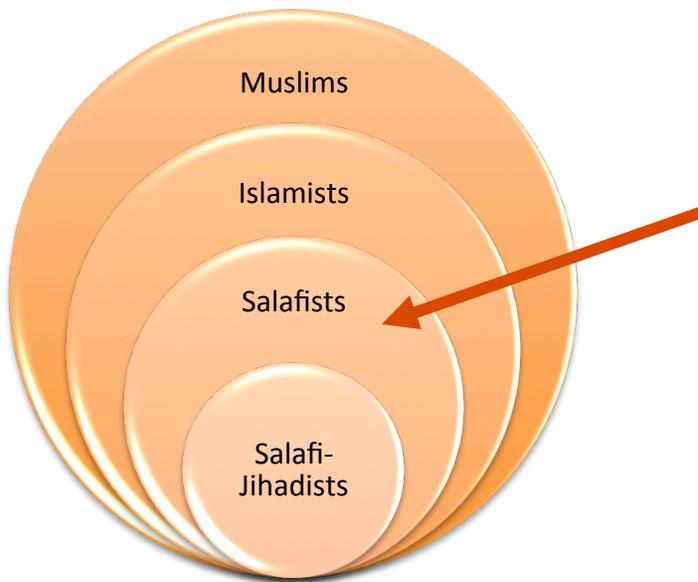
- “Muslim who doesn’t live by requirements of the faith is an unbeliever”
- “World is a perpetual battlefield between faith and unbelief”

Jihad described as fighting in the path of God as described in Qur’an, hadith: defense of the *ummah*, then spread of the faith

Note: different from *Sufis* concept of “greater jihad” as internal struggle that is necessary for spiritual insight

Islam is viewed as a revolutionary “liberation” movement, required to alter the unjust political, economic and social status quo

Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703-92)

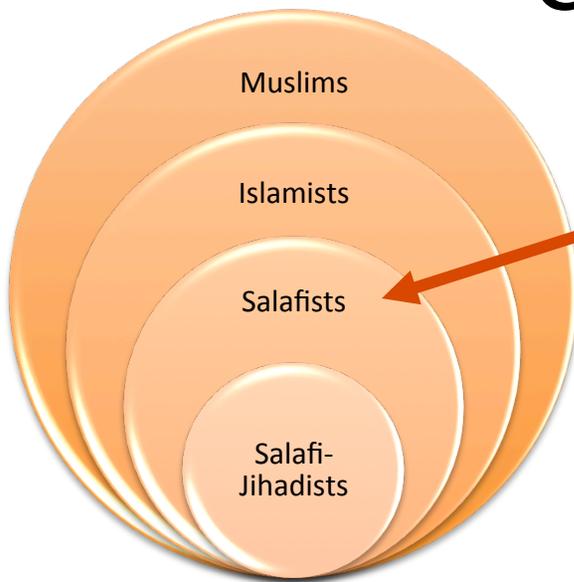


Preacher, scholar inspired by the ideas of Ibn Taymiyya

- Advocated strict return to fundamentals of the faith; a Puritan form of Islam, rejection of cultural variations
- *Tawhid* - transcendent unity of God; no compromise possible; global community of the faithful—the *ummah*
- *Islamic rule is the only just form of governance, all others are haram*

1744 pact with Muhammad bin Saud helped found Saudi Arabia; Wahhab's descendants dominate clerical establishment, legitimate House of Saud rule; Saudi govt. sponsors spread of Wahhabist interpretations of Islam to other countries, funding mosques, imams and distribution of books

Contemporary Salafism

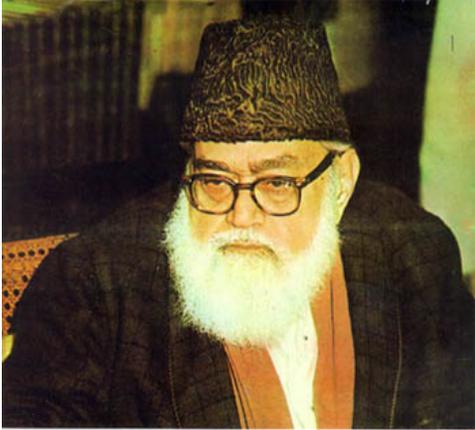


Emulation of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions (including clothes, hair)

