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# Why Terrorist Networks Maintain Viability within Today's Modern Society.

Cade Resnick Ph.D.

*Stetson University, [cjresnick@gmail.com](mailto:cjresnick@gmail.com)*

Amy Guimond Ph.D.

*Nova Southeastern University*


Heather Wellman Ph.D.

*Nova Southeastern University*

Shawna Resnick M.S.

*Nova Southeastern University*

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## ***Poverty and Conflict: Can Economic Development Prevent Conflict?***

Cade Resnick, Heather Wellman, Amy Guimond, Shawna Resnick

Resnick, C., Wellman, H., Guimond, A., & Resnick, S. (2015). Why terrorist networks maintain viability within today's modern society. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Conflict Science*, 1(1), 59-82.

### **Abstract**

Common concepts of terrorism refer to acts which are intended to create a system of fear. The ideological argument for terrorism relates to a politically and emotionally charged scenario in which terrorism is necessary. The development of a terrorist organization requires an environment that is ripe with social degradation and has idealistic minded people who are able to believe in a cause. The organization utilizes a social system to maintain its own stability and to retain the people who are involved within its self-contained community. Suffering oppression from its own government or another nation is a crucial component in fostering the development of terrorist organizations. The system of development is entrenched within the culture of a people who feel separated from the traditions and cultures of societal expectation. The perceived oppression is vital for creating blame for the current status of the surviving people. Furthermore, oppression allows for the development of hate to occur, which in turn creates a psychological opportunity to develop a terrorist narrative.

This paper seeks to discuss how terrorist organizations like Hezbollah and Al Qaeda are developed around an oppressed society which has found its voice through aggression and violence. Their cause is said to be for the benefit of a societies which is enveloped into the ideological word of God. Terrorist organizations have targeted different types of nations for their continued existence; yet, these organizations still use the primary focuses of psychological influence of world view and prejudice theories to maintain their existence. In understanding terrorism, the characteristics of involvement must also be evaluated from a lens of world view understanding in combination of prejudice and psychological theories.

## Introduction

The use of terror as a strategy for wielding power is as old an idea as power itself. For thousands of years, rulers have used terror as a tool to coerce others to comply with their demands. Two recognizable examples of leaders who used terror as a governing tactic are Genghis Khan, leader of the fierce Mongol Horde, and Maximilian Robespierre, the leader and inspiration behind the Reign of Terror (1793-94), which occurred midway through the French Revolution. What exactly does it mean to use terror as a tool for power? For Khan and Robespierre, terror meant nothing more than to instill fear in others, or to refer back to the original Latin, “to make [them] tremble.” However, in today’s political arena, the concept of terrorism is harder to define. The term terrorism is subjective; it has a variety of meanings to different groups of people (Merari, 2007). Governments, academics, and the media all define terrorism differently depending on the defining institutions purposes. What further complicates the definition of terrorism is that the term itself has become derogatory in its usage detracting from the notion of terrorism as simply a tool to achieve political ends (Merari, 2007). In the academic community, there is a lack of consensus about how to define terrorism (Terrorism, 2008). Though there are a variety of working definitions regarding terrorism, for the purposes of this paper, when the term terrorism is used, it is in reference to a tool used by individuals or groups who are trying to achieve a political or ideological outcome (Merari, 2007).

Terrorist movements are as varied as academics’ definitions of terrorism. The two most common forms of terrorist movements are those focused on political terrorism and those that are based in religious fundamentalism; it is important to note that these two forms are not the same thing but often both religious and political aspirations are found within the same terrorist movement (Blin, 2007). Al Qaeda is a prime example of a terrorist movement that combines political aspirations with a distinct religious undertone in its methods and ideologies (Blin, 2007). For example, one of Al Qaeda’s primary goals is to destroy Israel and the United States, a goal that is both political and religious in nature (Blin, 2007). The governments of these two states are considered to be the antithesis of Al Qaeda’s beliefs; Al Qaeda is opposed to both of these states’ political democracy as well as their social and religious values which stem from their Judeo-Christian foundations. Hezbollah is another example of an organization that combines religious and political motivations. Hezbollah considers itself the “Party of God” and operates under what it claims is a literal interpretation of the word of God. To that end the organization sees its mission as eliminating all non-Muslims from Muslim lands.

Through the execution of this mission, Hezbollah has moved from a guerrilla organization to a mainstream political organization (Harik, 2005). Through an examination of the theories of worldview and prejudice and by examining the psychology of terrorism, it becomes clear how through different methodologies Al Qaeda and Hezbollah have developed into successful organizations. While the methods the groups use are different, they pull from the concepts of worldview and prejudice development to impact the psychology of their target populations and to successfully implement their missions and create terror in their enemies.

### **Analysis of a Terrorist Perspective: World View Perspective**

Worldview theory explains how and why people's perceptions and beliefs change over time. According to Docherty (2001), each culture has its own unique worldview; however, the act of developing worldviews and using them during decision making processes is universal. In understanding worldviews it is important that we recognize that worldviews are composed of four interrelated components: 1) ontology (our understanding about nature and our interrelatedness with the universe); 2) a theory of world order (our understanding and beliefs of what exists and how it is relative to the rest of the world); 3) axiology (an understanding of the universe based on how important some parts are in relationship to others); and 4) epistemology (philosophy about the extent we are able to know what exists in the world) (Docherty, 2001).

