Addressing the Combined Threat of Violent Jihad and Cultural Jihad

Daniel Augusto
Northcentral University, daugusto@ncu.edu

Jeffrey Gagliano
jeffgagliano254@gmail.com

Introduction

This paper reviews recent literature and evidence related to the topics of violent jihad and the lesser known cultural jihad and argues that the West would benefit from a lens that combines the two threats rather than parsing them out as distinct problems. The authors attempt to increase understanding related to (1) how the concept of jihad has transitioned toward the commonly held strict interpretation of a holy war in the name of Islam and (2) what themes apply to the types of jihad that are being waged against the West.

This research also identifies several shared operational themes present in both violent jihad and cultural jihad and found that the Western intelligence community is uniquely qualified to provide a foundation for the West's response to these shared tactics between violent jihad and cultural jihad. As a result, the Western homeland security apparatus and, particularly, the intelligence community might benefit from an overall approach to a combined threat from violent and cultural jihad. The paper also emphasizes the need for academic research that adds cultural jihad into the body of work.

Although many are aware of the threat of violent jihad, a lesser-known threat is that of cultural jihad (Yousef, 2019). The combined threat of violent and cultural jihad creates some unique challenges, but also produces some shared themes that might serve as focal points for the intelligence community's attempts to combat the threats. Overall, this paper addresses the problems of violent and cultural jihadism and aims to add to the limited body of academic work relative to the combined threat from the two.

Violent Jihad

Historically, jihad was defined as a struggle (Emerick, 2000). External jihad consists of actions in furtherance of Islam, against an external person or entity (Emerick, 2000). In contemporary society, Jihad has become commonly known by many as holy war and

violence in the name of Islam (Clifton, 2017). Taylor and Swanson (2019) attributed the initial shift of jihad toward a 'holy war' interpretation as a result of the approach of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab and the Wahhabi movement during the 1700s. They argued that the Wahhabi labeled any group in opposition to the Wahhabi movement as non-Muslim, and potentially deserving of jihad against them in the form of a holy war. Readers might note the beginning of two themes that will be re-visited in the coming sections. One theme reflects a shift toward a willingness to identify any non-fundamentalist Muslim as a 'non-Muslim.' Another theme reflects the trend toward extreme violence in the name of the fundamentalist specific interpretation of Islam.

Historical underpinnings

Modern Islamism has been primarily dominated by groups that align with the ideals of the Muslim Brotherhood, stemming back to its inception in the 1920s (Haykel, 2016; Wickham, 2015). Essentially, the goals of the Muslim Brotherhood were to overthrow any secular government where the Muslim Brotherhood operates and institute Sharia law in the country (Haykel, 2016; Wickham, 2015). The Muslim Brotherhood was influenced by the Saudi Arabian Wahhabi strict interpretation of Islam and began in Egypt partially in response to British colonialism and other injustices in Cairo, Egypt (Commins, 2006; Obaid, 2017). The political and social justice orientation at that time resulted in the formation of a political ideology combined with Islam, which became known as 'Islamism' (Calvert, 2010). Proponents of Islamism found themselves discussing the 'Islamic state' likely for the first time in recent history (Calvert, 2010), similar to how a political figure would refer to a socialist state or a democratic state. This shift was key to the evolution of jihad toward its current form. Political ideology, perceived social injustice, and all the tumultuousness of social change and unrest began affecting people who practiced a religion that espoused an

increased acceptance of violence reflected within Islam's key holy book, prophetic role model, and its roots in struggle.

Key radical Islamic figures and events

Commins (2006) described Sayyid Qutb as an Egyptian Islamic author, educator, and poet who led the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the 1950s and 1960s and who would become a key figure in the evolution of jihad. During his career as an educational official, Qutb was sent to the U.S. for schooling in order to study some of the educational methods used in America (Calvert, 2010). Qutb's two years in the U.S. solidified his dislike for America because he witnessed American materialism, propensity toward violence, individualism, sexuality, and overall emphasis on outward appearances (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). The aforementioned characteristics were contrary to his values as a Muslim. Qutb returned from America convinced that Western influence was corrupting Egypt and the greater Islamic world. Qutb's transition was an important milestone in the development of modern violent jihad when he re-ignited the idea that, despite a person professing to be Muslim and worshipping Islam, that person could truly be non-Muslim by virtue of his or her actions. This was known as 'takfir' (Stanley, 2005). This labeling would be an important form of reasoning to allow later radical Islamists to avoid moral injury even while committing violence against other Muslims. Qutb's experience in prison and mistreatment by other Muslims galvanized his previous thoughts that he could essentially issue a takfir and disqualify someone from being a Muslim as a result of the person's actions, and that no compromise could be reached with secular governments, as they were inherently contradictory to Islam.

Qutb was later arrested for his role in the Muslim Brotherhood, detained, tortured, and interrogated (Obaid, 2017). He called for Islamist revolution against the Egyptian government in his book *Signposts on the Road* (Calvert, 2010). Qutb's legacy was also

reflected in his eventual influence over Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who would prove to be another central figure in the development of Islamism and the eventual direction of jihad. Al-Zawahiri would eventually ascend to prominence within radical Islam, become second in command of al-Qaeda behind Osama Bin Laden, and play a key role in the 9/11 attacks (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). As a youth, Al-Zawahiri's family was friends with Qutb, and Al-Zawahiri had read Qutb's books. When Qutb was eventually executed by the Egyptian government, he was viewed as a martyr. Qutb's execution prompted or finalized Al-Zawahiri's transition toward militant Islamism.

Al-Zawahiri had become heavily involved in plans to overthrow the secular Egyptian government, and he blamed Western influence and support of the Egyptian government (Wright, 2006). Al-Zawahiri was later involved in the planning of the murder of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Sadat's murder was among the first high-profile example in recent years of extremists justifying the murder of a fellow Muslim as a result of the writings of Qutb. Thus, one can see an example of Qutb's concepts being operationalized by Al-Zawahiri. Al-Zawahiri was later imprisoned for his involvement in the murder of Egyptian President Sadat. Again, one can observe the recurring theme of the militant's exposure to violence, torture, and execution as an emboldening step toward radical Islamism. The Wahhabi fundamentalist views of Saudi Arabia that shaped Qutb and Al-Zawahiri would also shape Osama Bin Laden. However, Bin Laden benefitted from what became known as the Islamic awakening, creating a call to arms toward his cause and increasing his popularity.

