



## **IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES: BOOKLET OF RELATED READINGS 6**

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## PREFACE

This booklet represents the second in a series of compilations of print and electronic articles that are relevant to the defeat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that insurgent and terrorist operatives use to kill and injure U.S. military forces and civilian populations. The readings are related to IED technology, social networks that may provide insight into how insurgent groups communicate and relate to their members, and other technical and cultural phenomena that will help the Joint Improvised Explosive Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) meet its mission.

The first section of the booklet contains abstracts of the articles included in the booklet in alphabetical order by author and title. The abstracts are hyperlinked to the article itself located later in the booklet. At the end of each article is a hot link to the original article on the Internet. Information of particular relevance is highlighted in yellow.

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## ARTICLE ABSTRACTS

Al-Rashed, Abdul Rahman. "[Has Al Qaeda Changed its Base?](#)" *Asharq Al-Awsat*, December 13, 2007.

The author, who is also the general manager of *Al-Arabiya* television, discusses the possibility that Al Qaeda has begun to shift its headquarters and sustainment activities (recruiting and training) from Afghanistan to Yemen. This move accompanies, according to the author, a change in strategy to contract and to surround the Gulf region, "which Al Qaeda considers its first and last goal."

Arendt, Susan. "[Portrait of a Halo 3 Forge Artist](#)," *Wired*, December 14, 2007.

*Halo 3* is a new computer video game based on future combat scenarios. The game itself does not deal with IEDs, but like many other sophisticated computer games it has a detailed map creation tool (called Forge in *Halo 3*). Many of these map creation tools are quite sophisticated and in the talented hands of young gamers can create a three-dimensional landscape in almost any way desired. [Researcher Note: These map-creation tools may be able very inexpensively to portray background landscapes for concepts we are visually trying to illustrate. Creative "gamers" may be able to show us what they can really do with these tools.]

"[Biometrics: Unlocking Doors With Your Eyes](#)," *ScienceDaily*, December 14, 2007.

The pattern of an iris is like a fingerprint in that every iris is unique. Although iris recognition systems are being used in a number of civilian, military, and homeland security applications, the system is not perfect as changes in lighting conditions alter a person's pupil size and distort the iris pattern. To overcome this flaw, a researcher has developed the technology to estimate the effect of the change in the iris pattern as a result of changes in surrounding lighting conditions.

Boccolini, Hamza. "[Algeria: Al-Qaeda Uses Elderly Terrorists in Change of Tactics](#)," *Adnkronos International*, December 13, 2007.

Early analysis of recent bombings in Algiers indicates that the Algerian arm of Al-Qaeda appears to be using terrorists older than 60 to carry out its attacks (to avoid scrutiny). This would be a major change in their procedures. [Researcher Note: This is one of two articles this week that seem to indicate a change in tactics. To what degree do we see different terrorist groups "copycatting" changes in techniques and is there a "pecking order" from which we can determine which groups lead the way in changes to TTP and what other groups follow?]

Carroll, Jill. "[Algeria Bombing Prompts Question: Can Al Qaeda Spread Across North Africa?](#)" *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 14, 2007.

The recent devastating twin truck bombings in Algiers was the latest strike from a longtime insurgent group, which recently allied itself with bin Laden's network and which claims the name *Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb* (AQIM). Some terrorism experts believe that the al Qaeda affiliate in North Africa is a potent force across the entire region possibly capable of even striking Europe, as it says is part of its overall goal. Others say the group is internally focused only on Algeria.

[“DEBKAfile Exclusive: Hamas Parades its First Female Commando and Suicide Units at Huge 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gaza Assembly,”](#) *DEBKAfile*, December 15, 2007.

Hamas has reportedly formed hundreds of suicide killers into a large unit for obstructing any potential major Israeli offensive against its missile-mortar offensive from Gaza. It has also formed a large unit of female commandos. Still a third force is composed of fighters dressed in Israeli military uniforms and using Israeli weapons. The units, part of hundreds of thousands of participants at the Hamas celebration in Gaza City on December 15, served as a demonstration of strength of the organization.

Glazov, Jamie. [“Symposium: Holiday Jihad?”](#) *FrontPageMag.com*, December 14, 2007.

Panelists attempt to answer the following questions: (1) How seriously must we take FBI warnings that al Qaeda may be preparing a series of holiday season attacks on American shopping malls; (2) Must we try to gauge terrorist strategy in the contexts of holidays and certain dates; (3) Do jihadists have a predilection for inflicting violence on some dates over others; and (4) Is it wise for us to fixate on certain dates as opposed to others in preparation against terrorist strikes?

Greene, Kate. [“Recharging Gadgets Wirelessly,”](#) *Technology Review*, December 13, 2007.

A Delaware-based startup company called WildCharge has brought to production a small metal pad, about the size of a sheet of paper, that can simultaneously (wire-free) charge multiple devices laid on top of it if they are equipped with adaptors. WildCharge is now selling an adaptor for Motorola Razr phones and is developing others.

[“Iraq’s Muqtada Sadr Studying to Issue Fatwas,”](#) *Al-Arabiya*, December 16, 2007.

Iraqi Shiite cleric and head of the Sadrist movement, Muqtada Al-Sadr, is studying intensively at the Al-Hawzah religious institution in Najaf to earn the title of ‘marjea’ (expert or authority). This will entitle him to issue fatwas (religious edicts) to his followers.

Kleiner, Kurt. [“Snakebot’ Navigates its Way Round Slippery Problem,”](#) *NewScientistTech*, December 14, 2007.

Different research groups have developed robots that mimic real snakes. Their shape and simplicity make them ideal for exploring narrow or cluttered environments, such as

crawling through pipes. Most of these robots can crawl along and turn on command, but directing them to navigate independently had proven difficult until Greek researchers apparently solved the problem. [Researcher Note: Do existing robots used in IED detection and neutralization have the ability to navigate constricted environments and, if not, could this development assist our effort?]

Levy, Janet. "[The Suicide of Reason](#)," *FrontPageMag.com*, December 13, 2007.

The article is a book review of Lee Harris' *The Suicide of Reason: Radical Islam's Threat to the West*. In the book, the Harris compares and contrasts the societies of the West ("rational actor") with fanatical societies ("tribal actor"), which characterize much of the Muslim world. Harris postulates that Western culture is guided by broad-minded self-interest and tolerance, while Muslim culture is based on a common narrative of prejudice and superstition "with a shame-induced, group ethic that fosters a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice, suicide."

Lunau, Kate. "[The Macleans.ca Interview: Tarek Fatah](#)," *Macleans (CA)*, November 29, 2007.

A prominent Canadian magazine interviews the founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress about the recent incident in the Sudan involving the schoolteacher and the naming of a teddy bear Mohammad. Tarek Fatah expresses his dismay over the confrontation and vows to oppose the Islamists who desire to expand sharia law. [Researcher Note: Identifying those in the Muslim community who will assist us and developing a plan to bring them on board with our efforts are worthwhile objectives. How are we using these experts to vet certain aspects of our undertakings?]

Nkrumah, Gamal. "[Hans Kèng: Moral Moorings](#)," *Al-Ahram*, December 13, 2007.

This article from one of Egypt's largest newspapers presents an excellent theological discussion of Islam in an interview with noted Roman Catholic theologian Hans Kèng (spelled Küng in Western media). Despite his political jab at the U.S. and President Bush, his discussion of religion presents a number of thoughtful points. Kèng was recently named one of the world's top 100 intellectuals by the British magazine *Prospect*.

Shahzad, Syed Saleem. "[Al-Qaeda Fights for its Mark in Pakistan](#)," *Asia Times Online*, December 13, 2007.

This article consists of an extremely succinct summary of competing strategies between the United States and al Qaeda. The author concludes that in Pakistan and elsewhere al Qaeda's aim is not so much to inflict immediate damage on the enemy, but rather to prevent local al Qaeda allies from lowering the level of the struggle from that of a global jihad for the establishment of a world caliphate to a local conflict that possibly could be settled with local government. Conversely, the United States has followed a strategy of alienating al Qaeda by reducing its global struggles into various stand-alone national resistance movements that can be dealt with separately.

Vijayan, Jaikumar. “[6 Hot Items on the Hacker’s Holiday Shopping List](#),” *NetworkWorld*, October 17, 2007.

This article is clearly not about explosives, but plainly shows how inexpensively emerging technology can be acquired by tech-savvy criminals and potential terrorists. Botnet, a collection of software robots, or bots, which run autonomously and automatically, services can be rented for US\$100–\$200 per hour. For US\$3,000–\$3,500 serious hackers can find sophisticated polymorphic malware capable of delivering multiple types of destructive code on vulnerable computers, while constantly morphing to evade detection. At the high end, starting at US\$100,000, malicious attackers can now buy their very own Storm botnet, complete with fast flux DNS and hosting capabilities.

Zyga, Lisa. “[New Technology Combines GPS Benefits with Privacy Protection](#),” *Physorg.com*, December 11, 2007.

Two computer scientists have recently developed a new technology that could provide cell phone and mobile device users “location anonymization,” while still enabling them to enjoy the benefits of location-based technologies. [Researcher Note: In the continuing battle to defeat IED operators using cell phone technology, our own researchers may need to be aware of this development, if they are not already.]

## ARTICLES



## 6 hot items on the hacker's holiday shopping list

By Jaikumar Vijayan, *Computerworld*, 10/17/07

Malicious hackers and other assorted bad guys looking for new tools for plying their trade this upcoming holiday season will have plenty of toys and services to choose from.

Servicing them is a growing underground market bristling with botnets, Trojans, rootkits, spyware and all sorts of shady services aimed at everybody from the humble do-it-yourself hacker to sophisticated, organized criminal gangs.

"Just like there is a B2B marketplace, now there's a C2C -- criminal-to-criminal -- market," said Don Jackson, security researcher with Atlanta-based security vendor SecureWorks.

And just like their more legitimate commercial counterparts, the operatives in this shadow economy operate on a free market principle, replete with concepts such as volume discounts, customer loyalty programs and referral services, added Makshym Schipka, senior architect for security vendor MessageLabs. "It's not just organized crime that is behind a lot of modern threats" on the Internet, said Schipka.

A lot of the activity is shifting more to a thriving open-market model filled with multiple criminal enterprises and individuals offering a whole portfolio of tools and services that are often just a Google click or two away from those who seek them.

"People are becoming more specialized in delivering goods and services in this market," he said. "You can either buy the things you want, or sell the things you made" with considerable impunity, he said. Just as there's a High Street for legitimate businesses, there's one for online criminals as well, said the London-based Schipka.

Here, according to Jackson and Schipka, are some the items likely to be in high demand by hackers shopping in this underground marketplace this coming holiday season:

**1. Build A Storm Botnet:** This new and uniquely crafted malware tool has been designed with the really high-end hacker in mind and is likely to be one of the hottest items this season, according to Jackson. For prices starting at \$100,000, spammers and other malicious attackers can now buy their very own Storm botnet, complete with fast flux DNS and hosting capabilities. Making it possible is a smart new 40-byte encryption feature supported on the latest Storm variants that hackers can basically use to segment compromised machines into their own little Storm botnets.

"Think of this as an FAO Schwarz kind of item," Jackson says. "Rather than leasing a botnet service and paying bot by bot for a good e-mail run or iFrame blast, you can pay for it all at once and have your own little Storm botnet," Jackson said. The people who would buy such services are those who have already made their loot using leased services and are looking to start owning infrastructure, he said.

**2. Rent-A-Bot services:** Who needs to buy a botnet when you can lease a perfectly good one by the hour at a fraction of the price? Available in abundance this season, such botnet services are designed to let average spammers deliver a gazillion copies of their malware without them having to invest in the infrastructure needed to do so, Schipka said. For as little as \$100 to \$200 per hour, spammers can get access to a fully functional botnet capable of delivering the finest image spam and body part enhancement ads to millions at the click of a button, he said.

And such rent-a-bots aren't just for spammers anymore, Jackson said. What makes these versatile services so broadly appealing to bad guys is that they can be easily adapted to deliver the malware of choice or to launch distributed denial of service (DDOS) attacks against extortion targets. One example is the BlackEnergy botnet, which can be used to launch DDOS attacks against specific targets for about \$80 per hour, according to Jackson. For those not willing to spend even that much, low-cost options starting at \$10 per hour for one million bots are readily available for conveniently distributing smaller spam loads and malware.

All an enterprising hacker needs to take advantage of such services is a plan, Schipka said. "You would need to figure out your business model and draw up a business plan," he said. "If you were renting a bot for three hours at a \$100 per hour to deliver spam it means you need to make more than that to benefit from the use of the service." If it's some other sort of malware being seeded via a botnet -- such as a keylogger or Trojan -- the cost of purchasing the code would have to be included as well, Schipka he said. "...They'd need to be looking for a botnet with the highest quality and the lowest amount of money."

**3. Ye Olde Malware tools:** Do-it-yourself enthusiasts have a wider range than ever before of malware tools, including Trojans, zero-day exploits, rootkits, spyware programs and keyloggers, according to Jackson and Schipka. For around \$3,000 to \$3,500, serious shoppers can find sophisticated polymorphic malware capable of delivering all sorts of nasty code on vulnerable computers while constantly morphing to evade detection. Variants can be purchased separately for less than \$10 on average to about \$20 a piece. In some cases, variants can be delivered at the rate of one new variant every 59 minutes, or precisely one minute less than the hourly cycles many anti-virus vendors use to push out new virus signatures, said Schipka.