Worldviews are developed to assist individuals in garnering a basic understanding of the world and subsequently, a set of moral guidelines which can shape their actions (Heyleighen, 2000; Docherty, 2001). Because conflict is fluid, and because the social context of the conflict changes over time, worldview theory indicates that parties will constantly be in a process of simultaneously reevaluating, reshaping, and either reaffirming or redefining their own worldviews. For this reason, while an individual may be able to say this is what their worldview is currently, they cannot say for certain that this is what their worldview was before, this is what it is now, and this is what it will always be (Docherty, 2001).

Telling and retelling of stories, primarily through the use of metaphors, is a large component in the development of worldviews, and a way that the worldviews of both old and young alike can be shaped by those in power. Metaphors themselves also contribute to worldview related conflict in at least three ways: 1) disagreements over the meanings of shared metaphors; 2) disputes over which metaphors apply to which situations; and 3) whether the metaphor is intended to be interpreted literally or figuratively (Docherty, 2001).

We see these three types of worldview-related conflicts frequently within any religiously driven conflict as each religion utilizes centuries old religious text which has been handed down generationally, more specifically in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, where believers continuously struggle with which interpretations of religious texts are to be followed. The terrorist networks of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda clearly recognize this struggle for believers over interpretation, and have used this to their advantage and helped guide and shape worldviews to their advantage. While numerous authors have cited that ideology plays a minimal role in an individual's decision to become a member of a terrorist organization (Horgan, 2009; Sageman, 2004, 2008; Bjorgo 2009), ideology is frequently used as a tool to create and perpetuate the worldviews held by the followers of the organizations. The terrorist organizations of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda, through narrowly interpreted reification of Quranic texts, have both re-transmitted interpretations of Surah and Hadiths to firmly establish and reaffirm power and control.

It should be noted that when groups enter into conflict scenarios with others who share the same worldviews, the process by which these worldviews are developed and maintained does not become a key factor in the conflict discourse (Docherty, 2001). Worldviews only become a factor when there are competing or conflicting worldviews (where differences can span from drastic to mild) and in situation in which worldview issues enter the forefront of the discourse (Docherty, 2001), such as is the case with the conflict between terrorist organizations and the Western World. In this situation, instead of working together toward developing a mutually beneficial living environment where conflicts are addressed via positive means, the terrorist networks of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda use propaganda and story-telling to highlight the worldview differences between their followers and the Western World, which creates and reinforces an additional narrative: that of terrorism. The created narrative then becomes cyclical as those who accept it buy into the idea that all things “western” and rooted within capitalism are assaulting the basic ideological tenets of the religious faith that is being hijacked through this propaganda and story-telling. Subsequently, they believe that death or annihilation are preferable to “losing” (with losing meaning loss of religious identity).

In the minds of those who follow the teachings of the terrorist networks of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda, both the Surah and Hadiths are clear regarding what is to be seen as being against Islam and what is to be seen as an attack against Allah. There is no room for ambiguity. Alternatively, there is no substantial evidence which proves beyond doubt what the intentions of these texts are, and the terrorist organizations of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda use this ambiguity to their benefit.

Followers of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda, in an attempt to remain in good graces with their God, must remain in a good relationship with the organizational leadership (who has dubbed themselves as the experts on religious doctrine and as a direct line to God). This allows the prejudices they have been established through the worldview process to cloud their religious interpretation, that strengthens a person's resolve over time, and thus these worldviews are used to perpetuate prejudice.

## Prejudice

Prejudice is one of the many potential outcomes of worldview building especially in religiously and ethnic based conflict. Although many people use religion as a way to calibrate their individual moral compass, throughout history, religion is arguably one of the strongest tools to continue and perpetuate prejudice, hatred, and violence against certain groups within society. We must be clear to make the distinction though that prejudice does not come from religious doctrine itself, but rather from the religious leaders who read and interpret the doctrine and then use it for their ulterior motives.

Gordon W. Allport (1958) defines prejudice as an “aversive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to that group” (p. 9). However this is only a partial understanding of prejudice. More importantly, in order for a generalization or misperception to be classified as prejudicial in nature, those who maintain views that are prejudicial must be resistant to changing those views even when there is evidence provided which undermines the original prejudicial views. It is never easy to determine how much information is required for a person to create a belief about others, but those with prejudicial views have a tendency to claim that they have enough information to have created and maintained those views over time (Allport, 1958), and thus become resistant to change. Because we have already established that prejudice is learned and maintained through the world viewing process, it becomes clear that it is far easier for followers of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda to learn prejudice than it is for them to unlearn. This is why terrorist organizations generally begin their indoctrination early, and it is believed that disenfranchised members of terrorist organizations may have high rates of recidivism, though more research is still needed (Morris, Eberhard, Rivera, & Watsula, 2010).

According to Allport (1958), prejudice manifests along a broad range of actions which have been broken down into five categories which can all be seen in the terrorist organizations of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda.

These categories are: 1) anti-locution (where the person holding the prejudicial views expresses prejudicial beliefs with like-minded people); 2) avoidance (where the person holding the prejudicial views will choose to not interact with the person that they hold the views about); 3) discrimination (where the person holding the prejudicial views will take steps to actively exclude the subject of their prejudicial views); 4) physical attack (where the person holding the prejudicial views will use violence or semi-violence towards the subject of their prejudicial views); and 5) extermination (where the person holding the prejudicial views takes steps to actively remove the subject of their prejudicial views from the face of the earth).