Islamic awakening

When three secular Arab governments were defeated in the Six-Day War against Israel, an ideological vacuum occurred in the Middle East (Susser, 2017). Islamists gained influence by convincing younger Muslims that Allah was punishing secular governments for veering away from religious involvement in government (Machairas, 2017). This loss and the

subsequent argument from Islamists would prompt a paradigm shift and increased the popularity of the idea of an Islamic state. This shift was known as 'Sahwa,' or 'the awakening' (Commins, 2006). Shia Muslims were consolidated when the secular Shaw fell from power and an Islamic government was installed (Susser, 2017). Sunni Muslims would also experience increased unity when Russia invaded Afghanistan (Macharais, 2017). This was another example of Muslims radicalizing in response to violence against their own. When Muslims across the world observed suffering on the part of Afghan Muslims, many volunteered to travel to Afghanistan and fight in the Mujahedeen (Commins, 2006).

Osama Bin Laden's fundamentalist lens on Islam was likely shaped by his upbringing in Saudi Arabia, which is known for a strict interpretation of Sharia law (Terrill, 2016). Despite, or perhaps due to, his wealthy family's Westernization, Bin Laden was known for his strict adherence to Islam from a young age (Ross, 2015). During college, Bin Laden was exposed to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, including Qutb's brother, Mohammed Qutb, a popular lecturer who emphasized the fundamentalist perspective. Bin Laden's Wahhabi foundation and Islamist personal influences would eventually shape the development of al-Qaeda and modern violent jihad (Ross, 2015). When interviewed in 1998 by John Miller with ABC News (ABC News, 2006), Osama Bin Laden expressed his belief that terrorism against the West, including non-combatants, is the same as America's use of a nuclear bomb against Japanese non-combatant casualties. Again, one can see militants' justifying violence that is contrary to the teachings of the Quran. One can also see the use or justification of a heightened level of violence by radical Islamists in response to prior violent tactics by their foes. Certainly, the potential exists that Bin Laden was simply using his knowledge of history as an excuse to justify his course of action. However, his comment resonates as an indication of a lens similar to that reflected when Qutb saw the materialism of America, and when Qutb and later Al-Zawahiri were each subjected to torture.

Bin-Laden and Zawahiri found themselves working together when Zawahiri joined the fight against the Russians in Afghanistan as members of the Taliban (Wright, 2006). This connection combined all the aforementioned direct and indirect influences experienced by both men and prompted the expansionist or offensively oriented approach that would come to be synonymous with modern violent jihad. Commins (2006) described Salafism as synonymous with Wahhabism. Taylor and Swanson (2019) described al-Qaeda as second-generation Salafism or jihadist Salafism. The precursor to this was first-generation Salafism, which is also known as traditional Salafism (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). Islamic unity, anti-imperialism, and anti-colonialism were the original tenants of Salafism. Leadership transition within Salafism would trigger intellectual and social reforms to Islamic thought. Attempts were made to reconcile Islamic modernist reform with Islamic elders. Salafist modern interpretation of the Quran also ran contrary to fundamentalist Wahhabism. Many of the Taliban fighters were radicalized during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan—and likely, subsequent U.S. military action in Afghanistan—and this radicalization would signal a shift toward second-generation or jihadist Salafism.

The emergence of jihadist Salafists, including al-Qaeda, also marked the beginning of a new paradigm in which radical Islamists no longer view violence as the primary mechanism to achieve their goals. Instead, they began viewing violence as the only mechanism capable of achieving their goals. Jihadist Salafists also have a more global view of jihad against the West and, since their emergence in the 1980s, have become more offensive-minded in their global approach to jihad against the West (Haykel, 2016). Certainly, one could argue that the Jihadist Salafist approach is among the primary violent jihad-related threats to the West and America. Figure 1 depicts a pathway from a strict interpretation of Islam through fundamentalist Islamist ideology and key leadership, which has facilitated the modern approach toward global violent jihad.
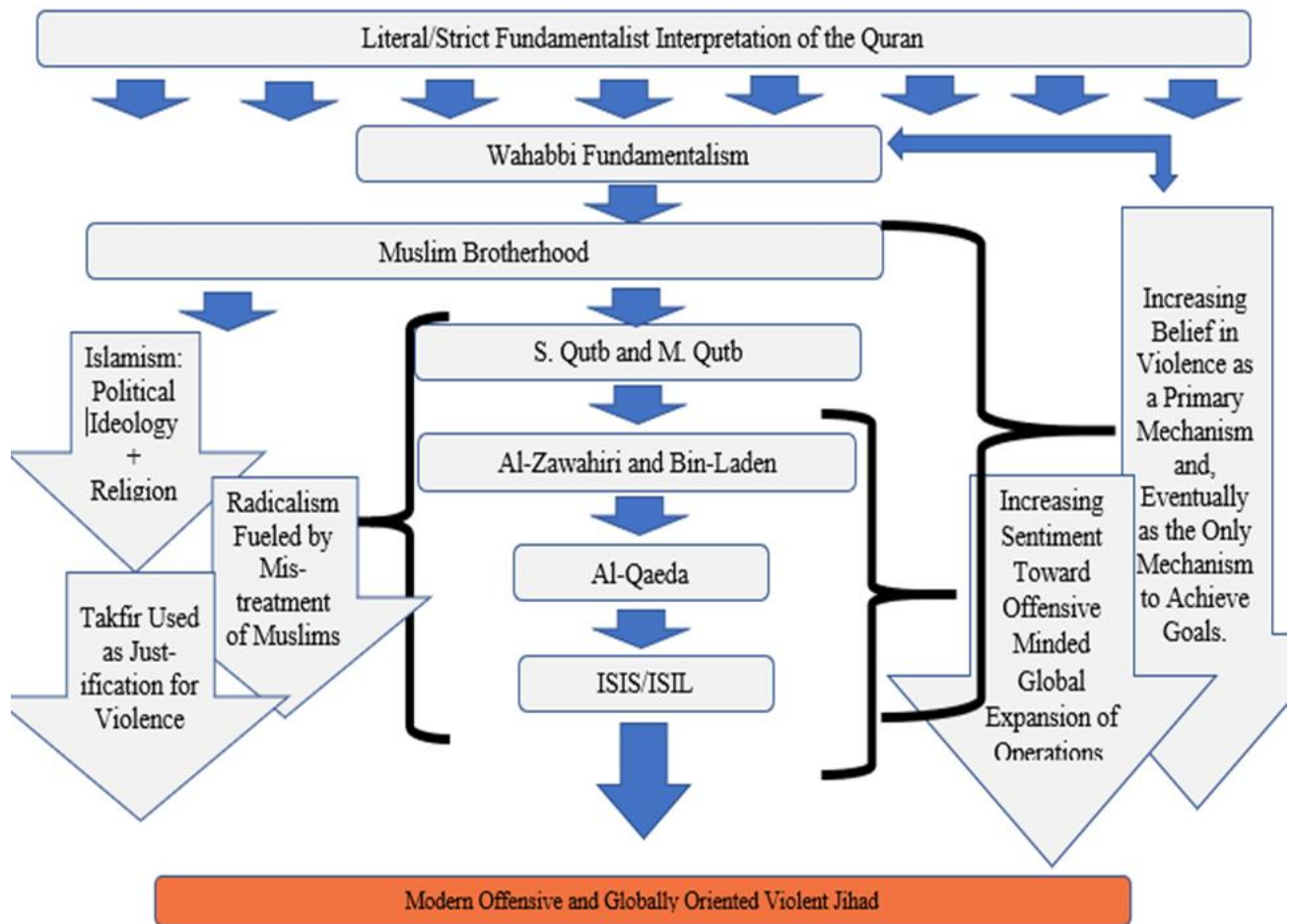
Figure 1. Pathways and factors in the development of modern violent jihad.