- Call for strict adherence to sharia law; reject any behavior not conducted or supported by the original founders of Islam
- Some Wahhabists prefer to be called Salafist

- All interpret the Qur'an literally; at the most extreme, Salafists reject secular nation-states and all manmade laws;
- Many Sunni radical groups and members are products of the Salafist interpretation of Islam
- However, most Salafists disagree with radicals on the permissibility of armed *jihad* as a religious duty, and with specific tactics in warfare such as terrorism and suicide attacks

Sayyid Abu'l A'la Mawdudi



Muslim journalist in colonial India (later Pakistan);
founded political movement

Prolific writer on issues of religious faith, and the
proper relationship between Islam and the
political structure, law, and practices of the
state

Writings became available in Arabic in 1950s

First modern Islamist writer to approach *jihad*
systematically:

- Warfare not just for political control, but to establish just rule
- Jihad becomes war of liberation: links concept to anti-colonialism, “national liberation movements,” and Arab resistance to Israel

Islam wants to employ all forces and means that can be employed for bringing about a universal all-embracing revolution. This far-reaching struggle that continuously exhausts all forces and this employment of all possible means is called jihad.”

Jihad In Islam, 1939

Hasan al-Banna



Teacher, Imam, formed Muslim Brotherhood in 1928 as educational and devotional group

- Rival to Wafd political party, threat to government (King Farouk). 1948 upheaval suppressed; 1949 al-Banna murdered in public
- “Free Officers” led by Gamel Abdel Nasser took control of Egypt in 1952. MB crushed

Primary means to restore Islamic character to society is vigorous preaching and teaching (*da'wa*) campaign; *direct political action not appropriate or effective*

Gradualist approach to build a strong Muslim state governed by *shari'a*: re-Islamization through four stages starting with individuals, then families, then communities, which will band together to form a true Islamic state

Influenced radicals by redefining *jihad*: God-ordained defensive requirement for all Muslims, as long as unbelievers rule any Islamic lands; greater jihad is armed physical struggle against injustice and unbelief, not the internal spiritual struggle

Sayyid Qutb

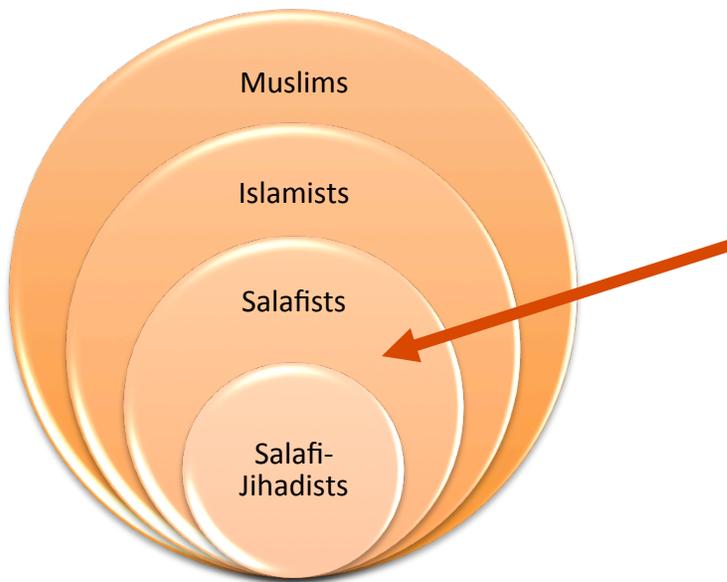


- Professor at Al-Azhar University, Muslim Brotherhood member; brother taught OBL at Saudi Arabian university
- Promoted Islamist revolt; author of 24 books including *Milestones* and *In the Shade of the Quran* (30 vols.)
- Jailed by Nasser, accused of assassination plot, executed 1966; influenced al-Faraj, Zawahiri, Rahman, et al.