Entity theory is closely related to prejudice as it relates to intractable conflict and speaks to the way that humans view one another. Entity theory can be used to both reinforce prejudices and worldviews as well as be reinforced by prejudices and worldviews. In entity theory, people are said to have innate qualities about them such as compassion or morality, and this is unchanging and fixed over time (Dweck & Ehrlinger, 2006). Entity theory and prejudice theory serve the purpose to explaining how, as they become more entrenched in following the teachings of the terrorist organization, members isolate themselves from those who may have different beliefs, morals, and values. In essence, people begin to isolate themselves from others who have differing views, and they fail to modify their views when confronted with evidence that suggests that they may not have made an appropriate initial assessment (Allport, 1958; Dweck & Ehrlinger, 2006). This isolation sets the stage for a stronger us vs. them dichotomy facilitated by an ease with which people on opposing sides of the conflict become quick to label those with opposing views as being overall immoral, evil or bad based entirely on the evidence that is presented.

### **Characteristics of Terrorism**

The process of worldview building and developing prejudice through that worldview building informs the characteristics of terrorist groups. Within the study of terrorism and terrorist movements, it is important to take note of some defining characteristics of terrorism; these characteristics allows for the delineation between terrorist activity, conventional warfare, and guerilla tactics. Table 1 highlights the differences between Terrorism, Guerilla War and Conventional War (Merari, 2007).

**Table 1** Characteristics of Terrorism, Guerrilla War, and Conventional War as Modes of Violent Struggle

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	Conventional War	Guerrilla War	Terrorism
Unit size in battle	Large (armies, corps, divisions)	Medium (platoons, companies, Small battalions)	(usually fewer than ten persons)
Weapons	Full range of military hardware (air force, armor, artillery, etc.)	Mostly infantry-type light weapons but sometimes artillery	Hand guns, hand grnades, assault rifles, and special ized pieces as well weap ons (e.g., car bombs, remote- control bombs, barometric pressure bombs)
Tactics	Usually joint operations involving several military branches	Commando-type	Specialized: kidnapping, assassinations, car bomb ing, hijacking, barricade - hostage etc.
Targets	Mostly military units, industrial and transportation infrastructure	Mostly military, police, and administration staff, as well as political opponents	State symbols, political opponents, and the public at large
Intended impact	Physical destruction	Mainly physical attrition of the enemy	Psychological coercion
Control of territory	Yes	Yes	No
Uniform	Wear uniform	Often wear uniform	Do not wear uniform
Recognition of war Zones	War limited to recognized geographical area	War limited to the country in strife	No recognized war zones; operations carried out worldwide
International legality	Yes, if conducted by rules	Yes, if conducted by rules	No
Domestic legality	Yes	No	No

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As seen in Table 1, terrorism is quite different from other methods of warfare in many distinct areas. One important distinction is that terrorists do not seek to acquire or control a physical territorial space; one of the defining characteristics of traditional warfare is that it is usually centered on some form of territorial acquisition (Merari, 2007).



Because terrorists do not usually operate out of a specified territorial base, they tend to immerse themselves within a small community. This causes them to operate in small units in order to maintain their anonymity and security, rather than conducting affairs in the corps or battalions of the military. Further, although terrorists may use military type weapons such as sniper rifles and grenades, they also will use anything at their disposal in order to achieve their overall goal. Terrorists will use car bombs, remote detonated devices, chemical gas, etc. The goal for these terrorists in their choice of weapon is to cause not only damage, but also to cause anxiety, fear, and panic. This is the primary tactic of terrorist organizations overall; their primary strategy is to exert psychological influence on a population (Merari, 2007). The psychological element of terrorism is discussed in depth in the next section. Where conventional and guerrilla warfare focus on the traditional, honorable rules of modern warfare, terrorists do not hesitate to step outside of these boundaries and use whatever strategy or tactic will help them to accomplish what they are after.

Differences between conventional warfare, guerrilla warfare and terrorism would be incomplete without a discussion of the morality concept for these three types of warfare. Conventional warfare is traditionally considered to be more “moral” and “humane” as it is conducted within certain parameters of actions that are considered acceptable, and theoretically avoiding using methods that are deemed unacceptable or immoral (Cornell University Law School). Conventional warfare is bound by the terms of the 1949 Geneva Convention which prohibits certain actions during wartime; these include but are not limited to granting wounded soldiers access to medical care, protecting medical personnel including hospital ships, affording humane and proper treatment to prisoners of war, prohibiting the use of torture to gain access to information from prisoners of war, and protecting civilians from inhumane treatment and attack (Cornell University Law School). The terms of the Geneva Convention bind the nations which are party to the Convention to these specific rules of warfare. The limitation of the Geneva Convention is that not all nations have agreed to the terms of the protocols; and further, terrorist movements (as organizations rather than nations) are not bound by the Geneva Convention or any other code of conduct for warfare.

Terrorist organizations operate under an entirely different set of guidelines that are shaped by culture, political, and religious ideology, and are not bound by other nations’ definitions of moral and immoral actions (Jenkins, 2006). Terrorism is a form of violence which shatters the war convention and the traditional political code (Walzer, 2006). In attempting to define terrorism with one sole purpose belittles the ideology that is associated within the environment of what terrorism is. The characteristics of what is terrorism has changed over the centuries.