Threats posed to the United States and the West

Violent jihad now poses an existential threat to the West and the U.S. through jihadist Salafists (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). This threat is due in large part to their unflinchingly confrontational and offense-oriented approach toward overcoming what they view as un-Islamic governments, and the support provided by the West. Certainly, the West, and particularly the U.S., also played a role in the radicalization with consistent troop deployments to the Middle East over the past 30 years. The U.S. even had a hand in emboldening the Taliban through CIA-led support operations during the fight against the spread of communism in Afghanistan. As described in the earlier paragraphs, radicalized Islamic fighters such as al-Qaeda, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and Islamic State of

Iraq and Levant (ISIL) have evolved to pose a serious and continuous threat to the West and the U.S.

According to the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) (START, 2019), the threat worldwide is primarily from radical Islamists who have committed a majority of terror attacks. Additionally, most if not all of those countries are often known for social unrest, such as Syria, Yemen, and Somalia. As of 2018, the U.S. did not even fall within the top 15 countries regarding the number of attacks from terrorism. Thus, one could be misled to believe that the primary terrorism threat in the U.S. is due to right-wing groups, and that violent jihad is a minor threat to the U.S. Truly, a majority of terrorist attacks in the U.S. are indeed from far-right domestic groups. However, the deaths resulting from these attacks are inconsistent. From 2000 to 2018, more than half of the far-right domestic terrorism attacks in the U.S. resulted in no casualties (START, 2019). In addition, a few attacks produced high casualties, which essentially create a few outliers in the data. Thus, the data can be deceiving when attempting to generalize or make comparisons. Additionally, radical Islamists are actively and effectively expanding their reach (Christie, 2018), and have proven more effective at consistently taking lives than the aforementioned far-right groups in the U.S. (START, 2019). Even a single casualty from terrorism is too many. However, policy-makers and homeland security leaders might consider whether the threat of far-right terrorism in the U.S. could be a form of 'red herring' when compared to the ever-expanding threat from radical Islamists who have proven to be consistently effective and who pose a direct and immediate threat from violent jihad.

Islam is said to mean 'submit' or 'surrender,' and submission to Allah is among the primary messages of the Quran (Emerick, 2000). This can be interpreted as submission to Allah's will, and those who have surrendered to Islam are in a form of peace (Emerick, 2000). However, those who have not submitted to Islam may be considered to be in a state of

war or perhaps turmoil. It follows that fundamentalist Islamists seeking violent jihad would consider themselves to be in a war-like state until non-Muslims submit or surrender to Islam. Further, radical Islamists would likely strictly interpret the need to wage jihad to make non-Muslims "surrender," in order to reach a state of peace. This strict interpretation seems particularly likely among fundamentalists, using the Quran's references to war as justification. However, other Islamists are waging another kind of jihad in an attempt to shift Western culture using subterfuge instead of overt violence.

Cultural Jihad

Yousef (2019) discussed the idea of a 'third jihad,' which is synonymous with cultural jihad. Aside from radical Islamists, he described a second type of fundamentalist Islamist as "political." For the purposes of this paper, Yousef's (2019) "political" Islamists will be referred to as cultural jihadists. Cultural jihadists are said to have the same goals as violent jihadists, but they use different mechanisms to work toward that goal. Like jihadist Salafists, cultural jihadists hope to eventually overtake Western culture and essentially establish a worldwide fundamentalist Islamic state. However, cultural jihadists operate within the existing Western legal and political systems to achieve those goals. They use the protections of the current legal structure, including the U.S. Constitution, in their attempt to install Sharia law. They are said to be using government technology, and public relations savvy to build influence to put radical Islamists into influential positions.

Some might argue that Yousef's (2019) examples of cultural jihad may teeter on the edge of conspiracy theory. However, federal trial exhibits bolster his argument. The Holy Land Foundation (HLF) was a Muslim charity operating in the U.S. throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. During 2009, several of the key figures in HLF were convicted of federal charges related to providing support for Hamas (USDOJ, 2009). Government Exhibit 003-

0085 3:04-CR-240-G from the case is titled An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America: 5/22/1991 (Center for Security Policy, 2013). The exhibit describes civilization jihad as a type of grand jihad that destroys Western civilization from within through sabotage. Thus, the concept of cultural jihad has existed within radical Islamist communities since at least the 1990s. The use of asymmetrical tactics and extreme attention to planning and patience are all ways in which radical Islamists have proven successful in violent jihad (Taylor & Swanson, 2019), and those characteristics could also apply to cultural jihad.