Qutb's "Manhaj": 4-Phased Process

1. Vanguard (*taliya*) of the movement (*jama'a*) is formed
2. Vanguard sounds the call (*da'wah*) to society to turn back to God, but is persecuted for its faith, oppressed by the system
3. Movement undergoes *hijrah*: conscious separation (spiritual and/or physical detachment) from the *jahili* (unbelievers) system, and the group purifies itself, unifies and grows in strength
4. Victory and consolidation of power: movement conducts a *jihad by force* to overthrow the apostate government, and restores the community to just rule and the practice of true Islam (through institution solely of the *shari'a*); God himself grants the victory and is once again sovereign

Salafi Islamist ideological Tenets



- Muslims have an obligation to establish a more just society, and may **use force** if necessary
(Ibn Taymiyya, Mawdudi, Qutb)
- Pluralism, the idea that no one has a monopoly on truth, is a falsehood, and liberal democracy (rule by man's laws) is against God's will
(al-Banna, Qutb)
- Muslims must resist the influences of Western institutions and traditions that have poisoned mankind *(Qutb)*
- Our generation of Muslims has been led astray by moderate clerics corrupted by politics and money; *Truly faithful Muslims "need to revive Islam, transform society" by all possible means*

20th Century Context

- Post-WWII migration to Europe (UK, France, Spain, Germany)
- The Cold War; superpowers viewed as corrupt, predatory and abusive
- The Israeli-Palestinian conflict; rising sentiment that Western civilization is morally bankrupt and in a state of perpetual war against Islam
- Government efforts to adapt Western ideas, structures, and technology; Rulers reformed laws, education, economies but continue to struggle for stability and legitimacy;
- Inability to restore early purity of Islamic faith and practice, regain lost glory and prestige; Failure, corruption of Islamic regimes
- Perceived Western colonial control, influence over politics, sociocultural norms; economic dependence

Why was 1979 a Pivotal Year?

- Soviet Union invades Afghanistan
 - U.S. covert operations
- Khomeini and the Iranian Revolution
 - Hostage crisis; demands the extradition of the Shah (after he dies, his assets) from the U.S.
- Takeover of Grand Mosque, Mecca
 - Thousands held hostage almost 2 weeks
 - U.S. blames Iran; Khomeini blames Americans and Zionists
 - Truth: Jihadists from Egypt & Saudi Arabia who wanted to overthrow the Saudi regime; expel Westerners, end oil exports to the U.S.

Abdullah Azzam

Palestinian cleric; Established recruitment, fundraising and inspiration network (later partnering with Osama bin Laden) during and after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan throughout 1980s



"...Every Muslim on earth should unsheath his sword and fight to liberate Palestine. The Jihad is not limited to Afghanistan...There will be no solution to the Palestinian problem except through jihad..."

"... Jihad means fighting. You must fight in any place you can get. Whenever Jihad is mentioned in the Holy Book, it means the obligation to fight. It does not mean to fight with the pen or to write books or articles in the press or to fight by holding lectures... Jihad and the rifle alone: no negotiations, no conferences, no dialogues."

*We must mobilize the entire Muslim community to **join our jihad***

Al Qaida's Salafi-jihadist ideology



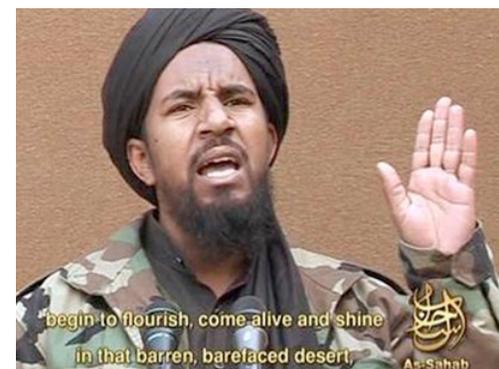
- We have a global conflict between Islam and the West. Islam is under siege and only we (the Jihadis, the “pure” defenders of Islam) can lift it (*al-Banna, Qutb, Azzam*)

- “We must do all that is necessary to tear down the existing order and re-establish the Islamic caliphate to rule over the entire Muslim world

- We must use force to overthrow corrupt, incompetent “apostate” regimes in the Middle East and replace them with governments that rule by Sharia law

- *Requires defeating their Western patrons (Zawahiri)*

- The violence we inflict upon our own people, governments, and resources is 1) necessary, 2) religiously sanctioned, and 3) really the fault of the West, Israel, and apostate regimes.