Effectively defining the characteristics of terrorism lies within the original definition of terrorism. The word 'terrorism' was originally described as the "systematic order of terror" which was utilized to rule the reluctant citizenry of 18th century France (Roberts, 2006). In the more recent history of terrorism, the evolution of terrorist characteristics have evolved. There is a less uniformly defined concept of what an act of terrorism may be, and that is the "systematic use of fear and criminal activity to achieve goals or objectives that a specific organization has planned" (Razzak, 2003). As a group, the network of terrorism works. Yet when considering that inside the group, the people consider themselves to be freedom fighters. Which is why there is a need for understanding that a primary characteristic of terrorism is ground within the field of psychology. The field of psychology considers that the concept of terrorism is more of a group dynamic need which allows for the universal psychological processes to take shape. The unconscious fear of death is removed when the concept of personal significance is guided toward a person who is a member of the terrorist organization (DeAngelis, November 2009).

Considering that there is significant violence that may occur from a terrorist act, there is a belief that the people committing the violence are doing so due to them being brainwashed. Although this concept has an aspect of reality outside of the terrorist culture, within there is a lifestyle for which the people participating believe. Horgan (2009) stated that people become more involved in terrorist networks due to the ease of acceptance. Utilizing group dynamics, becoming part of a terrorist network makes sense. As each individual joins the network for their own progressive reason, they are systematically integrated into the network to allow for growth and development. The network is then able to grow as an organization which has needs. The needs surrounding a terrorist network are guided by ideals and violence (Horgan, 2009).

Political leaders are required to follow a specific set of rules, which are guided by the people and accepted by the mass population. The differentiation between a political environment within a State and terrorism is that the leaders of a terrorist network exist within a political environment, yet, do not follow the internal rules structure. What hinders a society's leadership is the same freedom that terrorist networks are able to enjoy. Further, terrorist networks are not maintained internationally by treatise, rules or structure. Rather they operate outside of the international spectrum allowing for their own rule to occur. This rule may include violence within their own State or toward other States who are seen as the aggressors (Pittel & Rubbelke, 2009). Terrorism is not the only form of violence that occurs outside of the internationally accepted rules of war, but it is the most frequently used form of violence that falls outside of these accepted rules of war (Merari, 2007).

Because terrorists target non-combatants and civilians specifically, and because they frequently kill civilians through their methods (which steps outside of Walzer's morality litmus test for terrorists), terrorism can correctly be characterized as an illegal and unacceptable form of warfare for its consistent and blatant breaking of the moral standards in warfare (Merari, 2007). However, one element of the morality issue that needs to be reiterated is that terrorists do not follow the guidelines of morality as outlined by their enemies; instead they create their own morals and values. Terrorists also do not wage war according to the internationally accepted rules of warfare of their enemies, but they wage war by their own standards (Merari, 2007).

Terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and Hezbollah use their own standards of morality to maximize the amount of psychological impact over the communities they desire to influence. This psychological impact is the terrorists' primary strategy that they employ against a population. By operating outside of the internationally accepted standards of warfare, they cause fear among the targeted populations, as civilians never have the feeling that they are safe or that they will be protected as non-combatants (Merari, 2007). Civilians never know where or when to expect that an attack might occur and organizations such as Al Qaeda and Hezbollah use this to their advantage in controlling the psyche of those they wish to target.

Though this psychological element is the primary (and the most essential) strategy terrorist organizations use, there are five smaller strategies that are used which support the larger goal of psychological impact which Ariel Merari (2007) refers to as the essentials of the psychological impact. The first of these strategies is called propaganda by deed (Merari, 2007), where terrorists commit deeds which will ensure massive media coverage (such as car bombings) that kill the largest number possible. They then propagandize the media response to further disseminate a message of fear throughout the population; endless images being shown on news reports and in newspapers ensure that the deeds stay on the minds of every person with relatively easy access. The media coverage helps the terrorist organization achieve the shock value it was looking for (Merari, 2007).

According to Merari (2007), a second act that terrorists use in gaining psychological impact is that of intimidation. In some instances the terrorist organization needs to coerce a large population in a short amount of time, and so it uses the strategy of intimidation to make that happen. Usually intimidation works when a high-ranking authority such as a government official or a judge is kidnapped and the terrorist organization threatens violence in the form of torture, maiming or assassination (Merari, 2007).

The threats and intimidation is not just for the ones that were kidnapped; these threats are designed to bring the entire population to its knees as the second part of the intimidation technique is the promise of violence against all those that were in support of the person kidnapped and their failed policies (Merari, 2007). Furthermore, this sends the message that any part of the population that had been neutral on a decision will now be inclined to give the terrorists what they are after, rather than see violence enacted against the community.

Within the terrorist organizations, it is important for the terrorists to gain public support for their actions against the government. Without the support of the population, violence could unite the community with the government against the terrorist organization, rather than draw support which supports the ideals being sought by the terrorist organization. The terrorist organization requires an action by the government that they deem unacceptable, so the terrorist organization is justified in a violent response, and they can validate their behavior with their supporters as little more than a defensive tactic. The third act of terrorism is the act of provocation. The design is to create or develop an action that provokes the government to respond with some reaction that forces the public to view the terrorist organization as the abuser. Provocation forces the government to become the abuser in retaliation (Merrari, 2007). The organization then has the legitimacy it needs to respond with increased violence against the government; it is at this point that the organization wants to gain the support of the community in its rampage against the government. By provoking the government to act, the community becomes further incensed by the repression the government responds toward the terrorist organizations with, and this bolsters sympathy toward the goals of the terrorist organizations (Merari, 2007). The community may even begin to view the organization as freedom fighters, rather than as terrorists, which has a significant impact on the organization's ability to affect some type of change.