Among the key figures in modern Islamism, Sayed Qutb was known for his multiple publications. Among those was Qutb's (1977) publication, which indicated that the peace that Muslims should seek also translates to submission to Allah. Qutb (1977) argued that the intention of Islam was peace. However, further analysis of his writings provides indications that peace cannot happen until others submit to Allah. Thus, if one's lens is radical or violent, any positive or peaceful ideals within Islam can easily be interpreted as the need for offensive action by Muslims. Qutb (1977) stated, "Those who claim the right to legislate for people and exclude God's legislation are aggressors and are liable to divine punishment" (p. 72). Thus, any secular government is considered an 'aggressor' against Islam, and defense is justified. He also stated, "when dealing with its enemies Islam takes one of three courses: They may adopt the religion,or pay the tribute or fight" (p. 73). Using Qutb's (1977) logic and arguments as a foundation, radicals would likely feel justified in resorting to cultural jihad as a supplement to violent jihad as one of the three options for "dealing with its enemies." Thus, careful consideration of the possible threat of cultural jihad is warranted.

Threats posed to the United States and the West

Cultural jihad is also a realistic tactic, particularly given jihadists' history of extreme patience in their approach, as well as their display of unmatched imagination,

resourcefulness, and willingness to use 'the system' against itself in their plots (Ilardi, 2009; Taylor & Swanson, 2019). Readers should also remember that violent jihadists have a history of probing potential targets for weaknesses, and methodically building relationships and history within a community or facility before attacking (Ilardi, 2009). In short, the operationalization of cultural jihad against the West would be a complicated, coordinated, and decades-long. Overall, an extremely lofty goal. However, so was defeating the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, and managing to essentially transform aircraft into weapons of mass destruction using only boxcutters (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). Indications of cultural jihad have been observed within the U.S. education system, houses of worship, and the government.

Education. Moran (2019) reported events that some might consider a small step toward a decades-long cultural jihad and others might view as legitimate efforts to build understanding and tolerance. The event involved a California school responding to two Muslim students being bullied by distributing pro-Islam educational materials to increase tolerance of Muslim students. The education and tolerance initiative was orchestrated by the Council for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). A court settlement was reached, but the initiative had already been discontinued, replaced by a broader anti-bullying campaign. Liberals might describe this as yet another example of Islamophobia and conservatives might describe this as apparent favoritism toward one religion over others. However, even those casting cultural jihad aside as a conspiracy theory might take note of CAIR's recent designation as a terrorist group by the United Arab Emirates during 2014 (Emirates News Agency, 2014). The Anti-Defamation League (2015) also reported that CAIR was associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, two groups with designations or attempted designations as terrorist organizations. Even the biggest skeptics would likely question the legitimacy of an educational campaign with materials provided by a 'designated terror group'

which has been tied to the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas. Cultural jihadists hoping to build sympathy and inculcate a pro-Islamist attitude into the next generation of Americans would likely view the U.S. public education system as an attractive target.

Houses of worship. The Center for Religious Freedom (CRF) conducted research (2005) after The Center for Democracy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia (CDHR), a U.S.-based non-profit, made public allegations of undue influence by the Saudi Arabian government over religion in the U.S. The CRF found that one of the recurring themes identified in this study, Wahhabi fundamentalism, was prominent within mosques in the U.S. at the time of the research. CRF also found that Wahhabi Saudi funding and support were consistent throughout the mosques and educational materials. CRF (2005) gathered more than 200 books and educational materials from more than 12 of the most prominent mosques in the largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. They found that all documents contained between one and five links to the Saudi Arabian government. Many of the publications included rulings known as fatwas that demonize Muslims who are tolerant of Christianity and non-Muslims. These Saudi-funded Wahhabi schools were typically the only Islamic schools in the areas (9/11 Commission Report, 2002).

Government influence. In addition, the aforementioned U.S. government exhibit lists the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), among others, as Muslim Brotherhood organizations or 'friends' (Center for Security Policy, 2013). Authors such as Alto (2017) have reported on ISNA and its financial arm and NAIT as unindicted co-conspirators in the HLF federal case, and United States District Court (USDC) documents corroborate the unindicted co-conspirator status of ISNA and NAIT (USDC, 2009). ISNA has met with former President of the United States Barrack Obama (ISNA, 2013) and was described as a White House team member by the Obama administration (Obama, 2015).

Other factors adding to the threat. The aforementioned examples of potential cultural jihad could be viewed as isolated incidents that could be interpreted as coincidence or as deliberately planned incursions. However, given the stated goal of a grand jihad that destroys Western civilization from within, the prior examples can just as easily be viewed as a reflection of the shrouded nature of the tactic. Certainly, given the placement of the previously mentioned events and entities, the threat of cultural jihad is a distinct possibility, worthy of attention and further research. The genius of cultural jihad and likely the most substantial challenge to defending against it is that cultural jihad manifests one small societal shift at a time with no measurable milestones. Additionally, cultural jihad does not provide any distinct galvanizing events that solidify people. Such incremental, measured, and distributed efforts toward a paradigm shift occur over decades, not months. The challenge rests in determining where one draws a line between suspicion of an entire group of people and monitoring a potentially real, long-term threat against the West and the U.S. Regardless of where the line is drawn, detection of such subtle and incremental manipulation of the lens of an entire generation would prove difficult even in the most security-oriented environment. One could even argue that cultural jihadism is passive in nature due to the glacial pace of its efforts.

Another challenge in combatting cultural jihad is that it is meant not to change existing opinions of Islam but to build later generations' opinions of Islam through systemic embedding within existing social support, government, and education structures. One can imagine the myriad challenges associated with educating a generation of Americans who are not only ignorant of the difference between Islam and radical Islam (Islamism) but also who only have the lens provided by radical Islamists in social education programs. Cultural jihad is also a proactive way of advancing a jihad or accessing key Western infrastructure, particularly for radical Muslims who are not suited for violence or have other useful skills.