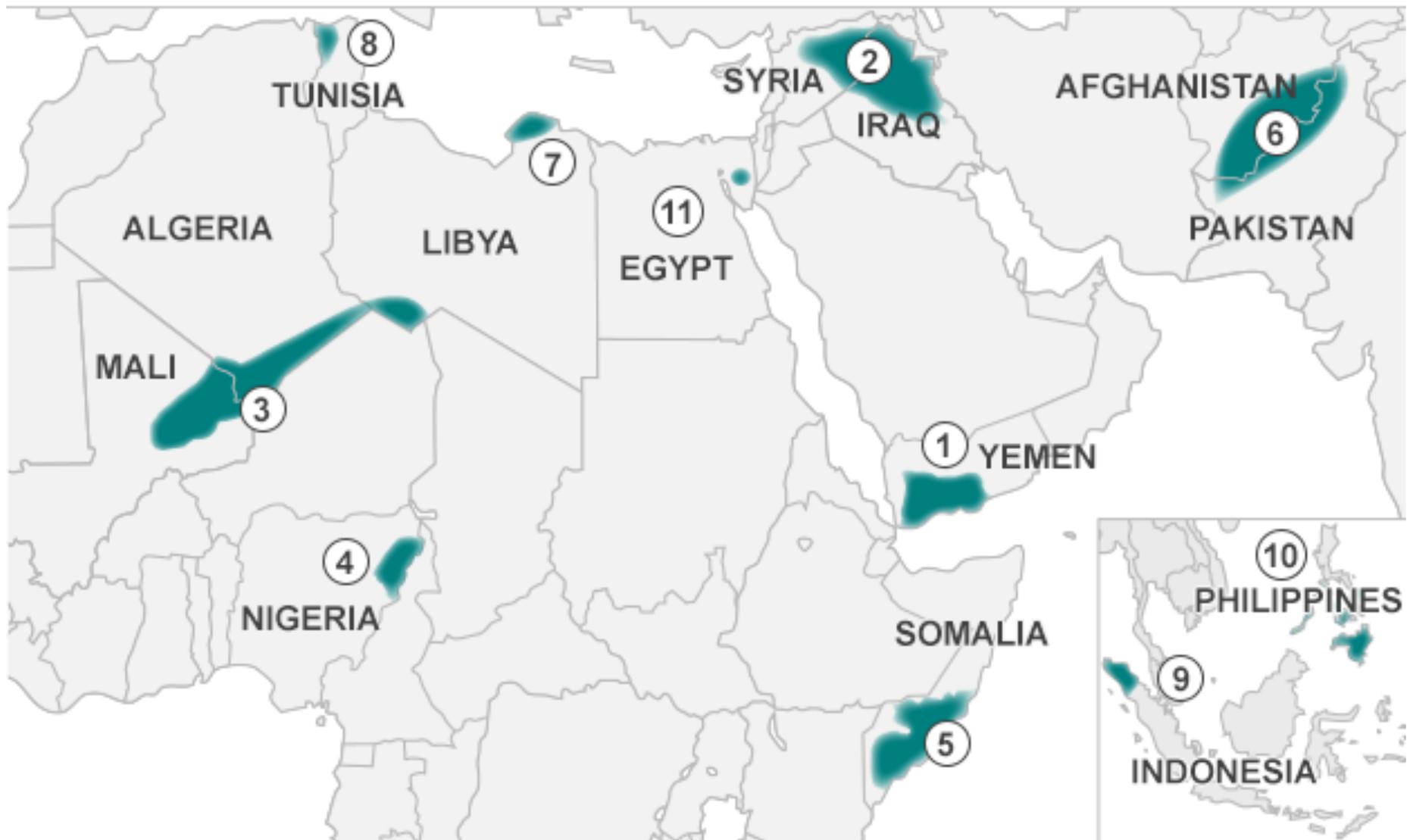
begin to flourish, come alive and shine
in that barren, barefaced desert.