Provocation is just one way terrorist organizations seek to demonstrate the fallacies within the government. The strategy of promoting chaos is also designed to demonstrate to the population that the government is ill equipped to deal with large-scale disaster if the terrorist organizations display the government's inability, this garners additional support from the population for the idea and promotion of the removal of the government authorities in charge. The terrorists implement a strategy of creating chaos on a large scale, they then use the slow and frequently ineffective government response to push forth a change in regime based on the current government's ineffectiveness in dealing with the problems that plague the population (Merari, 2007).

This strategy works best for the organization if the general population is not aware of who is causing the chaos in the first place, and can be a delicate balance to manage, one where the terrorist organization: 1) needs the sympathy of the community in acting out against the government; 2) must gain this sympathy while causing doubt in the effectiveness of the government it is fighting against; and 3) must do this without turning the community against the efforts of the terrorists themselves. The strategy of chaos is an attempt to further influence the mood of the public in their favor so that they may continue (without hindrance) their struggle against the government (Merari, 2007).

The political motivation of a terrorist organization is rarely known outside of the organization. The internal government focuses on governing the people and when a terrorist network is known within its borders, the goal should be to remove the organization at all costs. At times, a terrorist organization can develop itself as a freedom opportunity against other, outside governments who are causing internal degradation. Other times the terrorist organization develops to guide the people against its own government. An example of this is Hezbollah, who focused its political aggression toward Israel because the homeland was not taking care of the problem. In this instance the organization will utilize the host nation as part of the problem so that it can hold out against the resolve of the government (Kegley, 2002).

In some cases, terrorist organizations attempt to wear out the resolve of the governments they are fighting against regarding less important issues in order to face decreased resistance when the organization fights against the government regarding what they have deemed to be more important issues. This is known as the strategy of attrition, and it is quite common in all forms of warfare (Merari, 2007). Wearing down the enemy to exhaustion in order to launch a final offensive is not a new idea; what is new about the idea is removing it from the files of conventional war tactics and its implementation by terrorist organizations to be used against the government. With any response to a terrorist activity, the government must weigh the economic, political, and social costs of the response; the organization hopes that the government will decide the cost is too high in minor issues, and thus, they will not fight back with the same stamina the terrorist organization has shown (Merari, 2007). The strategy of attrition aims to wear down not only the resolve of the government to fight back, but also to wear down its resources which will then hurt the ability of the government to respond when the organization begins its fight for their primary issue.

These five techniques that terrorist organizations use are just some of the techniques used to instill fear within the general population and amongst government officials. In discussing each of these five techniques, it is important to remember that the purpose of each one is to support the larger goal of psychological influence over the population. These five techniques are general outlines, and organizations such as Hezbollah and Al Qaeda have used these techniques as well as others in their fight against their enemies. Ultimately, the primary goal is psychological influence, and terrorist will use whatever techniques are at their disposal in order to cause the greatest amount of paralyzing fear possible.

### **Psychology of Terrorism**

The image that is conjured within society when the word terrorist is uttered is of an individual that causes fear, abuse, and violence. When considering what it takes to become a terrorist, many individuals may believe that persons considered terrorists are filled with a specific psychopathy. Post (2007) suggests that people tend to believe that terrorists are fanatics who are out to gain power or precedence through their chosen obsessions. The idea of a normal individual who chooses to become a terrorist does not fit with the everyday conceptualization of the psychology of a terrorist, yet the research shows that people who choose to commit many of the terrorist based atrocities within society have a normal functioning brain. The people who are involved as terrorist and are in fact no different than the people who are reading this article (Horgan, 2005 & Post, 2007). Through interviews Horgan (2005) analyzed people who are known to be involved as terrorists and came to the conclusion that each of these people are to be considered normal from all natural or psychological standards. Developing a clearer picture of what occurs within an individual's mind may be close to impossible; yet, through the analysis of quality evaluation, researchers are better able to explain exactly what factors are at play in an individual's development into a terrorist. The primary factor that can be established to explain a young terrorist is a person of youth who has an inferiority complex (Horgan, 2005).

Borum (2007) considered various means in which an individual would choose to be part of a terrorist network. Joining a terrorist network is a conscious decision which is developed through a socially constructed environment. This environment is typically found among people who are average or above average in terms of educational and socio-economic backgrounds. Borum's research shows that people who are of lower socioeconomic status tend to react more quickly and offer more political violence such as riots rather than specific targeted terrorism. Further, an individual network is more apt to be developed within a society that is surrounded by a poverty environment, yet it is not developed or created by the poor (Borum, 2007).

People of higher socioeconomic means begin to develop their network by bringing an environment of comfort to a small group of people at a time. The people that are targeted tend to be people of little or no education who are seeking a cause to believe in, and find reason to believe the people who are coming to them have a purpose that will bring them to a better place. Poverty is not the cause of terrorism, yet it is a necessary aspect in recruitment of future participants. This poverty is also an important factor in developing a reason to find cause of angst toward the aggressor. Inevitably, recruitment can only occur if the people that are being recruited feel that their purpose can be met, and that their angst toward a perpetrator can be rectified (Post, 2007).