Likely to be in high-demand are customized Trojan programs specifically designed to steal identity and patient data from systems belonging to health care providers, Jackson said. Current black-market rates for this kind of ID information, which is typically used to defraud health insurers, is about \$200 per patient profile.

In the stocking stuffer class are tools such as the Webattacker malware creation kits, exploits from sites such as WabiSabiLabi and numerous one-click phishing kits available from groups such as the Russian Business Network, Jackson said.

**4. Data providers:** These consumer-friendly service providers are targeted at intrepid entrepreneurs looking to use someone else's identity and financial information for their own gain. As an industry niche that's been around longer than many others, data providers today cater to a wide-ranging audience with disparate needs. Some specialized services offer identity information, complete with driver's license photos, passport scans, credit card numbers, e-mail and street addresses -- all for as little as \$5 a pop, according to Schipka. At the higher end, health-care related identity data or information belonging to high-level corporate executives can go for nearly \$200 per victim. And then there are services that let individuals buy stolen credit card data at between 2% to 4% of the credit balance left on the cards, Schipka said.

**5. Drop services:** These specialized services have been developed expressly for the harried online shopper who purchases items online -- especially high-ticket electronics gadgets -- with stolen credit cards but has no place to send them. Drop services can provide thieves with convenient and reliable addresses to mail stolen goods in the country from where the online purchase is made, Schipka said. "Sometimes, these are people who know they are receiving stolen goods," he said. "Sometimes, they just sort of receive these parcels and either send them somewhere else or make them available in person" to pre-specified locations. People in the latter category don't often know they are handling stolen goods and are hired via phony work-at-home advertisements that promise to pay them specific amounts of money for simply receiving and forwarding goods, he said. Drop services typically get the stolen goods for about 30% or less of the retail value of the product, he said.

**6. Escrow, anyone?** Forget all those quaint notions about honor among thieves. In the online underground, it's more often about scammers looking to scam other scammers, Schipka said. That's where referrals and escrow services can play a key role, he said. For fees ranging from about 2% to 4% of the total transaction, service providers will act as a "trusted" intermediary between a seller and buyer of malware and other illegal services. Such services can hold purchase money in escrow until a buyer has had a chance to see whether the goods or services are okay and performing as billed. And sellers are assured they get paid for delivering what they promised, Schipka said.

[http://www.networkworld.com/news/2007/101707-six-hot-items-on-the.html?ts0hb=&story=wknd\\_xmas](http://www.networkworld.com/news/2007/101707-six-hot-items-on-the.html?ts0hb=&story=wknd_xmas)



## Al-Qaeda fights for its mark in Pakistan

By Syed Saleem Shahzad, December 13, 2007

KARACHI - The defeat of militants led by Mullah Fazlullah in the Swat Valley in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province and promotion of his detained father-in-law, Sufi Muhammad, as the new leader in the area were the essential recent targets of the Pakistani armed forces to alienate extremists and promote moderates.

The militants responded by sending out feelers for a truce, which prompted al-Qaeda to intervene by sending in fighters to continue a guerrilla battle. Al-Qaeda's aim is not so much to inflict immediate damage on the enemy. Rather, it is to prevent the flag-bearers of the "war on terror" from lowering the level of the struggle from that of a jihad for the establishment of a caliphate to a local conflict that could be settled through local government handpicked *jirgas* (councils).

This is precisely what the George W Bush administration is trying to do across the region; to alienate al-Qaeda by reducing its global struggles into various stand-alone national resistance movements that can be dealt with separately.

This initiative includes contact between Iran and the US on Iraq aimed at limited cooperation to further reduce the level of the insurgency in that country; the recent summit in Washington on the creation of a Palestinian state; Saudi Arabia's renewed efforts to reconcile Mehmoud Abbas' Fatah and Hamas in Palestine, besides Washington's efforts to speak to the Taliban directly about peace.

To date, the most successful outcome has been to alienate al-Qaeda from local tribes in Iraq, apart from Washington's cooperation with Iran. The latter could even lead to Tehran guarding against al-Qaeda's movement from Pakistan and Afghanistan into Iraq through Iran, as well as blocking smuggling routes through which arms and ammunition are smuggled for the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Over the past few years, al-Qaeda has been alert to efforts to dilute its global struggle. The Madrid bombings of 2004 were aimed at jolting international backing of the "war on terror", while the London bombings in 2005 and other foiled plots in 2006 were aimed at retaining al-Qaeda's lead role in the Muslim resistance movements in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

Thus, at a time when the Iraqi resistance has been largely freed from al-Qaeda's influence, hardliners are being sidelined in Palestine and liberal political forces are rising to the fore in Pakistan to give popular support to the "war on terror", it is conceivable that plots similar to the Madrid and London bombings will emerge to shatter the global

"Christmas truce" to alienate al-Qaeda.

Such incidents do serve al-Qaeda in the long term by swelling its numbers. This helps explain how, after losing thousands of fighters in the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the group managed to take command of the Iraqi resistance by pouring similar numbers into that country.

At the same time, with high-profile attacks al-Qaeda finds fertile ground for its ideology. The hard core of al-Qaeda in the Pakistan tribal areas is estimated at no more than a few hundred, but it has managed to rear a neo-Taliban to spread its views. In this regard, the incident of the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) is instructive. The radical mosque in Islamabad, which government security forces cleared of militants in July, had become al-Qaeda's outpost in the capital city.

Pakistan's Secretary of the Interior Syed Kamal Shah had explained to this correspondent before the operation that intelligence agencies had tracked conversations between Lal Masjid prayer leaders and top al-Qaeda men in the Waziristan tribal areas. The agencies were aware that the movement Lal Masjid had started went far beyond a simple agenda of Islamization. Kamal said events such as students from Lal Masjid's seminaries forcing brothels to close were a part of al-Qaeda's broader goal of alienating mass support from the government's operations against al-Qaeda in the tribal areas.

The Lal Masjid saga did distract the government from its operations in the Waziristans, but it also sowed deep seeds of anti-Americanism and undermined the US plans to promote a secular society in Pakistan. The foremost example of this is President Pervez Musharraf's own Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-i-Azam party, which has announced an "Islam first, Pakistan second" manifesto for the January general elections. This is a noted departure from the post-September 11, 2001, Musharraf slogan of "Pakistan first".

Similarly, the sub-nationalist Pashtun Awami National Party has always claimed to be the true secular party of the country, but now it is saying that "no rules against the Koran and the Sunnah [religious actions instituted by the Prophet Mohammed] will be acceptable".

Also, the Muttehad Quami Movement has always openly supported the "war on terror" and the need for a liberal and secular Pakistan. But it surprised everybody recently when its leader, Altaf Hussain, while in London, for the first time delivered an anti-American speech, calling Washington a supporter of feudals and capitalists.

[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/IL13Df02.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/IL13Df02.html)



## **Algeria: Al-Qaeda uses elderly terrorists in change of tactics**

Algiers, 13 Dec. (AKI) – (By Hamza Boccolini) - In a major strategic change, the Algerian arm of Al-Qaeda appears to be using terrorists older than 60 to carry out its attacks.

That is the finding to have emerged from early analysis of the dual bombings that struck Algiers on Tuesday.

Arab media and analysts have spoken of the "return of the elderly" to describe the strategic change by Al-Qaeda's Branch in the Islamic Maghreb (BAQMI) that claimed responsibility for the bombings in the Algerian capital.

The Algerian government said that at least 26 people were killed and more than 170 wounded by the two bombs. However hospital sources say that more than 60 people died in the attacks.

In a statement posted on Islamist websites, al-Qaeda's North Africa wing said that they had used 800 kilogrammes of explosives in each of the two suicide attacks.

Earlier this year al-Qaeda terrorists in Algeria had decided to use young people to carry out their attacks, but now they have changed their strategy and appear to have decided to use terrorists aged in their 60's.

To avoid Algerian security at key positions in the city, such as the United Nations building, leader of BAQMI Abu Musa Abdel Wudud and his collaborators used a 64-year-old white-haired terrorist, Rabah Bashla, in the suicide attack.

Algeria's minister for internal affairs, Yazid Zarhuni, who went to visit those injured in the attack said a youth had told him that a security official had stopped the drivers gathering

there and asked them to move backwards.

One of them refused and he was reportedly the elderly truck driver who later blew himself up. He was said to be in a hurry and looking for a way to get closer to the building.

"He was considered to be a normal person with very white hair and no-one imagined that he was a terrorist," said Zarhuni.

According to most Algerian newspapers, it is the first time that al-Qaeda has used 60 year olds for a suicide attack and this tactic caught everyone by surprise.

The only newspaper that was not so certain was *Ech-Chourouk* that closely follows Islamic terrorism.

"The use of people of an older age to carry out suicide attacks is not in conflict with the nature of jihadi movements, looking to involve all people of all ages and not only young people even though there are many of them," Algerian sociologist Nasreddin Jabi told the TV network, *al-Arabiya*.

According to Arab analyst, Abdel Ali al-Razqi, personal factors would have been behind the attack and not a clear strategy from al-Qaeda.

"The man of an older age who did the suicide attack has acted on a kind of personal vendetta to react against problems in his life, " he said. " He had family problems or he knew some members of an armed group that convinced him to carry out this operation."

Algerian police noted last September that in the five preceding months al-Qaeda had recruited 50 youths under the age of 16. There have been reports in the Arab newspaper *al-Hayat* saying that the terrorist group was concentrating on recruiting young people.

<http://www.adnkronos.com/AKI/English/Security/?id=1.0.1665340094>



## Algeria bombing prompts question: Can Al Qaeda spread across North Africa?

**Islamic militants linked to Osama bin Laden's network claimed Tuesday's attack in Algeria.**

By Jill Carroll | Staff writer of *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 14, 2007

### Cairo

When two formerly convicted Algerian Islamic militants blew themselves up in Algiers this week, killing at least 34 people at United Nations offices and a government building, they succeeded in one likely aspect of their mission – getting attention.



**Algiers: Rescuers work at the site of a bomb blast from car bomb attacks on Tuesday. They targeted United Nations offices and a government council. AP**

Tuesday's twin truck bombings was the latest strike from a longtime insurgent group, which recently allied itself with Osama bin Laden's network and changed its name to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Government

forces had appeared to be gaining the upper hand against the militants after it had killed or captured scores of insurgents over the past few months.

But while the bombing has shown that AQIM, formerly known as the Salafist Group for Call and Combat, still poses a serious threat, analysts say this new Al Qaeda affiliate in North Africa is far from reaching its goal of building a potent force across the entire region or even striking Europe, as it says is part of its overall goal.

"Despite its pretensions to be a Maghreb-wide organization, it is mounting attacks only in Algeria," says Hugh Roberts, an independent analyst who specializes in North African politics. "The notional threat to Europe is exaggerated."

The Algiers bombing is the deadliest against the UN since an attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad in 2003, which prompted the organization to leave Iraq. But Mr. Roberts says unlike the UN in Baghdad, which was poised to take a major political role in the country, the UN has no role in domestic politics in Algeria.



**Clean up: Rescue personal work to clear away the mounds of rubble from the site of a UN building in Algiers. Twin car bombings on Tuesday targeted the UN offices and another government building. AP**

The bombers hit the High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Development Programme offices.

The UN attacks were against "one extremely soft target that has clearly been hit purely to maximize international attention," Roberts says. The bombings at the Algerian government building, he says, "show this is about destabilizing the Algerian government."

Despite similarly spectacular suicide attacks in Algiers in April and a smattering of shootings and bombings by the group, AQIM has yet to prove that it is a real threat to the government or that it could spark another violent insurgency like the country saw in the 1990s.

Evan Kohlmann, a counterterrorism consultant based in New York who closely tracks Algerian insurgent groups, says the attacks smack of "desperation" from a group unable to launch a full-on guerrilla war against the government.

"So is this the great awakening of the jihad in Algeria? I'm somewhat skeptical. What we are more likely witnessing here is a jihadi movement that is flailing about wildly in the hopes of replicating the comparative success of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq," Mr. Kohlmann wrote in an e-mailed response to questions.

Roberts said high-profile attacks against foreigners was the strategy used by the once-formidable Armed Islamic Group, responsible for the worst terrorist attacks during the "dark decade" of warfare between the government and insurgents in the 1990s. Known by its French initials, the GIA attacked foreigners in Algeria, sending them fleeing and weakening the Algerian government by isolating it internationally. Lingering Islamist insurgents from those days compose the new Al Qaeda group.

"I think this is not part of a global jihad at all. It really has to do with destabilizing the Algerian government," says Roberts.

By attacking soft, civilian targets like those this week, AQIM risks facing the fate of the GIA, which alienated other militant Islamists and even once was chastised by Mr. bin Laden for its brutal massacres of civilians as well as Al Qaeda in Iraq, whom Iraqi tribes turned against because of its brutal tactics.

"AQIM is risking alienating another much larger part of its constituency – ordinary Islamist dissidents who may be opposed to the Algerian regime and its security forces, but who are disturbed by the idea of killing innocent UN workers for no apparent reason," says Kohlmann.

Following the attacks, it was revealed that the suicide bombers were both once convicted on terror charges but were amnestied.

The government has offered successive amnesties to try to end the Islamic insurgency in the 1990s, resulting in thousands of militants turning themselves in, but sparking fierce criticism from the families of terror victims.