Salafi-Jihadist Ideology

We, the true believers in the Prophet Muhammad are:

- the tip of the Islamist spear; the vanguard who will lead the ummah out of darkness and into the light
- defenders of a global Muslim community (umma) that has been continually subjugated and robbed of its resources
- obligated to attack the enemy wherever and whenever we are able to

Where are the main jihadist groups based?



1 Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

2 Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS)

3 Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)

4 Boko Haram

5 Al-Shabab

6 Taliban

7 Ansar al-Sharia in Libya

8 Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia

9 Jemaah Islamiah

10 Abu Sayyaf

11 Ansar Bayt Al-Maqdis

Affiliate Relationships

- Affiliation as strategic decision to enhance power, influence
- Usually based on personal relationships, often connected by the assistance and training they received in training camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan, or fighting in Iraq & Syria
- Central connection is shared belief in the Salafi-Jihadist ideology
 - Will these these geographically scattered, disparate movements will one day coalesce into a single, unstoppable force?
 - Emerging or potential affiliates?
 - Where would AQ or IS core most like to have an affiliate?

Example: Al-Qa`ida in Iraq

Why did Zarqawi swear allegiance to bin Laden?

- a. To gain legitimacy within the global Jihadi movement
- b. To get logistical support
- c. To increase the size and influence of his network
- d. To raise his stature by becoming a lieutenant of Bin Laden and Zawahiri
- e. To get volunteers from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, Algeria, Egypt and Europe
- f. To gain the trust of the Iraqi Sunni Islamists

Why did Bin Laden accept Zarqawi as a Lieutenant?

- a. To increase the influence and size of al-Qa`ida
- b. To gain a new branch in Iraq, an unexplored territory
- c. To take credit for Zarqawi's operations in Iraq
- d. To confront U.S. forces in Iraq
- e. To gain a new arena for Jihad, and validate AQ's ideology
- f. To bleed the U.S. militarily and economically

Affiliation as strategic decision to enhance power, influence

Rise of the Islamic State



- 2003-2011 – Al-Qaida in Iraq, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi
- June 2006: Zarqawi killed; Abu Ayub al-Masri new leader
- Oct 2006: Declares Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)
- 2007 to 2010; largely defeated; attrition due to drone strikes, military raids, etc.; April 2010 al-Masri killed by US & Iraqi forces
- May 2010: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi takes over

- March 2011: Syrian civil war begins
- 2011-2013: joins fight in Syria, becomes ISIS
- March 2013: ISIS and allies take Raqqa
- By Feb 2014: Severs ties with al-Qaeda; Fights al-Nusra and FSA; captures Fallujah
- June 2014: Captures Mosul, Tikrit, oil refinery in Baiji, Mosul dam
- Late June 2014: proclaims itself a worldwide caliphate, “**The Islamic State**”
- Territorial control key to perceived legitimacy



