The Antithesis: Unveiling Radical Islam’s Subversive Methods Directed Against the Democratic Institution

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Abstract

The phenomena of terrorism inherently exploit the pillars of a democratic society in an effort to subvert modernization among civilizations. The emergence of non-state actors and supra-indigenous groups has led to the overtue of Fourth Generation Warfare (4th GW); an attack by radical Islam against modernity and the West in the antithesis. This onslaught against the antithesis by radical Islam comprises a blurring of lines among war and politics, soldier and civilian, religion and governance. As a result, radical Islam contends that the antithesis is an institution responsible for the social inequalities and injustices of focused against Muslim worldwide. Therefore, 4th GW fosters pressure from the bottom, such as grass root social and religious upheaval, while simultaneously applying pressure from within creating institutional crisis directed against the modern state architecture, its sovereignty and right to self-determination. In light of radical Islam’s attack on the antithesis, this paper will unveil the subterfuge of methods employed through the art of 4th GW in undermining democratic institutional precepts, methods which include: insightful messaging, destabilizing jurisprudence and deceptive philanthropic means.

Key words: International Terrorism, Fourth Generation Warfare, Radical Islam, Counterterrorism

Introduction

The center of gravity in 4th Generation Warfare (GW) is the concept of granularity, i.e. the use of decentralized social structure known as the Ummah enables radical Islam the ability to wage asymmetrical activities against the democratic institution. The evolution of 4th GW has eclipsed the various traits of warfare beginning with the Napoleonic War comprising mass armies to that of aggregated firepower - WWI, the introduction of maneuver in WWII, and more recently that which reflects Mao’s Peoples War - insurgency. In a more contemporary form, the reflections of Marxism, a ideological conflict steeped in the precepts of Islamic theocracy converging on the principles of the democratic institution and pillars of national power. Herein rests the Marxian conflict of thesis (theocracy) - antithesis (democracy) and the resulting use of asymmetrical warfare by radical Islam to gain victory over the occident, restoring the caliph and a system of Islamic order. Therefore, 4th GW assaults the modern democratic institution along various lines of effort, e.g. technology, governance, rule of law, social order, economic development and diplomacy which are enablers to a stable, secure and prosperous modern global
society. This is accomplished on two levels: pressure from the bottom through popular support, and pressure from within through institutional reform. In all, that which exploits the grass roots movement and institutional integrity of democracy. These strategies are facilitated through the openness of modern society permitting the permeation of subversive means, e.g. insightful messaging, destabilizing jurisprudence and deceptive philanthropy which undermines and tears at the very fabric of a modern democratic society.

For example, Thomas Jefferson offered some 200 years ago that free press is one of the cornerstones to a free democratic society. However, consider the proliferation of insightful media content which is delivered or influenced by radical Islamic organizations to disrupt, discredit or dissuade the public perception with the intent of eroding public confidence. Such an attack on the state institution demonstrates the viability of 4th GW in an effort to spread fear and advance the goals of terrorist organizations (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008). Secondly, radical Islam views religion as a holistic system dealing with all aspects of life. Spreading the principle that Islam is the creed and state, book and sword and a way of life in essence moving radical Islam from the confines of the Mosque to the halls of government (Servold, G.). Thirdly, through these precepts, radical Islam uses an informal social network combined with philanthropic tendencies that are relatively impervious to regulatory state control enabling the process of jihad to advance against the antithesis (Servold, G.).

Simply stated, the supplanting of democratic institutions is currently taking place throughout the free world, among them are states such as France, Germany, United States, Canada, Holland, Spain, Italy, etc. As evidenced below, 4th GW is the harbinger of radical Islam. By implementing the subversive means of insightful messaging, destabilizing jurisprudence and deceptive philanthropy radical Islam conducts successive and redundant advances against the democratic institution chipping away at the cornerstones of constitutional rights and state power. Thus, how does radical Islam undermine the pillars of liberty, modern society and the institutional architecture using the asymmetry of 4th GW? What methods are used to undermine the principles of the modern state system? And, why do such actions reflect the attitude of radical Islamist organizations throughout the world?