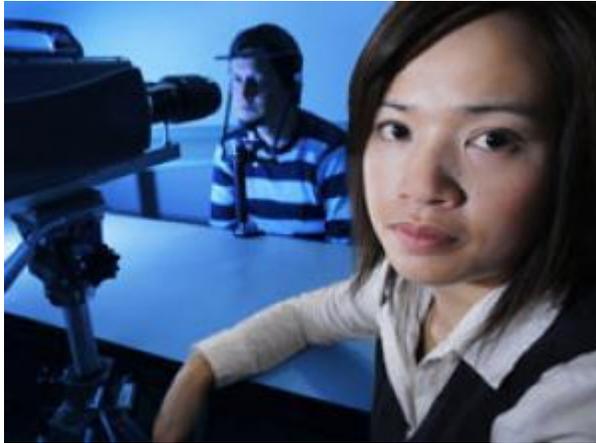
In a posting on a militant website, AQIM described the UN offices as "the headquarters of the international infidels' den." It also posted photos of two men it said were the bombers. Both posed with weapons and wore camouflage.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1214/p07s02-wome.html>

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## Biometrics: Unlocking Doors With Your Eyes



**QUT researcher Sammy Phang.** (Credit: Image courtesy of Queensland University of Technology)

*ScienceDaily* (Dec. 14, 2007) — It is not science fiction to think that our eyes could very soon be the key to unlocking our homes, accessing our bank accounts and logging on to our computers, according to Queensland University of Technology researcher Sammy Phang.

Research by Ms Phang, from QUT's Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering, is helping to remove one of the final obstacles to the everyday application of iris scanning technology.

Ms Phang said the pattern of an iris was like a fingerprint in that every iris was unique. "Every individual iris is unique and even the iris pattern of the left eye is different from the right. The iris pattern is fixed throughout a person's lifetime" she said.

"By using iris recognition it is possible to confirm the identity of a person based on who the person is rather than what the person possesses, such as an ID card or password.

"It is already being used around the world and it is possible that within the next 10 to 20 years it will be part of our everyday lives."

Ms Phang said although iris recognition systems were being used in a number of civilian applications, the system was not perfect. "Changes in lighting conditions change a person's pupil size and distort the iris pattern," she said.

"If the pupil size is very different, the distortion of the iris pattern can be significant, and makes it hard for the iris recognition system to work properly."

To overcome this flaw, Ms Phang has developed the technology to estimate the effect of the change in the iris pattern as a result of changes in surrounding lighting conditions. "It is possible for a pupil to change in size from 0.8mm to 8mm, depending on lighting conditions," she said.

Ms Phang said by using a high-speed camera which could capture up to 1200 images per second it was possible to track the iris surface's movements to study how the iris pattern changed depending on the variation of pupil sizes caused by the light. "The study showed that everyone's iris surface movement is different."

She said results of tests conducted using iris images showed it was possible to estimate the change on the surface of the iris and account for the way the iris features changed due to different lighting conditions.

"Preliminary image similarity comparisons between the actual iris image and the estimated iris image based on this study suggest that this can possibly improve iris verification performance."

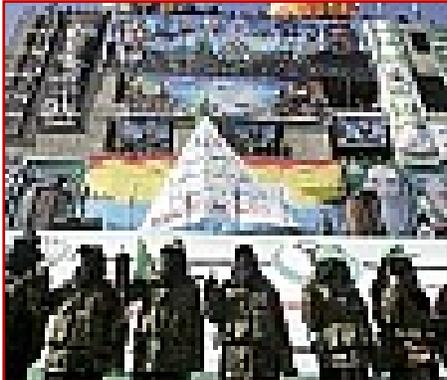
*Adapted from materials provided by Queensland University of Technology.*

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/12/071204100422.htm>



## DEBKAFfile Exclusive: Hamas parades its first female commando and suicide units at huge 20th anniversary Gaza assembly

December 15, 2007



### Hamas "unveils" its first female commandos

In addition to the female commandos, our military sources report Hamas has formed hundreds of suicide killers into a large unit for obstructing a major Israeli offensive against its missile-mortar offensive from Gaza. Its planners figure that if only one out of ten is successful, the Israeli advance will be seriously slowed. Another special unit created by Hamas is composed of fighters clad in IDF uniforms and armed with Israel weapons and gear to confuse Israeli Air Force surveillance craft and drones and slow their counteraction.

Hamas has stockpiled thousands of Qassam missiles, enough to rain down 100 a day on Israeli civilian and military targets.

The hundreds of thousands of participants at the Hamas celebration in Gaza City Saturday, December 15, were a demonstration of strength which belied claims of its waning powers. This claim is often heard from Israeli officials as a pretext to avoid a military confrontation in Gaza.

DEBKAFfile's military sources report that every passing week sees Hamas strength enhanced and better organized to take on Israeli counter-terror assaults.

The jihadist group's leaders in Gaza, Syria and Lebanon are certain that a major Israel offensive is on the way and believe they know the IDF war plan. They anticipate:

1. Tactics quite different from those employed in the 2006 Lebanon war;
2. Most Israeli and Western military pundits expect the IDF to cut through to northern Gaza - to stifle missile fire, and to the Philadelphi border enclave in the south - to stem the smuggling of fighters and arms from Sinai. Hamas, to the contrary, estimates that Israeli armored columns will race from the north and the east to converge on Gaza City and wipe out the command centers located there.
3. The IDF is expected to lay down a ferocious blanket of fire from land, sea and air. The suicide unit will be sent into action against the sources of fire and the tank columns.

4. Because no Hamas commander believes Israel tank columns can be stopped, they have drawn up Plan B: terrorist chiefs will go to ground and wage guerrilla warfare against Israeli troops in the same way as Sunni insurgents and al Qaeda combat US forces in Iraq.

5. After unifying the Hamas and Jihad Islami commands, as we have reported, the Islamist tacticians have merged all the terrorist groups operating in the Gaza Strip into a single 9,000-10,000 strong army. This is one-third larger than the Hizballah militia which fought Israel in 2006. It is made up of Ezz e-Din al-Qassam Brigades, combat-trained Gaza police units and the elite Hamas force which spearheaded the coup that expelled the Fatah-ruled Palestinian Authority from the Gaza Strip last June.

<http://debka.com/headline.php?hid=4860>



December 13, 2007

## Hans Kèng: Moral moorings



Roman Catholic theologian Hans Kèng was ordained a priest in 1954, and in 1962 he was appointed peritus, or special theological advisor, by Pope John XXIII. However, in December 1979, he was stripped of his licence to teach, largely because of his opposition to the doctrine of papal infallibility, expressed in his book *Infallible? An Inquiry*, published in 1971. Nevertheless, Kèng has not given up his quest to reform the Catholic Church, and he is both a respected Christian theologian and a widely recognised authority on world religions, especially on the "Abrahamic"

religions -- Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Until his retirement in 1996, Kèng was professor of ecumenical theology and director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research at the University of Tübingen in Germany, where he worked with his friend Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. Today, he heads the Global Ethic Foundation. Following the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, the then UN secretary-general Kofi Annan appointed Kèng a member of an international group of eminent persons brought together to promote dialogue among civilisations. Kèng was a natural choice for the position, since he was familiar with the Judeo-Christian Bible, the Hindu Bhagavad-Gita, the discourses of the Buddha and Confucius, and the Quran. Kèng's works include *Does God Exist? An Answer for Today* (1980); *Eternal Life?* (1984); *Christianity and Chinese Religions* (1988 with Julia Ching); *Paradigm Change in Theology* (1989); *The Catholic Church* (2002); and *My Struggle for Freedom* (2003). He was recently named one of the world's top 100 intellectuals by the British magazine *Prospect*.

Interview by Gamal Nkrumah

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It is mid-morning, and the calm of the corner of the Cairo hotel in which Hans Kèng explains his views on Islam and inter-religious dialogue is disturbed by the infuriating ring-tones of mobile phones.

Misreading the Muslim world has had grave ramifications, he says, and he infuses his understanding of the history of Islam with a wealth of detail and a kind of unanticipated solemnity. "There will be no peace among nations without peace among religions," he states,

matter-of-factly, and his deepest desire is precisely to help bring about an atmosphere of greater understanding between Muslims and Christians.

Kèng is unhappy with the current state of affairs and particularly about growing tensions between Muslims and Christians in the West. What he advocates above all is a common ethical framework for humanity as a whole, which must "demolish the walls of prejudice stone by stone and build bridges of dialogue, rather than erect new barriers of hatred, hostility and vengeance." In particular, for this Swiss-born Christian theologian, Westerners must build bridges of dialogue with Muslims.

That is the aim, but if there is to be genuine dialogue between Christians and Muslims, certain prickly questions will inevitably crop up. He explains that "a question that is not just for Christian theologians, but which constantly comes up especially in dialogue with conservative Muslims is: how are monotheism and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity related? Aren't they contradictory?" For many Muslims, the concept of the Trinity is tantamount to *shirk* ("association"), the worst form of unbelief in Islam.

As Kèng notes, "in seventh-century Islam the doctrine of the Trinity was brought into the centre of criticism." And while "the paradigm of early Christianity developed only after the death of Jesus, the foundations for the paradigm of original Islam were laid quite decisively during the Prophet Mohamed's lifetime." He is dismissive of religious conservatism, both Christian and Muslim. His rejection of papal infallibility cost him dearly, after all. However, he is convinced of the "moral imperative" of religion.

"Neither Christian fundamentalism nor secularism can satisfy the deep desires of humans," Kèng says. "We have to concentrate on religion." This is his third visit to Cairo, and he says that the city has a special place in his heart. He expresses an interest in having his recent book, *Islam: Past, Present and Future*, translated into Arabic, and he is ecstatic that it is already available in English in an Arab and Muslim city like Cairo.

I caught up with Kèng at the Nile Hilton in Cairo and sounded him out on the key points in his book. As a professional theologian, Kèng is clearly preoccupied by religion, and while he is aware that the divine status of Jesus in Christianity constitutes a stumbling block for inter-religious understanding, there are also other questions that Christians, or Westerners more generally, sometimes have regarding Islam, notably the affirmation of polygamy and the position of women. Kèng devotes sections of his book to discussions of these topics.

In Kèng's view, the core of the current of unease in Muslim-Christian relations comes from a sense that there is a perceived need for Muslims to "catch up" with the West, a perception that is common both in the West and in the Muslim heartlands. He contends that Muslims, and by implication Islam, have remained positioned in an older religious view, in which two different strands of religion took hold of Muslim practice. "Islam," he says, "has remained spiritually in the mediaeval paradigm of the *ulama* and Sufis," pausing to assess the impact of his words, marking a division between the Sufi orders that spread across the Muslim world and the clerics and theologians (*ulama*) who upheld the system of law (Sharia) taught in Quranic schools or *madrassas*.

From here, he thinks, comes much of the dilemma of contemporary Muslim reformers. "[Islam's] elites and representatives noticed too late that in Europe an epoch-making paradigm change was making itself felt, which in the long- run forced the cultural sphere shaped by Islam increasingly on the defensive," Kèng writes in his book *Islam*. "Faced with Sharia, Islam and Sufi Islam, Arab Islamic philosophy hardly had a chance. It did not achieve any accepted normative validity and could not develop any permanent dominant structures and institutions, for example in universities. Arab Islamic philosophy had a great history but was not historically influential in Islam," Kèng observes.

Kèng smiles a sanguine smile and acknowledges the debt Westerners owe to Islam, stressing the impact the Muslim religion had on Christianity, especially in the Middle Ages with the flowering of Islamic culture in Al-Andalus (Spain) and elsewhere. "Christianity inherited the Arab philosophy of Islam," Kèng says, while at the same time noting that while the European Christians were able to make ample use of this Islamic heritage, the Muslims themselves failed to utilise it. "Arab-Islamic philosophy had ended by the 12th century, as would become evident only very much later. That was an ominous development for the intellectual future of Islam," Kèng says.

He notes that, "the tolerance and cultural exchange that took place in the southern Spanish city of Cordoba and throughout Al-Andalus were unprecedented," but there is nevertheless little doubt that even after such impressive beginnings, the Muslim world later began lagging behind the West.

For Kèng, "it is not very helpful to play the blame game" for this. Islam is not to blame for stagnation, he insists. So, how did such an initially wealthy, intellectually rigorous and progressive civilisation wither into a politically weak and economically poor culture, characterised in later centuries by a degree of intellectual stagnation? "Is Islam itself to blame for the striking lack of spiritual productivity in the Islamic world?" is the way Kèng phrases the question. "Even [the British orientalist] Bernard Lewis does not think that," he notes, explaining that he is critical of Lewis's own attempt at an explanation, in the book *What Went Wrong?*, which is nevertheless highly thought of in some Western circles.

"In the 10th and 11th centuries, the caliphate had its capital in Cordoba. This was the 'Jewel of the Earth' in both economic and cultural respects -- thousands of shops, thousands of mosques, baths, running water, paved streets with lighting and the caliph's library of 400,000 volumes, which was just one of 70 libraries."

For Kèng, the reasons for the later stagnation of Muslim societies are complex, and they cannot be reduced to any one set of factors. In his attempt to answer the question, he explains that "by way of anticipation, my reply would be: Islam is not in itself to blame, nor is any particular paradigm, as long as it is appropriate to the time. What is to blame is the perpetuation of a paradigm beyond the period which is appropriate for it."