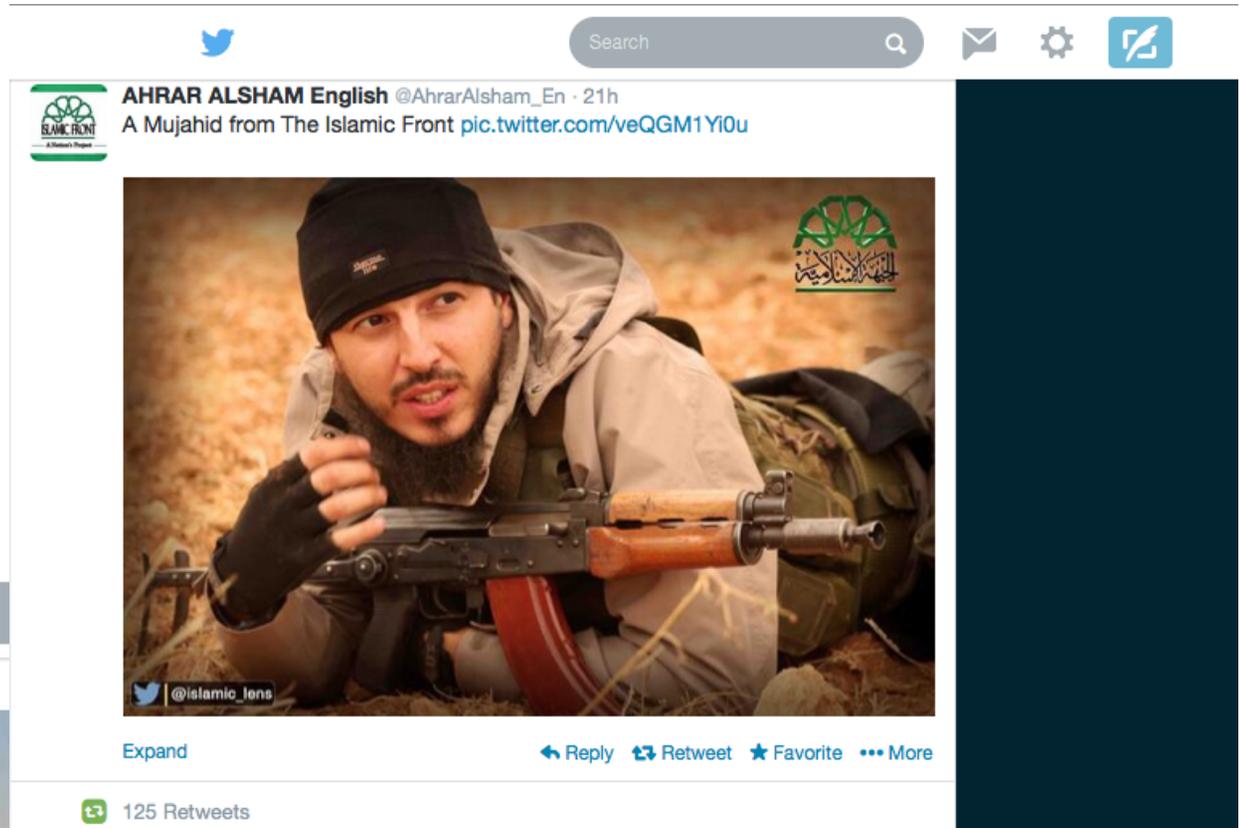
Foreign Fighters

Ideological entrepreneurs use multiple means to communicate, inspire individuals worldwide to “join the jihad” however they can