**Messaging**

It is important to understand that terrorist organizations continuously scout for various message channel outlets through which to propagate their recruitment drives, ideology and propaganda. As jihadists encounter increasing difficulties with organizational websites, they quickly discover the utility in turning towards Western social media outlets such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. To emphasize this, terrorist organizations refer to online media or information activities as propaganda jihad or media jihad. This concept is based on the well-known Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad: "One who sees a wrong must correct it with his hand, and if he cannot, then with his tongue, and if he cannot, then in his heart" (Al-Hadj, 2010). The importance of messaging among jihadist groups is evidenced by the so-called Internet Jihad Brigades Invasion who uses this medium to spread the message of Jihadist ideology, etc. The objective of this group is the transfer of material to social networking outlets. Most notably is the use of YouTube as the primary clearinghouse for one of America's most wanted terrorists, Anwar Al-Awlaki. Al-Awlaki provides spiritual guidance and inspiration for several recent successful and failed terror attacks in the U.S., e.g. Major Nidal Hasan, Umar Farooq Abdulmutallab, and Faisal Shahzad each showing connectivity to Awlaki. As of the last
reporting, there are over 5,000 videos on YouTube which proliferate Awlaki’s message of jihad (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008). Additionally, it is purported that Al-Zawahiri stated that “more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media.” As directed by Al-Zawahiri, “film everything; this is good advice for all mujahedeen. You should be aware that every frame you take is as good as a missile fired at the Crusader enemy and his puppets” (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008). Such activities are not alone, many other media outlets in the Muslim world campaign intensively against the U.S. and the West, presenting both as eternal enemies of Muslims and as a satanic force conspiring against the Muslims and their Islamic faith (Al-Hadj, 2010).

The difference today is that Muslims now have many more opportunities to access the writings and songs that are the source of extremist ideals. These extremist forums, literature and media are readily available online at jihadist forums and websites. These are powerful magnets for Muslims, especially young Muslims, who are looking for answers (Al-Hadj, 2010). Prominent terrorists play an active role in these organizations’ online media activities. For example, the perpetrator of the December 2009 Khost CIA base bombing, Jordanian terrorist Humam Al-Balawi, was a writer and supervisor on the Al-Hesbah forum, which served as the main jihadist forum until it was shut down (Al-Hadj, 2010). There are also cases where terrorist organizations actually force media to publish their motivations, so that people throughout the world read about it. For example, Croatian hijackers of a TWA airplane in 1976 demanded that flyers be dropped over several large cities and more importantly that high ranking newspaper such as the New York Times and the Washington Post print statements made by terrorist organizations. In light of this act of terrorism, the newspapers agreed and printed the statements (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008).

The broadcasting of such messaging affords exposure at the international level, building legitimacy behind the face of terrorism. For example, PLO leader Yassir Arafat gained legitimacy when he managed to speak at the United Nations General Assembly in 1974. His speech was, of course, broadcast throughout the world, much like speeches of other leaders. This speech provided him with the opportunity to prove himself an actual leader, despite his terrorist activities. Therefore, speeches conducted at the UN are foreseen as an important platform in the legitimization process for terrorist organizations (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008). It is also important to note that terrorists are not necessarily interested in the deaths of three, or thirty Ī or even of three thousand Ī people; but, rather to allow the imagination of the target audience to do their work for them. In fact, it is conceivable that the terrorists could attain their aims without carrying out a single attack. The desire to create crisis or pandemonium can be generated through the continuous broadcast of threats and declarations using local radio and TV interviews, and videos with the potential for a viral impact. Thus, these techniques which are familiar methods of psychological warfare are the very essence of 4th GW from a non-lethal standpoint (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008).