Kèng is also conscious that Islam at a popular level was influenced to varying degrees by the pre-Islamic societies it encountered and absorbed. This was especially evident in areas like India,

for example, and Southeast Asia. "[Islam] mixed with the practices and convictions of the popular cultures in which it found itself taking root," he observes.

He goes on to discuss Christian views, historically often negative, of the Prophet Mohamed. He makes it clear that he does not ascribe to such views, while conceding that even today they are widely held among some Westerners. These views "relate to the truthfulness of the prophet, his use of force and his relationship to women," Kèng explains.

We turn to Kèng's recent book on Islam, and he frames the discussion by referring to other works often read in the West such as the *Cambridge History of Islam* published by Cambridge University Press and its rival the *Oxford History of Islam*, edited by the American academic John Esposito. He states his views on these works with characteristic dry wit.

Today, Islam for some Westerners is associated with intolerance and militancy, or, as Kèng puts it, "when the Western media portrays Muslims, it loves to do so by portraying them as fanatical bearded lawyers, extremist violent terrorists, super-rich sheikhs, or veiled women." All too often, there is a desire to see Islam "as a totalitarian religion that leads to irrationality, fanaticism and hysteria".

But, on the contrary, for Kèng, "though the history of Islam is about a third shorter than Christianity, it is no less complex." Indeed, in Kèng's view, "the more Islam spread, the less monolithic it became."

One difference between the Muslim world and the modern West is the devaluation of religion in the latter. Is God dead in the secularist West?

"I think that this is partly right," Kèng says. "However, while in Europe 'God is dead', I think a lot of people know that life must have a meaning and that ethical standards are important. I think many people in Europe, as elsewhere, are seeking for spiritual truths. Secularism is a godless ideology, and I do not believe that it helps people. Communism, Maoism, Nazism -- these are all ideologies that function in the name of atheism," Kèng observes.

A country that particularly interests him is Turkey, largely because of its secular character. In particular, Kèng is interested in the character of Kemal Atatèrk, founder of the modern Turkish state, and in Turkish historical experience more generally. "In Turkey today, people clearly are not comfortable with 'secular extremism'," he observes, noting the rise in political Islam. "Atatèrk, a positivist and an atheist, was not interested in religion, and he thought nothing of religion, at first even using it strategically. He died in the conviction that the new Western worldview and secularist culture offered a substitute of equal value for the 'obsolete' Islamic religion and religious culture."

Kèng also touches on the Arab socialism practised in Egypt under president Gamal Abdel-Nasser and Pan-Arabism as a secular ideology. His conclusion is telling: "Given the political difficulties of Pan-Arabism, many Muslims are asking themselves whether it would be better to give up visions of Arab unity and concentrate instead on a religious and social renewal of Islam."

Indeed, it is this question of the religious and social renewal of Islam that perhaps most interests Kèng. He himself has been among the most vociferous advocates of change in his own Roman Catholic Church, and he ventures to explore such possibilities in Islam, even though he realises that there are fundamental differences between Christianity and Islam. For him, one opportunity for Muslims to indulge in reform came during the era of the French Revolution, when Muslims were obliged to face modern realities and to examine the fundamentals of their religion.

"The French Revolution in 1789 seemed to Muslims to be the first European movement that was not Christian, even anti-Christian," notes Kèng. The vital question for this erudite Christian scholar is one of "how should Islam react to the demand for democracy, human rights and civil rights, toleration and the separation of state and church propagated by the [French] Revolution."

Earlier in his visit to Cairo, Kèng gave a lecture at the American University in Cairo, where he touched upon another episode in the historical relationship between the Arab world and the West: the Crusades.

Asked about these mediaeval events, Kèng says, "I am against all crusades. That is the whole point of my book. The paradigm of revenge and hate should be substituted by a new paradigm of mutual understanding and honest cooperation."

We venture into a prickly subject: the sometimes unpleasant things that men can discover about their own religion. "Indisputably, hundreds of millions of people are fascinated by Islam," he says. "Those, like me, who can well remember the time of uncritical Roman Catholic apologetics before the Second Vatican Council, can imagine why some pious Muslims today attempt to depict their own religion in the brightest colours."

"However, for both Islam and Christianity, the final goal of the victory of the religion has proved unattainable and illusory. Moreover, this is theologically in conflict with statements of faith in both religions to the effect that it is for God himself to bring in the goal of history. There are more realistic political alternatives and alternative religious foundations."

Kèng is not only interested in religious matters, and he shows a willingness to discuss politics. He wonders "if the new president of the US will see that the politics of outgoing President George W Bush are bad and inappropriate."

"The religion of Bush stipulates that one must not lie. Yet, Bush lied a great deal about Iraq."

Kèng suggests that issues of morality and ethics necessarily impact the socio-economic sphere, and he is a firm believer in the need for a genuinely new world order. "I strongly believe that in the long-term the global market economy will only be accepted if it is socially acceptable," Kèng insists. He speaks of his belief that a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will improve relations between the adherents of the three Abrahamic religions. "If the Palestinian problem can be resolved," Kèng asserts, "then the West, and especially the US, will attack the Muslim world less," he says.

"I am Swiss, and therefore a little more independent. We are not so loaded by the history of Nazism, as, say, the Germans are. I try to be sincere," he explains.

Finally, we return to points of controversy or disagreement between Christianity and Islam. There is an assumption in the West that women are oppressed in Islam, whereas, in fact, for Kèng "women are a problem for all the Abrahamic religions." While all three religions aspire to accord equal dignity to men and women, in practice this has not always been the case.

The three religions, according to Kèng, share many ethical standards. They all urge their adherents not to murder, torture or torment -- including physical or verbal abuse. And, they call on their followers not to steal, exploit or accept bribes. They also regulate marital relations in a positive fashion by not allowing partners in a conjugal relationship to abuse, cheat on, humiliate or dishonour their spouses.

Kèng thinks that the importance of Sharia and legal rules in Islam is exaggerated. "It is striking that only around 600 of the thousands of verses of the Quran are concerned with legal questions, and most of these have to do with religious obligations and practices, such as ritual prayer, fasting and pilgrimage. Only around 80 verses contain directly legal material," he points out.

Kèng's book *Islam: Past, Present and Future* is a persuasive study of faith written in an accessible style. It is also a history of the Abrahamic religions more generally. It is the latest in a stream of works that have won him many accolades, for example when former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan told Kèng in his address for the 75th birthday of the distinguished theologian that, "I cannot really think of this lecture as a gift from me to you. It is you who do me a great honour by asking me to speak on your home turf on a subject -- global ethics -- which you have thought of profoundly as anyone in our time."

Kèng's book recognises the differences between the three monotheistic religions. "How can one God in two, even three, 'persons' still be one God? How can Father and Son, Spirit and man be one?" the Christian theologian asks of the doctrine of the Trinity. "The Quran protests energetically not against Jesus as the Messiah, but against his being made equal with God," he explains.

For him, on the other hand, Prophet Mohamed was an "utterly earthly leader". And the elative *Allahu Akbar*, "God is greatest," is the essence of Islam.

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<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/875/profile.htm>



## Has Al Qaeda Changed its Base?

13/12/2007



**Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed, the general manager of Al-Arabiya television.**

An official who is a close observer of the Al Qaeda network believes that the organization has begun to shift its activities to Yemen, in addition to its strong presence in Iraq. The movement's migration from Afghanistan is practically aiming to surround the Gulf region, which Al Qaeda considers its first and last goal.

The recent thwarted operations in Saudi Arabia and the arrests of terrorist cells is primary evidence that Al Qaeda has expanded, and perhaps shifted, its activities, which indicates that we are about to enter a third stage of the war on terror. The battle began early in Saudi Arabia but Al Qaeda suffered successive defeats and was thus forced to spread its wings abroad. It seems that after having been restricted, it has decided upon a change in strategy.

The aforementioned official believes that Yemen may replace Afghanistan as the incubator to breed, rally and train [terrorists]. In practice, Yemen could become the new Al Qaeda base – a label once reserved for Afghanistan. The official's assumptions were confirmed by new activity carried out in the rugged mountains of Yemen that proved to be testing even for the skilled Yemeni forces that best knew their land.

This was evident through the battles with the al Houthi groups that fortified their strength in the mountains over several months and inflicted damage on government forces. Although the Yemeni authority was able to weaken these groups, prevent their expansion and foil any influence of al Houthi members on the center of the capital and other major cities in Yemen, defeating them proved to be a very difficult matter.

If Al Qaeda has really decided to shift its center and perhaps its headquarters to the mountain peaks of northern Yemen, then we are facing a new challenge and a new phase in combat. Since it was first established, Al Qaeda has been targeting the most important country, namely, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region in general as it is aware of the fact that Saudi is to the region what the heart is to the body.

Also, despite its success of spreading chaos and destruction in Iraq, Algeria, Britain and other places, it has still failed to achieve the symbolic significance, popularity and influence that it has been aspiring to since the mid-1990s. Al Qaeda believes that Yemen is an easy country; drawing

evidence from the organization's frequent ability to hide in its mountains and exploit the existing tribal dissidents, in addition to the poverty of its economy and population density. As such, Yemen is fertile ground for the breeding of new generations of Al Qaeda cells – or an alternative haven to the desolate, remote and blockaded areas of Afghanistan.

The results of this grave analysis are that the Yemeni authorities should act as a targeted regime just as Al Qaeda had targeted the Afghan regime and instigated conflict among its tribes, setting it ablaze and causing extensive foreign intervention.

Saudi Arabia, the country that is most targeted by terrorists, also has no choice other than to prepare for a new bout of terrorism that requires increased efforts in curbing potential financiers who raise funds under the pretext of charitable work, and local instigators who are recruiting young men under various Islamic banners such as Iraq and Kashmir.

Perhaps the proposal of electronic [identity] cards for the entire population should be a priority and should be applied quickly. The truth is that the Saudi Ministry of Interior is one of the most advanced governmental institutions with respect to modern technology, not only in achieving security objectives but also in providing its various civil services. This is a compelling subject that deserves further examination in another article.

<http://www.asharqalawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=2&id=11150>



Attends Shiite theology school in Najaf

## Iraq's Muqtada Sadr studying to issue fatwas

DUBAI (AlArabiya.net)

Sunday, 16 December 2007



Sadr controls Iraq's formidable Mahdi Army (File)

Iraqi Shiite cleric and head of the Sadrist movement, Muqtada Al-Sadr, is doing intensive study to earn the title of 'marjea' ('expert' or 'authority'), which will entitle him to issue fatwas (religious edicts) for his followers, in accordance with Shiite traditions.

Al-Sadr is studying at the Al-Hawzah religious institution in Najaf, his official

spokesman Sheikh Salah Al-Obeidi said in a press statement carried by *Quds Press* on Saturday.

Al-Hawzah -- Arabic for 'seminary' -- is a theology school for Shiite clergymen located in the preeminent center for Shiite teaching before the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. The seminary in the city of Qom took the lead afterwards.

Al-Hawzah, whose clerics were routinely subjected to expulsions and mass arrests at the time of Saddam Hussein, is made up of four senior Grand Ayatollahs.

Obeidi did not specify how long it would take Al-Sadr to qualify to issue fatwas, but it usually takes several years to reach that degree of knowledge.

Despite being the head of a political party, Al-Sadr has not completed his religious or civil education, and is known for his inability to improvise. Sadr has to read off a written paper when giving a speech, and consequently, his media appearances have been scant.

Prominent Shiite scholars have remarked that Al-Sadr lacks proper education for a person of his position -- he controls the formidable Mahdi Army, the Iraqi paramilitary force that initiated the first armed confrontation with American troops. His party constitutes a major bloc in the Iraqi parliament, and he has supporters all over the country.

Experts say the anti-occupation cleric is pursuing a religious degree to become a key player in the power struggle in the oil-rich south and to increase his support among the Shiite majority.

Al-Obeidi denied the claims, saying Al-Sadr was not interested in money or power.

(Translated from Arabic by Sonia Farid).

<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2007/12/16/43018.html>



## New Technology Combines GPS Benefits with Privacy Protection

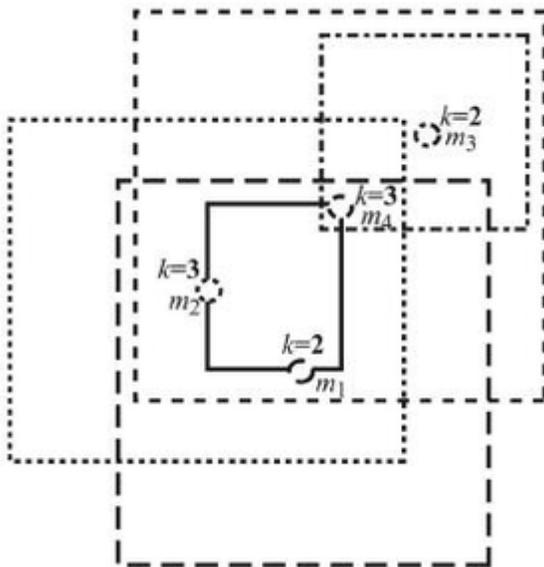
Lisa Zyga, December 11, 2007

As GPS and other wireless location-based technologies are becoming prevalent on cell phones and other everyday devices, two researchers are thinking about the social reaction to constant surveillance. As George Orwell envisioned, a world in which everyone is being watched opens the doors for privacy abuse and totalitarian control.