### **Recruitment through social construction**

Considering the power of a terrorist network, alongside the validity of a cause, the theoretical construct of social construction can be utilized to explain why and how an individual may see a terrorist network working toward their benefit rather than an environment of evil (Post, 2007). The theory of social construction is a concept that is focused on the dependence of contingent variables which are facilitated within our social selves. These different social selves are constructed through various underlying assumptions that an individual is a combination of their reality, knowledge and learned environment (Beaumie, 2006). When considering how social construction facilitates the development of the terrorist narrative within the realm of terrorist development and/or recruitment, the goal is not to offer a truthful representation of the landscape, rather the role of the controlling recruiter is to develop a conscious redirected toward an altered truth (Borum, 2007). In order to develop an altered truth in recruiting people into a network, the environment needs to have been deconstructed politically. Further the political deconstruction needs to leave behind at least one nation state or religious organization for the blame of circumstance (Blanford, 2011). For a terrorist network to continue its recruitment, then it needs to maintain its skills in recruitment. Prior to creating a recruitment team, the network leaders need to develop an environment in which they can convert individuals. This conversion is enabled through the system of social construction (Turk, 2008). The leaders develop a hierarchy which allows for them to recruit through an individual means. The strategic logic behind individual recruitment allows for the network to build a narrative for a small group toward recruitment rather than try and recruit the whole village at one time (Pape, 2006).

In seeking recruitment of new members to join a terrorist network, the strategy is to seek out people who are knowingly unhappy with the political enemy and can be taught why the cause is of value. A primary goal that is able to be shared between a recruiter and a recruit is that of future success. The understanding of group dynamics is that an individual alone is not enough to destroy the enemy; therefore the building of a network is deemed a necessity. This process is not a short or easy transition, yet the more an organization gains international acclaim the easier it is for a network to recruit new people (Pape, 2006). Exposures to the ideologies which justify terrorism are a crucial aspect in maintaining recruitment. The recruiters continue to educate the surrounding people in reference to the behaviors of the non-committed versus the ideologies of a possible perfect future, frequently through the worldviewing process. With this education in mind, the recruiters develop an argument of, 'if only they were not here, all would be perfect' (Turk, 2008), which in turn fosters an increase in prejudice and escalates the cycle of indoctrination.

In the discussion of what helps to create or develop a terrorist, one of the most important mind altering techniques is the use of a collective identity. The goal is to be able to develop a social psychology of internal networks to help and envelop an individual into the collective so that any sub groups or alternate options are no longer viable. This ability gives the leaders of these organizations sole control over a person who moves from outsider to recruit, then finally toward member. Being part of the inner sanctum is desired by all, but is a reward only offered as part of membership, and is only bestowed on only a few of the people involved (Post 2007). Recruitment of members into Hezbollah.

Terrorist networks may have a well-defined and developed model in which to seek out new recruits. Yet each network has a purpose it can use as a cause for recruitment. Two of the most successful networks in recruitment are Hezbollah and Al Qaeda. Post (2007) describes how the history of Hezbollah is filled with circumstances that allowed for people in positions of power to use the development of an altered worldview to advance the role for the Shi'ite people. The socio-political environment within Libya was disastrous enough that very little tugging was needed to show the people there could be another way.



The history of Hezbollah may be able to be traced back to Musa al-Sadr who developed the groundwork for development and recruitment of a new religious sect. In his commentary, he stated::

Today we shout out loud the wrongs against us, that cloud of injustice that has followed us since the beginning of our history. Starting from today, we will no longer complain or cry. Our name is not mitwaldi. Our name is “men of refusal,” “Men of vengeance,” “Men who revolt against all tyranny,” even though this costs us our blood and our lives. – Musa al-Sadr (Wright, 1985, p. 58)

This theme may sound similar to the context spoken by Hitler in Munich. When creating a fanatical system and sharing with the people that they will be needed to advance a cause, there has to be a certain aggressive emotion involved. The mentality of the youth movement (a primary component of Hezbollah’s recruitment) is developed through an understanding that their station in life is due to a government who does not care combined with a neighbor who will attack at any time (Post, 2007). “The neighbor that may attack” is a primary recruiting tool for a terrorist network such as Hezbollah who target Israel for their religious beliefs, and for their mere existence. The Shi’ite people then internalize this further and take the stance that Israel and its religion need to be exterminated. The people of Hezbollah believe strongly that their own religion is the only valid option and that anyone infringing on this religion is causing a societal abnormality (Blanford, 2011).

Blanford (2011) shares how according to the worldviews of Hezbollah, Israel was part of the problem and needed to be removed from the map. The Iranians that were sent to remove the problem of the Israeli forces in the South were met with trepidation from the local people, as they did not see Israel as a threat. Over a period of time the area of Bekaa became a religious mecca. The original intent of the forces was to remove the Israeli threat and to develop an awareness of the religious value. Slowly, yet certainly as part of the strategy, the guards integrated into the societal fabric and along with other people that arrived from Iran came to develop a city within the area of Bekaa. Clerics had arrived as the transformation of the original location became altered to look like and resemble a city that was approved by the Khomeini. Further, the clerics took away many of the pleasures people had and altered the environment to teach the Koran and Khomeini’s theories of Islam. These changes led to the development of Hezbollah and soon to the recruitment of future Hezbollah members (Blanford, 2011).

The Sheik and his clerics worked to draw on the Quran to aide them in facilitating an avenue for developing strength. This use was designed specifically to bring into question the intentions of Israel and the Jewish people. The meaning of Hezbollah is the “Party of God,” which in essence was a strong contradiction to the Jewish notion of one God (Post, 2007). The further use of developing the name Hezbollah lead to an intense anti-Israeli sentiment which allowed for the people in the village to believe that what they were doing is what is best for Lebanon. The more that Hezbollah dehumanized Israel the easier it was to find recruits willing to participate in the movement (Post, 2007).