In sum, insightful messaging is capable of going viral through informal media networks that surface among internationally syndicated media outlets. The Internet can function as a worldwide press agency. Messages put online by terrorist organizations are picked up by other Internet sites, and may find their way to the regular media. Thus, more people hear about the propaganda than before (COT Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, 2008). In a recent 2008 report, Europol stated that the increasingly sophisticated methods of promoting
this agenda which espouse a 'calling on people to join in the jihad' in particular using the
Internet and other electronic media, have been identified as factors contributing to the increasing
number of radical Islamic terrorists. In fact, al-Qaida has started an Internet media offensive in
2007 to increase messaging effectiveness by translating messages into European languages.
Also, in 2007 it is noted that an increasing number of women are participating in the spread of
radical material over the Internet. In short, the Internet is widely believed to amplify the

Jurisprudence

The establishment of the Islamic Sharia (law) is the controlling basis of the society, and is
the core principle of radical Islam in seeking a Muslim state, the liberation of Muslim countries
from imperialism, and the unification of Muslim nations. Through informal social programs
focused on the disadvantaged low and middle class, radical Islam courts individuals, families,
and communities in creating a state within a state of like-minded Islamists. Radical Islam seeks
to change the nature of the society and state in moderate pro-western governments of the Middle
East through manipulation of the political process and infiltration of key institutions (Servold,
G.). This is accomplished through the use of destabilizing jurisprudence as evidenced by the
interpretation of Shariah law by leading Islamic scholars, lawyers and reasoning judges (Servold,
G.). While there are divergent sects and local variations in the practice of the Islamic faith, a
clear distinction exists between believers and non-believers. Thus, radical Islam capitalizes on
this unifying force as an ideology for the creation of a greater Muslim state and Islamic world.
Radical Islam exploits and promotes this communal religious unification as a protection
measure, recruiting tool, and a 'call to arms' for Muslims to defend their brethren throughout the
world. For example, this sense of religious ideological unity mobilized the 'Arab Afghans' to
fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. From Bosnia to Sudan, to Indonesia, to the Philippines
protection of the Ummah is a familiar 'call to arms' for radical Islamists. Therefore, the
protection of the Ummah is tied to the concept of jihad (Servold, G.). In tying the Ummah to
jihad and the establishment of Shariah law as the controlling basis of society, radical Islam aims
to gain control of the government through the ballot box. With control of the government
secured, the secondary goal is to institute Islamicization of the nation. To accomplish this task
radical Islam uses a two-pronged approach: one at the 'intelligentsia' level and the other at the
'proletariat' level. Through the 'intelligentsia' level radical Islam targets control of social
institutions by infiltrating and attaining prominent positions among professional organizations,
government offices, institutions of higher learning, and labor unions. Through the 'proletariat'
level radical Islam targets popular support through charitable and religious programs. Therefore,
the through-put of such action is to indoctrinate the population with Islamic ideology in order to
form a sympathetic voter base which advocates Islamic objectives through democratic processes.
In sum, the mantra 'Islam is the solution' is a clever tool for drawing popular political support
for the cause and is also a call to stem modernization and globalization promoted by the Western
world (Servold, G.). Initially, it is worth noting that radical Islam acts more as a counter-society
(pressure from the bottom) until such time that the counter-government takes control (pressure
from within); herein lays the asymmetrical threat indicative radical Islam's 4th GW. Hence, in the
case of weak or failing states, this approach to Islamicization offers an alluring alternative to
potential chaos and lawlessness among governments that lack electoral accountability, an
independent judiciary, a clear definition of individual rights and a strong parliamentary
representation. Without these basic tools of governance, existing states are ill-equipped to mitigate the looming goals of radical Islam and the reformation of an Islamist institutional seizure (Servold, G.). The paradoxical dilemma is one which places greater pressure on regulatory compliance by state secular organizations while radical Islamists use the abundance of public space afforded of the mosques to promote radical Islamic agendas (Weber, P.).