Computer scientists Bugra Gedik and Ling Liu explain that, while an Orwellian society is not right around the corner, location-based technologies have already raised major personal privacy issues. One case in point is DARPA's LifeLog project, "a massive electronic database of every activity and relationship a person engages in," which was recently scrapped due to privacy concerns.

Gedik, a researcher at the IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, and Liu, an associate professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, have recently developed a new technology that could protect cell phone and mobile device users from privacy abuse, while still enabling them to enjoy the benefits that location-based technologies have to offer.

**This spatial layout shows how four messages relate to each other, with messages 1, 2, and 4 included in the same cloaking box (solid rectangle) in order to blur the identities of the users. Credit: Bugra Gedik and Ling Liu. ©2007 IEEE.**



"We need to devise a location anonymization architecture that is both scalable in terms of achieving high anonymization success rate and high accuracy, and robust in terms of protecting users from vulnerabilities and threats of misuse and abuse of their location information," Liu told *PhysOrg.com*, explaining one of the major challenges of developing a location privacy protection system.

While previous attempts at location privacy applications have been made, Gedik and Liu's system is the first to enable individuals to choose the level of anonymity for different applications, while still providing nearly optimal performance. For example, a cell phone user could send a request for a local gas station offering the most inexpensive gas to a "location-based services" (LBS) provider, and receive an accurate answer even without the provider knowing exactly where the user is located.

Without knowing a user's location, it would also be impossible for an LBS provider to determine with certainty a user's identity when using the protective system. This protection is important since, using only location information, curious or malicious providers could conceivably determine information such as a user's political affiliations, alternative lifestyles, medical problems or the private businesses of an organization such as new business initiatives and partnerships, the researchers explained.

The new system uses an anonymity-based approach called "location k-anonymity." A user is considered to be location k-anonymous if their location information sent to the LBS provider is indistinguishable from the location information of at least  $k - 1$  other users. In tests, the researchers experimented with k values from 2 to 12, with higher values meaning increased privacy, but also longer search times. In real life, different users could choose different k values for different applications based on their personalized privacy requirements, but the researchers predicted that even the most privacy-conscious users would be satisfied with a k value of 5.

"Most of the privacy-preserving algorithms today work with a system-defined fixed k for all users, and we argue that 'one-size-fits-all' k-anonymization approaches are not efficient," Gedik explained. "Our system is the first one to develop a personalized location anonymization model for a wide range of users with context-sensitive privacy requirements, while maintaining high accuracy through optimal location anonymization."

Whenever the system receives a message, an algorithm searches for other messages coming from the same general area, and then groups together k or more messages in a geographical rectangle encompassing all the messages. For tuning the system level parameters to obtain close-to-optimal accuracy in practice, the system uses a "trace generator," which simulates cars moving on roads based on real-world road data.

After the messages are anonymized in this way, the system forwards them to the external LBS providers. In tests, the system processed 50% of messages in less than five seconds, and 75% in less than 10 seconds. Further, the personalized location k-anonymity model had a high success rate, with only about 10% of messages being dropped due to algorithm shortcomings, such as the inability to find other messages sent within the same location.

The scientists will continue working on improving the algorithm, and also studying the quality of location-based services when used under the privacy algorithm in real-world situations.

"Our location privacy project is progressing along three dimensions," Liu explained. "First, we are working on ways to combine policy-based privacy specification and enforcement with anonymous usage of location information for protecting the location privacy of users and organizations. Second, we are interested in developing a privacy-conscious mobile community for different classes of applications. Third, we are interested in studying different location anonymization techniques in terms of both their ability to balance the level of privacy guarantees and the quality of service, and their resilience to various location-based inference attacks."

This location privacy project is currently funded by the NSF Cybertrust program.

**More information: Gedik, Bugra, and Liu, Ling. "Protecting Location Privacy with Personalized k-**

**Anonymity: Architecture and Algorithms. *IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing*, Vol. 7, No. 1, January 2008.**

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<http://www.physorg.com/news116603576.html>

# WIRED

## Portrait of a *Halo 3* Forge Artist

By Susan Arendt, 12.14.07



Art director Brock Davis created this optical illusion using *Halo 3*'s Forge tool. Image: Brock Davis

Brock Davis found a unique way to combine his love of *Halo* and his passion for drawing: He created a 3-D self-portrait using *Halo 3*'s Forge tool.

The intriguing image, an optical illusion composed of objects found within the game, generated a lot of interest online.

Davis, who works as an art director for an ad agency in Minneapolis, had seen examples of people using Forge to write messages or draw 2-D pictures, but was curious to see if such artistic endeavors could be taken a step further by making a 3-D image.



"I was curious about the idea I had in my head, and I wanted to see if it could work," he explains.

"It would be amazing to try something like this in the real world, but at least with Forge I was able to try it in a virtual world, and that's the next best thing.

"Especially since it's a tad easier to levitate and move large vehicles in Forge," he jokes.

Forge is *Halo 3*'s extremely flexible map-customization tool that allows players to create their dream multiplayer map, right down to the tiniest detail. *Halo* fans quickly embraced Forge after the game's release, putting the tool to use for more than just creating custom game maps.



Using a simple interface designed to let players add or replace in-game items like weapons and vehicles, as well as random articles used simply to give the map some flavor, they soon took to drawing pictures and writing messages by lining up weapons and vehicles on the ground. One player even proposed to his girlfriend by spelling it out in Forge. (She said yes.)

Davis, who has had no formal art training but has been drawing and designing his "whole life," says he's certain the self-portrait won't be the last of his art projects.

"It's just a matter of crossing paths with something that inspires me," he says. "I'm always looking for ways of doing creative things differently."

Though he never intended for his creation to attract so much attention, Davis says that "a prominent person" at Bungie Studios, *Halo*'s developer, commented on how much he liked the portrait.

"That was really cool," Davis says. "Maybe if I'm lucky, the gods at Bungie will see fit to drop a certain Spartan helmet in my stocking this year."

[http://www.wired.com/culture/art/news/2007/12/halo3\\_artist](http://www.wired.com/culture/art/news/2007/12/halo3_artist)

## Recharging Gadgets Wirelessly

A metal pad that can recharge devices placed on top of it has come to market.

By Kate Greene, Thursday, December 13, 2007

The chore of recharging cell phones, PDAs, MP3 players, cameras, and laptops is perhaps one of the more frustrating side effects of modern technology. Charger cables are usually tangled in nests near outlets or behind desks. And anyone traveling for more than a day with an electronic gadget has to tote along its clunky charger as well. A Delaware-based startup called WildCharge thinks that it has a better approach. The company is selling a small metal pad, about the size of a sheet of paper, that can simultaneously charge multiple devices laid on top of it--as long as they're equipped with adaptors. WildCharge is now selling an adaptor for Motorola Razzr phones, and it's developing others.



**Power pad:** Delaware-based WildCharge has developed an electrically conducting pad that charges phones and other devices via adaptors. Above, the battery cover of a Motorola Razzr mobile phone has been replaced by WildCharge's adaptor, which has four metal contacts arranged in a Y shape. *Credit: WildCharge*

"WildCharge is the industry first in wire-free charging," says Mitch Randall, the company's chief technology officer and inventor of the technology. He says that it was easy to bring the power pad to consumers because the technology is fairly straightforward, while other companies and research teams are still ironing out kinks in their approaches. "There are no other competitors on the market because they're still fighting their technology," he says. "Ours just works, and it's cheap."

In recent years, a number of wireless-power technologies have garnered some attention. Researchers at the University of Tokyo have developed a sheet of plastic with printed electronics that charges gadgets using a technique known as inductive coupling. In the researchers' prototype, electric current flows through a coil, inducing a magnetic field. This magnetic field, in turn, induces a current in a coil within or attached to a device that is touching or nearly touching the pad--the same way that an electric toothbrush charges on its pedestal. Still, the research is early, and the printed electronics aren't reliable enough to be used in a commercial product. At MIT, another group of researchers recently demonstrated a wireless-power setup that uses large coils to charge gadgets up to three meters away; they are currently working to commercialize the technology.

Randall explains that WildCharge took a different, simpler approach. The power pad--originally designed to power action figures for a child's game--consists of metal strips that conduct electricity. In order for a gadget to be recharged by the pad, it needs an adaptor, which plugs into

its charging port and consists of four metal contacts. When the contacts touch the metal strips on the pad, electricity flows directly into the battery of the gadget. Essentially, the contacts "close the circuit," says Randall, "just like flipping a light switch." For safety, Randall says, the pad shuts down when an object that isn't WildCharge-enabled comes in contact with it; but the mechanism behind that feature is proprietary, he says. If there are no devices in contact with the pad, then after 30 seconds, it goes into a standby mode to conserve power.

Currently, WildCharge offers adaptors only for Motorola Razr phones, but Randall says that his company will soon unveil others that work with iPods and smart phones, including the iPhone. The Razr adaptor replaces the battery cover that comes with the phone, but Randall says that future adaptors will look like the rubber sleeves that many people use to protect their handhelds from scratches and other damage. "If you go to an Apple store, you'll see a whole section of protective gel or hard rubber material that usually covers the back of a device and leaves the front open," says Randall. "We have a thing just like that. Embedded into that gel are our electronics."

While the company isn't releasing the names of any partners, Randall says that it has been in talks with cell-phone manufacturers interested in learning more about integrating the technology into their phones. At the outset, says Randall, manufacturers generally have concerns about heating, electromagnetic interference, and other effects of inductive coupling. "They are the experts at testing inductive wire-free technologies because they've seen a few of them go through their labs," says Randall. But since the WildCharge pad doesn't use inductive coupling, he says, it doesn't have the associated problems.

The company has already received significant recognition for its product. It was honored as a 2008 International CES Best of Innovations Design and Engineering winner, an award presented by the Consumer Electronics Association, which puts on the annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Also, *Time* magazine picked the WildCharge pad as one of the top innovations of 2007.

The pad definitely appeals to people's desire to disconnect from wires, says Roger Kay, the president of Endpoint Technologies Associates, a technology analysis firm. "Ultimately, what it saves is having to plug the device in and some of the messiness of power cords," he says. "That's probably the biggest impact." But, Kay adds, in order for the pad to win widespread adoption, WildCharge will need to keep down the cost of its adaptors, whether they're snapped on by customers or embedded by cell-phone manufacturers. "It's got to be very cheap, so that it's a no-brainer from the user's point of view," Kay says.

Randall believes that the technology's cost is low enough to make it appealing, but he also expects that people will truly value using the WildCharge pad. He says that some early customers have already derived unexpected benefits from using it, beyond simply avoiding messy cords. For one, he says, since people tend to set their phones on the pad when they're in their houses, they don't lose track of them as often. Also, since using the pad becomes a habit, phones tend to be more fully charged when they're needed, giving the impression of lengthened battery life. And once the new adaptors arrive, travelers will need to pack up only the power pad, instead of lugging around a mass of plug-in cords, Randall says.

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<http://www.technologyreview.com/Infotech/19894/?a=f>

# NewScientistTech

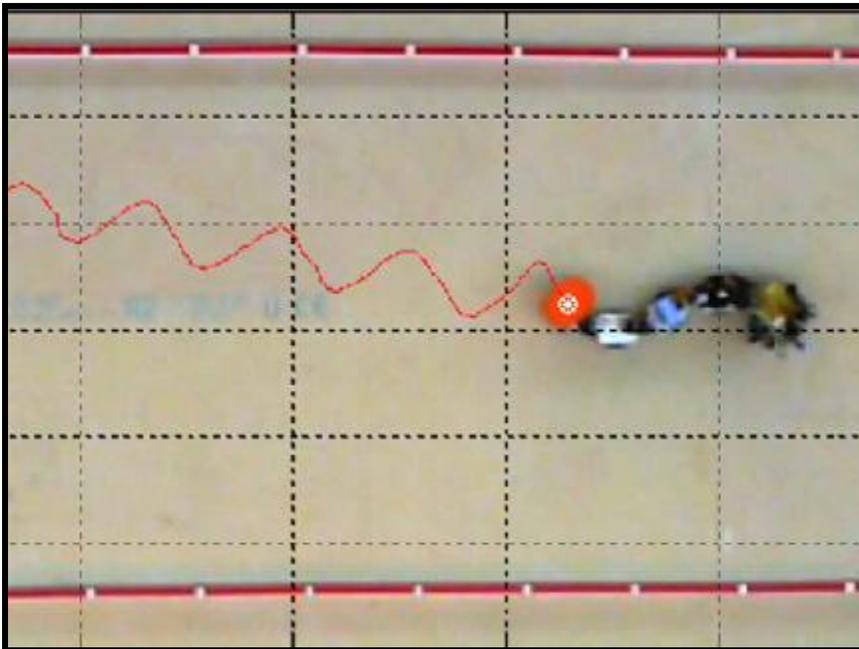
## 'Snakebot' navigates its way round slippery problem

Kurt Kleiner, *NewScientist.com* news service, 14 December 2007

The sight of several robotic snakes slithering down a hallway together is enough to most people the heebie-jeebies. But Greek researchers believe teams of coordinated snake-like robots could someday be useful for remote inspection, repair, and even rescue work.

A number of different research groups are developing robots that mimic real snakes; their shape and simplicity make them ideal for crawling through pipes or exploring narrow or cluttered environments.