Saad-Ghorayeb (2002) further demonstrates how Hezbollah was able to help guide the people who were thought of as second class citizens in their own land. Hezbollah wrote publicly how they are the first party to oppose deprivation of the impoverished, the first party to be a champion of the peasants and the farmers, the laborers and the poor, the oppressed and the deprived, the workers and the homeless. With the economy in decline and the people needing a leader to come and help rescue them, Hezbollah had an opportunity to recruit through social development and humanistic welfare (Saad-Ghorayeb, 2002). Hezbollah understood that the people’s resentment toward the Lebanese government was a system in which they could develop fertile radicalism for their cause (Post, 2007).

The people of Baalbek were being drafted into the nation of Hezbollah in a swift yet respectful manner. In an interview with one of the members, Post (2007) references a quote from Hamza akl Hamieh:

From an early age, I used to go to pray in the Mosques. I later volunteered for the Amal youth movement, where I underwent early training, which helped me mature and reach the state of mind in which I eventually joined Hezbollah. In those lessons we were taught the unique nature of our religion and that the Ashura distinguishes us from other streams of Islam. In the lessons on religion and customs, I began to feel the revolutionary atmosphere...” (p. 164)

This commentary is symbolic in that it is very close to the same manner in which Hitler was able to develop many recruits. As youths, people are more susceptible to belief and conversion. Hezbollah was a well-developed group that began through infiltrating villages through the promise of a better life. They then branched out through the religious clergy by showing the people what a better life looked like, all the while sharing their young students with the clerics.

As a good nature organization, Hezbollah was also deeply involved in the social service aspect of its network, remaining actively involved in charities, humanitarian efforts, and other social work. Each of these situations allows for Hezbollah to recruit new members and to train them alongside the youth in order to develop a stronger more indentured network (Post, 2007).

Hezbollah continues to offer its social aide to the community through financial grants and educational loans which are offered to a person or groups of people to be able to attend higher educational schools. According to Hala (1997), these people return to Hezbollah after completing their education, and become an integral part of the organization through becoming officers.

Hezbollah has a strong internal structure that works to maintain itself through metamorphosis. Rather than simply remaining an outside force working for the benefit of Lebanon, Hezbollah joined the mainstream political environment. Slowly Hezbollah has been gaining power through the political spectrum which allows for it to recruit people more easily. Since its inception Hezbollah has built itself into a network that internally seeks to build a better Shi'ite people and on the outside is working to remove infidels that differentiate the Islamic religion (Addis & Blanchard, 2011).

### **Recruitment into Al Qaeda.**

Al-Qaeda offers a different type of terrorist network and helps to elucidate the differences between terrorist networks and methodologies. Post (2007) wrote how Osama Bin Laden, the former leader of Al Qaeda, was an educated man who developed a vision for a better Islamic nation after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. Although Bin Laden is credited with the development of Al Qaeda, it was another leader who used the charisma and leadership of Bin Laden to develop the theory of imprisonment. Abdullah Azam was Bin Laden's mentor while in college, and it was Azam that showed Bin Laden the vision for what was to become Al Qaeda. The focus began through recruitment. The original recruiting strategy was a worldwide effort to remove the "Godless Soviet Union." This strategy may seem very open and wide spread, yet the original idea was also a tactic to view the desire for a militant wing. As the people received the news of a new militant style network, the more they viewed their world position as a negative one and wanted to force change. The outreach of the original recruitment request managed to secure 5000 people from Saudi Arabia, 3000 from Algeria and 2000 from Egypt. This group became known as the Afghan Arabs and started as the nucleus of the Al Qaeda network (Post, 2007).

An intriguing portion of the Al Qaeda development is its use of the Quran as a dominant discourse for recruitment. The Quran states that “Allah favors the weak and the underdog,” which is why Afghanistan (with American financial Aid) was able to defeat the Soviets. Ultimately this sent the message that God is on the side of the weak, and will remain so. This is a very simple template, yet it is the foundation with which Al Qaeda uses to recruit new members. Al Qaeda is a network that is steeped within religion and utilizes the Quran as the focal point of its development. This connection is what allows for the recruitment process to spread out of immediate communities to allow for cluster cells to be developed.

The founder of Al Qaeda, (Osama Bin Laden) worked diligently to develop a system which allows for recruiters to seek out people who are willing to adopt a new religion which is focused on Islamic fundamentalist beliefs. These beliefs are adapted so that recruits can understand the basic principles yet further understand that the threat for Al Qaeda is from the industrialized western nations and from non-believers. A common system of recruitment is within prisons or areas of lower socioeconomic status (Gerwehr & Daly, 2006). As time moved forward, Al Qaeda continued to modify their recruitment strategies, and leadership quickly found that by becoming a global terrorist network Al Qaeda was afforded the opportunity to expand their version of Islam. The term Jihad, which had previously been understood by Muslims to mean an internal and personal struggle of the self, was redefined by Al Qaeda to mean a Holy War, where people fight (literally) in the name of Allah.