Thus, cultural jihad as a mechanism allows radical Islamists to leverage more of their resources toward a battle on multiple fronts.

Overall, this literature review revealed a significant amount of academic research related to violent jihad, Islamism, and terrorism overall. However, a dearth of peer-reviewed research appears to exist related to cultural jihad. Much of the available information is from sources that, although often well-educated and reputable, may be considered by some to be politically or ideologically biased. Thus, a finding of this literature review is that researchers should prioritize a focus upon analysis of cultural jihad if only to identify what is known from peer-reviewed academic sources.

Themes Identified Relative to Violent Jihad and Cultural Jihad

Technology and social media

Technology is a useful tool to facilitate both violent jihad and cultural jihad. Indeed, German and Dutch authorities have expressed concern over what Banerjee (2014) described as 'web jihad.' Bangladeshi terrorists have communicated using Skype, and social networks such as Twitter and Skype were also used when more than 4,000 people were mobilized into violence between a Salafist group and another group in Germany. Particularly concerning is the trend that globally oriented violent jihadists are using online communications platforms operationally as command and control networks (Banerjee, 2014). ISIS and ISIL were identified as the first terrorist group to grow up with the Internet, and they are leveraging that access and knowledge to extend the reach of the jihadi threat worldwide, with a particular focus on the West. Klausen (2014) also found that social media plays a vital role in the operational strategy of jihadists. Twitter has been identified as a tool for communication, particularly in Syria and Iraq.

Technology and social media are likely important in cultural jihad as well. Few organizations operate without using a website and social media presence. These examples of potential cultural jihad all likely had websites and social media presence at some point. If one believes that cultural jihad is a real threat, it follows that cultural jihadists would use technology and social media in the same manner as their violent jihadist counterparts.

Social engineering and romanticism

Christie (2018) emphasized radical Islamism's seemingly ever-increasing reach, which is resulting in the radicalization of increasing numbers of young people. Haykel (2016) found that both ISIS and al-Qaeda marketed a romantic vision of renewed glory for Islam. Pisoiu (2015) discussed growing concern in the European intelligence community that residents who travel to the Middle East to fight in holy wars will return. Specifically, the concerns relate to a form of social engineering or recruitment where fighters return with stories of heroes returning from a righteous fight. Tales of adventure and honor would likely be attractive to other disenfranchised youths. This trend is concerning in its effectiveness at winning over impressionable young people toward radical Islam, taking a step toward cultural jihad. The trend is also troubling in that it facilitates radicalization and recruitment of additional fighters in violent jihad who represent an immediate threat in their home country and in the Middle East.

The proliferation of communication technology has aided in social engineering efforts that are now significantly less dependent upon geographic access to potential recruits in both cultural jihad and violent jihad. These romantic ideas and imagery are also effectively delivered using relatively low-tech and inexpensive technology. Internet videos depict emotional images and appeal to viewers's loyalty by asking for financial support or direct involvement in combat (Banerjee, 2014). Shaw and Bandara (2018) analyzed the marketing techniques that helped Islamic State (IS) surpass al-Qaeda relative to global violent jihad.

The researchers found that IS gained success by appropriating and extending key themes and communicating those themes using social media. Such social media messaging and recruitment is often aimed at disaffected youth (Mousseau, 2011).

Demonization of the West and non-fundamentalist Muslims

Clifton (2017) analyzed the personal justifications of a self-identified Islamic violent jihadist. The jihadist articulated an 'us versus them' mentality and a belief in an ummah, or borderless Islamic community. Western democracy and culture were viewed as the enemy, and the threat of Western culture overtaking Islam serves as justification for violence against Muslims and non-Muslims in the name of Islam. Haykel (2016) also found that both al-Qaeda and ISIS espoused violence as the only option and indeed a duty of Muslims. He also determined that both groups appealed to disenfranchisement and resentment of Muslims, particularly against the West. These themes would likely resonate with the cultural jihadist, since the ultimate goal is to collapse Western culture from within, thus leaving only the Islamic community. Christie (2018) found similar themes in radical recruitment efforts. It is unlikely these themes are limited to violent jihad, just as it is reasonable to apply them to cultural jihad.

Globally oriented and offensive-minded

Haykel (2016) described prominent violent jihadists as global in their ambitions and their reach. START (2019) also reported some concerning trends relative to some of the most prominent violent jihadists: Al-Qaeda and Islamic State. A discernible increase in 'reach' is occurring among these groups. The number of countries that experienced terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda and Islamic State-related groups has steadily increased since approximately 2003. Each group has committed terrorism in more than 50 countries (START, 2019). Cultural jihad appears to also be an offensive maneuver, and by nature, is globally oriented. The examples of cultural jihad at U.S. houses of worship, in education, and in the government,—