And yet, while most of these robots can crawl along and turn on command, getting them to navigate independently has so far proven difficult. Their mode of locomotion means their body is continually changing shape and position.



**A snakebot with infrared sensors on its head crawls along a corridor (Image: Dimitris Tsakiris)**

Michael Sfakiotakis and Dimitris Tsakiris at Foundation for Research and Technology in Heraklion, Greece have now developed a control mechanism that allows a snake-shaped robot safely navigate through an unfamiliar environment.

### Perfect aim

The researchers did a lot of the work with computer simulations, but also built a simple, wheeled "snakebot" to test the control method. The team gave their robot two pairs of infrared sensors on its head, each capable of judging the distance to a nearby wall or other solid object.

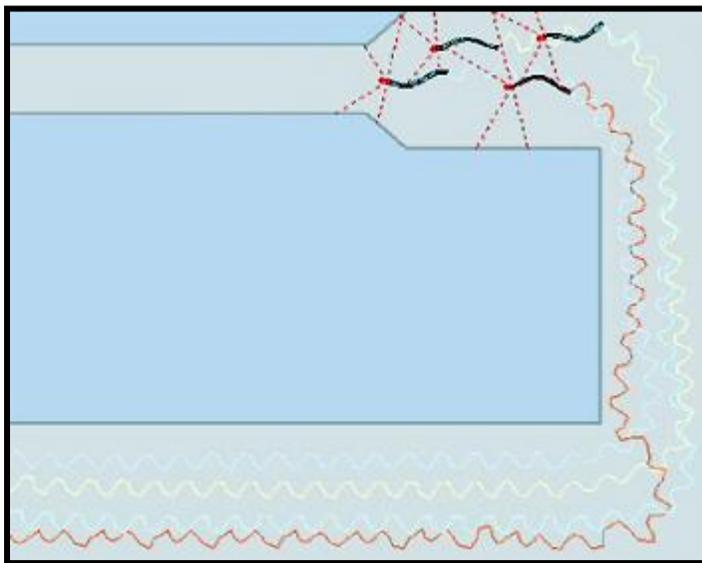
They also programmed the robot with a complex set of algorithms that force it to move its joints in response to its distance from an obstruction. The maths is complicated, but the result is fairly simple; the snakebot adjusts itself until its body is equidistant from the obstacles on either side.

For example, in a hallway it will move away from the nearest wall until it is slithering up the centre of the passage. And, when it comes to a corner, the snakebot will moves towards the newly opened space, gradually turning itself through the corner.

This allows the robot to slither through a corridor and turn corners without bumping into any walls. See a video of the researcher's snakebot in action (20.9MB .mov).

## Snake swarms

In simulations, the same behaviour lets several robots – with sensors along their body – to form a team that can travel along together. The robots simply centre themselves between their nearest neighbour and the wall. See a simulation of four snakebots working together (12.6MB .mov).



**Four virtual snakebots explore a more complex environment together (Image: Dimitris Tsakiris)**

Rainer Worst, a robotics researcher at the Fraunhofer Institute in Germany, says that teaching a snakebot to guide itself is especially difficult, partly because its body is so long and partly because of the nature of its locomotion.

Controlling undulations is not as simple as controlling rolling wheels, he told **New Scientist**. "This is rather impressive," he says.

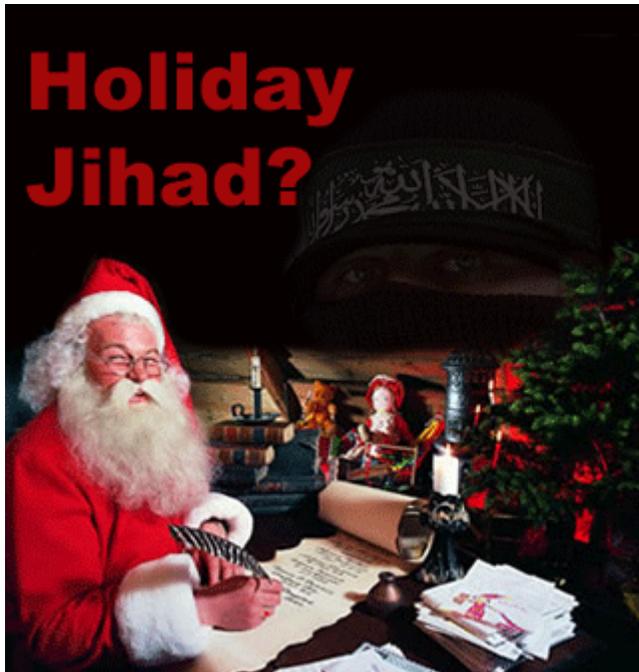
Journal reference: *The International Journal of Robotics Research* (vol 26, p 1267).

<http://technology.newscientist.com/article/dn13053>



## Symposium: *Holiday Jihad?*

By Jamie Glazov, *FrontPageMagazine.com* | 12/14/2007



The FBI recently issued a warning that al Qaeda may be preparing a series of holiday attacks on US shopping malls in Los Angeles and Chicago. How seriously must we take such warnings in the context of them applying to the approaching holiday? And must we try to gauge terrorist strategy in the contexts of holidays and certain dates? Do jihadists have a predilection for inflicting violence on some dates over others? Is it wise for us to fixate on certain dates as opposed to others in preparation against terrorist strikes?

To discuss these issues with us today are: **Daniel Pipes**, ([www.DanielPipes.org](http://www.DanielPipes.org)) a director of the Middle East Forum and author of *Miniatures*.

**Bruce Teft**, the Director of CRA's Threat Assessment Center. He retired from the CIA as a case officer in 1995 after 21 years, 17 working in Stations abroad. He was a founding member of the CIA's Counter-Terrorism Center in 1985 and has been involved with terrorism issues since then. After his retirement, he continued studying Islamic terrorist techniques and training more than 16,000 first responders, law enforcement, military and intelligence officials in terrorism awareness and prevention. For a two year period following 9/11, he was the Counter-Terrorism and Intelligence advisor to the New York Police Department.

**Robert Spencer**, a scholar of Islamic history, theology, and law and the director of Jihad Watch. He is the author of seven books, eight monographs, and hundreds of articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism, including the New York Times Bestsellers *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)* and *The Truth About Muhammad*. His latest book is *Religion of Peace?*

**FP:** Daniel Pipes, Bruce Teft and Robert Spencer, welcome to Frontpage Symposium. Bruce Teft, let me begin with you. What do you find significant about the FBI warning in the context of jihad attacks and dates?

**Tefft:** I believe that it is pretty clear that the FBI has no "sources" within the terrorist organizations per se -- they mostly draw these warnings (and they come out every year like clockwork) from increased "chatter" on jihadi websites. Of course, the terrorists are not going to be talking about real attacks on the websites. However, they know that we monitor and react to these websites and that it costs us inordinate amounts of time and money in preparing defensive measures. I suspect that most of these chat sites are manned by Muslim teenagers doing their part in the war of Islam against the West.

I do not believe that there is a connection between terrorist attacks and certain dates, with perhaps rare exceptions such as the connection between the OKC bombing and the Waco, Texas disaster. Any other apparent connections are probably nothing more than coincidence. Clandestine operations, whether military, intelligence or terrorist, are very difficult to fix for certain dates. They usually take place as soon as they are ready, certainly not before and rarely afterwards (due to a legitimate fear of discovery). It has been reported that bin Laden expected 9/11 to take place first in June and then August and was getting anxious just before the actual 9/11 attack.

**Spencer:** Bruce Tefft is of course correct: there is no direct correlation between jihad terror attacks and certain dates. Still, there are some curious resonances. Many have noted that the breaking of the siege of Vienna on September 11, 1683 (although some say September 12) led Osama bin Laden, within a culture that is famous for its long historical memories, to choose that date for the 2001 attacks as a means of signaling that now the mujahedin were picking up where they left off back then. However, even if this connection is absolutely true, no one could have predicted it in advance: it is not that well known as a historical landmark and the date is not celebrated or memorialized by anyone. This indicates that it is essentially a worthless exercise to try to gauge terrorist strategy by scanning over notable dates in history.

That said, it is also true that the jihadists have an eye for the grand symbol, and this could conceivably take the form of a strike on a notable date as easily as it took the form of attacks on a military landmark (the Pentagon) and an economic one (the World Trade Center). Also notable in this connection may be the warnings we see from Islamic clerics every year: do not participate in the infidels' festivities, do not wish them holiday greetings, do not endorse in any way what Muslim hardliners see as celebrations of infidelity and the rejection of God. These attitudes, so often reemphasized among Salafist communities, inculcate a contempt and hatred for non-Muslims particularly on the occasions of their holidays that could become the justification for a holiday attack. In sum, then, while the possibility cannot be ruled out that a large-scale attack could be planned for Christmas or New Years Day, there is still no solid indication that jihadists have a predilection for inflicting violence on some dates over others, and law enforcement officials have the obligation of remaining vigilant on every day of the year.

**Pipes:** I'd like to start by concurring with the observation that operational imperatives appear nearly always to trump the search for symbolic dates; and by joining with Bruce Tefft in wondering if all that "chatter" isn't manufactured for the purpose of misleading intelligence agencies into thinking something is amiss.

It also bears noting that by the year 2007, there's a lot of history behind us down to the specific day, so no matter what date out of the 366 one chooses for an act of terrorism, there surely will be something relevant taking place on that same day in some year of recent centuries.

Finally, I'd like to concur with Robert Spencer's point about Islamist hostility toward Western holidays. I have written about the rejection of Valentine's Day, but that is a special case, for the focus is erotic, something that bothers the pious of several faiths. More to the point is the general Muslim hostility toward most other holidays, both religious (Christmas above all, but also Easter and Yom Kippur), quasi-religious (New Year's), and completely secular (in the United States, July 4<sup>th</sup> and Thanksgiving).

Arguments against these holidays tend to fall into several categories: (1) They have pagan origins. (2) Muslims must not imitate *kafirs*. (3) Islam is complete and has no need for external celebrations.

To sum these various points up: While Islamists might well enjoy the symbolism of striking during Western holidays, this motivation will not likely have much importance.

**Tefft:** Both Robert Spencer and Daniel Pipes are far more erudite and educated in Islam than I am. In fact, I regard both as my mentors. Drawing on their discourse and writings, I've only tried to apply those teachings to the operational matter of fighting Islam.

I have no disagreement at all with their observations of Muslim hostility to Western holidays, or a Muslim desire to attack the *kafir* to commemorate a significant date- or that nearly every date in the calendar could be linked to some event significant to Muslims since they have been waging war against non-Muslims for 1400 years.

Operationally, however, specific dates are difficult to adhere to and analytically, it is nearly impossible to determine which date might be preferred for an attack over another date.

I eschew the term "Islamist" since I believe it is misleading, implying, as does the term "Islamofascist" that there is some major theological or ideological split in Islam over basic goals. From my understanding of Islam it appears that those we call "radicals", or "Islamists", or "Islamofascists" are basically acting in strict accordance with the Koran, Mohammed's example, and the *hadiths*. Those Muslims attacking us are the militants, the *muhajideen* or holy warriors -- the armed wing of Islam, much like the various IRA factions were the armed wing of the Irish nationalists, while Sinn Fein was the political/moderate wing.

Both the militants and the other Muslims who support them, or do not reject them as apostates, are after the same goal: conquest of the world by Islam. Their only difference might be tactical. "Moderate" Muslims may believe, as many Communists did during the Cold War, that infiltration and subversion are more effective than direct, frontal-assault armed attacks in conquering their enemy. But even "moderate" Muslims cannot deny the Koranic dictates to convert, enslave or kill every non-Muslim and make the world Islamic.

**FP:** Well moderate Muslims might not be able to deny that this is what the Qur'an dictates, but they can reject it. And in rejecting it this may make them un-Islamic in the eyes of Islam, but they can see themselves as Muslims if they want to and we cannot stop them. In other words, the problem is Islam, not the many Muslims who want to democratize it. They face a large challenge, but because they face a large challenge does not make them the same as Muslim extremists.

Robert Spencer, what do you make of Daniel Pipes' and Bruce Tefft's comments? And do you think in general that we should be on greater alert this holiday season? And in a general sense, is the West preparing itself in a way that it should be?

**Spencer:** Daniel Pipes' explanation of why Muslims reject non-Muslim holidays brought to mind an article posted recently on the website of the Khalid Bin Al-Walid Mosque in Toronto, which asks: "How can we bring ourselves to congratulate or wish people well for their disobedience to Allah? Thus expressions such as: Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Birthday, Happy New Year, etc, are completely out." This grounds the objection to them in the assertion that they are inherently manifestations of disobedience to Allah, probably because of their non-Islamic origins.

On a different subject, I agree with Bruce Tefft that "'moderate' Muslims cannot deny the Koranic dictates to convert, enslave or kill every non-Muslim and make the world Islamic" with a few small reservations: the choices for non-Muslims delineated by Muhammad and Islamic law are not conversion, slavery, or death, but conversion, subjugation, or death (cf. Sahih Muslim 4294). Subjugation is not, strictly speaking, slavery, although the distinction between the two at various points in Islamic history was exceedingly fine. Non-Muslims had to accept a humiliating second-class status and held their lives and property always at the sufferance of their Muslim overlords, but they were not slaves outright.