Philanthropy

In Islam, almsgiving or charity represents one of the five pillars of the faith. This is known in Arabic as Ṣakat. Much of this funding goes directly to non-governmental organization (NGO) efforts. As such, the strategy of radical Islam relies heavily on this pillar of the Islamic faith to fund social welfare programs that provide for a base of popular support and mobilizing radical Islam cause (Servold, G.). Based on pressure from the bottom, radical Islam uses a structure of charitable non-governmental organizations to formally pursue youth, health, religious, education, and social welfare service programs. By establishing small businesses and factories to generate income, employ members, and employ sympathizers radical Islam exploits membership in formal professional organization and syndicates as a vehicle to influence the national infrastructure (Servold, G.).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Islamic Relief, Mercy International, Muslim Association, Muslim Arab Youth Movement, and the Holy Land Foundation are just the tip of the iceberg encompassing radical Islam worldwide NGO network. These efforts by radical Islam explicitly exploit the ambiguity of philanthropy while maintaining an identifiable presence on college and university campuses that span a global network, e.g. University of South Florida-US, Oxford College and West Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education-UK, Cairo and Al Azhar University-Egypt, Khartoum University-Sudan, Amman University-Jordan, the University of Medina and Jeddah-Saudi Arabia, and Islamic University-Pakistan. While these examples do not provide an exact number of members, the global scope of these organizations suggests a membership in the many millions. In both Europe and the United States new immigrants, driven by a religious requirement, channel their charitable donations back to the country of origin and affiliate radical Islamist organizations which advocate a charitable and a political agenda (Servold, G.).

The use of charitable organizations and small businesses by al Qaeda in the U.S., Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan illustrates a method of gaining financial resources and sustaining sympathetic - passive and active - support of the Muslim base. Al Qaeda's financial backbone is built through the foundation of charities, nongovernmental organizations, mosques, websites, fund-raisers, intermediaries, facilitators, banks and other financial institutions that helped finance the mujahedeen throughout the 1980s (Weber, P.). For example, the Islamic American Relief Agency (IARA) in Columbia, Missouri is an example of the subversive use of a charitable relief organization. This organization claims to provide aid to children and refugees in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. It has even received funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. government agencies totaling $5.8 million in 1998 and 1999. Their web site states: Please help us to help victims (Servold, G.). From a state / non-state relationship, the exploitative use of philanthropy by Saudi Arabia was a primary tool in supporting the mujahedeen during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The network of charities created in support of the Afghan jihad, intentionally and unintentionally, became part of the
funding system of al Qaeda, which emerged among the numerous Islamic organizations based in Afghanistan during the war. At the time of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 the patterns of giving through Islamic charities to promote the spread of radical Islam by resistance movements was firmly established. It simply continued to flow with unrestricted generosity (Weber, P.). More recently, the Holy Land Foundation actively pursued financial support for suicide bombers families from the Muslim Arab Youth Association - one of the largest constituent organizations of the Muslim Brotherhood in the U.S. The Muslim Arab Youth Association (MAYA) maintains chapters and holds conventions in Oklahoma, Arizona, California, Michigan, New Jersey, Illinois, Texas, and Missouri (Servold, G.).

In sum, the debate on relations between terrorist organizations and philanthropy focuses on the involvement of foundations and NPOs in the fund-raising systems of terrorist organizations, more specifically the use of philanthropic organizations as cover. These aspects fail to recognize and deliberate on the greater issue involving the ambiguous use of philanthropy, and may lead to the deterioration of more proactive counter terrorism efforts. Accordingly, national and international law enforcement agencies are unable to further develop and coordinate efficient counter terrorism measures with respect to these deeper interstices of philanthropy’s opacity. As a result, further discussion and consideration must give way to the more controversial problem of whether or not the social infrastructure of an organization such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Muslim Brotherhood, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Muslim World League, International Islamic Relief Organization, etc. constitutes a legitimate target of counter terrorism efforts (Weber, P.). The impunity by which radical Islam subverts the principle of philanthropic contributions to humanity is deplorable. Permitting the egregious exploitation of public trust and confidence under the guise of philanthropy simply amounts to extortion and coercion and the deceit of good will among nations.