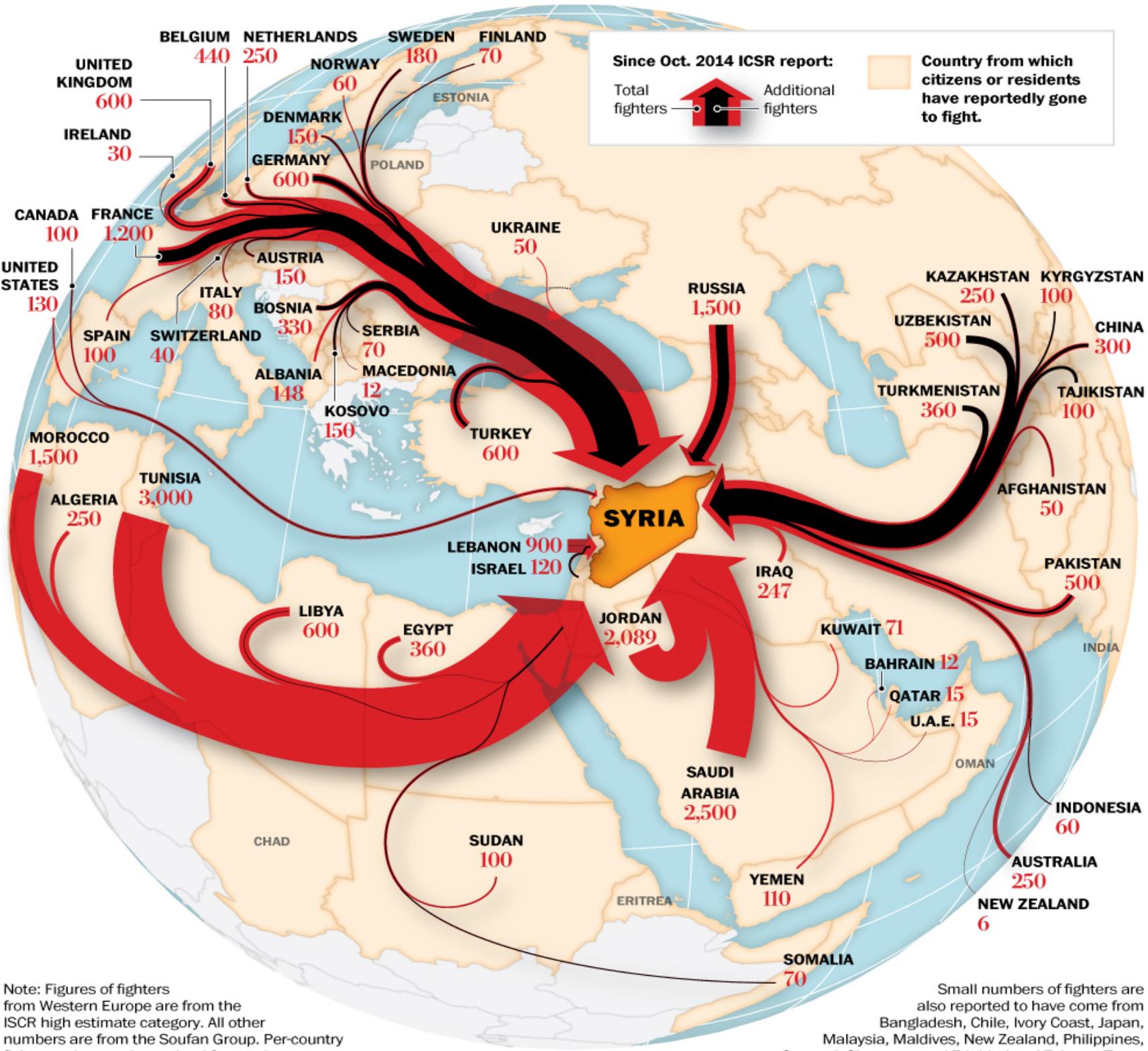
 pic.twitter.com/a0QBI8ok60



 [View photo](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

A screenshot of a Twitter post. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation icons. The post is from the account "AHRAR ALSHAM English" (@AhrarAlsham_En), posted 21 hours ago. The bio identifies the user as "A Mujahid from The Islamic Front". The main image shows a man in a black beanie and a light-colored jacket, holding an assault rifle. A watermark for "الجماعة الإسلامية" (The Islamic Front) is visible in the top right corner of the image. Below the image, there are interaction options: "Expand", "Reply", "Retweet", "Favorite", and "More". A retweet count of "125 Retweets" is displayed below the interaction options.

Many are inspired to travel to Iraq & Syria to join IS “defending” the new Islamic Caliphate



Note: Figures of fighters from Western Europe are from the ICSR high estimate category. All other numbers are from the Soufan Group. Per-country fighter estimates determined from a date range of December 2013 to the second half of 2014.

Small numbers of fighters are also reported to have come from Bangladesh, Chile, Ivory Coast, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, Senegal, Singapore and Trinidad and Tobago. These countries are not shown because they are off the map.

Inspired, but not “Affiliated”

- The growth of “Do It Yourself” terrorism model, encouraged by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State
- Individuals or small teams with no direct connection with AQ, IS, or any affiliate or other identifiable terrorist group
- Relationship with jihadist movement is **more inspirational than actual**
- Limited common profiles (mostly young, male; some converts to Islam, others born and raised; some children of immigrant parents, others indigenous)

Leaderless Jihad

- Abu Musab al-Suri (Mustafa Setmariam Nasar)
 - Syrian by birth, Spanish passport by marriage; lived in London, earned Judo black belt in France 1984
 - Lectured Afghanistan camps 1987-92, 98-01
 - Very prolific ideological thinker; author of 1,600-p. history of jihad
 - Architect of “think global, act local” argument for al Qaida’s long-term objectives
 - Authored “[A Call to Jihad in Syria](#)”

“. . . The next stage of jihad will be characterized by terrorism created by individuals or small autonomous groups which will wear down the enemy . . .”