As for Mr. Tefft's statement about moderate Muslims, I think it is a handy test of whether a self-professed moderate is sincerely interested in Islamic reform, or is a deceiver: does he admit that Islamic tradition contains teachings involving violence against and the subjugation of unbelievers? Or does he deny that such teachings exist? A real reformer will not deny the existence of such teachings, but will confront them and try to formulate ways to blunt their force for incitement to violence. So I agree that moderate Muslims cannot deny these Qur'anic dictates, but I think it may be possible to formulate a non-literal (and, indeed, anti-literal) understanding of Islam that explicitly rejects its traditional supremacist elements.

We shouldn't kid ourselves, however, into thinking this is a mass movement that is ready to sweep the Islamic world. There are a few Muslims in the West who are genuinely grappling with how to reconcile Islam with otherwise universally accepted notions of human rights, the sacred/secular distinction, and more. They deserve our support. But they do not at this point have the numbers or influence to even be called a movement, much less to seize the intellectual initiative from the jihadists.

Do I think in general that we should be on greater alert this holiday season? Yes, because the possibility of a holiday strike is there, but we should maintain general vigilance at all times. And in a general sense, is the West not preparing itself in a way that it should be? Indeed not. But the

failure is not so much in efforts to head off jihad terror attacks, as many have been thwarted, but in meeting the ideological challenge the jihadists present, and in calling upon American Muslim groups to do something effective to meet that ideological challenge and stop resisting anti-terror efforts. There are also many non-violent ways in which the Islamic supremacist agenda is advancing, and those are not even on the radar screen for law enforcement or government officials at this point.

**FP:** Dr. Pipes, your thoughts on the discussion? And kindly add a word, if you can, about Robert Spencer's point about the many non-violent ways in which the Islamist agenda is advancing.

**Pipes:** Robert Spencer makes two points – that there are “many non-violent ways in which the Islamic supremacist agenda is advancing” and that these are “not even on the radar screen for law enforcement or government officials at this point.” I agree entirely.

(1) I have labeled this phenomenon “lawful Islamism,” argued that it is no less dangerous than violent Islamism, and founded “Islamist Watch” to battle it.

(2) Government officials in general and law enforcement in particular are clueless about this problem; indeed, they tend to make matters worse by effectively endorsing lawful Islamists. This, by the way, has been U.S. policy since Edward Djerejian's Meriden House speech of June 1992.

Looking ahead, I see an emerging debate on lawful Islamists. That is, Westerners generally agree that truly moderate Muslims are our allies and violent Islamists are our enemies. Contention centers on the middle ground of lawful Islamists.

As for the topic that began this discussion, that of “holiday jihad,” I think we three general agree that the December holiday season is about as dangerous as other times of the year.

**Tefft:** I disagree with you Jamie that moderate Muslims can reject *any* part of the Qu'ran and remain Muslims. Nor have I ever seen "many Muslims" wishing to do so. As Robert noted, this is hardly a mass movement ready to sweep the Islamic world...a few hundred Muslims rejecting the Koran out of 1.5 billion is not even statistically noticeable.

As far as those Muslims who do not necessarily support al-Qaeda's tactic of frontal assault against non-Muslims, I think Dr. Pipe's points are essential. Muslims, who know they are obligated to make the world Islamic, are far more dangerous when they pretend to be pro-democratic, or loyal members of any man-made, non-Islamic state. CAIR and all of the other terrorist or Wahabbi-related Muslim organizations in the US from ISNA to MPAC to the Muslim Student Associations are past-masters at this type of infiltration and deception. This is much the same tactic the Communists resorted to following the Second World War when they realized that they could not beat the West on an open battlefield. Islam is at war with us. Muslims have so stated, from Mohammed to bin Laden to the Prime Minister of Turkey. Why do we persist in denying the danger? Islam is at war with us, we are not (yet) at war with Islam. And we are in grave danger because of this.

**FP:** There is a difference between Islam and Muslims. And there are Muslims who are not aware of -- or simply not interested in -- many of their own teachings. There are Muslims who do not and will not follow out on many of the teachings. Are these Muslims considered good Muslims within Islam? No. Does this mean they do not exist? No.

Islam poses a threat and a problem for us today. Muslims such as **Khalim Massoud** and **Hasan Mahmud** do not. They represent part of our hope and we would be very unwise to paint them with the same brush that we do Islamic extremists.

Having said that, Mr. Tefft, I am not in disagreement with your main points about Islam itself. **Spencer:** Bruce Tefft is right that moderate Muslims cannot “reject *any* part of the Qu’ran and remain Muslims” – from the standpoint of traditional Islamic theology and law. That is not to say that a new understanding of Islam could not be developed and ultimately become a large movement, but that consummation, however devoutly to be wished, is not at this point on the horizon. The jihadist movement is precisely a reassertion of that traditional theology and Qur’anic literalism among Muslim populations where some aspects of that literalism have been set aside in practice for quite some time.

Most analysts assume that Muslims who in practice reject that literalism will stand up and be counted on the side of the West, pluralism, and peaceful coexistence when challenged. This has, however, not as yet been proven. And it seems unlikely to happen, since the jihadists can and do portray themselves as the exponents of “pure” and “true” Islam in order to gain recruits and justify their actions. In light of that, genuine reformers would have to reject Qur’anic literalism and traditional Sharia provisions explicitly, and brave the charge from Islamic supremacists that they have by doing so ceased to be Muslim.

Those who do so, however small their numbers may be, deserve our support, although we should be wary of placing too high hopes on their prospects for initiating a large-scale reform movement within the Islamic world. Still, policymakers who are aware of the real magnitude of the problem should be studying ways to exploit the fact that, as Jamie puts it, there are Muslims “who are not aware of -- or simply not interested in -- many of their own teachings. There are Muslims who do not and will not follow out on many of the teachings.”

I believe there are many ways this can be done that haven’t even begun to be explored, because official policy has been hamstrung by fictions about Islam and Muslims that have been invested with the status of unquestionable dogma.

**Pipes:** Islam is in many ways similar to Judaism, as they are both based on a sacred law, Shari’a and Halakha. It is therefore instructive to look at the encounter of Judaism with modernity. To shorten a long and complex story, played out over several centuries, the grip of sacred law was loosened and Jews today remain Jews while eating pork and not keeping the Sabbath. Indeed, schools (e.g., Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist) emerged that codified attitudes toward the law. Although such developments remain in the future of Islam, I see no reason to preclude them. As I like to put it, Islam is what Muslims make of it. Or, as Hassan Hanafi, professor of philosophy at the University of Cairo, puts it, the Koran “is a supermarket, where one takes what one wants and leaves what one doesn’t want.”

**Tefft:** I notice that we are now moving into some very esoteric or philosophical areas -- which I am as well qualified as my friends here. While I wonder at Jamie's comment that there is a difference between Islam and Muslims, I certainly do not disagree with the thought that all whom we might call Muslims, or even moderate Muslims, may not be "good Muslims" according to Mohammed, Allah or the Koran. In that case these 'bad' (or "moderate") Muslims are, from our point of view, not a problem, not a threat and indeed, quite probably good, decent people.

That said, from a military-intelligence point of view, or even an operational and security viewpoint, we must drop political correctness and look at reality. As with the Nazis or Communists of a by-gone era, basic (fundamental) Islam is a murderous, even genocidal, supremacist, exclusionary and evil religion (ideology). I do not think we can gainsay individuals who claim to be Muslims and say that they really do not support the Koran (an obligation in being Muslim) or the ideology of Islam, or are ignorant of what they are claiming to be. This would be most presumptuous on our part. As a simple man, I will take people at their word and if a person claims to be a Muslim, like someone claiming to be a Nazi, they are also laying claim to the belief system that ideology professes.

Islam is not a race, ethnicity, or skin color. Adherence to Islam is not accidental or involuntary. You have to choose to believe in Islam and choose that ideology if you are a Muslim. If it is not yet clear, the religion of Islam is 180 degrees antithetical to the American way of life and the US Constitution. Our separation of church and state, by law, is an in-your-face denial of Allah and the Koran. This is the basic reason for Islam singling out the US as the Great Satan above all other nations. We are thumbing our collective noses at Mohammed teachings. True Muslims are not and cannot be our friends and allies. And, barring a crystal ball or mind-reading device, we really have no way to sort out the "True Muslims" from those who only claim to be Muslims (would someone who is not a true believer in National Socialism, claim to be a Nazi?). If someone states that he is a Muslim, I will take him at his word that he is my sworn enemy.

**FP:** Ok, well, this debate is starting to go in circles.

Needless to say, this position that "If someone states that he is a Muslim, I will take him at his word that he is my sworn enemy," well, as I have already stated, I reject this position.

And this is not coming from someone who is naïve about Islam or naïve about what the intense believers of that religion hold to be true and important. Yes, of course, a person who states that he is a Muslim and who means this within the context of embracing the violent and totalitarian themes of Islam, yes, this person is obviously an ideological enemy to anyone who believes in democracy, freedom, individual liberty etc. But again, there are those Muslims who consider themselves to be good Muslims but they are not knowledgeable about, or interested in, or have any intent on pursuing, the violent and authoritarian principles of their religion. And if they are Muslims like Thomas Haidon, they might even be interested and intent on working on an Islam that nullifies those ingredients of their religion. And this is why I have many friends who are Muslims, and these Muslims consider themselves to be Muslims and they have absolutely no interest in jihad or political Islam. And yes, the jihadis might kill these Muslims if they had the chance -- but this does not take the reality away that these are still Muslims.

But in any case, I have already made my position clear on this throughout the symposium. There is a difference between Muslims and Islam. And millions of Muslims throughout the world have been and are the victims of political Islam. And part of our impulse in doing what we do here at Frontpagemag.com is founded on reaching out to --and helping -- those Muslims who are victims of Islamo-Fascism and/or who are just as intent as we are on defeating Islamo-Fascism. . An all-inclusive attack on people of a faith, rather than the focus on the problems within a religion, is destructive and will get us nowhere.

But, as a said, this argument is starting to go in circles. Robert Spencer, last comment please.

**Spencer:** Mr. Tefft is correct that “Islam is not a race, ethnicity, or skin color.” At the same time, in the Middle East in particular, as well as in other areas of the Islamic world, one’s *deen* – religion – does approach the level of ethnicity. It is considered an unchangeable element of one’s identity. A few years back a Palestinian Muslim named Eyad Sarraj expressed this assumption when he said: “I would honestly say that if I could choose a religion, I would choose Christianity and its ideal of universal acceptance, love, and forgiveness.” It never occurred to him that he could actually choose a religion; such an idea, so taken for granted in America, is almost unheard-of in some sections of the Dar al-Islam.

Consequently, I think it might be fruitful for analysts to study how to bring Muslims to an explicit rejection of concepts that many reject implicitly already – Islamic supremacism, the subjugation of unbelievers, and the like. This could contribute to building the supermarket of which Dr. Pipes spoke, although it will certainly face titanic obstacles from those who consider themselves the guardians of Islamic authenticity and purity. Despite those obstacles, however, I don’t think it would be wise to cede the field entirely to the jihadists in their efforts to win cultural Muslims to their point of view. Our appeals to those cultural Muslims have thus far been based on ignorance both of Islam and of human nature, but there is no reason why that must always be the case.

**Pipes:** We seem long to have left the “holiday jihad” topic behind. A few responses to comments by my fellow panelists:

\* To Mr. Tefft’s comment that “the religion of Islam is 180 degrees antithetical to the American way of life and the US Constitution,” I note that he has isolated a virulent form of Islam, that which I call *Islamism*, and decided it is the whole of the religion, past and future. This is as fallacious as would be taking a certain form of Christianity – say, that of fifteenth-century Spain – and extending it to all times and places. All things change, especially major religions.

\* Malaysia may offer the most complete confluence of ethnicity and religion, where ethnic Malays are all assumed to be Muslim and woe to one would convert to another religion.

\* Muslims must indeed do much work do modernize their religion, but it is counterproductive to deny them this potential and insist that they remain mired in the horrors of Islamism. Would it not be better to give them a hand to help pull them out?

**FP:** Daniel Pipes, Bruce Teft and Robert Spencer, thank you for joining Frontpage Symposium. Though indeed we strayed from the “holiday jihad” topic that we focused on in the beginning, you gentlemen nonetheless gave some profound wisdom on that topic -- and even the debate that occurred after on connected issues of Islam crystallized crucial themes and perspectives. Thank you.

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## The Macleans.ca Interview: Tarek Fatah

The Muslim Canadian Congress founder on the schoolteacher jailed in Sudan after naming a teddy bear "Muhammad," what Canada should do and why he's going teddy bear shopping.

Kate Lunau | Nov 29, 2007

*Just a few months into a new job at a posh school in Sudan, British schoolteacher Gillian Gibbons thought she'd teach her seven-year-old students about animals and their habitats. She had a student bring in a favourite teddy bear, which the class voted to name Muhammad - the name of the founder of Islam, and a popular name among Muslim males. According to some reports, Muhammad was also the name of the most popular boy in class. A colleague turned Gibbons in. On Thursday in a Khartoum court, she was found guilty of insulting religion and sentenced to 15 days in prison (she faced a possible 40 lashes, a fine, or up to one year in jail). Gibbons will be deported from Sudan once her sentence is complete.*

*The case has sparked controversy and outrage in both Muslim and non-Muslim communities around the world, including in Canada. On Thursday, Canada's Muslim Canadian Congress issued a press release expressing "shock and dismay" over Gibbons' imprisonment and calling on the Sudanese government to release her immediately. That same day, MCC founder and Macleans 50 member Tarek Fatah placed a miniature teddy bear on his own desk - with the word "Muhammad" written across it in black pen.*

**Macleans.ca:** First of all, can you explain why it might be a problem to name a teddy bear "Muhammad" - are there any religious laws in Islam forbidding it?