A Summary in Perspective – the Organization of the Islamic Conference

The Middle East comprises over 260 million people, is increasingly urban, young, uneducated, and poverty stricken. Fifty-one percent live in cities; forty-three percent are under the age of fifteen; forty-eight percent are illiterate and thirty-three percent earn less than a dollar a day. These demographics describe a society with large segments of disaffected, disenchanted, disillusioned, disgruntled, and disappointed people. This embittered population sees Western modernization and secular government as unresponsive to their plight. In this light, radical Islam promotes a return to strict Islamic doctrine as the way to correct growing social inequities (Servold, G.).

Overshadowing these circumstances is the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its subversive use of insightful messaging, destabilizing jurisprudence and deceptive philanthropy. The OIC is a unique organization, one that has no equivalent in the world. It unites the religious, economic, military, and political strength of 56 states. Close to the Muslim World League of the Muslim Brotherhood, it shares the Brotherhood's strategic and cultural vision: that of a universal religious community, the Ummah, based upon the Koran, the Sunna-Hadith, and the canonical tenets of Sharia. The OIC as a whole represents the universal Islamic community, a community of more than one billion three to six hundred million Muslims (Hofmann, M.). Not only does the OIC enjoy unlimited power through the union and cohesion of all its bodies, but also adds to its infallibility as conferred by religion. The Quran, like all scriptures, deals with the issues of family and community and not with the organization of a State, whether it is a
monarchy or republic. Islam cannot prosper without an Islamic community guided by the Sharia, but it can prosper without a State. Against this backdrop, Islam considers democracy a kafir system. Thus, the Sharia adjudicates independently and with impunity from governmental and parliamentary oversight thus, the establishing the basis for separation of powers.

First, the union and cohesion of bodies representing these 56 countries, including some of the wealthiest in the world, control the lion’s share of global energy resources representing a formidable power among all facets of globalization. In this respect, the OIC foresees the United Nations as it docile agent against the West in succeeding with global Islamization (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010). Given these pretenses, it appears as though the OIC is attempting to re-instate the 21st century Caliphate, e.g. the supreme controlling body for all Muslims. In the OIC Charter of 2008, member states confirm that their union and solidarity is inspired by Islamic values; affirm an ambition to reinforce within the international arena their shared interests and the promotion of Islamic values; commit themselves to revitalizing the revolutionary role of Islam in the world by increasing the prosperity of member states, and guaranteeing the defense of national sovereignty and territorial integrity (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010).

Second, the OIC has numerous subsidiary institutions collaborating at the highest levels with international organizations in order to implement its political objectives worldwide. Its main working bodies are the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), seeking to impose the Islamic perception of history and civilization on the West. Recently, the ISESCO is establishing pressure from within through the Observatory of Islamophobia placing pressure on Western governments and international bodies to adopt laws punishing Islamophobia and blasphemy. Accordingly, the judiciary body of the OIC - the Islamic International Court of Justice - adjudicates cases through the interpretation of the commandments of Islamic Sharia creating a jurisprudence which will benefit the Islamic community as a whole. As stated in its 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, the OIC is strictly tied to the principles of the Koran, the Sunna-Hadith, and the Sharia. In short, the OIC seeks to become the reincarnation of the Caliphate (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010).

Third, in 2008 the Secretary General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, issued a “free speech” warning: We sent a clear message to the West regarding the red lines that should not be crossed regarding free speech about Islam and terrorism. Consequently, his report of success is noted in a follow-up report: The official West and its public opinion are now well-aware of the sensitivities of these issues. Additionally, they have also started to look seriously into the question of freedom of expression from the perspective of its inherent responsibility, which should not be overlooked. In an unequivocal response to such demands by the Muslim world, the American president had never taken more seriously his responsibility to restrict the freedom of speech, and bow to Muslim demands than Barack Hussein Obama. As noted during his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech that peace is unstable where citizens are denied the right to speak freely, the irony was blistering (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010). In collaboration with the President’s remarks, the OIC portends that it is Western non-Muslims, not Islamic jihadists, who are responsible for the link between Islam and terrorist violence, and are hoping by means of laws against "incitement to religious hatred," which are of course to be interpreted and applied by them, to render citizens mute and hence defenseless in the face of the advancing jihad (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010).
In its efforts to defend the true image of Islam and combat its defamation, the organization has requested the UN and the Western countries to punish the manifestations of Islamophobia. In the OIC’s view they are: European opposition to illegal immigration, anti-terrorist measures, criticism of multiculturalism, and indeed any efforts to defend Western cultural and national identities (Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2010).