along with simply the definition of cultural jihad—would seem to qualify it as an offensive, and globally oriented tactic.
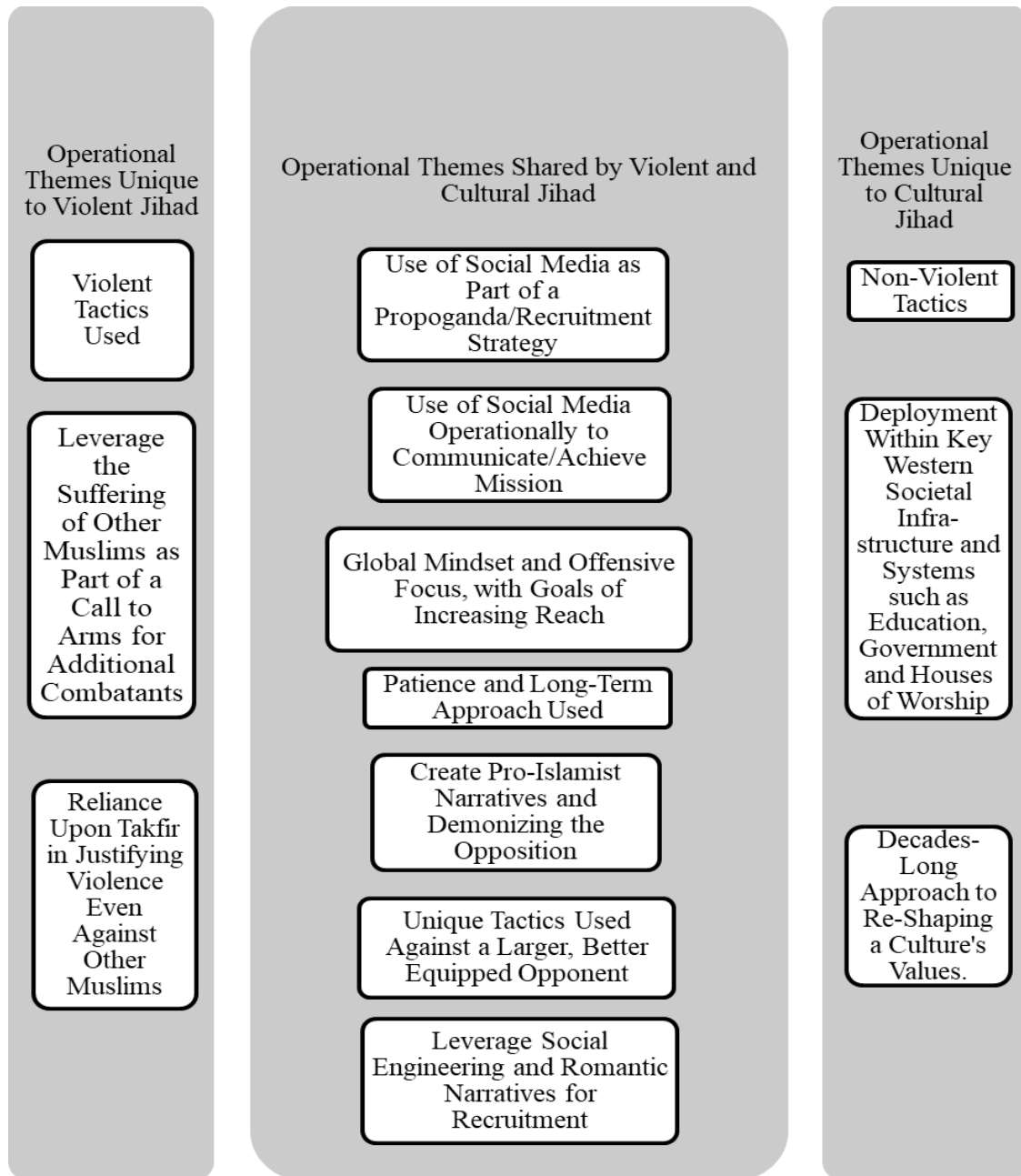

Figure 2. Themes present in cultural jihad and violent jihad.

Addressing the Combined Threat of Cultural Jihad and Violent Jihad

One might argue that the interaction between the U.S. and radical jihadists is a form of mutually assured destruction. Violence begets violence, and violent attacks will likely only strengthen the West's resolve, and result in another generation of Americans volunteering for the military in response to an attack. However, the same could be said of violent jihadists. This is similar to the trends witnessed when Russia invaded Afghanistan and the U.S. invaded Iraq (Susser, 2017). Young Afghan and Iraqi men found themselves drawn toward Mujahedeen because an apparent foreign threat was present in their homeland. Although that repeated cycle of violence would likely be palatable to radical Islamists, to truly change the culture of the West, cultural jihad is arguably the more sustainable and effective long-term approach to overcome Western culture.

Homeland security

One could argue that the West should continue to focus on limiting the potential for two-way communication between potential radicals and Islamist extremist organizations. By doing so, the West both limits the coordination between actor and director as well as potentially increasing the time necessary to plan, resource, and carry out such activities. Reducing the lanes of communication enhances the ability to identify, track, and intercept such actions and individuals by forcing them to seek alternate means of carrying out their activities. Thus, their method of attack is limited in its coordination and imagination. This disconnect would place operatives on a proverbial island with limited ability. This is particularly relevant given the importance of communication and coordination associated with sophisticated terrorist attacks (Miller, 2016). Few tasks are more complicated than the long-term manipulation of the social fabric and lens of a country. Other initiatives might be aimed at identifying key junctures between cultural jihad and violent jihad, particularly related to recruiting and radicalization efforts.

Academia

Another way to combat the combined threat of violent jihad and cultural jihad is through peer-reviewed academic research, particularly on cultural jihad. Such academic research would provide a body of work to provide a knowledge base relative to cultural jihad. Higher education programs would then eventually incorporate the concept more readily into their curricula. This would expose a generation of intelligence and security students to the unpublicized threat of cultural jihad. Beyond academia, the active intelligence community would also likely play a primary role in the efforts above aimed at the nexus points between cultural jihad and violent jihad.

The Role of the Intelligence Community

The nature of intelligence

Taylor and Swanson (2019) defined 'intelligence' as an informational product or process that is generated from the analysis of data. They also defined counterintelligence as activities designed to stifle attempts to gather intelligence related to an organization or entity. Synthesis and analysis are the differences between 'intelligence' and 'information.' Human intelligence (HUMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), geospatial intelligence (GEOINT), technical intelligence (TECHINT), imagery intelligence (IMINT), photographic intelligence (PHOINT), and open-source intelligence (OSINT) are a few of the types of intelligence.

The international intelligence community works together and coordinates with law enforcement to fight terrorism (Taylor & Swanson, 2019). One major impediment to successful intelligence is the diffuse nature of the threat and the laws governing the use of specific intelligence organizations to gather data from and on individuals and entities. Another challenge to that coordination is that intelligence entities often want to collect information continually, and they have a high threshold for overtly acting on the intelligence

generated, particularly when doing so would render the collection mechanism or source no longer useful. Law enforcement agencies are often drawn to 'taking people off the streets.' Both approaches have some use, but those differing approaches may also limit information sharing between agencies. This became evident after the 9/11 attacks.