**Tarek Fatah:** No, none whatsoever. Yesterday, a young 25-year-old Islamist, an engineer, emailed me and said, "Mr. Fatah, how would you like to find out that a dog is named Tarek?" I said, "I'd be quite honoured." But in his state of mind, a dog was a dirty, filthy object. You see, the debate [around whether or not it's appropriate to name a bear "Muhammad"] is going on among segments of Muslim society that adhere to a jihadi-Islamist agenda. They're trying to provoke conflict and to portray the West as essentially anti-Islam; to create fissures within the Western Muslim community, and to portray the West as at war with Islam. [They're saying,] "Here are these teachers sent over, who are trying to attack our faith." It's absolute nonsense – there are murderers, and suicide bombers, and rapists who are called "Muhammad." Nobody - least of all the Sudanese government - has ever objected to that.

**M:** Here in Canada, what's been the reaction among the larger Muslim community?

**TF:** They're exasperated. On one side, you have pressures to be [loyal] to your community, so many people would not say anything. But I can assure you that 99 per cent of the [Muslim] community rolls their eyes, and calls each other, and says, "What next?" We are at a loss for

words. It's embarrassing for us, and it is causing a backlash against the Muslim community. Can you imagine if you were in my shoes? I can imagine my neighbours sitting around the breakfast tables throwing up their hands and saying, "Are we dealing with crazy people?"

It's affecting everyone, everywhere. And the more Muslims are discriminated [against], the more Islamists have to celebrate. The more they can say, "The West is at war with Islam." And the more they can say, "We need sharia [law] to be imposed." I have not come 6,000 miles to introduce sharia in this country. I know others come here specifically for that reason. Our promise to the Islamists is this: we will not let that happen.

**M: The MCC has urged the Canadian government to intercede. Why should Canada intercede on the behalf of a British citizen?**

**TF:** Because [this issue] causes ordinary, non-Muslim Canadians to look at Muslims as if they are people from another planet. For the sake of better race relations in this country, it is important that mainstream organizations stand up and say, "We will not put up with this nonsense." The Canadian government is our spokesperson. If it cannot defend a teddy bear, what else will it defend? Canada should call in the Sudanese ambassador and tell them that we find this offensive; that the woman should be released right now and let go.

**M: Do you expect the Canadian government to take action on this matter?**

**TF:** I don't know. The Canadian government always surprises us – we don't know what will happen. We would hope that people like [Liberal leader] Stéphane Dion and [NDP leader] Jack Layton would speak up, but I doubt very much that Mr. Layton will say even a word. I think the Left in this country has tried to glamourize the Islamists as if they are some sort of latter-day Sandinistas. Mr. Layton talks of the Taliban as if they're the Viet Cong. It's delusional, uneducated, ill-informed. A love affair of the Left and Islamists that is very dangerous for the rest of the world.

**M: What are you yourself planning to do?**

**TF:** I'm taking a large teddy bear to Ottawa to present it to the Sudanese ambassador there - I am hoping to do this by Sunday. We're encouraging Muslims to mail in teddy bears, with the name "Muhammad" written on them, to the Sudanese ambassador.

**M: So you're going bear shopping soon?**

**TF:** (Laughs) I've never bought teddy bears in my life; I'm 58 years old. I just have to find a one-ton teddy bear I can lug along to Ottawa. I have one at my desk right now, but it's too tiny. I need a big one that I can leave at the doorstep of the Sudanese ambassador, and show him what I think.

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## The Suicide of Reason

By Janet Levy, *FrontPageMagazine.com* | 12/13/2007

### *The Suicide of Reason: Radical Islam's Threat to the West*

by Lee Harris

Basic Books, 2007.

290 pp., \$26.00.

For most in Western societies, the behavior of Muslim fundamentalists is often incomprehensible and, at the same time, terrifying, as illustrated by incidents which make news headlines.

The most recent is that of Gillian Gibbons, a British teacher at a school for children of the Sudanese elite and foreign diplomats. Gibbons was charged by the Sudanese government with inciting religious hatred after honoring a 7-year-old student's innocent request to eponymously name a classroom teddy bear "Mohammed." Gibbons was found guilty under Sharia or Islamic law of blasphemy against the prophet Mohammed. She was jailed and informed that she could be punished by 40 lashes and six months in prison. After a "fair" sentence of 15 days was announced by the ruling clerics, frenzied rioters brandished swords and knives across Khartoum, screaming for her death.

In Saudi Arabia, a woman gang raped by seven men was sentenced to 200 lashes and six months in prison for being in a state of "khalwa" or in the presence of unrelated males. Under Sharia law, women can appear in public only with male relatives. The victim's lawyer had his license to practice law confiscated after he deemed the rapists' sentence lenient and the victim's sentence unjust.

In 2005, a 14-year-old Iranian boy died after receiving 85 lashes for eating in public during the Muslim holiday of Ramadan.

Such incidents provoke outrage, shock and bewilderment in the West, which perceives the innocence of these victims and the injustice of their punishments for violating outmoded codes of behavior. But Muslim societies perceive these same actions as unacceptable breaches of and major offenses to a rigidly enforced code of behavior and moral precepts.

This dichotomy between attitudes in Western and Muslim societies is explored in depth in Lee Harris' recent book, *The Suicide of Reason*. In it, Harris contrasts the enlightened societies of the West and its "rational actor" with the fanatical societies and "tribal actor" that characterize much of the Muslim world. He examines the phenomenon of the "rule of law" Western culture that is guided by broadminded self-interest and tolerance. In contrast, he explores the "rule of the jungle," his reference to that faction of Muslim culture that is based on a common narrative of

superstition and prejudice with a shame-induced, group ethic that fosters a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice, suicide.

Harris describes the inherent conflict between Western civilization and its emphasis on reason and individualism and Islamic societies that teach intolerance and nurture fanaticism. Western cultures, imbued with a belief in the inevitability of the drive for individual freedom, view as fanatic, those societies which fail to modernize and adopt changed values. Harris posits that the West is disadvantaged in this way because it reacts to the story of change implicit in the history of the Muslim faith and creation of Islamic nation states. However, tribal societies don't necessarily embrace modernization and abandon their zealotry, upon which their social order is based. Their fanaticism, which includes glorification of martyrdom, thus becomes a weapon that defeats all Western attempts to deal with tribal societies, including negotiation, conventional warfare and punitive economic measures. So, while Islam seeks to destroy the West's enlightened way of life with the fanaticism of jihad, the West sabotages itself by non-judgmentally viewing these actions as cultural variations or efforts to procure freedom from an imagined oppression. Harris further contends that the West's reliance on reason in the face of fanaticism will destroy Western society.

In *The Suicide of Reason*, Harris explains the evolution of America's enlightened culture as a natural development originating from the ideal circumstances of pioneer life. He describes how America was settled by stubborn, rugged individualists who fled to the New World to escape religious persecution and freely practice their religion. These early settlers were mostly Protestant dissenters who valued hard work, were determined to hew their own path and refused to take orders from anyone. While the Old World remained a hierarchal society of landowners and serfs with a strong military and government enforcing laws and maintaining the status quo, the North American continent was a wilderness unburdened by history and rife with opportunity. It was geographically separated from Europe and free of threats except for Indians. It couldn't be conquered, only settled, and every pioneer was in charge of his own destiny. While the Old World admired the life of the idle rich and military strength and subjugation were the keys to wealth and power, in America, a settler with a Protestant ethic cleared his own land or paid someone else to do it. He held in contempt those who subjugated others to do their work. Hard work was honorable and the route to freedom, wealth and the good life. These unique characteristics of the New World – the right to keep the product of your labor, religious freedom and the lack of imposition on others – spawned American liberalism. Thus, America became fertile ground for the creation of a culture of enlightened reason.

In his provocative book, Harris contrasts this path of cultural evolution with an examination of the foundation of pre-modern societies, such as tribal or Islamic cultures ruled by "the law of the jungle." Thus, hewing to tribal values, Islam is a totalitarian religious and political ideology that protects the ummah, or the Muslim world, from being undermined and preserves mandated tribal behaviors and beliefs. The fanaticism inherent in Islam produces a group allegiance that supersedes all other potential attachments. The tribal code and tribal cohesion takes precedence over anything else and a collective fanaticism fosters cultural protectionism. Harris maintains that it is impossible to appeal to a sense of reason in societies bound by fanaticism because enlightenment directly challenges and threatens their beliefs and very existence.

Another feature of tribal societies is the existence of religious authorities that control the populace and serve as their spokespeople. Fanatical intolerance demands that critics or apostates are shunned and condemned to death. There is no room for self-reflection. The only criticism permissible is that levied at “the other” or the non-believer. Ironically, the very qualities that are shunned and prohibited by cultures of reason are viewed as good and virtuous by fanatical cultures. In Islamic fundamentalist societies, the mullahs endeavor to fan the flames of fanaticism in order to make it more intense and powerful.

The principle of honor is of primary importance in radical Islamic cultures. The honor of the community must be protected at all costs and far exceeds any notion of the individual or of individual rights. Religious leaders, who view the world across a long-term time horizon, operate for the good of the ummah, the propagation of Islam over time and the enforcement of Islamic law.

Tribal success hinges on the inculcation of a uniform system of steadfast shared values and of a sense of shame so deep and visceral that it is impervious to reason and makes death preferable to tribal code violations and the accompanying loss of collective honor. It solidifies a rigidly imposed “us vs. them” mindset in which “the other” is a cursed object of abject enmity. The faithful are indoctrinated and prepared to sacrifice themselves for furthering fanatic tribal goals. Martyrs for the cause are celebrated and elevated to a position of honor.

Tribal cultures thrive on the vacuum that chaos presents. It is a boon to fanaticism and totalitarian control. In a state of chaos, all behaviors become permissible and extreme measures are easy to enforce on desperate populations.

Against such beliefs and behaviors, the enlightened societies of the West are ill equipped to do battle, Harris says. In Western societies, like America, elites serve as critics of the status quo and are often opposed by the populace. They keep any impulses toward fanaticism by the masses in check. Chaos is anathema to reason or order, which must be maintained at all costs. Indeed, the fear of anarchy often leads to appeasement and repudiation of beliefs.

Harris defines America today as a “carpe diem feel good” society in which the happiness of the individual is placed above responsibility to the community, world or future. Rights are cherished above duties, the present valued more than the future, and material acquisitions deemed more important than hard work.

Shaming is used as an effective tool in the enlightened West but with a different twist from that of the Islamic world. People are shamed into thinking the “right” thoughts and ostracized for intolerance and aggressive behavior. This serves to dilute cultural values and life-preserving warrior behavior necessary for survival. In America, people are generally unwilling to make the ultimate sacrifice and will do anything to avoid death and loss of property. The society operates under the notion that all differences can be resolved with negotiation rather than bloodshed. Potential warriors, such as alpha males are feminized, drugged and shamed out of existence. Essentially, mandatory multiculturalism enforces respect for other cultures and disrespect for American culture, Harris argues.

Harris further suggests that America's Protestant tradition of independent thought and action has been replaced by programmed thought, further weakening our ability to deal with fundamentalist Islamic societies. America's teachers are "salesmen of a particular ideological brand" and enforce a groupthink mentality of the "correct" opinions. For example, instead of critically evaluating multiple points of view about women in society, students are told that women are oppressed and that they must be purged of their anti-feminist views. Politically correct values and attitudes religiously demand tolerance for different points of view. It is deemed contemptible to view our American culture, our nation or any religion as superior and practically de rigueur to be tolerant of the intolerant and odious, such as Muslim fundamentalists and 9/11 conspiracy theorists. Thus, Western civilization is stripped of the notion that anything precious and worth protecting or fighting for exists.

In summary, the West is suffering from an insidious ideological assault from the outside by fundamentalist Islam that could result in profound societal damage, while at the same time we are, from the inside, undermining our core values and traditions. We are not experiencing a clash of civilizations, but an overt attempt to dismantle the worldwide status quo. The West is vulnerable, because it has failed to recognize that survival hinges on being intolerant to the intolerant and acknowledging the superiority of our way of life and the exceptionalism of America. We will probably be unable to change the Islamists and alter their three-pronged prescription for non-Muslims – death, subjugation or conversion – but we can prevent them from changing us. Through our "enlightened" democracy and lack of cultural protectionism, we are inadvertently aiding their cause. Our ability to fight has been severely weakened by the enlightened principles of tolerance and multiculturalism that we have grown to cherish and by a lack of group cohesiveness and respect for our common values and accomplishments. While we think short-term and teach our children to have contempt for our culture, the Islamists think long-term and teach their children to die for Islam.

According to Harris, our success in fighting the threat of radical Islam will depend on a willingness to defend ourselves against that most potent weapon for survival: fanaticism. Societies that are the most fanatical about their preservation will prevail. America's best hope is that the struggle for our survival may cause us to awaken and recognize the nobility of our culture as something worth fighting for. We must return to our core traditions and values, take pride in our ethical superiority and exceptionalism and recognize a sacred duty to instill Western ethos in future generations and as widely throughout the world as possible.

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