Lastly, through its massive funding from oil sources, the OIC continues to lavishly spend on the Western media, academia and in countless dialogues. It influences Western policy, laws, and even textbooks through pressures brought by Muslim immigrants and by the Western nations’ own leftist parties. The idea of individual sovereignty is seen as a clash with the supreme sovereignty of Allah. Of course, no Muslim can accept the notion that a parliament is entirely free to legislate. In essence, Muslim legislators are not supposed to create law, but find it, i.e. to act on the basis of pre-existing divine law, namely the Sharia. In comparison, most democratic constitutions consist of institutions, procedures or values which cannot be changed even by parliamentary consensus decisions. In that vein, in an Islamic republic the core of the Sharia would be off-limits to legislation. Thus, to be a Muslim under Islamic Law corresponds to being a citizen elsewhere. This then explains why it is legitimate to accord certain civil rights to Muslims only. Therefore, equal treatment of Muslims and non-Muslims in an Islamic State seems to defeat the very idea of such a State (Hofmann, M.).

In sum, democracy is the antithesis of terrorism, and more precisely radical Islam, which is why the terrorists denounce it and are willing to kill the innocent to stop it. Democracy is based on empowerment, while radical Islam’s ideology is based on enslavement. Democracies expand the freedom of their citizens, while the radical Islam seeks to impose a single set of narrow beliefs through the imposition of Islamization. Democracy sees individuals as equal in worth and dignity, having an inherent potential to create, exercise self-governance and implement basic freedoms of speech and conscience. Radical Islam sees individuals as objects to be exploited, subjugated and lastly oppressed (U.S. Government, 2006).

Conclusion:

In concluding, radical Islam has launched a complex fusillade against the antithesis using latent methods such as the application of governance in the shadows known as Allahcracy which suppresses free press and speech in ascertaining the linkage between terrorism and Islam; the proliferation of resentment among observed Islamic religious practice and western politics; the creation of political, economic and social crisis through rhetorical and media backlash, the desecrating of national emblems, the burning of political effigies, the conduct of honor killings, the issuing of fatwas against Western personalities and institutions, the demanding of exemption from constitutional law; and the persuading of institutional reform via the Whitehouse in an attempt to undermine the tenets of democracy and the fabric of free society.

Each and any of these approaches are implemented by radical Islamists through the use of insightful messaging, destabilizing jurisprudence and deceptive philanthropic means with the intent of spreading fear and advancing the goals of radical Islamic organizations. This is accomplished through the use of informal granular - social networks combined with philanthropic tendencies that are relatively impervious to regulatory state control which enable advancement of jihad. The endstate is to move radical Islam from the confines of the mosque to the halls of the democratic institution, deposing the antithesis and reinstating the Caliphate in the 21st century.
Therefore, countering the subversive methods of radical Islam will require the full weight of diplomatic, political, economic and social efforts to bear on radical Islam’s center of gravity. The concentration of this strategy must focus on the granularity with which such organizations operate, sustain and survive. U.S. Counter terrorism policy must therefore include the assessment and analysis of the decentralized social structure, to the granular level, of radical Islam known as the Ummah, and its role in the proselytizing radical Islam. This will afford a two pronged approach in destabilizing the proliferation of radical Islamic messaging, jurisprudence and philanthropic means among Western democratic institutions. First, pressure from the bottom, whereby democratic institutions will reach the embittered Muslim youth of Mid-Eastern society in an effort to reduce alienation and despair; and secondly, pressure from within which will deepen the reach of democracy so that all citizens may enjoy the benefits of a modern and free democratic society without the subjugating effects of radical Islam.
References