The U.S. Gilmore Commission (2003), which was initiated after 9/11, identified several areas for improvement. First, overreliance upon TECHINT instead of HUMINT. Next, law enforcement failed to receive important intelligence. Additionally, decentralization and bureaucracy created information silos. This was particularly prevalent in the FBI. Old computer systems lack interoperability between agencies also stifled information sharing attempts between law enforcement agencies. Finally, the commission determined that exceedingly restrictive laws and policies were limiting the effective use of human sources related to terrorist intelligence gathering.

The role of the intelligence community in the engagement of jihad

With the exception of the CIA's relatively limited clandestine activities oversees, U.S. intelligence agencies are not typically involved in the tactical or 'ground level' enforcement operations undertaken to fight terrorism in the U.S. Intelligence as a process and as a product are the crucial first step in identifying and preventing attacks (Hughbank & Githens, 2010). Typically, the intelligence provided by the intelligence community is used by the military or law enforcement during tactical movements or operations. Some law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI and Air Force Office of Special Investigations, fulfill significant intelligence missions along with their traditional law enforcement roles. Western popular culture assigns a hierarchy to such agencies with the CIA and FBI often taking the top seats. However, the reality is that resource limitations and the need for specialties within intelligence and law enforcement agencies necessitate the establishment of task forces made up of several agencies as the only way to investigate terrorism effectively. The FBI Joint Terrorism Task

Force is one example of such a task force. In theory, the FBI's role as an intelligence agency and a law enforcement agency would facilitate information sharing between intelligence and law enforcement, particularly on an FBI led task force. However, the reality is that law enforcement personnel sometimes do not have access to information gleaned from intelligence sources because federal laws sometimes restrict the sharing of information.

Intelligence and violent jihad

The intelligence community will continue to support the law enforcement community and the military by collecting, prioritizing, and disseminating intelligence for use by law enforcement and military personnel (Hughbank & Githens, 2010). The intelligence community can provide valuable intelligence toward defensive anti-terrorism efforts, including law enforcement activities that are intended to intercept violent jihadists. The intelligence community also offers valuable intelligence to inform offensive counter-terrorism operations by military personnel overseas. Strategic intelligence is used to support long-term planning efforts and allows law enforcement to understand some of the capabilities and threats associated with violent jihadists in their communities (Hughbank & Githens, 2010). Strategic intelligence can be used toward a similar goal for offensive-oriented counter-terrorism efforts by deployed military personnel. One might also note that both law enforcement and military personnel can play a key role in the collection of tactical intelligence during the intelligence collection cycle aimed at combatting violent jihad. However, despite the importance of intelligence agencies in combatting violent jihad, intelligence agencies might be even more uniquely situated to combat the cultural jihadist threat to the West, so long as the use of intelligence assets and capabilities remains true to the spirit of federal laws restricting the use of intelligence domestically.

Intelligence and cultural jihad

Banerjee (2014) discussed the importance of counter-radicalization efforts against cultural jihad. Public education might be the most effective way to combat cultural jihad since ignorance of mainstream Islam versus radical Islamism allows for the latter perspective to flourish undetected within legitimate programs and agencies. However, similar to tactical counter-terrorism operations, counter-radicalization efforts begin with a quality intelligence product. Counter-radicalization will not be effective unless it is aimed at the appropriate groups, at the appropriate time, using the appropriate methods. Quality intelligence informs decision making.

One might argue that cultural external jihad might be the larger long-term threat to the West. Certainly, the immediate threat of violence exhibited by violent jihadists is the most pressing threat, and tactical intelligence is an important part of the defense. However, the successful installation of fundamentalist Islamic ideals throughout the West and the U.S. has the potential to expand the existing overt threats into millions of 'sleeper' threats. As such, the intelligence community will play a large role in abating not only the current external violent jihadi threat but the undercurrent cultural jihadi threat to the West as well. Overall, the intelligence community is intended to support larger anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts. As such, the intelligence community will be key to directly supporting law enforcement and military efforts toward anti-terrorism and counterterrorism. Given the themes identified in Figure 2, one might argue that the intelligence community should concentrate efforts on understanding and stifling the shared themes listed above since they impact both the short term and the long-term radical agenda. Strategic intelligence might also prove to be most effective in combatting cultural jihad since long-term trends and activities are of heightened importance.

Conclusion

Overall, the authors found that the overrepresentation of violence within radical Islamism begins with literal fundamentalist interpretations of the Quran. This paper also revealed a pathway and series of key influencers that have shifted violent jihad to be viewed by radicals as (1) the only option for change and (2) an offensive and globally-oriented tactic. The shift begins with a Wahhabi fundamentalist interpretation of the Quran's more violent passages. Four key, charismatic Islamist leaders and educators have been exposed-to and were responsible for an ever-increasing escalation of violence on both sides of the conflict. Due in part to the factors above, the four key, charismatic figures have essentially structured the framework for the globally focused, offensive-oriented violent jihad currently faced by the West. Violent jihad is now the primary immediate threat to the West.

The authors also found that cultural jihad may be an equally dangerous long-term threat to the West. Additionally, violent jihad and cultural jihad each have some unique operational aspects, but many operational themes are shared. As a result, the U.S. homeland security apparatus and Western intelligence community might benefit from continued focus on the themes found in both types of jihad, while building an outline that maps not only the immediate threats from violent jihad but the long term and completely legal threats to the identity of Western culture through cultural jihad.

This research identified several shared operational themes present in both violent jihad and cultural jihad and found that the intelligence community is uniquely qualified to provide a foundation for the West's response to these shared tactics between violent jihad and cultural jihad. The paper also suggests a more long-term approach to combatting cultural jihad through peer-reviewed academic research on cultural jihad, to expose future generations of intelligence students and security students to the threat of cultural jihad, and to add to the existing academic body of work on violent jihad.

References

Obaid, N. (2017, July). The Muslim Brotherhood. *Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.* Retrieved from https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/files/publication/Muslim%20Brotherhood%20-%20final.pdf.

Obama, B. (2015). *President Obama's message for the 2015 ISNA annual convention & It's current President.* Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ghbr7uLT9og.

ABC News. (2006). *ABCNEWS' John Miller*. Retrieved from https://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=129965&page=1.