Operative cells within Al Qaeda work in tandem toward maintaining their mission. When recruiting new members, a primary model allows for a new cell to maintain the premise, yet it is not imperative to operate as an absolute. The concept within Al Qaeda is that they have a sustainable model and allow for cells to develop around the model so that each is able to achieve a primary goal of destroying the infidels. The core of Al Qaeda is maintained while the outside is more fluidly developing. To many it may seem as if outreach has little or no coordination, yet, Osama Bin Laden realized from the beginning that in order to spread the word of Al Qaeda and to develop a network of people that are terrorists, each operative unit needed to be allowed to metamorphose itself rather than be controlled with an iron fist (Byman, 2010).

### **Why Terrorism Works**

The development of a terrorist organization requires an environment that is ripe with social degradation and has idealistic minded people who are able to believe in a cause (Coles, 2010). Suffering oppression from its own government or another nation is a crucial component in fostering the development of terrorist organizations.

The oppression is vital for creating blame for the current status of the surviving people. Furthermore, oppression allows for the development of hate to occur, which in turn creates a psychological opportunity to develop a terrorist narrative (Coles, 2010).

Blanford (2011) discusses that the history of Hezbollah and Al Qaeda are developed around an oppressed society which has found its voice through aggression and violence. Their cause is said to be for the benefit of a society which is enveloped into the ideological word of God. Both organizations have targeted different types of nations for their continued existence; yet, these organizations still use the same methods to maintain their existence. For example, the image to the people is that both organizations employ bottom up organizational structures in order to address the needs of the people. The administrative environment of both organizations is top down from a power perspective, yet maintains an image of transformational power (bottom up) (Blanford 2011).

The type of hostile environment that needs to be developed for a terrorist organization to operate requires considerable psychological experience. The types of people that are able to create a terrorist organization simultaneously work toward developing their own culture. They do this through social construction, developing a community through a new language, religion, and a common philosophy (Gergen, 1999). This shared language, religion, and philosophy serve to otherize and further alienate groups which are the targets of terrorist activities, a process which is compounded by a strengthening of worldviews.

A major component of world viewing is narrative, and within this context, terrorism becomes a narrative all of its own primarily because terrorism does not accept “losing” as a viable option and see death or annihilation as preferable to defeat. The group themselves is part of the population and not part of the government which allows for them to maintain their own rules. The ideology of terrorism is to be able to create systemic change for the population and to be able to sustain this system of fear. The fear that is being elicited develops an unconscious hatred toward the targeted group and allows for the terrorist group to solidify its cause by manipulating its followers (Turk, 2008).

## **Conclusion**

While the definition of terrorism is a hotly debated topic among academics, politicians, and the general public, there is no question that terrorist organizations operate outside the “accepted” rules of war and seek to gain political and social ground by striking terror in the hearts of their enemies.

Since the rise in terrorist attacks aimed at the Western world, scholars have tried to determine the profile of a terrorist and to dissect how terrorism works. Pape (2006) made it clear that a terrorist isn't much different than any other person, and cannot be defined by social, economic, or educational status. This unclear picture of a terrorist then leaves the world wondering how terrorist organizations are able to form and be successful. Byman (2003) noted that Al Qaeda is one of the most formidable terrorist groups the United States has ever encountered and has left policy makers questioning how to counteract such a well formed and entrenched group. Hezbollah has also proven itself to be a well formed group especially following its victories in democratic elections.

Al Qaeda and Hezbollah are prime examples of how worldviewing and prejudice create a psychological situation that allows for the development of a terrorist organization. Both organizations have developed worldviews that enable a feeling of being wronged and righteousness that empower its members to feel a deep prejudice against their enemies. At the same time their worldviewing seeps into the fabric of their societies making recruitment an easier task because members of the target recruitment population see the terrorist organizations as representing their fundamental rights and interests. This tactic can be seen in the strategies of both organizations. As discussed in the characteristics of terrorism, terrorist groups often begin by infiltrating a small community. This can help spread the point of view of the organization by spreading through a small, contained social structure before branching out. By developing prejudice against non-Muslims and the West, the organizations can create a sense of rightness in possible recruits and can mobilize them through the worldview that God is on their side.

It is only through a marriage of worldview building, prejudice creation, and psychological reasoning that terrorist organizations can operate. Each of these facets of terrorist development help to reinforce the othering and build a complete justification for terrorism in the mind of terrorists. The developed worldview helps reinforce the prejudice which develops out of the psychological mindset of a population, and in a cyclical nature, then bolsters the worldviews and prejudice again. To non-terrorists, it seems that a logical person wouldn't engage in terrorism, but by understanding that terrorism doesn't occur in a vacuum but rather through the careful crafting of a point of view that supports a terrorist organization, membership in a terrorist group is easier to understand. The careful indoctrination and recruitment process that both Al Qaeda and Hezbollah demonstrate and show the indoctrination process that builds to actual acts of terrorism. Both of these groups have developed a prejudice against the Western Nations and Israel and othered its enemies by crafting a purpose that supports its mission such as the elimination of Israel or the expulsion of Western culture.

As Byman (2003) points out, it is through understanding not only the terrorist organizations but also its members that policies can be developed to counteract terrorism. It is clear that Al Qaeda and Hezbollah have developed a clear worldview that incorporated deep religious conviction coupled with prejudice to develop broad organizations that have infiltrated the mainstream in their respective societies. Through this complete psychology of worldview development and prejudice, both organizations have become entrenched and formidable enemies, yet our growing understanding of their operations and the psychology of their recruitment and retention efforts, policies makers can now develop more effective counterterrorism methodologies.

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