- Captured in Pakistan October 2005; currently in Syrian prison (per AQ sources)

Global Jihadist Movement

Evolution of a global movement has taken multiple forms, influenced by core leaders in AQ and IS

A “multi-faceted jihadi militant landscape”

- AQ & IS “Central/Core” Elements
- Directed Affiliates / Branches / Territorial Extensions
- Autonomous Affiliates / Associates / Fellow Travelers
- Independent Cells, Individuals
 - Inspired by ideology
 - Some may have jihadist training camp experience
 - Not part of any chain of command

Ideological Resonance

Why does the ideology of global jihadism resonate among some Westerners?

- Perception of moral decadence (school shootings, movies, child abductions, corrupt scandals, bigotry, racism, extreme concentrations of wealth and power; etc.)
- Public losing faith in political decision-makers
- Policy debates become questions of patriotism, core values
- Decline in relative importance of religion – replacing God with secular idols (millionaires, athletes, Hollywood actors, etc.)

Is Ideology that Important?

Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks* (2004)

- Data on 172 members of the global Salafi movement
- Little or no relationship between poverty or religious devotion of individuals and their reasons for joining terrorist networks
- Typically, individuals in their mid-20s, relatively more education, many from more privileged backgrounds than average citizens
- Often, the compulsion to join terrorist groups evolves through friendship and kinship networks; childhood friends, family members; radicalization often occurs together (“bunch of guys”)
- Diaspora phenomenon; 84% of Global Salafi Mujahedin have joined the jihad, while living in a diaspora (87% in Western Europe)

Jihadism Case Studies

- Madrid train bombings, March 2004
- Dhiren Barot, Operation Rhyme
- Van Gogh Murder, Netherlands
- Toronto 18 plot, 2006
- Operation Pendennis, Australia
- London bombings, July 2005
- Airline Plots, August 2006
- Foiled Attacks in Italy, 2006
- German “Sauerland” Plot
- Danish Glasvej Case
- Barcelona Plot, January 2008
- Iraqi networks in France
- AQ in Afghanistan
- Jemaah Islamiyah in SE Asia
- Mombasa Attacks, Nov. 2002
- Sectarian attacks in Iraq
- Istanbul bombings, Nov. 2002
- Sinai terrorist attacks 2004-2006
- Casablanca incidents 2003, 2007
- Algiers attacks April 2007
- Riyadh, Sanaa attacks 2003, 2008
- Mumbai attacks Nov. 2008
- Kampala attacks, July 2010
- Syria & Iraq, 2011-present
- Nigeria attacks, 2011-present
- Boston Marathon, April 2013
- Paris attacks, 2014-2016
- Tunisia attacks, 2015
- Brussels attack, 2016
- San Bernadino, 2016
- Orlando, 2016

Final thoughts

Global jihadism is reflected in a network of jihadist networks, individuals, wannabes, ideological entrepreneurs, seekers, bomb-makers, facilitators, financiers, and many others

An Evolving Ideology:

“Discussing Jihadism is complicated by the fact that there is no single doctrine or ideology; it is always in motion, driven by the various individuals who develop and promote it as well as due to the constantly changing environmental circumstances in which it evolves.”

-- Jarret Brachman, *Global Jihadism*, 2007

Possible Final Exam questions

- What similarities do Zionist extremists in Israel and Christian extremists in the U.S. share with Islamist extremists in Iraq and Syria, or global jihadists elsewhere?
- What unique challenges do religious terrorists pose to governments, as compared to the challenges from secular/nationalist terrorist groups?
- Where does the global jihadist movement pose the greatest threat today? Tomorrow?
- What is needed beyond ideological resonance for global jihadism to succeed? What conditions, policies could help them accomplish the overall objectives of global jihadism?

Questions?