Alto, C. (2017, May 2). *Islamic Society of North America, Unindicted Co-Conspirator in Terror Financing, Holding Conferences in Tennessee.* The Tennessee Star. Retrieved from https://tennesseestar.com/2017/05/02/unindicted-co-conspirator-in-terror-financing-islamic-society-of-north-america-holding-conferences-in-tennessee/.

Banerjee, J. (2014). Jihad and counter-jihad in Germany. *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations, 18*(2), 103-136. doi:10.1177/0973598415569933.

Calvert, J. (2010). *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Center for Religious Freedom. (2005). *Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Invade American Mosques.* Retrieved from https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline_images/Saudi%20Publications%20on%20Hate%20Ideology%20Invade%20American%20Mosques.pdf.

Center for Security Policy. (2013). *From the Archives of the Muslim Brotherhood in North America: An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America*. Retrieved from https://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/CSP-Explanatory-Memorandum.pdf.

Center for Security Policy. (2015). *"Bridge-Building" to Nowhere. The Catholic Church's*

    Case Study in Inter-Faith Delusion. Retrieved from

    https://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/wp-

    content/uploads/2015/09/Bridge_Building_to_Nowhere.pdf.

Christie K. (2018) Terrorism and Jihad. *Politics, Religion & Ideology,19*(2), 250-254. doi:

    10.1080/21567689.2018.1437702.

Clifton, J. (2017). Justifying the jihad: the identity work of an Islamic terrorist. *Journal of*

    Language and Politics, 16(3), 453–470. doi 10.1075/jlp.15014.cli.

Commins, D. (2006). *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia.* New York: I. B. Taurus & Co.

    Ltd.

Emerick, Y. (2000). *The Holy Qur'An in Today's English.* Amirah Publishing.

Emirates News Agency. (2014, November 16). *UAE Cabinet approves list of designated*

    terrorist organisations, groups. Retrieved from

    http://wam.ae/en/details/1395272478814.

Haykel, B. (2016). ISIS and al-Qaeda—What are they thinking? understanding the adversary.

    The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 668(1), 71-81.

    doi:10.1177/0002716216672649.

Hughbank, R. & Githens, D. (2010). Intelligence and its role in protecting against terrorism.

    Journal of Strategic Security, 3(1), 31-38. Doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-

    0472.3.1.3.

Ilardi, G. J. (2009). The 9/11 Attacks—A Study of Al Qaeda's Use of Intelligence and

    Counterintelligence. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 32*(3), 171-187. Doi:

    10.1080/10576100802670803.

ISNA. (2013). *ISNA President Meets Twice with President Obama*. Retrieved from

    www.isna.net/isna-president-meets-twice-with-president-obama.

Klausen, J. (2015) Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters

    in Syria and Iraq. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 38*(1), 1-22. doi:

    10.1080/1057610X.2014.974948.

Machairas, D. (2017) The strategic and political consequences of the June 1967 war. *Cogent*

    Social Sciences, 3(1), 1-9. Doi: 10.1080/23311886.2017.1299555.

Miller, J. (2016, June 6). *The Evolution of Terrorism Since 9/11.* Radio Free Europe.

    Retrieved from https://www.rferl.org/a/evolution-of-terrorism-since-

    911/27782825.html.

Moran, L. (2019, March 25). *San Diego Unified Settles Case Over Shelved Anti-*

    Islamophobia Policies. Voice of San Diego. Retrieved from

    https://www.rferl.org/a/evolution-of-terrorism-since-911/27782825.

Mousseau, M. (2011). Urban poverty and support for Islamist terror: Survey results of

    Muslims in fourteen countries. *Journal of Peace Research, 48*(1), 35-47.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. (2002). *9/11 Commission*

    Report. Retrieved from https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/.

National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. (2019,

    October). *Background Report.* Retrieved from

    https://www.start.umd.edu/sites/default/files/publications/local_attachments/START_

    GTD_TerrorismIn2018_Oct2018.pdf.

Pisoiu, D. (2015). Subculture: The third wave of European jihad. *Journal for*

    Deradicalization, 2(1), 163-170. Retrieved from

    http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/15.

Qutb, S. (1977). *Islam and Universal Peace.* Indianapolis, IN: American Trust Publications.

Ross, C. A. (2015). A psychological profile of Osama Bin Laden. *The Journal of Psychohistory, 42*(4), 310-319. Retrieved from https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1672889566?pq-origsite=summon.

Shaw, M. & Bandara, P. (2018) Marketing Jihad: the rhetoric of recruitment. *Journal of Marketing Management, 34*(15), 1319-1335. doi:10.1080/0267257X.2018.1520282.

Stanley, T. (2005). Understanding the origins of Wahhabism and Salafism. *Terrorism Monitor, 3*(14). Retrieved from https://jamestown.org/program/understanding-the-origins-of-wahhabism-and-salafism/.

Susser, A. (2017). Fifty years since the Six-Day War. *The Royal United Services Institute Journal, 162*(3), 40-48. Doi: 10.1080/03071847.2017.1353270.

Taylor, R. W. & Swanson, C. R. (2019). *Terrorism, Intelligence, and Homeland Security.* New York: Pearson.

Terrill, R., J. (2016). *World Criminal Justice Systems: A Comparative Analysis* (9th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

The Anti-Defamation League. (2015). *Profile: The Council on American Islamic Relations.* Retrieved from https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/israel-international/israel--middle-east/Profile-The-Council-on-American-Islamic-Relations.pdf.

The Gilmore Commission. (2003). *Forging America's New Normalcy: Securing our Homeland, Protecting our Liberty.* Retrieved from https://www.rand.org/nsrd/terrpanel.html.

United States Department of Justice. (2009). *Federal Judge Hands Down Sentences on Holy Land Foundation Case.* Retrieved from https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/federal-judge-hands-downs-sentences-holy-land-foundation-case.

United States District Court. (2009). *Memorandum Opinion Order.* Retrieved from

    http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1425.pdf.

Wickham, C. R. (2015). *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist movement.*

    Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Wright, J. (2006). *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11.* New York: Random

    House.

Yousef, M. (2019). *The Third Jihad: Overcoming Radical Islam's Plan for the West.* Carrol

    Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.